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PART 1/9

COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

EVALUATION

Accompanying the document

REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL

on the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market

{COM(2019) 169 final} - {SWD(2019) 155 final}

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GLOSSARY

Term or acronym	*Meaning or definition*
ALMP	Active Labour Market Policies
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSR	Country Specific Recommendation
EaSI	Employment and Social Innovation Programme
EMCO	Employment Committee
ESF	European Social Fund
ESF Committee	European Social Fund Committee
IAP	Individual Action Plan refers to documents to which jobseekers and employment service providers subscribe, stating rights and obligations, goals and steps to achieve the goals. In most cases these can be renewed and revised to adjust to the changing situation of a jobseeker.
JIA	Job integration agreement is a written agreement between the jobseeker and single point of contact with the objective of facilitating transition into employment. Such an agreement should detail a package of individualised measures from different organisations, define goals, timelines, obligations of the long-term unemployed person and the service providers and should indicate available integration measures.
LTU	Long-term unemployed
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PES	Public Employment Services
SPC	Social Protection Committee
SPOC	Single point of contact refers to an authority responsible for supporting the long-term unemployed persons through a coordinated service offer involving available employment and social support services. This point of contact could be based on a framework of inter-institutional coordination and/or be identified within existing structures.
AT	Austria

BE	Belgium
BG	Bulgaria
HR	Croatia
CY	Cyprus
CZ	Czech Republic
DK	Denmark
EE	Estonia
FI	Finland
FR	France
DE	Germany
EL	Greece
HU	Hungary
IE	Ireland
IT	Italy
LV	Latvia
LT	Lithuania
LU	Luxembourg
MT	Malta
NL	Netherlands
PL	Poland
PT	Portugal
RO	Romania
SK	Slovakia
SI	Slovenia
ES	Spain
SE	Sweden
UK	United Kingdom

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose and scope

The aim of this evaluation is to assess actions taken by the 28 Member States and by the Commission in response to the Council Recommendation on the integration of the long term unemployed into the labour market of 15 February 2016 (2016/C 67/01), (hereafter 'the Recommendation') in line with the reporting obligation set therein.[1] The evaluation results feed into the Commission report to the Council and are used to shed light on future possible action.

The evaluation assesses to what extent the general and specific objectives of the Recommendation have been achieved, to what extent the guidelines provided in the Recommendation have translated into new policies and planned changes, as well as, the way these have influenced the use of structural funds in the Members States. In addition, the evaluation highlights the strong points and the weaknesses as well as innovative measures.

The evaluation covers all five criteria set out by the Better Regulation requirements, namely, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, relevance and EU added value.[2] It covers the period from first half 2015 (H1 2015) until November 2018 in order to capture the preparatory work and negotiations on the Recommendation which may have influenced policies prior to adoption of the Recommendation. Due to the relatively early stage in the intervention's lifecycle and the influence of a number of external factors, the evaluation focuses on the extent to which the provisions of the Recommendation have been planned and implemented, and to which extent this led to the expected outputs and short-term results rather than on more long-term results and impacts such as inclusive growth, public finances or well-being.

The document is largely based on an external supporting study[3], complemented by qualitative data gathered via the European Network of Public Employment Services and quantitative data collected by the Employment Committee (EMCO) (see Annex 1), as well as, on input gathered via a broad stakeholder consultation process described in Annex 2.

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[1]The evaluation is required by paragraph 14 which states: *The Council of the EU hereby recommends (...): evaluate, in cooperation with the Member States and after consulting the stakeholders concerned, the action taken in response to this recommendation and report to the Council by 15 February 2019 on the results of that evaluation.*
[2]Better Regulation Guidelines, SWD (2017) 350
[3]Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

2. BACKGROUND TO THE INTERVENTION

2.1 Description of the intervention and its objectives

Need for action

The economic crisis which started in 2008 resulted in a sharp increase in the long-term unemployment rate[4] in the EU between 2008 and 2013 (Figure 1), especially in some Member States.[5] At the peak of the crisis at the end of 2013, more than 12 million people were unemployed for more than one year, of which around 60% were jobless for at least two years in a row. At the time, the European Council and the European Central Bank recognised long-term unemployment as a major impediment to growth, while President Juncker's Political Guidelines identified the toll of unemployment as a key political challenge of the Commission's jobs and growth strategy.[6]

With the economic recovery that followed, improvements could be observed in unemployment trends but mainly for the short-term unemployed, while the job finding rates among the long-term unemployed continued to be low. These trends led to a continued increase of the share of the long-term unemployed in unemployment in most Member States, and higher risk of entrenchment in high structural unemployment[7], especially in countries with high long-term unemployment. These diverging trends carry negative economic impact and undermine social cohesion across the EU.[8]

Intervention logic

In order to speed up the return to work in the short/medium run, the Council Recommendation on the integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market aims to improve the effectiveness of support structures by specifically tackling three identified problems: the insufficient coverage of activation support for long-term unemployed; the ineffective design of activation models, both in terms of individualised support to jobseekers and of employer involvement; and the lack of coordination between relevant services and actors supporting the long-term unemployed.

While several factors can seriously hinder the return to employment, including structural issues such as low job creation, investment constraints, unreformed labour markets,[9] benefits trap[10] and low educational achievement levels, these are not specific to the long-term

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[4]Long term unemployment rate is defined as number of people who are out of work and have been actively seeking employment for at least a year as a share of the active population. The surge in long-term unemployment during the crisis was due both to an increase in short-term unemployment (entries to LTU) and to a decrease in job finding rates (exits from LTU). Staff Working Document (SWD) accompanying the Recommendation, 2015

[5]CY EL ES HR IE IT

[6]President Juncker's Political Guidelines https://ec.europa.eu/commission/publications/president-junckers-political-guidelines_en

[7]Kroft, K., Lange, F., Notowidigdo, M. J., & Katz, L. F. (2014). Long-term unemployment and the Great Recession: the role of composition, duration dependence, and non-participation (No. w20273). National Bureau of Economic Research.

[8]Persistent long-term unemployment leads to erosion and obsolescence of skills as well as lower utilisation of human capital. This in turn can dampen economic growth, increase social costs and lead to social exclusion. Staff Working Document (SWD) accompanying the Recommendation, 2015

[9]High taxes on labour that do not reward the work effort enough, too high minimum wages, excessive levels of employment protection for permanent workers, lack of a constructive social dialogue may act as deterrents to hiring.

[10]An excessively long duration of unemployment insurance, with too high income replacement levels and benefits not tapered with the duration of unemployment, and where little activation conditionality is attached, can discourage job search efforts.

unemployed, and yield results in the longer term. Hence, these are outside of the scope of the Recommendation.

The Recommendation proposes the following actions to be undertaken by Member States:

- Encouraging registration of jobseekers with an employment service;
- Increasing individualised support for the long-term unemployed through a detailed assessment of needs and prospects for employment (at the latest by 18 months);
- Ensuring delivery of a Job Integration Agreement (at latest by 18 months) in writing that defines the relevant services and measures that will be offered by different organisations to facilitate return to work, with mutual obligations of employment service and jobseeker;
- Improving the continuity of support by coordinating the provision of the various services available to the long-term unemployed (e.g. relating to their social, health and housing as well as employment situation) though a single point of contact;
- Encouraging and developing partnerships between employers, social partners, employment services, government authorities, social services and education and training providers, and developing services for employers.

Given the differences in labour market contexts in Member States and the various approaches to addressing insufficient support to the long-term unemployed, the Recommendation essentially seeks to provide guidance on *how,* rather than *what,* should be done in order to improve transitions from unemployment to employment, and to reduce the number of long-term unemployed falling into inactivity. This in turn should contribute to inclusive labour markets and growth, as well as improved public finances and social situation in the EU (see Annex 3 for a graphical presentation of the intervention logic).

In addition, the Recommendation calls upon the Member States and the Commission to assess and monitor its implementation[11] and to cooperate to make best use of the European structural and investment funds.[12] The Commission is invited to support and coordinate voluntary initiatives and alliances of companies engaged in the sustainable integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market as well as to support social innovation projects to integrate the long-term unemployed into the labour market, in particular through the Employment and Social Innovation programme (EaSI).

In this way, the Recommendation aims not only to reinforce the European Employment Strategy[13] and the Council decision on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States[14], but also to complement the 2008 Commission Recommendation on the active

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[11]The Recommendation states "*Monitor within the Employment Committee, in close cooperation with the Social Protection Committee with regard to the social services and income provision, the implementation of this recommendation through the multilateral surveillance within the framework of the European Semester and through the Joint Assessment Framework of indicators. The monitoring should follow up on the extent to which registered long-term unemployed persons have regained employment, whether their integration into the labour market is sustainable and the use of job-integration agreements. The European Network of Public Employment Services should contribute to this monitoring*" Council Recommendation on the integration of the long term unemployed into the labour market of 15 February 2016 (2016/C 67/01)
[12]In particular the European Social Fund, the European Regional Development Fund and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, in accordance with the relevant investment priorities for the 2014 2020 programmes.
[13]Sets out common objectives and targets for employment policy, aiming to create more and better jobs throughout the EU.
[14]Council Decision (EU) 2015/1848 of 5 October 2015 that calls for the improvement of labour-market matching and support for

inclusion of people excluded from the labour market[15] and the 2013 Council Recommendation establishing a Youth Guarantee[16].

2.2 Baseline and points of comparison

This section summarises the expectations on the impact of the Recommendation at the time of its adoption. A more detailed overview of the actual situation before the adoption of the Recommendation (points of comparison) and subsequent developments will be presented in section three.

Without the EU intervention, existing national and EU initiatives were expected only partly to address the identified problems given, firstly, that measures were mostly programme-based and not systematically implemented and, secondly, that cooperation often relied on technical exchanges rather than lasting partnerships between different actors. Hence, the Recommendation was expected to complement and strengthen existing policies in Member States, especially with regards to individual assessments, creation of a single point of contact and services for employers.[17]

It was expected that most changes would take place in the countries with:

- Both high long-term unemployment rates and high shares of long-term unemployed among unemployed (relative to the EU average)[18] and low registration rates;
- Weaker support structures, or where the services proposed did not exist.[19]

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sustainable transitions.

[15]Commission Recommendation on the active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market 2008/867/EC of 3 October 2008 sets out an integrated, comprehensive strategy for the active inclusion of those excluded from the labour market, combining adequate income support, inclusive labour markets and access to quality services.

[16]Council Recommendation 2013/C 120/01 of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee calls for Member States to ensure that all young people under the age of 25 years receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

[17]Staff Working Document (SWD) accompanying the Recommendation, 2015

[18]High LTU rate and share of LTU among unemployed implies relatively large numbers of LTU requiring assistance paired with low turnover of unemployed.

[19]Staff Working Document (SWD) accompanying the Recommendation, 2015

Table 1: Higher expected impact

	High LTU rate and share of LTU among unemployed[20]	Low registration rate[21]	No or little continuity in support delivery[22]	Limited individualised support[23]	Large share of public work schemes[24]
Member States	BG, EL, ES, HR, IE, IT, PT, SI, SK	BG, EE, IT, LV, RO	BG, EL, HR, IT, LT, LV, MT, RO	CY, CZ, EL, ES, HR, HU, IT, LU, PL, RO, SK	CZ, DE, FR, HR, LV

Source: Staff Working Document (SWD) accompanying the Recommendation, 2015.

Furthermore, the Recommendation was expected to lead to gradual changes and, in the case of countries with "consolidated" systems, the Recommendation would provide a further point of intervention for the long-term unemployed, i.e. a "last call" for further intensification of activation efforts. Low levels of overall administrative capacity – mainly related to staff competence and resources for an individualised approach to jobseekers – were identified as one of the main implementation risks.[25]

3. IMPLEMENTATION / STATE OF PLAY

This section aims to provide an overview of the broader macroeconomic context in which the Recommendation is embedded, as well as to describe how and to what extent the various elements of the Recommendation have been implemented by Member States and the Commission. These findings are then analysed in section five in order to answer the evaluation questions (see Annex 4).

3.1 Current policy and economic context

In the last five years, the EU has experienced uninterrupted economic growth which has been accompanied by a recovery in investment, stronger consumer demand, improved public finances and continued job creation, although at a different pace across countries. Since the peak of the crisis at the end of 2013, long-term unemployment is gradually improving in line with recent overall unemployment trends (Figure 1). The number of long-term unemployed in the EU has declined each year reaching around 7 million in the second quarter of 2018, 25% fewer than when the Recommendation was adopted at the beginning of 2016. At the EU level, the long-term unemployment rate decreased from 4.7% in the second quarter of 2015 to 3% in the second quarter of 2018.

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[20]2015 Eurostat data
[21]2014 Eurostat data
[22]Refers to no formal coordination between services
[23]Refers to insufficient use of profiling to make individual assessments and use of individual action plans
[24]Given consistent evidence about lack of effectiveness of public works on promoting transitions to employment, the Recommendation aimed to prompt a shift towards ALMPs relevant for the competitive labour market (employers' incentives, upskilling, start-up support) and reducing public works to a minimum.
[25]Staff Working Document (SWD) accompanying the Recommendation, 2015

Figure 1: Trends in long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployment among unemployed (EU28) – quarterly data
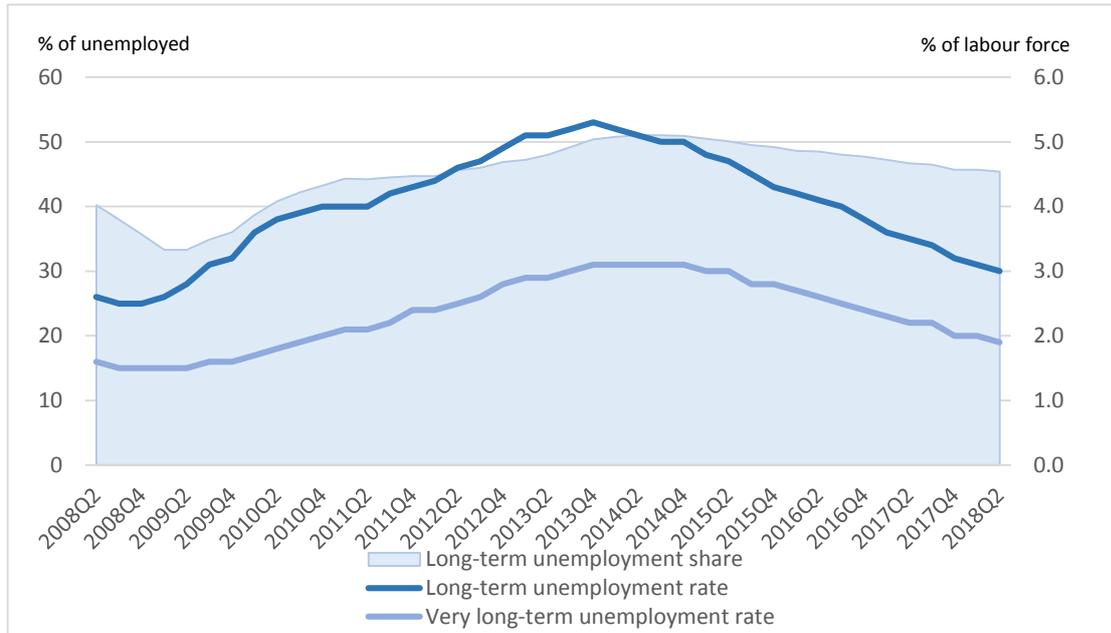
Source: Eurostat data (quarterly seasonally adjusted survey data). Long-term unemployment: >12 months unemployed. Very long-term unemployment: >24 months unemployed. Reference population 20-64 years.

Only Luxembourg, Finland and Austria have seen an increase in long-term unemployment between 2014 and 2017, albeit from low rates (Figure 2). Importantly, strong decreases are visible in Member States with high rates of long-term unemployment, such as Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Ireland, Portugal, Slovakia and Spain. Still, long-term unemployment rates continue to vary from 1-1.5% in the Czech Republic, Denmark, Poland, Sweden and the UK, to 4.5-8% in Cyprus, Spain, Italy and Slovakia, and 15.3% in Greece.

Figure 2: Long-term unemployment rates in Member States, 2014 versus 2017
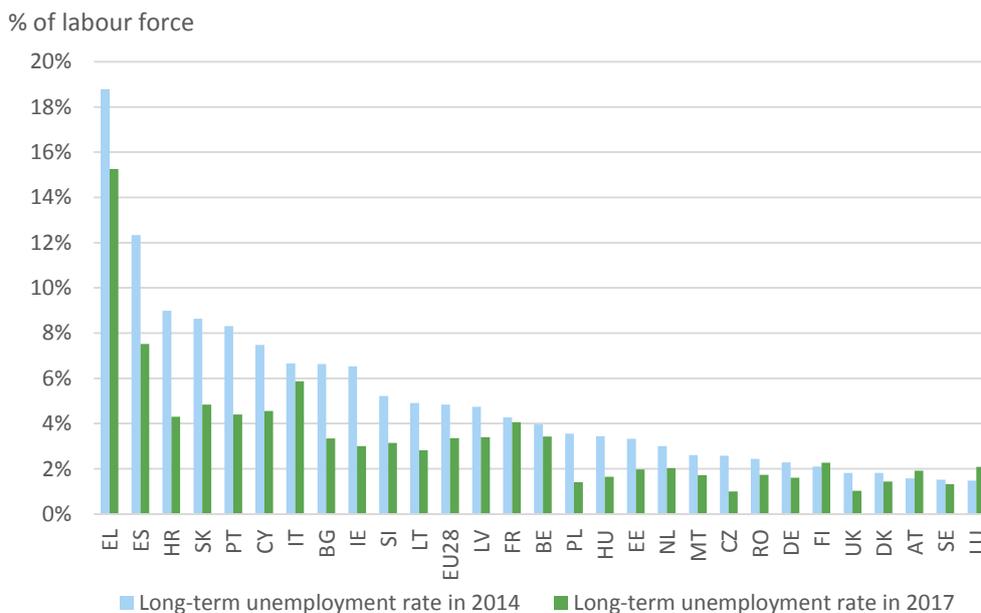
Source: Eurostat data, Labour Force Survey. Reference population aged 25-64 years.

Some groups are still facing higher risks of becoming long-term unemployed than others. Workers with low qualifications are twice as likely to experience long-term unemployment.[26] This is also the case for third country immigrants whose share in all long-term unemployed increased from 12% in 2015 to 15% in 2017 – and reached 20% or more in nine Member States.[27] Moreover, people with disabilities, minorities and people younger than 30 and older than 55 years are disproportionally affected.[28]

The proportion of unemployed who are long-term unemployed continued to be high in 2017, at around 49.5% across the EU, down from 53.3% in 2014 (Figure 3).[29] The shares declined in all but seven Member States since 2014 with the largest falls experienced by Croatia (-16.7pp), Poland (-12.0pp), Estonia (-11.3pp) and Ireland   (-10.1pp). Nevertheless, there are still considerable differences between Member States – in Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Slovakia the share continues to surpass well above 50%.

Figure 3: Share of unemployed who are long-term unemployed per Member State, 2014 versus 2017
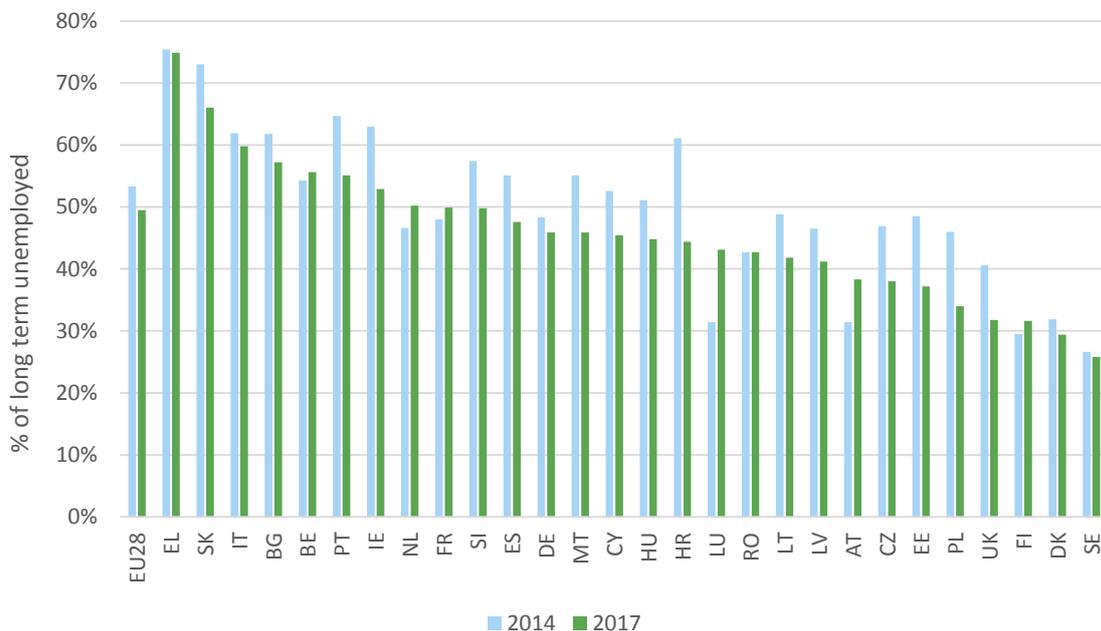
Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey. Reference population aged 25-64 years .Note: There is a break in the series between 2016 and 2017 in the data for BE, DK and IE, between 2015 and 2016 for DK and between 2014 and 2015 for LU.

Largely in line with the decreasing long-term unemployment rates, transition rates[30] improved between 2015 and 2017 in a majority of Member States for which data is available (Figure 4). This improvement is visible in eight out of the 11 Member States that had long-term

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[26]Staff Working Document (SWD) accompanying the Recommendation, 2015
[27]European Commission's calculations based on Eurostat, Labour force survey (based on the share of non-EU born long-term unemployed in the overall number of long-term unemployed). The ratio was (in 2017) higher than 20% in nine Member States (out of 21 Member States for which data is available).
[28]Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll consortium for the European Commission, 2019
[29]High shares may reflect a low turnover of unemployed being integrated into the labour market and the existence of core difficult to place groups of unemployed. Shares can also increase simply in response to falls in the number of short term unemployed (accounts for a larger part of the denominator) during periods of employment growth as inflows into unemployment reduce.
[30]Transition rates quantify flows between different labour market statuses in consecutive quarters – i.e. proportion of people in situation X in one quarter who are in situation Y in the subsequent quarter. The annual figures are constructed based on the averages of four quarterly transition rates.

unemployment rates above the EU28 average. A few countries had declining transition rates between 2015 and 2017, but these were mainly countries with low long-term unemployment rates. Large discrepancies in the EU remain, however, with Greece suffering from a stagnant labour market with under 5% transitions, in contrast to the more mobile labour markets, such as Denmark and Slovenia with over 20% transitions. Long-term unemployed aged 25-54 were more likely to transition into employment than those aged 55-64 in all countries but Sweden.[31]

Figure 4: Transition rates from long-term unemployment to employment per Member State, 2015 versus 2017
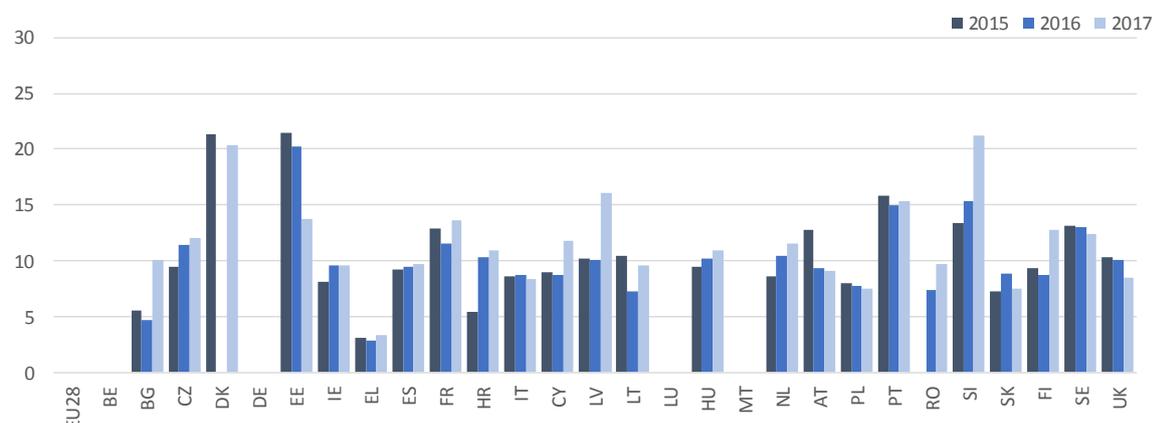
Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey. Experimental statistics, annual averages of quarterly transitions. Reference population aged 25-64 years. Data not available for EU28, BE, DK (2016 only), DE, LU, MT and RO (2015 only).

Exits to inactivity tend to diminish during downturns, but increase during recoveries. Different characteristics of the long-term unemployed (e.g. higher motivation, higher job-readiness) or reduced possibilities of exit towards retirement or pre-retirement schemes, can account for this.[32] Since 2015, transitions from long-term unemployment to inactivity[33] increased in 16 out of 23[34] Member States for which data is available. In 2017 those aged 55-64 were more likely to transition to inactivity than long-term unemployed aged 25-54. This possibly reflects, on the one hand, a reluctance on behalf of employers to take on people approaching retirement and, on the other hand, the fact that transitions to inactivity among older workers are boosted by retirements (whether natural or due to discouragement).[35]

At the end of 2016, a Council Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways[36] was adopted that recommends Member States to offer adults support for acquiring a minimum level of literacy, numeracy and digital competences. In 2017, the European Pillar of Social Rights confirmed the provisions of the Recommendation under principle 4 setting out the right to personalised, continuous and consistent support and the right to an in-depth individual assessment at the latest at 18 months of unemployment. This is also reflected in the Council decision on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States adopted in 2018.

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[31]Data collection for monitoring the LTU Recommendation (2017)
[32]Krueger, A.B., J. Cramer, and D. Cho, "Are the Long-Term Unemployed on the margins of the Labor Market?", 2014
[33]These transitions cover people that stop seeking work for a wide range of reasons including care responsibilities, long-term sickness, participation in education and training retirement, and discouragement (belief that no jobs are available). Whilst transitions to inactivity are generally considered a negative outcome in relation to integration/activation policy (e.g. if there were adequate care facilities people might not have to give up seeking work), some outcomes are neutral (e.g. retirement if purely for reasons of old age and access to pension benefits rather than for reasons of discouragement) or positive (participation in education/training).
[34]BG, CZ, EE, IE, EL, ES, FR, HR, HU, LV, NL, PL, PT, SK, SE, UK
[35]Data collection for monitoring the LTU Recommendation (2017)
[36]Council Recommendation 2016/C 484/01 of 19 December 2016 on Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults

3.2 Registration of the long-term unemployed

The Recommendation calls on Member States to improve registration with employment services in order to tackle the lack of coverage of support measures. The supporting study for the evaluation showed that six countries which had no such measures in place in 2015 introduced changes since the Recommendation was adopted (Table 2). The most common measures introduced were the provision of information to non-registered people on the support available, new service offerings to non-registered people and multi-channel possibilities for initial registration.[37]

Table 2: Changes in measures in place aiming to increase registration

		Changes in measures since H1 2015		
	Measures in place in H1 2015	**No**	**Planned**	**Implemented**
Yes	AT, BE, CZ, CY, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, HR IT, LT, LU, MT, NL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK (22)	AT, DE, DK, FI, LU, SE, UK (7)	CZ, CY, FR, IT, LT, NL, PT, RO, SI, SK (10)	BE, CZ, CY, EE, ES, FR, HR, IT, LT, MT, NL, PT, RO, SI, SK (15)
No	BG, EL, HU, IE, LV, PL (6)		BG, HU, IE (3)	BG, EL, HU, IE, LV, PL (6)

Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019.

Out of the 22 countries that already had measures in place, 15 countries implemented further changes or changed existing measures (Table 2). Outreach actions, usually to specific groups, and services to encourage the long-term unemployed to remain registered were areas where the largest number of countries made changes (ten Member States).[38]

Box 1: Examples of new measures to increase registration of inactive and to prevent deregistration

In **Greece**, since August 2018 all recipients of social solidarity income (SSI) – a means tested national minimum income – must register with public employment services.[39]

In **Slovenia**, the Public Employment Service has implemented programmes for social activation of the long-term unemployed and inactive people since 2017. These programmes are coordinated by the Ministry of Labour and delivered by non-profit organisations together with Public Employment Service cooperating with Centres for Social Work (CSWs). Social activation programmes have proven to be more effective at reaching out to inactive people than public employment services programmes.[40]

In **Romania** the incentives for registering have been strengthened by improving the attractiveness of service offerings through increased availability of employment

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[37]More detailed presentation of measures per Member States is available in the mapping of policy changes (Annex 3 of the supporting study)
[38]BE, EE, ES, FR, IT, LT, LU, NL, RO, SI
[39]Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019
[40]Ibid.

subsidies. Mobile 'JobCaravans' were also introduced to reach out to people in the most rural areas, where access to regular employment offices is limited.[41]

In some regions in **Spain**, in order to increase registration, the receipt of a minimum income social benefit (of which many claimants are long-term unemployed) is now conditional upon registration with the PES and in certain cases (i.e. depending on the individual profile) an additional activation benefit is available, subject to the commitment of taking part in an insertion plan.[42]

3.3 Individual assessments and job-integration agreements

Individual assessments

The Recommendation explicitly calls for all long-term unemployed to be offered an in-depth individual assessment at the latest by 18 months of unemployment. The individual assessment should take a holistic approach and assess the barriers to employment, skills, experiences and the life situation of the long-term unemployed with the help of profiling and segmentation tools.

Almost all Member States (except Hungary and Luxembourg) offered some kind of individual assessments and personalised guidance before the adoption of the Recommendation and 18 Member States planned or introduced changes since then (Table 3).

Table 3: Changes in measures for individual assessment and personalised guidance

		Changes in measures since H1 2015		
	Measures in place in H1 2015	**No**	**Planned**	**Implemented**
Yes	AT, BE, BG, CZ, CY, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, IE, IT, LT, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK (26)	AT, BE, DE, DK, EE, EL, MT, NL, SE (9)	BG, CZ, CY, FI, FR, IE, IT, LT, PL, PT, RO, SK (12)	BG, CZ, ES, FI, FR, HR, IE, IT, LT, LV, PL, PT, RO, SI, SK, UK (16)
No	HU, LU (2)	LU (1)		HU (1)

Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019.

In 2015, the individual assessments covered, in most cases, education and work experience, distance from work, health and substance abuse as well as family obligations. Debt issues, however, were covered by individual assessments in only eight countries[43]. Changes to individual assessments have been introduced since 2015, but they tend to cover similar aspects as before, with debt issues remaining less covered. Meanwhile, skills "audit" (assessment) is still not a standard practice and in the majority of cases it is not used to identify gaps in basic

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[41]Ibid.
[42]Thematic note on the ESF and YEI support to the long-term unemployed, European Commission, 2019
[43]AT, BE, CZ, DE, DK, EE, NL, SI

skills such as literacy, numeracy and digital skills.[44] Furthermore, basic skills are not always embedded into support measures for low skilled adults while they are fundamental for successful progression towards further learning or qualifications.[45]

In most countries[46] in 2015 the long-term unemployed were already encouraged to consult other service providers (e.g. in the fields of health, counselling or training). Yet since then, 15 countries[47] planned or implemented further changes. Only Greece and Poland did not have any measures in place in this area in 2015 and did not implement changes since.

Finally, in 2015, eight countries[48] did not provide individual guidance and information about job offers in different sectors or regions, but since then, all but Malta implemented measures to this end. Out of the ten Member States[49] that did not provide information on job offers in other Member States in 2015, five implemented measures thereafter.[50]

Box 2: Examples of measures to enhance the individualised approach

> **Croatian** Public Employment Service developed in 2017 a new profiling tool that helps classify clients' distance from the labour market based on specific variables. The model estimates the probability of employment within 12 months following registration. It is designed to take into account variables such as human capital (education and experience), history of employment and unemployment, economic sector of previous employment and any skills they may have gained, belonging to a vulnerable group and region of residence. Jobseekers with a high risk of becoming long-term unemployed are referred to motivation counselling, workshops and additional in-depth counselling.[51]
>
> In **France** intensive support seems to lead to the best results, as well as counselling that aims at removing social and/or personal barriers that jobseekers may face. Experience of Public Employment Service with intensive support schemes within the framework of professional security contract (*Contrat de sécurisation professionnelle*) and the reinforced/global support schemes demonstrate this.[52]
>
> In **Slovakia**, the clearest development in line with the Recommendation has been a greater focus on providing individualised support, specifically via a more in-depth and comprehensive individual assessment. The sharing of information between staff (e.g. via meetings) proved to be beneficial for providing a more holistic and tailor-made assistance.[53]
>
> In **Italy**, a new online tool has been developed called PIAAC10. It enables adults to evaluate and validate their skills and provides the opportunity to create a plan on how to

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[44]The assessment of all three basic skills is mentioned explicitly in the cases of AT, EL, HR and IT.
[45]Staff Working Document (SWD) on Upskilling Pathways: Taking stock of implementation measures, 2019
[46]Only not in EL, HU, LU, LV, PL, SK
[47]BE, BG, CZ, CY, ES, FI, FR, HR, IE, IT, LT, NL, PT, RO, UK
[48]BE, BG, ES, HU, LU, MT, PL, RO
[49]BE, ES, HU, IE, LT, LU, LV, NL, PL, UK
[50]ES, IE, LT, LU, PL
[51]Ad Hoc Module to the 2018 PES Capacity Questionnaire Survey report, European Network of Public Employment Services, 2018
[52]Ibid.
[53]Slovakia Case Study from Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

raise their competences. The aim is to promote learning among unemployed people and thereby increase their employability. The current target group is long-term unemployed individuals.[54]

In **Lithuania,** a new customer service model was introduced within PES which refers registered jobseekers who have been identified as having a lack of work motivation, social skills, and behavioural problems to a special career counsellor. The task of this specialist is to strengthen their motivation by advising them individually and in groups on their career choice, to prepare them for employment and teach them about the functioning of a business organisation etc. Counselling activities encompass three forms: general, psychological and vocational.[55]

More than half of the Public Employment Services (PES) offer long-term unemployed a different and more tailored individual assessment and guidance than other groups (although in practice even those PES which indicated that they do not apply differentiation seem to be applying a more personalised approach to the long-term unemployed).[56] The differences are usually linked to frequency and nature of contact, and also whether *tailored* support or other services are offered. Overall, the long-term unemployed tend to be consulted more frequently than other unemployed groups, and they are also able to access different services (e.g. motivational counselling). Counsellors appointed to work with the long-term unemployed receive special training, while different employability assessment and re-assessment approaches are applied. Finally, since 2016 some Member States, namely Croatia, Greece, Luxembourg and Slovakia, started to develop client profiling practices and segmentation of job-seekers to identify high risk of long-term unemployment and better target support.[57]

Box 3: Examples of differences in individual assessments/guidance between the long-term unemployed and other groups

The **Estonian** Public Employment Service has special case managers counselling the long-term unemployed. They consult fewer clients than job mediation consultants and can use networking, e.g. reaching clients' families, local authorities, social workers or other specialists. This means they can provide real individualised support.[58]

In **Finland,** after 12 months of unemployment, long-term unemployed individuals are contacted more frequently by a counsellor than other groups of unemployed and preferably face-to-face. Counsellors receive special training on how to assess needs and how to act in extraordinary situations.[59]

In **Slovenia** since January 2017, all the long-term unemployed receive a structured in-depth individual assessment within 12-15 months of registration with the PES. This

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[54]European Commission internal questionnaire (Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion), 2018
[55]Ad Hoc Module to the 2018 PES Capacity Questionnaire Survey report, European Network of Public Employment Services, 2018
[56]BE-Actiris, CZ, DK, EE, ES, FI, HR, LT, LV, LU, MT, PL, PT, SI and SK. Ad Hoc Module to the 2018 PES Capacity Questionnaire Survey report, European Network of Public Employment Services, 2018
[57]Ad Hoc Module to the 2018 PES Capacity Questionnaire Survey report, European Network of Public Employment Services, 2018
[58]Ibid.
[59]Ad Hoc Module to the 2018 PES Capacity Questionnaire Survey report, European Network of Public Employment Services, 2018

includes job counselling but also other types of counselling such as rehabilitation, in-depth psychological counselling, or medical counselling.[60]

In **Portugal** a specific intervention strategy was introduced in early 2017 with the goal of consulting long-term unemployed individuals on concrete action to re-enter the labour market. The 'Follow-up support in the search for employment' included the creation of technical tools in order to help the staff in Public Employment Service to provide more efficient assistance to long-term unemployed persons in utilizing the available employment measures. The aim of the project is to enhance the long-term unemployed individual's pro-activity in pursuit of their professional goals, support them to adopt better organised and more systematic job search behaviour, and to use various tools and resources themselves to become employed.[61]

In the **Netherlands**, the 'Work Profiler' system is a science- and evidence-based profiling tool which the PES uses to screen jobseekers upon registration. It assesses the risk of a person becoming long-term unemployed. Medium or high risk cases receive immediate face-to-face interventions and targeted strategies for their activation and integration into the labour market, whereas lower risk cases receive less personalised support.[62]

The **Danish** PES introduced a similar system, where a data profiling tool identifies clients that have an increased risk of becoming long-term unemployed. It is used in the first, intensive contact phase. After 18 months of unemployment, clients receive a re-assessment and further measures are taken, for example in the form of a personal job counsellor.[63]

Hungary is carrying out a programme to further develop the services of the PES with special emphasis on a new profiling tool and Individual Action Plan system. The focus of the programme is on assessing the employability of job-seekers, in particular long-term unemployed. This programme was financed partly by ESF.[64]

Job Integration Agreement

A Job Integration Agreement (JIA) refers to a written agreement which defines goals, timelines, and mutual obligations, and indicates available integration measures. It should be offered at the very latest when reaching 18 months of unemployment and include, as a minimum, an *individualised* service offer (e.g. employment, social support, health, education,

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[60]Ibid.
[61]Ibid.
[62]Ibid.
[63]Information provided by national expert - through Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019
[64]European Semester, Country Report Hungary 2018

early childhood care, debt counselling, transport etc.) aiming at finding a job and the identification of a *single point of contact*. [65]

The PES Network Quality Standards[66] aimed to complement the Recommendation with further guidance on how to define the JIA, and are used in the evaluation. The standards emphasise that the JIA needs to be based on an *individual in-depth assessment*, to propose realistic job goals and a clear offer of support by different providers as well as to specify *frequency and method* of contact. Finally, administrative capacity, including the provision of adequate *human resources* , needs to be ensured to allow for regular monitoring and reviews/updates as well as mechanisms to exchange relevant information between services. However, the evaluation process showed that the JIA concept is still differently understood across countries and also by different actors.

Different sources analysing JIA implementation[67] looked at different aspects of it and by triangulating them it is possible to get a more comprehensive view and understanding of the state of play. This section looks in particular at the timing of the JIA, whether an in depth-assessment takes place or not, whether there is a written mutual obligation and whether a package of services is offered.

In terms of timing, in 2015 six Member States[68] did not offer a Job Integration Agreement nor a similar instrument which could serve as basis for it such as an Individual Action Plan (IAP)[69] before 18 months. Since then all but Greece planned or implemented this feature. Among those countries[70] which already did so in 2015, 14 countries[71] implemented further changes.[72] The qualitative information collected via EMCO[73] shows that, by now, most PES routinely provide all, or most, registered unemployed with an IAP within a relatively short period after registration (maximum six months) after an initial assessment/profiling.

With regards to re-assessments, IAPs are generally reviewed on an ongoing basis, with the frequency and content of the reviews varying between countries and sometimes with the level of need (i.e. employability of client). Reviews generally focus on the fulfilment of steps/activities previously agreed and specified in the IAP and planning of future steps/activities. However, only half of the Member States offer either a new specific action plan or modify the existing plan on the basis of an *in-depth assessment*[74] (countries that have

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[65]Council Recommendation on the integration of the long term unemployed into the labour market (2016/C 67/01)
[66]European Network of Public Employment Services Proposal to EMCO for Quality Standards elaborated by a Working Group on LTU mandated by the PES Board. Following EMCO endorsement standards were adopted by EPSCO on 13 October 2016
[67]Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019, and Ad Hoc Module to the 2018 PES Capacity Questionnaire Survey report, European Network of Public Employment Services, 2018, and Data collection for monitoring the LTU Recommendation: 2017
[68]BG, EL, HU, IT, LU, RO
[69]The JIA concept places more emphasis on the importance of an in-depth assessment and of offering a package of services agreed with SPOC compared to IAP.
[70]AT, BE, CZ, CY, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, HR, IE, LT, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, SE, SI, SK, UK
[71]BE, CZ, CY, ES, FR, HR, IE, LT, LV, NL, PL, PT, SK, UK
[72]Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019
[73]Data collection for monitoring the LTU Recommendation: 2017
[74]The assessment is expected to take into account a full range of issues and barriers that have resulted in a person becoming long-term unemployed (i.e. prevented the original IAP from delivering a positive outcome in the first twelve months of unemployment)

dedicated JIA for LTU or IAP with individual assessment for all in Figure 5) which goes over and above the routine "progress" review *once* the person becomes long-term unemployed.

Figure 5: In-depth assessment linked to JIAs or IAPs

Source: DG EMPL elaboration of the JIA delivery groups in the Data collection for monitoring the LTU Recommendation:
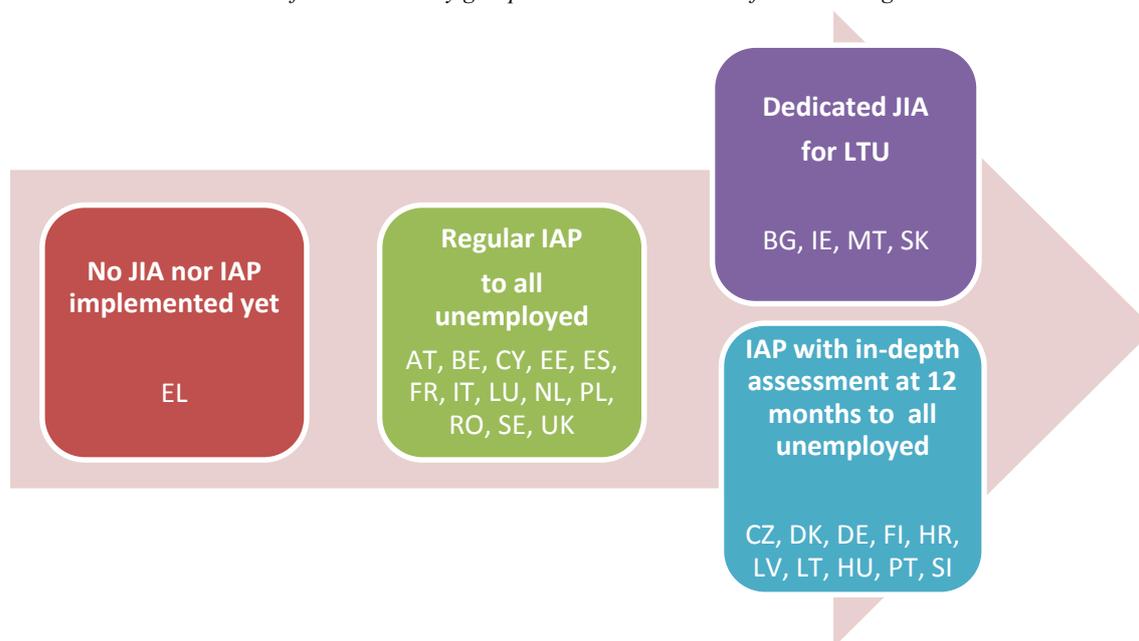
2017. Note: Countries are grouped according to the availability of the in-depth assessment once persons become long-term unemployed. The grouping does not take into account the quality of the JIA itself and whether offered by a single point of contact.

Box 4: Examples of improvements linked to JIA

Within the **Slovakian '**Action Plan on Enhancing the Integration of Long-Term Unemployed on the Labour Market' that was launched in 2016, the Public Employment Service launched the 'With Increased Activity Towards Employment' project in 2017. It aims to increase the internal motivation of long-term unemployed to find a job. It concerns a four month project where participants are given the assignment to identify reasons and obstacles that prevent them from entering the labour market. The project is supposed to identify jobseekers strengths and increase their self-confidence. Furthermore, participants receive advisory services and job offers that match their profile. In 2017, 20.74% of the participants found a job.[75]

In **Italy** the new guidelines introduced with the Ministry Decree in 2018 specifically require that between the 12th and the 18th month of unemployment a new in-depth individual assessment is conducted and a new JIA is drawn up.[76]

In **Belgium**, implemented within the Job Integration Agreements a 'work and health' programme, in order to provide additional support for people far from the labour market. Jobseekers with medical or mental health issues can participate in a temporary work-care plan. This is an internship programme, where participants receive guidance to

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[75]Ad Hoc Module to the 2018 PES Capacity Questionnaire Survey report, European Network of Public Employment Services, 2018
[76]Italy Case Study from Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

> work, combined with care counselling at a welfare institution, psychiatric hospital or public social welfare centre.[77]

Concerning the mutual obligation principle, in 2015 two thirds of Member States[78] had a written offer with mutual obligations in place according to the study. By now this has been planned or implemented[79] by all Member States. A more structured procedure implies clear attribution of responsibility for follow up actions. In 2015, almost half of the Member States[80] did not have such provisions and since then, eight countries[81] have planned or implemented these while another seven[82] made changes to the existing provisions, according to the study.

The study showed that 17 countries did not combine service offerings of different organisations as a part of the JIA in 2015.[83] Since then three Member States[84] started combining services and another five[85] are planning to do so. In some cases like in Croatia combining services is not possible due to confidentiality issues. Among those countries which already did this in 2015, six countries[86] introduced further changes.

In the package of services, job-search assistance and education and training were covered in almost all Member States already in 2015 (the "traditional" parts of an action plan), and the few countries[87] which did not include them, made changes since, according to the study. The number of countries which covered in-work assistance, health and other social services as well as support for increased mobility as a part of the JIA increased from around half in 2015 to more than two thirds in 2018. Childcare services and debt counselling featured as a part of the JIA in a relatively smaller number of countries both in 2015 (12 MS[88] and 6 MS[89] respectively) and in 2018 (16 MS[90] and 9 MS[91] respectively).

Finally, Member States differentiate sometimes between IAPs offered to all clients and those offered to long-term unemployed specifically. According to the PES survey, this is most often linked to a broader range of services being included in the latter case, e.g. a jobseeker can be directed to other institutions to receive relevant support[92], but also via more intensive support for the unemployed[93] or specific staff training[94].

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[77]Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019
[78]AT, BE, BG, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, IE, LT, LV, MT, PL, PT, SE, SI, UK
[79]CY, EL, HR, HU, IT, LU, NL, RO, SK
[80]BG, CZ, CY, EL, ES, FI, HR, HU, IT, LU, MT, RO, SK
[81]BG, EL, ES, HR, HU, IT, LU, SK
[82]FR, IE, LT, LV, NL, PL, PT
[83]Only AT, BE, BG, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, IE, LV, PL did.
[84]LU, NL, RO
[85]CY, HU, IT, LT, SK
[86]BE, BG, ES, FR, IE, PL
[87]HU, LU, RO
[88]BE, CY, DE, DK, EL, FI, FR, IE, LV, MT, NL, UK
[89]BE, CY, DE, DK, EE, NL
[90]BE, CY, DE, DK, EL, FI, FR, IE, LV, MT, NL, UK, BG, ES, HU, LU
[91]BE, CY, DE, DK, EE, NL, LU, LV, SK
[92]FI, HR, IE, LU, LV, MT, RO and SK
[93]DK, ES, HU and SI
[94]ES and LU

3.4 Coordination of services and single point of contact

The Recommendation calls on Member States to put in place the necessary arrangements to ensure continuity of support and identify a single point of contact. This contact should be responsible for supporting the long-term unemployed through a coordinated service offer, involving different service providers – and particularly employment and social support services.

Coordination of services

Establishing a single point of contact requires putting in place coordination processes between relevant institutions such as data sharing mechanisms or processes for referral of the individual from one organisation to another. Different ways of coordination can be effectively implemented (from informal to formal cooperation, or from joint needs assessment and follow-up to colocation and one-stop shops).[95]

Prior to the Recommendation, five Member States did not have coordination mechanisms in place between organisations dealing with the long-term unemployment (Table 4). Since then, four of these have introduced measures. The vast majority of Member States that did have coordination mechanisms in place have also further planned or implemented measures in this area.

Table 4: Coordination mechanisms between organisations dealing with LTU

		Changes in measures since H1 2015		
Measures in place in H1 2015		**No**	**Planned**	**Implemented**
Yes	AT, BE, CZ, CY, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, SE, SI, UK (23)	AT, DK, FI, MT, UK (5)	CZ, CY, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, NL, PL, PT, SE, SI (12)	BE, CY, CZ, DE, EE, ES, FR, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, NL, PL, PT, SI (17)
No	BG, EL, LU, RO, SK (5)	SK (1)	BG, EL, LU, RO (4)	BG, LU, RO (3)

Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

The types of mechanisms put in place to increase coordination vary. Data sharing practices between relevant organisations are among the more common arrangements.[96] This is an area which poses technical and legal barriers related to data protection legislation as well as IT infrastructure. Member States are working towards overcoming these barriers. IT infrastructure to allow data sharing is implemented or planned in seven out of 16 countries where it did not exist prior to the Recommendation (Table 5). Furthermore, out of the 12 Member States that already had such infrastructure in place before the Recommendation, two

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[95]Study on integrated delivery of social services aiming at the activation of minimum income recipients in the labour market — Success factors and reform pathways, European Commission, 2018.
[96]Ad Hoc Module to the 2018 PES Capacity Questionnaire Survey report, European Network of Public Employment Services, 2018

thirds have further planned or implemented measures since the Recommendation in this area (Table 5).

Table 5: IT infrastructure to allow access to individual data of LTU for several organisations

		Changes in measures since H1 2015		
Measures in place in H1 2015		**No**	**Planned**	**Implemented**
Yes	AT, CY, DK, ES, FI, FR, IE, MT, NL, SE, SI, SK (12)	AT, DK, MT (3)	CY, FR, IE, NL, SE, SK (6)	CY, ES, FI, FR, IE, NL, SE, SI, SK (9)
No	BE, BG, CZ, DE, EE, EL, HR, HU, IT, LT, LU, LV, PL, PT, RO, UK (16)	BE, CZ, DE, EE, EL, HR, HU, RO, UK (9)	BG, IT, LU, PL, PT (5)	BG, IT, LT, LV, PT (5)

Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

Coordination mechanisms introduced since the Recommendation are often based upon formal agreements between institutions. Nine[97] out of the 12 Member States that did not have formal agreements in place have since then implemented or planned to implement them. The supporting study also shows that in all Member States, cooperation – in whichever form - now includes PES and Social Services, in 21 it involves or is planned to involve also civil society organisations (CSOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) service providers, and in 18 Member States, private service providers (Table 6).

Table 6: Organisations participating in coordination

			Changes in measures since H1 2015		
	Measures in place in H1 2015		**No**	**Planned**	**Implemented**
PES	**Yes**	AT, BE, CY, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, HR, IE, IT, LT, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK (23)	AT, DK, MT, SE, SI (5)	CY, FR, IE, IT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SK (9)	BE, CY, DE, EE, ES, FI, FR, HR, IE, IT, LT, LV, NL, PL, PT, RO, UK (17)
	No	BG, CZ, EL, HU, LU (5)		BG, CZ, EL, LU (4)	BG, CZ, HU, LU (4)
Social Services	**Yes**	AT, BE, CY, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, HR, IE, IT, LT, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, UK (22)	AT, DK, EE, MT (4)	CY, FR, IE, IT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI (10)	BE, CY, DE, ES, FI, FR, HR, IE, IT, LT, LV, NL, PL, PT, RO, UK (16)

[97]EL, IT, LT, RO, SK ES HR, IE LU

	No	BG, CZ, EL, HU, LU, SK (6)		BG, CZ, EL, HU, LU, SK (6)	BG, CZ, HU, LU, SK (5)
NGO service providers	**Yes**	BE, CY, DE, DK, EE, ES, FR, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, PL, PT, RO, SI, UK (18)	DK, PT, SI (3)	CY, FR, IE, PL, RO (5)	BE, CY, DE, EE, ES, FR, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, PL, RO, UK (15)
	No	AT, BG, CZ, EL, FI, LU, MT, NL, SE, SK (10)	AT, CZ, EL, FI, MT, NL, SE (7)	SK (1)	BG, LU (2)
Private service providers	**Yes**	BE, DE, DK, ES, FR, HU, IE, LT, MT, NL, RO, SE, SI, UK (14)	DK, MT, SE, SI (4)	FR, IE, LT, NL, RO (5)	BE, DE, ES, FR, HU, IE, LT, NL, RO, UK (10)
	No	AT, BG, CZ, CY, EE, EL, FI, HR, IT, LU, LV, PL, PT, SK (14)	AT, CZ, CY, EE, EL, FI, HR, LU, PT, SK (10)	BG, PL (2)	BG, IT, LV (3)

Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

Box 5: Examples of measures to increase coordination between service-providers

In **Greece**, Community Centres that were established in 2016, co-financed by the European Social Fund, are a positive example of increasing coordination between relevant authorities. The Centres operate at the municipal level and integrate information on all types of social benefits at a single point, referring beneficiaries to the appropriate specialised service where needed. They involve various actors, from employment and social services, to volunteer organisations and local authorities, thus facilitating the long-term unemployed person's access to support through increased coordination.[98]

In the **Czech Republic**, the PES introduced new processes related to data exchange and assessment in cooperation with local authorities in order to improve collaboration between different service providers. This also involves a cooperation process to prepare a Job Integration Agreement between PES, local authorities, non-profit organisations, social service providers and the National Board of People with disabilities.[99]

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[98]Greece Case Study, from Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019
[99]Ad Hoc Module to the 2018 PES Capacity Questionnaire Survey report, European Network of Public Employment Services, 2018

In London, **United Kingdom**, through EaSI funding, the Housing and Employment Learning Project was set up. It functions as a one stop shop integrating housing and employment services. Support is being provided through a co-located team of Special Care Handlers, social workers, health trainers, job counsellors, benefit specialists and a virtual network of other services. The project targets 500 clients over two years with the end goal to provide them with an improved housing status, education and employment outcomes.[100]

The '**Italian** Strategy for labour market integration of long-term unemployed' was a direct consequence of the Recommendation. It entails a preventive, personalised and multidisciplinary approach, based on the integration of employment services with services delivered by other local actors (social services, training services, housing and health services). It involves the reinforcement of the IT infrastructure, qualitative profiling and setting up a personal action plan for employment including other services based on the long-term unemployed' needs.[101]

In **Germany**, *Netzwerke ABC* that was introduced in 2016, aims to support local PES offices in expanding their networks by building on the networking experience of a former program that was initiated by the Federal Employment Agency. It aims to disseminate experiences and knowledge on networking activities to all PES and expand their local networks. It is a voluntary program which transfers knowledge through an online platform, through local workshops, national conferences, checklists, a magazine and handbooks.[102]

In **Hungary**, a programme co-financed by the European Social Fund supports NGOs to provide labour market services (such as counselling, mentoring, and psychological counselling) to disadvantaged jobseekers in order to alleviate the burden on the Public Employment Services. The budget for this programme is HUF 6 billion, allocated among the counties according to the composition of jobseekers. The projects are implemented with close cooperation between NGOs and PES, and will involve approximately 93,000 jobseekers, 15% of whom need to be inactive according to the target defined in the project. The effective services of the NGOs started in early 2018 and by the end of June 2018, 3750 people have been involved in the programme.

Single point of contact

Whilst coordination is increasing across the board, this does not necessarily translate into a fully functioning single point of contact. The Recommendation calls Members States "to put in place the necessary arrangements to ensure continuity and identify a single point of contact responsible for supporting the long-term unemployed persons through a coordinated service

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[100]EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation - EaSI (2014 - 2020) – EaSI grants awarded as a result of the call for proposals VP/2015/011, 2016
[101]Italy Case Study, from Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019
[102]Germany Case Study, from Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

offer involving available employment and social support services." The Recommendation states that such a point of contact could be based on a framework of inter-institutional coordination and/or be identified within existing structures.

The set-up of the single point of contact can significantly vary, dependant on Member State's institutional framework for delivery of support to the unemployed as well as on cultures of cooperation between organisations. The evaluation process showed that the concept is differently understood across countries and also by different actors. The PES Network Quality Standards[103] which were developed to provide further practical guidance on implementation of the single point of contact, have been used in the evaluation to allow for a comparable analysis across Member States. As a minimum therefore, the single point of contact should fulfil at least the minimum standards of service defined in the PES Network Quality Standards, such as registration with a registration service, capability to conclude and implement Job Integration Agreements with people, provide an individual service offer for registered long-term unemployed people, and have mechanisms in place for transmission of relevant information of job vacancies between service providers.[104]

Based on these criteria, the supporting study shows that fifteen Member States did not have a single point of contact in place before the Recommendation was adopted. Out of these, nine have since planned or implemented changes to set one up (Table 7).

Table 7: Single point of contact for LTU in place, responsible for benefits and LTU support

Measures in place in H1 2015	Changes in measures in place from H2 2015		
	No	Planned	Implemented
Yes AT, BE, DE, DK, EE, FI, FR, IE, LV, MT, NL, SE, UK (13)	AT, BE, DE, EE, DK, NL, SE, UK (8)	FR, IE (2)	FI, FR, IE, LV, MT (5)
No BG, CY, CZ, EL, ES, HR, HU, IT, LT, LU, PL, PT, RO, SI, SK (15)	CY, EL, ES, HR, PT, SI (6)	BG, CZ, HU, IT, LT, PL, RO, SK (8)	BG, CZ, LU, PL (4)

Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

However, the single point of contact is not fully operational in all of these Member States. Whilst progress has been made, only one Member State has newly established a single point of contact since the Recommendation. As it stands, therefore, half of Member States have a fully operational single point of contact, eight have several of the SPOC minimum criteria of

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[103]European Network of Public Employment Services Proposal to EMCO for Quality Standards elaborated by a Working Group on LTU mandated by the PES Board. Following EMCO endorsement standards were adopted by EPSCO on 13 October 2016
[104]For the full list of minimum standards, see European Network of Public Employment Services Proposal to EMCO for Quality Standards elaborated by a Working Group on LTU mandated by the PES Board. Following EMCO endorsement standards were adopted by EPSCO on 13 October 2016.

the PES Network Quality Standards in place, whilst the remaining six have still to implement measures to make their nominated single points of contact operational (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Member States' degree of implementation of the single point of contact

SPOC fully operational	SPOC elements in place, but not fully operational	SPOC nominated but not operational
Austria, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Ireland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Sweden, UK (14)	Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia Slovakia (8)	Cyprus, Croatia Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Spain (6)

Source: European Commission clustering based on external supporting study and EMCO review conclusions

Box 6: Example of a fully operational single point of contact

In **Finland**, a cooperation model between several services is in place that allows the long-term unemployed to have access to a diverse range of support that meets their need. The cooperation is between the PES, that provides employment services, the municipality that provides social and health care services, and the Social Insurance Institution that provides vocational rehabilitation – all from the same location, a physical one-stop shop, or sometimes a mobile facility. The service design is intended to be customer orientated, based on a needs assessment that leads to a comprehensive individualised employment plan.[105]

3.5 Cooperation with employers

The Recommendation calls on Member States to develop closer links with employers, to encourage partnership between them and other actors such as social partners, social services and education providers, and to develop services for employers – such as placement support and screening services, to facilitate the integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market.

Table 8: Measures to establish closer links with employers related to the placement of LTU

Measures in place in H1 2015		Changes in measures since H1 2015		
		No	Planned	Implemented
Yes	AT, BE, CZ, CY, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, IE,	DK, FI, MT, SE, UK (5)	BE, CZ, CY, DE, EL, FR, IE, IT, LT, NL,	AT, BE, CZ, CY, DE, EE, EL, ES, FR,

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[105]Finland Case Study, from Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

			PT, SK (12)	HR, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, NL, PT, SI, SK (19)
IT, LT, LV, LU, MT, NL, PT, SE, SI, SK, UK (24)				
No	BG, HU, PL, RO (4)		BG, HU, PL, RO (4)	BG, HU, PL, RO (4)

Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

Prior to the Recommendation, only four Member States had no measures in for establishing closer links with employers. All four have since implemented or planned such measures (Table 8). Furthermore, of the Member States that did have measures in place before the Recommendation, a vast majority (19) implemented or planned further measures in this area.

The types of measures introduced vary. Incentives, work place mentoring and training and job placements tend to be the most common.[106] Recruitment subsidies were introduced in three[107] of the seven[108] countries where they were not used for the long-term unemployed before the Recommendation. Incentives through reduction of social security contributions are slightly less common, introduced in three[109] of the 12[110] countries where they did not exist prior to the Recommendation.

Box 7: Examples of financial incentives for employers recruiting long-term unemployed

In **Ireland**, JobsPlus is a financial incentive for employers recruiting people from the Live Register who are long-term unemployed. Since 2013, more than 12,000 long-term unemployed gained employment through the scheme, over 8,000 employers benefitted from JobsPlus grants, and 87% of the participants remained off the Live Register between 30 and 36 months after their commencement date.[111] The tiered nature of the incentive has been effective in targeting the long-term unemployed. Employers receive EUR 7,500 for each person recruited that is unemployed between 12-24 months, and EUR 10,000 for those unemployed for more than 24 months.[112]

In **Latvia** in 2017, in order to make hiring of long-term unemployed more attractive, the regulatory framework for social enterprises was improved. Private entrepreneurs, NGOs and municipalities can employ people at the risk of social exclusion by providing jobs in social services, environmental protection etc. Next to local government support, social enterprises are granted tax reliefs and additional state subsidies for the creation of jobs for vulnerable groups, including the long-term unemployed.[113]

In **Romania,** additional incentives for employers have been introduced to support

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[106]Ad Hoc Module to the 2018 PES Capacity Questionnaire Survey report, European Network of Public Employment Services, 2018
[107]IE, IT, LU
[108]HR, HU, IE, IT, LU, PL, UK
[109]BG, HU, IE
[110]AT, BG, CY, DE, DK, EE, FI, HU, IE, LU, LV, UK
[111]Published in August 2017: https://www.welfare.ie/en/downloads/JobsPlus-FocusedPolicyAssessment-August2017-FinalVersion.pdf. In addition, the results of the counterfactual evaluation of the JobsPlus programme should be available soon.
[112]Thematic note on the ESF support to the long-term unemployed (LTU) and Council Recommendation on integration of LTU into the labour market, European Commission, 2019.
[113]Information provided by national expert through Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

sustainable integration of the long-term unemployed. For employers retaining a person for at least 18 months, the amounts related to activation measures have been increased (to about 490 Euros per month), for a period of 12 months.

In terms of services from PES, the number of PES that provide tailored services to employers using specialist staff has steadily increased since 2014 from 15 PES to 20 PES.[114] Between 2016 and 2017, 11 PES have also increased the number of staff dedicated to this target group.[115]

The study shows that all Member States have planned or implemented placement support services for employers – five of these, since the Recommendation - whilst four of the five Member States that did not previously offer screening services, now do (Table 9). Workplace mentoring and training has also been increased since the Recommendation, now offered in seven of the eleven Member States that did not have such measures in place before (Table 9).

Some services to employers appear less widespread though. Only seven of the 19 Member States that previously did not offer post-placement support now do (Table 10). Similarly, support for social enterprises was introduced or planned since the Recommendation in only seven of the 16 countries where it did not exist before (Table 10).

Table 9: Closer links with employers - characteristics

	Measures in place in H1 2015		Changes in measures in place from H2 2015		
			No	**Planned**	**Implemented**
Screening of suitable candidates	**Yes**	AT, BE, BG, CZ, CY, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, IE, IT, LT, MT, NL, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK (23)	AT, DK, EE, FI, MT, SE, UK (7)	BG, CZ, CY, DE, EL, FR, IE, IT, LT, RO, SK (11)	BE, BG, CZ, CY, DE, EL, ES, FR, HR, IE, IT, LT, NL, RO, SI, SK (16)
	No	HU, LU, LV, PL, PT (5)	PL (1)	PT (1)	HU, LU, LV, PT (4)
Placement support	**Yes**	AT, BE, BG, CZ, CY, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, IT, LT, MT, NL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK (23)	AT, DK, FI, SE, UK (5)	BG, CZ, CY, DE, EL, FR, IT, LT, PT, RO, SK (11)	BE, BG, CZ, CY, DE, EE, EL, ES, FR, HR, IT, LT, MT, NL, PT, RO, SI, SK (18)
	No	HU, IE, LU, LV, PL (5)		IE, PL (2)	HU, IE, LU, LV, PL (5)
Workplace mentoring and training	**Yes**	AT, BE, BG, CY, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, HR, LT,	AT, DK, FI, NL, SE, UK (6)	BG, CY, DE, FR, LT, PT (6)	BE, BG, CY, DE, EE, ES, FR, HR, LT, PT, SI (11)

[114]Five PES that added such services since 2014 are FR, EL, SE, HU and IE. From Assessment Report on PES Capacity, European Network of Public Employment Services, 2017.
[115]Between 2016 and 2017, Austria, Belgium (Actiris) Bulgaria, France, Croatia, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Slovenia, and UK increased share of PES staff dedicated to employers. From Assessment Report on PES Capacity, European Network of Public Employment Services, 2017.

		NL, PT, SE, SI, UK (17)			
	No	CZ, EL, HU, IE, IT, LU, LV, MT, PL, RO, SK (11)	CZ, EL, MT, PL (4)	IE, RO, SK (3)	HU, IE, IT, LU, LV, RO, SK (7)
Post-placement support	**Yes**	CY, DE, DK, EE, MT, SE, SI, SK, UK (9)	DK, MT, SE, UK (4)	CY, DE, SK (3)	CY, DE, EE, SI, SK (5)
	No	AT, BE, BG, CZ, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, NL, PL, PT, RO (19)	AT, BE, CZ, EL, ES, FI, HR, IT, LU, NL, PL, PT (12)	BG, FR, IE, LT, RO (5)	BG, FR, HU, IE, LT, LV, RO (7)

Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

Table 10: Support to social enterprises

Measures in place in H1 2015		Changes in measures in place from H2 2015		
		No	Planned	Implemented
Yes	AT, BE, CZ, DE, ES, FR, IE, IT, LT, SE, SI, UK (12)	IT, SE, SI, UK (4)	CZ, DE, FR, IE (4)	AT, BE, CZ, DE, ES, FR, IE, LT (8)
No	BG, CY, DK, EE, EL, FI, HR, HU, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SK (16)	CY, DK, EE, FI, HR, MT, NL, PT, RO (9)	BG, HU, PL, SK (4)	BG, EL, HU, LU, LV, PL (6)

Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

Box 8: Examples of new measures for employer services

In **Ireland**, an Employer Relations Unit was set up in the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection. It includes a range of relevant groups with the aim of staying up to date with current and future trends and requirements of industries. This knowledge feeds into planning of training to develop jobseekers' skill sets, and matching jobseekers from the live register with national and regional job opportunities.

One approach taken by the unit to link the long-term unemployed directly to employers is through the organisation of job fairs, which in the past two years have gained enough momentum to now turn into "national job week". Employers are invited free of charge to have a stand, ideally have vacancies, and be matched with people who attend on the day.

In a recent evaluation, employers, for the most part, were very satisfied with the results, having received CVs from many suitable candidates at these events. Equally, job seekers expressed positivity that they had been interviewed on the day or invited to apply for positions. Employers also welcomed the opportunity to network with each other. As a result, over 500 companies have signed up to the Employment and Youth Activity Charter where they agree to engage with the Department for recruitment but also to provide Corporate Social Responsibility services, whereby companies provide supports, sponsorship events of facilities in order to provide customer and community support.[116]

In **Sweden**, the Stockholm Labour Market Administration has also set up a Unit for Business Collaboration. This unit coordinates the collaboration with networks of employers in sectors with job shortages. The collaborations are based on a commitment of employers to provide internship/apprenticeship/employment opportunities for students and unemployed. A 'Coaching and Mentoring in the Workplace' tool is being used to support employers and involves social clauses.[117]

In April 2017, the **Lithuanian** PES set up a new unit consisting of counsellors dedicated to working with employers, i.e. PES counsellors were separated between those working

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[116]Ireland Case Study, from Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019
[117]Eurocities, 2017

with jobseekers and those working with companies. Existing PES work coaches were retrained to take up the new positions as employer specialist counsellors. The employer specialists have a case load of around 600 employers. They carry out at least two visits to employers per week. In particular, they seek to visit employers that are new to PES services and will try to gain information about the employer's skills needs. They also outline the types of services that the PES can offer.[118]

Box 9: Examples of new measures involving employer partnerships

In **France,** the project *Territoires zero chômeur de longue durée* was launched as an experiment at the end of 2016. The objective of this project is to have zero long-term unemployment in the participating localities by creating "employment-oriented companies" that recruit long-term unemployed. Through these companies, the long-term unemployed are offered paid permanent employment contracts for their chosen number of hours. To avoid competition with local businesses, an assessment is conducted to identify the community's needs, with unfulfilled community needs then serving as the basis for the job offers. PES provides candidates to fill these job vacancies, firstly preparing them for integration through skills trainings, and managing mobility issues. In addition, the PES consults the companies on the potential for business development. In 2017, the pilot was conducted in 10 localities; it will grow to 50 in 2019 and will continue until 2021.[119]

In **Spain** the Launching Pads for Employment and Entrepreneurship (Lanzaderas de Empleo y Emprendimiento Solidario) scheme is an integrated scheme that aims to help the long-term unemployed enter self-employment or return to work through business "launching pads". It includes coaching and motivation activities for long-term unemployed to get them 'off the ground' and supports a change from a passive to an active approach. Support is provided for a team of unemployed who have a mentor. The scheme provides information, refers participants to business professionals, provides training, coaching and mentoring, and offers psychological support where needed. It is based on a collaborative, supportive model that focuses on personal development, teamwork, all the while working on the collective empowerment of individuals. It is available to registered and non-registered long-term unemployed, is organised at the regional level and is supported by the European Social Fund.[120]

In **Austria,** certain socioeconomic enterprises (Sozialökonomische Betriebe - SÖB), which are not-for-profit social enterprises, provide temporary jobs for long-term unemployed. These so-called transit jobs are designed for people that have been unemployed for a long time and combine employment with training and continual support to overcome any problems the individual may face throughout their time within

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[118]Employer's toolkit: Engaging with and improving services to employers, PES Network, 2018.
[119]Ad Hoc Module to the 2018 PES Capacity Questionnaire Survey report, European Network of Public Employment Services, 2018
[120]Guidance Note: expanding networks for entrepreneurs starting from unemployment, from the Better Entrepreneurship Policy Tool, https://www.betterentrepreneurship.eu

the enterprise. The Austrian PES allocates long-term unemployed persons to the different enterprises and finances the activities, which are partly supported by ESF.[121]

In **Cyprus**, the government introduced a scheme for employer involvement in June 2016. It lets employers design, create, and implement programmes for training and gaining work experience in jobs available to long-term unemployed. The employer will pay the worker the wages stipulated in collective agreements, or, if no such agreement exists, will pay the minimum wage. After six months of employment, employers will be reimbursed for 80% of the costs incurred (with a monthly cap). The training and experience programmes will run for four months, plus two without the subsidy, and employment must be full and permanent.[122]

3.6 Measures for vulnerable groups

The Recommendation aims to ensure an individualised approach for all the long-term unemployed and does not focus on any specific target group within the long-term unemployed. However, the majority of countries which had measures in place in 2015 targeting different groups[123], introduced changes across all policy areas of the Recommendation for all the groups. The two groups for whom most changes took place were people aged 54-65 and people with physical disabilities. Among those countries which did not have targeted measures in place, most changes were implemented with regards to people with mental and intellectual disabilities across the different policy areas of the Recommendation. Overall, most changes have been implemented with regards to people with physical or mental disabilities and people aged 54-65, followed by people with low skills, according to the study.

The Social Protection Committee's thematic report on social services for people furthest away from the labour market confirms the picture that Member States put in place a range of specific support services and measures targeting various groups such as people with disabilities, older, inactive, ex-offenders, homeless and migrants.[124]

Box 10: Examples of measures addressing outreach and support to certain vulnerable groups

In order to increase registration**, in Malta** since 2017 the Public Employment Service has set up three new measures targeting different, vulnerable, long-term unemployed groups: 1) in cooperation with, amongst others, migrant associations and NGOs, the Public Employment Service is running job-seeking advisory services for Migrants with International Protection; 2) in cooperation with various stakeholders, including the LEAP project coordinators[125] and social workers, outreach activities are being implemented to

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[121]Information provided by national expert – through Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019
[122]Ibid.
[123]People aged 54-65, people with low skills or qualifications, people with mental or intellectual disabilities, people with physical or sensory disabilities, non-EU nationals, specific ethnic groups
[124]Social Protection Committee, thematic report on social services for people furthest away from the labour market, 2018.
[125]The LEAP project 'Helping the most deprived 'take the leap' out of poverty' offers personalised support to families and directs them to the relevant social service providers.

identify and register long-term unemployed single parents; 3) in cooperation with educational institutions, information sessions targeting youth are taking place.[126]

In **Germany**, the ESF-funded project 'Zukunftswege' aims to integrate severely disabled people into the labour market permanently. This is done by intensive profiling, individual career path planning, special qualifications, and in-house training and qualifications at the workplace.[127]

Luxembourg introduced targeted measures for people with disabilities. Since 2017, the PES runs a guidance and re-integration project for people with disabilities. The project involves a wide range of stakeholders such as the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Integration, hospitals, psychologists, a socio-professional guidance centre, a re-education centre and employers' associations.[128] Furthermore, through a program called 'Relaunching my career' long-term unemployed between the age of 45 and 65 are targeted. Job seekers are supported through a 54-hour program in which they set professional goals, boost their network and adapt to labour market opportunities.[129]

Bulgaria introduced 'Joint Mobile Teams' to improve individualized services to Roma population. Individuals from the Roma community work as mediators between PES and the Roma communities in order to overcome the mistrust that many Roma have vis-à-vis official institutions. The mobile teams visit the Roma communities and perform individual assessments that are suitable to the needs of the Roma communities and guide them to institutions offering training or to companies that could employ them (temporary).[130]

In the Prudnik district in **Poland**, a project was launched for the economic activation of the unemployed, especially those in particularly difficult situations on the labour market. Apart from long-term unemployed, it targets people with disabilities, persons over 50 years of age, persons with low qualifications, return migrants or immigrants. The support to these groups includes traineeships, vocational training, intervention works or one-off measures for starting a business. The project is co-financed by the ESF.[131]

The **Estonian** government launched a 'Work Ability Reform' in 2016 with the aim to increase the participation of inactive people with reduced work ability in society and improve their employability. The reform includes assessments, pilot projects, rehabilitation services, personal assistive devices, social services and services based on ALMPs. These ALMP measures are financed by the ESF and are targeting risk groups,

[126]Ad Hoc Module to the 2018 PES Capacity Questionnaire Survey report, European Network of Public Employment Services, 2018
[127]European Commission internal questionnaire (Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion), 2018
[128]Ad Hoc Module to the 2018 PES Capacity Questionnaire Survey report, European Network of Public Employment Services, 2018
[129]European Commission internal questionnaire (Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion), 2018
[130]Information provided by national expert – through Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019
[131]Information provided by national expert – through Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

such as the long-term unemployed, who need longer-term support, training and a more personalised approach. Through the ESF also local community activities are financed that are providing specific solutions based on local circumstances and opportunities. Within the Work Ability Reform Programme, also employers are targeted as they receive compensation for workplace adjustment costs and training from a specialist on how to work with people with a reduced work ability. Additionally, the Unemployment Insurance funds provides support to employers in the acclimatisation period.[132]

3.7 European Commission and Member States working together

3.7.1 Monitoring progress

The Recommendation assigns an active role to both the European Commission and Member States in terms of monitoring of its implementation. In particular, the Employment Committee (EMCO), in close cooperation with the Social Protection Committee (SPC) with regard to social services and income provision, as well as the European Network of Public Employment Services have been tasked with contributing to this monitoring. Since the adoption of the Recommendation, several actions have been taken to track progress.

Multilateral surveillance and the European Semester

In 2015 the Commission identified long-term unemployment as a priority to be tackled in the Annual Growth Survey.[133] Annually, unemployment and long-term unemployment developments have been assessed in the Commission's country reports and in December 2016 and October 2018 two specific qualitative EMCO reviews took place to discuss progress in implementing the Recommendation. Based on these, country-specific recommendations have been issued to Member States since 2016 on related areas, as follows:

Table 11: Country-specific recommendations related to the Recommendation, 2016-2018

2016	Reinforcing coverage and/or effectiveness of ALMPs	Integrating support/services	PES capacities	
	BG, HR, ES, FI, HU, LV, LT, PT, RO, SK	BG, ES, PT, RO	CY, ES, IT	
2017	**ALMPs targeting/ Quality of ALMPs delivery**	**Integrating support/services**	**PES reform**	**Better activation**
	BG, HU, RO, SK/ CY, IT, LT	BG, ES, IE, RO	CY, IT	PT, SK
2018	**Effectiveness of ALMPs**	**Effectiveness of support (employer cooperation, integrated services, individualised services)**	**PES reform**	**Better activation**
	BE, CZ, HU, IT	SK, ES, FI	CY	BG, SK

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[132]European Commission internal questionnaire (Directorate General Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion), 2018
[133]Survey spells out general economic priorities for the EU and offers EU governments policy guidance for the following year.

In 2018 the Joint Employment Report (JER) presented for the first time the Social Scoreboard that monitors Member States' performance in relation to the European Pillar of Social Rights. It allows to detect key employment and social problems and to assess convergence or divergence patterns across Member States.[134] In 2018, long-term unemployment rate was added as one of the 14 headline indicators. As a way to further integrate the Social Scoreboard in European Semester, the 2018 and 2019 Country Reports have provided an in-depth analysis of country-specific challenges identified by the Social Scoreboard.

Finally, discussions in EMCO on a benchmarking framework on Unemployment Benefits (UB) and ALMPs have been ongoing since 2016. This comes in the context of a growing common understanding of the importance of viewing ALMPs in a more holistic way as part of a set of comprehensive and supporting activation policies, which is also a key component of the Council Recommendation on long-term unemployment. This benchmarking framework, once finalised by EMCO, will lead to a strengthening of the basis for cross-examination of relative performances and identification of best policy practices and country challenges, both in the context of the European Semester and with respect to the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

Annual quantitative data collection

From the outset, a quantitative monitoring framework was developed by the Employment Committee Indicators Group, with the support of the Commission, to measure progress in implementation of the Recommendation at three levels: aggregate, direct and follow-up level. The framework is mainly based on existing indicators[135] with quality aspects built into some of the indicators. In October 2016, it was endorsed by the Council. Starting in 2017, the Commission has collected yearly data for 2016 and 2017 which were presented to both EMCO and SPC. Issues impacting the quality and comparability of data as well interpretation of some results, e.g. linked to JIA and certain definitions have been tackled by EMCO in 2018 via methodological improvements.[136]

European Network of Public Employment Services

In 2016, a dedicated working group on long-term unemployment of the European Network of Public Employment Services (PES Network)[137] was established at the request of the Commission. The working group designed a set of quality standards for implementing the single point of contact and a Job Integration Agreement. These standards were adopted by the PES Network, subsequently endorsed by EPSCO and then incorporated into the self-

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[134]Following a methodology agreed within EMCO and SPC committees, Member States' performance is analysed looking jointly at levels and changes of each indicator in comparison with the respective EU averages. Based on their performance, the Member States are classified into seven groups, namely: "best performers", "better than average", "good but to monitor", "on average/neutral", "weak but improving", "to watch" and "critical situations".

[135]Existing indicators in the Joint Assessment Framework (JAF) of the European Employment Strategy, the PES Benchlearning process, Eurostat and LMP database. Additional data collection would be limited to specific data on the Job Integration Agreements delivered by the PES.

[136]Monitoring of the LTU Recommendation: Methodological report, 2018

[137]Established under Decision No 573/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on enhanced cooperation between public employment services (PES)

assessment questionnaires proposed by the Commission for the EMCO reviews on long-term unemployment in 2016 and 2018. To further underpin qualitative monitoring of the Recommendation in 2018, the PES Network, with support from the Commission, launched a specifically designed questionnaire as a part of its annual PES Capacity Survey[138]. Finally, as of 2018, additional information on the implementation of the Recommendation was incorporated into the qualitative assessments[139] conducted within the Benchlearning project.[140]

In parallel, since mid-2015, the Network has been issuing specific recommendations to each PES, based on a structured and systematic analysis of PES performance within the Benchlearning project, to help PES steer their national action plans for improvement. It also collected potentially transferable practices for learning purposes. The focus has been on developing strategies and services for employers[141], making the individual assessments of jobseekers more holistic[142] and improving the profiling process.[143] In almost half of the countries assessed, recommendations have been on improving the staff capacities and their qualifications via trainings[144]. In 2017, the Network started the second cycle of PES visits in order to assess changes and progress made.

3.7.2 Mobilising EU funds to support implementation

Promoting the use of the European Social Fund

The Recommendation was not accompanied by dedicated financing to support its implementation. This was unlike the 2013 Recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee,[145] which aimed also to support access to employment for a vulnerable group and had dedicated financing in the form of the Youth Employment Initiative. To support implementation, the Recommendation called instead on both Member States and the European Commission to make best use of the European structural and investment funds in accordance with the relevant investment priorities for the 2014-2020 programmes. The European Social Fund in particular was expected to be a key EU funding source for implementation. The ESF Committee confirmed in its Opinion on the Recommendation that substantial amounts of the ESF were available for putting in place integrated long-term unemployed support structures and for the groups further away from the labour market.[146]

Following adoption of the Recommendation, the European Commission published a thematic guidance fiche for Member State ESF Managing Authorities in May 2016[147] outlining where new actions on long-term unemployment could be programmed, and including existing good

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[138]Ad Hoc Module to the 2018 PES Capacity Questionnaire Survey report, European Network of Public Employment Services, 2018
[139]A qualitative performance enabler (C5) was amended and renamed as: 'Early engagement to reduce the duration of unemployment, and implementation of the LTU recommendation'.
[140]It aims to support each PES in improving its performance through comparisons (indicator-based benchmarking) and institutional learning from peers (mutual learning). Overall, the aim is to improve administrative capacities and support exchanges of good practices.
[141]AT, CZ, DK, EE, FI, FR, DE, EL, IT, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SK, SE
[142]CY, DK, EE, FI, DE, HR, EL, IE, LU, MT, RO, SK, SE, UK
[143]BG, HR, CZ, DK, FI, HU, IT, LV, LU, MT, NL, PT, RO, SK
[144]BE, BG, CZ, CZ, DE, IT, EL, LV, LT, PT, RO, SK
[145]2013/C 120/01
[146]Staff Working Document (SWD) Accompanying the Recommendation, 2015
[147]ESF Thematic guidance fiche on LTU, http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=15600&langId=en

practices in line with the Recommendation, to encourage and facilitate use of the ESF to implement the Recommendation.

To further support the implementation of the Recommendation via the European Social Fund, the Commission's allocated ESF Technical Assistance is funding an innovative project set up in September 2017, under the ESF Transnational Platform's Thematic Network on Employment. This Network brings together ESF Managing Authorities and relevant actors in Member States working on employment. The 2-year project aims to develop 'support packages' for Member States to help them implement measures in line with the Recommendation with the ESF. These support packages are being designed currently and include:

- a toolkit for governments on how to design systems which enable holistic and dynamic recording of an individual jobseekers situation, to enable a single client-centred view;
- a set of videos showcasing how individuals' successful integrations have been enabled through employment support services offered post-placement, to the individual and the employer;

On the basis of theses support packages, recipient countries and regions – Bulgaria, Croatia, Lithuania, the Autonomous Province of Trento, Greece, Spain, Slovenia and Slovakia are developing pilot projects. In Croatia, Lithuania and the Autonomous Province of Trento, for example, these are focused on improving the provision of integrated service support to the long-term unemployed, through putting in place either a case management approach or stronger information sharing mechanisms between PES and social services. The aim is that these pilot projects will eventually be scaled up with the use of the ESF.

Employment and Social Innovation Programme

The Mutual Learning Programme (MLP) under the European Employment Strategy financed by EaSI aims to support, coordinate and encourage mutual learning between EU Member States in order to assist progress towards the goals of the employment strategy. Two Peer Reviews under the MLP took place specifically on long-term unemployment, one in Germany in October 2016, on 'Approaches to integrate long-term unemployed persons'[148] and another in Croatia on 'Improving measures for integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market' in November 2017[149]. A peer Review on 'Way to Work - strengthening the links between active labour market policy measures and social support services', in Lithuania, June 2018 also provided opportunities for mutual learning on areas related strongly to the Recommendation.

Furthermore, two calls for projects with a link (direct and indirect) to long-term unemployed have been financed through EaSI. One call concerned the integration of third country nationals[150] into the labour market (an at-risk group for long-term unemployment). The other

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[148]http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1070&newsId=2529&furtherNews =yes
[149]http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1070&langId=en&newsId=2853&furtherNews =yes
[150]In Italy, Spain, Germany, Serbia, Austria, Sweden, Denmark, Turkey, Belgium, Norway, Austria, Albania, Bulgaria, and Serbia. A total of five grants were awarded. Actions include: Fast Track Action Boost (EUR 1891 441,05); Regional Integration Accelerators

call targeted people who are unemployed over 35 years, and the long-term unemployed, to increase mobility in Europe and offer individualised support packages and improve labour market integration.[151]

In addition, the EaSI programme promotes the involvement of civil society through financial support for the key EU-level NGO networks active in the inclusion of the vulnerable groups to the labour market, enabling them to carry out various projects and support the exchange of knowledge and good practices. As an example, the European Network of Social Integration Enterprises (ENSIE) developed a methodological tool to measure social and economic impact of Work Integration Social Enterprises (WISE's), which was applied in ten member organisations from nine EU countries in 2016. Another example is Eurocities, where the exchange of good practices among cities on refugee and migrant integration, the group that has a higher risk of being long-term unemployed, lead to a significant policy change in Gdansk in 2016.[152]

In 2018, the European Investment Fund (EIF) has signed the social entrepreneurship guarantee agreement for €50 million with seven member banks of the Erste Group in Austria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Serbia. This will provide financing to over 500 social enterprises during the next five years. The finances will be provided under the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI). The Erste Group plans to offer financing to socially-oriented organisations, groups in education, health-care and social services. Moreover, the financing will target projects to encourage the employment of disadvantaged or marginalised groups.[153]

Since 2016, the PES Network which is financed through EaSI, has also been contributing to mutual learning with support from the European Commission. It issued a number of analytical papers and practitioner's toolkits, and organised a conference to assist implementation of the Recommendation.[154] It also conducted research to identify good practices in PES on early intervention with and activation of the unemployed.[155]

Lastly, the Network, with Commission support, offers tailor-made peer-to-peer advice to specific PES within its Mutual Assistance Projects closely reflecting country specific recommendations issued as a part of the European Semester. Within this framework the Cypriot PES received assistance on, among other areas, customer segmentation, improved activation services (including outreach) for jobseekers especially from the most disadvantaged

(EUR 2027 203,14); Fast Track Integration in European Regions (EUR 1940 501,56); Fostering Opportunities of Refugee Workers (EUR 2339 568,10); and Acceleration of Labour Market Integration of Immigrants through Mapping of Skills and Trainings (EUR 979 177 50).

[151]Grants to fund three projects: Reactivate – A Tool to Work Abroad – Boost You Mobility (EUR 1144450.00); Reactivate (EUR 750 000.00); and Reactivate and Relocate (EUR 1101 794.18). Participating countries are: France, Italy, Sweden, Ireland, Netherlands, Germany, Greece, Denmark, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Finland, Romania and Luxembourg.

[152]European Commission (2018), Projects and organisations funded by the European Union programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EASI), Report VIII Period covered 2014-2017, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2018.

[153]http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=67&langId=en&newsId=9144

[154]The PES Network http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1163&langId=en

[155]PES practices https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1206&langId=en

groups (young, disabled, and long-term unemployed).[156] Another example is the Spanish PES that so far received assistance with common profiling system for jobseekers.[157]

An Expert Group on Social Economy and Social enterprise has been set up in 2018 to advise the Commission on "Social investment and the social window of the Invest EU Fund" and on "the role of clusters and similar forms of business cooperation in fostering the development of the social economy". Recommendations are expected for end 2019.

4. METHOD

The evaluation of the Recommendation was based on evaluation questions linked to the five criteria defined by the Better Regulation Guidelines. These questions were broken down into sub-questions and developed as operational questions appropriate for stakeholder responses. An evaluation matrix describing this process is included in the evaluation supporting study.[158] In addition, the analysis of the criteria built on the intervention logic represented graphically in Annex 3.

4.1 Sources of information

Following the Evaluation Roadmap[159] published in June 2017, the evaluation has been carried out on the basis of evidence from different sources.

An external and independent supporting study ('the study') was conducted to support the evaluation, between February 2018 and November 2018. The methodological approach to the study combined quantitative and qualitative data, which have been systematically triangulated to answer the evaluation questions.[160] The supporting study includes a mapping of policy changes undertaken by independent national experts to document the policy changes implemented in Member States following the adoption of the Recommendation in February 2016. It also includes eight case studies, conducted by independent national experts, on Croatia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Slovakia and Romania.

Input from consultations with a range of actors has also contributed to the evaluation. An open internet-based public consultation ran from 2 May 2018 to 31 July 2018. In the context of the study, relevant stakeholders, including social partners, civil society organisations and European Social Fund national managing authorities were consulted in a targeted way through several fora, as detailed in Annex 2. Member States were consulted through three seminars with nominated national contact points on long-term unemployment that took place from March to November 2018, as part of the study.

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[156]This came as a response to the 2016 and 2017 CSRs to enhance the capacity of their PES in their provision to the LTU and improve outreach to the non-registered unemployed.
[157]In Spain received CSRs that called on Spain to reinforce the coordination between regional employment services, social services and employers, to better respond to jobseekers' and employers' needs.
[158]Annex 1 of the Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019. The study provides further details on the methodological approach it used and its strengths and limitations.
[159]https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/initiatives/ares-2017-3234290_en
[160]Annex 7 of the Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019 provides details on the methodological approach it used and its strengths and limitations.

The Recommendation assigns an active role to both the Employment Committee, the Social Protection Committee and the European Network of Public Employment Services in monitoring its implementation. The Employment Committee multilateral surveillance on implementation of the Recommendation took place in October 2018, following a first review in October 2016, and contributed qualitative data to the evaluation. The Employment Committee monitoring data reports on long-term unemployment for 2016 and 2017, based on the EPSCO-endorsed monitoring framework, have provided the main source of quantitative data for the evaluation.

Contribution from the European Network of Public Employment Services has also fed into the evaluation. This includes the Network's annual capacity surveys, which in 2018 included an ad-hoc section on long-term unemployment, results of the benchlearning process, which covers aspects related to the capacity of the public employment services to deliver services to the long-term unemployed, and results of ongoing mutual learning.

The evaluation also draws on various other secondary sources, cited throughout in the text, including a report on ESF support to the long-term unemployed, also undertaken for the purpose of the evaluation (overview in Annex 1).

4.2 Limitations and robustness of findings

The following limitations of the evaluation should be taken into account:

One limitation is the lack of a quantified counter-factual scenario on two levels. Firstly, there is no counter-factual scenario for the evaluation of the direct effect of the Recommendation, that is, 'what would have happened in the absence of the Recommendation.' Secondly, there is no counter-factual scenario, for the evaluation of the actions taken by the 28 Member States and by the Commission in response to the Recommendation, that is, 'what would have happened in the absence of the actions taken in response to the Recommendation.' The SWD of 2015 included some statements on the expected future situation if the Recommendation had not been adopted. However, due to the voluntary nature of the Recommendation and given that measures are mostly taken at national and/or even local or regional level, it would not be possible to present a robust quantitative counterfactual scenario that could reflect the absence of EU action.

Limited time has passed between the adoption of the Recommendation in February 2016 and the start of the present evaluation, which is expected to deliver a report to the Council in early 2019. For a Recommendation that, to a large extent, requires institutional change, implementation takes time and is still ongoing in many Member States. This means that it is too early to assess fully to which extent the integration of long-term unemployed to the labour market has improved due to the Recommendation. Furthermore, because of the close interaction between the policy area addressed by the Recommendation and other policy areas, and the influence of other policies and the economic situation on the target group and on the institutions and structures relevant to the Recommendation, it will probably remain difficult to establish such a direct link also in the future. As a result, whilst the evaluation takes into account results - changes in transition rates, the share of long-term unemployed - such

findings are interpreted with care since it cannot be expected that more long-term effects have already materialised, also given that many other contextual factors will have a strong influence on the labour market development in Europe.

The supporting study has used a large amount of secondary data, from statistical data to monitoring data. Some statistical data was only available with a significant time-lag: the data from the Labour Market Policy database is only available up to 2016, thereby rendering comparability with other more recent data challenging. Where this data has been analysed in the evaluation, it is therefore treated with caution.

Furthermore, capacities to deliver follow-up data for the quantitative data collection are rather patchy given that registers are often not linked. Also, there are no benchmarks to judge the results. This means that for the moment it is quite difficult to draw firm conclusions on transitions and the delivery of sustainable outcomes for the long-term unemployed. The issue of considerable time-lag linked to some of the indicators persists. Furthermore, as the EMCO quantitative framework does not take into account the quality of JIAs and their ongoing management via a single point of contact nor information on the client journeys, there is a gap in terms of monitoring the quality of implemented elements in a more systematic manner. For now, the two qualitative strands (EMCO reviews and PES survey) appear are visibly aligned. They could be further differentiated with the aim of collecting information to monitor the qualitative aspects of JIA or client journeys, linked also to the coordination of services via the single point of contact.

Reaching the long-term unemployed themselves proved challenging in the evidence-gathering. In the case studies of the supporting study, it was not possible to reach any long-term unemployed people in Finland, Italy and Germany. It was also not possible to reach any non-registered long-term unemployed people. Whilst the Open Public Consultation (OPC) did reach a few more long-term unemployed individuals (33 people - 16% of individual respondents to the OPC), the views and opinions from long-term unemployed themselves remain few. This means that the study cannot draw conclusions on whether the end target group have themselves experienced a change in national policies and practices since the Recommendation was adopted.

Defining and setting appropriate criteria to ensure a comparable assessment across countries and different contexts proved challenging for certain measures in the Recommendation, namely for Job Integration Agreements and single points of contact. The starting point for the definition by the independent national experts from the supporting study was that stipulated in the Recommendation. However, it appeared from consultation with stakeholders, in particular national contact points within Member States, that these definitions of the JIA and the single point of contact were differently understood across Member States. The PES Network Quality Standards, which were developed in order to provide guidance to Member States in implementation, were used by national experts of the supporting study when evaluating implementation of these measures. This, alongside triangulation of results with various other sources, has helped mitigate this issue, and allowed for a comparability of results across Member States.

5. ANALYSIS AND ANSWERS TO THE EVALUATION QUESTIONS

5.1 Effectiveness

The question of effectiveness concerns whether the objectives of the Recommendation have been achieved. The assessment uses evidence on points of comparison, expected impacts and state of play presented in section two and three. The analysis is largely process-oriented, that is, to what extent the Recommendation influenced Member States activities to improve support offered to long-term unemployed and its effectiveness.

The overall finding is that the Recommendation's influence on Member States' activities to support the long-term unemployed has been stronger in countries which had a less favourable starting position in terms of the quality of support. This appeared both from the mapping exercise within the supporting study, as well as from the case study interviews. It matches the expectations outlined in the Staff Working Document accompanying the Recommendation (2015) (Figure 6).

Figure 1: Change in policy, 2015 to 2018
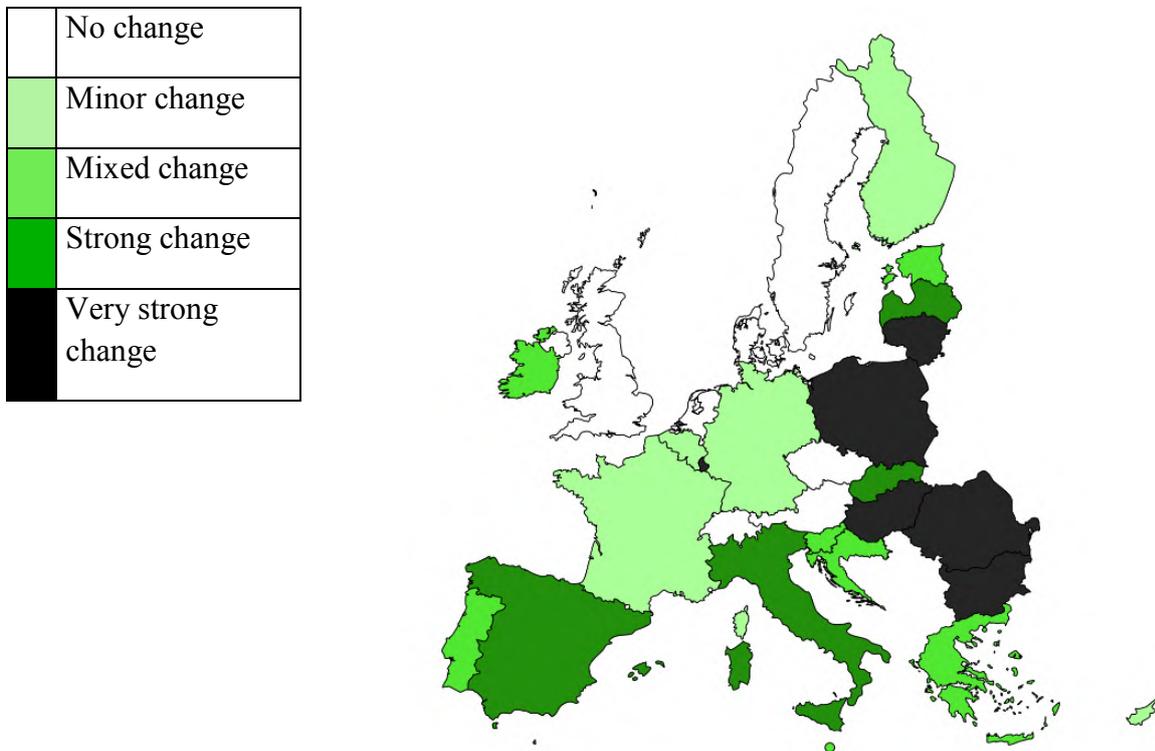
Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019 Note: Countries with no change show no changes in the mapping exercise for any policy area. Countries with minor change show improvement in 1 policy area. Mixed change is change in 2 or 3 policy areas. Strong change is change in at least 4 out of 5 policy areas with at most 1 policy area showing an improvement stronger than 1 point. Very strong change is change in at least 4 out of 5 policy areas with at least 2 policy areas showing an increase stronger than 1 point.

In the supporting study, the changes in measures were qualitatively assessed by experts to determine the level of implementation, using a five-score grading (Table 12):

Table 12: Scoring definitions

Score	Level of implementation	Explanation
1	Low	No or basic implementation only, only on an ad hoc basis or not fully integrated into the overall services package; significant room for improvement.
2	Low-Medium	More than just a basic implementation but falls short of being routinely implemented at national level and integrated into the overall service package; significant room for improvement.
3	Medium	Routinely implemented and integrated into the overall service package but recognise that the service/function falls short of guiding elements of the Recommendation guidance.
4	Medium-High	Established and well-developed service/function that fulfils most guiding elements of the Recommendation but falls short of realising all of them.
5	High	Established and well-developed service/function that fulfils all the guiding elements of the Recommendation. This implies that mechanisms to constantly monitor performance and develop the service/function on the basis of what is or is not working well should be in place.

Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

Ultimately, the value of the Recommendation will depend on whether the measures proposed are effective. There are attempts to analyse this, subject to various limitations. In that respect, the assessment of measures by Member States themselves[161] will play an important role.

In general, the stakeholder consultation showed positive feedback regarding the effectiveness of the Recommendation. Most of respondents to the OPC thought that the measures improved mostly for people with low education or skill levels, and that the Recommendation resulted in some changes in policies (e.g. prioritisation, funding and acceleration of measures). EU level stakeholders argued that the Recommendation had been effective in putting long-term unemployment higher on the policy agenda. The case study interviews resulted in differing views on its effectiveness, as it was assessed to range from low (Finland, Germany, Greece and Italy), to being effective in terms of confirming national choice of policy measures (Ireland), to varying per measure (Croatia) and effective (Romania and Slovakia).

Furthermore, via various channels[162] CSOs, local level stakeholders and social partners expressed disappointed that they had not been given a more visible role in the Recommendation, and believed that its effectiveness would have been higher if such a role

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[161]18 Member States aim at assessing measures in at least one area of the Recommendation according to the supporting study (mapping exercise and case studies).
[162]This was expressed in either the feedback on the Evaluation Roadmap, in the OPC, in the Strategic Dialogue Meeting with CSOs, the Social Dialogue Meeting with social partners, and the EU level targeted interviews (see Annex 2).

had been foreseen. CSOs in the Strategic Dialogue Meeting also stressed that the Recommendation's lack of specific, dedicated funding, likely limited its effectiveness.

The following sections present in more detail the changes in Member States according to various measures proposed in the Recommendation.

5.1.1 Registration of long term unemployed

Between 2015 and 2018, 15 Member States made progress in terms of the quality of measures encouraging registration of long-term unemployed (Figure 7). All Member States with previously very low registration rates[163] and/or all Member States (except Czech Republic) with a low starting point[164] (scores 1-2) in the quality of their measures in 2015, made improvements.

Figure 7: Changes in quality of measures encouraging registration of LTU (2015-2018)
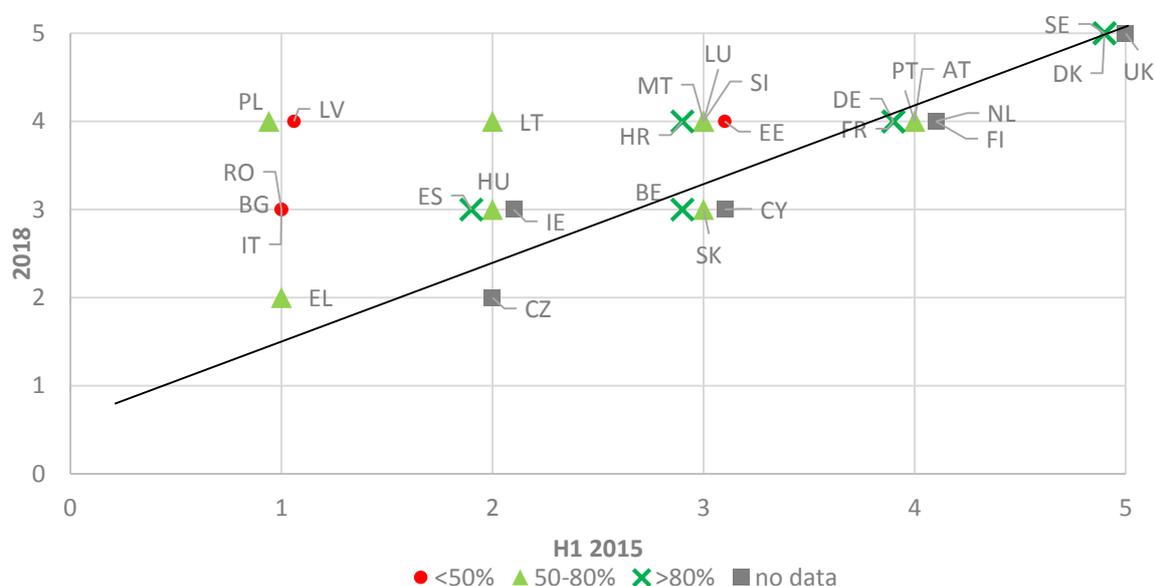
*Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019 Note: *Countries are coded by LTU registration rates in 2014. LTU registration rate is the share of long-term unemployed who are registered with the PES (LFS data). **Quality scores are based on a rating from 1 – 5, with 1 being no or basic implementation only, while 5 means established and well-developed service/function that fulfils all the guiding elements of the Recommendation.*

In total, 21 countries strengthened their existing measures or put in place new measures and incentives to encourage registration. Considerable improvements in the quality of these measures were observed in Member States with previously less developed approaches and/or with low registration rates - as was expected.

Prior to the Recommendation, most Member States had moderate to high registration with only the UK, Italy, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia and Romania with registration rates below 50%. In 2017, 71.8% of long-term unemployed were registered with the PES[165], which decreased

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[163]BG, EE, IT, LV, RO
[164]BG, EL, ES, IE, IT, HU, LV, LT, PL, RO
[165]Defined as people aged 25-64 and recorded by the LFS as being unemployed and seeking work for a year or more. The indicator provides only a partial picture because the population of LTU as measured by the LFS – which applies the strict ILO definition of unemployment (3 conditions: out of work, available for work, and actively seeking work) - does not necessarily correspond to the

slightly from 73% in 2015 (Figure 8).[166] Changes in the level of registration between 2015 and 2017 were positive in eight of the countries for which data is available for both years and comparable between years,[167] with Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia and Greece experiencing the largest improvements. However, there is no clear-cut evidence yet that these measures have translated into increased registration rates for the long-term unemployed.

Figure 8: Share of LTU registered with PES, 2015-2017 (%, 25-64)
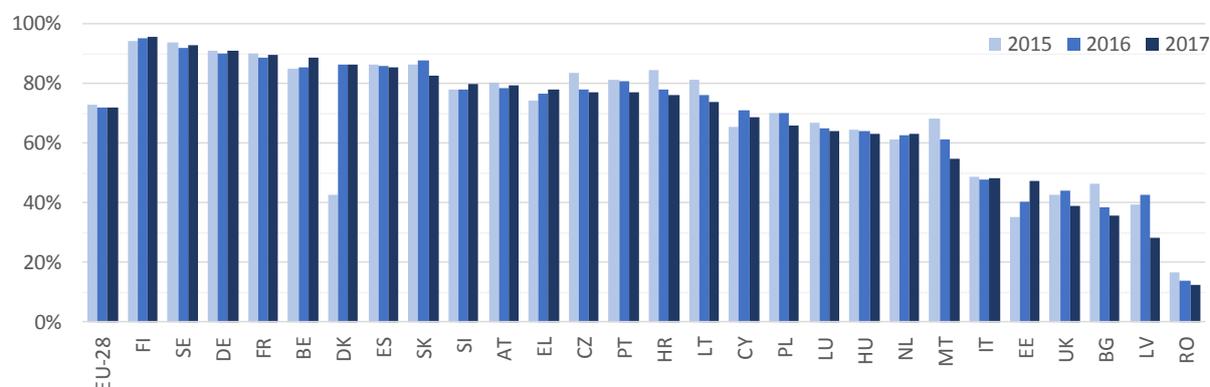
Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey, data extracted on 21 August 2018. Notes: No data for IE (REGISTER variable not currently collected). There are breaks in the series between 2016 and 2017 for BE, DK and MT and between 2015 and 2016 for DK. The 2015 data for DK include large numbers (27%) of "No answer" responses and are assumed to be not comparable with other years. The following figures may be slightly understated (max. 1 percentage point) due to missing values in the detailed data because of small sample sizes – 2015 & 2016: CZ & CY; 2017: BG, CY, LV.

Several factors can influence registration rates, some of which are outside the scope of the Recommendation's measures and/or of the evaluation. Firstly, developments in registration rates may reflect the impact of improved economic situation on the labour market in some Member States.[168] Other factors can be eligibility for receiving unemployment benefits and how long they have received them; sanctioning mechanisms linked to benefits; fragmentation of state administration, geographical distance to PES, the proportion of the long-term unemployed who have never worked before and the quality and attractiveness of PES services.[169]

The findings from the data collection[170] show that in most, if not all, Member States with high overall registration rates (above 85%), a common feature is that the registration with PES is a conditionality to receiving unemployment benefits or means-tested social benefits/assistance. Focus in these countries may be more on incentivising people to remain registered once

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target population at national level. For example, in many countries, people registered as unemployed are allowed to work in a small part-time job (up to a threshold of hours/income) and in some countries there are restrictions on who can register as unemployed so that certain groups are excluded (e.g. people seeking temporary or part-time work).

[166]At EU level there was very little difference in levels of registration among LTU with different levels of education, but registration was slightly higher among women than men (73.3% compared to 71.4%) and significantly higher among those aged 55-64 than those aged 25-54 (77.3% compared to 70.5%).

[167]Registration rates increased in BE, CY, DE, EE, EL, FI, NL, and SI. Although the chart shows a dramatic increase for Denmark, there is a break in the series and the 2015 data include significant numbers of "No answer" responses so the data are presumed to be not comparable. There are no data for IE (REGISTER variable currently not collected).

[168]The share of registered long-term unemployed registered with PES is decreasing due to a higher outflow of registered long-term unemployed, who are relatively close to the labour market, which would lead to a decrease in overall registration rates, if individuals further away from the labour market do not register in response to improved service offerings. The evaluation did not look at this in detail, but statistical data show improving growth and employment rates in some countries such as BG, CZ, LV, PL and RO. See also section 3.1.

[169]SWD accompanying the Recommendation (2015)

[170]Data collection for monitoring the LTU Recommendation (2017)

unemployment insurance has expired. However, when the amount of benefits and assistance are low and thresholds and eligibility criteria are very narrow, this approach appears to have less impact on registration rates, as can be seen in Romania and Italy.

In Member States with high rates of unemployment and a high share of long-term unemployment such as Greece and Italy, high caseloads - the limited capacity of PES to handle or to manage support - have been identified as a main obstacle to increasing registration.[171] Given that it takes time to change perceptions amongst the long-term unemployed about the quality and effectiveness of services, as confirmed by the OPC and in the case studies, it is likely that it will take more time before registration rates improve.

CEDEFOP[172] underlines that the effectiveness of outreach policies is enhanced by anchoring them in national strategies, clearly identifying target groups and entrusting implementation and coordination to regional or local level. Some relevant lessons on increasing the effectiveness of outreach can be drawn from evaluations in other areas. For instance, the evaluation of the Guidance and Orientation for Adult Learners project identified co-operation between service organisations (i.e. reaching out to partners) as a highly effective outreach strategy that allowed more successful recruitment of clients than only through direct outreach.[173]

5.1.2. Individual assessments and job-integration agreements

There is strong evidence from the supporting study and the data collection that practically all Member States conducted an individual assessment of job seeker before 18 months already in 2015. However, the fact that 17 Member States still made changes suggests that there was scope for improving their quality as well as broadening their scope, including by encouraging long-term unemployed to consult other services. A larger share of Member States now includes information about job offers as a part of the individual assessments. On the other hand, gaps in basic skills such as literacy, numeracy and digital skills are still not being identified as a part of the assessments in PES.[174] Whilst tools to improve these assessments are being increasingly developed and used, and both PES capacities and staff skills are being enhanced,[175] limited PES capacity remains the main barrier for offering truly individualised services in Member States with high long-term unemployment rates.

Skills-based profiling is important in terms of enabling skills-based matching. This can be a key way not only to deal with long-term unemployment, but also to prevent it from occurring.

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[171]Mapping and case studies of Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019
[172]CEDEFOP, 2018, Reaching out to 'invisible' young people and adults, Briefing note.
http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/9128_en.pdf. See also some examples of guidance and outreach for inactive and unemployed in Cedefop's ReferNet network reports (http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/networks/refernet/thematic-perspectives/guidance-outreach).
[173]Cross-country evaluation of the Guidance and Orientation for Adult Learners (GOAL) project carried out by the UCL Institute of Education (IOE) in partnership with local evaluation teams in participating Member States (https://adultguidance.eu/). GOAL sought to develop new models or expand existing models of guidance and orientation for low-educated adults in six countries: Belgium (Flanders), Czech Republic, Iceland, the Netherlands, Lithuania, and Slovenia. It ran from February 2015 to January 2018 and funded under the Erasmus+ programme Key Action 3, prospective initiatives, European Policy Experimentation (http://www.projectgoal.eu/).
[174]The assessment of all three basic skills is mentioned explicitly in the cases of AT, EL, HR and IT.
[175]Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019, and Annual report of the European Network of Public Employment Services, 2017

In a labour market characterised by more fluidity, finding the jobseeker with the right set of skills, combined with motivation for the job, will make a successful and productive match.[176] Skills-based matching gives jobseekers a broader perspective on career possibilities whilst also having a positive effect on employers' trust in PES, encouraging the use of PES services by employers, and in turn, increasing the use of the PES channels for vacancy posting, job search and selection.[177] Effective skills-matching is therefore likely to increase the exit rate from unemployment, especially among low-educated and low-skilled workers who use this job search channel more often than their high-skilled counterparts.[178]

Overall, 12 Member States[179], and more importantly, practically all with a low starting point (scores 1-2)[180], made progress since 2015 in terms of the quality of measures linked to individual assessments, according to the supporting study. The improvements occurred in the majority of countries[181] for which a strong impact was expected (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Changes in quality of measures linked to individual assessments
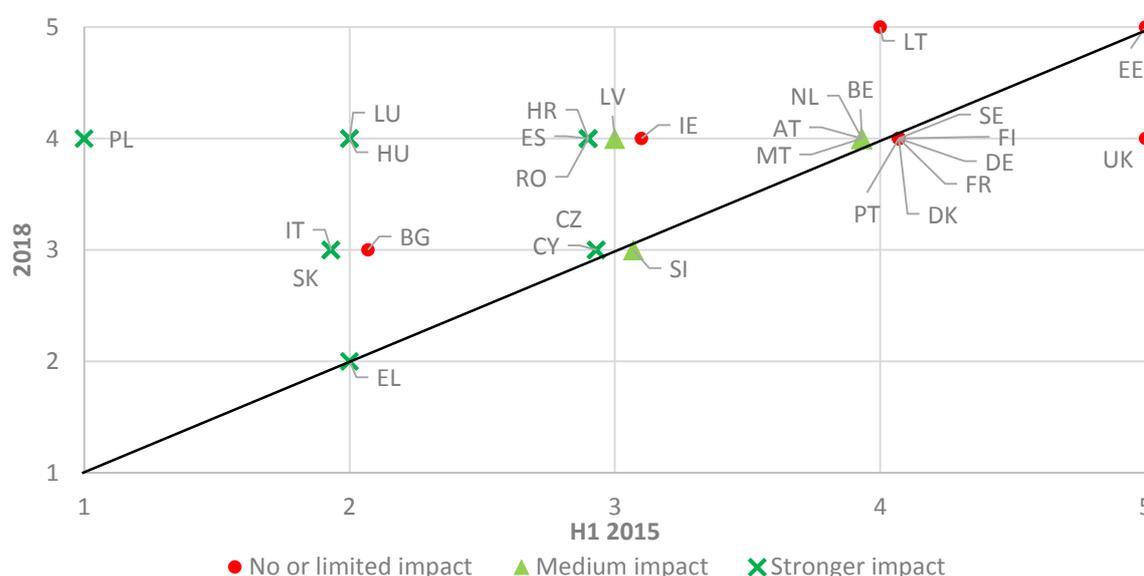

Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019 Note: *Expectations (no/limited, medium and stronger impact) are derived from the Staff Working Document (EC, 2015). ** Quality scores are based on a rating from 1 – 5, with 1 being no or basic implementation only, while 5 means established and well-developed service/function that fulfils all the guiding elements of the Recommendation.

There is strong evidence that, already in 2015, a large majority of Member States offered action plans *before* 18 months of unemployment, which to a different degree resemble a Job Integration Agreement. By now, practically all Member States (except Greece) have planned or implemented one before 18 months of unemployment, as confirmed by different sources. Again, the fact that two thirds of the countries implemented further changes to their mechanisms suggests that there was room to improve the quality of these agreements. In addition, the mutual obligation principle between the employment service and jobseeker has

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[176]Analytical Paper: How to PES act to prevent unemployment in a changing world of work?, European Commission, 2019.
[177]Skills-based profiling and matching in PES, European Commission, 2014
[178]Ibid.
[179]BG, ES, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, PL, RO, SK
[180]BG, HU, IT, LU, PL, SK except Greece
[181]ES, HR, HU, IT, LU, PL, RO, SK. Not CY, CZ or EL

been integrated or is at least planned by all Member States. Finally, a few more countries started to combine service offerings of different organisations as a part of the JIA. These actions are also reflected in increased quality scores for ten Member States with regards to JIA (Figure 10). Out of these, seven Member States[182] had low starting points in 2015 (scores 1-2) before the Recommendation was adopted.

Figure 10: Changes in quality of measures linked to JIA

*Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019 Note: * Quality scores are based on a rating from 1 – 5, with 1 being no or basic implementation only, while 5 means established and well-developed service/function that fulfils all the guiding elements of the Recommendation.*

However, findings also revealed that while JIA is being used to outline the step-by-step path towards integration into the labour market, in practice, it differs in scope and level of detail from country to country. For instance, in at least half of Member States the JIAs still do not include some of the key features such as an in-depth assessment at the time when a person becomes long term unemployed or a combined services offer from different providers (Figure 5 in section 3.3). The variation in the quality of the JIA was also raised by several CSOs during the consultations - PES staff tends to focus too much on "fitting" the client to the standard offers rather than providing targeted support.

The implementation and follow up of JIA, at least quantitatively, are monitored on a yearly basis via the monitoring framework for the majority of countries. The information for the year 2017 shows that the proportion of long-term unemployed with a JIA ranges from a quarter to 100%, but this largely reflects the approach taken for JIA delivery i.e. whether it is a regular IAP, IAP with an in-depth assessment or a dedicated JIA. (Figure 11).

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[182]BG, ES, HU, IT, LU, LT, SK

Figure 11: Use of JIAs amongst LTU registered for at least 18 months (%, 25-64) in 2017

Legend: Regular IAP ▮ IAP with in-depth assessment ▮ Dedicated JIA

JIA not yet implemented: EL,CY
No data: IT,RO
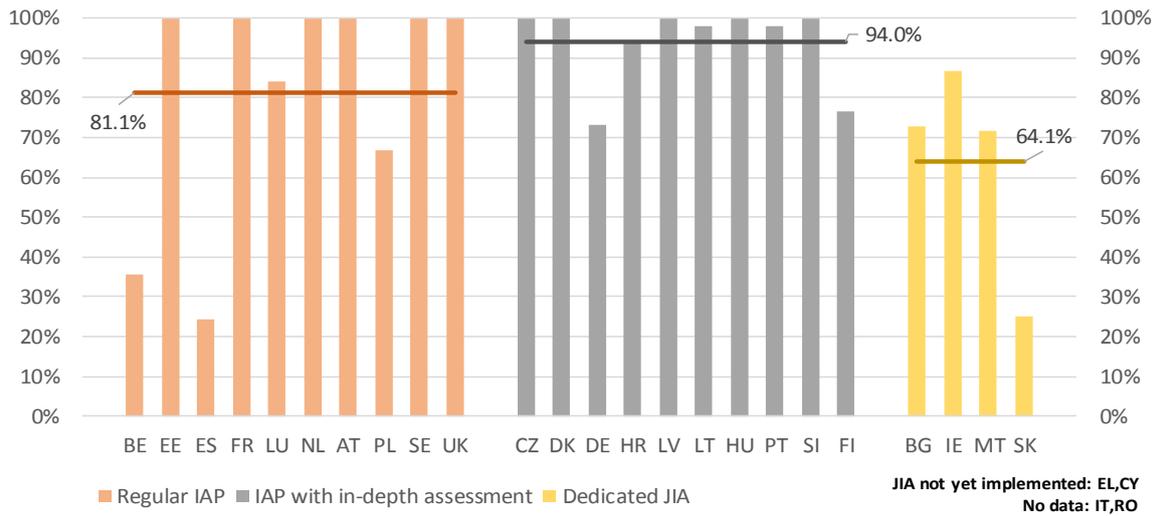
Source: Data collection for monitoring the LTU Recommendation,2017.Note: For the purpose of the data collection, Cyprus decided not to report on JIA since national authorities considered that the regular IAP provided to all unemployed does not fulfil the requirements of the Recommendation.

Countries that consider the IAP delivered to all unemployed as fulfilling the requirements of a JIA can have 100% coverage whilst countries implementing a completely new approach in response to the Recommendation may have much lower coverage as the new process is rolled out. It means that comparison between countries in terms of coverage is of limited value and the main value lies in assessing outcomes and, in the future, changes through time. The supporting study found small differences in coverage by JIA between age groups, gender or educational level.[183] To date, the different approaches do not seem to have had any major impact on transition rates with the proportion of long-term unemployed with a JIA taking up employment falling between 15% and 35% for 16 of the 22 countries for which data are available, and relatively small differences between the groups.

With regards to follow up, countries that provide dedicated JIAs or IAPs with an additional in-depth assessment appear to have better results in terms of sustained employment (averages of 70.5% and 65.6% respectively) compared to regular IAP group (average of 46.0%) which is quite promising, although no general conclusions can be drawn due to a limited sample.[184] Furthermore, as quality of JIA delivery depends on the skills, knowledge and understanding of the employment counsellors as well as organisational policies and structures that support them[185], measuring the impact of different types of IAPs is challenging because of the many and complex variables involved.[186] As regards those receiving a JIA in 2016 (based on data for 14 countries)[187], 50% were still unemployed one year later (without any break) but this is not necessarily a negative outcome as one of the aims of the Recommendation was to engage people and prevent deregistration.

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[183]This analysis is undertaken on 11 Member States which do not have full coverage of JIA, since full coverage does not allow to identify differences.
[184]Information is available for 12 countries: BE, BG, DK, ES, HR, IE, LT, MT, PL, PT, SE and SK.
[185]Organizational support includes training, constructive feedback, collection of client/ customer satisfaction data; and systematic evaluation of data from processes of monitoring whether clients/ customers complete the agreed action.
[186]European Commission (2012), Individual Action Planning (IAP): Resolving tensions and maximizing impact in European PES, Brussels, Authors: Jenny Bimrose and Sally- Anne Barnes
[187]Information is available for 14 countries: BE, BG, DK, ES, HR, IE, LT, LV, MT, PL, PT, SE, SK and UK.

The data available does not allow for granular analysis of the effectiveness of the different types of measures outlined in JIAs. Also, the variety of approaches being taken in Member States and the short implementation period make it even more difficult to conclude on which measures have proven to be more effective in a robust manner. While no consensus emerged on exact measures that lead to best results, the case studies and the PES survey confirmed the importance of tailored measures to the *individual* and provision of *holistic* support for both preventing long-term unemployment and improving transitions to employment.

5.1.3. Coordination of services and single point of contact

The Recommendation has further strengthened the move towards more integrated service provision, both in Member States with a history of institutional cooperation and in Member States with less cooperation. In total, 17 Member States improved the quality of their measures in this area, including six of the seven Member States where there were no formal coordination systems in place prior to the Recommendation. Furthermore, changes in scores were stronger in countries which had a low degree of coordination (scores 1-2 in 2015) before the Recommendation was adopted, such as Poland, Slovakia, Romania, and Luxembourg (Figure 12), as expected.

Figure 12: Changes quality of measures for the aspect of Interinstitutional coordination and SPOC (2015-2018)
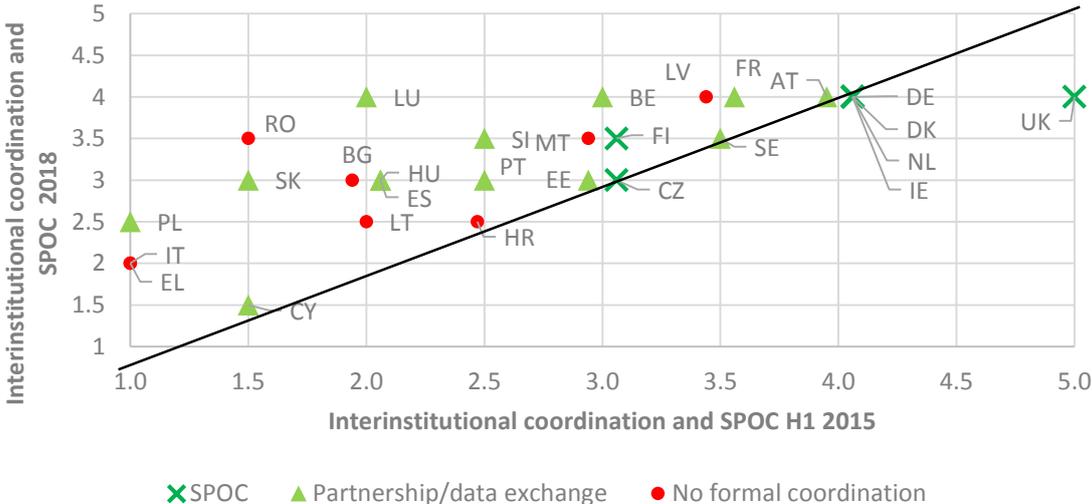
Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019 Note:* Degree of coordination already in place (SPOC, partnership/data exchange, no formal coordination) is from SWD accompanying the Recommendation, 2015 ** Quality scores are based on a rating from 1 – 5, with 1 being no or basic implementation only, while 5 means established and well-developed service/function that fulfils all the guiding elements of the Recommendation.

There is a clear indication that the Recommendation has spurred and stimulated discussion and policy initiatives towards more integrated service approaches. In Ireland, for example, although interviewed stakeholders found it hard to identify policy changes that were a direct consequence of the Recommendation, they believed it had led to increased inter-agency collaboration across multiple ministries and thus a more integrated approach to tackle the

issue of long-term unemployment.[188] Similarly, in Slovakia, the establishment of Units of Services for Citizens to provide information on employment and coordination with social services, were already in motion from January 2015 but the Recommendation helped to reaffirm and refocus the direction of development.[189] It is not yet however possible to identify visible effects/outcomes of such measures, such as an increase in clients, or to establish that more integrated services are provided to long-term unemployed.

The improvement in terms of setting up an operational single point of contact (SPOC) as put forward in the Recommendation is less pronounced. Only one Member State (Luxembourg) has moved from having no SPOC in place prior to the Recommendation to a fully functioning one since.[190] As highlighted in section 3.4, most Member States have improved the coordination of services, putting in place some of the minimum criteria required for a SPOC as defined in the PES Network Quality Standards, but not to the extent of a SPOC, whilst a smaller number have nominated a SPOC but in practice measures have not yet changed in terms of exchange of data, a combined service offering etc., in order to make it an operational SPOC.

The varying degrees of implementation of this element of the Recommendation can be explained by the fact that establishing the SPOC is one of the more challenging aspects of the Recommendation. It has a strong institutional component, involving different service providers and governance levels, and its set-up is also affected by the legal framework for sharing information on individuals between organisations. Indeed, Cyprus, Germany, Estonia, Sweden, Slovenia and Slovakia all cited information sharing issues, posed either by data protection regulation, or by incompatibility of different services' IT systems as barriers to coordination among institutions.[191] Furthermore, establishing a SPOC often requires a change in working cultures, building capacity, and developing new work processes. Unsurprisingly therefore, having a steering authority to lead this process, on the basis of a clear model of cooperation, has been identified as key requirement for increasing coordination.[192] Political commitment can further facilitate this process, as it can ensure buy-in from all actors, and the institutional and legislative changes possibly required.[193] In Ireland, for example, the Intreo model of a one-stop shop was set up largely through a top-down approach via strong senior administrative leadership and significant political commitment.[194] Offering institutional incentives for cooperation have also been identified as one possible way to facilitate integration of services.[195]

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[188]Case study Ireland, from Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019.
[189]Case study Slovakia, from Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019
[190]Based on Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019 and EMCO conclusions, October 2018
[191]See Annex 3 of Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019
[192]Annex 3 of Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019
[193]Study on integrated delivery of social services aiming at the activation of minimum income recipients in the labour market - success factors and reform pathways, European Commission, 2018
[194]Ibid.
[195]Ibid.

5.1.4. Cooperation with employers

Member States have as a whole improved the support provided to employers to integrate the long-term unemployed in the labour market. 14 Member States improved the quality of their measures in this area between 2015 and 2018 (Figure 13). Of these, a majority are Member States that had low scores (1-2) in terms of employment involvement prior to the Recommendation.

Figure 13: Changes in quality of measures for the aspect of employer involvement 2015-2018
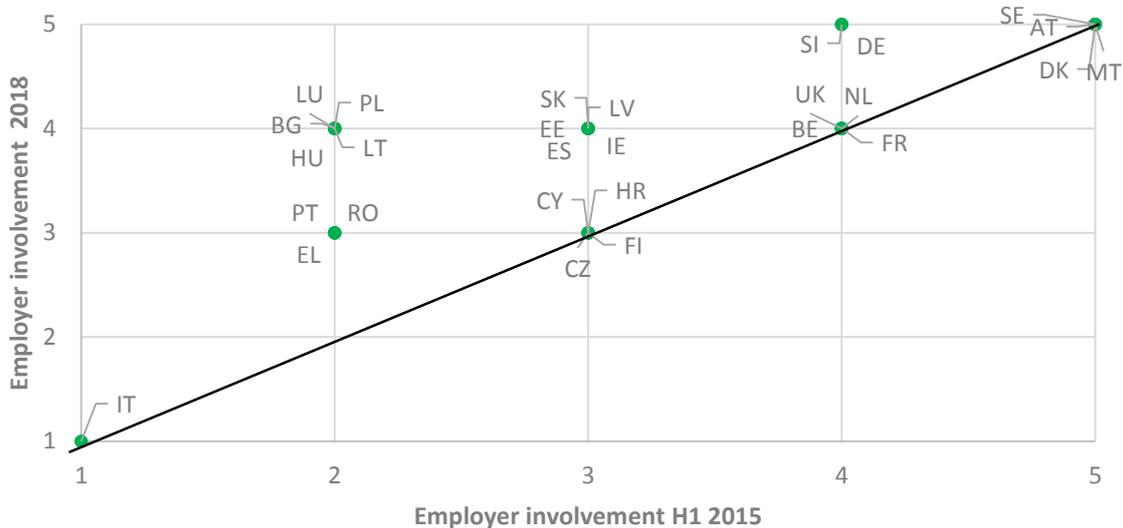
*Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019 Note: *Quality scores are based on a rating from 1 – 5, with 1 being no or basic implementation only, while 5 means established and well-developed service/function that fulfils all the guiding elements of the Recommendation.*

The findings also show that the type of measures introduced or strengthened vary. Two mechanisms can ensure strong employer involvement – enhancing services to employers and focusing active labour market policies (ALMPs) on the competitive labour market by using employment incentives, thus directing expenditure away from public works schemes. In terms of the first mechanism, employer services, Member States are across the board enhancing their measures, as detailed in section 3. Screening of candidates and placement support services are now offered in almost all Member States. For successful employer engagement, an appropriate organisational structure in the PES has been shown to be crucial, ideally acting as a single gateway for employers.[196] Five more Member States have established specialised employer services in PES, leading to 23 Member States with such a dedicated employer function within PES. Furthermore, in 2017, most of the PES also increased the number of staff dedicated to employer services.[197] This is important given that proactively maintaining personal relationships with employers is important in developing and maintaining strong employer involvement.[198] For example, the preliminary evaluation findings of a German programme to support long-term unemployed[199] highlight the important and effective role of intensive and

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[196]Employer's toolkit: Engaging with and improving services to employers, PES Network, 2018.
[197]Assessment Report on PES Capacity, European Network of Public Employment Services, 2017
[198]Employer's toolkit: Engaging with and improving services to employers, PES Network, 2018.
[199]Evaluation des ESF-Bundesprogramms zur Eingliederung langzeitarbeitsloser Leistungsberechtigter nach dem SGB II auf dem

personal contact between employment services and employer, notably through case-workers reaching out to employers and encouraging them to invite long-term unemployed for interviews or to employ them compared to more generic approaches[200]. The intensity of co-operation of case-workers with employers can be sometimes on the same level as the intensity between the case-worker and long-term unemployed.

In terms of the second mechanism, employer incentives are the most common form of employer involvement[201] and were introduced in three of the seven Member States that did not have them in place for the long-term unemployed before the Recommendation.[202] However, trends do not show an increase in ALMP expenditure in this area (Figure 14) which would be expected along with a corresponding decrease in expenditure in public works schemes.[203] Although data on ALMP expenditure is not available for the same period evaluated by the study (2015-2018), between 2014 and 2016[204] expenditure in public works schemes appears to have increased in more countries than it has decreased (Figure 15).

Figure 14: ALMP-expenditures on employment incentives (category 4), % of GDP in 2014 and 2016 and changes in the policy area of employer involvement from the mapping exercise (ranging from 0-2)
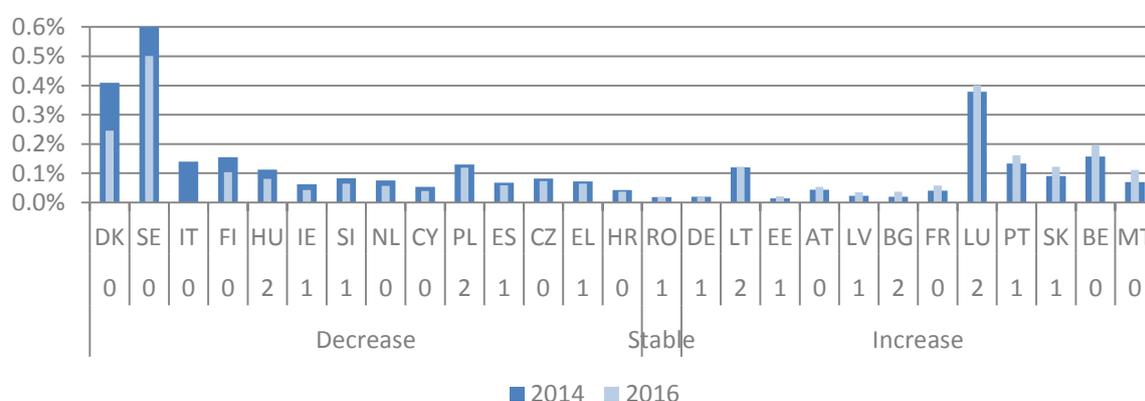
Source: Eurostat LMP-database Note: The UK is excluded because of lacking data

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allgemeinen Arbeitsmarkt. ZwischenberichISG Institut für Sozialforschung und Gesellschaftspolitik GmbH Institut für Angewandte Wirtschaftsforschung e.V. (IAW) an der Universität Tübingen im Auftrag des Bundesministeriums für Arbeit und Soziales, August 2018, https://www.esf.de/portal/SharedDocs/PDFs/DE/Publikationen/fb511_evaluation_lza.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=1
[200]The case-workers assessed personal contacts as highly effective (in 92% cases) compared to fair trades or information events (26%) or contact via employers' association, e.g. newsletters (18%).
[201]Ad Hoc Module to the 2018 PES Capacity Questionnaire Survey report, European Network of Public Employment Services, 2018
[202]Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019
[203]Staff Working Document (SWD) accompanying the Recommendation, 2015
[204]ALMP data is not available beyond 2016 which means that there is a strong time-lag present.

Figure 15: ALMP expenditures on public works and job creation (category 6), % of GDP in 2014 and 2016
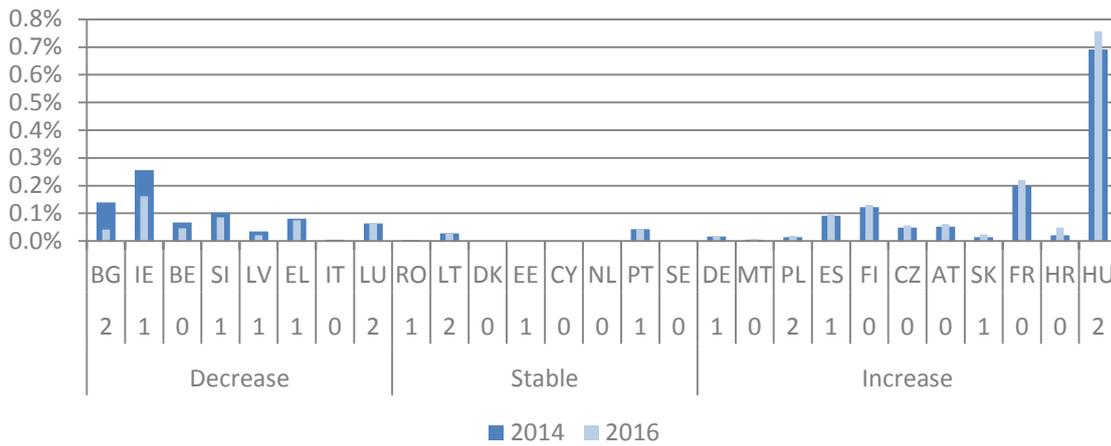
Source: Eurostat LMP-database Note: The UK is excluded because of missing data

However, when compared to the improvement in the quality of measures in employment involvement since the Recommendation, one can see developments that are more in line with the Recommendation: countries with a stronger improvement in the quality of measures more often show a decrease in public works expenditure. For example, Bulgaria, Ireland, Slovenia, Latvia, Greece and Luxembourg that have decreased expenditure (Figure 15) are all in the group of countries that have shown improvement in the quality of measures for employer involvement (Figure 13). Also further in line with the Recommendation, Member States with increasing expenditure shares on employer incentives have higher increases in the policy area of employer involvement - for example Estonia, Austria, Latvia, Bulgaria, Luxembourg, Slovakia (Figure 13 and Figure 14).

In relation to ALMP expenditure, the findings of the impact of the Recommendation remain less conclusive. Expenditure trends do appear to show some movement as expected in the Recommendation – that where ALMPs are focused more on the competitive labour market, employer involvement tends to be stronger. This would be in line with the expectations of the Recommendation, and with the findings outlined in section 3 showing general progress in employer involvement. However, this can only be confirmed when recent data becomes available.

As detailed in section 3, less improved measures in Member States include support to social enterprises. A fast-growing movement, social enterprises are effective in responding to needs that are otherwise not met, or not met in an optimal manner, by public authorities. They can take different forms such as cooperatives, mutual societies, non-profit associations, and foundations. Several EU level civil society stakeholders stressed that social enterprises can be key for providing workers that are unable to perform a standard form of employment, with the opportunity to increase their employability and confidence, in a pedagogical setting (see Annex 2).

Post-placement support services also appeared to be one of the less improved measures in Member States. Such support requires strong cooperation between employers, social partners, PES and other relevant actors. Whilst generally positive about improvements in employer engagement, the importance of partnerships and cooperation with employers was echoed by

key stakeholders, particularly civil society and social partners at the EU level in the OPC, in targeted consultations and in other sources.[205] These stakeholders also stressed that the level of involvement greatly varied depending on the regional and local context in terms of business environment, degree of contacts or proximity to employers and the capacity of social partners to engage at the local level. As came forward in the interviews conducted for the case studies, in Croatia, Greece, and Italy the measures related to employer involvement were not seen as very effective, as employers still are very hesitant to use this service, mostly related to the social stigma related to long-term unemployed, whereas in Ireland, Romania and Slovakia the measures were seen as very effective.

5.1.5. Reach of vulnerable groups

Although findings show that Member States have been targeting specific groups of vulnerable people, both by changing existing practices and introducing new measures that reflect country context and needs, it is not possible to assess to which extent all the different groups in need are reached by the specific measures proposed in the Recommendation. The available data on the reach across age groups and skill levels reveal that there is little difference in reach of general target group and older workers and low skilled unemployed respectively but systematic data on other groups is lacking. This due to lack of systematic aggregate data, mainly linked to data protection legislation (sensitive personal data is not registered especially linked to ethnicity, for instance, in the case of Roma minorities) or to the fact that the data on participants is not (sufficiently) collected even when legally possible (for instance data by nationality and/or country of birth). This represents an area of improvement in the monitoring system for the future.

Within the open public consultation, most respondents agreed that improvements had been made for people with low skills and qualifications and for people with mental or intellectual disabilities (the majority of respondents agreed to this, although consent was higher among organisations than from individuals), whereas this was less so for all other vulnerable groups. Several position papers submitted also indicated that measures to reach out to such groups should be strengthened.

However, the evaluation found evidence that specific ethnic groups (such as Roma) are targeted in most countries with large Roma populations (Greece, Slovenia, Slovakia, Spain), but a strong link to the Recommendation could not be identified. Specific measures are being implemented and PES capacities increased in Member States with large (recent) migrant populations, such as Sweden, Germany, Austria and Belgium, targeting non-EU nationals. However, there is no evidence that this development is due to the Recommendation per se. It is likely to be a policy response to a broader political challenge of integrating immigrants as quickly as possible into the labour market.

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[205]See for example Eurofound, Long-term unemployed youth Characteristics and policy responses, 2017.

5.2 Efficiency

This section looks into what costs the Recommendation generated and if these are proportionate to the benefits achieved. Overall, it has proven difficult to find solid evidence to quantify costs or benefits directly related to the Recommendation for several reasons.

Costs were expected to arise in particular in Member States where JIA and SPOC implementation would require investments in capacities and IT infrastructure. However, in general for most Member States it was difficult to provide comprehensive information on overall costs. For instance, practitioners interviewed during case studies were not typically able to provide comprehensive information on for example, time spent on individualised support, or costs for individual assessments or JIAs and data on costs linked to individual Job Integration Agreements or assessments, is not budgeted nor tracked.

The empirical analysis of the effects of service-integration episodes showed that few reforms have been systematically monitored and evaluated. As a result, there is relatively little reliable evidence on their cost effectiveness. The limited available evidence suggests that integration reforms rarely generate fiscal savings in the short term, however, the setup costs of these reforms are also relatively modest.[206]

Significant costs can be identified where the ESF is used as a complementary financing mechanism in addition to national resources, but these are context dependent and can only constitute a starting point when estimating the costs and benefits of implementation. For instance in Romania, a large ESF funded project is planned in order to implement personalised approaches within PES (24 million EUR) and in Slovakia ESF co-finances a project aimed at providing individualised support to long-term unemployed (32,8 million EUR).[207]

Staff deployment has fluctuated across Member States in recent years and tends to reflect internal developments linked to introduction of new services for specific groups, the introduction of a new strategy, a more fundamental reorientation such as a shift in services from passive to active measures, institutional changes, changes in the composition of labour force linked to influx of refugees or the start of ESF funded projects.[208] The supporting study and the PES survey showed that lack of resources and financial constraints are a barrier to implementation of the Recommendation. This is especially the case on the regional/local level where support is *de facto* delivered.

Generally, qualitative information gathered as a part of the study suggests that costs appear limited as they are mostly associated with changes in internal procedures, guidelines and processes (Croatia, Ireland, Slovakia), and given that certain elements were already in place in some Member States (Finland, Germany). In addition, in Member States which have implemented new actions, the interviewed stakeholders seem to perceive the costs as not being excessively high in relation to the (perceived) benefit and less of strain on national budgets

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[206]Study on integrated delivery of social services aiming at the activation of minimum income recipients in the labour market – success factors and reform pathways, European Commission, 2018
[207]Case Studies Romania and Slovakia, from Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019
[208]Assessment Report on PES Capacity, European Network of Public Employment Services, 2017 and 2018

when co-financed via ESF. Romanian national-level stakeholders pointed out that they believe that service provision increased in efficiency as a result of the Recommendation, as it led to better coordination of different service providers, removal of redundant processes, improving feedback and thereby customer satisfaction.[209]

As regards benefits, it is not only still too early to assess the full benefits of the Recommendation given that it is gradually being implemented and there is a time lag before certain effects are visible, but it is also difficult to fully disentangle the effects from external factors such as favourable economic conditions. Nevertheless, given the very high cost for society and the individual, both in terms of direct costs and lost revenue, of long term unemployment and the low perception of costs, they are likely proportionate to the benefits (potentially) achieved in the future according to several respondents in the case studies, both at policy and practitioners level. The increased focus on early intervention through profiling and outreach is important in terms of both cost-effectiveness and overall fiscal savings from a likely reduction in benefit payments.[210]

At the EU level, the costs of the implementation are more direct. Since the adoption of the Recommendation approximately 1.5 million EUR per year[211] can be directly linked to its implementation of which two thirds relate to the ESF transnational platform's project on long-term unemployment. Relevant comparisons in terms of implementation show that monitoring costs for the Youth Guarantee are around EUR 65,000 a year.[212] In comparison, monitoring for the Recommendation has so far been around EUR 60,000 a year since the monitoring framework was adopted. The costs incurred at the EU level appear thus proportionate to the benefits achieved through knowledge exchange and regular monitoring of the implementation, both appreciated by stakeholders. Particularly during the seminars with long-term unemployment national contact points, participants highlighted exchange of practices as an important benefit with added value, to be pursued.[213]

5.3 Relevance

This section attempts to answer whether the Recommendation is relevant for the integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market, in particular given the changing labour market context.

The Open Public Consultation results reveal broad consensus among respondents that the Recommendation as a whole is still relevant (75% of respondents). The quality of support to the long-term unemployed continues to vary, while discrepancies in long-term unemployment rates as well as the social situation between and within Member States continues to persist, despite recent favourable economic developments.

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[209]Case Study Romania, from Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019
[210] Profiling the Unemployed. A Review of OECD Experiences and Implications for Emerging Economies. Social Protection & Labor Discussion Papers, No.1424, World Bank, Washington D.C., Loxha, A., Morgandi, M.,2014
[211]Based on estimations from the Commission. Costs refer to EMCO monitoring, Mutual Learning Events (EaSI) and the Transnational project (ESF)
[212]https://ted.europa.eu/TED/notice/udl?uri=TED:NOTICE:254269-2016:TEXT:EN:HTML
[213]A survey is being undertaken in relation to MLP and use of EaSI that will demonstrate more long-term impacts of these programmes, forthcoming

As expected, the Recommendation has been more relevant in practical terms for Member States with less developed systems to address long-term unemployment - it helped both to raise awareness of the challenges to be tackled and to set the policy agenda (e.g. Italy). In addition, it served as source of inspiration for policy design (e.g. Slovakia and Croatia). For some, it led to a better understanding of how to support vulnerable groups in the labour market (e.g. Romania, Ireland).[214] According to CSOs, the Recommendation has been relevant in guiding service providers on how to provide the long-term unemployed with better targeted support (see Annex 2).

The Recommendation remains relevant for Member States with more developed systems as well. In many cases, the remaining long-term unemployed in these Member States often face very complex obstacles and/or are inactive. For example, in Germany, the long-term unemployed are more likely to be in material deprivation (33%) and at risk of poverty (73%) than the EU average (27% and 52% respectively), according to the case study. The focus on ensuring holistic and targeted support in the Recommendation is particularly important for long-term unemployed with such obstacles to employment. This is especially the case given the context of labour shortages in some Member States, and in view of demographic as well as labour market changes.

The monitoring and facilitation of knowledge sharing remain relevant both in order to see progress in implementation or where progress is lacking, and to identify the challenges and weaknesses so as to support better implementation of the Recommendation. The majority of respondents in the targeted interviews (EU-level CSOs, social partners and public authorities) argued that it would be relevant, if in line with monitoring the Recommendation, for the EU to follow up and put pressure on Member States where limited progress has been made. The evaluation could not conclude on the need to support and coordinate voluntary initiatives and company alliances, and further analysis is needed.

The Recommendation remains particularly relevant and might even warrant further action with regard to the single point of contact. This is because the SPOC as envisaged in the Recommendation is still far from being established across the board, with only one Member State having newly developed their single point of contact since the Recommendation. The Recommendation's focus on the SPOC therefore remains relevant for Member States as even though increasing integration of services is happening, the fully seamless and holistic support to the jobseeker as defined in the concept of the SPOC is still far from a widespread reality. Furthermore, coordination of services including income support services, came out as crucial for the integration of vulnerable groups facing multiple obstacles to employment. This was supported not only by civil society organisations in the stakeholder consultation but also by findings in other related policy domains, such as educational, [215]social[216] and youth.[217]

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[214]Case studies from Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

[215]Cross-country evaluation of the Guidance and Orientation for Adult Learners (GOAL) project carried out by the UCL Institute of Education (IOE) in partnership with local evaluation teams in participating Member States (https://adultguidance.eu/).

[216]The need for close cooperation among stakeholders, at local level and beyond, and for the active involvement of all relevant partners was highlighted in the Commission Staff Working document on the implementation of the 2008 Commission Recommendation on the active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market (SWD(2017) 257 final and in the 2018 Thematic Reporting synthesis executed by the Social Protection Committee on 'Social services that complement active labour market inclusion

Ensuring therefore the link to income support and benefits in the construction of the single point of contact is key to ensure the seamless and holistic support needed by the long-term unemployed.

The study has also found that whilst employer involvement is increasing, expenditure on public works schemes is not falling, meaning that the Recommendation's approach to employer involvement still has relevance. This is the case even in Member States with otherwise well-developed long-term unemployment support systems, such as France and Finland, that have higher expenditure on public works schemes. The OPC results and findings from interviewed stakeholders in the case studies for Croatia, Greece and Italy, also point to the persistent challenge in overcoming employers' reluctance to employ long-term unemployed due to the perceived 'higher risk' they carry as employees. Breaking down the stigma and working with employers and other partners to do so, therefore remains relevant, including in countries with more developed approaches.

One element that seems less relevant is the specific reference to 18 months as a cut off point for providing individual assessments and Job Integration Agreements. This is because the findings show that practically all Member States provide these at a much earlier stage. This was also pointed out by the majority of CSOs at EU-level.[218]

5.4 Coherence

The aim of this section is to assess to what extent the Recommendation is coherent with existing policies and instruments at EU and national levels that have the most direct link with long-term unemployed and support provided to them (external coherence) and also the internal coherence of measures included in the Recommendation. It will therefore also examine whether the Recommendation prompted a shift in policy and funding in the use of the European Structural and Investment Funds by Member States and to what extent the Funds have been used to implement the Recommendation.

The findings from the OPC and targeted consultations point to strong coherence and complementarity between the Recommendation and other EU policy instruments aiming to support people back into employment. The Commission Recommendation on the active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market,[219] the Council Recommendations on establishing a Youth Guarantee and on Upskilling Pathways[220] are coherent with the Recommendation on long-term unemployment in terms of specific aims and target groups The Recommendation also seems to be coherent with the policies related to integration of third-country nationals[221] which emphasise the need to provide tailor-made support answering specific needs but also the importance of using the general system providing mainstreaming services. The provisions of the Recommendation are also aligned with principle four of the

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measures for people of working age who are furthest away from the labour market'.

[217] European Commission, Activation measures for young people in vulnerable situations: Experience from the Ground, 2018.

[218] This was expressed multiple times in the Strategic Dialogue Meeting and by two CSOs in targeted interviews, as detailed in Annex 2.

[219] Commission Recommendation 2008/867/EC

[220] Council Recommendations (2013/C 120/01) and (2016/C 484/01)

[221] COM(2016) 377 final, Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals

European Social Pillar of Social Rights[222] and the latest Council decision on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States.[223] Based on the evidence presented in section 3.7 on monitoring and mutual learning, there are clear synergies with the European Semester country specific recommendations, Social Scoreboard, work on the benchmarking framework for unemployment benefits and ALMPs, as well as the recommendations issued as a part of the work carried out by the European Network of Public Employment Services. Coherence with national policies in the area was assessed to be strong, and the measures proposed in general correspond to national priorities and strategies. The case studies confirm that the Recommendation is in line with national employment policies in Croatia, Finland, Italy and Slovakia.[224] Moreover, the findings reveal that the Recommendation influenced policy prioritisation in some Member States.[225]

The evidence gathered during the evaluation suggests that different components of the interventions operate well together to achieve given objectives (internal coherence). The mapping of changes and their scores show that member states have typically higher or lower scores across groups of measures or that they improved their measures across all the areas.[226] The Slovakia case study, for example, is explicit on the links between measures as the provision of individualised support, which is considered as the most profound change in the work of Labour Offices during the 2014-2017 period, is closely related to the designation of a single point of contact where the initial screening of the job seekers takes place.

Use of EU funding

The Recommendation calls on both Member States and the European Commission to make best use of the European structural and investment funds in implementing the Recommendation in accordance with the relevant investment priorities for the 2014-2020 programmes. Member States were able to use the European Regional Development Fund to fund projects on long-term unemployment. Areas under the ERDF relevant for support to the long-term unemployed include investment in business development, support to entrepreneurship and incubation, for which 8.1 billion EUR was allocated in 2014-2020, Support to social enterprises with 343.6 million EUR, and for ICT Services and applications for SMEs with 1.5 billion EUR.[227]

The European Social Fund was expected to be a key EU funding source for implementation. In terms of objectives and priorities of the ESF, there are several investment priorities under which actions relevant to the Recommendation can be programmed. Overall, 50% of funds

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[222]Right to personalised, continuous and consistent support and right to an in-depth individual assessment at the latest at 18 months of unemployment

[223]Council decision (EU) 2018/1215 of 16 July 2018 on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States

[224]Case Studies of Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll 2019.

[225]HR, IE, IT, RO, SK.

[226]There are few exceptions to that where the quality remained at the lowest level 1 and didn't change between 2015 and 2018, such as job integration agreements (Greece, Romania although the latter introduced them in 2017), the single point of contacts (Cyprus, Greece) and links with employers (Italy). See Figure on the assessment of the quality of measures in place in the mapping (Annex 3 of the supporting study.

[227]An analysis of how the ERDF has directly supported the long-term unemployed and/or implementation of the Recommendation is not possible due to lack of data broken down by target group, but several examples of relevant projects can be found here. For some examples of projects on LTU funded by ERDF see: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/projects/poland/tackling-obstacles-to-long-term-unemployment and http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/projects/ireland/momentum-effective-support-for-long-term-unemployed-people

was allocated to Investment Priorities *relevant* to the long-term unemployed and to the Recommendation (8i, 8ii, 8vii, 9i and 10iii[228]), equating to around EUR 60.2 million. Most important within these, are investment priority 9i with 30% of long-term unemployment-related allocations and Investment Priority 8i, with 24% of the long-term unemployment-related allocations.

Up to the end of 2017, long-term unemployed participants made up 17%[229] of all ESF participants and accounted for 2.6 million.[230] In Belgium, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Latvia and Slovakia, the long-term unemployed participants make up over a third of all ESF participants (Figure 16). The number of long-term unemployed participants in ESF interventions represent a third of the long-term unemployed population in 2017,[231] indicating the relative importance of the ESF in supporting this group. This ratio is higher than the EU aggregate in 12 Member States, with noticeably, Belgium, Estonia and Ireland with values surpassing 1 (Figure 17).

Figure 16: LTU participations by Member State, 2014-2017 (% of total ESF participations) and LTU rates (% of active population) in 2017
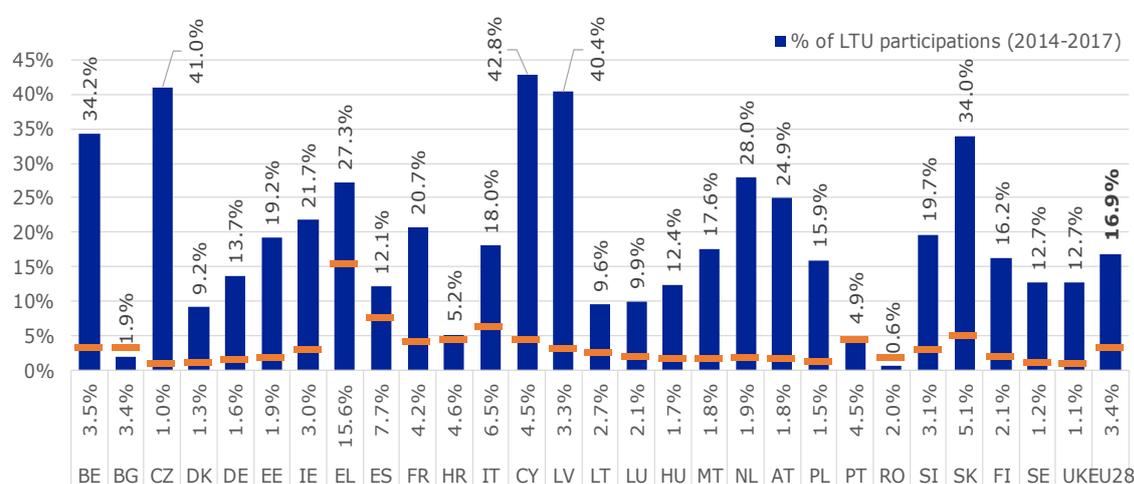
Source: Database of OP based on SFC2014 data extracted in August 2018, from Thematic note on the ESF and YEI support to long-term unemployed (LTU) and the implementation of Council Recommendation on integration of LTU into the labour market, European Commission, 2019.

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[228]**Investment Priority 8i**: Access to employment for job-seekers and inactive people, including the long-term unemployed and people far from the labour market, also through local employment initiative and support for labour mobility; Investment Priority 8ii: Sustainable integration into the labour market of young people, in particular those not in employment, education or training, including young people at risk of social exclusion and young people from marginalise communities, including through implementation of the Youth Guarantee; **Investment Priority 8vii:** Modernisation of labour market institutions, such as public and private employment series and improving the matching of labour market needs, including through actions that enhance transnational labour mobility as well as through mobility schemes and better cooperation between institutions and relevant stakeholders; **Investment Priority 9i:** Active inclusion, including with a view to promoting equal opportunities and active participation, and improving employability; **Investment Priority 10iii**: Enhancing equal access to lifelong learning for all age groups in formal, non-formal and informal settings, upgrading knowledge, skills and competences of the workforce, and promoting flexible learning pathways including through career guidance and validation of acquired competences.

[229]Thematic note on the ESF and YEI support to long-term unemployed (LTU) and the implementation of Council Recommendation on integration of LTU into the labour market, European Commission, 2019.

[230]Including long-term unemployed participants under the Youth Employment Initiative.

[231]However, it is important to note that ESF performance data relate to cumulative outputs (i.e. programme starts) over a period (2014-2017), whilst LFS data refer to the average stocks of individuals in a given year (2017). In addition, in the monitoring of ESF, it is possible that the same individual is counted more than once if they participate either simultaneously or sequentially in two or more different operations. Therefore, a direct comparison is not possible, and the figures should not be interpreted as the share of LTU reached. They represent an indication of the volume of LTU treated in relation to the size of the LTU population. See Thematic note on the ESF and YEI support to long-term unemployed (LTU) and the implementation of Council Recommendation on integration of LTU into the labour market, European Commission, 2019.

Figure 17: LTU participants for period 2014-2017 (ESF) as ratio of LTU population in 2017
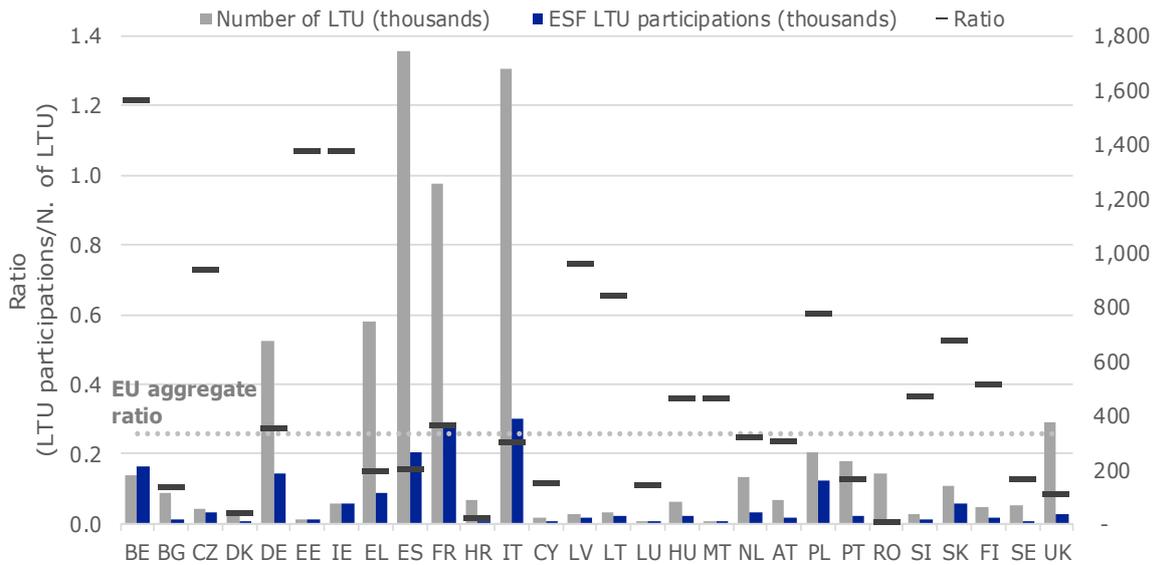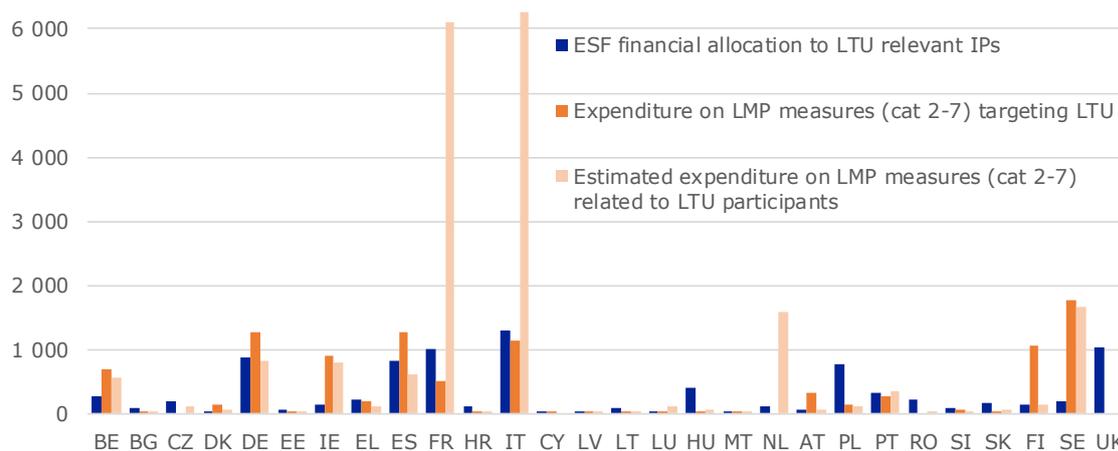

Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey, data extracted on 3 October 2018 and database of OP based on SFC2014 data extracted in August 2018, from Thematic note on the ESF and YEI support to long-term unemployed (LTU) and the implementation of Council Recommendation on integration of LTU into the labour market, European Commission, 2019.

Findings suggest therefore, that the ESF is key in supporting the long-term unemployed. Its contribution to national policies in the area is substantial - in over half of Member States (17),[232] ESF financial allocations to Investment Priorities that are relevant for the long-term unemployed exceed the national expenditure[233] for interventions targeting the long-term unemployed. In Estonia, Hungary and Poland, ESF funds to long-term unemployment Investment Priorities significantly exceed (more than 5 times) both the expenditure of interventions that include the long-term unemployed as a target group and the estimated expenditure dedicated to long-term unemployed participants (Figure 18).

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[232]BG, CZ, EE, EL, FR, HR, IT, LV, LT, HU, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SI, SK. Note that for CZ, NL and RO, none of the LMP interventions are flagged as targeting LTU and thus LMP expenditure estimated is 0.
[233]Reported in the Labour Market Policy database

Figure 18: ESF financial allocation (2014-2020) and expenditure on LMP measures (2014-2016) related to LTU (annual average)

Source: Database of OP based on SFC2014 data extracted in August 2018 and LMP Database, data extracted 12 December 2018, from Thematic note on the ESF and YEI support to long-term unemployed (LTU) and the implementation of Council Recommendation on integration of LTU into the labour market, European Commission, 2019. Note: LMP data not available for the UK; LMP data on estimated expenditure on LMP measures related to LTU participants are not available for CY and for comparability reasons refer only to 2016 for PL and an average of 2015-2016 for CZ.

Box 11: Example of ESF support to the long-term unemployed

> In **Spain** (Regional Operational Programme – Catalonia), the ESF, even if representing only a small part of the overall budget of the PES (10%), is key in the provision of services for long-term unemployed, as PES counsellors and certain active labour market measures targeting long-term unemployment are fully funded by the ESF. The OP is currently being amended (pending internal approval of regional institutions) to increase support to groups at most risk of social exclusion and promote active inclusion, including long-term unemployed or individuals at risk of becoming long-term unemployed, and all the ESF intervention actions in place have been described as being line with the principles of the Recommendation.[234]

Despite this, though, the link between the use of the ESF and the Recommendation itself is not so clear to establish. Whilst the Recommendation was introduced only after the ESF Operational Programmes were adopted, changes to reflect new priorities or funding allocations are allowed. In practice, there are few cases where these changes were made to reflect the Recommendation's aims. The share of the budget for long-term unemployment related IPs was increased in four countries: in Greece and Italy, proportions to IP 8i have gone up (4.8pp and 2.7 pp respectively), in Spain, there was a 4.5pp increase for IP 8vii, and in France, the share of budget for 10iii increased by 3.2pp.[235]

Changes in spending priorities linked to the Recommendation may not be apparent in aggregate level data though, and qualitative findings indicate that policy and funding

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[234]Thematic note on the ESF and YEI support to long-term unemployed (LTU) and the implementation of Council Recommendation on integration of LTU into the labour market, European Commission, 2019.
[235]Thematic note on the ESF and YEI support to long-term unemployed (LTU) and the implementation of Council Recommendation on integration of LTU into the labour market, European Commission, 2019.

prioritisation did change in a few other Member States too, in response to the Recommendation.[236]

Box 12: Example of ESF policy and funding prioritisation in response to the Recommendation

In **Slovakia**, a dedicated Action Plan on enhancing the integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market (2017-2020) was adopted in response to the Recommendation, in November 2016. The Action Plan is being implemented in 2017-2020, with 105 mil EUR co-financed by the ESF. The Action Plan focuses on providing intensive individualised approach and tailored specialised counselling where needed to the long-term unemployed, supporting reintegration through in-work benefits and support to work trials, and developing cooperation between relevant actors including Public Employment Services and private employment services, and supported employment agencies and NGOs. It also focuses on supporting social enterprises in the social economy. Measures and initiatives under the Action Plan aim to cover some 272,000 jobseekers which it is estimated that about 51,000 long-term unemployed will find employment.[237]

5.5 EU value added

In this section the evaluation aims to identify whether the Recommendation influenced Member States in terms of programming and delivery of ALMPs and in overall allocation towards employment and social services, and what the added value is as compared to the initiatives that would have been undertaken in its absence. It also looks into the expectations with regards to the role of the EU in tackling the issue of long-term unemployment.

Different targeted interviews at EU-level point to the fact that the Recommendation was useful. One CSO said it had a positive impact, one social partner indicated that it put long-term unemployment higher on the policy agenda and one national public authority mentioned it helped develop a common understanding in the development of the policy responses by the various responsible national authorities. This was confirmed in the Employment Committee 2018 conclusions on the implementation of the Recommendation endorsed by the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council in December 2018.[238] By translating lessons learnt from mutual learning into an action framework aiming to raise service delivery performance in all Member States, the Recommendation has created a politically visible commitment which takes mutual learning and purely technical exchanges on good practices beyond the PES' remit. Particularly in Member States where high impact was expected (Table 1), it influenced the focus of Member States in their efforts, and has been useful for prioritising support and guiding implementation. However, it is not possible to draw firm conclusions based on the existing evidence on whether funding and resources allocation to support the long-term unemployed increased in response to the Recommendation. Also, it is not possible to answer to what extent the improvements are due to the Recommendation per se or can be attributed to efforts which would have taken place in its

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[236] Ibid.
[237] Ibid.
[238] EMCO key messages, endorsed by EPSCO 6 December 2018, http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14409-2018-INIT/en/pdf

absence, given the still very scarce use of counterfactual impact evaluations in Member States.[239]

Within the OPC, 89% of the respondents said it was useful to have a specific policy targeted towards the long-term unemployed. As mentioned in the relevance section, stakeholders, at least on the EU level, expect and value the Commission's efforts to monitor implementation and to use various tools to apply "pressure" where progress is not being made.

The evaluation shows that the Commission has played an active role, in line with these expectations, in building a monitoring framework and collecting qualitative data across all EU Member States in this first phase of the implementation. This has likely created a sense of ownership among Member States, and also established ground for future policy discussions. CSOs did, however, stress that they would like to see more qualitative indicators included within the monitoring process, in order to better assess the quality of jobs offered to long-term unemployed and thus the sustainability of the measures.[240] Research shows that when addressing vulnerable groups, it is important to measure the "distance travelled" by the individual since accessing the support, rather than purely focusing on the outcome achieved, i.e.: whether they have integrated into the labour market, returned to education or become socially active.[241] The Commission has also taken an active role with regards to knowledge sharing and developing common standards, producing relevant materials and by supporting the roll-out of a transnational project supporting implementation of the Recommendation. This has also been confirmed during targeted consultations with employers' associations, trade unions and civil society organisations. It is less likely that those activities would take place and/or continue without the Recommendation's framework.

Suggestions for enhancing the EU value added, arising from EU level stakeholders (one CSO and one social partner) included greater involvement in fighting stigma linked to long-term unemployment and facilitating knowledge sharing and exchange. For now, less effort has been put into supporting and coordinating voluntary initiatives and company alliances but it is also not entirely clear to what extent there is a demand for this. While changes have been implemented across the different policy areas, monitoring of inter-institutional coordination is the area where relatively less was done both in the past and recently. Supporting in filling the gaps in this monitoring, based also on results of national evaluations, could therefore enhance EU added value.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The objective of this evaluation was to examine the actual implementation and performance of the Council Recommendation on the integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market, between 2015 and late 2018, and to report to the Council.

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[239]Nevertheless, some evidence is available, beyond the supporting study, explicitly mentioning the role of the Recommendation for national actions (e.g. Spain in Fundae (2018). Guidance and outreach for inactive and unemployed – Spain. Cedefop ReferNet thematic perspectives series. http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2018/guidance_outreach_Spain_Cedefop_ ReferNet.pdf).
[240]This was expressed in the Strategic Dialogue Meeting that took place on 15 November 2018
[241]Activation measures for young people in vulnerable situations, European Commission, 2018

The evaluation covered the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and EU added value of the Recommendation. These criteria were examined in an external study, and built upon by the information gathered through consultation activities, including an open public consultation, targeted consultations and interviews with a range of relevant stakeholders, monitoring data reports on long-term unemployment for 2016 and 2017 and various other secondary sources.

The evaluation concludes that costs associated with the implementation of the Recommendation do not appear excessively high in relation to the perceived benefit, although it has proven difficult to find solid evidence to quantify costs or benefits *directly* related to the Recommendation. The Recommendation remains relevant for all Member States because there is scope to improve support, and given also current demographic trends and tightening labour markets across Europe. Monitoring and facilitation of knowledge sharing remain relevant both for keeping track and supporting implementation of the Recommendation in the future. Furthermore, the evaluation found that there is strong coherence and complementarity between the Recommendation and other EU policy instruments aiming to support people back into employment, as well as national policies. Findings suggest that the European Social Fund has been key in supporting the long-term unemployed and that policy and funding prioritisation took place in a few Member States, although the direct link between the Recommendation itself and the use of the ESF is not so clear to establish. Lastly, the evaluation has shown the EU value added as the Recommendation has helped to put and keep the issue of long-term unemployment high on the political agenda at the European level and in Member States. Particularly in Member States with weaker support systems for the unemployed, it helped to re-focus efforts and guide implementation. Finally, the Commission's active role, both with regards to monitoring and supporting implementation with various tools (e.g. exchange of knowledge), has been welcomed. It has likely created a sense of ownership among Member States and established ground for policy discussions. As a result, it is expected by stakeholders to continue. Nevertheless, the evaluation showed that there is still room for improvement given that, despite these activities, some of the concepts continue to be differently understood across countries, notably JIA and SPOC.

As regards its effectiveness, it is still too early to assess the full impact of the Recommendation. In general, a minimum of three years of full data relating to the operation of an EU intervention should be available.[242] The full impact encompassing all areas will be possible to measure only in a few years. However, in some areas of the Recommendation that are more advanced in terms of implementation, one could expect to be able to do the assessment earlier.

There are several other issues that must be considered when assessing the impact. It is not always possible to establish a direct link between the effects and the Recommendation given the interaction with several other factors which have a strong influence on these, most notably the business cycle and investments as well as national policy and institutional context. In assessing the effectiveness of measures, Member States also have an important role. They are

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[242]Better regulation "Toolbox", SWD (2017) 350.

better placed than the EU-level to monitor and evaluate certain impacts, given that the context differs per Member States, and because the Recommendation to a large extent complements and supports existing national policies.

The evaluation shows that progress and improvements of policy interventions across the EU are in line with the objectives of the Recommendation. Progress has been stronger in countries which had a less favourable starting position in terms of the quality of support, matching the expectations outlined in the Staff Working Document accompanying the Recommendation (2015).

Registration of the long-term unemployed

Member States have adopted a range of measures to encourage registration including information to non-registered on the support available, services to discourage deregistration and outreach to specific inactive groups. Member States with higher registration tend to condition receipt of benefits upon registration. However, the range of measures adopted have not yet translated into higher registration rates. Nevertheless, while in some Member States the measures might simply require some additional time before their effects become visible (e.g. changing perceptions among the long-term unemployed about the quality of services), in others more structural changes are needed that are typically outside of the scope of the Recommendation (e.g. the conditionality of unemployment benefits, PES capacity, better cooperation with CSOs and local actors).

The quality of individual support and its monitoring

Overall, the evaluation showed that there is a more holistic approach towards individual assessments and that tools are being increasingly developed to support the process (e.g. profiling, guidance, individual action plans, job integration agreements etc.). The current cut off point at 18 months for providing individual assessments is fully met and in practice almost all Member States provide these at a much earlier stage. Nevertheless, in practice, the scope and depth of assessments, in particular once the person becomes long-term unemployed, and their frequency, still vary considerably, which is strongly linked to limited capacities of PES. Furthermore, although by now Job Integration Agreements exist in some form in almost all Member States and are provided before 18 months of unemployment, some of the key features are still missing and/or are not implemented to fully meet the standards of Job Integration Agreement as envisaged by the Recommendation and operationalised in the PES Network Quality Standards. One feature is the above-mentioned absence of in-depth assessment when a person becomes long-term unemployed. Another one is that existing agreements/action plans tend to still encompass only regular employment services rather than a package of services and measures from different service providers, as envisaged in the Recommendation. This is closely linked to the current functioning of the single point of contact. Finally, the evaluation showed that there is scope for improving the monitoring of the quality of services and the impact of the different JIA delivery approaches. In the context of the current monitoring framework this has proven to be challenging due to the complexity of variables involved and issues linked to the quality and completeness of data.

Coordination of services and the single point of contact

The single point of contact as envisaged in the Recommendation is not yet fully in place. The evaluation has shown that increasing cooperation and coordination between services is progressively happening across the board, but large gaps remain in ensuring that the individual has a single point of contact through which to access relevant support. The capacity of key actors needed to steer and lead integration across several organisations is key for that to happen and this remains an issue in most Member States. Action is needed therefore to increase the capacity of relevant organisations – both employment and social services – to this end. Furthermore, political will to integrate services and set up a single point of contact appears to be crucial in speeding up change and ensuring full operationalisation of a single point of contact. This is because it can lead to a legislative requirement for cooperation across institutions, which enables both data protection challenges and organisational change obstacles to be overcome. This is also lacking in Member States with less institutional cooperation.

Cooperation with employers

Employer involvement has increased and a variety of measures are underway across Member States. A focus on increasing services provided to employers is visible in most Member States. However, a move away from public works schemes towards more competitive ALMPs is not particularly evident in ALMP expenditure levels, although a time-lag in the date could be a factor here. Whilst there has been improvement in offering employers services, less improved measures include combining incentives with in-work support, developing more supported employment opportunities, and increasing post-placement support services. Cooperation between employers, social partners, PES and other relevant actors does not appear to be sufficient. Support to social enterprises also appears to have been less a focus in the area of employer engagement, despite their potential to upskill and employ vulnerable groups.

ANNEX 1: PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

Organisation and timing

DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL) is the lead DG for the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market of 15 February 2016 (2016/C 67/01) which is legally pursuant to its article 14.

The evaluation started with the publication of the Evaluation Roadmap[243] and has been carried out with the support of the Inter Service Group chaired by DG EMPL to which the following DGs were invited AGRI, GROW, EAC, ECFIN, HOME, JRC, JUST, REGIO, RTD, SJ and SG. The group met five times:

- 17/05/2017 – evaluation roadmap and terms of reference for the external study

- 06/03/2018 - inception meeting for the external study

- 14/09/2018 - draft interim report of the external study

- 24/10/2018 - interim report of the external study

- 03/12/2018 - written consultation on the draft final report of the external study

- 18/01/2019 - draft SWD and draft report to the Council

Use of evidence

Both internal and external expertise was used to ensure good quality of the evaluation and related Staff Working Document. The main sources include:

- External study carried out by Ramboll Management consortium[244]. According to the quality assessment of the study done by the Inter Service Group, the study has been conducted in line with the Request of Services and the agreed inception report except for interviews with long-term unemployed themselves and some targeted consultations. It includes all agreed components and is based on relevant qualitative and quantitative data although less information and evidence on efficiency was included than expected. The analysis and conclusions are sound while methodology and limitations are clearly outlined. Recommendations are relevant.

- Seminars with long-term unemployment contact points designated by Member States for testing preliminary findings/conclusions of the study.

- EMCO multilateral surveillance reviews on long-term unemployment in December 2016 and October 2018

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[243]https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/initiatives/ares-2017-3234290_en
[244]Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

- Ad Hoc Module to the 2018 PES Capacity Questionnaire Survey report produced by the European Network of Public Employment Services

- Data collection for monitoring the long-term unemployment Recommendation reports 2016 and 2017 carried out by Alphametrics

- Thematic note on the ESF and YEI support to long-term unemployed and the implementation of Council Recommendation on integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market

- An internal questionnaire by DG EMPL on the use of the European Social Fund in relation to long-term unemployment in Member States.

- The 2018 Thematic Reporting synthesis executed by the Social Protection Committee on 'Social services that complement active labour market inclusion measures for people of working age who are furthest away from the labour market'.

- Studies/toolkits produced by the European Network of Public Employment Services

- Reports from mutual learning events on long-term unemployment

- Annual EaSI implementation reports

- A Labour Market Observatory study on 'The implementation of the Council Recommendation of 15 February 2016 on the integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market' carried out by the European Economic and Social Committee in 2018.

The Recommendation itself stipulates that the Commission shall '*evaluate, in cooperation with the member states and <u>after consulting the stakeholders concerned, the actions taken in response to this recommendation and report to the council by 15 February 2019 on the results of that evaluation'*.[245] The general goal of this stakeholder consultation is to collect data, experiences and opinions on the Recommendation's effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, relevance and EU added value from relevant stakeholder groups and the general public.

The Commission followed a consultation strategy consisting of various consultation methods and tools used as well as actors involved. The strategy indicated that the evaluation of the Recommendation would involve both an open public consultation in all official EU languages and a targeted stakeholder consultation with key stakeholders in their appropriate language. Within the strategy, the Commission identified the following stakeholder groups who could be impacted or could impact the implementation of the Recommendation on long-term unemployment:

- citizens and interested stakeholders,

- labour and social affairs ministries in Member States,

- local and regional authorities in Member States,

- employment services in Member States,

- social services in Member States,

- people that benefited from the support mentioned within the Recommendation who found a job, people that benefited from support but did not find a job and unregistered long-term unemployed,

- national level and EU level social partners,

- national level and EU level civil society organisations,

- European Network of Employment Services,

- ESF authorities.

The Commission published an Evaluation Roadmap[246] to provide information on the content and the planning of the evaluation of the Recommendation. The Roadmap was available for feedback from the public from 29 June 2017 until 27 July 2017. Opinions could be provided through the website of the Commission by all parties interested in doing so. This was done in line with the Better Regulation guidelines[247], which mandate transparent and inclusive policy making by offering interested citizens and stakeholders

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[245]Council Recommendation on the integration of the long term unemployed into the labour market of 15 February 2016 (2016/C 67/01)
[246]https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/initiatives/ares-2017-3234290_en
[247]Better Regulation https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-making-process/planning-and-proposing-law/better-regulation-why-and-how_en

the opportunity to provide feedback on the design of policies and their evaluation methods.

In total, the Evaluation Roadmap yielded six responses, of which four were non-governmental organisations (NGOs), one was a business' association and one indicated 'Other'. Comments submitted were rather feedback on the Recommendation itself than on the evaluation strategy, so therefore they will only be noted briefly. An issue mentioned by two respondents were to devote more attention to the specific labour market situation of a country to tackle long-term unemployment rather than focusing on how individuals need to adjust, and one emphasised the importance of the creation of quality jobs. One NGO noted the opportunity of involving Work Integration Social Enterprises in the Recommendation and a business association advocated for job creation through entrepreneurship. There was one comment on the strong links between unemployment and health issues which strengthens the importance of coordination of services as proposed in the Recommendation. Furthermore, it was noted that civil society organisations could play an important role in tackling long-term unemployment which was now ignored, and the possible added value of Member State information exchange and cooperation.

What follows will be a summary of the consultation process reviewing the stakeholders involved and the methods used, a summary of the results gathered and lastly, a fitness check on the compliance of the consultation with the Commission's minimum requirements.

Summary of the consultation process

This section will provide an extensive summary of the stakeholders consulted, the methods by which this has been done and insight into the results obtained.

1.1 Public Consultation

An open public consultation was held in order for all interested citizens and stakeholders to provide feedback on the Recommendation. This was done via an online questionnaire that was available in all 24 official EU languages, through the Commission's consultation platform. Respondents had the opportunity to respond to the questionnaire from 2 May 2018 until 31 July 2018.

The questionnaire consisted of an introductory section with questions to identify the nature of the respondent while ensuring its anonymity, followed by a few questions on the respondents' knowledge on the Recommendation and eventually a section where respondents could provide their opinion on the Recommendation. The majority of questions asked were multiple-choice questions, whereas a few gave the opportunity to respond openly. The questions concerning the evaluation of the Recommendation consisted of statements for which respondents had to indicate their consent ranging from strongly disagree until strongly agree, plus an option indicating that they had no opinion or did not know. Lastly, respondents could include an attachment to elaborate further on their position towards the Recommendation.

In total, the open public consultation yielded 482 responses, of which 205 responded as individuals and 277 in the name of an organisation. Over half of the respondents said to have 'fairly good' or 'in-depth' knowledge on the Recommendation and their countries' policies on tackling long-term unemployment. This share was significantly higher among respondents replying in the name of an organisation than for individuals.

Regarding its relevance, 75% of respondents answered that the Recommendation is still relevant in addressing long-term-unemployment, where most stressed the importance of an individual in-depth assessment. More than 60% replied that the EU should also pursue other measures to help the long-term unemployed find a job.

Regarding its effectiveness it appeared that the majority of respondents thought the measures of the last two years improved for people with low skills or qualifications and those with mental and/or psychological disabilities, in both cases this number was higher for organisations than for individual respondents The majority of the respondents said to disagree on improvements being made regarding individual employment services, social support services and coordination of support for other vulnerable groups among long-term unemployed.

A third of the respondents replied that there were synergies between EU policies helping long-term unemployed and that thus these were coherent, whereas most respondents did not specifically answer the question. Considering EU added value, 89% of the respondents said to find it useful to have a policy especially targeted towards long-term-unemployment. Most respondents said that the Recommendation resulted in some changes in policies (prioritisation/funding/acceleration of measures).

Additionally, 23 complementary documents were received which, as opposed to the responses to the open public consultation, were not anonymous:

- **Eurodiaconia** expressed their broad agreement with the Recommendation and its measures, but emphasised that it should have foreseen a role for civil society organisations, that it should better tailor to the needs of disadvantaged groups, that intervention should happen earlier than is envisioned in the current Recommendation, the importance of quality jobs, the lack of funding related to the Recommendation and that it fails to include skills.
- **EASPD**, the European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities, said that it fully supports the Recommendation on long-term unemployment, however provides a few suggestions to maximize its impact. These are to stimulate early individual assessment within Member States, to provide clients with ongoing support (also after one has found employment), to involve support providers, ensure streamlining with the European Semester and to set up an action plan to reach out towards disadvantaged groups.
- **ESN**, the European Social Network, based on a questionnaire that it conducted among its members, stressed the importance of cooperation between different service providers, where 65% of respondents indicated that the integration of services was managed successfully. However, it was noted that cooperation between professionals within separate services was not efficient, that there is lack of procedure, too little

training for professionals that are supposed to work together, lack of funding and lack of software to support this cooperation.

- **ENSIE**, the European Network of Social Integration Enterprises, sees an opportunity to include Work Integration Social Enterprises (WISEs) in the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market. Those are designed for disadvantaged workers not able to perform a standard form of employment and adopt an individually tailored and strong pedagogical approach in order to increase their workers competences and empower them.
- **Mental Health Europe** argued that the Recommendation should better include support for long-term unemployed who face psychosocial disabilities. Furthermore, they suggest that integrated support towards employment should begin at the earliest possible stage and not only after 18 months.
- **Confprofessioni** (IT) stated that the Recommendation could be strengthened in terms of support towards local employment services, for example in acquiring and training staff. They added that the EU should promote business creation, self-employment and the launch of professional activities via EU funds. They emphasised the role of the EU to promote the dissemination of lessons learnt and best practices across countries to fight long-term unemployment.
- **Social enterprise network Arbeit** (AT) argued that unemployment is a structural issue rather than a responsibility of the individual. To solve the issue, the labour market has to be made more inclusive by combining public, private and social initiatives.
- **The Outermost Regions' Employment Network**, welcomed the Recommendation but questioned the fact that it did not include a specific mention of how to support the outermost regions, where long-term-unemployment is a severe problem. Education and training were particularly mentioned as an important aspect to fight long-term unemployment in these regions.

Furthermore, some of the submitted responses were not directly related to the implementation of the Recommendation. **Eurocarers** mentioned the need for support to long-term carers, **EAPN** submitted their Roadmap on applying for minimum income in the Netherlands to serve as a guide to both care-seekers and service providers, and **the European Rehabilitation Platform** provided their recommendations on improving the inclusion of people with disabilities in the labour market. Two Finnish examples provided information on projects that involved integrated services with the aim to help unemployed people better (**TYP and Satakunto**), and a German paper from the **BAGFW** welcoming 'participation in the labour market for all', focused on creating subsidized employment opportunities in the free economy. One individual that was long-term unemployed submitted his views on the Italian situation, and there was one document from what is assumed to be an employer involved in hiring long-term unemployed, explaining the barriers that they face regarding their recruitment, mostly related to the lack of skills long-term unemployed have.

The Finnish position paper on TYP was used as a good example for the integration of services in the main text of the SWD. Documents that contained views on a certain issue rather than on the Recommendation itself were not considered for the evaluation.

Furthermore, some documents consisted of complementary information on questions asked in the questionnaire; those were treated as answers to the specific questions they addressed.

1.2 Seminars with national contact points

In total, three meetings were held in the form of seminars with national contact points. These contact points are representatives from Member States nominated by Member States themselves following the first EMCO review on long-term unemployment in 2016. The objectives of these seminars were to provide transparency on the supporting study conducted, to obtain informal input on the evaluation process and to share and exchange on challenges faced and lessons learned by Member States in the implementation of the Recommendation.

The first seminar was held on 19 March 2018 and focused on the explanation of the supporting study for the evaluation and the data collection method. Contact points could identify questions they wished to see addressed in the study. The second seminar was held on 28 June 2018 and involved a presentation of the mapping exercise conducted within the study, supplemented by two presentations of civil society organisations to provide examples of social innovation. The last seminar, held on 6 November 2018, also involved a presentation of the mapping exercise conducted and discussion groups were formed to discuss the challenges Member States faced regarding the implementation of the Recommendation.

Results of the seminars fed into the supporting study for the evaluation and discussions on mapping. Most of these discussions related to the definitions and criteria used in the external study and how these differ in different countries, leading to discussions on how to interpret certain aspects of the Recommendation. Ultimately, this led to refining of the mapping exercise and of the definitions used in the study. Informal input from the seminars has contributed to the qualitative evidence base of the evaluation.

1.3 Targeted Consultation

Targeted consultations were undertaken to obtain feedback from relevant stakeholders. The stakeholders targeted and the methods used are listed below.

Strategic Dialogue Meeting with civil society

A strategic dialogue meeting was held with civil society organisations (CSOs) on 15 November 2018 in Brussels, to which EU level CSOs were invited. The meeting was held in order to receive feedback on the Recommendation's implementation from organisations directly or indirectly working with or representing the long-term unemployed. The meeting included a presentation of the evaluation, two presentations by CSOs and eventually group discussions on 1) the role of CSOs in helping the long-term unemployed; 2) whether the organisations changed focus after the adoption of the Recommendation; 3) current practices and lessons learnt; 4) future recommendations on how to further help the long-term unemployed.

The main results of the meeting came in the form of feedback on the design and implementation of the Recommendation. All agreed on its relevance and importance in guiding service providers in helping long-term unemployed. Generally, the approach was agreed to be holistic and inclusive. In terms of challenges, the most recurring comments were that the Recommendation lacked funding thus limiting its effectiveness, and that the cut-off time of 18 months for the JIA was too long as intervention should happen as early as possible. Also, participants stressed that the Recommendation left little room for innovation and experimenting as its approach was argued to be quite strict. Besides that, participants called for more qualitative indicators to be included in monitoring, both related to the services provided and the quality of the jobs offered to unemployed. According to most CSOs, the current design focuses too much on changing a long-term unemployed person to become fit for a standard job, rather than finding a job fit for the client. Another point that came forward was the lack of after-placement mentoring and training, thereby sometimes limiting the sustainability of employment opportunities. Lastly, participants expressed that as the Recommendation did not specifically refer to the involvement of civil society, they found it hard to take a specific role within the process of its implementation.

Social Dialogue Meeting with Social Partners

On 28 June 2018, the Social Dialogue Committee discussed the Recommendation with Social Partners. They were updated on the planned activities around the evaluation, and encouraged to participate in the open public consultation. BusinessEurope asked the Commission to focus more on employing the inactive population. ETUC emphasised their disappointment that the role of trade unions is not recognised within the Recommendation, emphasising that they can support long-term unemployed both through public employment services and by providing training and support in the workplace.

European Network of Public Employment Services

The PES Network was involved in the Recommendation in various ways. Besides their contribution to the monitoring of its implementation by the adoption of quality standards for SPOC and JIA, their Capacity Survey of 2018 focused specifically on long-term unemployment and was shared among its 32 Advisors for European PES Affairs based in the 28 EU Member States, Iceland and Norway. A report[248] has been prepared discussing the results of this survey, which was used for the evaluation and discussed under 'Use of evidence' under Annex 1: Procedural information.

The Advisors for European PES Affairs were consulted in a meeting in June 2018.

The European Social Fund Committee

The Recommendation was discussed by the ESF Committee's Informal Technical Working Group on 5 October 2018. The members were consulted via group discussions on to what extent there was a change in funding priorities after the Recommendation, whether there were barriers to the use of funding for the implementation of the

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[248]Ad Hoc Module to the 2018 PES Capacity Questionnaire Survey report, European Network of Public Employment Services, 2018

Recommendation and how ESF could further support the long-term unemployed. An ad-hoc report[249] on the use of the ESF to support the long-term unemployed was produced as part of the synthesis report of the ESF Annual Implementation Reports. This was used as part of the evidence base for this evaluation.

Social Protection Committee

The Social Protection Committee (SPC) was informed by the Commission on the evaluation strategy and the progress that had been made in a meeting on 30 October 2018. The SPC was consulted on their activities that support long-term unemployed, and gave its consent on using its 2018 thematic report[250] for the evaluation.

1.4 Targeted Interviews

Targeted interviews as a method of consultation have been executed in two forms: interviews on the EU level, and on national, regional and local level within Member States, conducted for the case studies as part of the external supporting study.

Targeted interviews on EU level

Interviews on the EU level have been executed by Ramboll with nine stakeholders in total, either by phone or in person. Those stakeholders included three civil society organisations[251], four social partners[252], and two public authorities[253]. Interviewees were asked about their opinions on the Recommendation's relevance, effectiveness, coherence and EU added value.

There was a consensus among all interviewed EU level stakeholders that the Recommendation was and is still relevant in fighting long-term unemployment. Employers' organisations and CSOs especially emphasised the relevance of the individualised approach and coordination of services. Two CSOs criticised the 18 months cut off point as mentioned in the JIA, as they argued it to be too late, and one CSO and one social partner noted that an assessment of the specific labour market situations causing long-term unemployment within Member States was lacking. Trade unions in general underlined that they were given no role in the Recommendation.

However, most interviewees argued that the implementation of the Recommendation is a task for the Member States and that the EU has a limited role in this. The majority of interviewees argued that the EU should monitor the implementation of the Recommendation and follow up on this, also pressuring those Member States where limited progress has been made. Other suggestions were that the EU should help breaking down the social stigma towards long-term unemployed (one CSO) and to facilitate more exchange between Member States (one social partner).

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[249]Thematic note on the ESF and YEI support to long-term unemployed (LTU) and the implementation of Council Recommendation on integration of LTU into the labour market
[250]Social Protection Committee Thematic Reporting on 'Social services that complement active labour market inclusion measures for people of working age who are furthest away from the labour market', 2018
[251]European Network of Social Integration Enterprises (ENSIE), Eurocities and Eurodiaconia.
[252]Employers' organisations: SMEUnited, CEEP and BusinessEurope. Trade unions: ETUC
[253]Committee of Regions and European Commission – DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion.

Regarding its effectiveness, social partners noted that they did not have any means to make an assessment of the Recommendation's effectiveness, whereas one trade union thought that it had put long-term unemployment higher on the policy agenda. CSOs argued that the Recommendation has had a positive impact. Public authorities acknowledged it brought together the previously different approaches taken by the various responsible national authorities on the integration of long-term unemployed persons.

The majority of interviewees argued the Recommendation to be coherent with other EU policies or instruments tackling unemployment. However, it was noted that the use of EU funds could be improved, for example by using ESF funds to overcome PES capacity issues, as suggested by one social partner.

The EU added value of the Recommendation was placing the issue of long-term unemployment (higher) on the policy agenda and providing guidance on measures how to tackle the issue, according to most of the interviewees. One CSO argued it to be lacking specificity and that it could contain more relevant minimum standards for those member states with low-developed support systems. Nevertheless, hypothetically repealing the Recommendation was seen as negative by all interviewees.

Targeted interviews conducted for the case studies

In order to conduct a more in-depth assessment of the implementation on the Recommendation on long-term unemployment within Member States, eight case studies were conducted as part of the external supporting study[254]. Information was gathered through fieldwork by the appointed national experts, supplemented by targeted interviews with stakeholders from Member States. The national long-term unemployment contact points were consulted on the results of the national experts' work.

The countries selected for the case studies were Croatia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Romania and Slovakia, in order to include countries on a broad range of development regarding employment services. Below, a short description[255] of the expressions of the interviewees per country is provided, per key criteria of the evaluation. For Greece, the structure is somewhat different as severe unemployment rates and other after-crisis issues did not allow for a by-the-book implementation of the Recommendation.

Croatia

In Croatia, interviews were carried out with main national level stakeholders[256] and more regionally[257] in two local communities in the Karlovačka county, as it has one of the

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[254]Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

[255]Summaries here are kept short as the complete case studies for all countries are added to this document as annexes for further reading.

[256]**National level** stakeholders: four representatives from the Ministry of Labour and Pension Systems (two EMCO members and two ESF Managing authorities), one representative from the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy, one representative from the Croatian Employment Service, one representative of the Union of Autonomous Trade Unions of Croatia and one of the Croatian Employers' Association.

[257]**Regional level** stakeholders: Six employers, three local PES officers, nine long-term unemployed persons, four representatives from

highest shares of long-term unemployment in Croatia. Within the communities, interviews were conducted with local PES workers, social workers, employers, civil society organisations and long-term unemployed individuals.

In general, stakeholders agreed that the Recommendation is relevant for Croatia, as the share of long-term unemployment is still high. National level interviewees report that the Recommendation was a breaking point for national policy and that it led to changes in legislation and redesigning of internal procedures aimed at improving the situation for long-term unemployed.

The effectiveness of the Recommendation varied across the measures proposed. Most stakeholders agreed that the Recommendation was irrelevant with regards to the registration process and coordination of services, as those were already well-developed. However, there has been increasing attention for the individual client, reported both by interviewed long-term unemployed persons and job counsellors. Some of the interviewed employers had experience hiring long-term unemployed persons, but the majority had negative experiences. The use of financial support was assessed positively, but in general employers were not interested in partnerships related to hiring long-term unemployed persons.

Regarding efficiency, the majority of stakeholders thought that the costs of the implementation of the Recommendation would not be excessive, as most measures were already in place. However, they said to assume that the Recommendation will lead to a lower number of long-term unemployed. There is argued to be synergy between the Recommendation and national policies as mentioned by national level stakeholders.

In general, stakeholders believe that there is an added value of the involvement of the EU regarding this policy Recommendation as it puts additional focus on the issue of long-term unemployment and it brought earlier developed ideas to implementation phase. National level stakeholders welcome more mutual learning as they would like to know good practices from other countries. Local-level stakeholders are less convinced by the EU added value, as the support is often very short term, and they blame that this results in frequent changes which make it more complicated for beneficiaries to use the services.

Finland

Interviews were conducted nationally with representatives of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, labour market organisations and expert organisations such as the Social Insurance Institution of Finland and the Association of Finnish local and regional authorities. Furthermore, one regional PES director was interviewed and on the local level three more PES officers and six civil servants working closely with long-term unemployed persons, either in rural or urban areas.

Social Service Centres and two civil society organisations.

The assessment of these stakeholders on the relevance of the Recommendation is not high apart from an increase in awareness-raising of the opportunities for employers to hire long-term unemployed persons.

The effectiveness of the Recommendation is low in Finland, as all measures proposed in it were already in place, and thus no new measures were implemented. PES staff mentioned that there have been some incremental changes in some operational measures, but that these were not incurred by the Recommendation. All elements are in line with the Finnish employment policy.

Germany

In Germany, eleven stakeholders were interviewed and three focus groups were organised in order to collect information on the Recommendation on all levels[258]. For the regional level, representatives from Sachsen were chosen as this is the state with the highest long-term unemployment rates of the country, but with significant improvements since 2015.

The Recommendation has not been relevant for Germany. All stakeholders at national and regional level said that it did not initiate any policy changes with regard to support to long-term unemployment as all measures proposed were already used. Only half of national level interviewees were aware of the Recommendation prior to the interview. In order for the Recommendation to be relevant, it should be adapted to cater to country's labour markets. Case managers mentioned that there should be more freedom within the ESF funded projects in order to be relevant at the local level.

As no measures were introduced following the Recommendation, their effectiveness cannot be assessed. However, most measures in Germany are actually more advanced than proposed by the Council. One national level stakeholder even criticizes the JIA approach of the Council Recommendation of being too narrow-minded, as in Germany the increased use of JIA made it a bureaucratic must-do with little personal attention. Instead, stakeholders emphasise an individual, comprehensive and intensive support in counselling. Close collaboration with employers is seen as a key to successful reintegration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, where coaching employers in the process is reported as being very important.

The added value of the Recommendation for Germany is limited as it did not bring about the introduction of any policy changes, although some national and regional level stakeholders mentioned it to be a confirmation being on the right track.

Greece

For Greece, information was gathered by interviewing representatives[259] at national and regional level and locally within two cities of Greece: Patras and Argos. As mentioned,

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[258]**National** level: Two representatives from the Federal Employment Agency, one representative from the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, one from the German Trade Union Confederation and one from the Confederation of German Employers' Association. **Regional** level: Officer of the Regional directorate of the Federal Employment Agency Sachsen and one coordinator from the ESF-Programme JobSachsen, who is also a representative of the State Ministry of Economy and Labour. **Local** level: Two case managers from JobCenters (Bautzen & Dresden), one long-term unemployed and two representatives from an educational institution.
[259]**National** level: Four PES representatives, three representatives of the Greece Department of Employment, two employers'

the Recommendation was not particularly relevant for Greece as it has been facing severe structural problems since the crisis and solving these needs special measures at different levels than what was proposed in the Recommendation. In fact, Greece is under a Financial Assistance Program since 2012 and at that time also signed a Memorandum of Understanding towards its creditors. As a result, resources cannot be devoted to tools such as developing a JIA. It seems, however, that the Recommendation is in line with the policies set out in the Memorandum of Understanding. The Financial Assistance Program included some measures related to improving the labour market situation, namely restructuring the PES, efforts to increase registration with PES services and measures related to active labour market policies. The restructuring of PES services is referred to as a reengineering process, which is co-financed by the ESF and involves the improvement and modernisation of services offered to unemployed persons, re-training of staff to provide more individual support and the set-up of Community centres to act as a single point of contact. As no official implementation of the Recommendation took place, the interviews with Greek representatives took place to review the measures mentioned above.

Officials working at the Greek PES were all positive about the new portal that was introduced as part of the reengineering process. The same counted for beneficiaries of this service, which included all long-term unemployed persons that were interviewed. Regarding the individualized support, PES beneficiaries said to be satisfied with the services provided by counsellors and the individual action plan that was used. Job counsellors stressed that an individual approach is crucial, and that installing a JIA would be beneficial.

Employers and employers' associations expressed to be hesitant to use PES services related to hiring their clients, as they were afraid of the amount of bureaucracy accompanied with this or the lack of flexibility. Businesses were said to be disappointed by the lack of their involvement in ALMP development. Employers' associations also expressed that PES services were not used because of lack of labour demand.

Stakeholders expressed to see the EU added value of the Recommendation in providing funding through the ESF and mediating in knowledge sharing. Both at national and local level it was brought up as a concern that policies were designed top-down without much targeting for individual long-term unemployed or countries in general.

Ireland

In Ireland, six national level representatives of the Ministry of Employment Affairs and Social Protection were interviewed and one case officer of a regional Irish PES office.

Although there has been a decrease in the level of long-term unemployment in Ireland, the interviewees concluded that the Recommendation remained relevant. It led to a better

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associations and one employer. **Regional**: one officer from a regional PES office and one employers' association. **Local**: In Patras four PES representatives (management, employment promotion, employers counsellor and jobseekers counsellor) and two long-term unemployed persons and in Argos three PES representatives (employment promotion, employers counsellor and jobseekers counsellor) and one long-term unemployed person.

understanding of the target group and the identification of vulnerable groups among long-term unemployed persons and the provision of better support for those groups.

Regarding its effectiveness, interviewees found it hard to identify policy changes that were a direct consequence of the Recommendation. National level stakeholders mentioned that it rather confirmed paths that were taken ahead of the Recommendation, such as to move away from passive income support towards a more personal support for jobseekers in 2011. Furthermore, they noted that it led to increased cooperation and a more integrated approach with regards to tackling long-term unemployment in Ireland. As a result, there was more interagency collaboration of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection with other government departments (Justice, Finance, Education) and other agencies related to housing, health and education. Also regionally, the Recommendation was said to have created better collaboration between employment services and social services. Stakeholders felt that employer support has strengthened because of the Recommendation.

With regards to its efficiency, stakeholders did not report any financial consequences of the Recommendation. It was argued to be in line with other EU initiatives in support of jobseekers. The EU added value of the Recommendation was identified by stakeholders as bringing a common goal to different institutions of supporting long-term unemployed. A suggestion from their side to enlarge the EU added value was to do more mutual learning between Member States to tackle certain issues.

Italy

The interviews held were with three national stakeholders, multiple interviews on two regional cases -Marche and Lombardy-, and for two cities within those regions – Milan and Ancona.[260] Since Italy has experienced structural inefficiencies for all the measures proposed in the Recommendation, it was impossible to address all of them, and therefore the focus was on strengthening the governance structure by creating the national agency for active labour market policies (ANPAL), the introduction of new procedures and modernisation of the IT infrastructure.

Due to the low development of Italy's system of public employment services and lack of active labour market policies, the Recommendation deemed quite relevant for Italian governments. It raised awareness on the pitfalls of the system supposed to support the long-term unemployed and thereby helped government officials to design a policy agenda to solve these issues.

The effectiveness of the Recommendation was argued to be quite low in Italy. Local level interviewees in both regions argued that the outreach ability and thus registration with employment services has remained low. A reason they gave is the lack of trust unemployed individuals have in PES to improve their labour market situation. Views

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[260]**National** level: One with a representative of ANPAL (the National Agency for Active Labour Market Policies), someone from the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies and from Confcooperative. **Regional**: For Lombardy: one state representative, one representative from Assolombarda and one from Confcooperateive Lombardia. For Marche: three state representatives. **Local**: For Milan: one representative from AFOL, one from the Milanese PES and one from the municipality. For Ancona: one PES representative, one from the municipality and two representatives from the CGIL Ancona (the General Italian Confederation of Labour).

from regional and local level interviewees confirmed that the implementation of a customized support service has been gradual and differing territorially.[261] Something that recurred in the interviews in both Lombardy and Marche was that a lack of staff prohibited realisation of personalized support to the long-term unemployed. From both regions it appears that cooperation with other service providers happens informally and unstructured, and thus differs per location. It was expressed that also employers have low incentives to build strong relationships with the PES.

The measures set out in the Recommendation were reported to be coherent with national policies regarding labour and anti-poverty that were introduced by the Italian government between 2012 and 2018.

Romania

Interviews were conducted with seven national level stakeholders, three regional level stakeholders and seven on the local level. Additionally, four focus groups were organised gathering information from people supporting long-term unemployed individuals and individuals that were long-term unemployed at that time.[262]

The Recommendation was deemed relevant especially in terms of providing support to the most disadvantaged groups in the labour market.

It can be argued that effectiveness of the Recommendation was high for Romania. In December 2017, a Memorandum was signed that aimed to develop an integrated package to increase measures for the reintegration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, in line with the Recommendation. In order to increase registration, mobile 'JobCaravans' were introduced to also provide employment services to people in the most rural areas. A regional level interviewee argued these to be effective to reach the Roma population, but people that were long-term unemployed themselves argued the caravans to be of little value. Local level interviewees mentioned that although work is ongoing to develop a SPOC, none of this has operationalized into something tangible yet. An interviewee representing employers argued the post-placement support offered by employment services to be relevant. People working with long-term unemployed persons noted that mediation services were effective, as a high proportion of long-term unemployed finding work did so through these services. It was expressed that the Recommendation spurred the creation of new opportunities, solutions and improved goals to support clients.

Efficiency has been said to have increased, especially due to a better coordination of services by more efficient service delivery and therefore removing of redundant processes, improving feedback and increasing customer satisfaction.

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[261] A regional PES officer from Lombardy stated that the individualized approach has been part of their operations since 2007, whereas actors from Marche noted that new guidelines were set out in the Customized Service Pact and were very novel.

[262] **National level**: national policy makers from the following departments: PES, Labour Market Analysis, Employment, Ministry of Labour and Social Justice, European Funds, Human Capital, SMEs and Service Management. **Regional level**: Three representatives from regional PES offices. **Local level**: Urban: Three employers, two civil society associations, twelve PES officers and three beneficiaries of services aimed at long-term unemployed individuals. Rural: two employers and seven beneficiaries of services aimed at long-term unemployed individuals.

Following the interviews, it can be said that there is some coherence with the Youth Guarantee, but not with other EU policy initiatives within Romania. The EU added value has expressed itself in the mobilisation of national efforts to support long-term unemployed individuals and has been said to have affected institutions, policies, funds, activities and individuals.

Slovakia

Four interviews were conducted with national stakeholders and locally, interviews and focus groups were held at two labour offices in regions with high unemployment and long-term unemployment rates.[263]

Apart from the measure on registration, all measures proposed in the Recommendation appeared relevant for Slovakia.

Overall, the measures were viewed to be effective in Slovakia. Following the Recommendation, the period of activation for long-term unemployed was reduced from 24 to 18 months. Labour office staff has argued this to be the most substantial and most effective change in the services provided. People that were long-term unemployed themselves, said they did not experience this. As PES argues, the decline in long-term unemployment leads them to believe the more individualized approach was successful. Interviewees stated that there have been no major changes in the processes to register jobseekers but that existing measures have been further developed and kept registration rates high. Regarding the coordination of support services, a SPOC has been developed at the labour offices. Clients have expressed that this saves a lot of time and effort. However, the staff of the labour offices note that there are some issues regarding different IT systems across services and many legal requirements that come with information exchange, which hinders the effectiveness of the SPOC. Following the Recommendation, two acts were introduced: one on Employment services, introducing financial incentives for employers to hire long-term unemployed individuals; and one on Social economy and social business, thereby improving the opportunities for long-term unemployed to find a job. From the interviews with employers and employers' associations, it became apparent that there existed satisfaction on the services hiring a long-term unemployed person. From the governance perspective, it was argued that the administrative burden of such contracts was too high.

The Recommendation was coherent with national Slovakian policies to support long-term unemployed, and helped to implement these policies on a wider scope.

From the interviews that were executed across the Member States selected for the case studies it becomes apparent that their opinions on the Recommendation varied. Overall, interviewees from more developed Member States such as Finland and Germany argued that the Recommendation was of little relevance to them as the measures proposed were already in place in these countries and thus did not incur any policy changes.

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[263]**National level**: Two representatives from the ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, one from PES and one from the Association of Towns and Municipalities. **Local**: Presov: Six PES officers, six long-term unemployed persons, two NGOs, and three regular employers. Sobota: Seven PES officers, six long-term unemployed persons, three NGOs, and three regular employers.

Interviewees from Member States at the other end like Italy or Greece did not have any measures in place and some proposals in the Recommendation were simply out of reach. Relating to this, a recurring suggestion was to design measures more targeted to the Member States' specific labour market situations.

Overall, stakeholders across all countries mentioned that it was too early to be able to assess the actual effectiveness and thus efficiency of the measures proposed in the Recommendation.

Regarding EU added value, something that was mentioned across interviewees from different Member States was to do more on mutual learning, so countries could learn from each other's best practices.

Compliance with the Commission minimum requirements on stakeholder consultation

Regarding the assessment of the stakeholder consultation conducted for this evaluation against the minimum standards set out by the Commission in its Better Regulation guidelines, all standards have been met.

Of main importance are the periods in which public consultation was held. The required time of the open public consultation of twelve weeks was met, and also the four weeks for feedback on the Evaluation Roadmap were assessed to be sufficient.

A strength of the open public consultation was that it was provided in all 24 official EU languages, so that exclusion was minimal. The same holds for the targeted interviews, as since these were conducted by national experts, they could be held in the official language of the applicable Member State.

A weaker point of the stakeholder consultation is the limited inclusion of individuals who were or have been unemployed and in some way did or did not benefit from the measures set out in the Recommendation. Their views were supposed to be included in the case studies in order to also present the user-perspective, but only a few interviews were conducted in the context of the supporting study.

ANNEX 3: INTERVENTION LOGIC

Figure 19: Intervention logic for the Recommendation
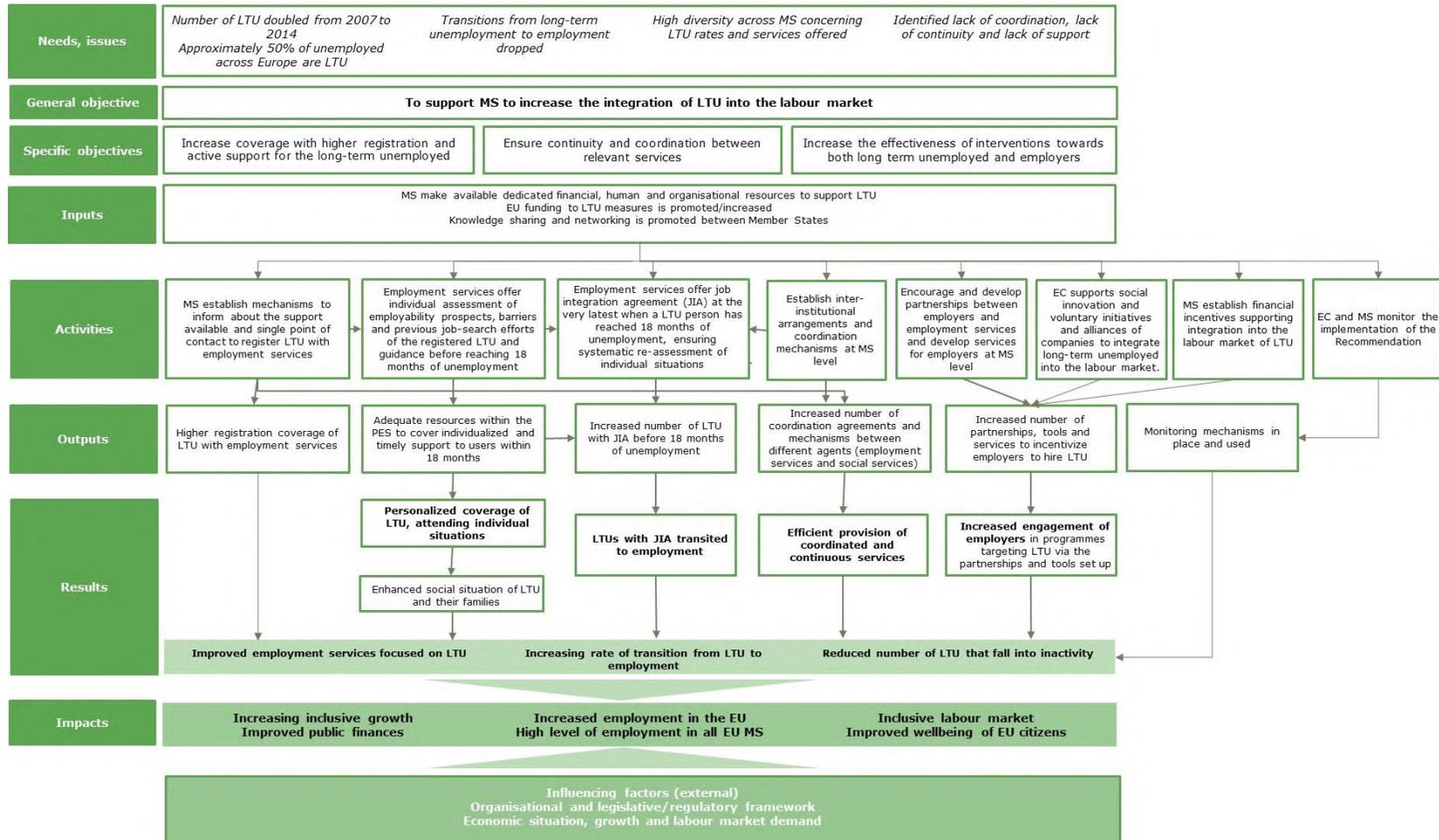
Effectiveness:

- Has the coverage of registration of job seekers to employment services increased thanks to the adopted Recommendation?
- What measures have been taken to increase registration of long-term unemployed including specific/targeted measures to improve outreach to long-term unemployed furthest away from the labour market? Are there any good practices?
- To what extent are the different groups in need (by age, gender, origin, skills) reached by the measures at Member State level?
- Do the employment services conduct an individual assessment of the job seeker within 18 months?
- Have job integration agreements (JIAs) mechanisms been set up within 18 months and how were they used? Has the mutual obligation principle been implemented and which type of measures outlined in the JIA aiming to enhance the integration and employability of the LTU in the labour market have proven more effective so far?
- Are the implementation and follow-up regularly monitored?
- Which arrangements have been put in place to set up the single point of contact and what effects are visible? Which formats are most promising in terms of good practice?
- Has the coordination between employment and social services but also other providers (healthcare, childcare, housing, financial etc.) improved following the adoption of the Recommendation and if yes, how? Are there good practices in such cooperation?
- To what extent are the employers, and social partners involved in support to the long-term unemployed? Have specific measures been taken to support employers' engagement? Are there any good practices?

Efficiency:

- What are the costs and benefits generated by the implementation of the Recommendation for the Member States, the PES, the local administrations and stakeholders? Are the costs proportionate to the benefits achieved?
- What were the estimated costs and benefits of improving coordination of support to the long-term unemployed and notably the cost of improving the personalised assessment and that of setting up job integration agreements?

Coherence:

- To what extent is the LTU recommendation coherent with other EU instruments supporting bringing people back to employment, such as the Youth Guarantee, the active inclusion recommendation, the Skills Pathways Recommendation and the country specific recommendations under the European Semester?
- Have the EU structural and investment funds (the European Social Fund the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Regional Development Fund) as well as the Employment and Social Innovation programme (EaSI) been used or are planned to be used to implement the requirements of the Recommendation and how?
- Did the Recommendation prompt a shift in terms of LTU policy prioritisation and funding? What are the issues, lessons learnt and good practices?

Relevance:

- How do the measures proposed in the Recommendation correspond to the goal of integration of job seekers in the labour market?
- Are the provisions of the Recommendation still relevant in the current state of labour markets and social situation in the EU? Would a revision of the Recommendation be necessary (e.g. extended to other groups of jobseekers or delivery organisations, setting other timeframes for intervention)?
- What are the stakeholders and citizens expectations for the role of the EU in reinforcing support to the long-term unemployed?

EU added value:

- Has the Recommendation influenced the national level in prioritising the LTU measures in the programming and delivery of active labour market policies and in the overall resource allocation towards employment or social services?
- What is the added value of the Recommendation as compared to the initiatives that Member States would have taken in the absence of it? What would be the likely consequence if the Recommendation would be repealed?

ANNEX 5: COUNTRY SHEETS

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - AUSTRIA

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 25-64 years[264]
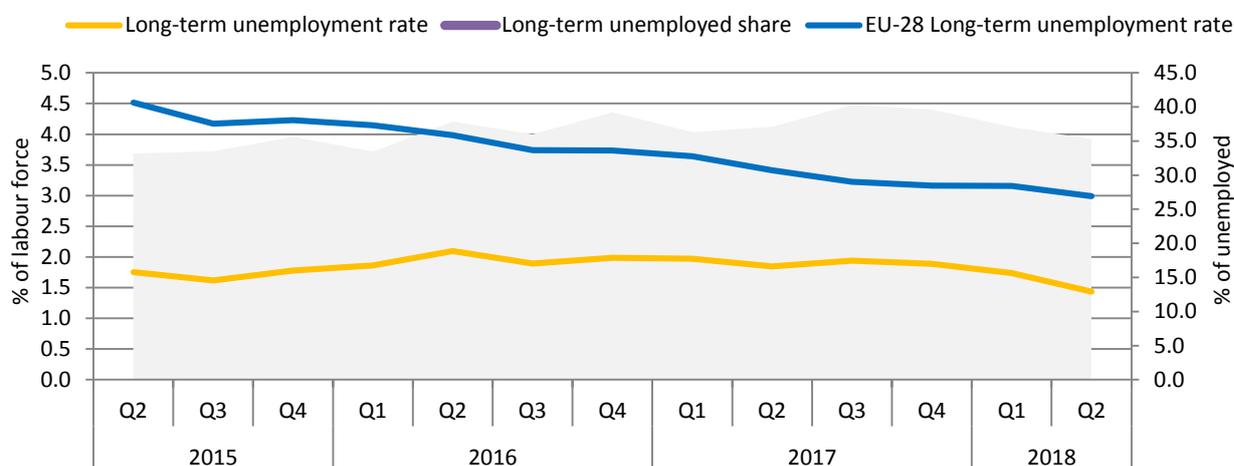
Source: Eurostat

In Austria between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 1.8% to 1.4%. However, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed increased slightly - from 33.1% to 35.3%.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- A new **profiling system** in the Public Employment Services has been developed
- A well-established **single point of contact** in place
- There is strong **cooperation** between Public Employment Service and employers

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- There is a gap between the **skill demands** of employers and skills of long-term unemployed
- **Data sharing** between Public Employment Services and social services could be further improved
- No specific **individual assessment** is undertaken for the long-term unemployed

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[264]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[265]
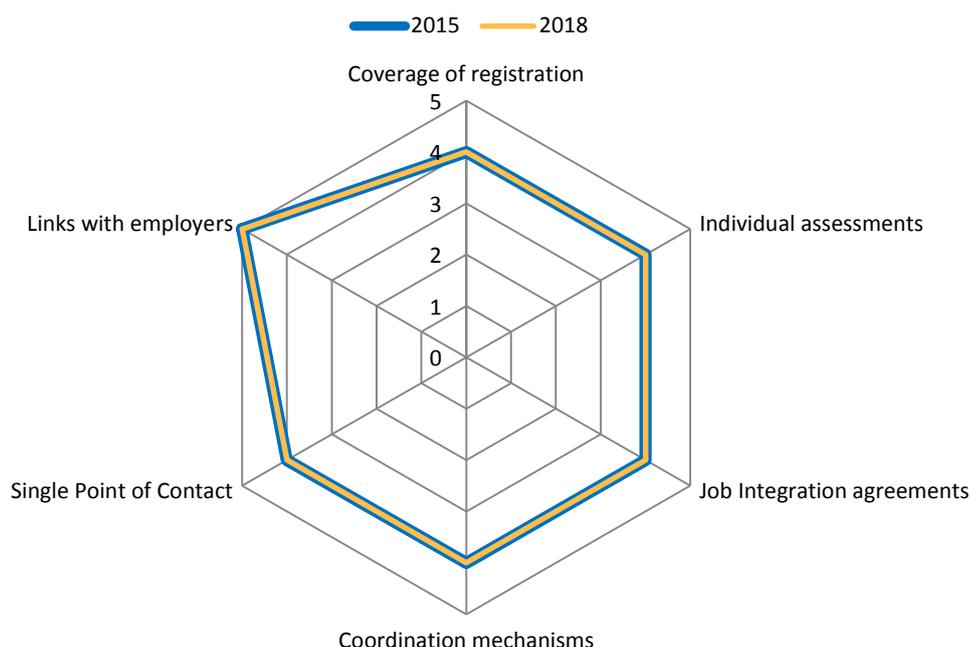

Example of a measure in practice

In Austria, related to employer partnerships, certain **socioeconomic enterprises** (Sozialökonomische Betriebe - SÖB) are non-profit social enterprises that provide temporary jobs for long-term unemployed people. These so-called 'transit jobs' are designed for people who have been unemployed for a long time as they combine employment with training and continual support to overcome any problems the individual may face throughout their time with the enterprise. The Public Employment Service is responsible for allocating the long-term unemployed to the socio-economic enterprises and for financing the SÖBs, which are also supported by the European Social Fund.

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[265] Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - BELGIUM

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 25-64 years[266]
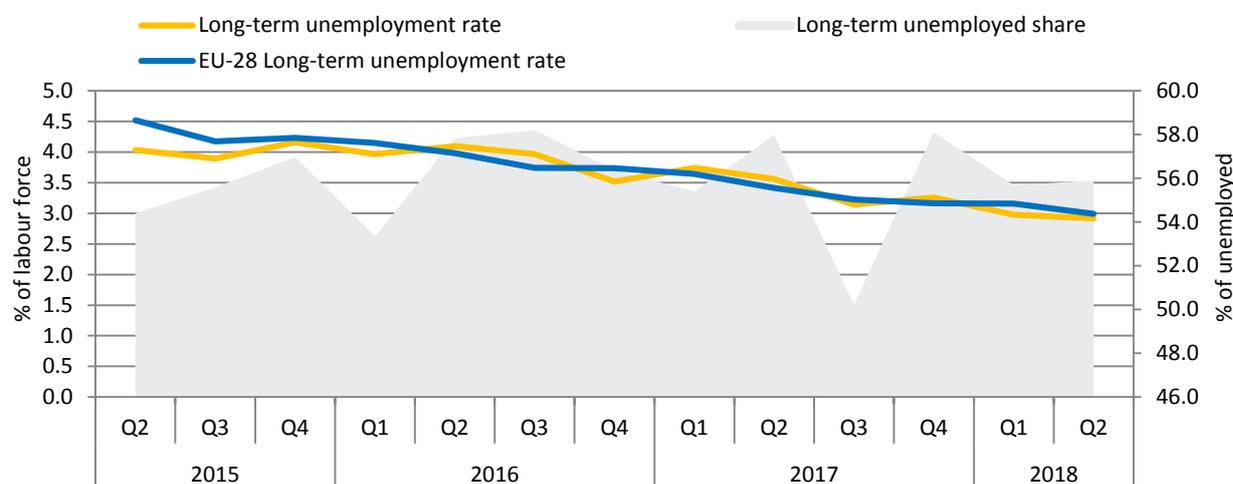
Source: Eurostat.

In Belgium, between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 4% to 2.9%. However, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed rose slightly from 54% to 55.9%.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- **Tailor-made approaches** to assessment and activation are well developed
- **Job Integration Agreements** are in place
- There has been improvement in **coordination** between services, to support the functioning of the single point of contact

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- A systematic **in depth (re)-assessment of needs** when the person becomes long-term unemployed could be introduced
- **Monitoring** of measures is challenging because of the variety of tailor-made approaches, but should be implemented more systematically
- **Registration** could be improved by reaching out to those not entitled to unemployment benefits or discouraged from participation in the labour market

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[266]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[267]
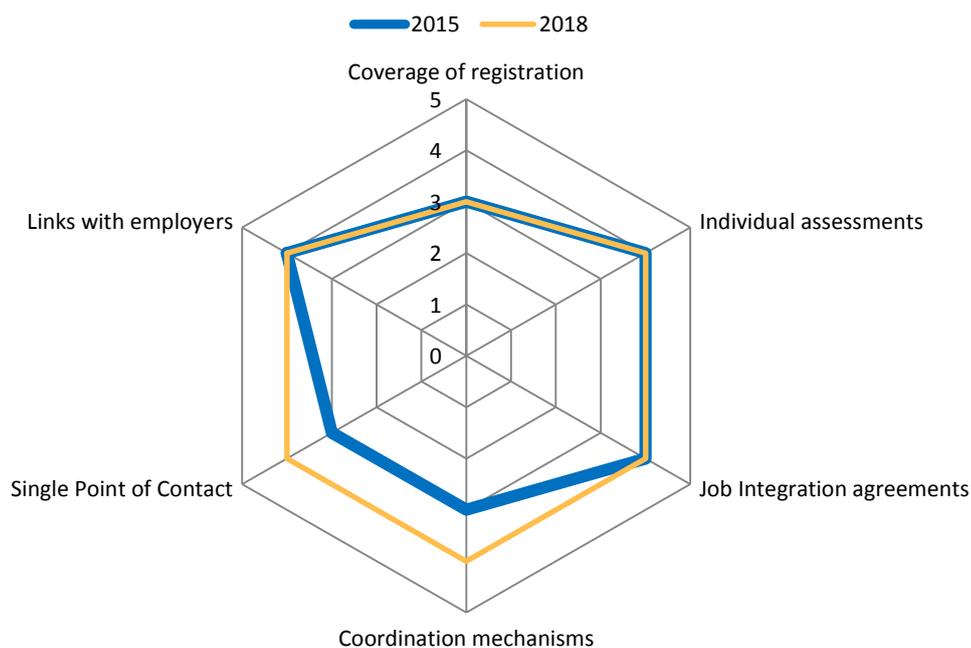

Example of a measure in practice

Related to Job Integration Agreements, Belgium introduced specific measures for persons far from the labour market in 2018. The **'Werk en Zorg' (work and health) programme** is for jobseekers with medical or mental health issues. It is a temporary (maximum 18 months) work-care plan, where the long-term unemployed participate in an internship programme while receiving care counselling at a welfare institution, a psychiatric hospital or a public social welfare centre. They also receive guidance to work during that period. These services are provided on the basis of a Job Integration Agreement.

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[267]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - BULGARIA

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 25-64 years[268]
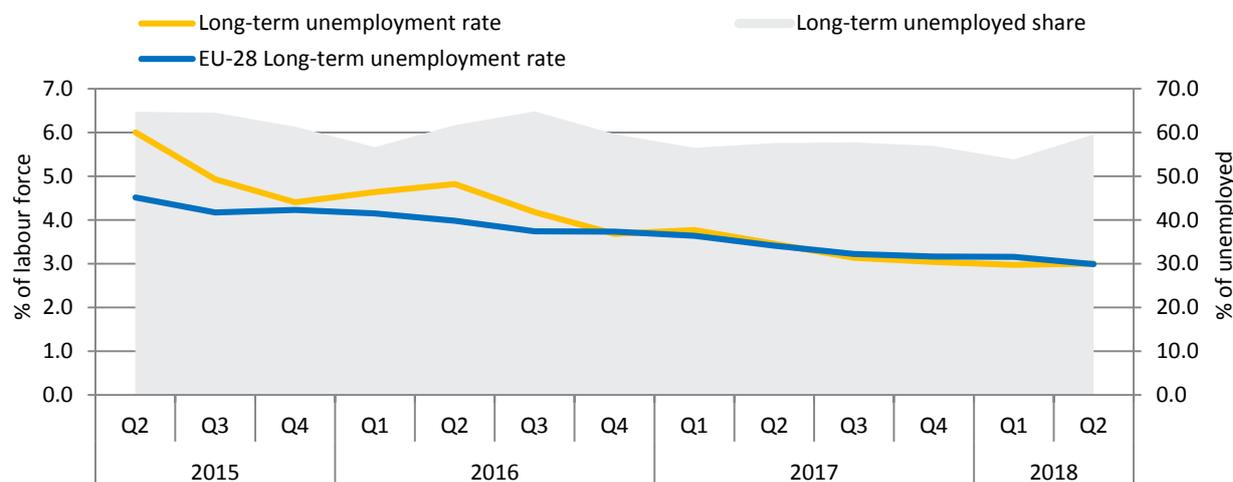
Source: Eurostat.

In Bulgaria between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 6% to 3%. Similarly, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased - from 64.7% to 59.6%.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- **Job Integration Agreements** have been introduced
- Progress has been made in measures to increase **registration**
- There are efforts to strengthen **partnerships with employers**, as Public Employment Services are actively seeking contact with employers willing to hire the long-term unemployed

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- **Coordination mechanisms** between organisations dealing with long-term unemployed should be strengthened, in order to establish a fully functioning **single point of contact**
- **Individualised guidance** related to job offers differs across regions and sectors
- There could be room for more **targeted measures** for vulnerable groups of the long-term unemployed, such as Roma or people with disabilities.

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[268]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[269]
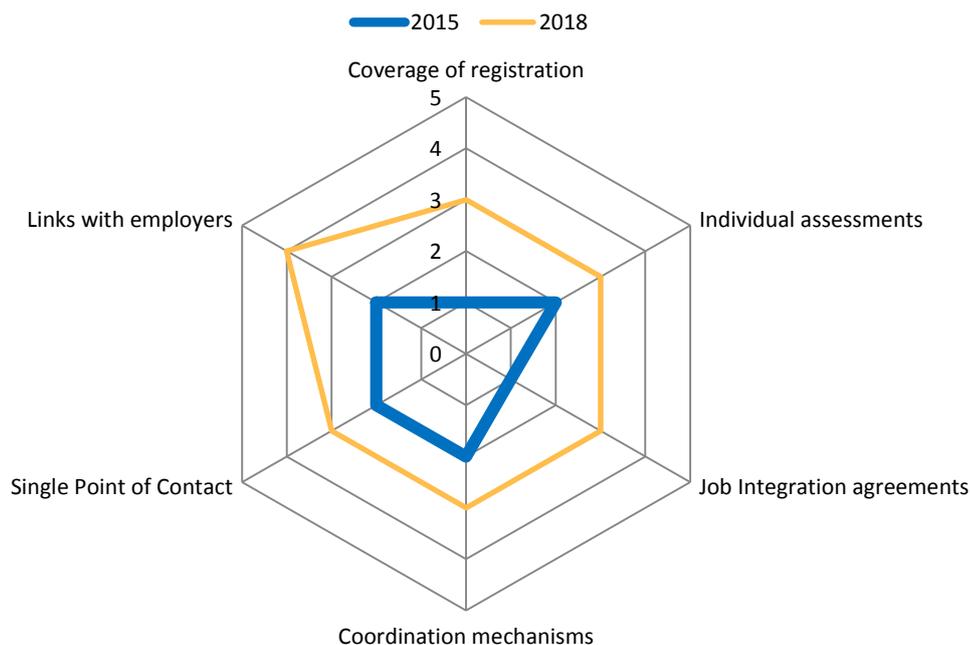
Example of a measure in practice

Bulgaria introduced **'Joint Mobile Teams'** to improve individualised services to Roma. Individuals from the Roma community work as mediators between public employment services and the Roma communities to overcome the mistrust that many Roma have towards official institutions. The mobile teams actually visit the Roma communities and perform individual assessments that are suitable to the needs of the Roma communities, and guide them to institutions offering training or to companies where they can have at least temporary jobs.

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[269]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - CYPRUS

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 25-64 years[270]
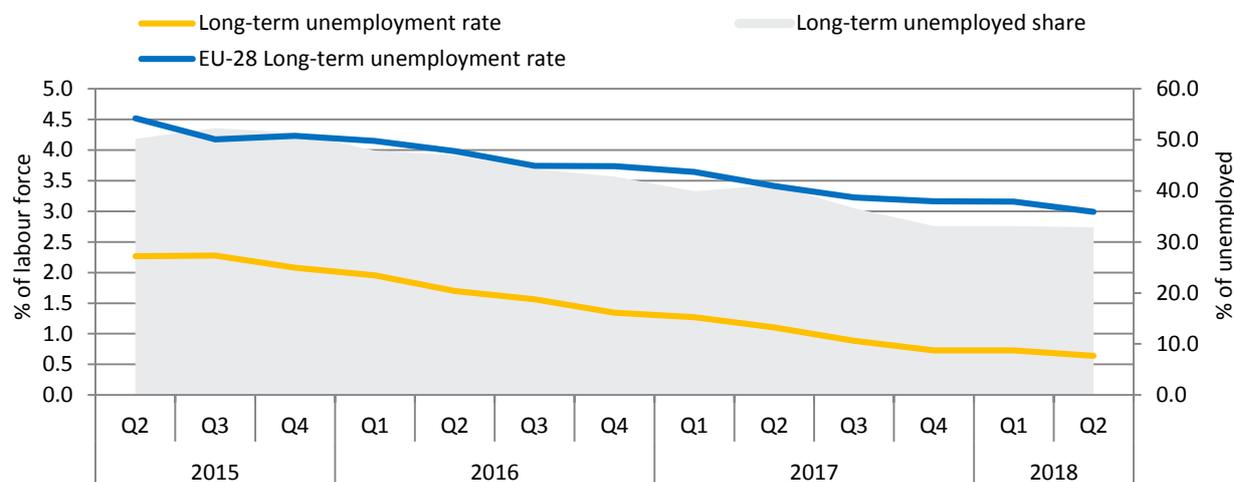
Source: Eurostat.

In Cyprus between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 6.8% to 2.4%. Furthermore, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased - from 51.7% to 36.9%.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Protocols for **cooperation with employers** regarding job placements for long-term <unemployed are being implemented, and new services for employers are being developed
- Progress has been made to enhance individualised support to the long-term unemployed, through introducing **Job Integration Agreements**
- The **increased capacity** of Public Employment Services is enabling more individualised counselling for the unemployed

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- **Information sharing** between relevant service providers could be improved**,** particularly as there is limited sharing of individual assessments of the long-term unemployed
- There is room for further efforts to increase **outreach** to the long-term unemployed
- A **single point of contact** is not in place

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[270]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[271]
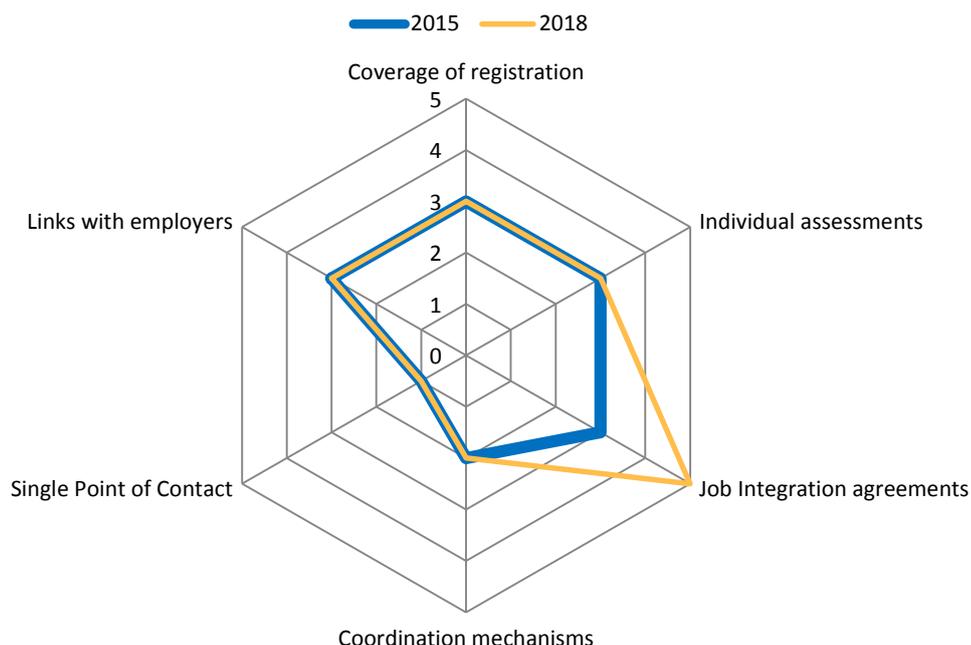

📍 Example of a measure in practice

The Cypriot Human Resource Development Authority introduced a new scheme in June 2016 to get **employers to design, create and implement programmes for training and gaining work experience** in posts that will be available to the long-term unemployed. The employer will pay the worker the wages stipulated in collective agreements, or, if no such agreement exists, will pay the minimum wage (EUR 870). At the end of six months, employers will be reimbursed for 80% of the cost incurred, with a monthly cap (EUR 1.000). The training and experience programmes will run for four months, plus two without the subsidy, and employment must be full and permanent.

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[271]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - CZECH REPUBLIC

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 25-64 years[272]
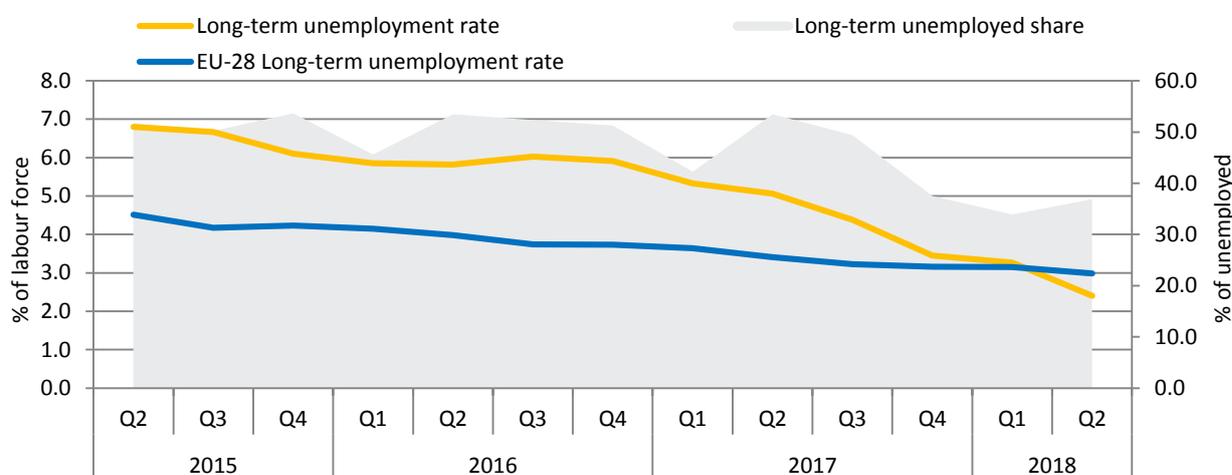
Source: Eurostat.

In the Czech Republic between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 2.3% to 0.6%. Furthermore, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased steadily - from 50.2% to 32.9%.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- There have been some efforts to increase the **individualised approach** when supporting the long-term unemployed
- **Profiling** of jobseekers has improved
- There have been some efforts to increase **coordination** between Public Employment Services and social services

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- **Individual action plans** could be extended to also include services from organisations other than Public Employment Services
- Reliance on the European Social Fund is high, which impedes the **sustainability** of the measures implemented
- Outreach measures to increase **registration** of the long-term unemployed could be improved

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[272]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[273]
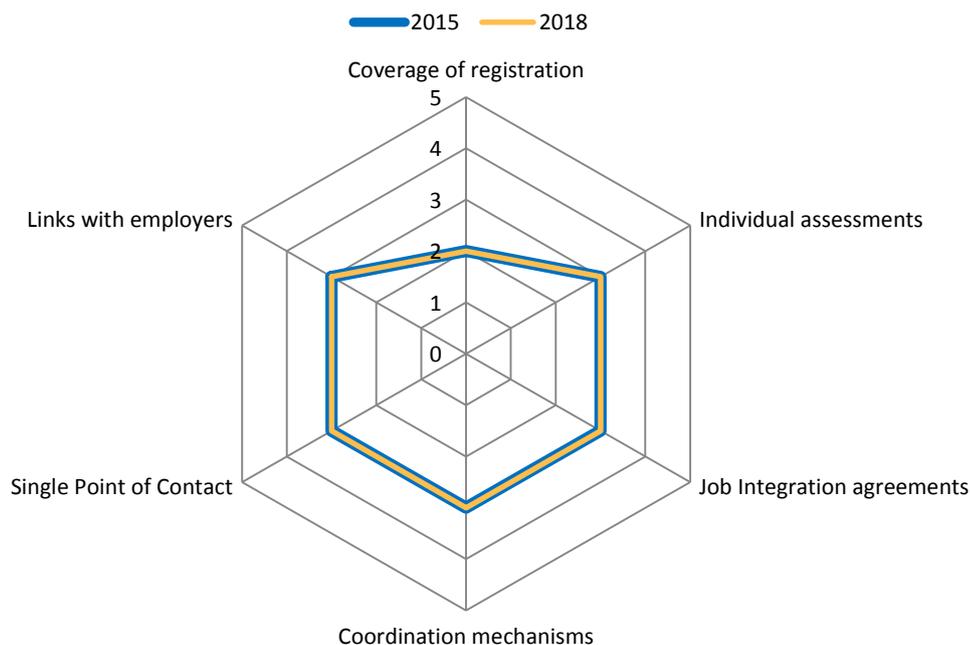

Example of a measure in practice

The Czech public employment service introduced **data exchange and assessment processes** in 2016, in cooperation with local authorities. They also introduced a cooperation process to prepare a Job Integration Agreement with local authorities, non-profit organisations, social service providers and the National Board of People with disabilities.

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[273]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - GERMANY

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 25-64 years[274]
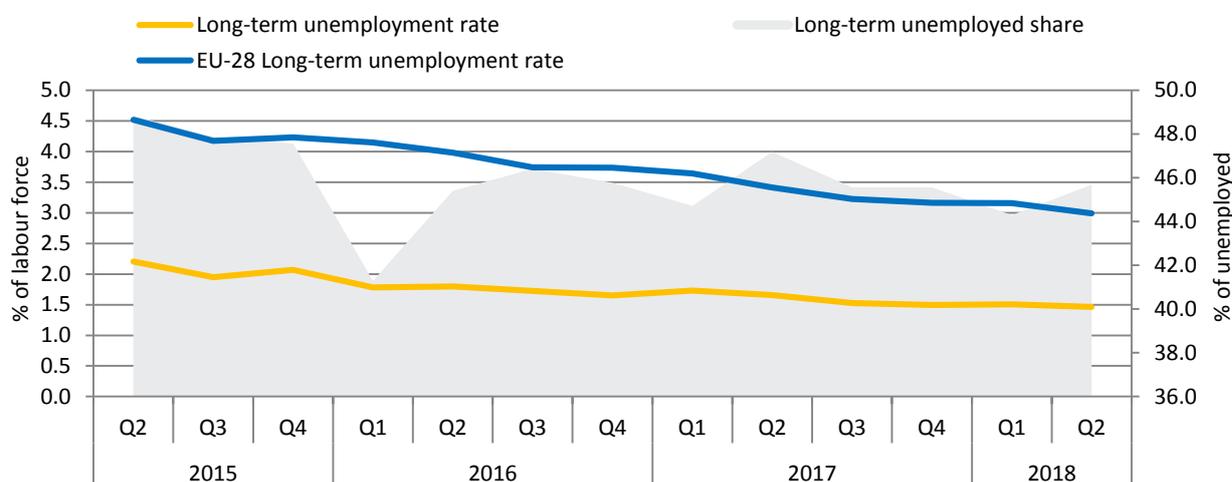
Source: Eurostat.

In Germany between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 2.2% to 1.5%. Similarly, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased - from 48.8% to 45.7%.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- A new **holistic support approach** has been developed, with a special counselling package for households dealing with long-term unemployment
- **Special case workers** are being assigned to jobseekers who are long-term unemployed
- There has been further improvement in **collaboration with employers** through combining hiring subsidies for long-term unemployed with employer coaching

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- **Coordination** among institutions with different levels of responsibility (federal vs. municipal) could be improved
- There are **disparities** in the quality of employment services between regions and for certain groups, especially those with disabilities
- There is room to improve **coordination and data sharing** between different service providers, such as Public Employment Services and providers of debt counselling, social and health services

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[274] The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[275]
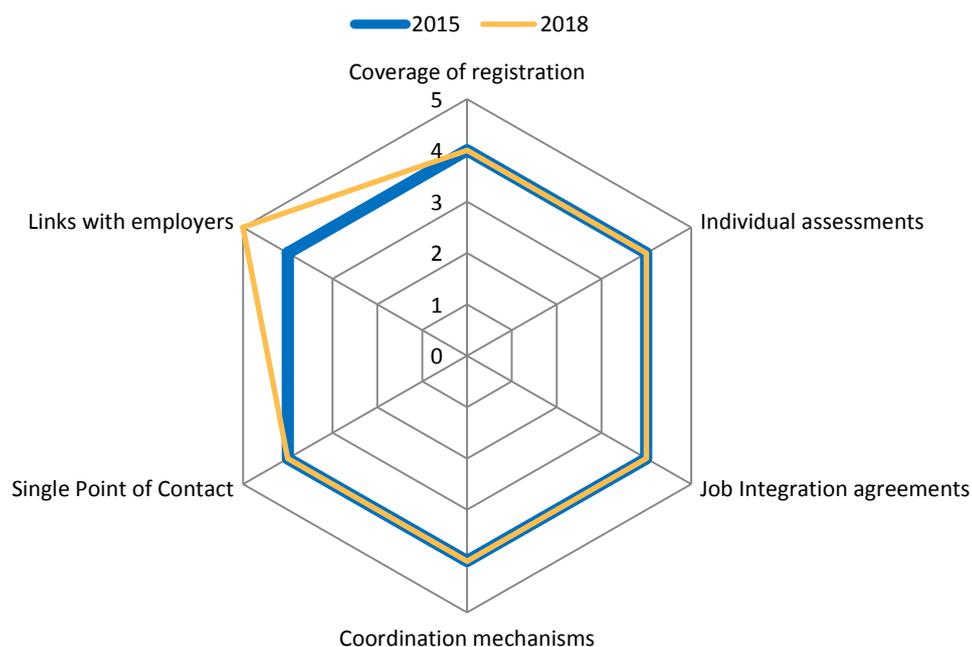

📍 Example of a measure in practice

Germany introduced the initiative **'Netzwerke ABC'** in 2016, to support Jobcenters (German Public Employment Service) in expanding their networks by building on the networking experience of a previous programme by the Federal Employment Agency. 'Netzwerke ABC' aims to disseminate experiences and knowledge on networking activities to all Jobcenters and to extend local networks. It is a voluntary programme, which transfers knowledge via an online platform, as well as via local workshops, national conferences, checklists, a magazine and handbooks. For these capacity-building activities, the programme has an annual budget of around EUR 250,000. About half of all Jobcenters in Germany have already participated in the events organised by the programme.

[275]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - DENMARK

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 20-64 years[276]
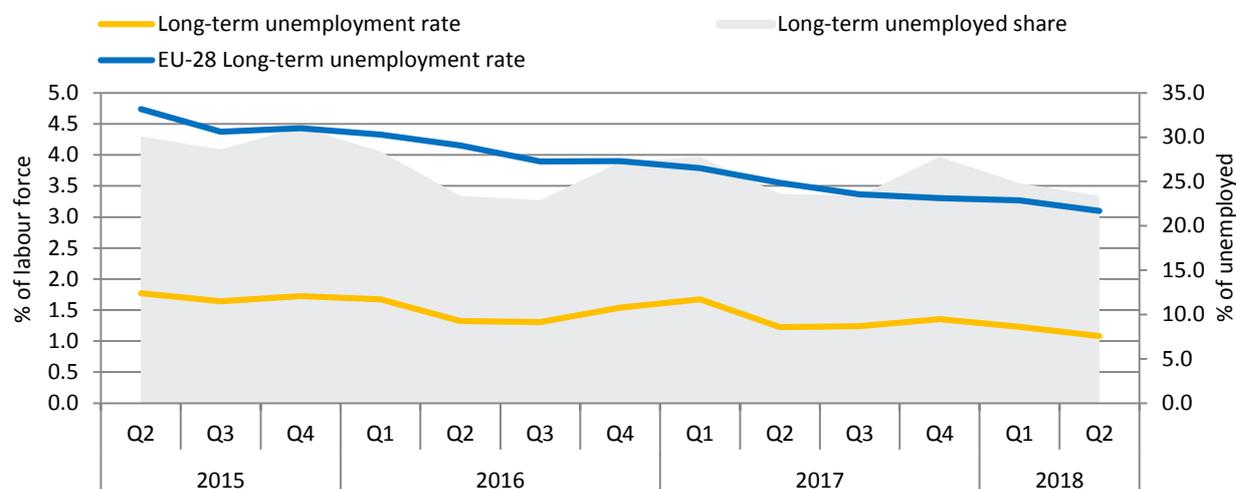
Source: Eurostat. Note: The age group here differs from the Recommendation (25-64) due to missing data.

In Denmark between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 1.8% to 1.1%. Furthermore, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased - from 30.1% to 23.4%.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- There is a focus on **early intervention** to prevent long-term unemployment
- A **single point of contact** is well-established, driven by a digital platform accessible to relevant caseworkers in employment and social services
- **Job Integration Agreements** are offered to all long-term unemployed

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- There are **disparities between municipalities** in labour market integration success rates
- **Collaboration** between employment and social services could be increased in developing the joint integrated service plan for the long-term unemployed
- There is room to further improve **outreach measures** to increase registration, particularly for more vulnerable groups of the long-term unemployed

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[276] The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[277]
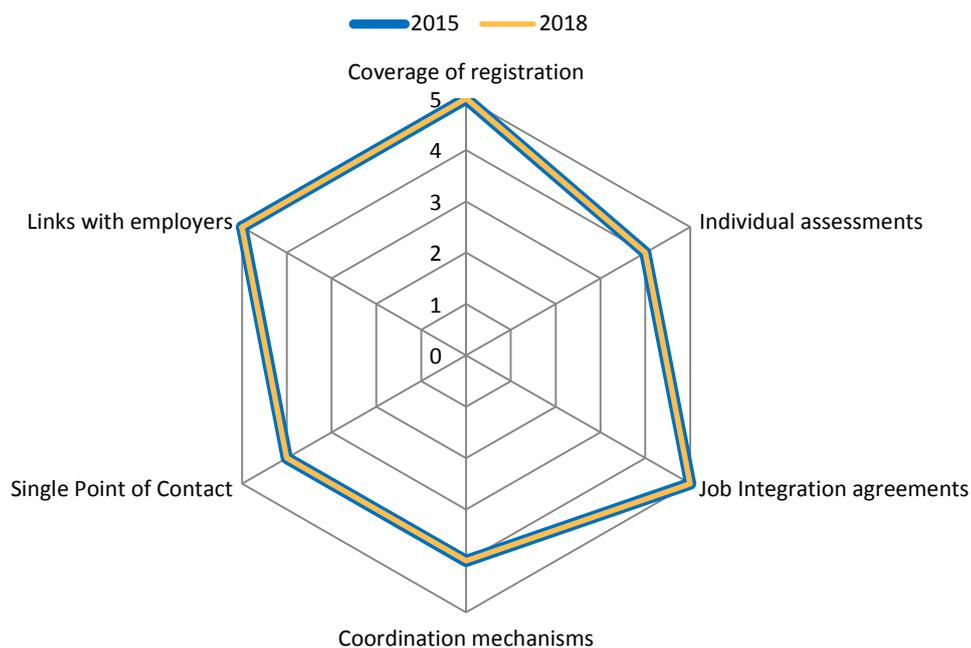

📍 Example of a measure in practice

Denmark introduced a **data profiling tool**, in the first, intensive contact phase between the long-term unemployed person and the case worker, helping the latter to identify clients with an increased risk of long-term unemployment. A re-assessment takes place after 18 months of unemployment, followed by further measures, e.g. in the form of a personal job counsellor.

[277]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - ESTONIA

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 20-64 years[278]
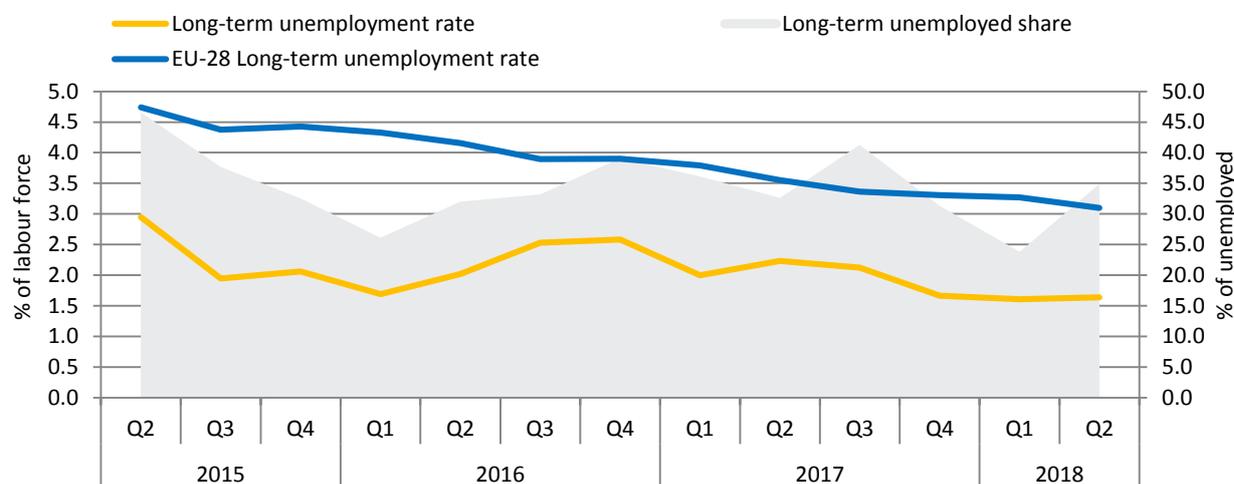
Source: Eurostat.

Note: The age group used here differs from the Recommendation (25-65 years) due to missing data.

In Estonia between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 2.9% to 1.6%. Similarly, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased - from 46.6% to 34.9%.


KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- **Individual assessments** work well, with specialised case managers for the long-term unemployed
- **Job Integration Agreements** are in place and effective. They are adapted locally and their quality is regularly monitored and assessed
- There has been progress in developing **employer partnerships,** with specialised employer counsellors in every Public Employment Service office

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- **Registration** could be further increased by ensuring more unemployed are registered with the Unemployment Insurance Fund
- **Sharing of information** between service providers could be improved
- Formalised **procedures for referring** the individual to relevant service providers could be introduced

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[278]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[279]
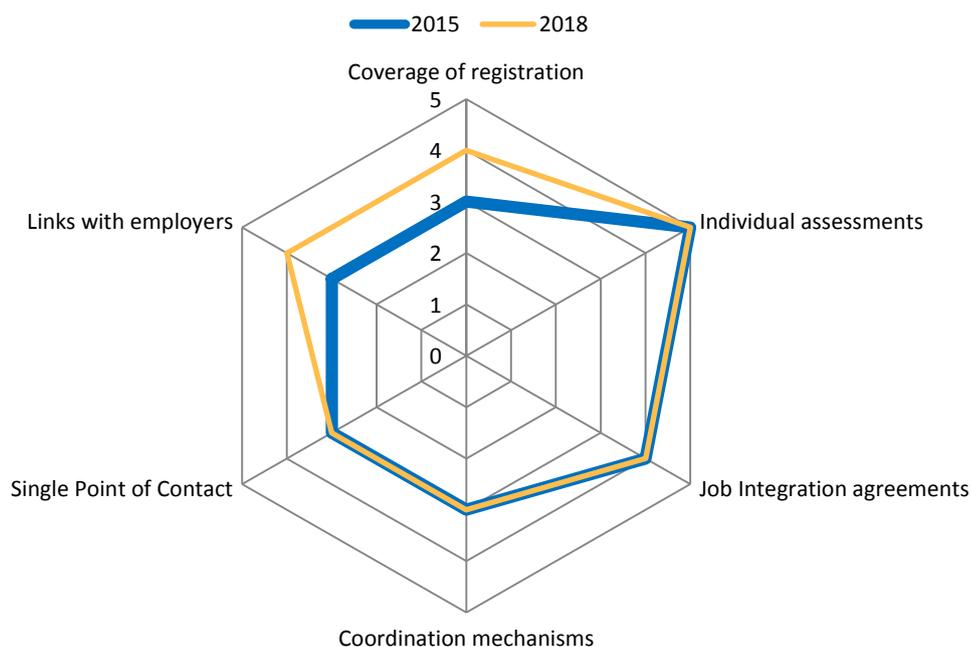

Example of a measure in practice

The Estonian government started a **'Work Ability Reform'** in 2016, to increase the participation of inactive people with reduced work ability in society, and increase their ability to find a job. The reform includes assessments, pilot projects, rehabilitation services, personal assistive devices, social services and a set of new active labour market policies for the target group. These active labour market policies are financed by the European Social Fund and are targeting risk groups such as the long-term unemployed, who need longer-term training, support and more personalised approach. The European Social Fund also supports local community activities providing specific solutions based on local circumstances and opportunities. The Work Ability reform also offers employers trainings on how to work with people with reduced work ability, as well as compensation for workplace adjustments. Furthermore, the Unemployment Insurance Fund advises employers and provides support in the initial period of employment.

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[279]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - GREECE

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 25-64 years[280]
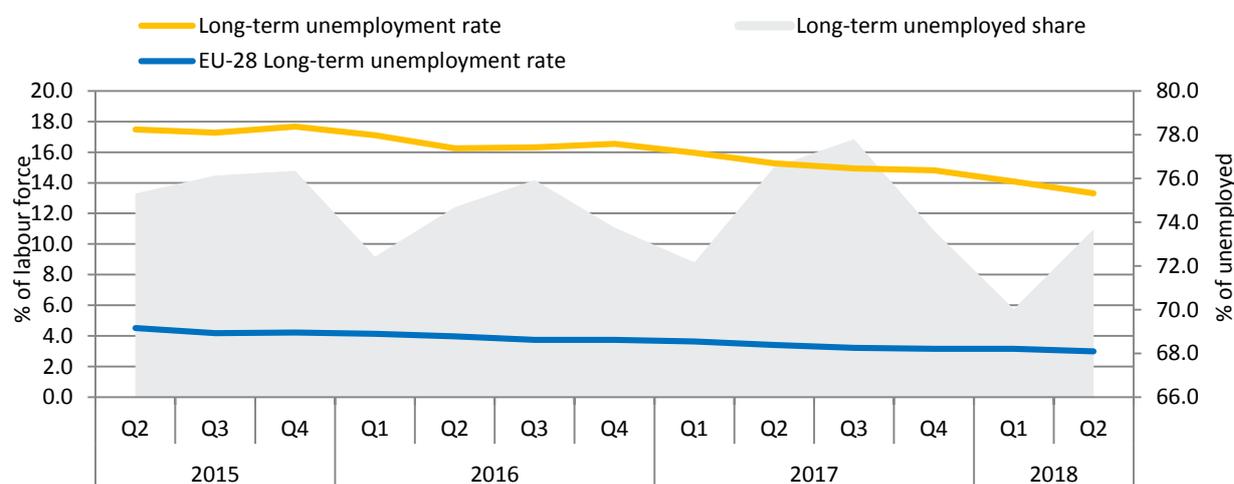
Source: Eurostat.

In Greece between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 17.5% to 13.3%. Similarly, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased slightly - from 75.3% to 73.7%.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Additional financial incentives and simplified procedures for the long-term unemployed have been introduced to increase **registration** with Public Employment Services
- **Links with employers** have been strengthened, mostly through the availability of subsidies when hiring a long-term unemployed
- There is some increase in **coordination** between employment and social services

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- There is **limited capacity** of Public Employment Services in terms of human resources, as well as financial and IT restrictions
- **Individualised support** provided by employment services should be improved as it is not systematic and does not intensify with duration of employment
- **Job Integration Agreements** are not in place

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[280] The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[281]
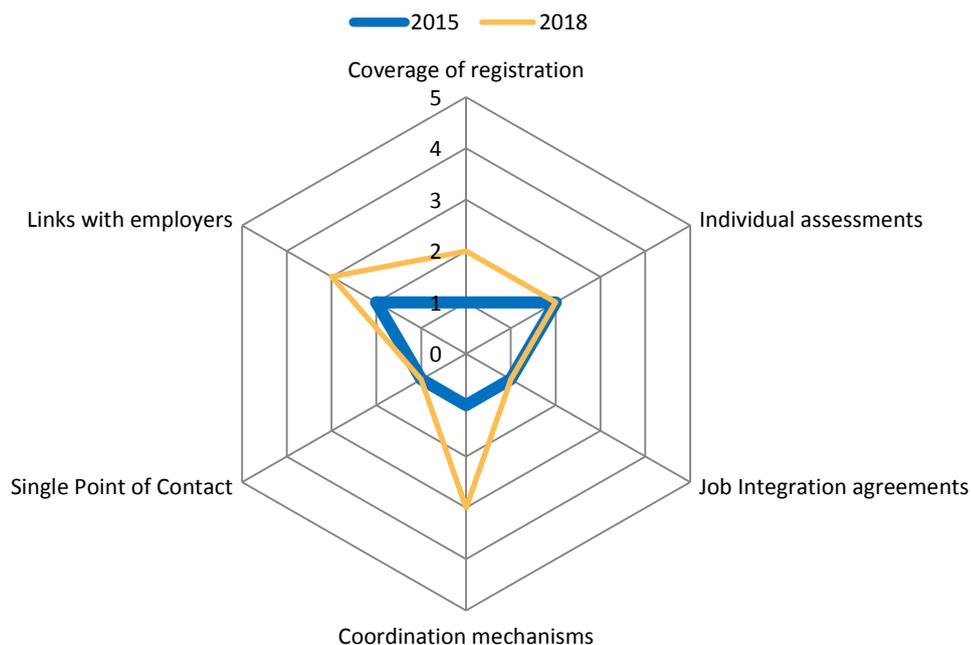

📍 Example of A measure in practice

A **comprehensive reform** of the business model of OAED, the organisation responsible for public employment services in Greece, was carried out with the support of the European Commission and expertise from several Member States, and co-funded by the European Social Fund. New services have been introduced in the PES and others simplified, including a profiling method and more personalised services, enhancing the organization's effectiveness in supporting the long-term unemployed.

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[281]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - SPAIN

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 25-64 years[282]
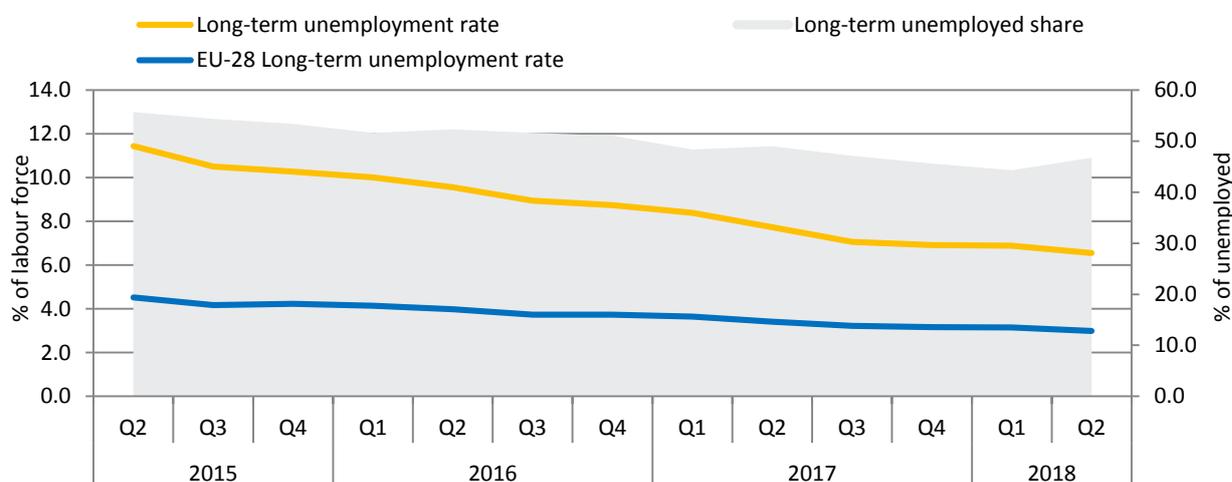
Source: Eurostat.

In Spain between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 11.4% to 6.5%. Furthermore, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased continuously - from 55.7% to 46.8%.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- There has been progress **in increasing coordination** between service providers, through integration of information on relevant databases
- A more **personalised approach** in Public Employment Services is in place, by setting targets as regards individual counselling and needs' assessments for the long-term unemployed
- Efforts to increase **registration** proved effective, as the level of registration with Public Employment Services is relatively high

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- The human and financial **capacity issues** of Public Employment Services at regional level result in disparities in service provision
- Beyond recruitment subsidies and reductions in social security contributions, **cooperation with employers** is limited, with room for improvement in matching jobseekers with employer needs, and increasing vacancies handled by employment services
- There is little progress in establishing a **single point of contact**

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[282]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[283]

Legend: 2015, 2018

Axes: Coverage of registration, Individual assessments, Job Integration agreements, Coordination mechanisms, Single Point of Contact, Links with employers
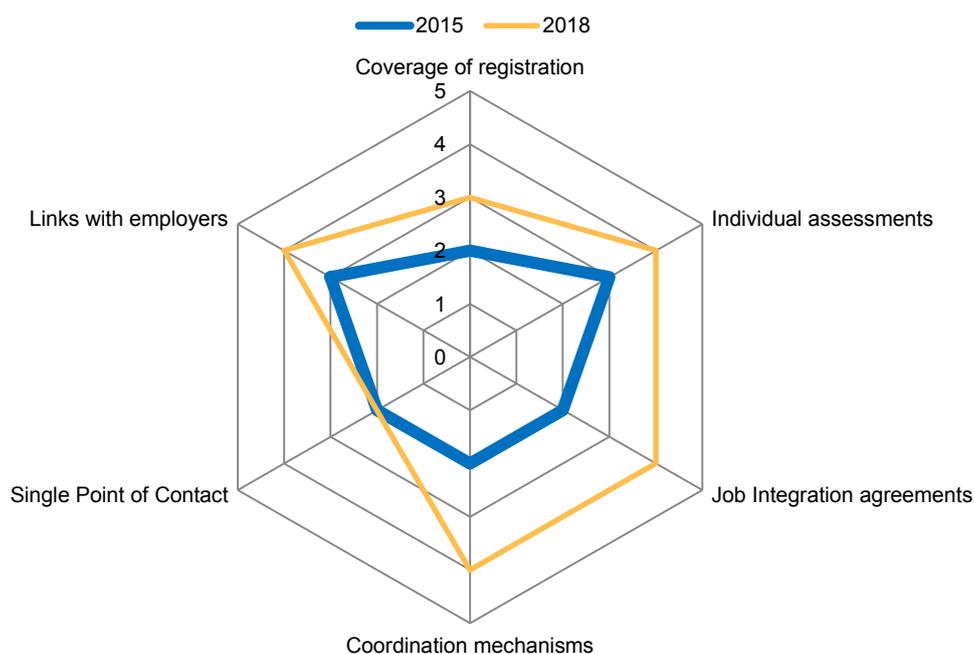
📍 Example of a measure in practice

The **Launching Pads for Employment and Entrepreneurship** (*Lanzaderas de Empleo y Emprendimiento Solidario*) scheme is an integrated scheme that aims to help the long-term unemployed enter self-employment or return to work through business "launching pads". It includes coaching and motivation activities for long-term unemployed to get them 'off the ground' and supports a change from a passive to an active approach. Support is provided for a team of unemployed who have a mentor. The scheme provides information, refers participants to business professionals, provides training, coaching and mentoring, and offers psychological support where needed. It is based on a collaborative, supportive model that focuses on personal development, teamwork, all the while working on the collective empowerment of individuals. It is available to registered and non-registered long-term unemployed, is organised at the regional level and is supported by the European Social Fund.

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[283]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - FINLAND

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 25-64 years[284]
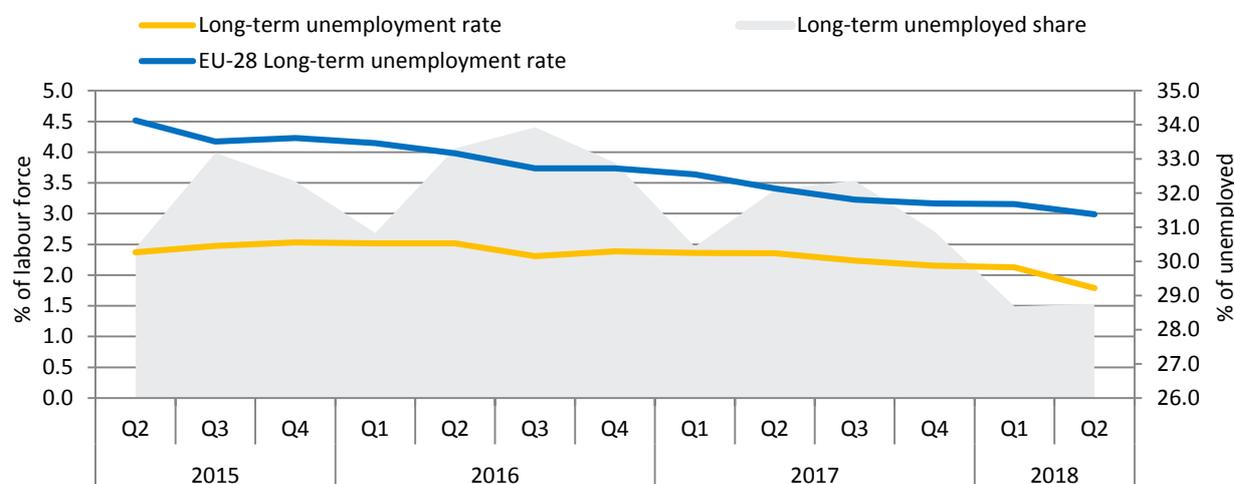
Source: Eurostat.

In Finland between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 2.4% to 1.8%. Similarly, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased - from 30.4% to 28.8%.


KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- There is more frequent **communication** between the unemployed and the job counsellors (once every three months)
- There are more frequent reviews of **Job Integration Agreements** for long-term unemployed
- Progress has been made in the **coordination of services**

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- More could be done to **reach out to the inactive** population, such as discouraged workers or people with a migrant background
- **Links with employers** could be further improved particularly to tackle perceived stigma attached to the long-term unemployed
- **Lack of human resources** in some Public Employment Services could be addressed as it may hamper the quality of Job Integration Agreements

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[284]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[285]
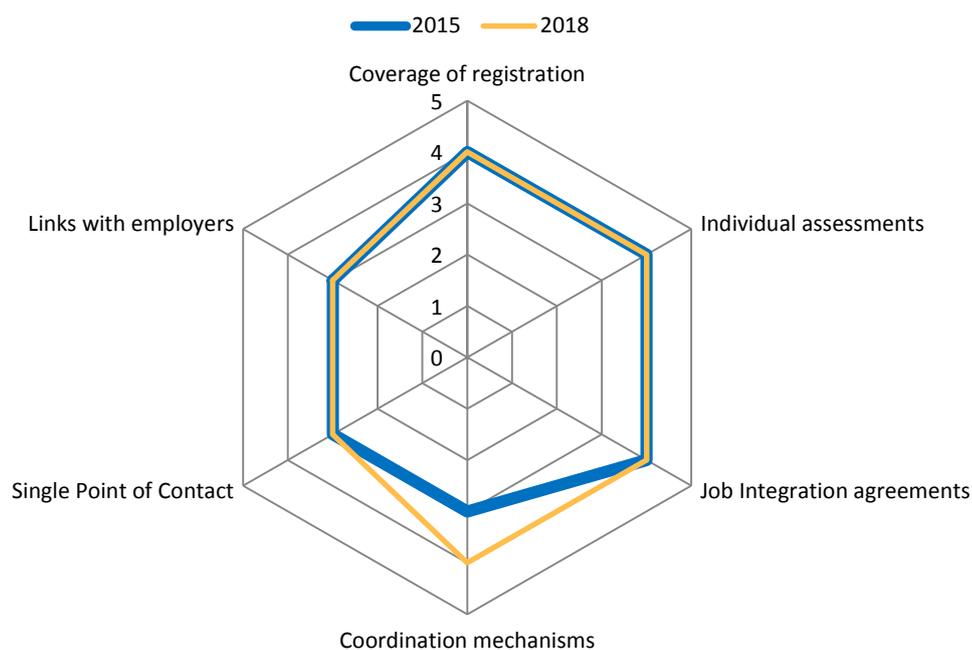

📍 Example of a measure in practice

Related to coordination of support, Finland implemented the **multi-sectoral joint service** (TYP) in 2015. It is a model which brings together the long-term unemployed and experts of three authorities of the public administration – the Employment and Economic Development office, the municipalities and the Finnish Social Insurance Institution – to evaluate the needs for services of the long-term unemployed, draw up a functional employment plan and take joint responsibility for the progress itself and the follow-up process.

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[285]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - FRANCE

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 25-64 years[286]
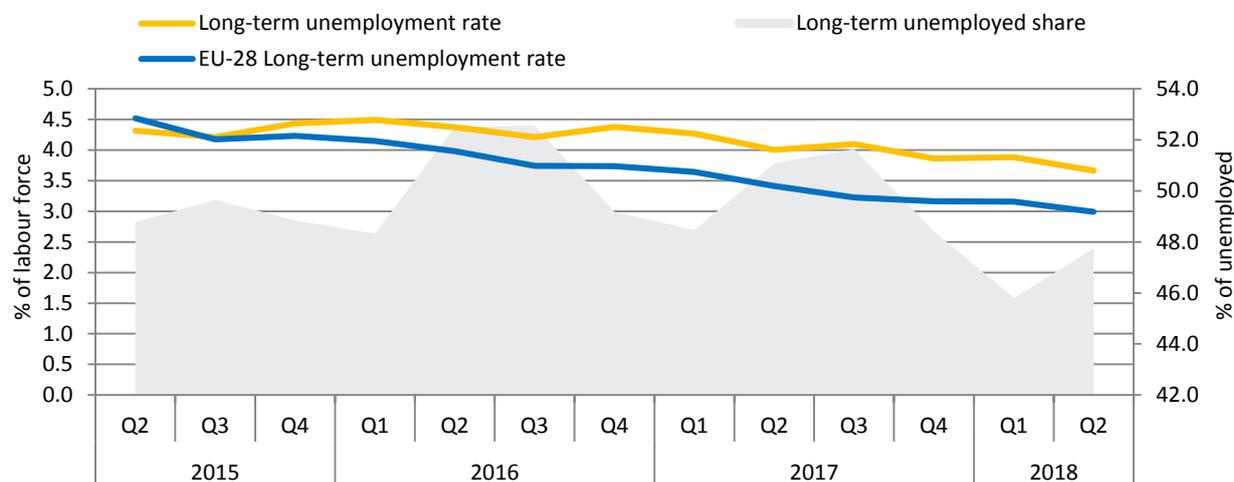
Source: Eurostat.

In France between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 4.3% to 3.7%. Similarly, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased slightly - from 48.8% to 47.7%.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- There is a **holistic approach** to supporting the long-term unemployed through high quality Job Integration Agreements, personal guidance, tailored services and involvement of employers
- Online tools for **registration** and application for benefits have been introduced, thereby increasing human resources for individual assessment at Public Employment Services
- There has been some progress in measures to improve **coordination of services**

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- There is room to improve the functioning of the **single point of contact** through better IT infrastructure and administrative mechanisms that allow information sharing between service providers
- Despite reinforcement of employer-dedicated teams, some local Public Employment Services report a **lack of human resources** to support all employer needs
- **Partnerships with employers** could be further improved in terms of outreach and after-placement support

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[286]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[287]
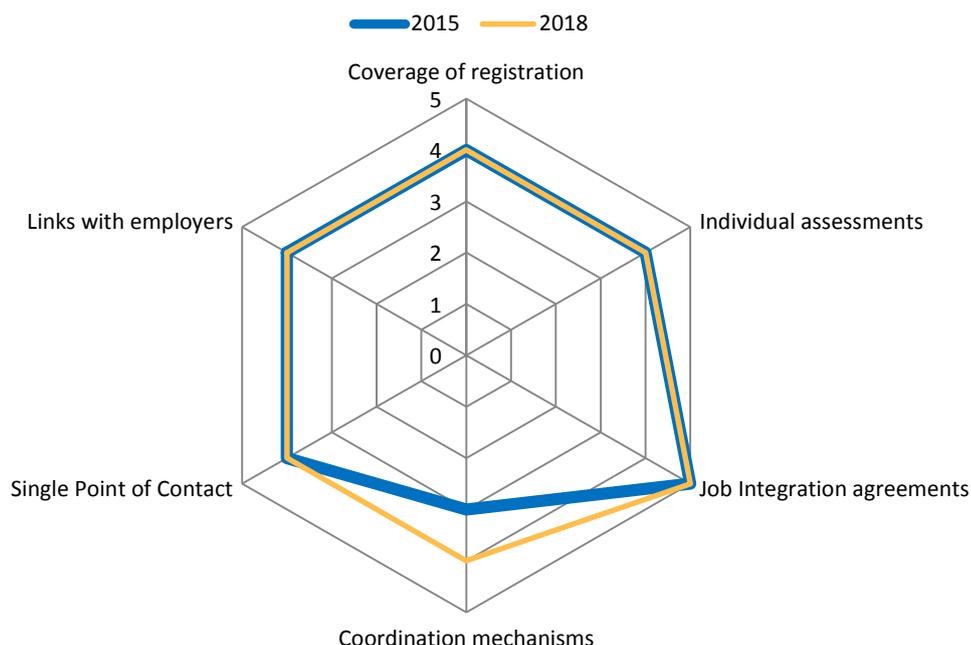

📍 Example of a measure in practice

France introduced a project called **'Territoires Zéros Chômeurs de Longue Durée'** (Territories with no Long-Term Unemployed) in 2016. It is a pilot project (for 5 years), tested in ten territories of France. Long-term unemployed persons are employed by social enterprises, subsidized by state and local authorities' funds. The jobs are created to fulfil social needs (e.g. care and maintenance activities) and do not substitute jobs created in the private sector. The jobs are developed according to the skills of the unemployed persons and they provide a long-term perspective with an open contract. The employees may also receive training if required. After the pilot phase and depending upon the experiences gained the project may be extended.

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[287]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - CROATIA

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 20-64 years[288]
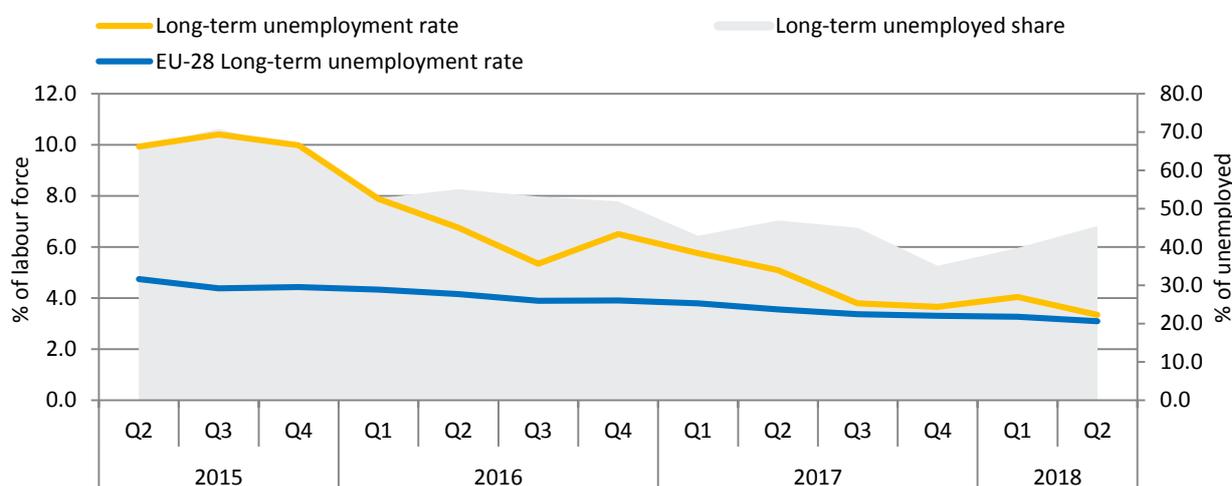
Source: Eurostat.Note: The age group used here differs from the Recommendation (25-64) due to missing data

In Croatia between 2015Q2 and 2018Q1, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 9.3% to 3.9%. Furthermore, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased - from 67.8% to 44.5%.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:
- A statistically assisted **profiling** by Public Employment Services has been put in place
- Measures to encourage the long-term unemployed to remain registered with the Public Employment Services have been introduced, to reduce **de-registration**
- There has been progress in developing and providing **Individual Assessments** and **Job Integration Agreements**

REMAINING CHALLENGES:
- **Cooperation with employers** should be further strengthened
- **Data exchange** between the Public Employment Services and Social Welfare Centres is limited
- The **limited capacity** of Public Employment Services should be addressed as it impacts the services provided. There are also regional disparities in capacity, and therefore in the quality of services offered.

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[288]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[289]
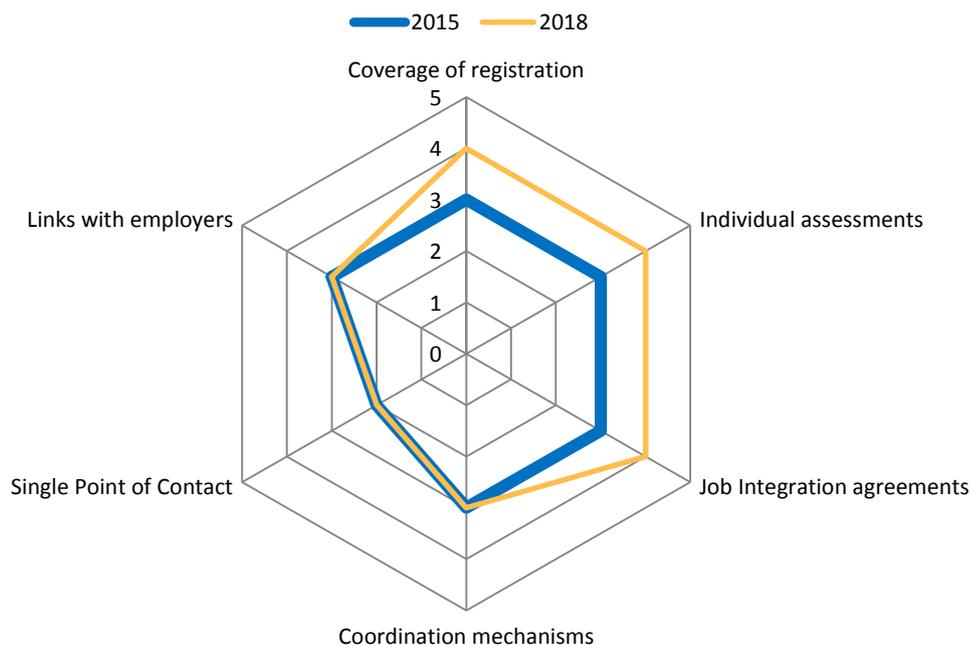
📍 Example of a measure in practice

Related to individual assessments, in 2017 the Croatian Employment Services (HZZ) started to pilot and then **rolled out statistically assisted profiling** (StAP) with the aim to assess the risk of long-term unemployment. The procedure enables more individualised counselling based on the estimated distance from the labour market. It also helps detect persons with higher risk of becoming long-term unemployed, so that the HZZ counsellors can put additional efforts in trying to bring them closer to the labour market.

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[289]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - HUNGARY

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 25-64 years[290]
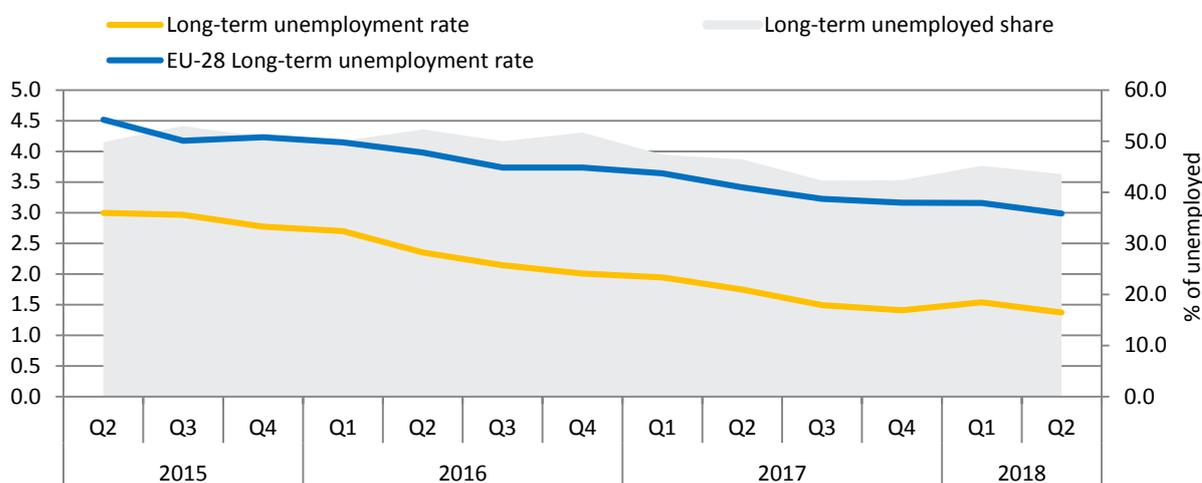
Source: Eurostat.

In Hungary between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 3.0% to 1.4%. Furthermore, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased - from 49.8% to 43.6%.[291]

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- An **Individual Action Plan** updated every six months is offered to all long-term unemployed
- Cooperation between Public Employment Services and NGOs has improved efforts to increase **registration** of the inactive and long-term unemployed
- Employer-dedicated staff in the public employment services have been introduced, to increase **services for employers**

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- There is room to improve **personalised individual assessments** so that the long-term unemployed gets tailor-made support, from a range of services that build upon each other.
- **Links with employers** and Public Employment Services could be further strengthened through formalised, structured and regular cooperation
- Developing formal **coordination mechanisms** between social and employment services, and IT infrastructure for data sharing, would be important, as cooperation now happens irregularly and depends on local circumstances

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[290]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.
[291]One important aspect to take into account is the fact that Hungarian employment / unemployment rates are distorted by the Public Works Scheme, which still accounts for roughly 4% of the labour force. This also affects the figures for long-term unemployment.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[292]
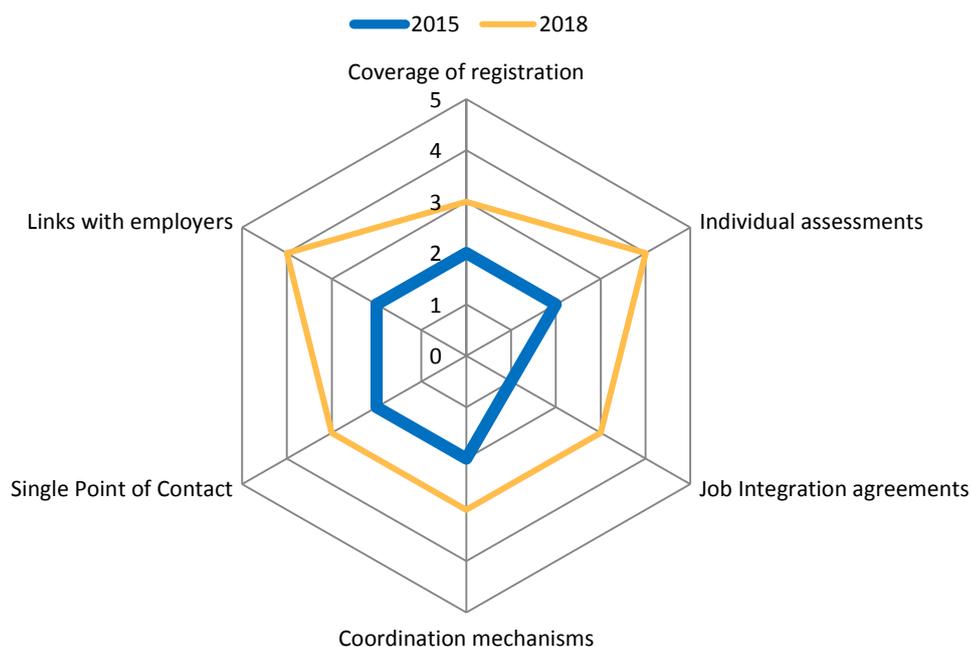
Example of a measure in practice

A programme co-financed by the European Social Fund supports **NGOs to provide labour market services** (such as counselling, mentoring, and psychological counselling) to disadvantaged jobseekers in order to alleviate the burden on the Public Employment Services. The budget for this programme is HUF 6 billion, allocated among the counties according to the composition of jobseekers. The projects are implemented with close cooperation between NGOs and PES, and will involve approximately 93,000 jobseekers, 15% of whom need to be inactive according to the target defined in the project. The effective services of the NGOs started in early 2018 and by the end of June 2018, 3750 people have been involved in the programme.

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[292]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - IRELAND

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 25-64 years[293]
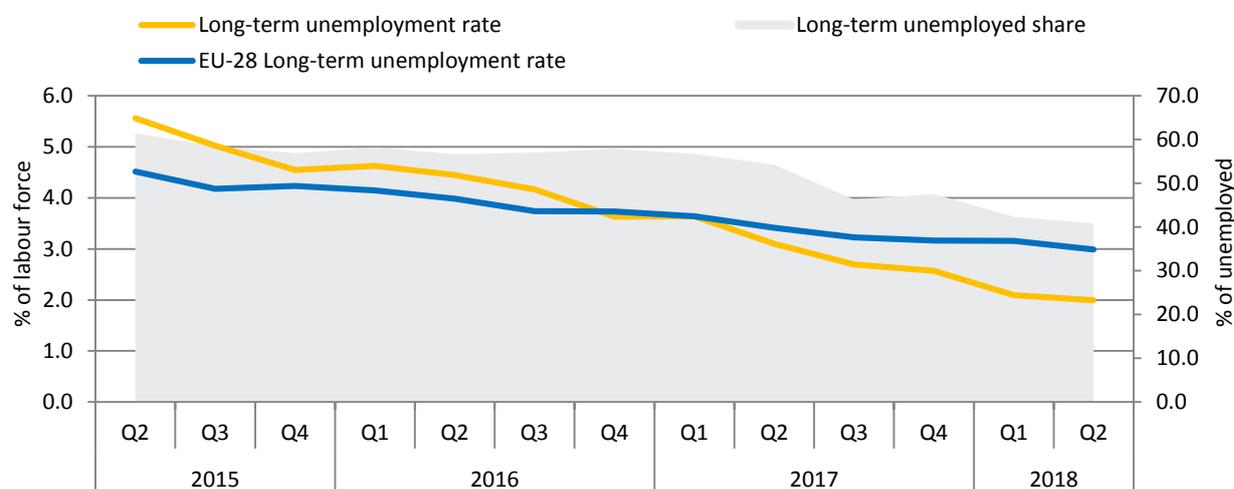
Source: Eurostat.

In Ireland between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 5.6% to 2%. Similarly, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased from 61.4% to 40.8%.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- The one stop shop model of Intreo, which integrates employment and income support services, is a well-functioning **single point of contact**
- **Employer partnerships** have been enhanced through the Employer Relations Unit that provides screening services as well as tailor-made training programmes
- A broader portfolio of **services** are now offered to the long-term unemployed thanks to the JobPath activation measure

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- **A quality assurance model** to assess Individual Action Plans and Job Integration Agreements could be introduced
- Closer **collaboration and data-sharing** could be achieved among government departments, agencies and social partners
- **Outreach** could be strengthened to increase coverage of registration among inactive and other vulnerable groups

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[293]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[294]
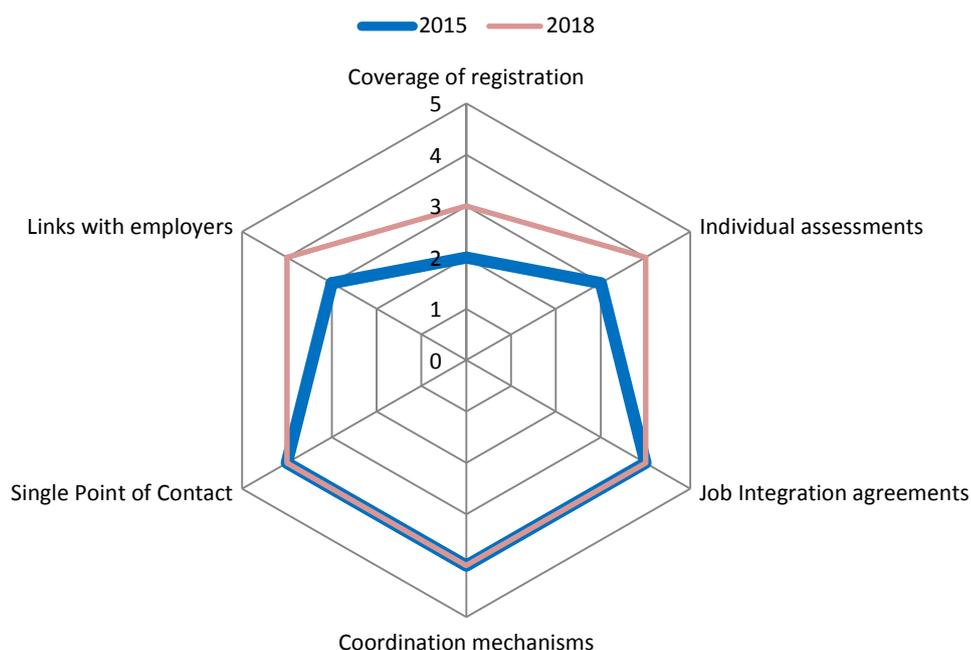
📍 Example of a measure in practice

Following the creation of the Employer Relations Unit in 2012, an **Employer Relations Strategy** was introduced for the period 2017-2020 in order to improve and expand the services provided to employers by the unit. As well as linking up with other stakeholders such as employer representative groups, industry and development authorities, one of the initiatives under the Strategy is upscaling previous local job fairs into a 'national job week', where employers can advertise vacancies and meet jobseekers.

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[294]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION – ITALY

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 25-64 years[295]
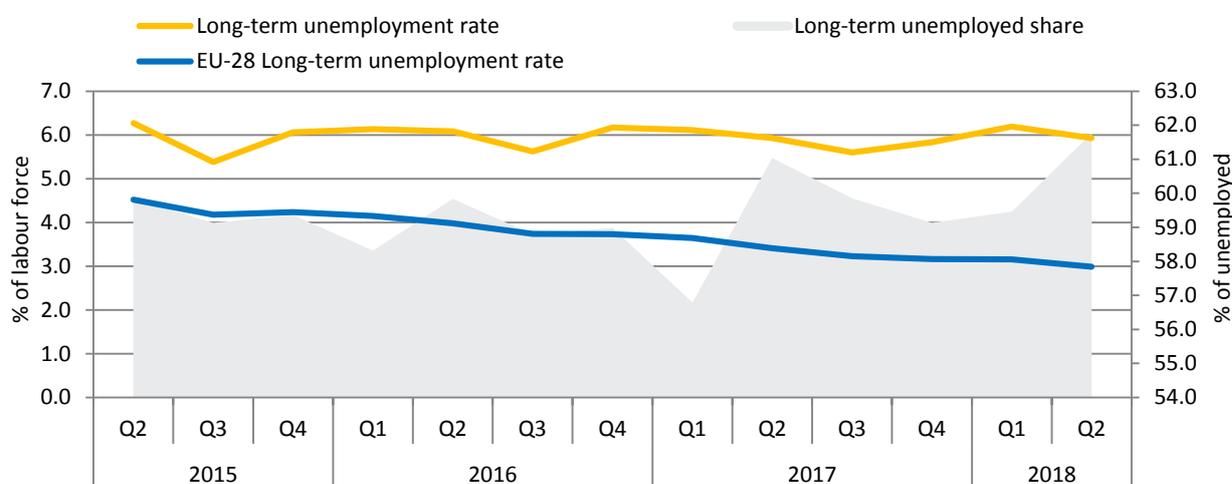
Source: Eurostat.

In Italy between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate decreased from 6.3% to 5.9%. However, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed increased - from 59.8% to 61.8%.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- The **'Italian Strategy for labour market integration for long-term unemployed'** has been developed, due partly to increased awareness of the shortfalls in the support system for the long-term unemployed
- A new statistical **profiling** tool has been introduced
- There is progress in implementation of measures to increase **registration**, partly thanks to a new tool that allows online registration with employment services

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- Public Employment Services still have **limited resources**, despite recent legislative changes
- Improved **coordination** between the state and the regions in efforts to tackle long-term unemployment, as well as between other service providers at all levels, is needed.
- **Cooperation and partnerships with employers** are underdeveloped and warrant improvement

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[295]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of ž active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[296]
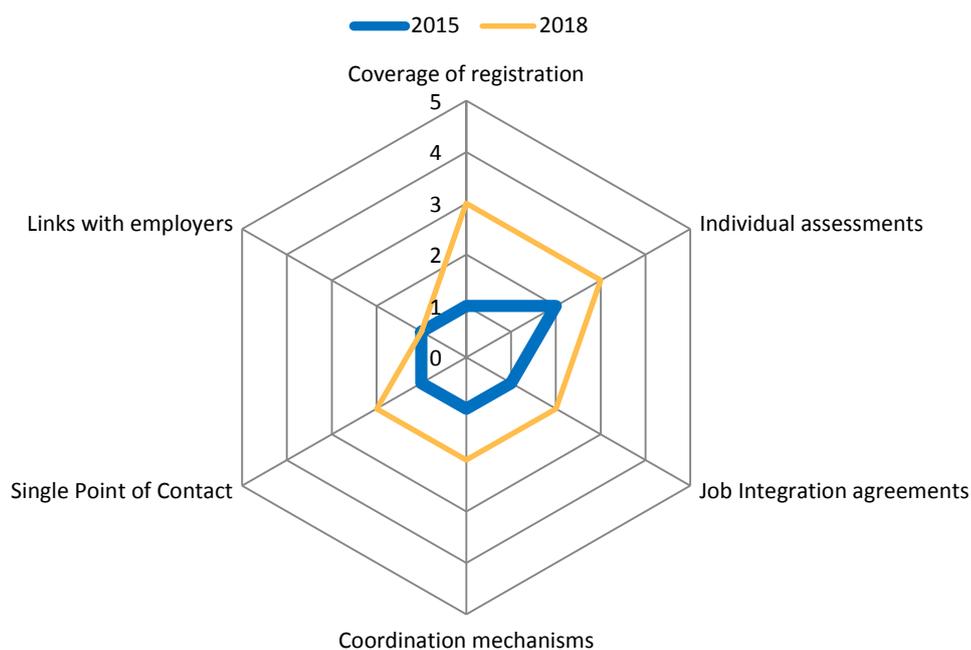

⊙ Example of a measure in practice

The new **"Italian Strategy for labour market integration of long-term unemployed"** is a direct consequence of the Recommendation. It entails a preventative, personalised and multidisciplinary approach, based on the integration of employment services with services delivered by other local actors (such as social services, training services, housing services and health services). It involves a reinforcement of the IT infrastructure, qualitative profiling and setting up a personalized action plan for employment, which includes various services based on the long-term unemployed needs.

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[296]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - LITHUANIA

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 20-64 years[297]

Source: Eurostat. Note: The age group used here differs from the Recommendation (25-64) due to missing data.

In Lithuania between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 4.4% to 2.1%. Furthermore, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased - from 46% to 34.7%.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- **Cooperation** between Public Employment Services and stakeholder organisations to identify unregistered unemployed and their needs has increased
- There is more focus on **individual assessment and targeted counselling**
- Progress has been made to develop closer **links with employers**

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- A clear, formalised **model of cooperation** between local Public Employment Services and municipal social services is lacking. A pilot project on "Integrated Service Provision" will be launched in 2019.
- Further development of **Job Integration Agreements** is needed so that they cover other services beyond employment services
- **Data sharing** between organisations needs improvement, particularly as regards sharing of individual assessments across service providers

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[297]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[298]
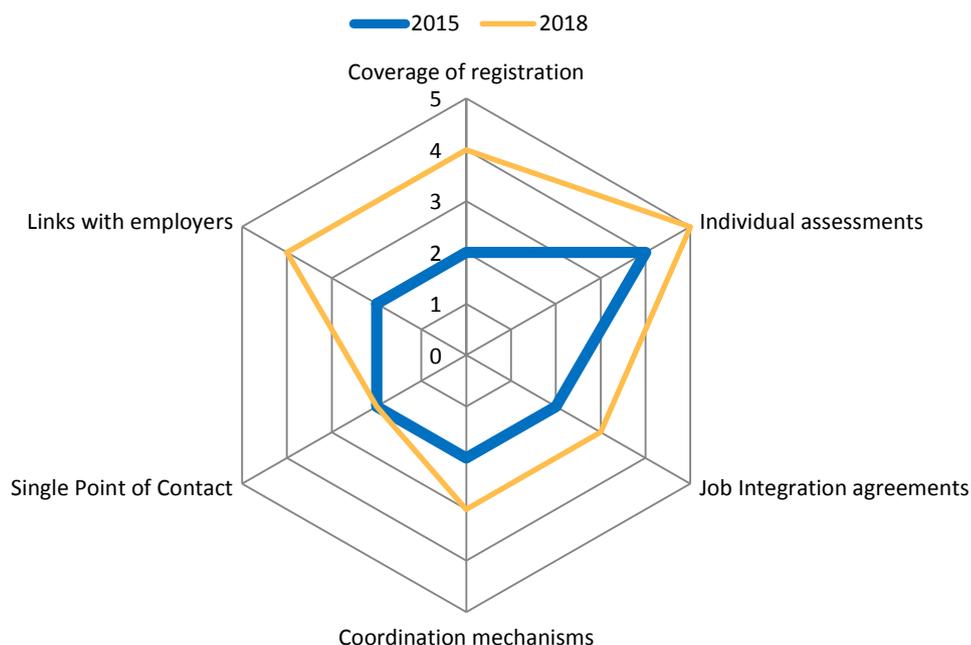

📍 Example of a measure in practice

The Public Employment Service introduced **a new customer service model** in 2017. It provides an improved profiling of jobseekers, individual assessment of job opportunities covering qualifications, work experience as well as social factors and risks, and strengthens partnerships with NGOs. This helps to target prioritised groups across the country and is considered to be effective as it helps tailor counselling services and involves jobseekers in shared community activities.

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[298]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - LUXEMBOURG

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 20-64 years[299]
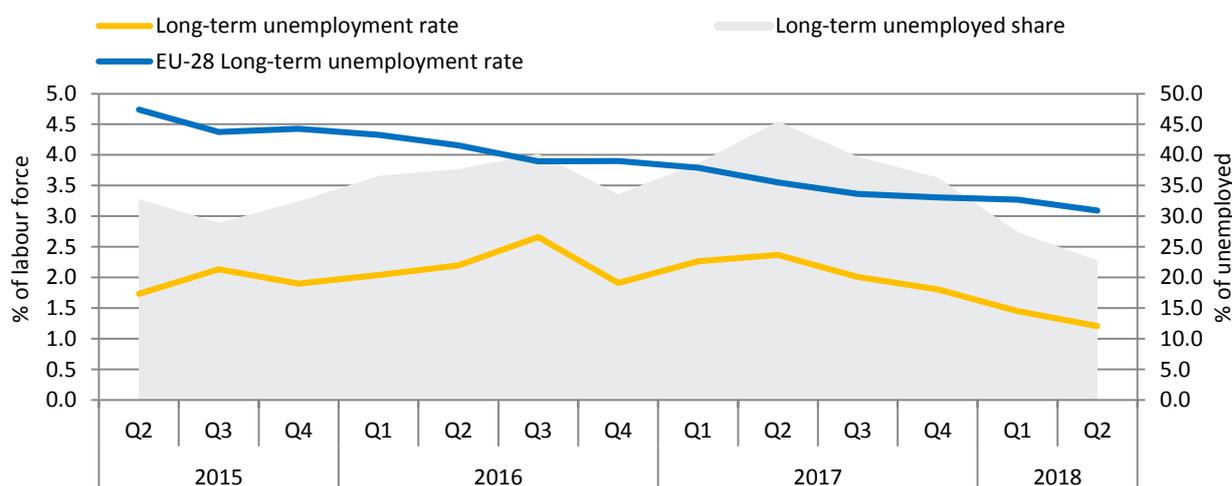
Source: Eurostat.Note: The age group used here differs from the Recommendation (25-64 years) due to missing data.

In Luxembourg between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate slightly grew from 1.7% to 1.2%. At the same time, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed increased - from 32.8% to 22.8%.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Personalised services, including **individual assessments** and **Job Integration Agreements** for long-term unemployed have improved
- A **single point of contact** has been put in place with simultaneous cross-registration with employment and social services
- **Links with employers** have been further strengthened

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- Measures to discourage **de-registration** of long-term unemployed when unemployment benefits are exhausted should be improved
- **Data and information sharing** between different service providers could be further improved to enhance service delivery
- Introducing more **targeted measures** that take into account the specificities of the long-term unemployed may be necessary

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[299]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[300]
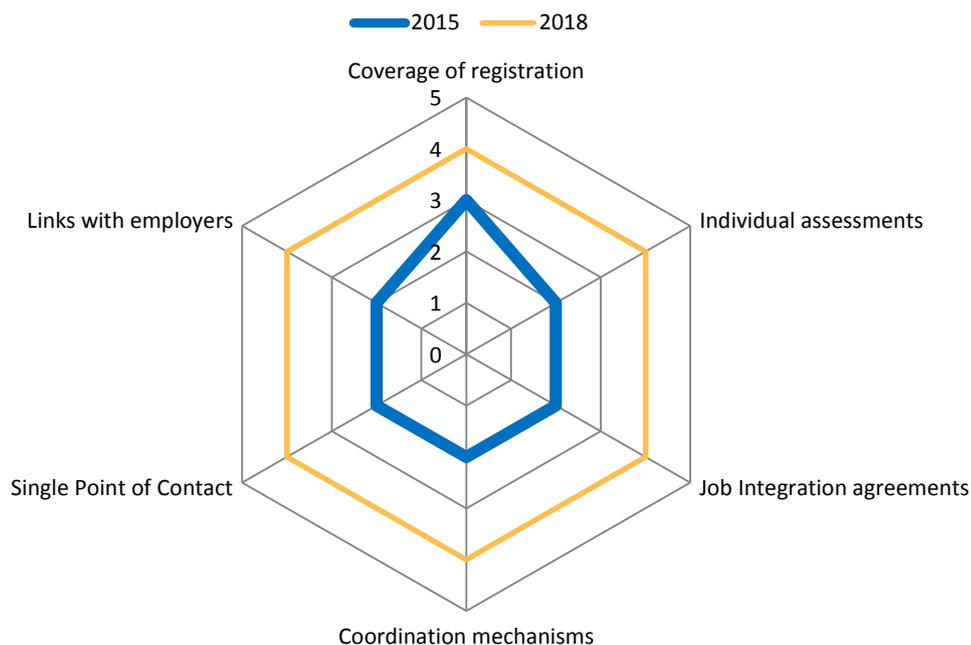
📍 Example of a measure in practice

Luxembourg introduced **targeted measures for people with disabilities** in 2017. Since then, the Public Employment Service runs a guidance and (re) integration project for people with disabilities. It cooperates with a wide range of stakeholders including the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Integration, a socio-professional guidance centre, hospitals, psychologists, a re-education centre and the employers' association.

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[300]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - LATVIA

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 20-64 years[301]
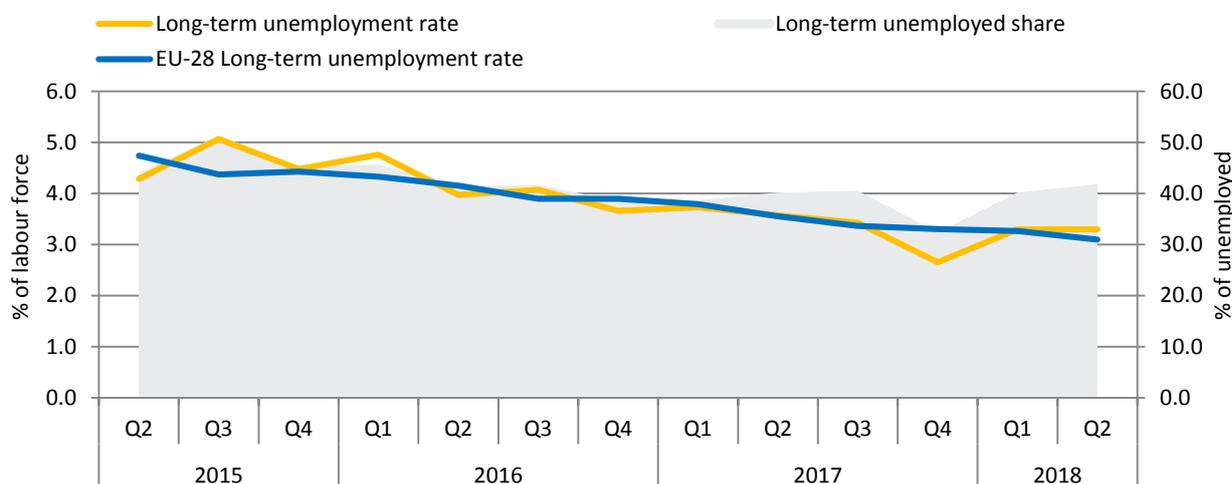
Source: Eurostat.Note: The age group used here differs from the Recommendation (25-64 years) due to missing data.

In Latvia between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 4.3% to 3.3%. Furthermore, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased - from 44% to 41.8%.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- The quality of measures encouraging **registration** has improved, partly by making the registration process more attractive to jobseekers
- **Individual assessments** and **Job Integration Agreement** are comprehensive and regularly updated
- **Links with employers** are strong

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- Efforts should be devoted to reducing the **strong regional disparities** in labour market outcomes
- The **sustainability** of measures could be improved as they still rely largely on financing from the European Social Fund
- There is room to further strengthen **coordination of service provision**

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[301]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[302]
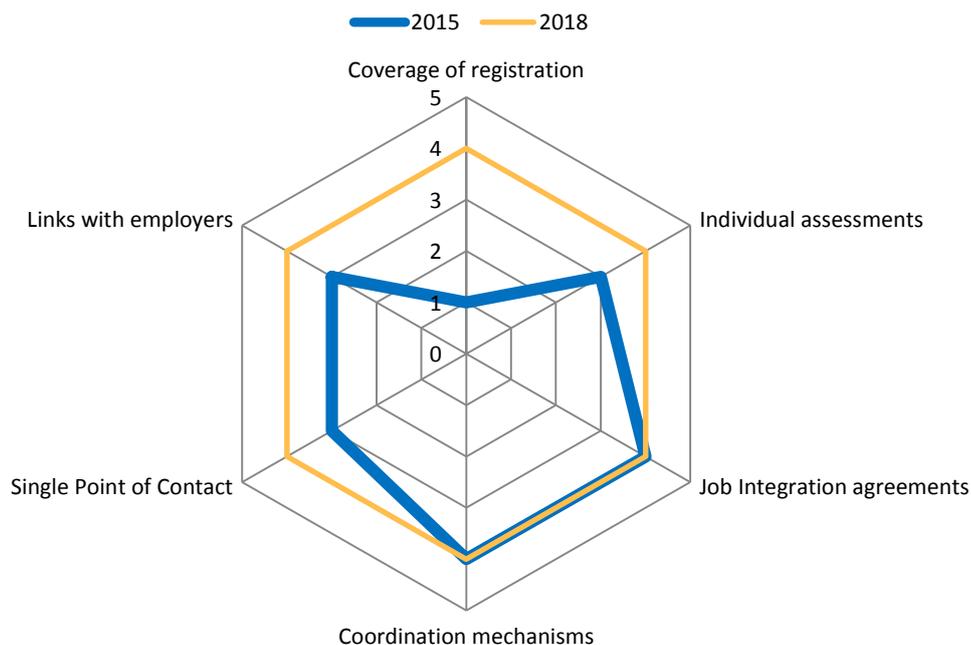

Example of a measure in practice

In 2017, Latvia improved the **regulatory framework for social enterprises**. Social enterprises are now granted tax reliefs and can receive additional state subsidies and local government support. Private entrepreneurs, non-governmental organisations but also municipalities can now employ people at risk of social exclusion, including the long-term unemployed.

[302]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - MALTA

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 20-64 years[303]
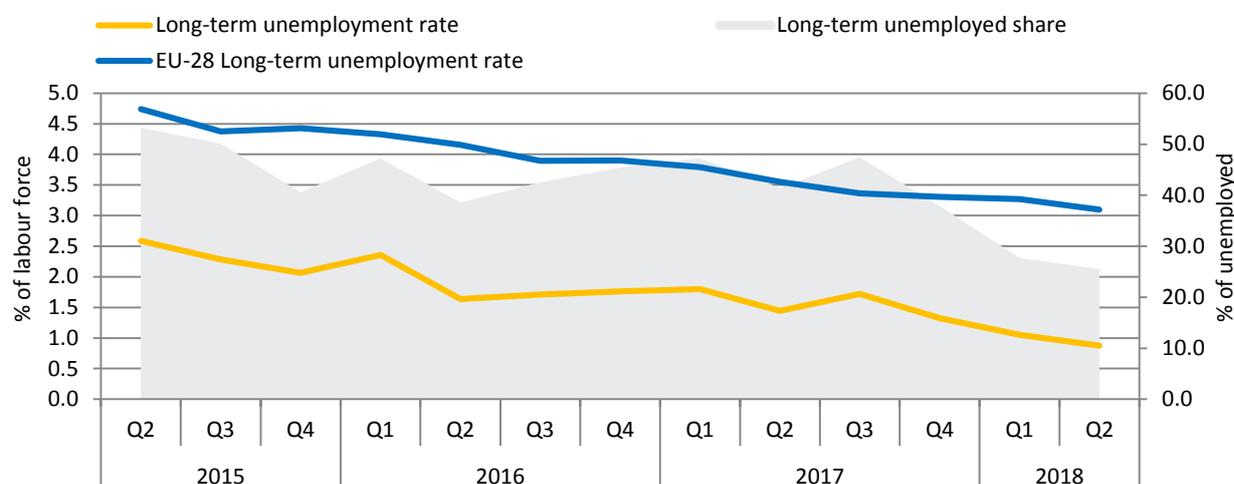
Source: Eurostat. Note: The age group used here differs from the Recommendation (25-64 years) due to missing data.

In Malta between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 2.6% to 0.9%. The share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased - from 53.2% to 25.5%.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- New hiring incentives and subsidies to increase **employer engagement** are in place
- Some new outreach measures to increase **registration** have been introduced
- There are improvements in establishing a **single point of contact** with a wide range of services available to the long-term unemployed and referral to further services if needed.

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- Despite counsellors' low caseloads, not all long-term unemployed receive a **Job Integration Agreement**
- To increase effectiveness of **cooperation**, a more harmonised approach in terms of priorities between Public Employment Services and social service providers is warranted
- **Outreach** to inactive, especially vulnerable groups could be further improved with more targeted measures

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[303]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[304]
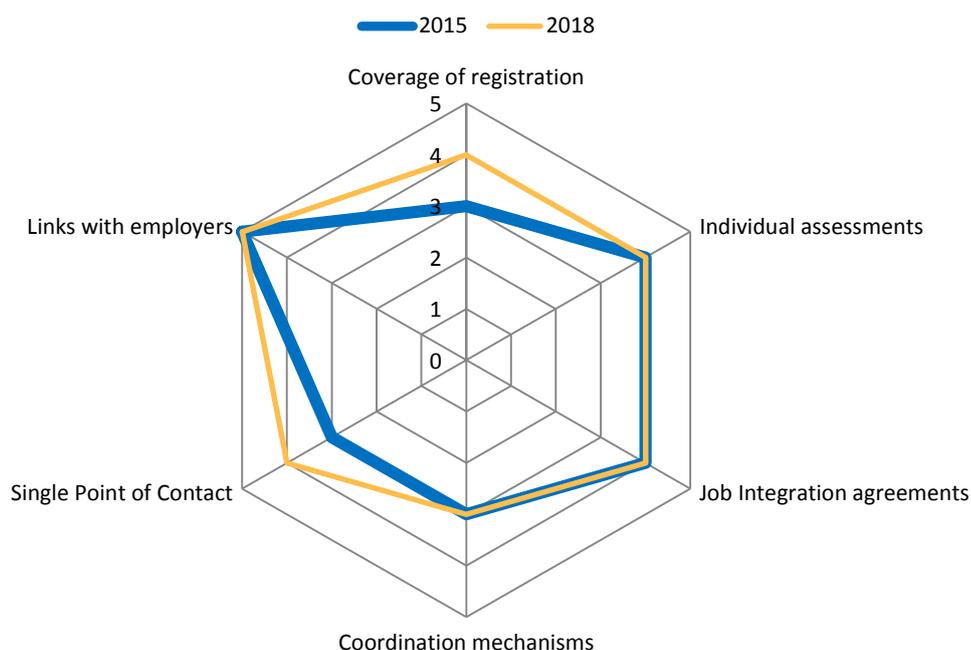
Example of a measure in practice

In order to increase the registration with the Public Employment Services in Malta, three new measures have been introduced **targeting different vulnerable long-term unemployed groups** since 2017. These include migrants and single parents and youth. The Public Employment Service has run job-seeking advisory services for migrants in cooperation with various stakeholders, including migrant associations and Non-Governmental Organisations. For long-term unemployed single parents, the Public Employment Service has implemented outreach activities to identify and register them in cooperation with various stakeholders, including the LEAP[305] project coordinators and social workers.

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[304]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

[305]LEAP project – Helping the most deprived 'take the leap' out of poverty

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION – THE NETHERLANDS

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 25-64 years[306]
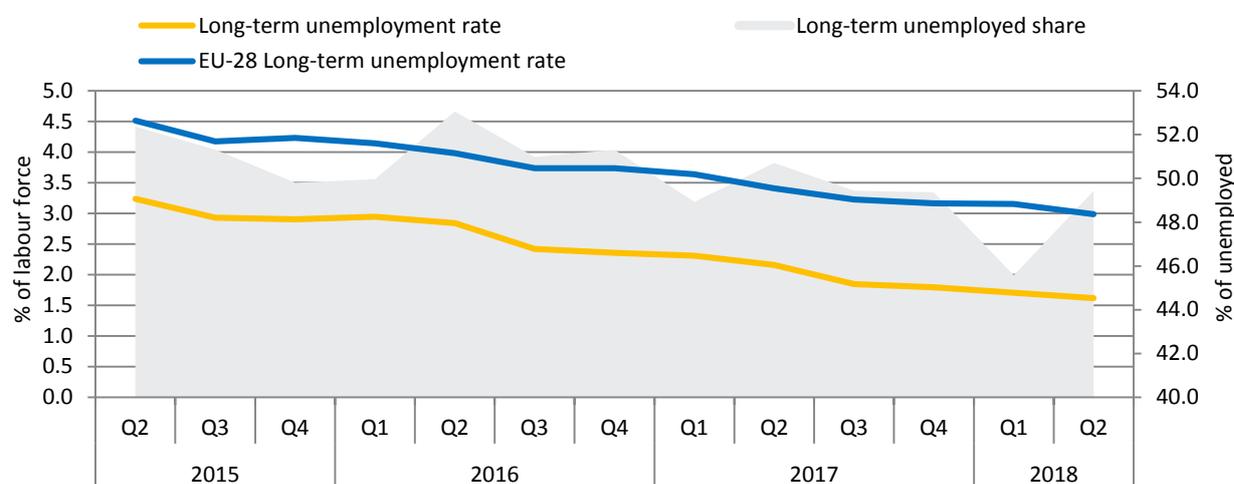
Source: Eurostat.

In the Netherlands between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 3.2% to 1.6%. Furthermore, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased slightly - from 52.4% to 49.4%.


KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- **Face-to-face service delivery** is being increasingly used
- Systematic **profiling** of jobseekers to identify the risk of becoming long-term unemployed has been implemented
- A **single point of contact** is in place thanks to the clear division of responsibilities in service provision between the Public Employment Service and municipalities

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- **Monitoring** of local policies towards those not receiving unemployment benefits could be reinforced
- **Inter-institutional coordination** could be more standardised and information flows improved in the different regions given current variations
- There are some difficulties in establishing effective **collaboration** with private stakeholders

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[306]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[307]
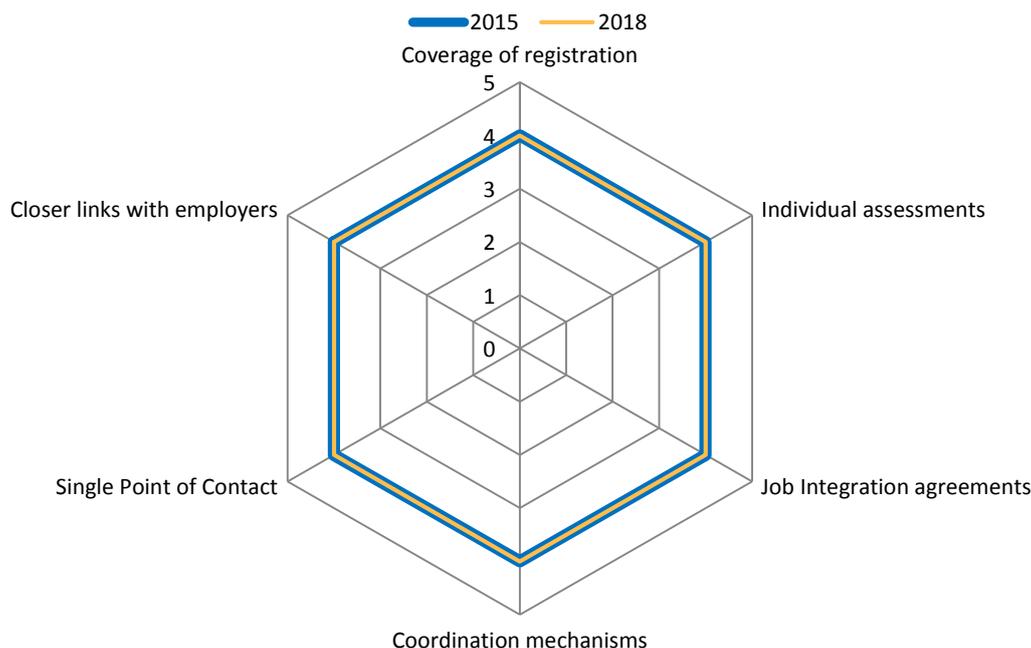

Example of a measure in practice

The **'Work Profiler' system** for the long-term unemployed was implemented in the Public Employment Service in Netherlands in 2016. It is a systematic, science- and evidence-based profiling of jobseekers, which assesses the risk of a person becoming long-term unemployed. In the case of medium or high risk of becoming long-term unemployed, immediate face-to-face interventions are organised and targeted strategies for the activation and integration of jobseekers are developed.

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[307]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION – POLAND

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 25-64 years[308]
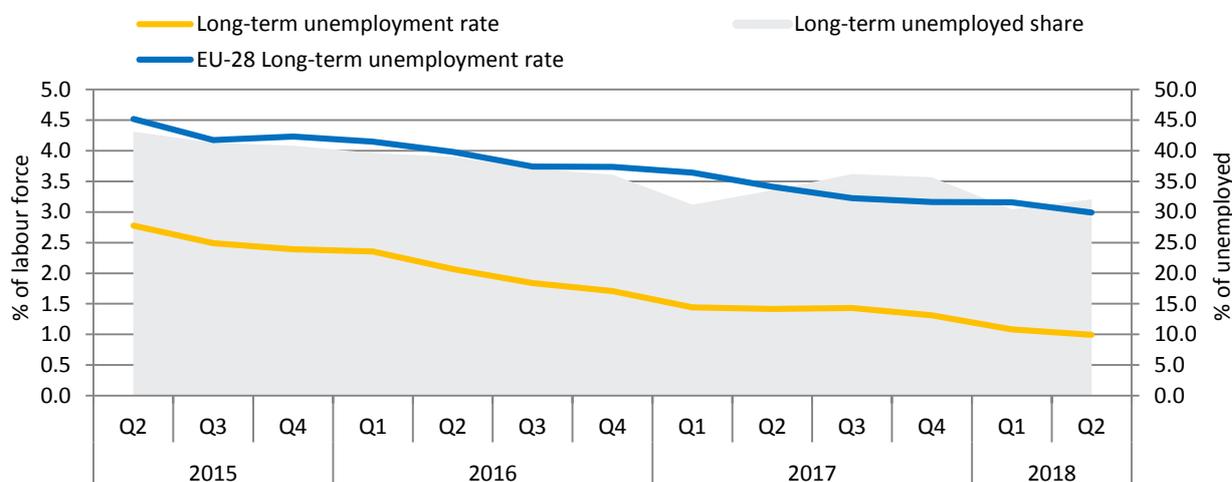
Source: Eurostat.

In Poland between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 2.8% to 1%. Similarly, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased - from 43.1% to 32.1%.


KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- The quality of measures encouraging **registration** with Public Employment Services has improved
- There is progress in providing **individual assessments**
- Stronger **links with employers** have been developed through local partnerships and hiring incentives for specific vulnerable groups

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- There is room to improve **coordination** between Public Employment Services and social services
- **Data sharing** across organisations is limited. Sharing of individual assessments across service providers would be important
- The delivery of **Job Integration Agreements** could improve

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[308]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[309]
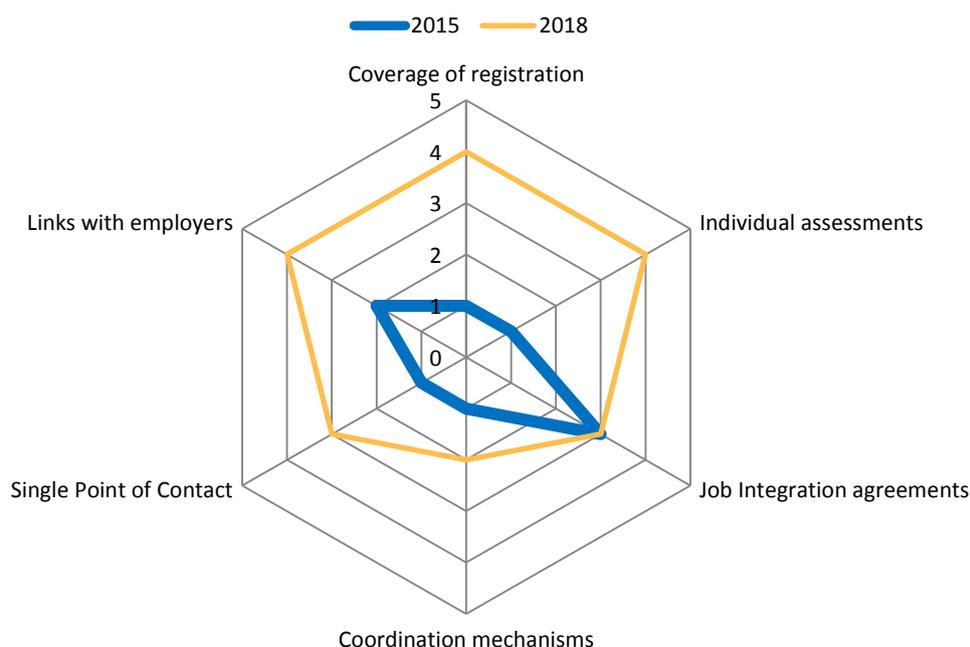
## 📍 Example of a measure in practice

A project called "**Economic activation of the unemployed**" in the Prudnik District' (Silesia) target vulnerable groups of the unemployed. The participants include long-term unemployed, persons with disabilities, persons over 50 years of age, persons with low qualifications or return migrants and immigrants. The support provided includes traineeships, vocational training or one-off measures for starting a business. The project is co-financed by the European Social Fund.

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[309]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - PORTUGAL

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 25-64 years[310]
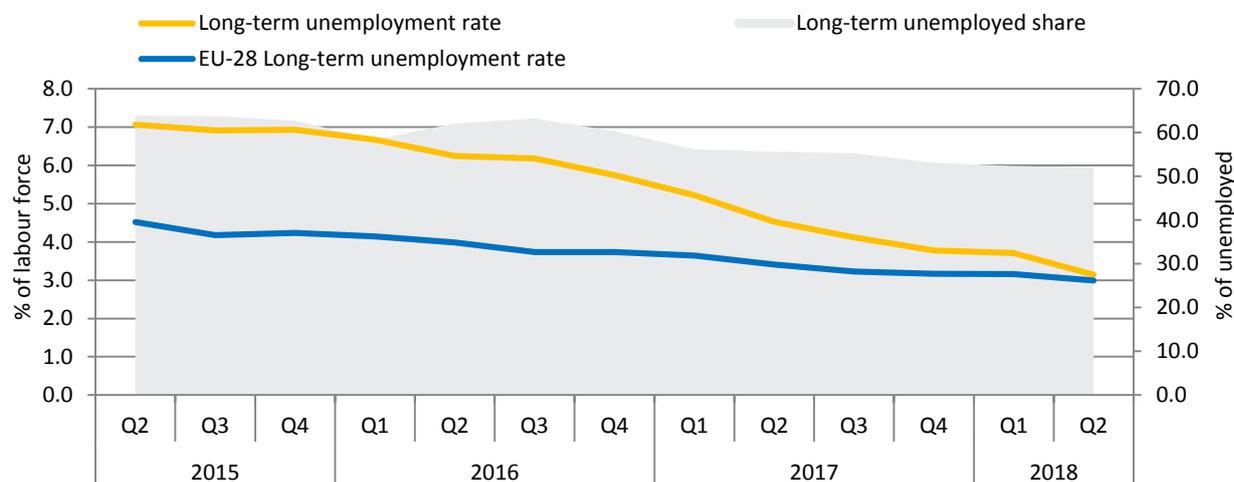
Source: Eurostat.

In Portugal between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 7.1% to 3.1%. Furthermore, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased - from 63.8% to 52%.


KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- The **registration** process with Public Employment Services has been simplified
- There has been some progress in the design and systematic use of **Job Integration Agreements**
- **Links with employers** have improved, thanks to an intermediary between employers and the unemployed, and a platform matching labour supply and demand

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- **Financial constraints** to implementing new measures exist, despite technical expertise
- There are limited **human resources** in Public Employment Services
- More efforts are needed to improve **inter-institutional cooperation**, particularly for information sharing

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[310]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[311]
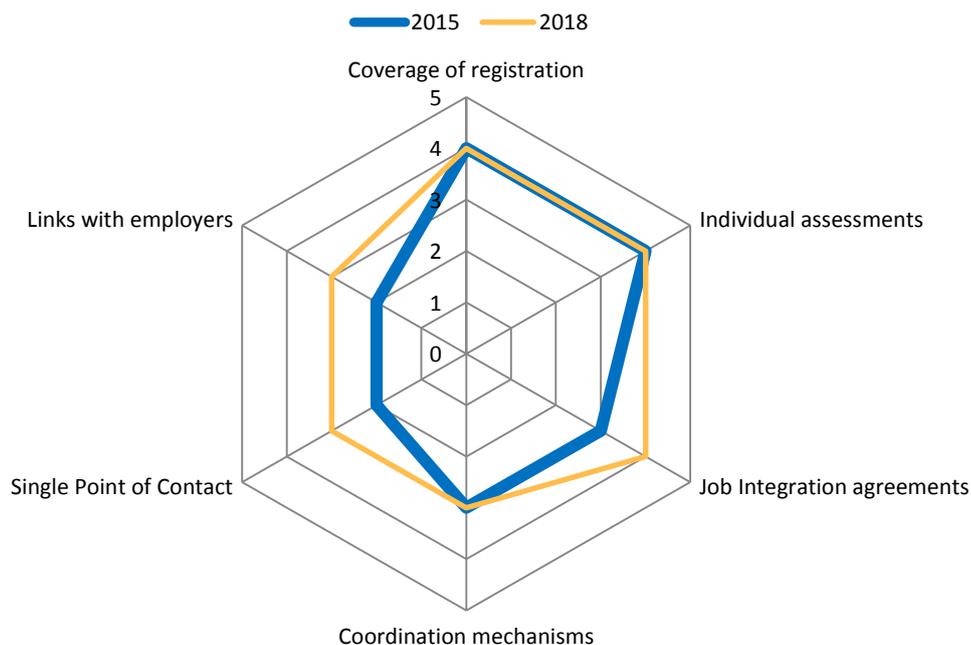
📍 Example of a measure in practice

The specific intervention strategy **'Follow-up-support in the search for employment'** was introduced in early 2017. It aims to provide better information and advice to the long-term unemployed on the measures available to get them back into work. By doing so, the strategy hopes to empower individuals to be more proactive in the pursuit of their own professional goals, improving also job search behaviour. Technical tools have been created to help the staff offering the support in the employment centres.

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[311]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - ROMANIA

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 20-64 years[312]
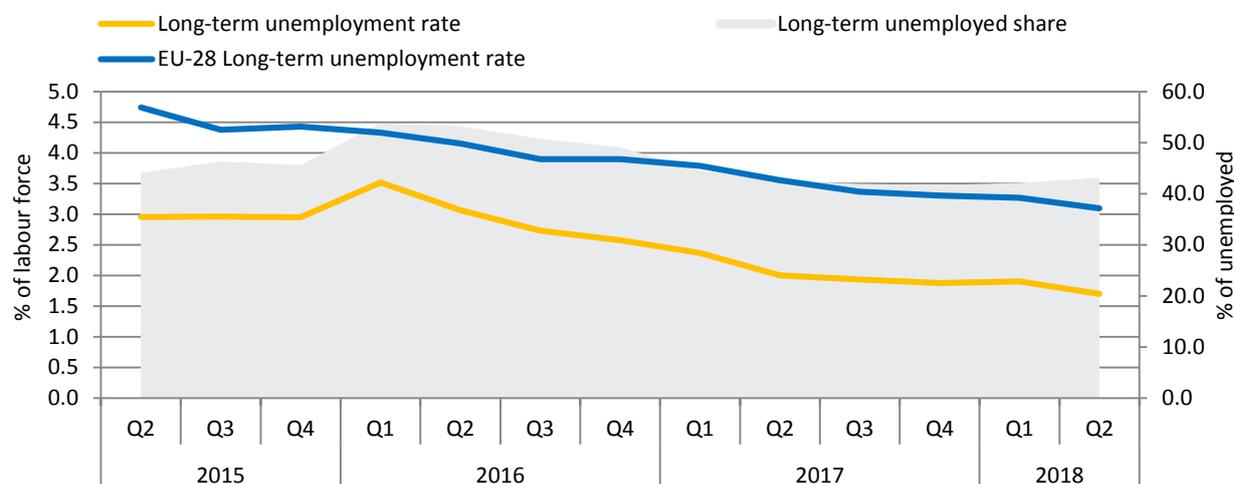
Source: Eurostat.Note: The age group here differs from the Recommendation (25-64) due to missing data.

In Romania between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 3% to 1.7%. Similarly, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased - from 44.1% to 43.1%.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- There has been progress in the quality of measures encouraging **registration,** through incentives, outreach actions and cross-registration
- More financial incentives for **employers** are in place
- A legal framework introducing **Job Integration Agreements** has been adopted

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- **Registration** of the unemployed is still very low and multichannel possibilities should be further explored
- Both the **single point of contact** and **Job Integration Agreements** need to become operational
- **Employer services** of the Public Employment Service should be improved, including through implementing the European Social Fund projects that are planned in this area.

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[312]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[313]
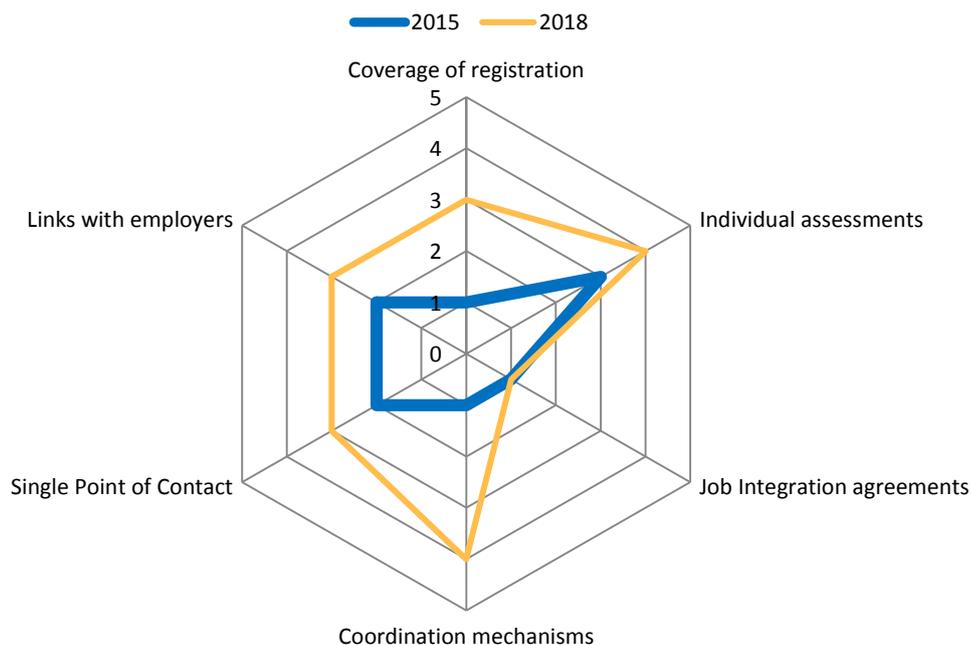

📍 Example of a measure in practice

Additional **incentives for employers** have been introduced to support sustainable integration of the long-term unemployed. For employers retaining a person for at least 18 months, the amounts related to activation measures have been increased (to about 490 Euros per month), for a period of 12 months.

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[313]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION – SWEDEN

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 25-64 years[314]
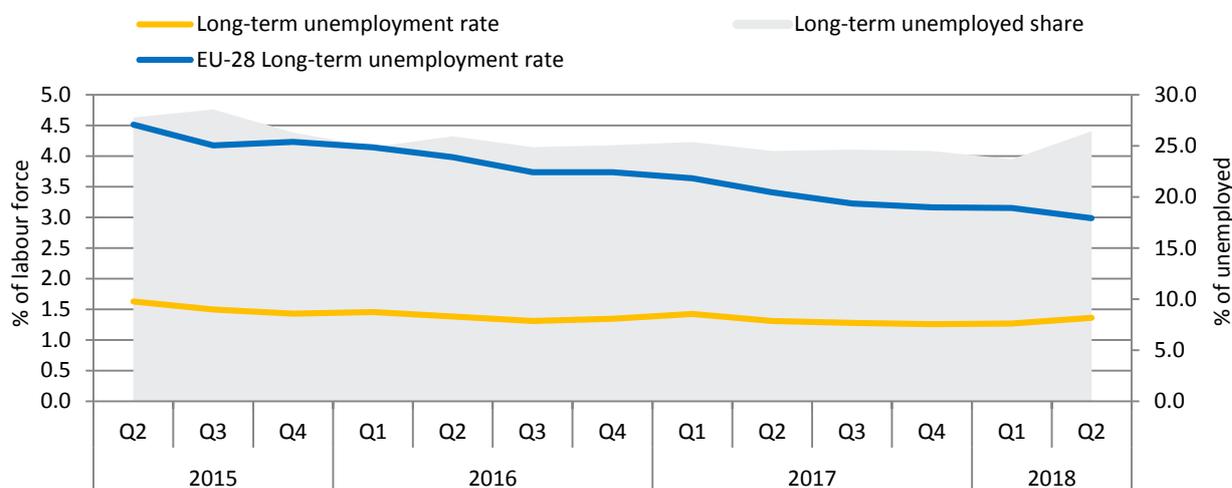
Source: Eurostat.

In Sweden between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 1.6% to 1.4%. Similarly, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased - from 27.8% to 26.5%.


KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- **Individual assessments** and personal guidance are in place. Assessments are continuously updated and include a wide range of activation measures
- There are stronger **links with employers** thanks to the adoption of an employers' strategy and the appointment of special employers' counsellors within Public Employment Services
- **Registration** has been simplified thanks to new digital channels

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- In depth re-assessment of needs when the person becomes long-term unemployed should be introduced
- There are barriers to **coordination** among institutions with regards to data sharing due to confidentiality of personal data
- Further efforts are needed to implement the **single point of contact** in rural areas

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[314]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[315]
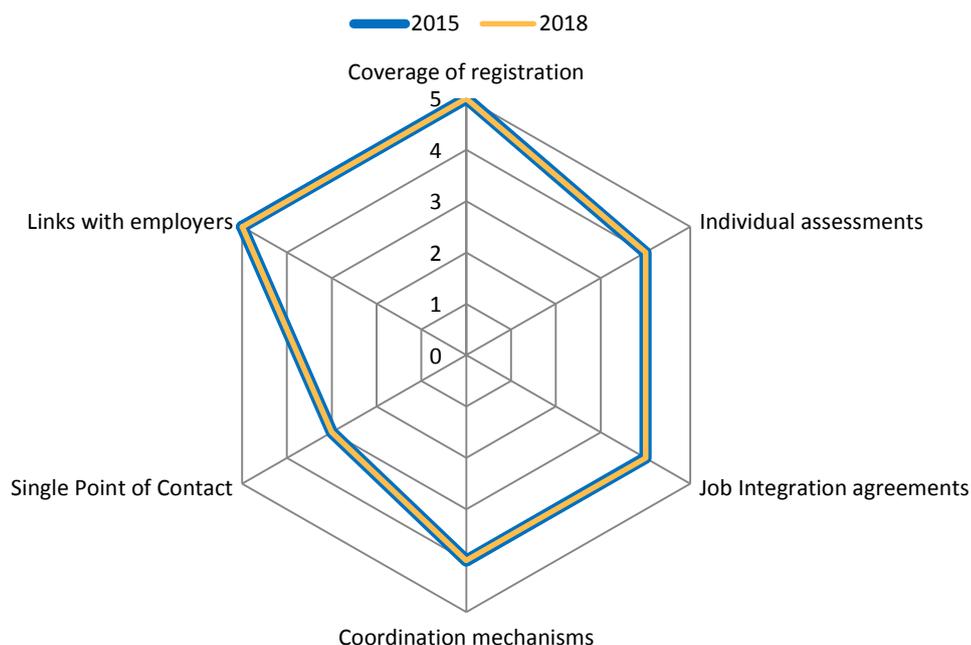

Example of a measure in practice

The Labour Market Administration of Stockholm developed a specific **Unit for Business Collaboration**, which coordinates the collaboration with networks of employers in sectors with job shortages. The collaboration is based on a commitment of employers to provide internship/apprenticeship/employment opportunities for students and unemployed. This is complemented with a 'Coaching and Mentoring in the Workplace' tool in order to support employers and involves social clauses.

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[315]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - SLOVENIA

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 25-64 years[316]
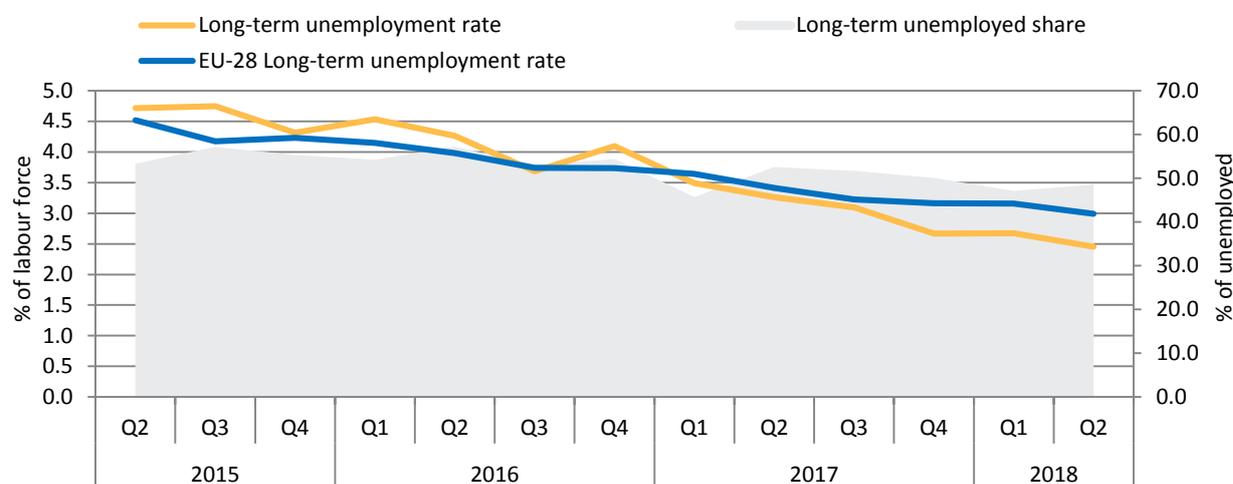
Source: Eurostat.

In Slovenia between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 4.7% to 2.5%. Furthermore, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased - from 53.3% to 48.5%.
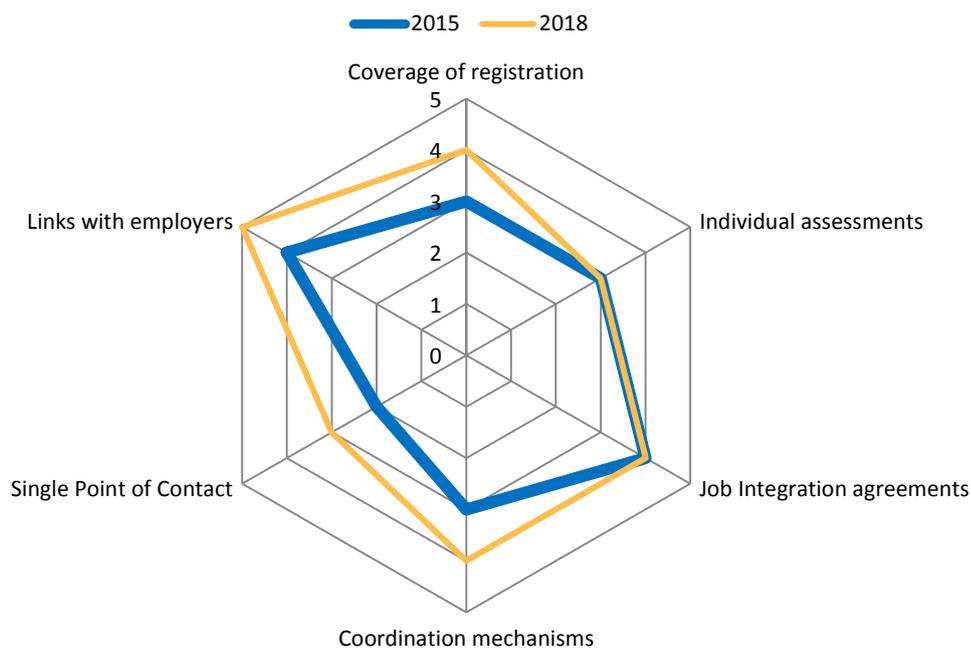

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Measures to increase **registration** have improved thanks to better allocation of resources and gradual sanctions upon deregistration of the unemployed
- **Individual assessments** have been strengthened through guidelines, action plans and retraining of staff
- There are stronger **links with employers** thanks to better promoting services available to them and the recently introduced central office for employers

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- High **caseloads** for the counsellors of Public Employment Services hamper the effectiveness of individual assessments and Job Integration Agreements
- **Coordination** between the Public Employment Service and Centres for Social Work could be improved, especially regarding data sharing
- There is room to expand the range of services offered in **Individual Action Plans** which are currently limited to employment services alone

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[316]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[317]

Radar chart comparing 2015 and 2018 scores across: Coverage of registration, Individual assessments, Job Integration agreements, Coordination mechanisms, Single Point of Contact, Links with employers. Scale 0 to 5.

## 📍 Example of a measure in practice

Since January 2017, all the long-term unemployed are to be given a **structured in-depth individual assessment** within 12-15 months of registration with Public Employment Services. A part of the assessment can be also provided by some contractors of the Public Employment Services, whilst a medical assessment is also carried out, if needed. Different types of counselling, such as rehabilitation, in-depth psychological counselling, or medical counselling is then be offered to the long-term unemployed, depending on their needs.

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[317]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - SLOVAKIA

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 25-64 years[318]
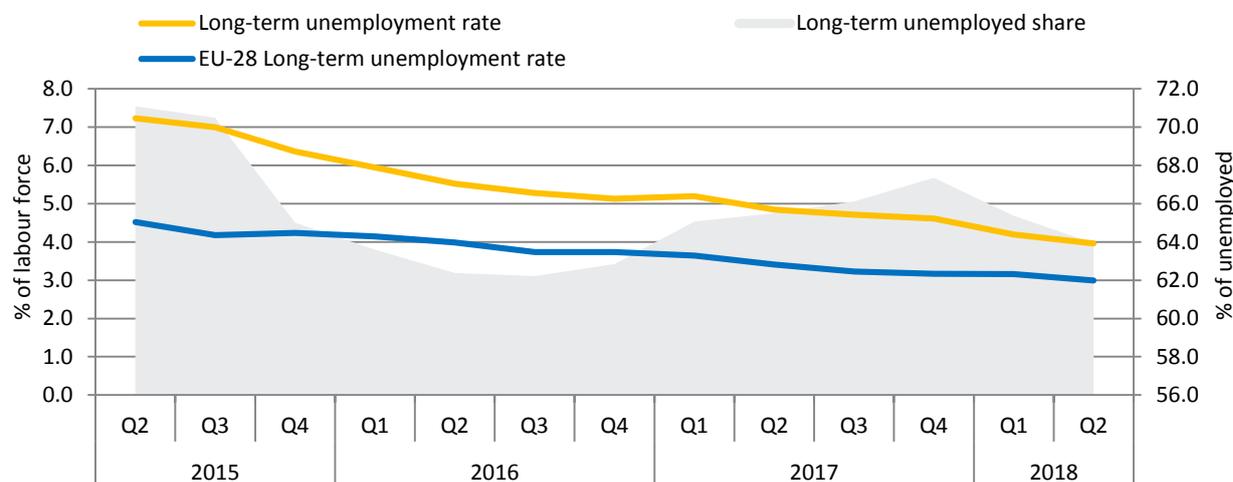
Source: Eurostat.

In Slovakia between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 7.2% to 4%. Similarly, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased - from 71.1% to 63.9%.
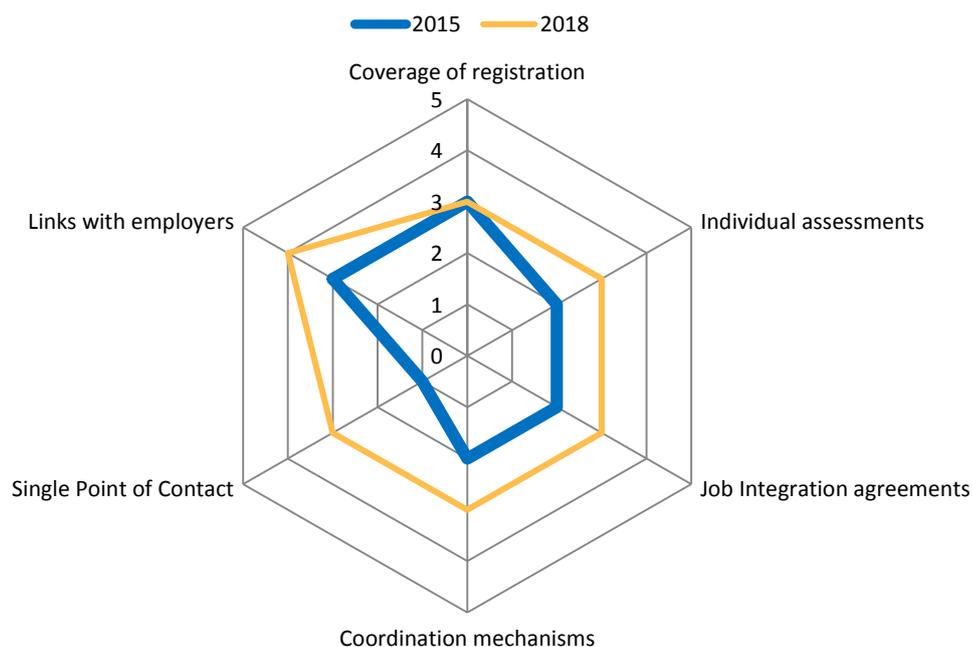

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- A comprehensive **Action Plan on enhancing the integration of the long-term unemployed** into the labour market, supported by the European Social Fund, is being implemented
- New services such as "Networking" and "Committees for Employment" have been introduced specifically to improve **employer involvement**
- A **single point of contact** has been established in all Public Employment Service offices

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- Further efforts are needed to improve **profiling** of long-term unemployed
- **Activation measures** for long-term unemployed need to be more tailor made
- **Outreach** activities to vulnerable groups need to be strengthened

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[318]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[319]


📍 Example of a measure in practice

Slovakia established a comprehensive Action Plan on Enhancing the Integration of Long-Term Unemployed on the Labour Market in 2016. The Action Plan aims to support around 270,000 jobseekers with a range of measures co-financed under the European Social Fund. One such project, **'With Increased Activity Towards Employment'** (WIATE), was launched by the Slovakian Public Employment Service in 2017. For four months, measures are provided to the long-term unemployed individual to identify the obstacles that prevent this individual from entering the labour market. The aim is to increase the internal motivation of the long-term unemployed to find a job by improving their self-confidence and identifying their strengths. The client also receives advisory services and job offers matching their profile. In the first year of the program, 21% of the participants found a job.

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[319]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

THE RECOMMENDATION ON INTEGRATION OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - UNITED KINGDOM

Long-term unemployment rates and share of long-term unemployed among unemployed, 25-64 years[320]
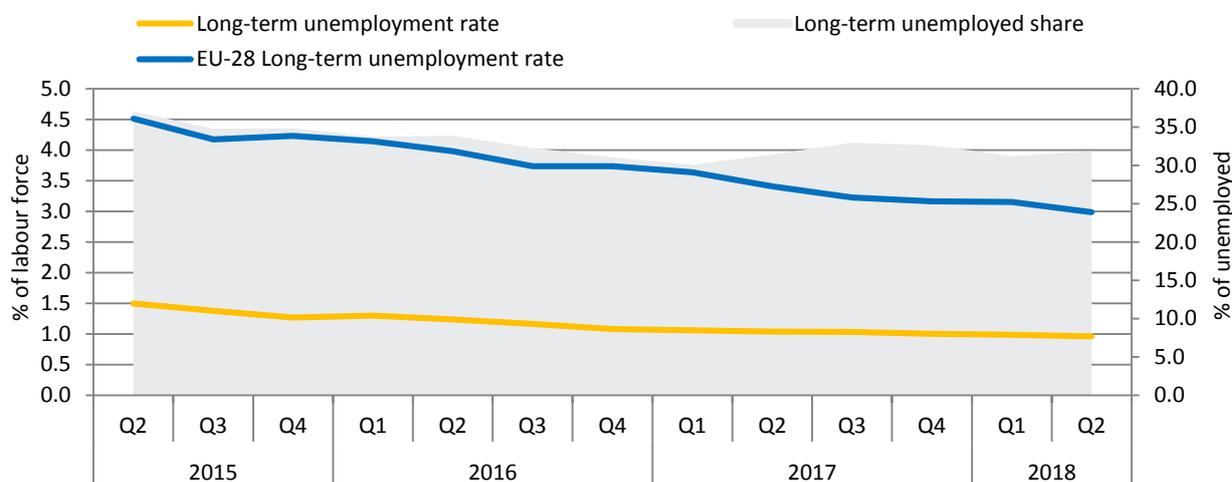
Source: Eurostat.

In the United Kingdom between 2015Q2 and 2018Q2, the long-term unemployment rate dropped from 1.5% to 1%. Similarly, the share of the unemployed that were long-term unemployed decreased - from 37% to 31.9%.
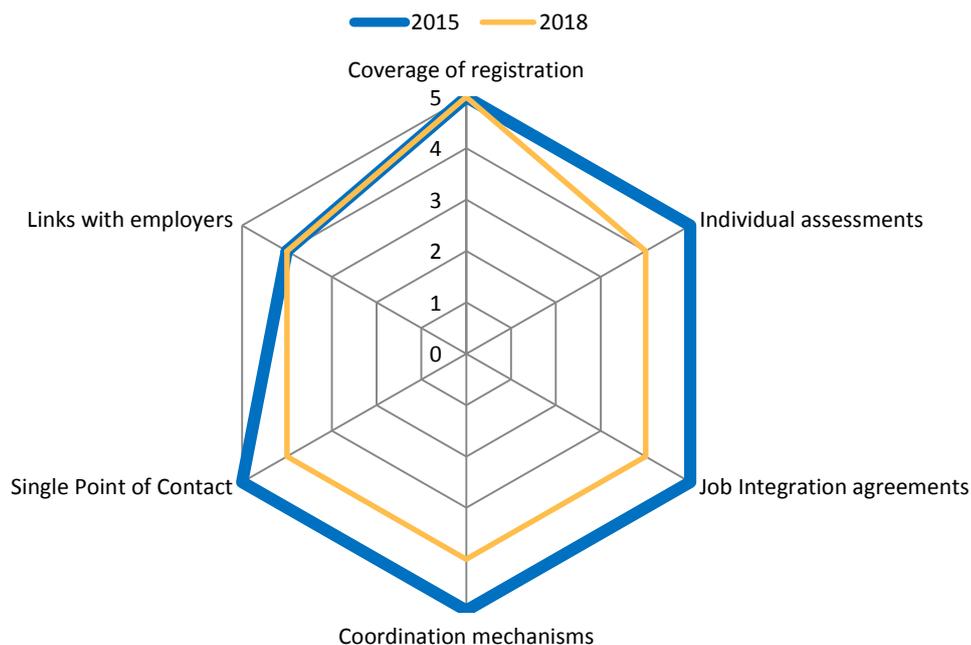

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- **Job Integration Agreements** offer a broad range of services to long-term unemployed
- A strong referral system through a **single point of contact** to social services, training and up-skilling programmes is in place
- Registration mechanism ensures automatic **registration** of the long-term unemployed

REMAINING CHALLENGES:

- Long-term unemployed that do not qualify for relevant minimum income scheme have little **incentive to register** with public employment services
- Less comprehensive **individual assessments** of long-term unemployed are now in place
- **Employer engagement** is positive but could be more tailored and specific

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[320]The long-term unemployment rate (LTU) is the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons in the labour market. Active persons are those who are either employed or unemployed.

Improvement in the quality of measures from 2015 to 2018[321]

Coverage of registration, Individual assessments, Job Integration agreements, Coordination mechanisms, Single Point of Contact, Links with employers

2015 2018

📍 Example of a measure in practice

The **Housing and Employment Learning Project** was set up in 2016 in Westminster, London. It aims to function as a multi-disciplinary One Stop Shop integrating housing and employment support via a co-located team of Personal Care Handlers, social workers, health trainers, benefit specialists and a virtual network of other support services. The project targets 500 clients over two years with the end goal to provide them with an improved housing status, education and employment outcomes. The project was co-funded by the Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EasI).

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[321]Between first half of 2015 and 2018. Scores assessed as follows: 1 = low (no) implementation; 2 = Low-medium implementation; 3 = medium implementation; 4 = Medium-high implementation: 5 = High implementation. Source: Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

ANNEX 6: CASE STUDIES