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Implementation of a labor market program with more frequent meetings in Sweden[a]

by

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Abstract

In 2015, the Swedish Public Employment Service (PES), together with the Institute for Evaluation of Labour Market and Education Policy (IFAU), launched a large-scale randomized control trial to collect new evidence on direct and displacement effects of job search assistance (JSA). The JSA program introduced more frequent meetings between case workers and job seekers during the early phase of an unemployment spell, and involved three types of meetings: (1) individual face-to-face meetings, (2) individual distance meetings, and (3) group meetings. The purpose of this paper is to present details of the design of the experiment, as a background for the evaluation of the job search assistance program reported in a companion paper.

Keywords: counseling, job search, randomized experiment
JEL-codes: C93, J68

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1 Introduction

In 2015, the Swedish Public Employment Service (PES), together with the Institute for Evaluation of Labour Market and Education Policy (IFAU), launched a large-scale randomized control trial to collect new evidence on direct and indirect effects of job search assistance (JSA). The intervention was called "Progress–early meetings" within the PES. The general idea was to measure the causal impact of introducing more frequent meetings between case workers and job seekers during the early phase of an unemployment spell. Those who were chosen to participate in the study were summoned to extra meetings with a case worker during the first three months of unemployment. The hypothesis was that this intervention would promote job-search activities early in the job search process, and, in the end, shorten unemployment.[1] The intervention involved three types of meetings: (1) individual face-to-face meetings with a case worker, (2) individual distance meetings with a case worker via telephone or a video link, and (3) group meetings gathering 10–15 job seekers, and lead by one or two case workers.

Another feature of this trial was to study whether improved employment prospects for the participants would come at the cost of reduced job opportunities for the non-participants, so called displacement effects.[2] In the presence of displacement effects, estimates of the net gain from the intervention must take displacement into account. In our intervention, we estimated both direct effects for the participants and displacement effects for non-participants at the same offices by exploiting a two-level randomization design over, first, 72 local public employment offices and, second, the job seekers within chosen offices.

We designed the randomization so that half of the offices would be active offices working with a given type of meeting, while the second half would be non-active offices providing ordinary services. Within each active office, a share of randomly chosen newly registered job seekers would be assigned to a treatment group (receiving one of the three types of meetings) or a control group (receiving ordinary services). This randomization at two levels allows us to credibly estimate the overall effect of JSA. Whereas the direct effect is captured by comparing the treated and the non-treated at the active offices, displacement is captured by comparing the non-treated at the active and the non-active offices.

The purpose of this paper is to present details of the design of the experiment and to discuss some of the challenges occurring during the implementation to provide a background for the evaluation of the implemented policies reported in Cheung et al. (2019).

[1] Previous research generally shows positive impacts from job search assistance. The evidence from experiments includes for instance Gorter and Kalb (1996), Dolton and O'Neill (1996), Dolton and O'Neill (2002), van den Berg and van der Klauuw (2006), Hägglund (2011), Graversen and van Ours (2008a), Graversen and van Ours (2008b), Crépon et al. (2013), Arni (2015), Maibom et al. (2017) and Gautier et al. (2018). Two recent US studies include McConnell et al. (2016) and Manoli et al. (2018).

[2] See for example Dahlberg and Forslund (2005) and Crépon et al. (2013).

This paper is organized as follows. The next section provides the project background such as its organization, timeline and budget. Section 3 describes the three meeting treatments and any differences with ordinary services provided by the PES. Section 4 presents the the target group and section 5 the experimental design. Section 6 describes the take up rates and the actual number of extra meetings. Section 7 presents survey evidence on treatment, and section 8 concludes.

2 About the project

2.1 Project organization and budget

The Analysis Department at the PES applied for funding of the project in 2013 from the European Progress Fund and the project was granted around EUR 1 million. One of the requirements for receiving funding was that an independent academic partner should be contracted to assist in the evaluation. To meet this requirement, IFAU was asked to be the assisting independent partner. In addition, the Swedish PES needed to appoint three external reviewers who would provide feedback at various stages of the project, mainly with respect to methodology, analysis and results. Two professors from Denmark and one from Norway accepted to be the external reviewers.[3]

A project team was formed within the Research and Evaluation Unit at the Swedish PES and was responsible to lead the project within the PES. During the implementation of the experiment, the project team expanded with some additional employees. Most of them mainly assisted in the communication with PES offices that participated in the study (e.g., traveling to offices and presenting details about the project, follow up meetings etc.). Some of the team members focused on training and supporting the staff in group meetings at the offices that would work with group meetings. The team was also assisted by an administrator and an accountant.

At the beginning of the implementation of the experiment, in March 2015, a board of directors within the PES was appointed. The board consisted of a project leader, a project owner, and several directors from different departments within the PES. The board was mainly responsible for ensuring that the organizational structure was in line with the project's goal and budget as well as to ensure that the project had enough resources to meet the goals.

The total project budget, including the EU funding, was around EUR 2 million. This, however, did not cover all the costs arising from the project. In particular, it is unclear to what extent the lump-sum payment from the central PES to the local offices met the actual project costs at the local office level.

[3] The reviewers were: Knut Røed, Senior Research Fellow at the Ragnar Frisch Centre for Economic Research in Norway; Michael Rosholm and Michael Svarer, Professors in Economics at the Department of Economics and Business in University of Aarhus, Denmark.

2.2 Time table

The Swedish PES submitted the project application in December 2013, and the European Commission accepted the application in August 2014. The formal time span for the project was from November 3, 2014 to November 2, 2017. The first three months, from November 2014 to January 2015, was a planning phase. The implementation phase was running from February 2015 to March 2016 and the follow-up phase from April 2016 to March 2017. The analysis phase was from April 2017 to November 2017 and the final report to the European Commission was filed in the beginning of 2018. After that, the work with the more extensive scientific report continued and an IFAU working paper was published in 2019.

2.2.1 Planning phase

During the planning phase, the project team at the PES, together with researchers from IFAU, designed the scientific evaluation of the project. This work included, among other things, power calculations, selecting the 72 participating offices, and randomizing these offices to different subgroups (active, non-active, and type of meeting).

In January 2015, the project team established the first contact with the 72 participating offices. Half of these offices were assigned to be non-active control offices and the other half were participating active offices. The 36 non-active control offices received brief information about the project, and were asked to continue their work as usual. An information tour was conducted to visit each of the 36 participating active offices. These offices received extensive information on the project's objective and background, the training activities and the different steps of the implementation process. Emphasis was placed on explaining and creating understanding for the evaluation method and the random allocation of job seekers. Each participating office appointed two case workers who would act as the project's contact persons. During a two-day workshop, in February 2015, the contact persons received additional information about the target group, the implementation process and some practical routines on documentation and the randomization procedure. They were also trained in the specific type of meeting they were assigned to provide.

2.2.2 Implementation phase

The project was implemented during two separate periods. A first wave of job seekers was randomized during spring 2015, from March 9 to May 31. A second wave was randomized during fall 2015, from August 17 to November 17. Having a second three-month period (during the fall) was a way to increase the number of treated participants in the study. As the meetings between the case workers and the participating job seekers continued for at most three months after the job seeker's registration at the PES, the job seekers would continue to have meetings after the last randomization date until February 2016.

At the start-up of the second phase of the project in the end of August 2015, the contact persons were invited to a kick-off where they received some updated information about the project as well as further training in the specific meeting type. The two contact persons in each active office would then be responsible for the local project implementation within their office, for communication and for follow-up meetings with the central administration of the project. Contact persons from offices working with distance and group meetings would also conduct all the meetings with the job seekers. In offices working with individual face-to-face meetings, the meetings were held either by the contact persons or by any other local case worker assigned to the project.

Throughout the implementation phase, the project team had regular meetings (online or by phone) with the contact persons to monitor that the project progressed according to given instructions, as well as to support, give information about any changes of the experiment protocol, and to answer questions from the respective offices.

During the implementation, the project team also gathered survey data. Questionnaires were sent to a sample of job seekers in both the treatment and the control group 90 days after their unemployment registration as well as to all the case workers who worked with the meetings at the 36 participating offices (results are reported in section 8).

2.2.3 Follow-up phase

The follow-up phase started in April 2016, after all the meetings with the job seekers had ended. The project team started this phase by visiting each one of the 36 active offices. The purpose of these visits was to interview the contact persons to get their view of the project implementation. This was followed by a workshop with the external reviewers from Denmark and Norway, in May 2016. Besides these activities, the focus during this phase was to compile and process the data that had been generated by the study. A first version of raw data was delivered to IFAU in the middle of autumn 2016.

2.2.4 Analysis phase

When the first data had been delivered to IFAU, the project transitioned to an analysis phase. This phase started at the end of 2016 and continued during 2017. In June 2017, another workshop was held with the external reviewers to receive their feedback on the project. In October 2017, a research conference was held in Stockholm to get additional feedback from experts within academia. A final project report was submitted to the European Commission in January 2018. Thereafter, the work with the scientific report continued. A working paper was published at the PES and at IFAU in November 2019 (Cheung et al., 2019).

3 The treatments

The intervention involved three different types of treatment; (1) individual face-to-face meetings with a case worker, (2) individual distance meetings with a case worker via telephone or a video link, and (3) group meetings gathering 10-15 job seekers, lead by one or two case workers. The idea was to have mandatory meetings but this was in practice difficult as the case workers within the Swedish PES had the usual (full) discretion in assigning job seekers to meetings. The details of each meeting type is outlined in this section.

3.1 Individual face-to-face meetings

The individual face-to-face meetings took place during the first three months of an unemployment spell. The goal was to summon job seekers to three extra meetings in addition to the ordinary activities during the first three months of unemployment. The meetings were supposed to last for roughly 30 minutes, but could vary in time from ten minutes to one hour. Throughout the experiment, the case workers had full discretion to decide on the content of the meetings based on the job seeker's needs. If the case workers saw any need for a deeper investigation, they should hand over the the job seeker in question to a specialist.

3.2 Distance meetings

The distance meetings were similar to the face-to-face meetings in many respects. There should be three extra meetings during the first three months of an unemployment spell. The meetings lasted 10–60 minutes, and again the case workers were free to decide on the content of the meetings. However, the distance meetings were held online, using a video link, or via telephone for the job seekers who did not have access to a computer or an electronical identification (e-ID). Importantly, the case workers who managed the distance meetings had the same authority to take decisions as case workers meeting with job seekers at the PES office. The basic idea with offering distance meetings is that this could create greater flexibility, both for the case workers and for the job seekers. Arguably, meeting on distance is less costly for job seekers, especially for those who must travel far to reach a PES office. To make sure that the procedure for the distance meetings met the legal requirements, the job seekers accessed the video link using e-ID and a code identifying the specific meeting. For the telephone meetings, the case worker used a set of questions to verify the job seeker's identity.

The software that was used for the online meetings provided possibilities to chat, manage a video call, and browse through the job seeker's personal job search website (the so-called *My Pages*). The present study can be seen as a pilot for using the software at the regular local PES offices. Before our project, only specialized Customer Service PES offices had tested the software.

3.3 Group meetings

The group meetings followed a concept and methodology called *New Job (Nytt Jobb)*.[4] The basic idea was that 10–15 job seekers and one or two case workers would meet on five different occasions, where each occasion focused on a specific topic. The seminar series lasted for roughly two weeks and its content is illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1 Group meeting seminars

Seminar 1	Seminar 2	Seminar 3	Seminar 4	Seminar 5
CV and cover letter	Networking and interview training	Elevator pitch presentation	How to write a profiled application	More on specific topics and repetition

After two weeks of seminars the job seekers were encouraged to meet and support each other in the continued job search process. The job seekers were supposed to form smaller units, so called operative teams, which would keep daily contact. The operative teams were also responsible for setting up their own weekly planning and to contact their case worker once every week. Job seekers who were assigned to participate in the group meetings participated in the activities for a maximum of two months.

3.4 Summons to extra meetings

Case workers typically summoned job seekers to the extra meetings by sending an e-mail. The exact phrasing in the summons varied between the different meeting types. The case workers who handled the group meetings used a standardized format that informed the job seeker about all the five upcoming seminars, including a description of the objective and content of the seminars. In the summons to distance meetings, practical information was provided on how the web meeting would take place and what the job seeker needed to access the meeting (e.g., e-ID). With few exceptions, these summons informed the job seeker that (s)he during three months would receive more frequent contact with a case worker and provided information about the purpose and content of the meetings. Summons to face-to-face meetings were formulated by the case workers themselves and, hence, differed both between case workers and offices.

3.5 Differences in PES services between treated and non-treated

The treated job seekers were supposed to be summoned to the three meetings *in addition* to the ordinary service provided to all job seekers. During the implementation phase, the ordinary service that the PES offered was rather limited. Most job seekers typically met her or his case worker

[4] The working method is a refinement of "Right Job", described in Gartell (2013).

once or twice during the first 90 days of unemployment. The extra meetings in the randomized trial more than doubled the meeting frequency during the first quarter of the unemployment spell (the number of meetings roughly increased from 2 to 5). The first contact occurred in direct connection to the registration, in the form of an initial planning meeting. Everyone who registered at the PES was summoned to this initial meeting.[5] During the planning meeting, the case worker usually tries to (1) give information about the unemployment insurance, (2) identify the amount of support the job seeker needed, (3) verify the job seeker's qualifications, (4) register information about the job seeker to facilitate job matching (previous experience, desired professions etc.), and (5) prepare an individual action plan.

During the first period of unemployment, job seekers were, to a high degree, expected to take own responsibility for their job search activities. Search effort was mainly managed through monthly mandatory activity reports (submitted either online or manually).

4 Target group

One important goal of the project was to produce results that would be valid for a broad category of job seekers. To achieve high external validity, a general target group was defined including all newly registered job seekers, without any recent history of unemployment. However, job seekers who were already covered by other intensive programs, such as the program for newly arrived immigrants (*Etableringsuppdraget),* or those coming directly from the Swedish Social Insurance Agency (*Försäkringskassan)* were excluded.[6]

The definition of the target group during the first wave of the trial (Spring 2015) included all newly registered unemployed except those that met at least one of the following criteria:

- Job seekers with past unemployment history or subsidized employment (including New Start Jobs) at any point in time during the three months preceding the day of registration.
- Job seekers who participated in activities for newly arrived immigrants (the so called Etableringsuppdraget) or were registered in a rehabilitation program.
- Job seekers with protected identity or lacking a social security number.

During the second wave of the trial in Fall 2015, the following criterion was added:

- Job seekers aged 16–24 at offices participating in the project *Ung framtid*.

[5] In October 2015 Arbetsförmedlingen introduced the possibility for job seekers to register and book a planning meeting online. See the Public Employment Service's Annual Report 2015 (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2015).
[6] The main reason for excluding these groups was that they already received more intense job search assistance from the PES.

This criterion had to do with another project, *Ung framtid*, running at the same time within the PES, and some of the chosen offices were also chosen to participate in *Ung framtid*.[7]

Job seekers who were expected to start a new job within 30 days were supposed to be included in the target group but did not have to be summoned to the extra meetings. The reason for the latter was that it would be hard to motivate intensified assistance in the form of extra meetings for job seekers who already had a new job underway. These job seekers were, however, not included in the target group during the first wave of the project, and were therefore not randomized. During the second wave, the instructions emphasized that these job seekers should be randomized. For a job seeker to be exempted from the extra meetings, (s)he had to present an employment contract showing a new job within 30 days from the registration day. The reason for this adjustment was that the offices had interpreted the exclusion criterion differently during the first wave. Some offices excluded all job seekers stating that they had a new job underway, while others only excluded those who could verify this with an employment contract.

4.1 Target group compared to other registered job seekers

Comparing the target group to the pool of registered job seekers within the 72 PES offices (excluding the target group) is a way to understand the extent to which the results from the project can be generalized.

Table 2 shows the characteristics of the target group (including both the treated and the non-treated in the experiment) and the non-target group in the 72 participating offices during the trial. The average characteristics of the two groups can be expected to differ for two reasons. First, as discussed above, only a part of the inflow of new job seekers was sampled into the target group. The excluded groups can generally be expected to have a weaker attachment to the labor market. Second, persons already in the stock of unemployed were excluded. By construction, these had longer unemployment durations than the target group. Longer unemployment durations typically signal personal characteristics that are less valued in the labor market. Hence, some systematic differences between job seekers in the target and the non-target groups are expected, where persons in the target group are expected to have characteristics that signal closer attachment to the labor market. This is indeed what is seen in Table 2: the target group was positively selected with shorter unemployment history, fewer previous spells in labor market programs and fewer

[7] The *Ung framtid* project was partially financed by the European Social Fund and was implemented in two stages between September 2014 and June 2018. The aim of the *Ung framtid* project was to decrease youth unemployment in certain areas of Sweden by giving young job seekers (aged 16–24) intensified job search assistance. The second stage of *Ung framtid* coincided with the second period (fall 2015) of this study. Due to this, young job seekers had to be excluded during fall 2015 at some of the 36 participating offices in this study. In total, twelve offices were affected; four offices with group meetings, two offices with distance meetings and six offices with individual face-to-face meetings.

job seekers with low education. Job seekers in the target group were also to a higher degree assessed by case workers as matchable compared to the non-target group.[8] In accordance with the exclusion restrictions, the target group also had a lower share of disabled and born outside west Europe.

Table 2 Characteristics of the target group compared to the non-target group, fall and spring 2015

	(1)	(2)
Variables	**Popuation (excl. target group)**	**Target group**
Age	34.671	33.463
Male	0.537	0.548
Unemployed benefits	0.615	0.637
Disabled	0.203	0.053
Matchable	0.801	0.864
Less than high school	0.271	0.224
High school	0.481	0.489
College	0.248	0.287
Born in Sweden	0.608	0.655
Born in the nordic countries	0.014	0.015
Born in west Europe	0.027	0.035
Born outside west Europe	0.350	0.295
Unemployment days t-1	66.366	30.776
Unemployment days t-2	94.719	67.921
Unemployment days t-3	89.609	70.735
Unemployment days t-4	79.405	64.963
Unemployment spells t-1	0.855	0.440
Unemployment spells t-2	1.029	0.791
Unemployment spells t-3	0.949	0.812
Unemployment spells t-4	0.821	0.711
Labor market educ. spells, last 4 yrs	0.037	0.022
Preparatory educ. spells, last 4 yrs	0.068	0.047
Labor market training spells, last 4 yrs	0.053	0.029
Subs. empl. spells, last 4 yrs	0.129	0.106
Observations	**348,595**	**57,778**

Next, Table 3 presents the number of observations after imposing each of the target group restrictions listed above. Evidently, the restriction that had the largest impact was the restriction that the target group should consist of unemployed job seekers. A majority of the job seekers that were dropped at this stage were classified as category 14, which means they were hindered to take a job (mostly due to sickness or parental leave).[9] Job seekers who were registered but already had a part-time/temporary job, worked by the hour or were job-changers were also excluded at this

[8] Case workers subjectively assess and categorize job seekers as "matchable" if they are ready to take a job today, and as "non-matchable" if they, for example due to lack of basic qualifications or illness, for the moment are not ready to take a job.

[9] These are based on a yearly figure of 2015 from PES on the total population of newly registered job seekers, not only the 72 offices in this study.

stage.[10] The second largest group that was excluded was job seekers with unemployment history during the past three months. Next, some job seekers were dropped as a consequence of being registered in a program for newly arrived immigrants. This had a small but notable impact on the number of observations. Finally, a very small number of job seekers were dropped because they were registered in a rehabilitation program. After the imposition of all restrictions, the target group consisted of just below 56 percent of all newly registered job seekers.

Table 3 The population newly registered of job seekers in the 72 offices and number of observations after different restriction imposed

Restrictions	No of job seekers Spring 2015	% of all	No of job seekers Fall 2015	% of all
All newly registered registered job seekers at PES	39,868	100	64,138	100
Coded as unemployed at registration[11]	26,704	70.0	42,663	66.5
No past unemployed history in the last 95 days	23,479	58.9	37,734	58.8
Not registered in a program for newly arrived immigrants	22,007	55.2	35,796	55.8
Not registered in a rehabilitation program	22,001	55.2	35,777	55.8
Target group	**22,001**	**55.2**	**35,777**	**55.8**

5 Experimental design

The study had two major objectives. The first objective was to investigate whether treatment had any impact on treated job seekers and the second objective was to investigate whether the intervention would give rise to displacement effects. To identify these effects, a random assignment at two levels was adopted.

In a first stage, a sample of 72 offices was selected from 173 PES offices in Sweden, based on a selection rule described in section 5.1 below. The offices were of varying sizes and were located across Sweden to increase geographical dispersion. A subset of 36 offices was randomly selected from the 72 offices to take an active part in the study. This is further described in section 5.2. In short, these offices were divided into three equally large groups: 12 offices that would use individual face-to-face meetings, 12 that would use distance meetings, and 12 that would use group meetings. The remaining 36 offices would also play an important role in the study, as control offices, which will be described more below.

[10] They have category 21 part-time unemployment, 22 employed by the hour, 31 temporary employed and 41 job-changers. These are also based on yearly figures 2015 from PES.

[11] All job seekers that are not coded as 11, which is the internal PES code for being unemployed, at the registration day are excluded here. Job seekers coded as 11 at their registration day but switching code after 7 days or are entering a job guarantee program are also excluded here. This is due to a technicality of PES's system in which job seekers that are being re-registered and entering a job guarantee program are automatically coded as 11 when registered in the system. Then they switch, normally within 14 days, to another code for job guarantee program.

In a second stage, individuals in the target population were randomly selected to either a control or a treatment group within each active office. This means that within each active office, there were both treated and non-treated job seekers. In total, 14,075 individuals were sampled to the treatment group and 12,463 individuals to the control group in the active offices. The non-treated job seekers should receive the usual service provided by the PES (see section 3.5 above).

The idea of randomizing over offices was to use the 36 non-active offices as a reference to ensure that active and non-active offices had equal characteristics on average. Then displacement effects could be identified by comparing outcomes across job seekers from the control group (in the active offices) and job seekers in the non-active offices. If the job seekers in the control group performed worse than those in the non-active offices, the conclusion would be that the intervention had created displacement.

5.1 Office sample and external validity

The project team wanted to have as many offices as possible in the study. However, due to budget restrictions, 72 was the maximum number of offices that could be included. A large number of offices was desirable from an analytical perspective as the chances to detect any type of heterogeneity, for example across regions, as well as any potential displacement effects would be larger. However, from an organizational and practical view, managing, monitoring and supporting such large number of offices was challenging. As described in later sections, this challenge affected the randomization.

The selection of the 72 offices was based on a number of rules. First, offices with an inflow of less than 20 new job seekers per month (as measured in March–May the year before the program was implemented) were excluded because it would be impossible to implement group meetings with too small an inflow.[12] Second, to reduce the risk of spillover, not more than one office from the same local labor market would be included (see 5.1.2 below). Third, given the selection of offices achieved by applying the first two criteria, we added a number of offices to achieve regional balance and a high external validity, i.e., the extent to which the results can be generalized.

5.1.1 Regional representation

One goal when choosing the local offices was to have a balanced regional representation of the offices in Sweden. To achieve this, the local offices (in the choice set) were grouped according to Statistics Sweden's definition of H-regions. Six H-regions were grouped into three broad catego-

[12] We also excluded small offices with a high risk of being closed down from the choice set.

ries: i) Metropolitan areas: H1, H2 (Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö), ii) Medium-sized cities: H3 and H4, and iii) Rural areas: H5 and H6.

Table 4 presents the target population of offices and the sample of 72 selected offices. Comparing the average monthly inflow (column 5) of job seekers, one can see that the target population has a lower average (112) than the 72 selected offices (160). The explanation for this is that, for each of the three types of regions, offices with the smallest inflow were deliberately excluded. A second explanation (see columns 1 and 2) is that offices in regions H3 and H4 (medium-sized cities) were slightly oversampled.[13]

Table 4 Target population and the final set of offices

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Target population	**No. of offices**	**Percent**	**Inflow**	**Percent**	**Average inflow per office**
Metropolis	47	27%	8,087	42%	172
Medium-sized city	79	46%	9,488	49%	120
Rural areas	47	27%	1,805	9%	38
Total	173	100%	19,380	100%	112
Sample (72 offices)	**No. of offices**	**Percent**	**Inflow**	**Percent**	**Average inflow per office**
Metropolis	18	25%	4,287	37%	238
Medium-sized city	36	50%	5,884	51%	163
Rural areas	18	25%	1,348	12%	75
Total	72	100%	11,519	100%	160

5.1.2 Local labor markets

To study displacement, by exploiting the fact that job seekers across 36 active and 36 non-active offices can be compared, one needs to assume that there are no spillover effects across offices. In particular, any spillover of the direct treatment effect between the active and the non-active offices will lead to bias when estimating displacement.

Spillover is more likely to exist between offices that are located close to each other. Hence, a first rule that was used to reduce the risk of spillover was to include only one office per local labor market in Sweden. This worked fine for the rural and medium-sized city and areas. However, each one of the three metropolitan areas (Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö) is a separate local labor market. To be able to include more than one office from each metropolitan area, additional rules were used. One way to address the issue with spillover was to separate offices based on geographical proximity, e.g., choose one office in the northern part of the local labor market, and one in the southern part. Offices that worked with very different target groups (e.g., health care

[13] This was done to ensure that all offices in a sixfold would be of the same type.

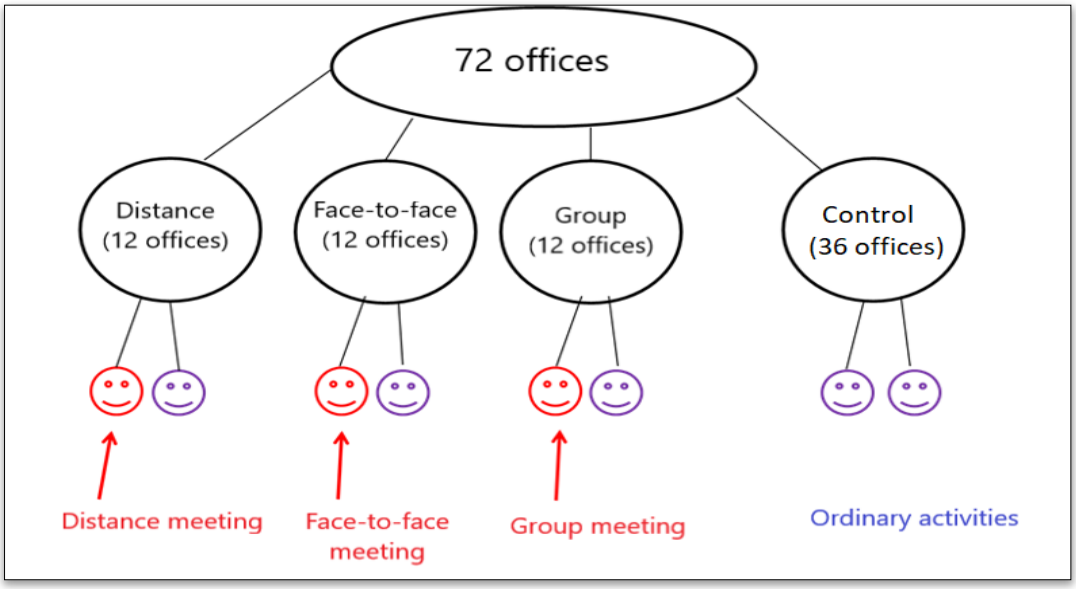
vs. engineering) were also identified, assuming that the job seekers at the different offices did not compete for the same jobs.

The three inclusion criteria narrowed down the number of potential offices. For the regions Rural areas and Medium-sized cities, all the potential offices had to be chosen to achieve 18 and 36 offices respectively. In the Metropolis region, the number of potential offices was higher than 18 and the selection of offices was made according to the strategy mentioned above. The next section explains how the 72 selected offices were divided into smaller units, so called sixfolds, sharing the same conditions.

5.2 Randomization of offices

Having decided on a final sample of 72 offices, a randomization procedure at the office level was carried out. 36 of the 72 offices were randomly assigned an active role in the study, and the remaining 36 offices constituted non-active control offices. The 36 active offices were assigned to work with either individual face-to-face meetings (12 offices), distance meetings (12 offices), or group meetings (12 offices). The set-up is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Illustration of the randomization at different levels



Note: Red figures indicate the proportion of job seekers that receive more frequent meetings in addition to ordinary activities depending on if the office was selected to work with distance meetings, face-to-face individual meetings or group meetings. Purple figures indicate the proportion of job seekers in the office who get to take part in ordinary activities. The job seekers in the 36 control offices only take part in ordinary activities.

5.2.1 Creating sixfolds before randomization

It was important that the four subgroups (one active group for each type of treatment and one non-active, see Figure 1) were as similar to each other as possible. Based on a model developed by the PES, we divided the offices into sixfolds with similar economic and demographic conditions.

Within each strata, we then randomized each office into different categories: one office was assigned face-to-face meetings, one distance meetings, one group meetings, and the remaining three constituted non-active offices. In total, this gave 12 offices per meeting format and 36 non-active offices that continued with the baseline services offered to all job seekers. Hence, a sixfold would contain six offices with similar conditions. At the same time, the offices in a given cluster would belong to different local labor markets (except for the metropolitan areas). Hence, the offices in a sixfold were chosen to be as similar to each other as possible (same cluster), but they could not be located in the same labor market (due to the risk of spillover). We also constructed the sixfolds such that three sixfolds were in the metropolitan areas, six in the medium-sized city areas, and three in the rural areas (see Table 5).

Table 5 Distribution of sixfolds in different regions

	No. of offices	No. sixfolds
Metropolitan areas	18	3
Medium-sized city	36	6
Rural areas	18	3
Total	72	12

5.2.2 Random assignment of the type of meeting

Each office within a sixfold was randomized to one of the four subgroups. One office was assigned to work with individual face-to-face meetings (I), one was assigned to group meetings (G), one was assigned to distance meetings (D), and the remaining three offices were assigned to be non-active control offices (K) that would only work with usual services as described in section 2. For the three active offices (I, G and D) the intensity of the treatment, i.e., the proportion of the inflow assigned to the treatment group, was randomized to either 50 or 80 percent, and was represented in the same sixfold in order to compare the degree of displacement.[14] Figure 2 illustrates the six different combinations (P1–P6) used:

Figure 2 Illustration of the six different combinations used in randomization

$$P1=\{K, K, K, I^{80}, D^{50}, G^{80}\}$$
$$P2=\{K, K, K, I^{80}, D^{50}, G^{50}\}$$
$$P3=\{K, K, K, I^{80}, D^{80}, G^{50}\}$$
$$P4=\{K, K, K, I^{50}, D^{80}, G^{50}\}$$
$$P5=\{K, K, K, I^{50}, D^{80}, G^{80}\}$$
$$P6=\{K, K, K, I^{50}, D^{50}, G^{80}\}$$

[14] Having different proportions of treated at different offices was a way to contribute to a better identification of displacement effects. The reason for this is that the size of the displacement effect (in the presence of such effects) should depend on the fraction of treated individuals in a local labor market, which is easily seen by considering the possible size of displacement (the effect on job-finding for the non-treated) with only one individual treated compared to a situation where almost everyone gets the extra treatment. However, during the second wave of the implementation, the proportion of treated job-seekers was set to 50% for all active offices. The main reason was that not all offices assigned to treat 80 percent could summon all the treated to meetings due to a high work load.

Thus, in the first step of the randomization process, the combinations of P1–P6 were randomly allocated to the different sixfolds. Each combination was drawn twice. In the second step, the six treatment alternatives in the drawn combination were randomly allocated to the six offices within each sixfold.

To give an example, a sixfold that consisted of the following six offices {A, B, C, D, E, F}, could be randomly assigned to the following combination P3={0, 0, 0, I80, D80, G50}. This means that two offices within the sixfold, say office D and E, would be randomly assigned to work with individual face-to-face meetings (I) and distance meetings (D), and would allocate 80 percent of their inflow to treatment. A third office, say office F, would be randomly assigned to work with group meetings (G) and would allocate 50 percent of the inflow to treatment. Finally, the remaining three offices (A, B and C) would be randomly assigned to become non-active control offices.

The 50 and 80 percent treatment shares were used during the first wave. During the second wave, the treatment intensity was set to 50 percent for all offices for practical reasons.

5.3 Randomization of job seekers

Participating job seekers were selected from the inflow at the 36 active offices during two periods in 2015: March 9–May 31 and August 17–November 17. The randomization was based on the birth date of each job seeker and should be applied to all job seekers in the target group. For reasons discussed below, the randomization tool was not applied to all job seekers in the target group. From now on we use "randomize" to indicate that the tool was used.[15]

5.3.1 Randomization procedure during the first wave

During the first wave in spring 2015, all case workers within an active local office were responsible for randomizing their given share of job seekers to the treatment group. The instruction given to the active offices was to randomize all job seekers belonging to the target group with a web-based tool when they were registered at the local office reception (the so-called Direktservice). Hence, all case workers who at some point in time worked at the reception had the responsibility to randomize. Note that this "randomization" using the web-based tool only revealed the predetermined treatment status based on the date of of birth.

Case workers were then instructed to summon treated job seekers to the extra meetings. Job seekers randomized to the control group should receive the usual job search assistance given to newly unemployed (see section 2).

[15] In our analysis of the data from the experiment, our main alternative is an estimate of the intention to treat (ITT) based on knowledge of who should have been randomized and the associated treatment status.

The randomization was based on the birth date of a job seeker. The assignment to treatment was shown on the screen directly after the case worker had registered the birth date in the web-based tool. Each participating office had a unique link to the tool, enabling the project team to monitor the number of randomized job seekers at each office.

Statistics from the web-based tool used to monitor the offices showed that far from every job seeker in the target group was randomized. In addition, the share that was randomized varied substantially across the different offices (from around 20 to around 70 percent).[16] There were several reasons why the randomization at the local offices did not turn out as planned.

First, one reason had to do with the lack of communication and time pressure. The idea was that the contact persons should pass on the information from the project team to the rest of the case workers working at their office. However, the other case workers received little training and information about the randomization procedure.[17] There were also case workers who did not understand the purpose of randomizing job seekers, especially when the outcome was a direct contrast to the case workers' own judgement and assessment of the job seeker's need. At several of the local offices, the work load was very high and the registration procedure already involved many steps to go through. This had the effect that many case workers forgot or did not prioritize to conduct the randomization procedure. However, in some local offices the contact persons did all the randomization. These offices had a higher share of randomized job seekers. An important lesson from the spring wave was to avoid having the randomization done by a large number of case workers at the local office reception.

Second, when the project started in the spring it got some negative publicity in Swedish media. It was questioned whether the PES actually had the right to conduct an intervention where job seekers were selected to participate in a program based on randomization. Some local offices were affected by the reporting and stopped assigning new job seekers to the project for a short period. The randomization continued once the project team had informed the offices that the PES had the legal right to conduct the study.

Third, at two of the largest participating offices, the work load for the case workers was too high. To enable these two offices to stay in the project, an agreement was made between the project management and the local offices to stop randomization for short periods of time during the Spring.

Fourth, the case worker could, based on an individual assessment of the job seeker, conclude that he or she would not benefit from the extra meetings (see 5.3.4 below). These job seekers were supposed to be randomized but did not have to be called to meetings. As this procedure was not

[16] Note that the share of job seekers that were randomized is set to 0 at the two offices where project activity was not conducted at the largest office but instead at another local office in the same region. See 5.3.3 below.
[17] A few case workers also stated that the guidelines that had been distributed were too long and complicated.

clearly defined in the guidelines during the first wave, some case workers did not randomize job seekers that they assessed would not benefit from the extra meetings.

5.3.2 A modified randomization procedure during the second wave

To address the low share of randomized job seekers, the randomization procedure was modified during the second wave of the project. The central project team took over the control of the randomization. Instead of having various case workers doing the randomization at the customer reception, the team compiled weakly office lists of all newly registered job seekers being randomly assigned (based on their birth date) to the treatment group. These lists were provided to the contact persons at the local offices who were given the responsibility to summon job seekers to the extra meetings. For security reasons, only the project team and the contact persons at the respective offices had access to these lists. The lists were communicated to the local offices using secure digital folders on shared servers. The contact persons had the main responsibility for communicating the lists every new week to their colleagues, and that listed job seekers were being summoned to the meetings. The contact persons were encouraged to use the lists as an assisting administration tool and could thereby receive direct feedback from the project team. The project team could also use the lists as a monitoring tool to discuss any deviations from the project protocol in the monthly follow-up meetings with the contact persons.

Two offices, however, continued the same way as they had done during the first wave, i.e., to use the web-based tool at the office reception when randomizing the job seekers. They believed it was the best way to implement the project in their office. At these offices, the contact persons were given the responsibility to verify that the job seekers in the target group were in fact randomized. The majority of the offices summoned job seekers entirely based on the lists prepared by the project team.

5.3.3 Office deviations

The only way the offices could be identified in the PES registers was through so called office codes. The office code comprised an organizational unit which sometimes consisted of several physical offices (of varying size). Notably, when the offices were randomized to active and non-active offices, these codes were used. If the office code covered more than one physical office, the largest office within that code was chosen for the study.

For the majority of offices, the chosen office was the same as the office actually implementing the extra meetings. However, a number of offices themselves chose to deviate from these instructions. At two of these offices, activities took place at more physical offices than just the largest chosen (all belonging to the same office code). In another two offices, the largest office was replaced by another local office belonging to the same office code.

5.3.4 Job seekers excluded from randomization

All job seekers belonging to the target group were supposed to be randomized.[18] Case workers could, however, make a labor market assessment and judgement of the job seeker's ability to benefit from the extra meetings. According to the case workers of group meetings, the "Nytt Jobb" methodology required participants to have a sufficient level of Swedish language proficiency to be able to benefit from these meetings. According to the protocol, job seekers belonging to the target group were supposed to be randomized. Subsequently, the case worker could make an assessment whether the job seeker was unable to take advantage of the meeting, and be exempt from being summoned to the meeting. However, as this was not clearly defined in the guidelines to case workers, many of the case workers made an assessment of the job seeker's ability already before the randomization. A large share of job seekers that the case workers perceived as not being able to take advantage of the group meetings was thus not randomized in the first wave. In the second wave, the inclusion criteria emphasized that all job seekers in the target group should first be randomized even though they did not have to attend the meetings and then be assessed by the case worker.

5.4 Balance test of the two-level randomization

The randomization procedure is supposed to generate groups of individuals who are similar in all relevant dimensions. Table 6 presents descriptive statistics on a number of observed characteristics for the job seekers at the 72 offices. The randomized treatment assignment was based on the date of birth for all job seekers. Columns 1 and 2 present the group averages for the treated and the non-treated job seekers at the active offices and column 3 for job seekers at non-active offices.[19] The p-values for the test of equality between groups (column 4 between treated and non-treated and column 5 for active and non-active offices) show no significant differences between the treated and the non-treated job seekers at the active office, or across the active and non-active offices. This suggests that the randomization worked properly both within and across offices.

[18] Excluding job seekers before randomization is not a problem for the estimations but is one of the explanations why the share of randomized in the target group was lower than 100 percent.
[19] Note that treated in this context is defined as being randomized to treatment according to the protocol of the trial.

Table 6 Balancing test of treated and non-treated at active offices and between active and non-active offices

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Variables	**Treated T**	**Non-treated C**	**Non-active NA**	**p-val, diff T-C**	**p-val, diff TC-NA**
Age	33.333	33.391	33.539	0.707	0.637
Male	0.542	0.539	0.555	0.571	0.186
Unemployment benefits	0.642	0.638	0.634	0.546	0.747
Disabled	0.052	0.052	0.054	0.931	0.602
Matchable	0.868	0.862	0.864	0.117	0.936
Less than high school	0.224	0.223	0.225	0.873	0.878
High school	0.491	0.493	0.486	0.833	0.690
College	0.285	0.285	0.289	0.932	0.844
Born in Sweden	0.678	0.667	0.641	0.059	0.399
Born in the nordic countries	0.013	0.015	0.015	0.197	0.547
Born in west Europe	0.036	0.034	0.036	0.256	0.857
Born outside west Europe	0.273	0.284	0.308	0.035	0.385
Unemployment days t-1	30.657	30.425	30.980	0.767	0.777
Unemployment days t-2	67.422	68.493	68.253	0.449	0.914
Unemployment days t-3	69.570	71.826	71.218	0.133	0.868
Unemployment days t-4	63.822	63.678	66.135	0.921	0.438
Unemployment spells t-1	0.431	0.440	0.442	0.427	0.793
Unemployment spells t-2	0.789	0.800	0.793	0.518	0.972
Unemployment spells t-3	0.806	0.815	0.819	0.630	0.840
Unemployment spells t-4	0.706	0.721	0.716	0.397	0.960
Labor market educ. spells, last 4 yrs	0.024	0.020	0.022	0.172	0.965
Preparatory educ. spells, last 4 yrs	0.048	0.047	0.047	0.869	0.983
Labor market training spells, last 4 yrs	0.027	0.030	0.031	0.389	0.370
Subs. empl. spells, last 4 yrs	0.106	0.108	0.106	0.711	0.920
Observations	**14,075**	**12,463**	**31,240**	**26,538**	**57,778**

5.5 Participation rates

We define the participation rate as the number of actually randomized job seekers of all eligible job seekers in the target group to be randomized. The number of randomized job seekers and the participation rate are shown in Table 7. Overall, the participation rate was 62 percent during the two waves of the project. This means that 38 percent of job seekers in the target group were not randomized, and the majority of this group belonged to the first wave of the project. The participation rate was 37 percent during the first wave and 77 percent during the second wave. The main reasons why job seekers in the target group were not randomized were the following:

1. The participation rate is based on job seekers at the offices that were chosen in the randomization procedure, i.e., the largest office within the chosen region. Deviations from this protocol therefore imply zero randomized job seekers in the two offices where the extra meetings took place at other offices than the largest (see 5.3.3 above). This decreased the participation rate during both waves of the project.

2. As noted in section 5.3.1, the randomization by case workers in the local office reception during the first wave did not work out as expected, resulting in a low number of randomized job seekers during spring 2015. During the second wave, the randomization procedure was handled by the central project group.

3. As noted in section 4, job seekers starting a new job within 30 days were not part of the target group during the first wave of the project. This information was given directly from job seekers to case workers during their first meeting. As we do not have access to these data, we cannot identify and exclude these job seekers in our register data, and these job-seekers will therefore show up as job seekers supposed to have been randomized. The same problem applies to job seekers that case workers perceived would not benefit from the meetings, for example job seekers with very low proficiency in Swedish in offices providing the group meetings. The dropout due to this factor was probably not extensive as the participation rate for group meetings did not differ substantially from face-to-face meetings (see Table 7).

4. During the first wave, all distance meetings required that job seekers had access to a computer, an internet connection, and an e-ID to log in. The randomization tool was set up to randomize all job seekers in the target group. However, sometimes only job seekers who actually met the requirements and could take part in the meetings were randomized. In the second wave of the project, distance meetings were also conducted by telephone and not only job seekers having appropriate internet access were randomized and could participate in meetings. Results presented in Table 7 show that distance meetings had the lowest participation rate during Spring, only 27 percent compared to 39 and 42 percent for group and face-to-face meetings respectively. In the Fall period, distance meetings had the highest participation rate.

5. In the second wave, the randomization procedure was handled by the central project group. Apart from the office deviations mentioned above, this implies that all job seekers belonging to the target group should have been randomized. However, a problem during the implementation of the project was that the central project group had limited access to data, making it difficult to define the target group accurately. Hence, as the theoretical target group deviated from the one specified during the implementation, a number of theoretically eligible job seekers were not randomized. This gave rise to a drop in the participation rate.

Table 7 Participation rates

	Spring 2015	Fall 2015	Total
All			
No. of eligable job seekers in target group to be randomized	10,074	16,464	26,538
No. of actually randomized job seekers	3,732	12,679	16,411
Participation rate (share actual randomized)	37%	77%	62%
Face-to-face			
No. of eligable job seekers in target group to be randomized	4,001	6,566	10,567
No. of actually randomized job seekers	1,708	4,646	6,354
Participation rate (share actual randomized)	43%	71%	60%
Distance meetings			
No. of eligable job seekers in target group to be randomized	3,073	5,186	8,259
No. of actually randomized job seekers	844	4,240	5,084
Participation rate (share actual randomized)	27%	82%	62%
Group meetings			
No. of eligable job seekers in target group to be randomized	3,000	4,712	7,712
No. of actually randomized job seekers	1,180	3,793	4,973
Participation rate (share actual randomized)	39%	80%	64%

In summary, even though there are some factors on the level of the job seeker that may explain the dropout from randomization, the major explanations for the low participation rate are on the level of the office and the case worker. This suggests that the characteristics of the job seekers actually randomized should not differ substantially from the target group as a whole. This is confirmed by Table 8 showing similar descriptive statistics for the target group (column 1) as for those in the target group who were actually randomized (column 2).[20] Table 8 also shows sample statistics for job seekers randomized to treatment who also attended at least one meeting (column 3). This is the group that the take-up rate calculation is based on (see more about this in the next section).

[20] The table shows sample statistics for the treatment group (according to their date of birth). Thus, column 1 shows the full treatment group, column 2 those in the treatment group that were randomized and column 3 the treated who attended at least one extra meeting.

Table 8 Sample statistics for the target group, those randomized and those who attended at least on extra meeting

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Variables	**Target group**	**Randomized**	**Attended at least one extra meeting**
Age	33.33	34.34	35.37
Male	0.542	0.538	0.544
Unemployment benefits	0.642	0.692	0.760
Disabled	0.052	0.048	0.035
Matchable	0.868	0.884	0.920
Less than high school	0.224	0.206	0.172
High school	0.491	0.494	0.512
College	0.285	0.300	0.316
Born in Sweden	0.678	0.700	0.716
Born in the nordic countries	0.013	0.013	0.015
Born in west Europe	0.036	0.036	0.033
Born outside west Europe	0.273	0.251	0.236
Unemployment days t-1	30.66	31.30	31.78
Unemployment days t-2	67.42	69.16	70.44
Unemployment days t-3	69.57	73.08	76.43
Unemployment days t-4	63.82	67.95	73.18
Unemployment spells t-1	0.431	0.419	0.400
Unemployment spells t-2	0.789	0.787	0.779
Unemployment spells t-3	0.806	0.830	0.833
Unemployment spells t-4	0.706	0.752	0.793
Labor market educ. spells, last 4 yrs	0.024	0.025	0.029
Preparatory educ. spells, last 4 yrs	0.048	0.047	0.042
Labor market training spells, last 4 yrs	0.027	0.027	0.027
Subs. empl. spells, last 4 yrs	0.106	0.122	0.142
Observations	**14,075**	**8,358**	**3,183**

6 Take-up and extra meetings

The take-up rate is defined as the share of job seekers who attended at least one extra meeting among the job seekers randomly selected for treatment. The calculation of the take-up rate is based on the treated target population, i.e., on the job seekers that were supposed to have been randomly selected to treatment. As described in section 5, far from all eligible job seekers were randomized and the participation rate was 62 percent (37 percent and 77 percent respectively during the first and second wave). This implies that the maximum take-up rate, given that all job seekers who actually were randomly selected for extra meetings attended at least one meeting, is 62 percent.

Table 9 presents the take-up rates for all job seekers and for job seekers in each treatment group. There were in total 3 183 job seekers receiving the intended treatment, i.e., attended at

least one meeting/seminar, giving an average take-up rate of 23 percent.[21] Data presented also show that the take-up rate was 15 percent for the spring period and 28 percent during the fall. In total, the take-up rate was similar for the face-to-face and distance meetings, 26 and 24 percent respectively. Take-up for group meetings was lower at 17 percent. Take-up rates for face-to-face meetings were quite similar for both waves but differed substantially for distance meetings and group meetings (see section 6.1 for more information).

Table 9 Take-up rates

	Spring 2015	Fall 2015	Total
All			
No. of job seekers belonging to the treatment group	6,289	7,786	14,075
No. of actually treated job seekers[22]	974	2,209	3183
Take up (share of actually treated)	15%	28%	23%
Face-to-face			
No. of job seekers belonging to the treatment group	2,374	2,734	5,108
No. of actually treated job seekers	569	768	1337
Take-up (share of actually treated)	24%	28%	26%
Distance meetings			
No. of job seekers belonging to the treatment group	1,937	2,650	4,587
No. of actually treated job seekers	155	963	1118
Take-up (share of actually treated)	8%	36%	24%
Group meetings			
No. of job seekers belonging to the treatment group	1,978	2,402	4,380
No. of actually treated job seekers	250	478	728
Take-up (share of actually treated)	13%	20%	17%

Table 10 shows that take-up rates were similar for men and women, at 23 percent. About 45 percent of the treatment group were women. This mirrors the share of females in the target group.

Table 10 Take-up rates for women and men

	Spring 2015	Fall 2015	Total
Women			
No of job seekers belonging to the treatment group	2,871	3,538	6,409
No of actually treated job seekers	434	1,011	1,445
Take up (share of actual treated)	15%	29%	23%
Men			
No of job seekers belonging to the treatment group	3,418	4,248	7,666
No of actually treated job seekers	540	1,198	1,738
Take up (share of actual treated)	16%	28%	23%

[21] A low take-up reduces statistical power and makes it more difficult to detect if our treatment had an effect. Another issue is that, if we find an effect, a low take-up makes it more difficult to generalize it to the target group.
[22] We define "actually treated" as having attended at least one program meeting.

6.1 Factors explaining the take-up

As noted above, 23 percent of the job seekers in the treatment group attended at least one meeting. Take-up also differed between the three types of meetings as well as between the two waves. We now discuss explanations to the take-up rate.

6.1.1 Factors attributable to local PES offices

Probably the most important explanation of the low take-up rates was that some meetings at some offices were canceled, mainly due to high work loads at large offices randomized to an 80 percent treatment intensity in the spring of 2015.

All job seekers randomized to treatment were supposed to be summoned to the extra meetings. However, in practice the case worker could make and act on a labor-market assessment and judgement on the job seeker's ability to benefit from the meeting provided by the treatment. This applied mostly to the group meetings from which job seekers with extremely low language skills were often excluded. This is not likely to have been an important factor, as recently arrived immigrant in the introductory program were excluded from the target group. The case worker could also exclude some job seekers due to special reasons. For example, job seekers who were extremely uncomfortable with interacting in groups did not have to attend group meetings. The case worker would then document the reason in the assisting administration list of randomized job seekers. This factor was probably also less important, but could further diminish the take-up for group meetings, which had the lowest take-up (Table 9).

6.1.2 Factors attributable to the job seekers

As the project was conducted under relatively good labor market conditions, many job seekers quickly found jobs, and therefore left unemployment before they were summoned, or after being summoned but before the first meeting. This factor is not likely to have been a major cause of the low take-up, as the first meeting was supposed to take place rather early in the unemployment spell.

In addition, some of the job seekers that were assigned to the treatment group were about to start a job within 30 days, and, hence, were not supposed to participate in the extra meetings (see section 4). Finally, some job seekers did not show up due to reasons such as illness.

6.1.3 Distance meetings not mandatory during the first wave

During the first wave of the study, all distance meetings were held online. That required that the job seekers had access to a computer, an internet connection, and an e-ID to log in. Job seekers who said that they could not meet these requirements were therefore not summoned. In addition, virtually all offices experienced technical problems with the software that they used for the online

distance meetings. The problems concerned everything from guiding through websites, problems with the sound, and the system being slow. These problems were not present during the second wave, as distance meetings were then also conducted by telephone. As shown in Table 9, take-up for distance meetings rose from 8 to 36 percent between the first and second wave of the project.

As noted above, there were many reasons for the low number of job seekers actually attending at least one extra meeting. Therefore, the characteristics of job seekers attending at least one meeting could differ from the characteristics of the target group as well as from the total group of randomized job seekers. Sample statistics for the three groups are presented in Table 8. Even though we observe differences for some variables, the overall results presented in Table 8 do not indicate large differences between the groups.[23]

6.2 Number of meetings for those actually treated

This section describes the number of completed meetings for those who actually attended at least one extra meeting. As described in section 3, the job seekers were supposed to attend at most three extra meetings if they were assigned to face-to-face meetings or distance meetings, and five seminar occasions if they were assigned to group meetings.

Data on completed meetings was extracted from records that the case worker keeps for each job seeker, the so-called daily records (Dagantеckningar), in which the content of the meetings is also registered. To be able to separate the meetings within the project from other activities, the case workers were given detailed instructions: all the meetings that were scheduled and completed within the project were to be clearly marked by using the headline “Progress meeting” in the daily records.

Table 11 shows the total number of meetings for the job seekers who received at least one extra meeting. During the spring period, the total number of meetings was 2,370 and more than half of these were face-to-face meetings. As explained above, the distance meetings could only be given to job seekers who had access to a computer and e-ID, which at least in part can explain the low number of meetings held. Many job seekers only attended one meeting. For those attending face-to-face and distance meetings, 40 and 46 percent attended only one meeting, respectively. For those attending group meetings, 25 percent participated in only one seminar meeting. The two most likely reasons for this are that the job seekers found a job after the first meeting, or that they just skipped attending more than one meeting. As expected, the average number of meetings

[23] Generally, the job seekers who attended at least one meeting had personal characteristics suggesting better labor market prospects, but also more days in previous unemployment spells. Furthermore, a significantly higher fraction in this group were eligible for unemployment benefits and, hence, could be subject to sanctions to a larger extent in case of no-shows.

is higher for group meetings than for face-to-face meetings and distance meetings (group meetings included five seminars while the two forms of individual meetings included three meetings).

For the second wave, in Fall 2015, the total number of meetings was 5,596 and around twice as large as in the first wave and more equally distributed between the three forms of meetings. For job seekers attending at least one group seminar, the average number of meetings was around three. For the face-to-face meetings and the distance meetings the average number of meetings was slightly lower, at around two.

Table 11 Number of meetings during spring and fall 2015

	Spring 2015	Fall 2015
All		
Total number of meetings or seminars	2,370	5,596
Face-to-face		
Share of job seekers attending 1 meeting	0.4	0.41
Share of job seekers attending 2 meetings	0.33	0.33
Share of job seekers attending 3 meetings	0.27	0.25
Total number of meetings	1,238	1,689
Average no of meetings per participant	1.9	1.8
Distance meetings		
Share of job seekers attending 1 meeting	0.46	0.39
Share of job seekers attending 2 meetings	0.28	0.28
Share of job seekers attending 3 meetings	0.25	0.33
Total number of meetings	354	2,344
Average no of meetings per participant	1.7	1.9
Group meetings		
Share of job seekers attending 1 meeting or seminar	0.25	0.28
Share of job seekers attending 2 meetings or seminars	0.18	0.17
Share of job seekers attending 3 meetings or seminars	0.26	0.25
Share of job seekers attending 4 meetings or seminars	0.31	0.31
Share of job seekers attending 5 meetings or seminars		0.28
Total number of meetings or seminars	778	1,563
Average no of meetings or seminars per participant	2.6	3.1

Cheung et al. (2019) also show that: 1) the treatment group, as expected, received significantly more meetings during the experiment period (quarter 1), but not after the experiment, 2) participants in the face-to-face and the distance meetings received a similar amount of extra meetings, whereas participants in the group meetings received slightly more extra meetings, 3) job seekers assigned to face-to-face meetings and group meetings received significantly more physical meetings, whereas job seekers assigned to distance meetings received more distance meetings, and 4) face-to-face and distance meetings were fairly evenly distributed over the first three months of the unemployment spell, while group meetings were more concentrated to the first two months. All this is consistent with what we should expect based on the protocol for the randomized trial.

7 Survey evidence

While section 3 describes the general set-up of the three different types of meetings, this section describes how the implementation turned out in practice. The description of the implementation is based on several data sources:

1. Documentation from the monthly follow-up meetings held with the contact persons at the respective offices during the implementation of the project. This provides an illustration of how the work with the meetings developed, and how we addressed practical problems that arose.

2. Questionnaires sent both during the first and during the second period of the study, to all case workers who held extra meetings within the project.

3. Interviews with contact persons and office managers conducted during spring 2016, after the project had ended.

4. The daily records that the case worker keeps for each job seeker.

5. Questionnaires sent to both treated and non-treated job seekers, including job seekers at the non-active offices. The questionnaire was sent 90 days after the job seeker was randomized.

A more detailed description of the data sources can be found in Appendix.

7.1 Implementation of meetings

The majority of the offices that conducted face-to-face meetings did not face any practical problems. These meetings were therefore implemented as planned. However, the large inflow of newly registered job seekers at two of the large offices led to capacity problems, implying that not all participants at these offices could participate in the scheduled meetings (due to heavy workload for the case workers).

For distance meetings, virtually all offices experienced technical problems with the software that was used for the online distance meetings. Both the interviews and the questionnaire that was sent to the case workers show that many case workers only partly used the software. During the second wave it was possible to use telephone meetings (see section 5.5). Since this increased the number of meetings that was held, the work load increased. Many offices had such a high work load that they could not provide meetings as expected. Therefore, it was decided that the Public Employment Service Customer Service would support some of the distance offices.

For group meetings, one problem was that many offices experienced high dropout rates during the course of the seminars, something that led to difficulties in continuing the activities as planned. In many cases, half of the job seekers quit coming already after the first seminar.

7.2 Content of meetings and time spent on meetings

7.2.1 Content of meetings

For the face-to-face meetings and the distance meetings, it was up to the case worker to decide on the content of the meetings. The group meetings, in contrast, followed a certain structure where each seminar addressed a specific topic. In the following, the content of the meetings is described. First, face-to-face and distance meetings are compared. Then, information on the group meetings is presented.

The interviews with the contact persons during spring 2016 (after all the extra meetings were conducted) suggest that the content of the face-to-face meetings was based on the needs of the job seeker. Some offices followed a clear structure, where the first meeting was based on a specific topic, the second meeting another topic and so on. Most offices, however, were flexible and adapted everything along the way. In general, the case workers seem to have used the first extra meeting to get a better picture of the job seeker's background and his/her needs, while the second and the third meetings focused more on following up on the job search activities. When interviewed, the contact persons stated that the extra meetings gave an opportunity to match the job seeker to relevant vacancies. They also stated that it was common to use the activity reports in the meetings. The extra meetings were also used for coaching, providing information, and register care (i.e., verifying that the information in the registers was accurate and updated).

Similar to the face-to-face meetings, the distance meetings focused a great deal on matching and encouraging the job seekers, especially for the job seekers who were more self-going. The meetings were also used to provide basic information, completing forms, guidance on the personal PES website (*My Pages*), the job seeker's competence profile and improving the job seeker's CVs.

In summary, it seems that the face-to-face meetings and the distance meetings had much in common. The only distinct difference was that the distance meetings focused more on improving the job seeker's profile at the *My Pages* web site.

A questionnaire was also sent to all case workers working within the project (see list of data sources above). Regarding the content of the meetings, the responses from this questionnaire were similar to the answers received from interviewing the contact persons. Table 12 compares the answers to the questionnaire for face-to-face meetings and distance meetings. Overall the responses were very similar across the two meeting formats. However, case workers handling the face-to-face meetings to a greater extent asserted that they identified special needs while case workers in distance meetings to a greater extent asserted that they discussed regular education and vocational training and, like the contact persons, that more effort was put into providing information on the *My Pages* web site.

Table 12 Content of meetings based on the questionnaire sent to case workers

	Face-to-face meetings			Distance meetings		
	Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No	Don't know
Information about Arbetsförmedlingen´s website	69%	19%	13%	92%	8%	0%
Identification of special needs	72%	13%	16%	60%	36%	4%
CV and cover letter	79%	12%	9%	88%	13%	0%
Discussed job openings	91%	0%	9%	100%	0%	0%
Discussed ways to make contact with employer	91%	0%	9%	100%	0%	0%
Discussed participating in recruitment meetings	79%	9%	12%	81%	15%	4%
Discussed need for regular education	68%	15%	18%	96%	4%	0%
Discussed need for vocational training or other labor market programs	69%	19%	13%	96%	4%	0%

The group meetings followed the specific concept *New Job* which involves five seminars that address different steps in the job search process, such as CV writing, interview training, and net-working. After the five seminars (after a two-week period) the job seekers were encouraged to continue meeting in operational teams. Here, the job seekers themselves were responsible for setting upthe meetings.

7.2.2 Time spent on meetings

The recommendation to the case workers was that the individual face-to-face meetings and the distance meetings would take about half an hour, but that they could be either shorter or longer depending on the job seekers' needs. The group meeting seminars naturally took longer time, usually 2–3 hours. Interviews with the contact persons revealed that most face-to-face meetings lasted between half an hour and one hour. Only two offices state that they held meetings that lasted half an hour or less. For the distance meetings, 50 percent of the case workers say that the meetings lasted shorter than half an hour, while the other 50 percent say that the meetings lasted around half an hour or longer.

To investigate the total time that the case workers spent on the meetings, including time for preparation, implementation and administration after the meetings, a time-use survey with all case workers within the project was carried out. The results presented in Table 13 show no major differences between the face-to-face meetings and the distance meetings. The case workers in the distance meetings indicated slightly longer preparation time (which is probably due to the equip-ment that was used) while case workers in the face-to-face meetings indicated slightly longer meeting times. Time for administration was roughly the same for the two meeting formats. The case workers who worked with the group meetings stated that a seminar took on average two and a half hours, and that the total time spent on each seminar was around four and a half hours. The time-use survey also asked questions about how many meetings were cancelled and how much

time the cancelled meetings claimed. The results show that a higher share of the face-to-face meetings were cancelled compared with distance meetings.

Table 13 Time spent on meetings

	No.	Average	Std. dev.	Min	Max
Face-to-face meetings					
Time preparing meeting	13	16	10	5	45
Length of meeting	13	38	13	15	60
Time after meeting	12	14	6	5	30
Share cancelled meetings	12	24	15	2	50
Time spent for a cancelled meeting	12	12	4	5	20
Distance meetings					
Time preparing meeting	17	25	26	5	120
Length of meeting	17	27	12	10	60
Time after meeting	17	15	14	5	60
Share cancelled meetings	16	14	9	2	30
Time spent for a cancelled meeting	16	13	8	5	30
Group meetings					
Time preparing meeting	9	69	35	20	120
Length of meeting	9	154	49	50	210
Time after meeting	8	54	20	30	90
Share cancelled meetings	9	7	9	0	25
Time spent for a cancelled meeting	8	20	21	0	60

Note: All data are expressed in number of minutes except for column No. refering to the number of responses received from case workers and the rows “Share cancelled meetings” expressed in percent.

7.3 Meeting quality

The questionnaire sent to the case workers asked if they agreed with the statement that it was possible to hold meetings of good quality. Table 14 shows that roughly 50 percent of the case workers agreed fully with this statement. Case workers who managed the group meetings were more satisfied (74 percent agree) compared to case workers responsible for the distance meetings (38 percent agree) and the face-to-face meetings (45 percent agree).

The questionnaire also asked about the reasons why the case workers were unable to hold meetings of good quality. The answers to this question differed across the three types of meetings. For the face-to-face meetings, the main reasons were either that not enough time was set aside for the work with the meetings (70 percent), or that the job seekers did not want/were unable to attend the meetings. The case workers who managed the distance meetings pointed to technical problems during the web meetings (70 percent), and lack of time (38 percent). However, they also stated that they lacked support from their manager (19 percent) and that the job seekers did not want/were not able to attend the meetings (19 percent). The case workers responsible for the group meetings stated that they did not have enough time (60 percent), or that the job seekers did not want to or were unable to attend the seminars (20 percent).

Table 14 Was it possible to have meetings of good quality?

	Face-to-face	Distance	Group
I have received good conditions for being able to conduct meetings of good quality?			
- Agree	45%	38%	74%
- Disagree	55%	62%	26%
Reason for "Disagree"			
I have not had enough time allocated to the work with the meetings	70%	38%	60%
I have not received enough support from my manager	4%	19%	0%
I have not received enough support from project management	4%	6%	0%
Job seekers have not wanted/been able to go to the meetings	30%	19%	20%
Technical problems with the web meetings		69%	

7.3.1 Work load

All the 36 active offices received financial compensation for participating in the project. However, since the compensation was delayed until after the implementation had started, the offices had little time to hire new case workers. The majority of the offices addressed this problem by letting the case workers continue working with cases outside the project. As a result, the case workers working with the meetings had a comparably high workload, especially at the larger offices according to the answers to the survey questions. A few offices hired case workers who had retired or used so-called customer resources (staff who work with more basic duties) to assist within the project.

Based on the information presented so far, the work load seemed to vary across the three meeting formats. The offices working with group meetings struggled with gathering enough participants, and sometimes had difficulties with continuing with the seminars. This should imply that a heavy workload was less of a problem for the case workers handling the group meetings. Moreover, as described above, the distance meetings were not mandatory during the first wave of the study. During the second wave, when the meetings were mandatory, staff from the Customer Service offices assisted the distance meetings offices. Hence, the case workers responsible for distance meetings were, to some extent, also protected from a heavy workload. In contrast, due to a high inflow of job seekers in both waves of the project, the case workers responsible for the face-to-face meetings were more likely to have had too much work.

The answers to the questions in the case-worker questionnaire support the hypothesis that heavy workload was a bigger problem for the face-to-face meetings. Around 70 percent of the case workers working with face-to-face meetings stated that the project entailed a higher workload, while the equivalents for case workers in distance meetings and group meetings were 58 and 39 percent, respectively.

7.4 Job seekers' perception of treatment

To learn more about differences in how the job seekers perceived the first three months of unemployment, questionnaires were sent to both the treated and to all the non-treated job seekers (including non-treated at the 36 non-active offices). The survey data were gathered 90 days after the day of registration. This section summarizes the answers to the questions.

7.4.1 Number of contacts with case workers

Table 15 shows how often the job seekers were in contact with their case worker. Columns named T and C show the answers for the treated and non-treated job seekers at the non-active offices, and columns named NA show answers for the job seekers at the non-active offices. The results in columns 1–3 – especially if comparing the response alternatives "Once a month" and "More seldom" – suggest that the treated job seekers met their case worker more often than the non-treated job seekers. The differences across treated and non-treated job seekers apply to all meeting formats (see response alternatives "Once a month" and "More seldom" in the remaining columns). As expected, the difference appears to be larger for the distance meetings and the face-to-face meeting compared to the group meetings (due to the low take-up for group meetings).

Table 15 About how often have you had contact with your case worker?

	All			Face-to-face		Distance		Group	
	T	C	NA	T	C	T	C	T	C
Several times a week	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	0.4%	3%	1%	0%
Once a week	4%	3%	1%	3%	2%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Every two weeks	8%	7%	5%	9%	6%	9%	8%	8%	8%
Once a month	33%	23%	24%	35%	23%	39%	26%	25%	19%
More seldom	31%	40%	35%	32%	42%	27%	38%	36%	41%
Never	13%	15%	14%	13%	17%	11%	14%	16%	15%
Don't know//No answer	9%	10%	18%	7%	11%	10%	8%	10%	14%

Table 16 provides a more detailed picture of the differences in the contact between the job seekers and the case workers. The first panel studies meetings at the office. Here a difference between treated (T) and control (C) for face-to-face meetings is expected, but not for the other two types of meetings. Notably, this is the pattern that emerges: it is only for face-to-face meetings that the answers differ between T and C (see response alternatives 1, 3 and 4). Moving to the next panel, visits where job seekers meet in a group, a difference across T and C for group meetings is expected, but not for the other two types of meetings. Once again, the expected pattern arises (see response alternatives 1, 3 and 4). Finally, the last panel – distance meetings online and/or by phone – shows differences between T and C for distance meetings, but not for group meetings or

face-to-face meetings (see response alternatives 1, 3 and 4). In summary, both Table 15 and Table 16 clearly indicates that the job seekers who were assigned to attend extra meetings had more meetings, and also meetings of the intended kind.

Table 16 How many times in total have you participated in meetings with a case worker since you registered at the PES?

	All		Face-to-face			Distance		Group	
	T	C	NA	T	C	T	C	T	C
Face-to-face									
None	28%	33%	24%	22%	4%	34%	31%	26%	27%
Once	32%	36%	37%	25%	31%	33%	46%	37%	35%
2-3 times	22%	15%	16%	32%	14%	16%	15%	2%	16%
More than 3 times	7%	04%	3%	13%	3%	5%	4%	5%	6%
Don't know/No answe	12%	12%	21%	8%	12%	14%	4%	13%	15%
Distance meetings									
None	56%	64%	48%	63%	68%	38%	62%	7%	62%
Once	8%	9%	13%	9%	8%	12%	11%	3%	8%
2-3 times	15%	6%	7%	8%	4%	27%	8%	5%	8%
More than 3 times	6%	3%	4%	5%	4%	9%	3%	3%	2%
Don't know/No answer	15%	18%	28%	15%	16%	13%	16%	18%	21%
Group meetings									
None	55%	61%	49%	61%	64%	57%	55%	46%	64%
Once	15%	14%	18%	13%	13%	17%	21%	15%	13%
2-3 times	7%	5%	3%	5%	4%	6%	5%	9%	4%
More than 3 times	7%	3%	1%	4%	2%	3%	5%	15%	2%
Don't know/No answer	16%	17%	29%	16%	17%	17%	15%	15%	17%

7.4.2 Job seekers' perception of the meeting contents

Table 17 focuses on how the job seekers perceived the meetings. This information is taken from the questionnaire that was sent to both the treated (T) and the non-treated (C) job seekers. Table 17 shows that there was a difference between T and C regarding what was done during the meetings. For example, the job seekers in the treatment group were more likely to state that the meetings they had with the case worker were about identifying what jobs they could apply for, and potential ways to contact employers.

Table 17 What have you and the case worker done when you had meetings (individual, in group or online/by phone)?

	Treated job seekers (T)			Non-treated job seekers (C)		
	Yes	No	Don't know/ No answer	Yes	No	Don't know/ No answer
Worked on personal letter and CV	22%	52%	26%	17%	54%	30%
Identified what jobs I can apply for	55%	19%	26%	50%	20%	30%
Discussed various ways to contact employers	39%	34%	27%	32%	38%	30%
Discussed need for regular education	17%	56%	27%	14%	54%	32%
Discussed need for trainee position, programme and other efforts	24%	49%	27%	21%	48%	31%

7.4.3 Number of hours used for job search

One of the questions to the job seekers concerned job-search effort: Did the meetings affect the job seekers' behavior? Table 18 shows the results for this question. Overall, there seems to be no difference between treated and non-treated job seekers when it comes to hours spent on job search. This holds irrespectively of whether looking at all the meeting formats together, or looking at each one of the meeting formats separately. There are differences between T and C in columns 4–9, but there is no clear pattern that allow us to draw any conclusions.

Table 18 Number of hours per week used for the job search during the current unemployment spell

	All			Face-to-face		Distance		Group	
	T	C	NA	T	C	T	C	T	C
0 hours	7%	6%	3%	6%	5%	6%	8%	8%	6%
1-5 hours	31%	31%	26%	28%	31%	37%	32%	27%	30%
6-10 hours	22%	23%	17%	22%	21%	21%	25%	23%	23%
11-20 hours	15%	14%	15%	19%	14%	11%	15%	17%	13%
21-30 hours	8%	6%	7%	8%	8%	9%	5%	6%	5%
More than 30 hours	6%	5%	9%	7%	6%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Don't know/No answer	12%	14%	22%	10%	14%	12%	12%	13%	18%

8 Concluding comments

It is increasingly argued that active labour market policies should be measured and evaluated to inform policy makers about their effectiveness. Randomized controlled trials (RCTs) are often considered as the gold standard when it comes to delivering evidence on labour market policies and measures. While a proper design and implementation can result in convincing causal inference, there are also challenges in implementing a large scale RCT. Especially when resources are limited. Therefore, some aspects of the lesson that can have relevance for future similar studies learned from this study are outlined here.

First, the project had an ambitious set-up in order to measure displacement effects. This required a large number of participating offices. Based on a number of parameters, a pool of 72 offices was identified in which the offices were randomized into three different types of treatment as well as control offices. The design required mandatory participation and offices chosen to participate had no chance to opt out. The mandatory participation for offices worked out relatively well but was however one explanation for office deviations and low participation and take-up. It may also be argued that mandatory participation is not a constructive method to create a cooperative environment and support from local office management and case workers assigned to the project. As an alternative, the pool of 72 offices could instead have been based on voluntary participation in which the project management could have sent out a request for interested offices to participate and to become randomized. This would most likely have increased motivation and made the implementation of the project more easy. At the same time, this alternative approach would probably run a high risk of ending up with too few participating offices as the financial incentives for a specific office to participate were not large enough. There is thus a trade-off in which to choose, mandatory or voluntary participation, which is important to take into account when designing future similar studies. Which one to choose, depends on the context of the project including careful consideration on the number of units to randomize, how well the project is anchored at all levels of the organization and the budget of the project.

Second, one problem often encountered by RCTs with randomization is to recruit a suifficient number of participants. To meet this requirement it is important to make sure that the randomization procedure is performed for all persons in the target group. If the randomization procedure is to be performed by case workers as a new task in their ordinary work, the procedure has to be easy and well anchored. During the first wave of the project, the case workers at the customer receptions were involved in the randomization process. As these case workers were not part of the project organization they did not have as high incentives to randomize as if they had been part of the project. In addition, in most of the larger offices the work load was intense and office management did not always actively emphasize the importance of the project. As a consequence, randomization was sometimes forgotten because of all the other mandatory tasks involved in the meeting between case worker and job seeker. One important insight is thus to have control over the randomization process. Switching from a decentralized randomization done by a large group of case workers to a central randomization in the fall was a major reason why the participation rate increased by almost 40 percentage points from the spring to the fall wave. For future studies, it may be wise to automatize the randomization process as much as possible.

A related insight is the importance of having efficient tools to monitor the randomization process. During the first wave of the project, we did not have a tool to observe all job-seekers in the

target group at the participating offices and therefore could not know how many of those that were not randomized. In the project, monitoring was mainly performed by regular Skype-meetings with the local offices. However, more resources could have been devoted to monitoring. For future large-scale RCTs, it is consequently a good idea to develop an integrated data monitoring system with rapid data feedback and supportive supervision to reinforce data reliability, timeliness, completeness and precision.

Third, to achieve a good implementation it is important to anchor the project both at the horizontal and vertical level, i.e., with the operational part of the organization as well as at the local offices. Support from local management was one of the key factors for local project workers to successfully conduct the project. It was important that everyone understood the purpose of the project, and the gains involved. Anchoring the metohod of randomization was also of great importance. For a case worker it is not natural to toss a coin to decide who will get more help and who will not. Time spent on securing that all project workers understand the benefits of using the RCT-design is a good investment.

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Appendix: Data sources

A1: Questionnaires to case workers

Questionnaires to case workers who were either contact persons or worked with the Progress meetings were sent out as web surveys during both spring and autumn 2015. The spring's questionnaires were sent out on 26 June 2015 to 135 case workers with a reminder at the beginning of August 2015 and the autumn's questionnaires were sent out on 18 December 2015 to a total of 127 case workers with a reminder at the beginning of January 2016. Both questionnaires contained similar questions and the response rate to the spring's questionnaire was 78 percent and the autumn's was 73 percent. In terms of the individual face-to-face meetings, it was not only the contact persons who worked with the implementation of the meetings since all case workers were able to do so. The contact persons have in some cases distributed the meetings between case workers at the office. Therefore, questionnaires have been sent to both the contact persons and to those with whom the contact persons worked in the individual face-to-face meetings. However, after linking together the questionnaire answers with information from the day notes, it is apparent that some of the respondents never worked with the progress meetings, which is why they were excluded from the analysis and the report of these questionnaires (see Table A1). The autumn's questionnaire questions to the distance offices are presented below. The spring's questionnaire had similar questions and the questionnaire questions to the offices that worked with group meetings or physical meetings were identical except that the distance meetings were replaced with, e.g., group meetings.

Table A1 Compilation of questionnaires sent and response rate for case workers

Type of meeting	Number	Respondent (%)	Excluded
Spring: Web dispatch on 26 June 2015, a reminder at the beginning of August			
Distance	29	22 (79%)	1
Group	28	24 (86%)	0
Face-to-face	78	58 (74%)	10
Total	135	104 (78%)	11
Autumn: Web dispatch on 18 December 2015, a reminder at the beginning of January 2016			
Distance	34	26 (77%)	0
Group	64	48 (74%)	6
Face-to-face	29	19 (66%)	0
Total	127	93 (73%)	6

Questionnaire questions to case workers

Subject: Questionnaire from Public Employment Service – participating offices in "Progress – early meetings"
Heading: Follow-up of *Progress – early meetings*, autumn 2015

To whom it may concern,

You have been selected to participate in this questionnaire since you are working or have worked with developing distance meetings, group meetings or individual physical meetings (office visits) in the project "Progress – early meetings" in autumn 2015.

Through the EU financed Progress project, the Analysis Department has conducted a development work that aims to investigate if various kinds of meeting formats early in the period of unemployment can help job seekers find a job more quickly. Within the agency, we need more knowledge about what works and what does not work to in the future be able to prioritize the resources correctly. Your answers are very important to the follow-up of the project. For more information about the project, see here: [Linkhttp://vis.arbetsformedlingen.se/varmyndighet/utvecklingsarbete/progresstidigamoten.4.2cdb5cd114bfe8d7a745d3a.html]

We are very thankful for you taking time to answer the questionnaire. Your answers will be handled anonymously and confidentially. All results will be presented at an aggregated level and not on a personal level. [Link]

For questions, please contact the Analysis Department.

1. Did you work with distance meetings in “Progress - early meetings” in autumn 2015?
   □[1] Yes
   □[2] No → Finish the questionnaire

2. How many years have you worked with job seekers at the Public Employment Service?
   □[1] Around 0-2 years
   □[2] Around 2-5 years
   □[3] More than 5 years

3. How many job seekers do you have on your signature? Number:…..……...

All of the following questions pertain to autumn 2015.

4. How did the randomisation of job seekers work at your office?
   □[1] We have mainly randomised in Direct Service → Question 6
   □[2] We have mainly used randomisation lists prepared by the Analysis Department
   □[3] We have used both methods

5. Do you think the randomisation lists worked well?
   □[1] Yes, because ……
   □[2] No, because ……
   □[3] I have not been involved in the randomisation
   □[4] Don’t know

6. Around how much of your working hours did you work with “Progress – early meetings”?
   □[1] Full-time
   □[2] Half-time
   □[3] Less than half-time

7. Which job seekers do you work with in “Progress – early meetings”?
   □[1] All job seekers (matching)
   □[2] All job seekers except young people
   □[3] Young people

8. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the distance meetings as a working method within “Progress – early meetings”?
   □[1] Very dissatisfied
   □[2] Somewhat dissatisfied

□[3] Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
□[4] Somewhat satisfied
□[5] Very satisfied

9. State on a scale of 1 to 5 how you feel the distance meetings within Progress affected your work station? Where 1=Disagree fully and 5=Agree fully

	Disagree fully.				Agree fully
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Better contact with job seekers	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]	□[4]	□[5]
More job satisfaction	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]	□[4]	□[5]
Higher work load	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]	□[4]	□[5]
More administration	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]	□[4]	□[5]

Other, namely …….

10. Have you been able to use Vergic Engage for secure identification of the job seekers?
□[1] Never
□[2] In some cases
□[3] In about half of the cases
□[4] In most cases
□[5] In all cases

11. Have you been able to use Vergic Engage to hold the meetings?
□[1] Never
□[2] In some cases
□[3] In about half of the cases
□[4] In most cases
□[5] In all cases

12. What have you and the job seeker done when you held distance meetings?

	Yes	No	Don't know
Informed about and guided around My pages	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]
Identified special needs, e.g. early efforts and rehabilitation	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]
Worked on personal letter and CV	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]
Discussed jobs to apply for	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]
Discussed various ways to contact employers	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]
Discussed participation in recruitment meetings	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]
Discussed need for regular education	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]
Discussed need for trainee position, programme and other efforts	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]
Other, namely……			

13. What do you believe the meetings have meant to the job seekers? Indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 how much you agree with the following statements (1=disagree fully and 5=agree fully).

	Disagree fully.				Agree fully	
The job seeker has...	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
Gotten started with the job search more quickly	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]	□[4]	□[5]	□[6]
More quickly supplemented his/her CV and other info in AIS	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]	□[4]	□[5]	□[6]
More quickly organised application documents like letters, CV, etc.	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]	□[4]	□[5]	□[6]
More quickly got help he/she needs	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]	□[4]	□[5]	□[6]
Gained more motivation to look for jobs or study	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]	□[4]	□[5]	□[6]
Felt that somebody cares and sees his/her needs	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]	□[4]	□[5]	□[6]
Felt stressed/pressured/monitored	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]	□[4]	□[5]	□[6]
Felt that he/she threw away his/her time	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]	□[4]	□[5]	□[6]
Other, namely: ……						

14. How satisfied or dissatisfied do you believe the participants are with the distance meetings in "Progress – early meetings"?
    □[1] Very dissatisfied
    □[2] Somewhat dissatisfied
    □[3] Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
    □[4] Somewhat satisfied
    □[5] Very satisfied

15. Do you agree with the following statements: "I have received good conditions for being able to conduct group activities of good quality?"
    □[1] Disagree fully → Question 16
    □[2] Agree partly → Question 16
    □[3] Agree fully → Question 17
    □[4] Don't know → Question 17

16. What is it that has meant that you were unable to hold the meetings in a good way? Several options are possible.
    □[1] I have not had enough time allocated to the work with the meetings
    □[2] I have not had enough support from my manager
    □[3] I have not received enough support from project management
    □[4] Technical problems with the web meetings
    □[5] Job seekers have not wanted/been able to go to the meetings
    □[6] Other, namely ……..

17. How do you feel that "Progress – early meetings" affects the job seekers who are *not* offered distance meetings?
    □[1] They receive *less* time with an case worker
    □[2] They receive neither more or less time with an case worker.
    □[3] They receive *more* time with an case worker

18. Do you feel that the distance meetings in "Progress – early meetings" are *more* applicable to a certain target group?
    - □[1] Yes, newly registered young people (under 25) have the greatest need for early meetings
    - □[2] Yes, newly registered older adults (over 25) have the greatest need for early meetings
    - □[3] Yes, newly registered job seekers who are far from the labour market have the greatest need for early meetings
    - □[4] Yes, newly registered job seekers who are close to the labour market have the greatest need for early meetings
    - □[5] Other target group, namely …….
    - □[6] No, the meetings suit everyone.

19. Do you think that the Public Employment Service should continue working with distance meetings early in the period of unemployment?
    - □[1] Yes
    - □[2] No
    - □[3] Doubtful/Don't know

20. If the Public Employment Service decides to continue with distance meetings early in the period of unemployment, are there any changes you would like to see and if so what?
    ……
    ……
    ……
    ……
    ……
    ……
    ……

21. What worked well/poorly with "Progress – early meetings" during autumn 2015?
    ……
    ……
    ……
    ……
    ……
    ……
    ……

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

A2: Questionnaires to job seekers

During autumn 2015, questionnaires were continuously sent to a random sample of job seekers within the project and registered for 90 days. The questionnaires were sent online as a web survey between August 2015 and November 2015 with two reminders and one follow-up by phone. The sample of job seekers drawn to receive the questionnaire consisted of 1,500 individuals registered at the 36 non-active offices and 4,500 individuals registered at the active offices. Among the 4,500 individuals at the active offices, 1,500 belonged to the control group and 3,000 to the treatment group. Of the 3,000 job seekers who belonged to the treatment group, 1,000 questionnaires were sent to those who belonged to the treatment group for distance meetings, 1,000 questionnaires to those belonging to the treatment group for physical meetings and 1,000 questionnaires to those belonging to the treatment group for the group meetings. Figure A2 below shows how the questionnaire selection was done.

In addition to these 6,000 questionnaires, questionnaires were sent to all that actually had received a meeting according to the randomization tool regardless of which office or treatment group they belonged to. The response rate for this questionnaire after both web surveys and a phone follow-up was 34 percent (see Table A2). The web survey was followed by two reminders with a response rate of 19 percent. The response rate for job seekers belonging to the active offices was 40 percent after both web surveys and a phone follow-up.

Table A2: Response rate

	Selection	Web	Web+phone
All offices (active and non-active offices)	6,000	19%	34%
Only active offices	4,500	19%	40%

Questionnaire cover letter to job seekers

To whom it may concern,

How much help have you received from the Public Employment Service and what do you think?

You were registered with the Public Employment Service for a time when we were developing our methods around meetings and service. We would like to know what help you have received and what you think.

The Institute for Evaluation of Labour Market and Education Policy (IFAU) is helping us follow up and evaluate the change work to develop meetings and service for job seekers. The information from the questionnaire will be used to evaluate the Public Employment Service's development work.

Completing the questionnaire is voluntary. To not ask more than necessary, we will supplement your responses with information that is already at the Public Employment Service and Statistics Sweden. Identification details are removed from your information, which is covered by confidentiality under Section 24 Section 8 of the Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act (2009:400). More information about the project, confidentiality and how your information is used is provided below.

Click here to open the questionnaire

If you wonder over anything or would like to know more about the study, please e-mail or phone xxx

Thank you very much for your participation!

About the project
We would like to know more about whether it matters how quickly you as a job seeker have your first meeting and how often you can meet a case worker.

How provided information is used and saved
We will retrieve information from Statistics Sweden regarding employment income, education and health-related information, such as sickness benefits, sick and activity compensation, occupational injury compensation, rehabilitation compensation and the occurrence of disabilities that entail a reduced working capacity. It is Statistics Sweden that links the background information to the questionnaires. Your responses will be separated from identification information and will not be able to be tied to you as an individual. The responses from the questionnaires will be locked away; the electronic data files will be on a locked server. Data is deleted after 10 years. The de-identified responses will be used to evaluate the Public Employment Service's service and improvement efforts for job seekers. Further research on the collected materials may not be done without a renewed application to the regional research board. IFAU is the research principal.

The provided information is protected
Identification provided is protected by confidentiality under Section 24 Section 8 of the Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act (2009:400). The persons who work with the study are covered by the rules on document secrecy and professional confidentiality. Rules for personal data handling are also in the Personal Data Act (1998:204), the Act regarding Personal Data Processing in Labour Market Policy Activities (2002:546) and the Ordinance on Personal Data Processing in Labour Market Policy Activities (2002:623). IFAU is covered by the Official Statistics Act (2001:99) and Ordinance (2001:100), and the Act (2012:741) and Ordinance (2012:742) regarding the Processing of Personal Data at IFAU.

Information on personal data
IFAU and the Public Employment Service are personal data managers for the processing of personal data they carry out.

You have the right to receive free information once a year in the form of a so-called register transcript regarding your own personal data that is handled by the Public Employment Service in its capacity as a personal data manager. You also have the right to correction and damages if personal data is handled in violation of the Personal Data Act.

If you believe that the Public Employment Service or IFAU have handled your personal data in a manner that violates the Personal Data Act, you have the right to request the personal data to be corrected, blocked or deleted.

Questionnaire questions to job seekers

In order for your responses to be able to be used in the study, you must fill in the box for consent to the personal data processing described above. You are then automatically sent on to the questionnaire.

□ I consent and want to participate in the study
□ No

1. First, we would like to know your work situation today. According to our information, you are or have recently been registered as a job seeker at the Public Employment Service. Is this correct and if so, what is your work situation today?

□[1] Have work full-time → Answer section A, section B and section C
□[2] Have work part-time → Answer section A, section B and section C
□[3] Study/attend training (not a labour market course)
→ Answer section A and section C
□[4] Participate in a programme at the Public Employment Service (that is financed by the Public Employment Service, including labour market course)
→ Answer section A and section C
□[5] Have started my own business→ Answer section A, section B and section C
□[6] Reported sick/sick leave/parental leave → Answer section A and section C
□[7] Job seeker full-time/seeking work → Answer section A and section C
□[8] Other → Answer section A and section C

Section A

Here, we ask a few questions concerning the *latest* period you were registered with the Public Employment Service.

2. About how often have you had contact with your case worker?

□[1] Several times a week
□[2] Once a week
□[3] Every two weeks
□[4] Once a month
□[5] More seldom
□[6] Never

3. How many times *in total* have you participated in meetings with a case worker since you registered with the Public Employment Service? Here, we are asking about meetings you were summoned to.

	None	1 time	2-3 times	More than 3 times
Personal meetings at office:	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]	□[4]
Visits where job seekers meet in a group:	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]	□[4]
Distance meetings online and/or by phone	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]	□[4]

4. Do you think the number of meetings was too many, just right or too few?
□[1] Too many
□[2] Just right – neither too many nor too few
□[3] Too few
□[4] Don't know

5. The contact with the Public Employment Service has meant that I...

	Yes	No	Don't know
received adequate support in my job search	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]
received fast help in my job search	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]
had somebody who listens and sees my needs	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]
gained more motivation to look for jobs or study	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]
gained a larger contact network	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]
felt stressed/pressured	□[1]	□[2]	□[3]

Other, namely: ……

6. What have you and the case worker done when you had meetings (individual, in group or online/by phone)?

	Yes	No	Don't know
Worked on personal letter and CV	□1	□2	□3
Identified what jobs I can apply for	□1	□2	□3
Discussed various ways to contact employers	□1	□2	□3
Discussed need for regular education	□1	□2	□3
Discussed need for trainee position, programme and other efforts	□1	□2	□3
Other, namely:……			

7. About how many hours a week did you use for the job search during the time you were last registered? (By job search, we mean all the time you spent, for example, working on your CV, looking for a job, sending out applications, attending recruitment meetings, phoning employers, etc.)
   □1 0 hours
   □2 1-5 hours
   □3 6-10 hours
   □4 11-20 hours
   □5 21-30 hours
   □6 more than 30 hours

8. How satisfied are you with the service your received from the Public Employment Service?
   □1 Very satisfied
   □2 Somewhat satisfied
   □3 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
   □4 Somewhat dissatisfied
   □5 Very dissatisfied
   □6 Don't know/don't want to answer

Section B (those who have found work answer)

Now we will ask some questions about the job you have today.

9. How did you find out about the job you have today?
   □1 Through the Public Employment Service. Such as through the case worker, Job Bank or recruitment efforts arranged by the Public Employment Service
   □2 By an advertisement, e.g. job site or newspaper ad

□[3] I contacted the employer

□[4] The employer contacted me

□[5] Through networks, friends and acquaintances

□[6] Social media

□[7] Own initiative/Starting my own business

□[8] Other, namely…….....

10. How satisfied are you with the job you have now?
    □[1] Very satisfied
    □[2] Somewhat satisfied
    □[3] Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
    □[4] Somewhat dissatisfied
    □[5] Very dissatisfied
    □[6] Don't know/don't want to answer

11. Is your job a profession that you are trained for or have experience of?
    □[1] Yes

    □[2] No

    □[3] Don't know/don't want to answer

Section C

Lastly, we will ask a question about your general situation.

12. On the whole, how satisfied are you with your life in general nowadays?
    □[1] Very satisfied
    □[2] Somewhat satisfied
    □[3] Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
    □[4] Somewhat dissatisfied
    □[5] Very dissatisfied

13. Do you have any other opinions you would like to share?
    …….

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

A3: Interviews with contact persons and managers

Interviews were held between March 2016 and June 2016 with all the contact persons and office managers involved in the project. The interviews were conducted by two people from the project team; one keeping notes and the other conducting the interview. The contact persons and their managers were interviewed separately as they had different roles in and experiences of the project. This was a way to increase the contact persons' willingness to participate and to make sure that they would feel more at ease to express themselves during the interview. Table A3 presents the number of interviews conducted by the project team. There were in total 54 contact persons from 31 offices (of 36 active offices) and 30 managers from 28 offices interviewed during this period.

Table A3: Number of interviews with contact persons and managers

	Total	Face-to-face	Distance	Group
Number of interviewed contact persons	54 persons (31 offices)	22 persons (12 offices)	10 persons (10 offices)	22 persons (9 offices)
Number of interviewed managers	30 persons (28 offices)	12 persons (10 offices)	8 persons (8 offices)	10 persons (10 offices)

Interview questions to case workers

Background questions

- What duties did you have before you began working in Progress?
- Who has been involved in the work with Progress at your office?
- What other things at the office affected you at the same time?

Start-up and preparations

- Did you feel prepared when the project began?
- Presentation of the project: objective and target group, content of the meetings.
- Training day in Stockholm in February 2015. How was the training with the distance tool.
- Information material?

Support

- Support for the project at a management level?
- How was the project received by your colleagues?

Randomization of job seekers at the costumer reception (Direktservice)

- How did the new start go in the autumn?
- Randomization lists from the Analysis Department. Everyone was invited to a meeting. Web/phone.
- How was the new working method handled on 1 October (registration through the web, own booking of first planning talk)?

Working method - early meetings

Content of the meetings (spring/autumn)

- What do you generally think about the possibility of using early meetings?
- What have you and the job seeker done when you held meetings?
- Have you felt that you could control the content in the way you wanted?
- How much time has been spent on each individual meeting on average?
- Have the meetings felt meaningful for you as a case worker?
- How have you convened the meetings?

Technology (spring/autumn)

- Have you been able to use Vergic Engage for secure identification of the job seekers? Have you been able to use Vergic Engage to hold the meetings?
- How has it worked with the web meetings vs phone meetings?
- Sponsors, used, support, observed

Three compulsory meetings

- What do you think about the meetings being compulsory?
- Do you think three meetings was the right amount?
- About what percentage of those summoned came to meeting 1, 2 and 3?

- Has the same case worker held all Progress meetings with the job seeker? Is it the job seeker's ordinary case worker who also took care of the Progress meetings?

Your work situation (spring/autumn)

- Have you only worked with Progress or have you also worked with your ordinary duties?
- How has your work situation been affected by you working with Progress?
- How has the administrative part of your work been affected by the project?
- Has your work in the project meant that you had less time for your job seekers who did not participate in the project?

Continuation

- Are early meetings a working method you would like to continue working with?
- Are there any lessons to incorporate into the ordinary operations?
- If you had free hands to develop the working method with early meetings, what changes would you make?

Conditions to hold good meetings? (spring/autumn)

- Have you had conditions to hold good meetings?
- To what extent have you been relieved of your ordinary duties?
- How has the support from your manager been? How was the project prioritized?
- Too few or too many job seekers?
- Has your work been affected by media coverage?

How have the job seekers perceived the meetings? (spring/autumn)

- How do you feel that the job seekers perceived the meetings?
- Are there any groups of job seekers who were more/less positive?
- What group of job seekers do you believe had the most/least benefit from the meetings?
- Which job seekers, among those randomized to the meetings, were not able to be offered the meetings?
- Possibility of using interpreter?
- How have the meetings works with job seekers who do not have good knowledge in Swedish?

Evaluation method and randomization

- How do you view the project using an evaluation method that builds on randomization, i.e., that job seekers are randomly allocated between more frequent meetings and ordinary service?
- Have you received opinions/reactions to the evaluation method from others?
- How have you convened the meetings? Action plan, regular summons? What information about the meetings did the job seekers receive, booked for one meeting or info on meetings over three months?
- How do you feel the documentation of your work in the randomization lists worked?
- Positive to conducting this kind of randomized experiment in the future?

Interview questions to managers

Background questions

- What kind of management role do you have?
- How long have you been involved in the project?
- What role did you have in the implementation of the project?
- How do you perceive the work load at your office in the time the project began and was implemented?
- What other things at the office affected you at the same time?

Start-up and preparations

- Preparations and information prior to the start of the project?
- Project's objective and target group, content of the meetings.
- Support for the project at a management level?
- How was the project received by your colleagues?
- How did the randomization of the job seekers' work at the reception (Directservice)?
- How did the new start go in the autumn of 2015?

Working method - early meetings

Method

- Do you feel that the meetings felt meaningful to the case workers/job seekers?
- Do you feel that the extra meetings lead to the job seekers finding work faster?
- What do you think about the meetings being compulsory for the job seeker?
- What group of job seekers do you believe had the most/least benefit from the meetings?
- Has the work with the early meetings meant that the job seekers who did not get early meetings received less help than they normally would have?

Technology

- How did the technology for distance meetings work?

Work situation

- How has the work situation for those who work with the project and other employees at the office been affected by the project?

Continuation

- Are early meetings a working method you would like to continue working with?
- Are there any lessons to incorporate into the ordinary operations?
- If you had free hands to develop the working method with early meetings, what changes would you make?

Conditions to hold good meetings?

- Resources to conduct the project?

- Have employees participating in the project received the conditions to hold good meetings?
- To what extent have they been able to be relieved of their ordinary duties?
- Support from and contact with the project management?
- Media coverage?

Evaluation method and randomization

- How do you view the project using an evaluation method that builds on randomization, i.e., that job seekers are randomly allocated between more frequent meetings and ordinary service?
- Have you received opinions/reactions to the evaluation method?
- What randomization method did your office use? Did it work better in the autumn when the Analysis Department took care of the randomization and sent out randomization lists?
- All job seekers who were randomized for meetings were not summoned. What does it look like at your office?
- Positive to conducting this kind of randomized experiment in the future?

A4: Day notes

Case workers keep continuous notes on the work with the job seeker, in so-called day notes. In the project, day notes were used in two different ways. First, day notes were used to map how many Progress meetings were held in the various meeting formats. Second, day notes were used to measure the amount of the support provided to the project participants in relation to the job seeker not participating in the project.

Number of meetings held

To identify and measure the number of participants receiving an extra meeting within the project, day notes were used. Case workers working with individual physical meetings and distance meetings in the project were instructed to write *Meeting 1, Meeting 2* and *Meeting 3* in the heading of the day note. Through this, it was possible to track which job seekers who had received the extra Progress meetings. However, some case workers would forget or had misunderstood the instructions, and not all case workers would use these headings. Therefore, text coding and statistical text searching was conducted in addition to the contents of the day notes for all job seekers eligible for the extra meetings. A requirement for coding and thus counting a meeting as a meeting within the project was that it was clearly written in the heading or in the contents of the day note that the meeting was a Progress meeting. Hence, the number of Progress meetings presented could therefore be an underestimation.

Categorizations of contacts between job seekers and case workers

Based on the day notes, contacts between job seekers and case workers were coded in two different ways: automatically generated types of contact and categorization based on keywords. Combination of both was used such that the contacts were classified as detailed as possible. This way, one could capture the quality of a contact with a special keyword, e.g., "psychologist", which differs with respect to the type of contact such as a contact being a visit or occurring by phone.

Automatically generated type of contact

A case worker is instructed to register any type of contact occurring between a case worker and a job seeker and how the contact took place. This leads to an automatically generated row in the day note "Latest contact" which can have any of the following six values: B=Visit; T=Telephone; P=Post; E=E-mail; E=E visit; I= registration by web with e-ID. This row is extracted and used as a variable in the statistical analysis.

Categorization based on keywords in heading

Based on what the case worker writes in the day notes (for the automatically generated contact above), all contacts are categorized based on the quality of the contact. This is done as follows:

Based on day notes, all contacts are coded based on keywords in the day notes heading. The contacts are gathered in 20 different groups where the idea is that one group shall capture contacts

of the same type, e.g., all headings that in some way relate to activity reports are gathered in the group Activity reports.

A group of PES employees with long experience of working as case workers would then review a sample of day notes. Based on what is in the day notes, an assessment is done of the quality of the contact. The assessment was done separately by the type of contact, e.g., by visit, phone, email etc. The coding ranged between 1 and 3 as follows: 1=administrative meeting; 2=informative meeting, contains little about the job seeker; 3= qualitative meeting, job seeker applied for job, planning, follow-up, CV and personal letter, other hidden matters discovered, matching.

After the review, each group of contacts is given a quality assessment like that with the average value of coding. Note that this assessment can thereby vary between type of contact, i.e., B, T, etc. Of all the contacts in the study population, 87 percent belonged to one of the 20 category groups. The remaining 13 percent had not been captured with the overall search words used. The contacts were also mutually exclusive, i.e., the categories were coded with the restriction that the contact should not have been coded before.