

Questions and Answers
– WAPES Asia-Pacific Regional Conference –
“Digitalisation of PES”
October 18th, 2023

1. Is digitisation in the PES synonymous with digitisation of all or part of the service offering?
Is the digitisation of PES a necessary transition in today's world of work? *(from ANPE, PES of Niger)*

Answer from Michael Mwasikakata – Head of Labour Market Services (ES&ALMPs) for Transitions Unit (ILO):

Digitization has become crucial and necessary, especially in the realm of public employment services. In today's age, it's almost unimaginable for a country's employment services to function without digital tools. Global trends indicate that a vast majority of public employment services around the world have embraced digitization, with at least one or two services being digitized. This trend is observed not only in Asia-Pacific region but also in Latin America and the Caribbean countries (LAC) and potentially in many others. In essence, digitization is unavoidable for public employment services to stay relevant and competitive in an ever-changing world of work.

2. If researched, was there a pattern visible in what type of digital tools were used in early steps of digitization? Where they employment services specific tools such as job boards or career development platforms, or more generic tools such as administrative and online communication tools?
(from SkillLab, Netherlands)

Answer from Michael Mwasikakata – Head of Labour Market Services (ES&ALMPs) for Transitions Unit (ILO):

Our research focused on the services delivered through digital technologies, particularly at a global level. We found a trend where simpler services tended to be digitized before more complex ones. In the Asia-Pacific study, we observed that back-office tools were more advanced compared to front-office tools, suggesting a prevalence of generic administrative tools.

3. How about Job Counseling online in Australia? (from PES Indonesia)

Answer from Melissa Ryan, First Assistant Secretary, Workforce Australia for Individuals, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

Regarding our online services, it is observed that most participants can effectively manage their own career coaching needs. While our contact center is available for support, it's essential to note that our staff are not trained as online career coaches or counselors. We may refer participants to other services, although the outcomes of these referrals have varied.

Our primary focus is on supporting individuals who can navigate their career pathways independently. Currently, we do not offer job counseling as part of our services. However, if participants have been using our online platform for four months without visible progress, they may be referred to an employability skills training program. This program connects them with an external provider who can help them refocus on resume preparation and tailoring them to specific industries. It's important to clarify that this external provider handles this aspect rather than us providing online job counseling.

4. What is the current status of the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in PES Australia (especially for online services for customers)? (from Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich - PES Austria)

Answer from Melissa Ryan, First Assistant Secretary, Workforce Australia for Individuals, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

For current Australian workforce digital platform, AI is not fully integrated. While we do use some machine learning in our digital assistant, the broader concept of AI is still being explored. We are cautious about rolling out AI without a comprehensive understanding of its implications, including safeguards against vulnerabilities or bias. As it stands, our platform does not utilize AI at this time. Usage is attributed to certain functions and interfaces that still need improvement.

5. What is the future digital transformation outlook for Workforce Australia? Is the utilisation of advanced technology will be more develop? (from WCC Group BV, The Netherlands)

Answer from Melissa Ryan, First Assistant Secretary, Workforce Australia for Individuals, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

The Australian Government has initiated a review of employment services, with a focus on online effectiveness and the potential need for increased digital investment. The review, led by a select committee, will release its findings in late November. I encourage everyone to watch for these recommendations. The government will consider them, prioritizing the expansion and improvement of

online services, which will require additional funding. Support services may also be offered to assist participants. The government is committed to a forward-looking approach, not reverting to previous methods, but instead building upon existing systems and technology for the future;

6. Cambodia - Could you please specify whether jobseekers can get in addition to careers information online counselling, i.e. directly contact from the website a PES counsellor for an online counselling meeting?
(from a PES expert in Germany)

Answer from Ouch Cheachanmolika, Acting Director General of National Employment Agency (NEA) of Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MLVT)

Job seeker can use the career counselling function in NEA's Website. There are some basic information. Moreover, job seeker can ask a question regarding the career through the Q&A in the career counselling function. However, there is still a need to improve this function.

7. Another question for Cambodia - What is approximately the coverage with mobiles, laptops among the Cambodian population (in addition to digital literacy)?

Answer from Ouch Cheachanmolika, Acting Director General of National Employment Agency (NEA) of Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MLVT)

We do not have the exact numbers regarding the availability of laptops or mobile devices among the people, but it's important to note that many Cambodian individuals, especially those in rural areas, may not have advanced digital skills. They might have limited knowledge, like basic scrolling, for instance. This becomes a challenge when, for instance, they need to use websites like the NEA, which require users to input information for registration or creating a CV. Some function or some interface are still not to improve that's why that's not much people use the website and application.

8. A question for M. Millet and M. Bayle please. Thank you - a really impressive digital transformation -in particular because it also seeks to support job changers re-skill and change sectors - crucial in our fast-moving global labour markers.. How are you measuring outcomes from this cohort compared to the more traditional user groups and how is this shaping your evolving services? Many thanks (from APM Ingeus, Australia)

Answer from Alexandre Millet - Deputy Head of Open Innovation, Pôle emploi (France):

At the moment we do not specifically measure the outcome, as we have decided from the beginning that the access to the platform and to the services is not limited

and can be done anonymously.

Only 4% of our visitors connect to their account when browsing the platform. Many of them connect once they access a remote service (we do not have specific data on those either, for legal reasons about personal-data protection).

However, we have all the classic statistics about the users' visits: which pages are accessed the most, which services have most « clicks », time spent on each page, rebound ratio, and so on.

We do collect feedback from users and counsellors, and we have nation-wide surveys about Pôle emploi's image, including some questions about the Emploi store.

9. Could we know or have your comprehension of the Labour Market Information System?

Answer from Alexandre Millet - Deputy Head of Open Innovation, Pôle emploi (France):

This is a way to present and adapt a whole range of statistics in order to provide relevant information about the job market on local territories.

ex: employment rate by economic sectors, number of job offers, companies creations, etc.

10. Can you describe shortly the use of AI solutions in Emploi store? Where do you see business value for using AI in specific services? (from European Commission, Belgium)

Answer from Alexandre Millet - Deputy Head of Open Innovation, Pôle emploi (France):

At the moment, we are not using AI on the platform.

However, some of the listed service do it. I mentioned « La Bonne Boîte » (« The Right Place ») which uses both AI and traditional algorithms to predict which companies are highly susceptible to recruit in the next 3-6 months.

For the future, we are working on using AI on the platform itself (and linked to other Pôle emploi's websites) in order to offer a tailored selection of services to our registered jobseekers. Keeping in mind that we want to continue offering a self-care tool for all autonomous users.