

Feedback from:

EuroHealthNet

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Submitted by

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Belgium

Initiative

Evaluation of the long-term unemployed recommendation

This feedback builds upon the impact long term unemployment (LTU) has on health inequalities (HI). HI cost EU governments significantly: they reduce people's ability to contribute to society, undermine

economic growth and prosperity, and increase health, social care and wider public expenditures.

LTU IMPACT ON HEALTH INEQUALITIES

The link between unemployment and ill health is well established.

Unemployment has a higher negative on health for people from low socio-economic groups. Unsurprisingly, LTU sees effects on ill health compounded: people experience negative pressures on their physical and mental health (for numbers on HI cf. Mackenbach et al. 2008 Eurothine & for employment influences on HI cf. DRIVERS goo.gl/xufYyY).

The attached policy briefing includes comments on LTU recommendation in relation with health inequalities and the aspects that could have been better addressed. The main messages should be addressed in the evaluation questions:

- ›Health services can play a useful role for integrated and personalised approaches to support LT unemployed
- ›Conditionality should be implemented based on proven effectiveness in terms of helping people across the social gradient
- ›Addressing the demand side of the labour market is needed to successfully achieve the objective of the recommendation
- ›More emphasis is needed on the importance of the right balance between flexibility and security.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF EVALUATION

- ›Evaluation question (reg. Effectiveness) “What measures have been taken to improve outreach to LTU furthest away from the labour market?” This question could be further developed to include the effectiveness in reaching people across the social gradient. For example, to reflect on measures to stimulate job creation per se including tackling barriers to work confronting discriminatory hiring practices or promoting workplace adaptations for workers with particular needs.

- ›Evaluation question (reg. Effectiveness) “Has the coordination between employment and social services but also other providers (healthcare, childcare, housing, financial etc.) improved ... how?”, This question should include the extent to which inter-service collaboration has taken place, including integrated and personalised services and possibilities to refer job seekers to care and prevention services.
- ›Evaluation question (reg. Efficiency) “Are the costs proportionate to the benefits achieved?” This question should also include the assessment of conditionality measures and their effectiveness in terms of helping people from across the social gradient.
- ›Evaluation question (reg. Coherence) “To what extent is the LTU recommendation coherent with other EU instruments supporting bringing people back to employment, such as the ... The European Semester?” This could be most useful, for example, to identify correlations between social, employment, fiscal and economic NRPs, CSRs and the LTU recommendation, and the extent to which the LTU objectives are being monitored through the EU Semester.
- ›Evaluation question (reg. Coherence) “Have the EU structural and investment funds ... as well as EaSI been used ... to implement the requirements of the Recommendation and how?” This is a very good question which complements the ones above and could provide a good perspective on the use of EU funds for implementation at national and regional level. The question ‘why not?’ can be included, if that is the case, and also to ‘what could improve the use of these funds?’.
- ›Evaluation question (reg. Relevance) “How do the measures proposed in the Recommendation correspond to the goal of integration of job seekers in the labour market?” Include the possibility to suggest additional EU-level measures.

It is pertinent to involve local and regional authorities and civil society bodies in the evaluation and consultation phase as they work closely on the targeted measures addressing those furthest away from the labour market.

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