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Titel: Unemployment Duration and Job Search Intensity in Europe - an Overview

Abstract: Long unemployment durations remain one of the most severe problems on European labour markets. At an aggregate level, it leads to more persistent unemployment. At an individual level, it may cause a depreciation of skills and have detrimental effects on the social inclusion of the unemployed. The exit out of unemployment into employment depends, at least partly, on the efforts spent on the job search process. To contribute to the literature on unemployment duration and job search in Europe, we analyse the duration of unemployment and the job search behaviour of the unemployed for the countries surveyed in the EU LFS. In this context, we pay particular attention to the role of household characteristics. Moreover, we take differences between country groups as well as between men and women into account.

Concerning unemployment duration, our results indicate that more highly educated persons, younger persons and individuals with favourable house-hold characteristics are more likely to have shorter unemployment spells as opposed to older and lower educated ones. Unfavourable household characteristics (e.g., an increasing number of elderly individuals living in the household) are correlated with longer unemployment duration. We also find differences between country groups.

In a second step, we investigate the search behaviour of the unemployed, i.e. search intensity and the use of specific search methods. Moreover, we use factor analysis to identify which search methods are usually used together, thus forming bundles, and how the use of such bundles of search methods differs between different country groups. We find that individuals with more favourable labour market characteristics search more intensively and, in particular, make more use of search methods other than contacting the public employment office. Furthermore, the search behaviour strongly varies with household characteristics and the duration of unemployment. We also find that search patterns differ between country groups.