

Research project: The transition from unemployment to work for older workers.

Research question

Much is known about the transition from unemployment to employment for younger or middle aged workers (Gangl, 2006). However, only few studies have done so with the explicit focus on older workers (Elder & Pavalko, 1993). Older workers are often regarded as too unproductive or not flexible enough (Dalen, Henkens & Schippers, 2009) and thus substituted by younger workers. Thus, the assumption that the transition out of unemployment is especially problematic for this group of workers is not unreasonable. We are therefore interested in which theoretical approaches can be used to make assumptions about the labor market transition for older workers. This means, we can for example focus on unemployment length or earnings after re-employment. Furthermore, we will compare the research findings to prior research on younger workers. This way, there are two main contributions of this research. First, it assesses what is known from prior research about the transition from unemployment to employment for older workers. Also it is interesting to provide an overview of factors that can theoretically be expected to relate to the unemployment length of older employees. Second, we test the impact of the identified factors on e.g. unemployment length and earnings empirically with a large-scale longitudinal survey (in a country-comparing perspective).

Data and Method

This project uses an existing data source to answer the research question. SHARE (Study of Health, Ageing and Retirement) is a longitudinal dataset including multiple European countries. This provides the possibility of studying real transitions between phases in the labor market and to compare the labor market transition from unemployment to employment between countries. The sample of SHARE relies on respondents above the age of 50.

Project size

1 student can sign in for this project. Working language of the project can be either English or Dutch.

Literature

- Dalen, H.P. van, Henkens, K., & Schippers, J. (2009). Dealing with older workers in Europe? A comparative survey of employers' attitudes and actions. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 19(1), 47-60.
- Elder, G.H., Jr., & Pavalko, E.K. (1993). Work careers in men's later years: transitions, trajectories, and historical change. *Journal of Gerontology*, 48, 180-191.
- Gangl, M. (2006). Scar effects of unemployment: an assessment of institutional complementarities. *American Sociological Review*, 71(6), 986-1013.

Information on SHARE

http://www.share-project.org/t3/share/uploads/tx_sharepublications/BuchSHAREganz250808.pdf
<http://www.share-project.org/>

More information

Maria Fleischmann (fleischmann@fsw.eur.nl)

Ferry Koster (koster@fsw.eur.nl)