



PROVIDING PERSONALISED  
COUNSELLING TO JOBSEEKERS  
AND BUSINESSES THROUGH TELE-  
COUNSELLING.

# MyDYPALive:

## Tele-counselling services to jobseekers and employers

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### GREECE

A key challenge was the need to provide uninterrupted personalised services to the unemployed and especially quality counselling services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the implementation of tele-counselling, some additional challenges came up, such as:

- ▶ A large effort in terms of training and process adjustment was required to introduce the new digital channel and integrate it smoothly into the daily work of all DYP staff, including local managers and administration representatives.
- ▶ Counsellors on the field normally have greater proximity and a better understanding of their clients' needs, and they enjoy classified access to local data. The nationwide delivery of counselling services meant that the network of MyDYPALive counsellors needed access to adequate information and local registries and vacancies through DYP's Integrated Information System (IIS).
- ▶ Counselling via teleconference requires specific conditions, e.g., privacy, absence of noise etc. When a local PES did not fulfil these conditions, job counsellors were strongly encouraged to telework. However, this also led to a broader reconsidering of local PES premises infrastructure.
- ▶ The handling of non-responsive cases led to unnecessary workload and additional efforts. To address that, a specific replacement process for job counsellors was developed, reviewed and improved in order to ensure that appointments which were not taken up by customers could be replaced on an ad-hoc basis.

Name of the PES

DYPA - Public Employment Service

Scope of measure  
(a pilot project or a national reform)

National

When was the practice  
implemented?

The practice and associated services were launched on 14 December 2020.

What was the driver for introducing  
the practice? Was it internal or  
external?

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, mobility restrictions and health safety measures were introduced. The PES counselling services needed to be suspended. To fill this void, tele-counselling was introduced as an alternative to on-site counselling services.

Which organisation was involved  
in its implementation?

The General Secretariat for Information Systems, supervised by the Ministry of Digital Governance, is responsible for the development and technical support of the new platform. Other organisations, involved mostly in the part of the interpretation, include the Ionian University, the Hellenic Committee for South-east European Studies and Metadrasi, an NGO active in the field of actions for migration and development.

Which groups were targeted  
by the practice?

The platform aims to support both employers and unemployed, with a special emphasis on persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups facing serious impediments to labour market (re)entry, such as refugees and migrants, by guaranteeing the provision of uninterrupted services by the PES, during the mobility restrictions implemented to contain the COVID-19 pandemic.

What were the practice's  
main objectives?

Primarily, the platform was intended to provide equal and inclusive counselling services throughout Greece. The use of this kind of technology allowed an uninterrupted continuation of counselling services and therefore mitigated the negative impact of the restrictions introduced in reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic. It has also allowed to test new services such as counselling with interpretation for foreigners or people with hearing disabilities.

#### What activities were carried out?

The following activities were carried out:

1. Designing a concrete plan to implement tele-counselling: the basic principle was to guarantee counselling services beyond local administrative boundaries. Citizens receive the same quality counselling services from all over the country no matter where they live, and counsellors provide the same quality services to the entire country, no matter where they work.
2. Issuing an invitation of interest to counsellors who would like to join the team on a voluntary basis.
3. Providing technical training to counsellors.
4. Providing operational training to counsellors as well as implementation guidelines.
5. Preparing a working plan for counsellors.
6. Designing toolkits for each service: counselling to the unemployed, counselling to employers, counselling to the unemployed with interpretation.
7. Performing follow-up meetings with counsellors.
8. Collecting quantitative and qualitative data for counsellor performance monitoring purposes.
9. Using data to improve services within available resources and processes.
10. Creating a national network of "MyDYPALive" counsellors.

#### What resources and other relevant organisational aspects were involved?

67 fully trained counsellors in 39 different local PES offices are currently involved in the implementation of tele-counselling. Considering the high demand for the service, this number is projected to be further increased.

#### What were the source(s) of funding?

Funding is secured by DYPA's budget while operational staff from DYPA and technical staff from the Ministry of Digital Governance also play a decisive role in the project.

#### What were the outputs of the practice: people reached and products?

From the launch of tele-counselling in December 2020 until the end of July 2021, 4 408 tele-counselling sessions were created. 87% of these were related to counselling, 12% to the correction of registration data and 1% to EURES-specific issues.

In regard to counselling sessions, general counselling to jobseekers was the main service in demand (nearly two-thirds of all sessions), followed by counselling to employers (12%), counselling of specific target groups (5%) and counselling with interpretation (3%).

#### What outcomes have been identified?

The following outcomes have been achieved so far:

- ▶ Citizens encounter a modern face of DYPA.
- ▶ Local PES staff get familiar with tele-conferencing as an everyday routine.
- ▶ Counsellors and local PES offices that participate in the platform work in teams or as a network.
- ▶ Restrictions and benefits of tele-conference as a service have been quickly realised and lead to fast adjustments.
- ▶ Counsellors acquire experience in counselling as well as time management skills.
- ▶ Counsellors become "mentors" for the next group of colleagues that join the service.
- ▶ DYPA asked the General Secretariat for Information Systems, who is responsible for the development and technical support of the platform, to develop a permanent mechanism of Customer Service Management (CSM). Measurement was launched in July 2021. Two months data is available so far: 78% (average) of customers are very/totally satisfied by the service received.

#### What are the lessons learnt and success factors?

Through technology-based counselling services, citizens, jobseekers and employers encounter the modern face of DYPA. It has become apparent that beneficiaries and staff members have embraced this new service as a suitable alternative to on-site counselling. The further expansion to other services such as EURES has been considered a success of the programme, also broadening its scope. The implementation of mentor/mentee pairs is also considered a considerable success factor. Lastly, a major success factor was that interpretation has been used to broaden the coverage of counselling support for people in need.



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