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# Title registration for a review proposal: Active labor market programme participation for unemployment insurance recipients

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**Title registration approval date:**  
30 November 2010

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## TITLE OF THE REVIEW

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Active labour market programme participation for unemployment insurance recipients.

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## BACKGROUND

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### **Briefly describe and define *the problem***

Many countries during the 1990s introduced Active Labour Market Programmes (ALMPs) in an effort to reduce unemployment. In countries such as Australia, USA, Denmark, Sweden, England and Switzerland, participation in an active labour market programme is required to continue receiving benefits (Gerfin and Lecher, 2002 and Geerdsen, 2003). Typically, compulsory programme participation is required after a certain period of time on unemployment insurance.

The purpose of making benefit payments conditional on participation in ALMPs is twofold. Firstly, participation in ALMPs may improve the participants' qualifications and reintroduce them to the labour market. Secondly, the compulsory aspect may provide an incentive for unemployed individuals to look for and return to work prior to programme participation (Black, et al., 2003; Jackman, 1994; Hansen and Tranæs, 1999). A systematic review of the effect occurring *prior* to participation in a compulsory labor market programme (denoted the "threat effect") is currently in progress (Bjørn et al, 2004).

We will focus on the first effect and look at research on the outcome of programme participation, i.e. effects *during* and *after* programme participation (Heckman et al., 1999; Martin and Grubb, 2001). The effects of ALMP participation on job-finding rates are typically composed of two separate effects: a locking-in effect and a postprogramme effect. The locking-in effect refers to the period of participation in a programme. During this period, job-search intensity may be lowered, because there is less time to search for a job, and participants may want to complete an ongoing skill-enhancing activity, hence the locking-in effect. The post-programme effect refers to the period after participation in a programme. If the ALMP has increased the individual's employability, a rise in the job-finding rate is expected. The combination of these two effects consequently determines the net effects of ALMP participation on unemployment duration.

In this review we will focus on the effect of ALMP participation in unemployed individuals receiving unemployment insurance benefits. To our best knowledge there is no systematic review on this topic. In the systematic review "Work programmes for welfare recipients" (Smedslund et al, 2006) the objective is to estimate the effects of work programmes on welfare recipients' employment and economic self-sufficiency. Persons entitled to unemployment insurance benefits and persons with pensions of any kind are excluded in Smedslund et al, 2006.

### **Briefly describe and define *the population***

The population consists of unemployed individuals receiving unemployment insurance benefits. Unemployed individuals receiving other kinds of unemployment benefits, such as welfare benefits will be excluded.

### **Briefly describe and define *the intervention***

The intervention is ALMP participation. ALMPs can consist of job search assistance, training, education, subsidized work, and similar programmes. Some of the programmes demand full-time participation over a long time period (e.g. several months), while other programmes are part-time and have a short duration (e.g. few days/weeks).

The main control or comparison condition is ordinary (passive) unemployment insurance benefits or the usual services available to unemployment insurance recipients (that are not ALMPs).

### **Outcomes: What are the intended effects of the intervention?**

The primary outcome is employment status. Secondary outcomes related to earnings and duration of employment will be included to the extent they are reported in the studies.

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## OBJECTIVES

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The object of this review is to study the effects of ALMPs for unemployment insurance recipients on employment, earnings and duration of employment. Where possible, we will also try to identify program elements that appear to be more or less effective.

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## METHODOLOGY

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### **What types of studies designs are to be included and excluded?**

We will include all studies that estimate an effect, either using a no-treatment (or usual services) control group or using an estimated counterfactual outcome, which corresponds to no treatment.

These studies will include randomised controlled trials, quasi-experiments, natural experiments, and econometric studies based on observational data, which may be either survey or register data.

### **Your method of synthesis:**

We will use meta-analysis if possible.

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## REFERENCES

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Black, D.A., J. A. Smith, M. C. Berger, and J. N. Brett (2003). Is the threat of reemployment services more effective than the services themselves? Evidence from random assignment in the UI system. *American Economic Journal*, vol. 112, page 1313-1327

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Gerfin, M. and M. Lechner (2002). A microeconomic evaluation of the active labour market policy in Switzerland. *The economic Journal*, vol 112, page 854-893

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Geir Smedslund<sup>1</sup>, Kåre Birger Hagen, Asbjørn Steiro<sup>1</sup>, Torill Johme, Therese Kristine Dalsbø and Mons Georg Rud (2006). Work programmes for welfare recipients, Campbell Collaboration Review.

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## SOURCES OF SUPPORT

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**Internal funding:**  
SFI Campbell

**External funding:**

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## DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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None known

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## REQUEST SUPPORT

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Do you need support in any of these areas (methodology, statistics, systematic searches, field expertise, review manager etc?)

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## AUTHOR(S) REVIEW TEAM

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**Include the complete name and address of reviewer(s)** (can be changed later). This is the review team -- list the full names, affiliation and contact details of author's to be cited on the final publication.

**Lead reviewer:**

The lead author is the person who develops and co-ordinates the review team, discusses and assigns roles for individual members of the review team, liaises with the editorial base and takes responsibility for the on-going updates of the review

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## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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Please give brief description of content and methodological expertise within the review team. The recommended optimal review team composition includes at least one person on the review team who has content expertise, at least one person who has methodological expertise and at least one person who has statistical expertise. It is also recommended to have one person with information retrieval expertise. Who is responsible for the below areas? Please list their names:

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- Systematic review methods: Trine Filges & Krystyna Kowalski
- Statistical analysis: Trine Filges & Geir Smedslund
- Information retrieval: Anne-Marie Klint Jørgensen

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## PRELIMINARY TIMEFRAME

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Approximate date for submission of Draft Protocol (please note this should be no longer than six months after title approval. If the protocol is not submitted by then, the review area may be opened up for other reviewers):

**Title registration approval date:** 30 November 2010

**Draft protocol submission date:** March 2011