

“Can you hear me? Chris, you’re on mute!”

What does research tell us about the nature and impact of delivering guidance remotely versus face to face – what have we learned since the pandemic?

Feb, 2022

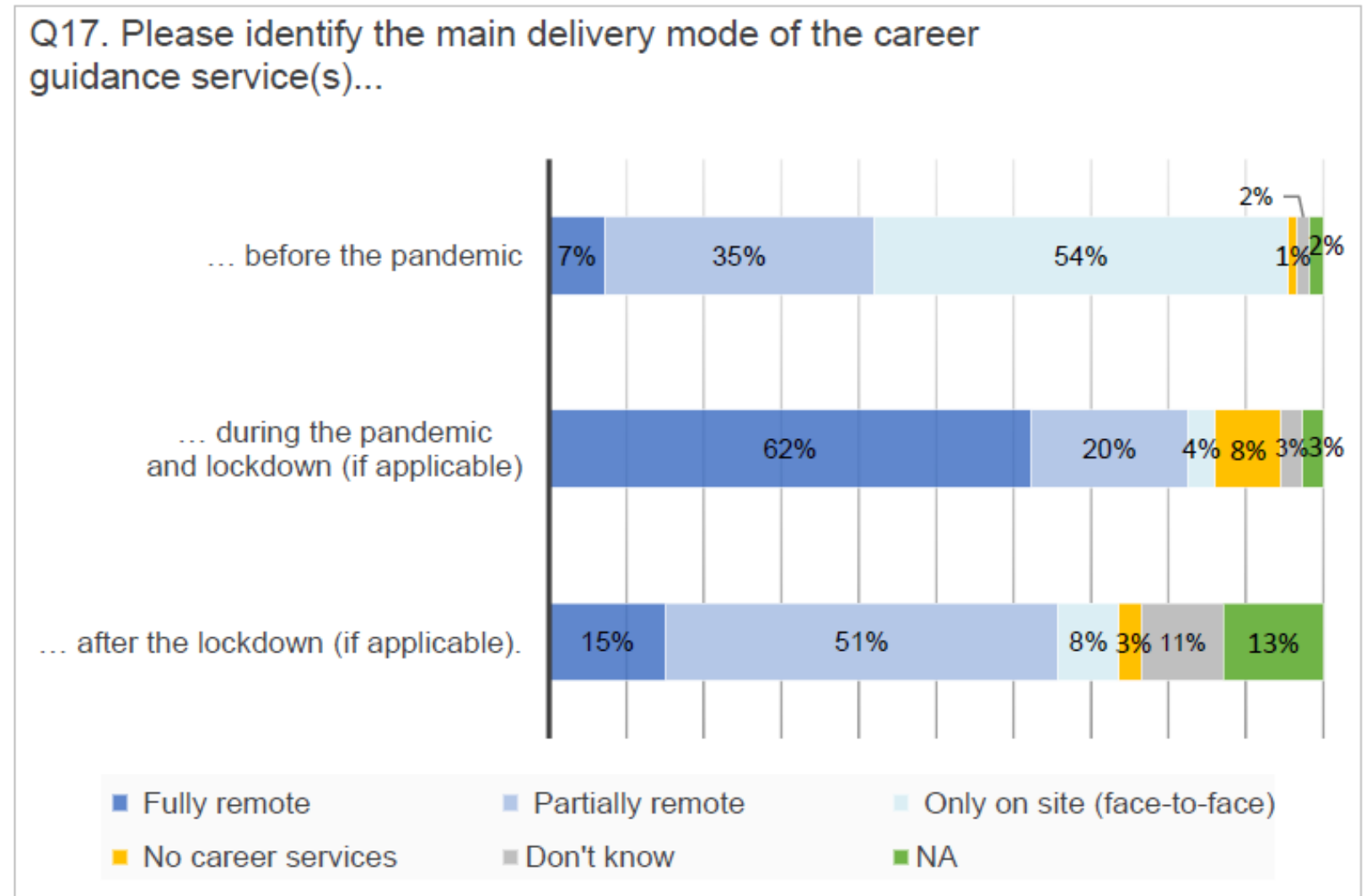
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“62% of career guidance fully remote in mid-2020 vs 7% before covid”

Figure 15. **Delivery of career guidance services before, during and after the lockdown (where applicable)**



The big questions

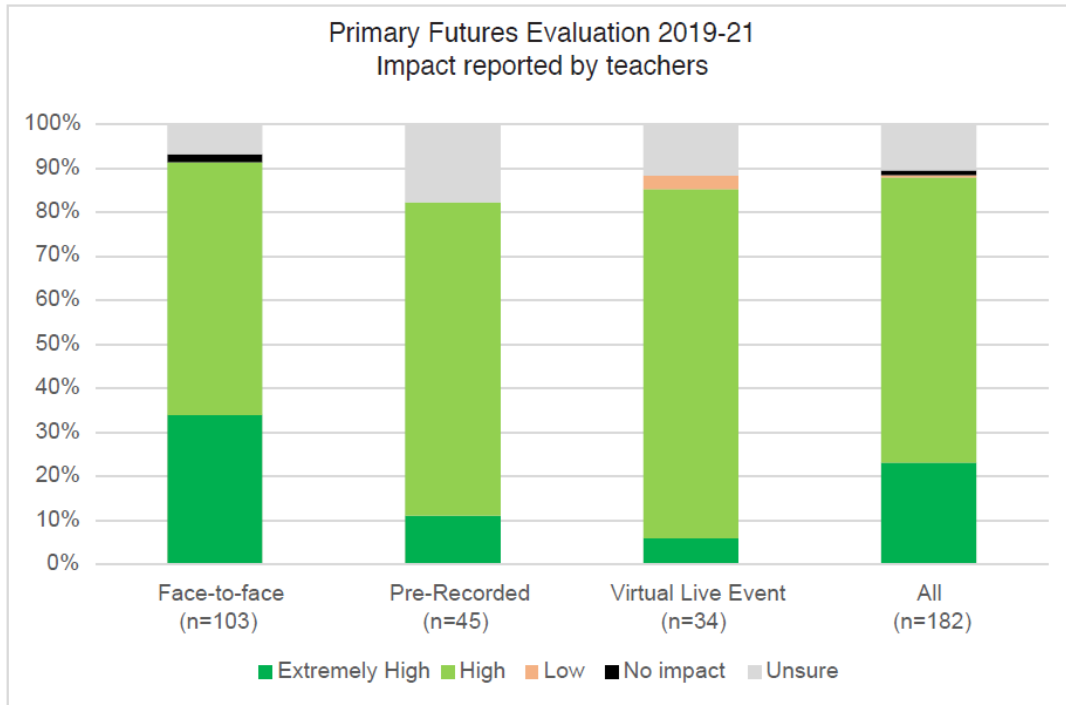
- How has remote delivery of guidance likely affected benefits for clients?
- When we have a choice about delivery models in the future, what blend of remote and face-to-face should we aim for?

What might we learn from telehealth?

- 15 comparative studies of telephone and face-to-face psychological therapy
- Specialised standards long been available for remote (e.g. APA telepsychology; US virtual schools)
- Similar on empathy, attentiveness → Conclude equally effective on average
- But! Practitioners and patients reluctant and don't like it as much
- Caveats? Mostly US veterans, possible publication bias, also mostly prior to high quality broadband powered video-conferencing...
- Another Parallel? Mental health social work training – assessed performance in Zoom vs face-to-face roleplays with actors

What about career guidance?

**Employer volunteer talks in primary schools:
teacher view → favour face-to-face**



**Counselling conversations / support for adults:
customer view → not much in it**

Table 3: Levels of customer satisfaction reported in the literature

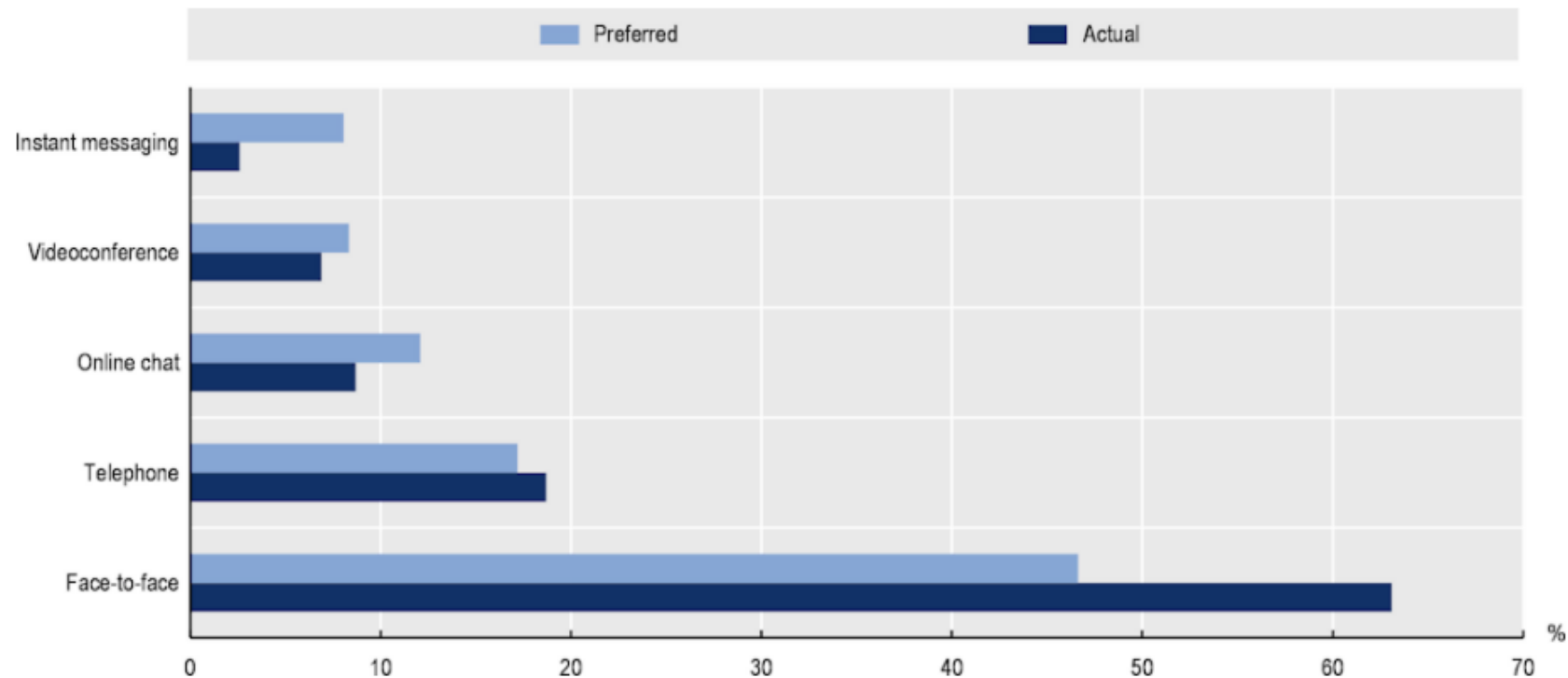
Study	Mode	Country	Sample size	Level of satisfaction
Deese (2002)	Employment and careers centre (various services)	USA	4,207	89%
Ting (2009)	Online career assessment	China/Hong Kong	92	87%
Head of Defence Statistics Health (2014)	3 day career transition workshop	UK	3,153	87%
BIS (2013)	Face-to-face and telephone career counselling	England	8,808	85% (84% for telephone)
BIS (2012)	Face-to-face and telephone career counselling	England	6,610	85% (84% for telephone)
Šverko <i>et al.</i> (2002)	Online career assessment	Croatia	2,064	82%
Noble (2010)	Face-to-face career development programme	USA	41	78-98% (on various measures)
Healy (2001)	Face-to-face career counselling	USA	153	78%
BIS (2013)	Online information	England	6,504	76%

**But impact/satisfaction for children the same
→ Number of jobs heard about mattered more than the channel**

OECD data: Adult preferences historically split c. 50:50 between face-to-face and remote channels

Figure 2.4. **Actual and preferred channels of service delivery**

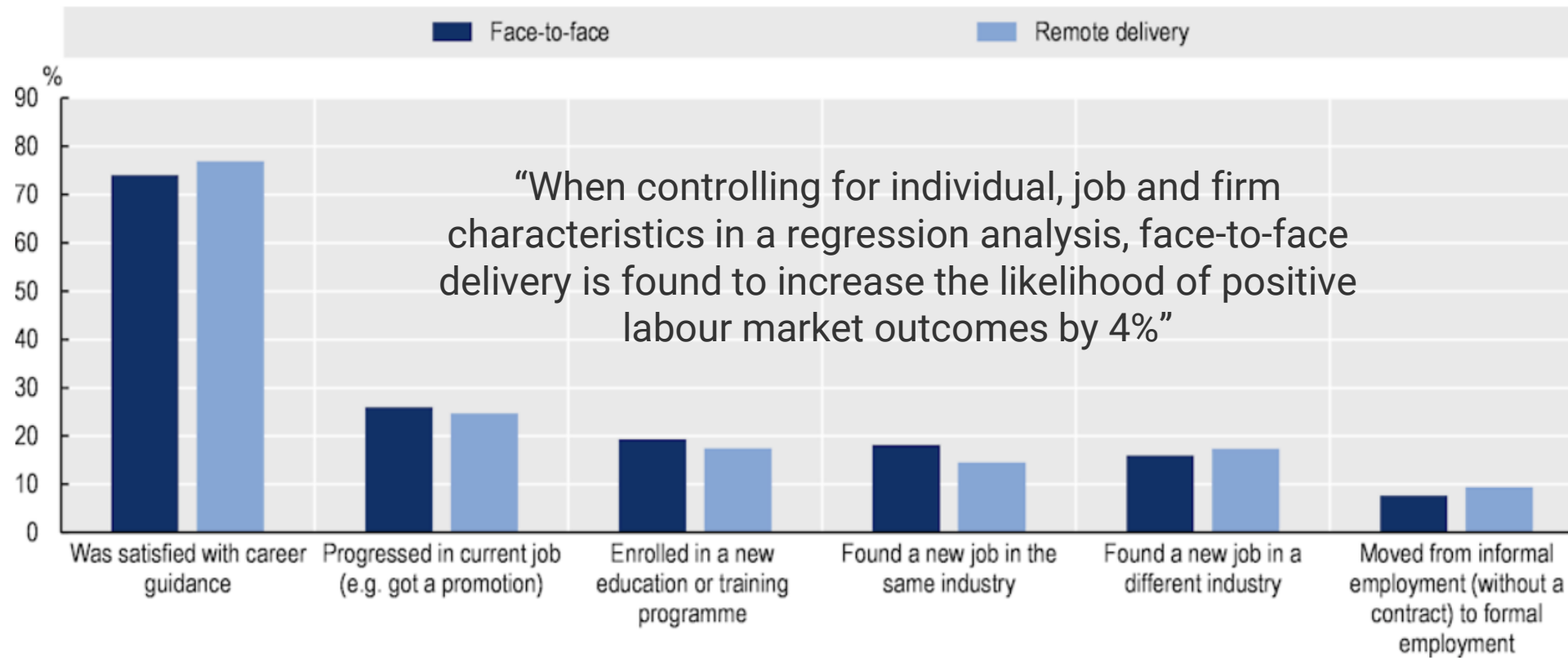
Percentage of adults who have spoken to a career guidance advisor over the past five years (Actual), and percentage of respondents (Preferred), by channel of delivery



Note: Average for the six countries covered by the SCGA: Chile, France, Germany, Italy, New Zealand and the United States. Data refer to the last time the respondent spoke to a career guidance advisor. 'Actual' refers to the percentage of people who spoke to a career guidance advisor over the past five years. 'Preferred' refers to the percentage of all respondents, including both users and non-users of career guidance services.

OECD data: No large difference in historical outcomes – but slightly better for face-to-face

Percentage of adults who received career guidance services in the last five years, by mode of delivery



Academic research

- 2013 Finland – close PES offices, go remote → unemployment 2-3 weeks longer (but quality?)
- Digital services alone, without access to a professional historically work less well
- 2019 Tehran university case-control study: online group counselling 0.2 effect size per hour compares well to Oliver et al (1988) or Whiston et al (2017) meta-analyses

Note: Average for the six countries covered by the SCGA: Chile, France, Germany, Italy, New Zealand and the United States. Data refer to the last time the respondent spoke to a career guidance advisor. Remote delivery includes telephone, online chat, videoconference, instant messaging or email. OECD 2020 Survey of Career Guidance for Adults (SCGA). <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/ea2a59b4-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/ea2a59b4-en>
 Vehkasalo, V. (2020), “Effects of face-to-face counselling on unemployment rate and duration: evidence from a Public Employment Service reform”, *Journal for Labour Market Research*, Vol. 54/1, p. 11, [10.1186/s12651-020-00276-8](https://doi.org/10.1186/s12651-020-00276-8).
 Whiston, S., B. Brecheisen and J. Stephens (2003), “Does treatment modality affect career counseling effectiveness?”, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, Vol. 62/3, pp. 390-410, [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0001-8791\(02\)00050-7](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0001-8791(02)00050-7).
 Pordelan, N., & Hosseinian, S. (2021). Online career counseling success: the role of hardiness and psychological capital. *Int J Educ Vocat Guidance* 21, 531–549 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10775-020-09452-1>

Do good practice guidelines rely on channel?

Example drawn from secondary school personal guidance

1. Integration. *Personal guidance does not work in isolation. It needs to be integrated into a broader career guidance programme, be supported by senior leadership and involve all staff.*

2. Space and time. *Guidance professionals need appropriate spaces to work in and sufficient time with clients to achieve outcomes.*

3. Preparation and feedback. *Young people need to be prepared for personal guidance sessions and supported to implement the decisions and plans that they have made in these sessions.*

4. Effective interviews. *The personal guidance interviews themselves need to be well run and make use of evidence-based approaches.*

5. Professionalism. *Personal guidance is a professional activity which needs to be undertaken by an expert practitioner informed by professional and ethical standards.*

Key factors for adult satisfaction

- *Having enough time with the adviser*
- *Customer expectations*
- *Receiving new, directly useful information*
- *Advisers who like their job / are positive*

Doing remote guidance better in the future?

Practitioner experience in the pandemic

Savitz-Romer et al. (2020): surveys of 984 school counsellors in US ,

Cedefop et al. (2020): surveys of 963 respondents across 93 countries.

Šapale et al. (2021): structured qualitative discussion with advisors ten in Latvia

- Very challenging time for many practitioners
- Very heterogeneous experiences for practitioners: some felt unsupported, unfamiliar with the tech, concerned that it's less possible to do the pastoral/social-emotional side of guidance remotely, concerns over client access/inclusion, ...
- Guidance comes out, but implementation and support remain hard
 - *April 2020 Detailed guidance from Irish government for online guidance counselling provision by schools*
 - *March 2021 CDI position paper – guidelines for safe and ethical delivery of remote guidance, noting same ethical principles can be done via v/c : competence, duty of care, confidentiality, autonomy, accessibility, & impartiality*

Closing reflections

- Hard to extrapolate from either pre-pandemic or mid-pandemic experiences to a post-pandemic setting – norms are changing, technology improving, new issues emerging, ...
- Individuals' needs differ, e.g. digital inclusion vs. remote/time-poor/hard to travel; some prefer “personal touch”, others feel more comfortable at home
- For certain activities, it's likely that remote vs in-person activities are complements rather than exact substitutes, each providing a different mix of skills/experiences and pros/cons
 - e.g. remote, part-time, project-focused internships vs. the in-person Monday-Friday experience
 - virtual interactive career talks with diverse and distant individuals vs. local interactions and visits
 - mock interviews – help to manage different types of “anxiety”, different things can go wrong
- For other activities, e.g. one-to-one professional guidance conversations, good quality guidance for most clients is defined by more important factors than mode of delivery
- A blended , personalised future is more likely to bring improved impact that better fits people's lives – more cost-effective perhaps, but likely limited cost savings