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IS THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION CONDUCIVE TO NEET ACTIVATION? OPINIONS OF PEOPLE INVOLVED IN NEET ACTIVATION

This article refers to the results of research that was conducted on the eve of the COVID-19 pandemic in Poland, shortly before the first confirmed laboratory case was registered. The research was carried out with 240 people who dealt daily with youth, including NEETs activation, through work or volunteering in various types of institutions (public, NGO, and private). The results allowed us to back upthe hypothesis that people who deal with NEET youth support on a daily basis value traditional methods of professional activation more than digital methods. The analysis also answered the question of which demo-social variables among the respondents had an impact on their assessment of the methods used for professional activation. The variables that were found to significantly differentiate the respondents' assessments included gender, education, place of residence, the type of institution in which the respondents worked, and the age range of the respondents.

Keywords: PES, unemployed youth, labor market, NEET, neoliberalism.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the second decade of the 21st century, in connection with the technological revolution (Industry 4.0), practically every sphere of importance for human functioning undergoes changes: the economy (economic sphere), interpersonal relations (social sphere), attitudes towards work (and work itself) change, and education changes. Both training methods and counseling methods used to activate economically inactive people (whose profile is also changing fundamentally – towards "NEET" (Not in Employment, Education, or Training)) are changing. The change taking place in this field is very rapid, and therefore the literature and research do not sufficiently describe these issues.

The main focus of this article is on inactive professional youth, included in the so-called "NEET category".

The hypothesis in this article was the assumption that people in Poland that are involved on a daily basis in institutional support for unemployed youth, including NEETs, value traditional methods of professional activation of this social category more than digital

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methods. In the article, apart from verifying this hypothesis, we try to answer the question: whether and what demo-social variables of the respondents have an impact on their assessment?

The hypothesis was tested by quantifying the survey conducted in Poland on a sample of 240 people who daily deal with youth, including NEETs, activation through work or volunteering in various types of institutions (public, NGO and private). The distribution of responses was checked and the relationships between the evaluations of individual methods and the demo-social characteristics of the respondents were assessed using statistical methods.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW ON NEET. NEET SITUATION IN POLAND

The constant focus of researchers, as well as policymakers, on the so called "NEET" group, mainly among young people in particular countries around the world, as well as in the European Union (EU), is noticeable, especially from 2010 onwards. The EU policymakers even sometimes referred to having a "NEET crisis" (Mascherini, 2012). In 2012, the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofund) recommended to focus on young disadvantaged people, mainly the NEET youth, in the age range of 15 to 29 that are excluded from labor and from the education market in the EU (Mascherini, 2012; Liszka, Walawender, 2018). The NEET rate is considered the share of individuals who are not engaged in employment, education or training in the total population of young people in a given territorial area collectively (Mirończuk, 2014). If we consider the age group of 15–29 within the 27 EU member states, we may notice that in most (including Poland) the NEET youth population is feminized, with only a few EU states having more men than woman in the category (Luxemburgh, Finland, Ireland, Belgium, and Estonia) (see Chart 1).

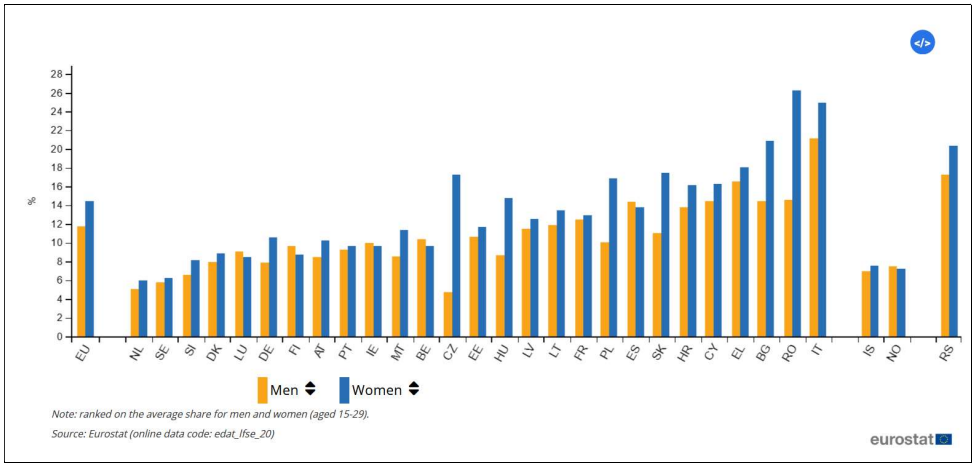

Chart 1. Young people (15–29) neither in employment nor in education and training, by sex, 2021

Source: Eurostat.

If we compare the overall share of NEETs in particular countries between 2011 and 2021, it is noticeable that the NEET rates were reduced in most EU states, but increased in Italy, Romania, Cyprus, Austria, and Luxemburgh. For Poland, the rate was 15.2% in 2011, and 13.4% in 2021 (Chart 2).

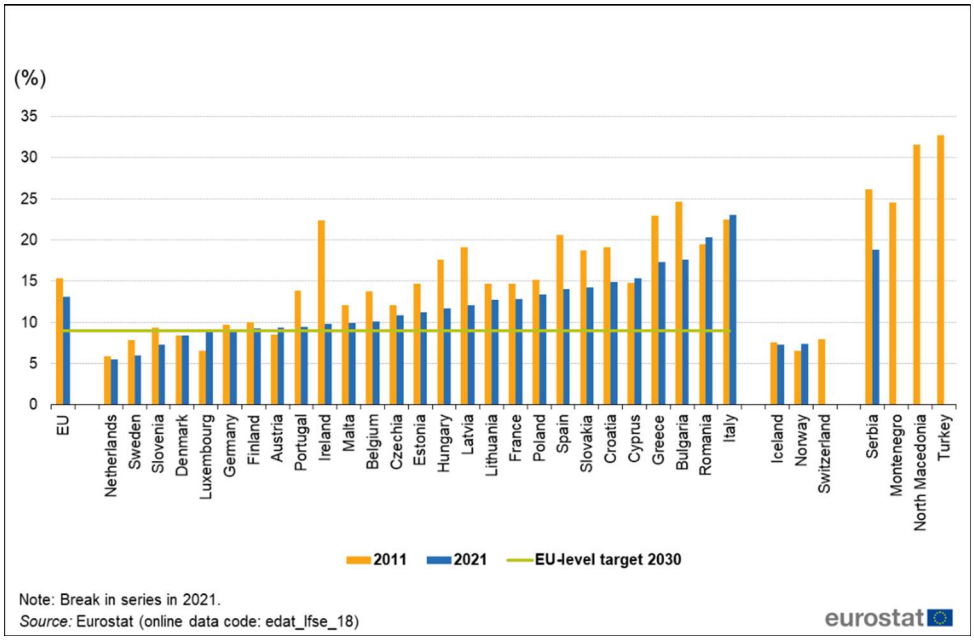

Chart 2. Young people (15–29) neither in employment nor in education and training, 2011 and 2021

Source: Eurostat.

The NEET acronym was applied by the EU as well as its member states' institutions and governments in order to build public policies, especially in the 2014–2020 EU perspective. In recent years, studies not only focus on unemployed youth, including NEET persons from a particular geographic area, but also on the macrolevel factors of nations, such as the economic growth, the educational system and the overall condition of the labor market institutions supporting the group of young people (Bacher et al., 2017). Particular focus, despite the employment policies, is on the area of the vocational education and the positive effect of the dual apprenticeship systems on employment ability of youth (Bacher et al., 2017; Liszka, Walawender, 2021). Some other studies focus on institutions and their staff. They include the perception of usefulness, trust and the effectiveness of the institutions that implement public policies on NEETs (Alonso et al., 2022), or on how the rates of different NEET subgroups are conditioned by various institutional configurations in EU states (Assmann, Broschinski, 2021). Assmann & Broschinski (2021) conducted a comparative analysis for 26 European countries using aggregated EU Labor Force Survey data from 2018 and concluded that "institutional causes of being NEET are as diverse as the group itself" (Assmann, Broschinski, 2021). The study found that in Northern European

countries with high expenditures on disability benefits there are also high rates of NEETs with a disability or illness concluding that high disability benefits may create false incentives to stay away from the labor market. High levels of NEETs with care responsibilities were noticed in Visegrad group countries (Czechia, Slovakia, Hungary, and Poland) with undeveloped family-related services in conjunction with weak formalized long-term care. Greece, Italy, Spain, France, Croatia, Latvia, and Portugal having very restrictive employment protection legislation, have a very high proportion of unemployment youth and highest NEET rates. On the other hand, Germany, Austria, Belgium, the UK, and Ireland, Lithuania, and Slovenia have less restrictive employment protection integration and developed work-oriented VET systems or have high investment in education, and are characterized by particularly low rates of discouraged and unemployed NEETs (Assmann, Broschinski, 2021).

Public, non-public (Civil Society Organizations), and privately owned institutions supporting young people outside the education and labor market play a crucial role in the implementation of particular public policies in EU states, including the "flagship" initiative – Youth Guarantee (YG) created in order to support unemployed young people. In 2013, the idea of the proposed instrument was to provide each young person an offer of employment, further education, apprenticeship, or traineeship in as little as four months after the person becomes unemployed, or leaves the formal education system (Council of the European Union, 2013). Particularly, the public employment services (PESs) have a crucial role in the implementation of YG in EU countries. An interesting research on PESs located in European countries and their role as the lead organizations in the implementation and coordination of YG shows that in only seven EU countries the national PESs are clearly identified as the lead organizations for coordinating and managing the YG schemes, and only in two (Poland and Cyprus) they have the most responsibilities in implementation (Tosun, 2017). A study on data gathered from survey studies in which all but the Spanish PESs participated assigned one point per each of the following dimension concerning national PESs and their role in the YG initiative: responsibility for management and co-ordination of the YG (1 point), coordinating the public and private organizations involved in the YG implementation (1 point), outreach of NEETs (1 point), registering young unemployed people (1 point), provision of YG services (1 point), following up who benefitted (1 point) (Tosun, 2017). The Polish and the Cyprus PESs were assigned 6 points, which meant having the most responsibilities pertaining to YG implementation and support of unemployed youth, including NEETs. Therefore, the next question is how the PESs in Poland try to recruit NEETs and if they succeed or not, especially since 87% of YG participants enter the program through PESs in Poland and two thirds of YG project coordinators reported problems with recruitment of participants (Hardy et al., 2018). A study by Smoter (2022) concluded that most of NEETs in the age group of 15–24 remain beyond the reach of the public services registers, including as much as three quarters of NEETs from the Polish rural areas. Moreover, the results show that most PESs did not cooperate with local institutions, rarely used modern channels of communication with potential clients and if so, only with a limited extent used such methods as mobile units, info-kiosks, or information centers for targeting the hardest-to-reach NEETs. Only some of them also used promotion on social media (39.5%) (Smoter, 2022). Even worse young NEET coverage by YG was observed in Spain (31.7% of the possible beneficiaries) (Strecker et al., 2021), or in Hungary, where research shows that only 6.2% of the NEET population was covered by the program, mainly due to problems with reaching unregistered

NEETs, and lack of cooperation and communication between institutions (Parrag, 2019). Problems with reaching inactive NEETs who are not registered at PESs are noticed all over the world, also outside the EU states (OECD, 2016).

3. CHANGES IN TRAINING AND CONSULTING METHODS TOWARDS DIGITIZATION

Nowadays, labor market sets new challenges for young people, as beside theoretical knowledge and practical skills, digital skills and competences pertaining to the use of digital technology have a great importance. Poor digital skills can result in social exclusion, while strong digital competences may guarantee good earnings and safety of employment (Madej--Kurzawa et al., 2021). This applies as well to young people in the NEET status. A number of initiatives targeting unemployed youth try to equip the participants with digital employability skills, such as searching jobs on-line, ability to write a CV with word editing software, and filling a job application through a computer (Szpakowicz, 2022). The Madej--Kurzawa et al. (2021) study allowed for the identification of four groups of EU countries differing by NEET rates and digital skills. The research team concluded, that countries with lowest NEET rates are also those where young people present high levels of digital skills and countries with highest NEET rates include those where young people present low levels of digital skills. Poland was among the countries with medium NEET rates and those where youth presents strong digital competences, but only in processing e-mails, and low digital competences in searching for job, study, and course offers online and applying for them (Madej-Kurzawa et al., 2021). The staff of the organizations that work with disadvantaged youth should play a crucial role in encouraging young people to acquire or develop digital skills. One study concluded that in Poland 42.5% of NEET respondents find their level of qualification and professional competencies satisfactory (Rak, 2022).

Digital transformations also affected institutions supporting unemployed youth, including services of "employment assistance", as the major forms of interventions they offer include career guidance, candidate profiling, and job-matching. Nonetheless, organizations may still prefer face-to-face communication over the digital one during technological reforms (Scarano, Colfer, 2022). Public services (PESs) can also benefit from digitalization, for example by allowing first time service-users to register their profiles in the PES system, or by posting videos, tests, or reading instructions for jobseekers on the PES website, external sites, or self-service portals. They may also use more advanced methods for organization of online trainings with trainers, live webinars, remote meetings, recordings, etc. (Scarano, Colfer, 2022). Digital transformation is also noticeable in career guidance for labor market integration (Kraatz, 2021). Digitalization can also be used to change the necessity of personal meetings of the client with the professional to remote meetings via diverse channels and with usage of online tools in order to increase the accessibility of services (Scarano, Colfer, 2022). Nonetheless, technology cannot replace human interactions, as they are crucial even when using the digital channels (email, counseling using online video channels, chats), so it seems "traditional channels" of communication are not disappearing. Still, digitalization may be a challenge for clients living in rural areas, people with lower education and digital skill levels, and some groups of migrants (Kraatz, 2021). Moreover, an international study concluded that some traditional communication channels, such as telephone communication, can better reach vulnerable clients across country (Kraatz, 2018).

From a more philosophical approach, digital technologies may paradoxically create a potential for an ethical renewal of learning in line with the neoliberal principle of freedom emerging from the individual possibilities it opens, freedom of production, and the search for a new mechanism of security - especially through the Blended Learning (BL) scheme, where learning can be done in part by online delivery and in part by stationary or "traditional" delivery by the trainer (Grimaldi, Ball, 2019). In this approach, BL promises more educational freedom, more effective timing and arrangement of the learning process for the student, more equity, and reduced timing for direct activities with the trainer, and in conclusion greater effect on the education process (Grimaldi, Ball, 2019). The BL scheme may also create a solution that meets expectations of both, the supporters of "traditional channels", as well as the enthusiasts of digitalization in the area of supporting the clients, including NEETs.

Our research may be treated as a pilot study filling the gap in the area of studying the opinions of institutional staff from all over the Poland on the value and effectiveness of traditional tools versus the digital ones in the areas of labor market, job related courses, career guidance, and "employment assistance" services offered for unemployed youth, including NEETs, that the respondents' institutions support. Before we move to the research results, it is worth mentioning the research was done on the eve of the COVID-19 pandemic in Poland, as we were finishing gathering the data at the end of 2019 and at the beginning of 2020, a few weeks later, on 4th March 2020, the first laboratory confirmed case was registered in Poland. The so called "the China virus" by some Polish media (Wapteka, 2020), although known at the time, seemed a still a distant treat for Poles.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Characteristics of the surveyed group of respondents

When selecting the sample, the spatial criterion (division into 16 voivodships) was taken into account. The respondents represented a total of 75 institutions. Only respondents who had contact young people from the 15–29 age range at work, place of employment, or through voluntary activity with were eligible. The research was carried out using a paper questionnaire. Most of the questionnaire included close ended questions. It also included selected scales of attitudes.

241 respondents took part in the study, but one questionnaire was rejected, so 240 were included for the data analyses. The respondents constituted a highly feminized and very well educated group: three quarters of the respondents were women and 90% had higher education. The average age of the respondents was 40 years, the median was 38. The greatest number of respondents was between 36 and 45 years old (37%). Every fifth respondent lived in a rural area. The largest percentage were residents of cities with a population of over 100,000 residents. Every fifth respondent had a disability certificate (Table 1).

When considering the structure of the respondents in terms of the characteristics of the people they work with, it should be noted that the largest number of respondents (every third) worked for non-governmental organizations (foundations, associations) and for public employment services (nearly every fifth).

In their professional practice, the results indicated that most often the respondents work with people from "all age groups indicated in the survey" (33%) and with people older than 29 (32%).

Table 1. The characteristics of the studied group in terms of domestic characteristics

		No.	Percentage
Sex	Women	183	76%
	Men	57	24%
Age	Less than 25 years	10	4%
	25–35 years	77	32%
	36–46 years old	88	37%
	46–55 years old	44	18%
	56–65 years old	19	8%
	More than 65 years old	3	1%
Education	Secondary general education	12	5%
	Post-secondary and sec. vocational	13	5%
	Bachelor's degree	16	7%
	Master's degree	197	82%
	Doctoral degree	3	1%
Domicile	village	48	20%
	city up to 20,000 residents	27	11%
	city with 20 to 50 thousand	42	18%
	city with 50 to 100 thousand	32	13%
	city more than 100 thousand	91	38%
Certificate of disability	yes	20	8%
	no	218	92%

Source: Own study based on research results.

Almost half of the surveyed people have contact with all categories classified as "young people" in their professional work. Every fifth respondent indicated that they work with the category of people defined as people who have not been studying or working for at least 4 weeks before the meeting (Table 2).

Table 2. Characteristics of the studied group according to the nature of the people with whom the respondents work

		No.	Percentage
Institution type	public employment services (regional, poviat)	40	17%
	Volunteer Labor Corps	34	14%
	non-governmental organization (foundation, association)	75	32%
	school (vocational education – trade schools/ technology)	16	7%
	school (other than those mentioned above)	13	6%
	non-school training institution	32	13%
	institution of employment agency or career counseling	20	8%
	other	8	3%
Age range of young people with whom the respondent has contact	from 15 to 18 years	31	13%
	from 18 to 25 years	38	16%
	from 25 to 29 years	12	5%
	all of the above	79	33%
	different age range	76	32%

Table 2 (cont.). Characteristics of the studied group according to the nature of the people with whom the respondents work

		No.	Percentage
Young people with whom most often the respondent has contact	learners and working people	27	11%
	learners, but not working for at least 4 weeks before the meeting	26	11%
	people who have not been studying or working for at least 4 weeks before the meeting	52	22%
	all of the above	107	45%
	other	24	10%

Source: Own study based on research results.

4.2. Respondents' opinion on the effectiveness of traditional forms of professional and educational activation among people aged 15–29.

The traditional forms of professional activation usually include:

- internships/apprenticeships,
- training/vocational courses,
- social training (so-called "soft"),
- career counseling,
- job placement offered,
- referral to undertake/supplement education,
- in vocational education/training institutions.

The respondents were asked to evaluate individual forms of activation on a five-point scale, where 1 means very low effectiveness, 3 – average and 5 – very high effectiveness. Then the average of the grades was calculated. The highest average was achieved by internships/apprenticeships (4.17), followed by career counseling (4.08) and vocational training/courses (4.07). The lowest average grade was obtained by employment services (3.95) and social training (the so-called "soft") (3.96) (Table 3).

Table 3. Basic descriptive statistics for the assessment of traditional forms of professional activation

	Mean	Me	Mo	N_{Mo}	Min	Max	Std	V_z
internships/apprenticeships	4.17	4	5	100	1	5	0.88	21
training/vocational courses	4.07	4	4	95	2	5	0.87	21
social training (so-called "soft")	3.96	4	4	97	1	5	0.88	22
career counseling/counseling	4.08	4	4	109	1	5	0.85	21
job placement offered	3.95	4	4	107	1	5	0.92	23
referral to undertake/supplement education in vocational education/training institutions	4.02	4	4	105	2	5	0.80	20

Source: Own study based on research results.

The respondents were also asked about the instruments that may be helpful in the process of preparing people aged 15 to 29 for employment. They mainly mentioned

coaching / tutoring / mentoring (72%)[3], financial support during apprenticeship (71%), and to a lesser extent psychological help (55%) (Chart 3).

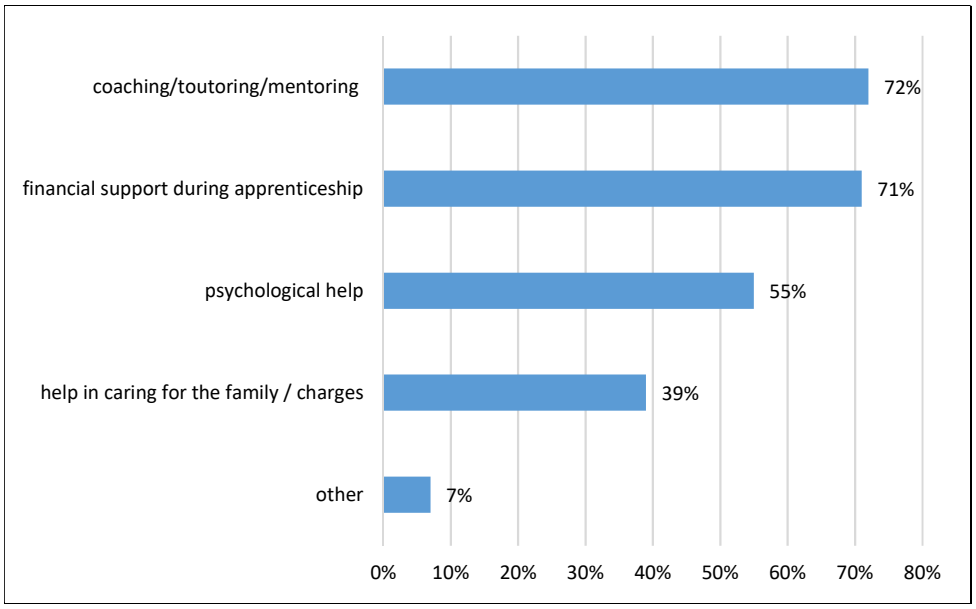

Chart 3. Instruments that may be helpful, according to the respondents, in the process of preparing people aged 15 to 29 for employment

Source: Own study based on research results.

4.3. Respondents' opinion on the effectiveness of digital tools in professional and educational activation among people aged 15-29

The modern forms of vocational and educational activation in the study include:

- internet platforms / portals,
- e-learning training,
- applications / computer programs/for a smartphone,
- multimedia films (e.g. YouTube),
- gamification / workshops,
- digital diagnostic tests,
- other digital instruments in addition to those listed above.

The respondents assessed the above-mentioned forms of vocational and educational activation using a similar evaluation method as in the case of traditional methods.

The highest average scores were obtained by the following forms: platforms/internet portals and applications/computer programs/for a smartphone (4.05), followed by digital diagnostic tests (4.0). The lowest scores were given to e-learning trainings (3.72) (Table 4).

[3] The respondents could provide several answers.

Table 4. Basic descriptive statistics for the evaluation of the effectiveness of digital tools in professional activation

	Mean	Me	Mo	N_{Mo}	Min	Max	Std	V_z
internet platforms/portals	4.05	4	4	108	1	5	0.83	21
e-learning training	3.72	4	4	100	1	5	0.90	24
applications/computer programs/for a smartphone	4.05	4	4	109	2	5	0.81	20
multimedia films (e.g. YouTube)	3.93	4	4	94	2	5	0.86	22
gamification games/workshops	3.87	4	4	96	1	5	0.88	23
digital diagnostic tests	4.00	4	4	105	1	5	0.83	21
other digital instruments in addition to those listed above	1.30	1	1	161	1	2	0.46	35

Source: Own study based on research results.

When asked whether digital instruments, in addition to those listed above (i.e. platforms/portals, applications/programs, e-learning training, multimedia films, games, digital tests), can be helpful in the process of preparing people aged 15 to 29 years of age for employment, 70% of the respondents answered negatively and 30% positively (Chart 4).

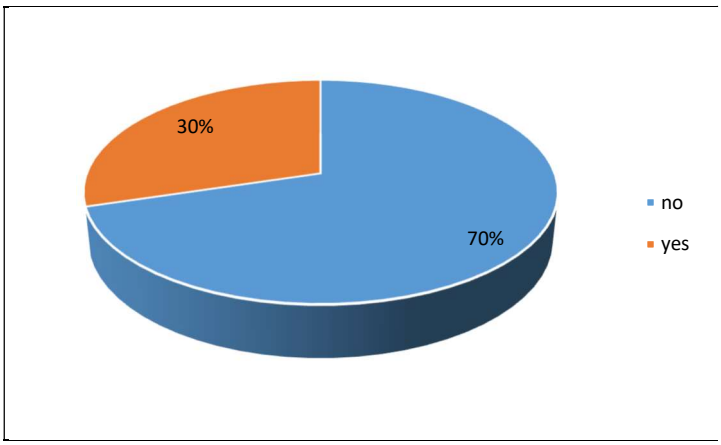

Chart 4. Can other instruments be helpful in the process of preparing for employment by people aged 15–29?

Source: Own study based on research results.

4.4. The difference in ratings

When analyzing the differences in assessments, it should be stated that methods considered traditional are generally rated higher than digital tools. Figure 3 presents the average scores for traditional and digital tools in the socio-professional activation of young people. The three top-rated tools with averages between 4.17 and 4.07 are traditional tools. These are: internships/apprenticeships, counseling / career counseling and training/vo-

cational courses. The three lowest rated tools with averages between 3.93 and 3.72 are digital. These are: multimedia films (eg YouTube), games/gamification workshops and e-learning trainings (Chart 5).

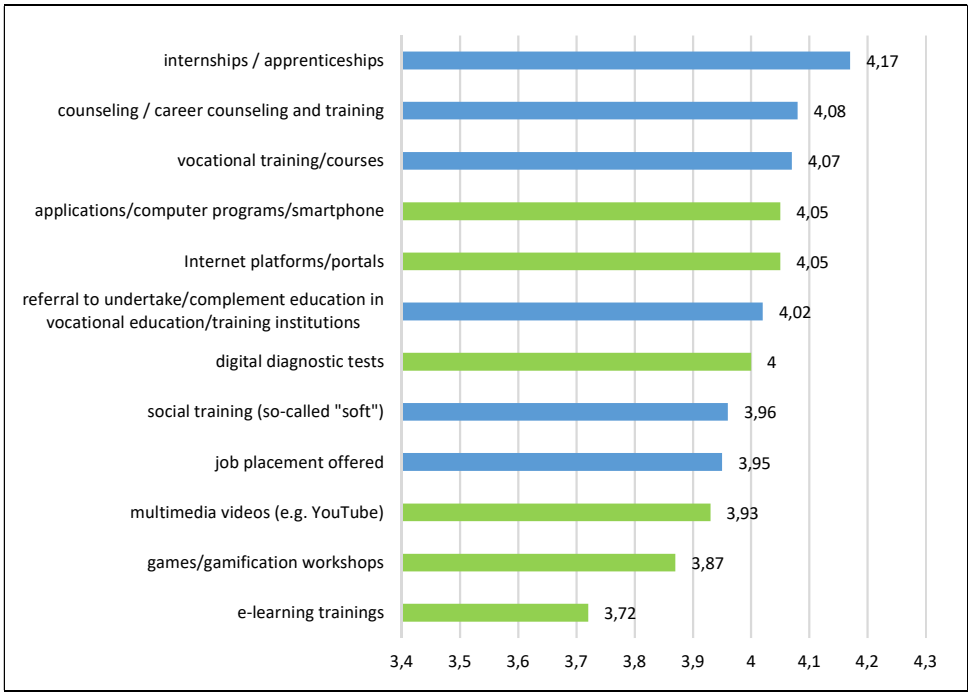

Chart 5. Average ratings of the effectiveness of digital tools in professional activation ("traditional" – blue and "digital" – green)

Source: Own study based on research results.

4.5. Dependency analysis

The analysis includes the results of the ANOVA Kruskal-Wallis and U Mann-Whitney tests that allow to assess whether the relationship or differences between the selected variables are statistically significant. These are nonparametric tests. The significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ was adopted for the research. It is assumed that: when $p < 0.05$ there is a statistically significant relationship (marked with *); $p < 0.01$, there is a highly significant relationship (**); $p < 0.001$, there is a very high statistically significant relationship (***). The analyses were completed using Statistica 13.1 and an Excel spreadsheet.

It was checked whether demo-social variables have an impact on the assessment of the use of individual activation tools. The analysis showed several such relationships.

The conducted research shows that gender is such a variable. It had an impact on the assessment of the effectiveness of social training $p < \alpha$ ($p = 0.0400$), counseling and career counseling $p < \alpha$ ($p = 0.0456$), online platforms and portals $p < \alpha$ ($p = 0.0155$), applications and computer programs $p < \alpha$ ($p = 0.0406$) and the effectiveness of games and gamification workshops $p < \alpha$ ($p = 0.0456$) (Table 5).

Table 5. U Mann-Whithey test results. Gender and traditional and digital activation tools

	p – (test probability)
social training (so-called “soft”)	*0.0400* *
career counseling/counseling	*0.0456* *
internet platforms/ portals	*0.0155* *
applications / computer programs/for a smartphone	*0.0406* *
gamification games/workshops	*0.0456* *

Source: Own study based on research results.

Chart 6 shows how the effectiveness of all the methods mentioned above was assessed by women and men.

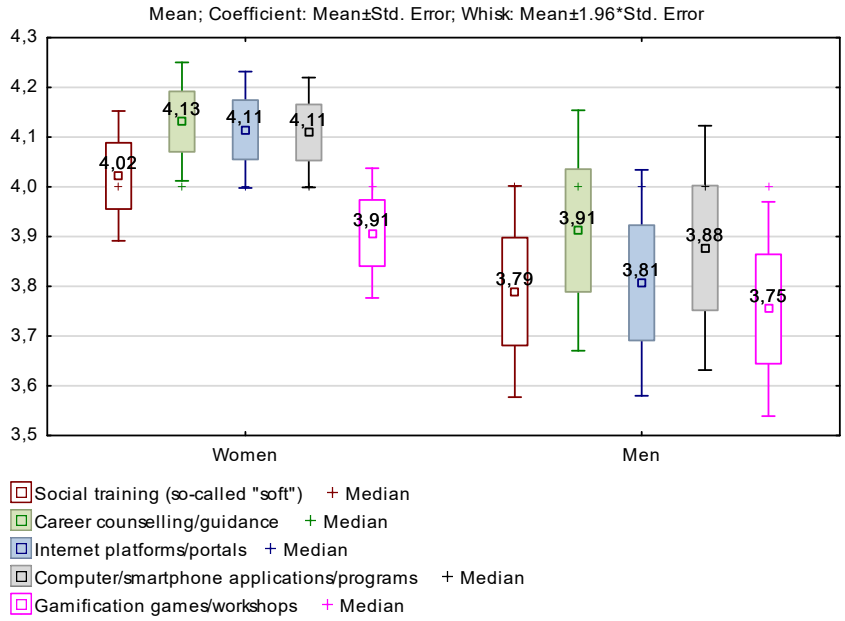

Chart 6. Average ratings of individual activation methods, broken down by gender

Source: Own study based on research results.

Another variable that significantly impacted the respondents' statements was education. The conducted research shows that education has an impact on the assessment of traditional and digital activation methods – internships and apprenticeships $p < \alpha$ ($p = 0.0000$), training and vocational courses $p < \alpha$ ($p = 0.0067$), referrals to study in vocational education institutions $p < \alpha$ ($p = 0.0476$) and in games and gamification workshops $p < \alpha$ ($p = 0.0462$) (Table 6).

Table 6. Kruskal-Wallis ANOVVA test results. Education and traditional and digital activation tools

	p – (test probability)
internships / apprenticeships	0.0000 ***
training / vocational courses	0.0067 **
referral to study in vocational education institutions	0.0476 *
gamification games / workshops	0.0462 *

Source: Own study based on research results.

Chart 7 shows that the effectiveness of internships and apprenticeships was rated the highest by people with general secondary education (4.33), and the lowest by people with doctoral education (2.67). Similarly, the effectiveness of training and vocational courses was rated the highest by people with general secondary education (4.25), and the lowest by people with doctoral education (3.33). The same difference is also in the assessment of the effectiveness of referral to study in vocational education institutions, which was the effectiveness of this tool was the highest rated by people with general secondary education (4.08), and the lowest by people with doctoral education (3.67). The last tool comes from the digital group and it was an assessment of the effectiveness of games and gamification workshops. The effectiveness of this tool is rated the highest by people with doctoral education (4.33) and the lowest by those with post-secondary and secondary vocational education (3.62) (Chart 7).

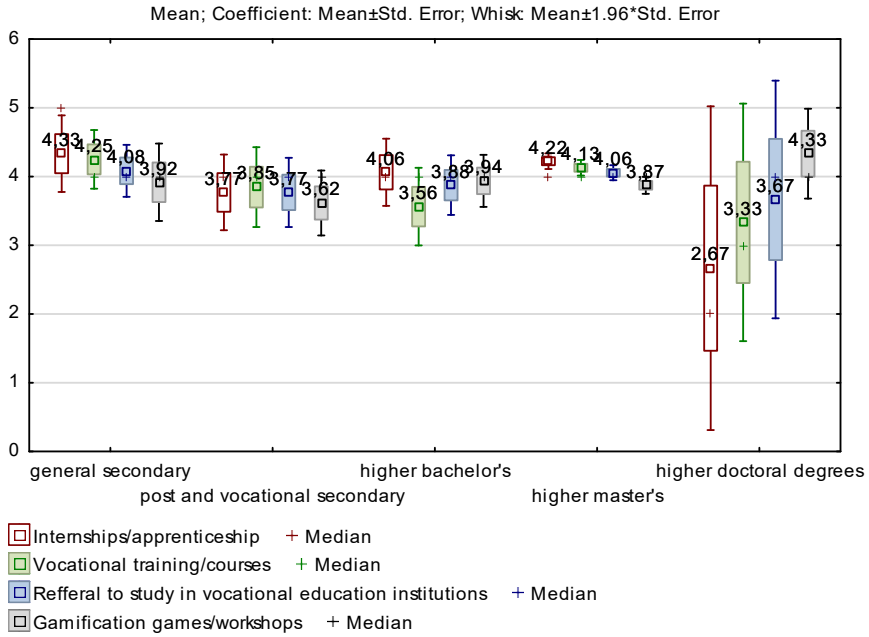

Chart 7. Average ratings of individual activation methods, broken down by education

Source: Own study based on research results.

Another variable impacting the respondents' statements was the place of residence. The research shows that this variable has an impact on the evaluation of digital activation methods – platforms and internet portals $p < \alpha$ ($p = 0.0471$) and multimedia films $p < \alpha$ ($p = 0.0424$) (Table 7).

Table 7. Kruskal-Wallis ANOVVA test results. Education and digital activation tools

	p – (test probability)
internet platforms / portals	0.0471 *
multimedia films (e.g. YouTube)	0.0424 *

Source: Own study based on research results.

Chart 8 shows that the highest effectiveness of internet platforms and portals is assessed by people living in cities with over 50,000 up to 100,000 inhabitants (4.31) and the lowest living in the largest cities (3.85).

On the other hand, the highest effectiveness of multimedia films (e.g. on YouTube) is assessed by people living in cities up to 20,000 inhabitants (4.04) and the lowest by respondents living in the largest cities (3.82).

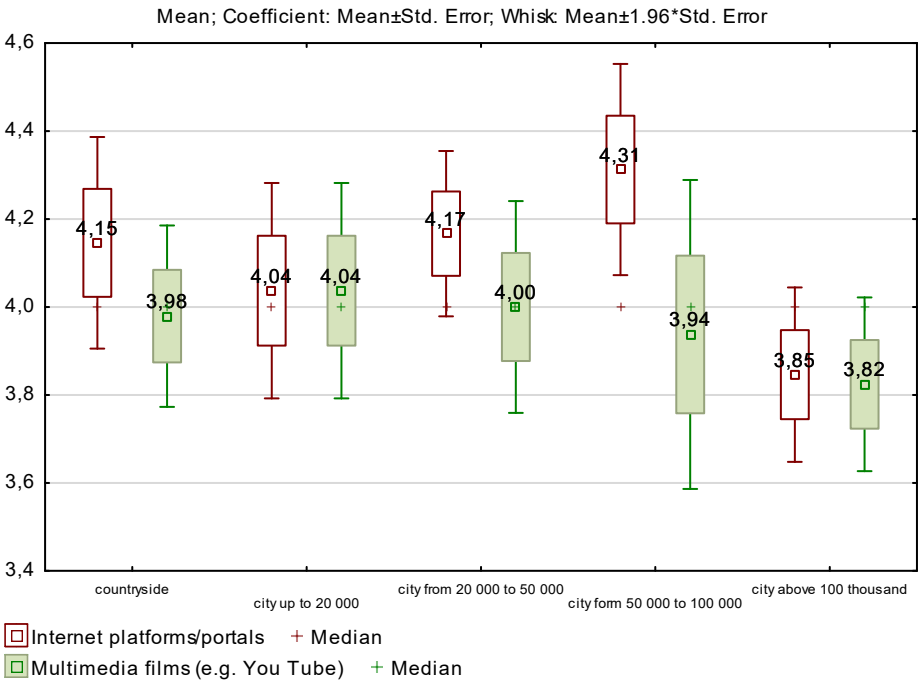

Chart 8. Average ratings of individual activation methods, broken down by place of residence.

Source: Own study based on research results.

Also, having a certificate of disability has an impact on the assessment of the effectiveness of job placement $p < \alpha$ ($p = 0.0339$) and computer applications and programs as well as on smartphones $p < \alpha$ ($p = 0.0426$) (Table 8).

Table 8. U Mann-Whitney test results. Holding a certificate of disability and the assessment of traditional and digital activation tools

	p – (test probability)
job placement	0.0339 *
applications / computer programs / for a smartphone	0.0426 *

Source: Own study based on research results.

Chart 9 shows that the effectiveness of job placement (4.35) and computer or smartphone applications or programs (4.15) is rated higher by people who have a disability certificate.

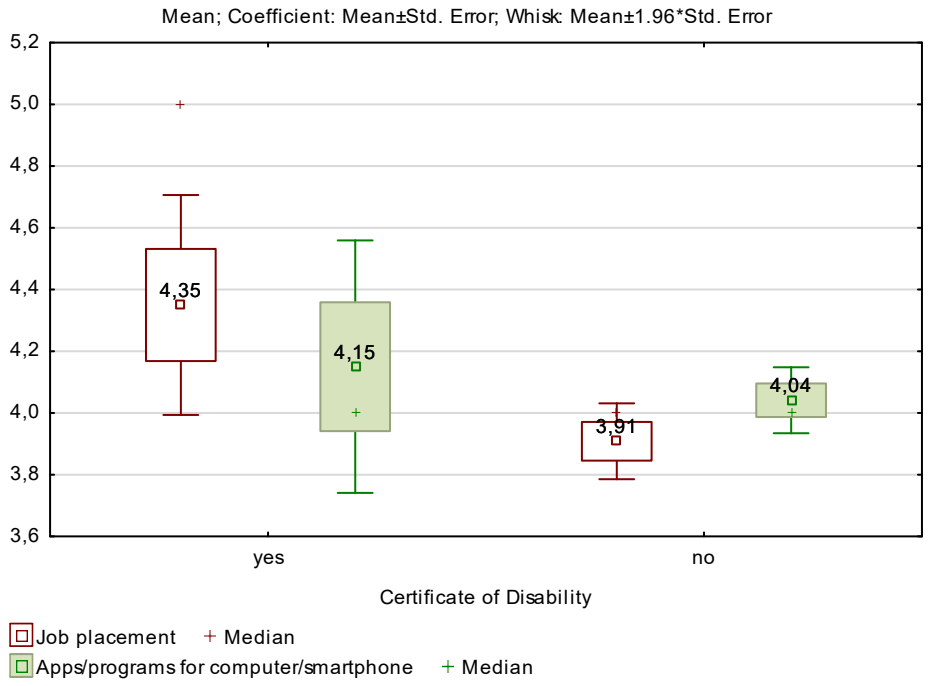

Chart 9. Average ratings for individual activation methods, broken down by having a certificate of disability.

Source: Own study based on research results.

Another variable that influenced the assessment of respondents' statements was the type of institution in which the respondents work. The conducted research shows that the type of institution influences both the assessment of traditional and digital tools. The test results are presented in Table 9.

Table 9. Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA test results. The type of institution and the assessment of traditional and digital activation tools

	p – (test probability)
internships / apprenticeships	0.0112 *
career counseling / counseling	0.0168 *
job placement	0.0424 *
referral to study in vocational education institutions	0.0465 *
internet platforms / portals	0.0432 *
gamification games / workshops	0.0499 *

Source: Own study based on research results.

The effectiveness of work experience and apprenticeships was rated the highest by respondents working in schools (vocational education – industry schools and technology) (4.44) and in regional and poviat public agencies (4.36), and the lowest by respondents working in institutions providing employment or vocational counseling services (3,65).

Respondents working in regional and poviat public agencies rated career counseling the highest (4.30) and respondents working in institutions providing employment or career counseling services rated it the lowest (3.75).

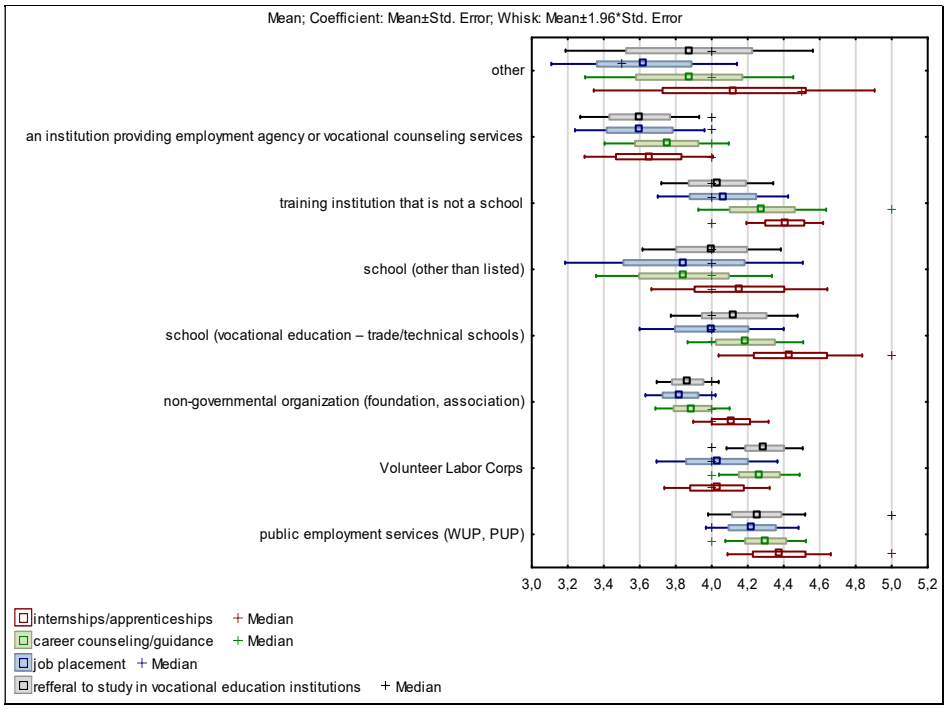

Chart 10. Average ratings of individual methods of traditional activation, broken down by the type of institution in which the respondent works

Source: Own study based on research results.

Efficiency – employment agencies were rated the highest by respondents working in regional and poviat public agencies (4.22) and the lowest (3.60) by respondents working in institutions providing employment or vocational counseling services.

In the case of evaluating the effectiveness of a referral to study in vocational education institutions as a tool for activating youth, it was rated the highest by respondents working in Voluntary Labor Corps (4.29) and the lowest by those working in institutions providing employment or vocational counseling services (3.60) (Chart 10).

In the case of the assessment of the effectiveness of online platforms and portals, respondents working in the public employment services assessed them as the most effective (4.38) and the lowest rating was by respondents working in institutions providing employment or career counseling services (3.70). Regarding the effectiveness of the game and gamification workshops as an activation tool, the respondents working in other workplaces (4.25) and in a training institution other than a school (4.09) rated them as the most effective, and those working in institutions providing employment or career counseling services the lowest (3.55) (Chart 11).

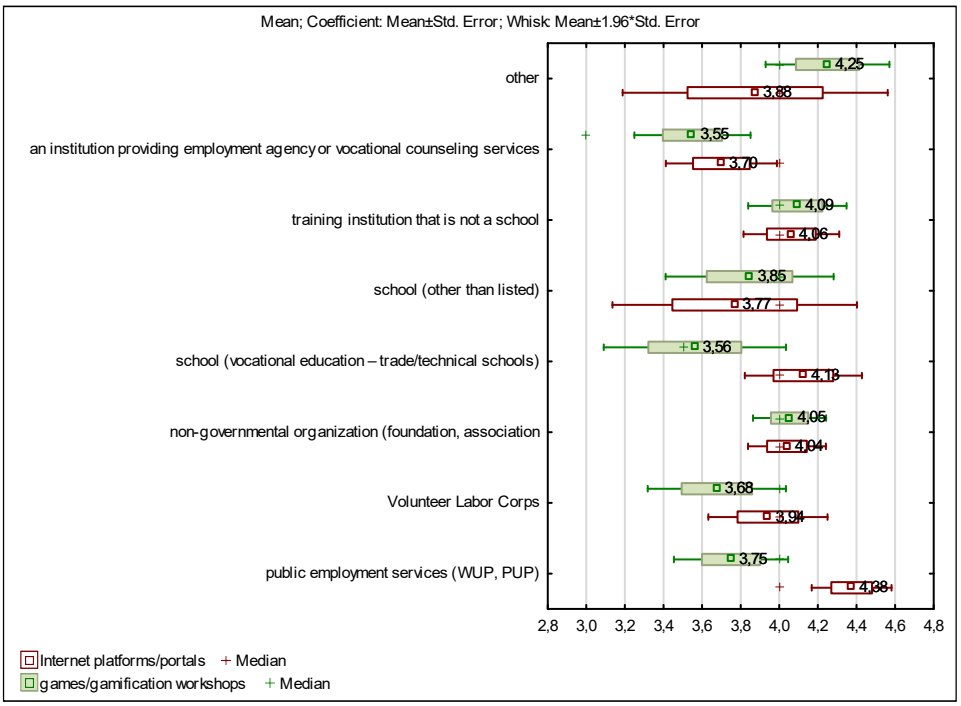

Chart 11. Average ratings of individual methods of digital activation, broken down by the type of institution in which the respondent works

Source: Own study based on research results.

The conducted research shows that the age range of the respondents had an impact on the assessment of training tools and vocational courses $p < \alpha$ ($p = 0.0461$) and the assessment of the effectiveness of digital diagnostic tests $p < \alpha$ ($p = 0.0324$) (Table 10).

Table 10. Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA test results. Education and traditional and digital activation tools

	p – (test probability)
training / vocational courses	0.0461 *
digital diagnostic tests	0.0324 *

Source: Own study based on research results.

Chart 12 shows that the highest effectiveness of training courses is assessed by respondents working with people in a different age range than those mentioned (4.24), and the lowest by respondents working with people from 25 to 29 years of age (3.83).

On the other hand, the effectiveness of digital diagnostic tests was rated the highest by respondents working with the youngest age group, aged 15 to 18 (4.10), and the lowest by respondents working with people aged 25 to 29 (3.91).

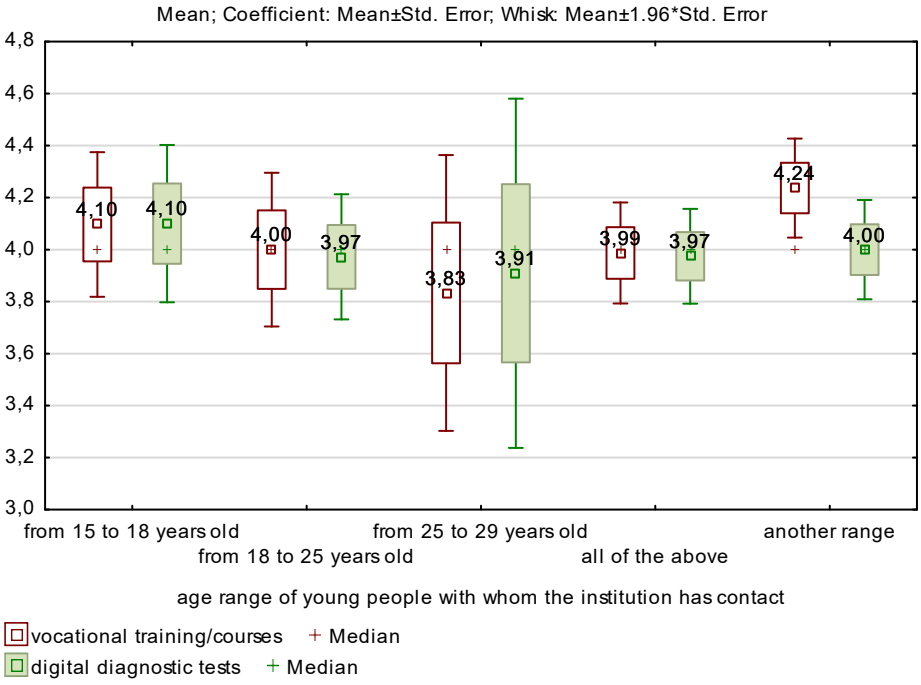

Chart 12. Average ratings of individual activation methods broken down by the age group of the respondents

Source: Own study based on research results.

The conducted research shows that the type of people the respondent has contact with had an impact on the assessment of two tools: e-learning training $p < \alpha$ ($p = 0.0032$) and the assessment of applications and computer programs for a smartphone $p < \alpha$ ($p = 0, 0325$) (Table 11).

Table 11. Kruskal-Wallis ANOVVA test results. The type of young people the respondent has contact with and the assessment of traditional and digital activation tools

	p – (test probability)
e-learning training	0.0032 **
applications / computer programs / for a smartphone	0.0325 *

Source: Own study based on research results.

Chart 13 shows that the effectiveness of e-learning training is rated the highest by respondents working with people from the category "other" than those mentioned (4.08), and the lowest by respondents working with people studying but not working at least 4 weeks before the meeting (3.38).

On the other hand, the effectiveness of computer and smartphone applications and programs was rated the highest by respondents working with people who did not study and have not worked for a minimum of 4 weeks before the meeting (4.23), and the lowest was assessed by respondents working with people studying but not working at least 4 weeks before the meeting (3.69).

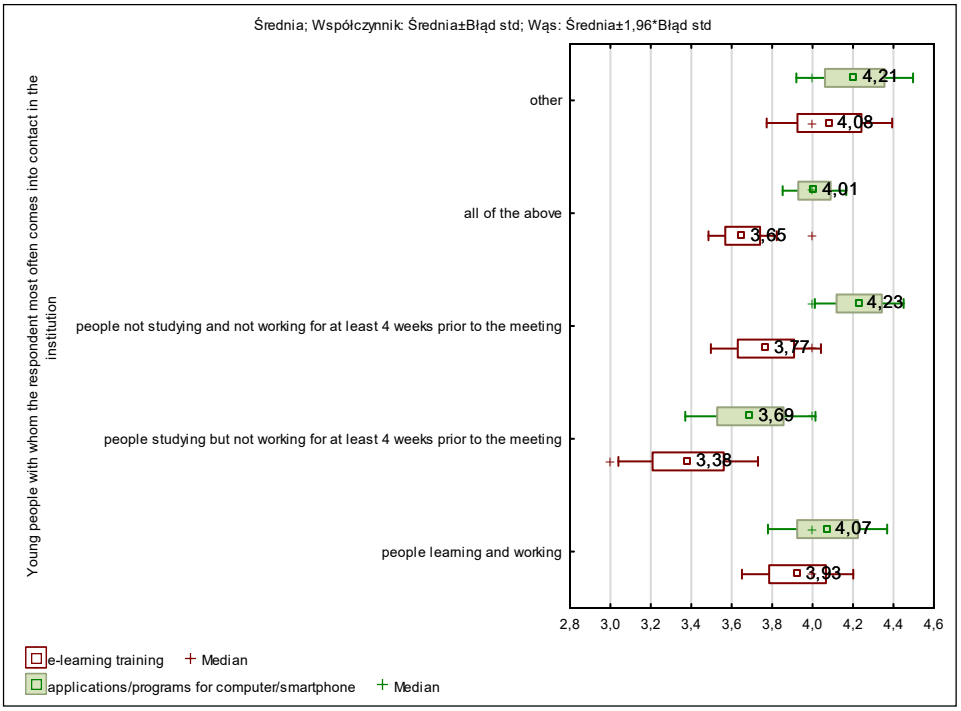

Chart 13. Average ratings of individual activation methods, broken down by the type of people the respondent has contact with

Source: Own study based on research results.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The conducted statistical analysis allowed us to maintain the hypothesis that people who deal with NEET youth support on a daily basis value traditional methods of professional activation more than digital methods. This is evidenced by higher average values of ratings awarded to traditional methods than to digital methods.

The analysis also provided an answer to the question: whether and what demo-social variables of the respondents have an impact on their assessment? First of all, it should be stated that the demosocial variables impact the respondents' assessments. The variables that significantly influence the respondents' statements include: gender (impact on the assessment of the effectiveness of social training, counseling and career counseling, internet platforms and portals, computer applications and programs, and the effectiveness of games and gamification workshops), education (impact on the assessment of traditional and digital activation methods – internships and apprenticeships, training and vocational courses, referral to study in vocational education institutions as well as games and gamification workshops), place of residence (impact on the evaluation of digital activation methods – platforms and web portals as well as films), having a disability certificate (the effectiveness of job placement, computer applications and programs as well as smartphones), the type of institution in which the respondents work (impact on both the assessment of traditional and digital tools) and the age range of the respondents (impact on the assessment of two training tools and vocational courses, and to evaluate the effectiveness of digital diagnostic tests). Interestingly, the respondents' statements (in terms of the assessment of the effectiveness of individual activation forms) were not statistically significantly influenced by the age of the respondents.

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