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Public consultation on integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

1 Introduction

Addressing long-term unemployment is a key political priority of the European Commission's jobs and growth strategy. In February 2016 the Council of the European Union adopted the Recommendation on the integration of the long-term unemployed in the labour market (LTU Recommendation).

The aim of this consultation is to gather views and opinions on the measures proposed in the Recommendation and their implementation as well as to shed light on future possible action. In the context of this consultation, long-term unemployed are considered as those that have been without a job for more than one year but are looking for a job.

2 About you

*2.1 Are you replying

- as an individual in your personal capacity?
- in your professional capacity or on behalf of an organisation?

*2.7 Your contribution:

(Note that whatever option chosen your answers may be subject to a request for public access to documents under Regulation (EC) no 1049/2001 (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32001R1049>))

- can be published with your personal information** (I consent the publication of all information in my contribution in whole or in part including my name or the name of my organisation, and I declare that nothing within my response is unlawful or would infringe the rights of any third party in a manner that would prevent publication)
- can be published provided you remain anonymous** (I consent the publication of all information in my contribution in whole or in part (which may include quotes or opinions I express) provided that it is done anonymously. I declare that nothing within my response is unlawful or would infringe the rights of any third party in a manner that would prevent publication)

*2.8 Name of the organisation:

*2.9 Postal address of the organisation:

*2.10 Type of organisation:

- Association/non-governmental organisation
- Employer representation/business organisation/employer
- Trade union
- Ministry/public authority
- Public employment services
- Private employment services
- Public social services
- Private social services
- Education and training provider
- Academia/researcher
- Other

2.11 Please specify:

not for profit partnership

***2.12 Are you working at EU level, national or regional/local level?**

- EU
- National
- Regional/local
- Not applicable

***2.13 In which country is your organisation based?**

- Austria
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Ireland
- Italy
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Malta
- Netherlands
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Slovak Republic
- Slovenia
- Spain

- Sweden
- United Kingdom
- Other

***2.14 Is your organisation included in the transparency register?**

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

***2.15 If yes, please indicate your Register ID number:**

48562122691-12

3 Knowledge of the Council Recommendation on long-term unemployment

***3.1 How familiar are you with the Recommendation on the integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market?**

- Not at all
- Limited knowledge
- Fairly good knowledge
- In-depth knowledge

***3.2 How familiar are you with your country's policies for tackling long-term unemployment?**

- Not at all
- Limited knowledge
- Fairly good knowledge
- In-depth knowledge

4 Relevance

The Recommendation proposes a number of measures to support integration of long-term unemployed people into the labour market. In this section we would like to get your opinion whether these measures are still relevant. Please respond in relation to your country. If you indicated that you work at the EU level, please respond in relation to the EU as a whole.

4.1 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the following measures are still relevant to help long term unemployed find a job?

	S tro ng ly ag ree	A gr ee	Neit her agre e or disag ree	D is a gr ee	S tro ng ly di sa gr ee	I don' t kno w/N o opin ion

* Improving information on the job offers and support available to long-term unemployed persons	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Encouraging registration of long-term unemployed persons with Employment Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Providing a single point of contact that offers coordinated employment support and social support services to long-term unemployed persons	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Providing in-depth individual assessments to each long term unemployed person covering employability prospects, barriers to employment and previous job-search efforts	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Using Job Integration Agreements, detailing explicit goals, timelines and the obligations of both the long term unemployed person and the service provider(s), to facilitate transition into employment	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Improving services to employers such as placement support, workplace mentoring and training etc. to facilitate professional reintegration of long-term unemployed persons	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Developing financial incentives for employers to stimulate creation of job opportunities for long-term unemployed persons	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4.2 Is there anything you wish to add regarding the relevance of the measures proposed by the Recommendation?

1,000 character(s) maximum

EuroHealthNet urges EU institutions to address the imperative of addressing the health, social, economic and structural barriers linked to the (un-)employment, in particular of people with chronic diseases, to ensure that all people can meaningfully contribute to economies and societies . with special attention to quality work. It is also necessary to increasingly apply a structural approach recognising that EU goes beyond individual choice.

EuroHealthNet is a co-signatory to the Joint Statement on "Improving the Employment of People with Chronic Diseases in Europe"[1], centred around key messages for this consultation: investing in prevention and earlier detection of chronic diseases ensures labour market integration of this particular group

Joint Statement on Improving the Employment of People with Chronic Diseases in Europe

<https://eurohealthnet.eu/publication/joint-statement-improving-employment-people-chronic-diseases-europe>

* 4.3 In your view, should the Recommendation pursue other measures to help long-term unemployed find a job?

- Yes
 No

* 4.4 If yes, please explain which:

The prevalence of chronic diseases in Europe is rising, particularly affecting people of working-age [2] - 23.5% of the working population in the 28 EU Member States report to suffer from a chronic illness, including mental ill health, while an increasing postponement of the retirement age is observed in all EU countries. Often people have to work longer years while in poor health (gender inequality is also a factor). Absenteeism and presenteeism contribute to huge economic losses as a result. The link between unemployment and ill health is well established.[3] Unemployment has a higher negative impact on health for people from low socio-economic groups. Long-term unemployment sees effects on ill health compounded: people experience negative pressures on their physical and mental health[4]. Health inequalities cost economies significantly: they reduce people's ability to contribute to society, undermine economic growth and prosperity, and increase health, social care and wider public expenditures.

•Health: a cause and consequence of long-term unemployment:

Health systems can play an important part in an integrated and personalised approach in supporting long-term unemployed people (LTU people) back to the labour market. Ill health is both cause and consequence of long-term unemployment, and poor mental health among LTU people is notably higher than in the general population. Integrated and personalised services to help LTU people to return to the labour market should therefore include the possibility to refer job seekers to specialist medical services, as well as target social security services to their needs which influence their employment situation, e.g. childcare.

•A mutual responsibility approach that does not aggravate existing disadvantages and stigmatise people even more:

The mutual responsibilities approach provides incentives for job seekers to participate in ALMPs and incentives to employers to hire and sustain job seekers' employment. Nevertheless, stringent conditionalities such as benefit withdrawal disproportionately affect those who already face the greatest disadvantages and at greatest risk of social exclusion. As a result, conditionalities could lead to reduced levels of uptake of social rights; i.e. services that could help unemployed people. Conditionalities could potentially push people even further away from the labour market, thereby entrenching LTU and undermining health and well-being. While conditionalities may be useful in some cases, they should be implemented on the basis of proven effectiveness in terms of helping people from across the social gradient into employment.

•Labour market flexicurity, but not long-term precarious employment:

Recently, the focus of the labour market has been more on flexibility than security, resulting in increases in temporary/non-standard and often precarious forms of employment. Employment that is perceived to be unfair by workers leads to psychosocial stress and mental ill health. Temporary work can lead to frustration, inability to progress with life/upskilling plans (e.g. start a family), reluctance to take up social rights, lack of self-esteem and the perception of inequity. Thus, the recommendation could place more emphasis on the importance of the right balance between flexibility and security.

•The importance of stimulating both supply and demand in the labour market:

Sometimes labour market demand has more influence than skills and qualifications of unemployed people. Measures targeted at the demand side of the labour market can be useful. These could include tackling barriers to work by confronting discriminatory recruitment practices (concerning age, ethnicity, sex, geography, etc.) and promoting workplace adaptations for workers with particular needs. These measures could also include financial or fiscal incentives to hire the long-term unemployed - such as those already in existence in several European

Union member states for particular categories of workers.

[2] Oortwijn W, Nelissen E, Adamini S, van den Heuvel S, Geuskens G, Burdof L. Social determinants state of the art reviews - Health of people of working age - Full Report. (2011) European Commission Directorate General for Health and Consumers. Luxembourg. ISBN 978-92-79-18526-7

[3] 1) Wanberg CR: The individual experience of unemployment. *Annu Rev Psychol* 2012, 63:369- 396. 10.1146/annurev-psych-120710-100500PubMedView Article. 2) Jin RL, Shah CP, Svoboda TJ: The impact of unemployment on health: a review of the evidence (Reprinted from *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, vol 153, pg 529-40, 1995). *J Public Health Pol* 1997,18(3):275-301. 10.2307/3343311View Article.

[4]Norström et al. (2014) - How does unemployment affect self-assessed health? A systematic review focusing on subgroup effects. *BMC Public Health*. Available at: <http://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1471-2458-14-1310>. 3 Herbig et al. (2013) - Health in the long-term unemployed.

5 Effectiveness

In this section we would like to get your view on recent changes in measures used to facilitate the integration of long-term unemployed people into the labour market. Please respond in relation to your country. If you indicated that you work at the EU level, please respond in relation to the EU as a whole.

5.1

To what extent do you agree or disagree that measures for the following specific groups at risk of long-term unemployment have been strengthened in the last two years?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know/No opinion
* Older LTU (i. e. older than 45 years)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Non-EU nationals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Women	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* People with low skills or qualifications	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* People with physical or sensory disabilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* People with mental (including mental health problems) or intellectual disabilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Roma	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

5.2 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	St ro ng ly ag re e	A g r e e	Nei ther ag re e or dis ag ree	Dis ag r e e	St ro ng ly dis ag r e e	I don 't kno w/N o opi nio n
* Efforts to register long-term unemployed persons with employment services have been strengthened in the last two years	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Employment support services offered to long-term unemployed persons have become better tailored to their individual needs in the last two years	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Social support services for long-term unemployed persons have been strengthened in the last two years	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Coordination (or integration) of support (between employment services, social assistance services, health care, training providers etc.) provided to the long-term unemployed has improved in the last two years	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Cooperation between employment services and employers has improved in the last two years	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

5.3

Is there anything you wish to add regarding the coordination, cooperation and partnerships between relevant service providers and organisations in the provision of services to the long-term unemployed?

1,000 character(s) maximum

Health systems are among most significant employers, but are too rarely involved in setting employment policy and practice. Integration or coordination of services along the care continuum has a positive impact on prevention of illness, quality of patient care and improved health outcomes as well as labour market integration. In addition, integrated care results in economic benefits with long and short-term cost-savings including avoidance of complications and related health costs, reduced health-care utilisation, and labour productivity gains when the patients are of working age [5] . Furthermore, rehabilitation programmes should be an essential part of the employment pathway of a chronic disease patient, not only easing disease recovery but also supporting the patient after/during treatment.

[5] Ellen Nolte, Emma Pitchforth. European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies. Policy summary II. What is the evidence on the economic impacts of integrated care? 2014

6 Coherence

In this section we would like your opinion on whether the Recommendation fits into the overall EU policy framework tackling unemployment and inactivity.

6.1 How familiar are you with the following EU policy initiatives?

	In-depth knowledge	Fairly good knowledge	Limited knowledge	Not at all
* COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION of 3 October 2008 on the active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 19 December 2016 on Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6.2 In your opinion, what are the synergies and possible duplications between the LTU Recommendation and the EU policy initiatives mentioned earlier?

1,500 character(s) maximum

The Recommendation on the Integration of Long-term Unemployed into the Labour Market reinforces the other Recommendations, by added-value components such as the life-course perspective of taking different life situations and stages into account (youth, adults, labour market excluded groups and long-term unemployed). However, to increase the equity dimension, other forms of non-standard and emerging life stages ought to be addressed: this includes informal caring responsibilities, single and working parents (especially mothers have an important influence on the child's later life, including his/her academic achievements/likelihood of long-term unemployment). This was among others one of the key factors of health inequalities identified within the DRIVERS project.[6]

[6] DRIVERS Improving health equity through action across the life course (2015) https://eurohealthnet.eu/sites/eurohealthnet.eu/files/publications/DRIVERS_Recommendations_rel2.pdf

7 EU added value

In this section we would like your view of the added value of having a policy at EU level to tackle long-term unemployment.

7.1

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding the Recommendation? Please respond in relation to your country. If you indicated that you work at the EU level, please respond in relation to the EU as a whole.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know/No opinion
*The Recommendation prompted prioritization of long term unemployment policy measures	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*The Recommendation prompted a shift in funding towards the long term unemployed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
*The Recommendation accelerated implementation of planned actions to tackle long-term unemployment	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*The Recommendation prompted other changes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

7.2 Please describe other changes prompted by the Recommendation, if any:

1,000 character(s) maximum

In addressing the EU added value of such a Recommendation, the attention ought to go beyond what is "prompted" - a measure can be prompted without any effect having taken place. Actual results should be at the centre.

The attention to disadvantaged groups - although not clearly described - and applying targeted measures is positive, this corresponds to the principle of proportional universalism, which is key in addressing specific needs of deprived groups. Proportional universalism is necessary as the LTU people require different approaches than others (e.g. short-term unemployed).

Targeted measures, however, need to be combined with a truly integrated care approach, e.g. health systems need to connect with employment services to ensure that a potential diagnosis is properly addressed in an integrated individual assessment. Crucially for equity, stronger emphasis on quality employment is needed in the Recommendation.

*7.3 In your opinion/experience, is it useful to have a targeted EU policy to tackle long-term unemployment?

- Yes
 No

*7.4 Please, explain why:

1,000 character(s) maximum

EU policy tools are useful to tackle long-term unemployment. The tools mentioned offer an opportunity to revive relevant past commitments and define the direction of EU policy development, while at the same time respect the subsidiarity principle and allow for a country-tailored implementation.

The following EU commitments should be better connected to the Recommendation on long-term unemployment:

- ▶Article 168 TFEU: European Union shall ensure a high level of human health protection; health in all Union's policies.
- ▶Agenda 2030 - The Sustainable Development Goals - Goal 3 Health and Well-Being
- ▶The Europe 2020 Targets - Target: Employment rate of 75% for people aged 20-64 and participation of all working-age people in the labour market.
- ▶European Pillar of Social Rights - "Equal opportunities and access to labour market" and "Social protection and inclusion".
- ▶The EC Recommendation on Investing in Children - Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage.

**7.5 If you have anything to add, within the scope of this questionnaire, please feel free to do so here:
1,500 character(s) maximum**

The relevance of addressing health inequalities, often experienced by people from lower socio-economic backgrounds as well as people with chronic diseases is crucial to this approach.

Beyond the direct costs of healthcare to treat people with chronic diseases, which amount to €700 billion in the EU, workers with chronic conditions and employers incur indirect costs. For cardiovascular diseases alone, productivity losses are estimated at € 54 billion/year[8]. Evidence shows that chronic diseases have a significant impact on labour supply in terms of workforce participation, hours worked, job turnover and early retirement. Overall, they "depress wages, earnings and labour productivity, as well as increase early retirement, high job turnover and disability"[9]. For individuals with chronic conditions, those diseases also often result in stigma and barriers to employment (e.g. with consequences on wages, earnings and positions reached/level of seniority in an organisation)[10].

[8] Wilkins E, et al. (2017). European Cardiovascular Disease Statistics 2017. European Heart Network.

[9] Tackling chronic disease in Europe - Strategies, interventions and challenges. http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/96632/E93736.pdf

[10] Health at a Glance 2016

7.6

Please feel free to upload a concise document, such as a position paper. The maximum file size is 1MB. *Please note that the uploaded document will be published alongside your response to the questionnaire which is the essential input to this public consultation. The upload of such a document is optional and will serve as additional background reading to better understand your position. If you have indicated that you/your organisation should remain anonymous, please make sure that the uploaded document contains no reference to your name/the name of your organisation.*

Contact

EMPL-LTU-CONSULTATION@ec.europa.eu

