

ORIGINAL SCIENTIFIC PAPER

ANALYSIS OF THE INFLUENCE OF THE UNEMPLOYMENT DURATION ON THE WORKERS MOTIVATION TO SEARCH FOR A NEW JOB

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ABSTRACT

In this paper the authors are comprehensively researching the impact of the unemployment duration on the workers motivation to look for a new job in Croatia, France, Greece, Italy and Spain in the period from 2008 to 2018. The purpose and ultimate aim of the paper is to investigate the connection between the nominal variables unemployment duration and the workers motivation to look for a new job and, based on this, to form conclusions about the importance and influence of the mentioned category on the dynamics and inclusiveness of the labour market. The empirical part of the research is based on the EU LFS official data set obtained as part of the project RPP 35/2020-LFS approved by the European Commission and Eurostat. The paper analysed a sample of 827,654 respondents. In the research part of the work, a contingency table was determined for each observed EU country, and the χ^2 -test was applied to examine the connection between two nominal variables. Based on an extensive analysis of data from selected EU member states, results were obtained that indicate the fact that the motivation of workers to look for a new job is the highest in the first month after the onset of unemployment, and it is during this period that different methods for finding a job are used the most.

Keywords: Unemployment duration, motivation for new employment; labour market; EU countries

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INTRODUCTION

The paper analyzes the problem in the form of correlation between the unemployment duration on the workers motivation to look for a new job in selected European Union countries and draws conclusions individually for each country. The countries were selected based on their geopolitical position and similarities in the mentality and work habits of the population, and an additional condition was EU membership.

By using the χ^2 -test to examine the connection between two nominal variables, the knowledge about complex interactions and dynamics of the labour market was deepened.

In order to better understand the issues investigated in the paper, it is necessary to review the most important results of previously conducted studies.

The declaration of job search alone is not enough to classify a person as unemployed. Looking for a job means taking certain steps in a precisely defined past time in order to find paid employment or self-employment. The term job search is independent of the duration and type of employment sought. It includes self-employment, part-time employment, occasional, temporary and seasonal work and, in general, refers to any type of work that is considered an economic activity according to international standards. With this formulation of this criterion, an effort was made to achieve objectivity when measuring unemployment [1].

Through unemployment benefits, activation policies and the tax wedge, the authors Lastauskasov and Stakenasbov point out that structural reforms dissipate in open economies [2].

The fact that labour market flexibilization does not always come with a relevant improvement in overall employment rates and economic growth is not new [3] [4] [5]. Differences in regional unemployment rates depend on the degree of regional flexibility of the labour market [6].

Booth, Francesconi and Franka analyse the relevance of temporary jobs and their accumulation on the labor market (they define the categories as stepping stones and/or dead ends) [7]. Likewise, if viewed from the aspect of temporary jobs, employment protection and performance on the labour market, can be noticed in certain cases that the simultaneous use of strong job protection and active employment policy measures in the form of temporary jobs seems contradictory, as the former aims to limit job closures, while the latter reinforces them [8]. Many examples demonstrate that there is greater risks of unemployment after the end of the contract and entry into the framework of precarious employment as the lack of fixed-term work [9]. The authors Bande and Karanassou analyze the flexibility of the labor market and the regional dynamics of the unemployment rate. They state that the degree of labor market flexibility differs between regions with high and low unemployment [10]. Another study analyses the cost of flexible labour by comparing wage penalties for fixed-term contracts in Germany and Spain using quantile regression. The authors point out that individuals with a fixed-term employment contract earn less than equivalent workers with an indefinite-term contract, in both countries [11]. Similar study analyses whether temporarily employed workers in Europe are discriminated. Their results point to the fact that in countries where permanent employment is better protected, there is greater discrimination against temporary workers [12].

LITERATURE REVIEW

From an economic point of view, unemployment is a loss for production and a loss of quality workers who are forced to look for work outside their home country. Unemployment causes a waste of resources which brings a series of difficulties for the entire economy. It should be noted that the unemployment rate among young people is higher than the unemployment rate of other age groups. The latest Eurostat survey on youth unemployment in the European Union has revealed some worrying trends. Spain leads the way with the highest rate of 28.5 percent, while Germany stands out as an exception with a record low youth unemployment rate of 5.8 percent. After Spain, Greece (26.7 percent) and Italy (22.7 percent) have the highest youth unemployment rate in the observed countries. Croatia is still above average with a double-digit youth unemployment rate of 19.0 percent, as is France with 17.2 percent [13].

The duration of unemployment is a characteristic that shows how much time an unemployed person spent in the records of the Employment Service from the moment of his entry into the records until the reporting date or until the date of exit from the records. Research shows that additional education and subsequent training of workers who have lost their jobs is associated with a reduction in the duration of unemployment. Such persons, who remained without a job and subsequently received additional training or education in a specific field, were unemployed for an average of three months less [14]. There are various methods to find a job. One of the most important is certainly through the Public Employment Service, which is a key mechanism in the process of finding a new job. It plays an important role in the transition from unemployment to employment in new jobs through stimulating forms of support [15]. Likewise, in one study, it was proven that the effects of the support program of the Public Employment Service have a greater impact on the reduction of repeated job losses than on the duration of unemployment [16].

Regarding support, one study proved that when the level of unemployment benefits decreases, the motivation to find employment increases [17]. As well, as the time interval during which unemployment benefits are accrued increases, the motivation to re-employ decreases [18]. Previously stated is linked to a study in which it was empirically proven that higher benefits result in less motivation to seek new employment [19] [20]. In addition to the previously mentioned, a new study has proven that reducing the benefit period encourages benefit recipients to find and accept new jobs more quickly, even though these jobs in most cases are less paid than their original jobs before unemployment [21].

Studies also show that employers do not look favourably on longer periods of unemployment and the longer the period of unemployment, the less likely the unemployed will receive an invitation to an interview [22].

Empirical analysis and sublimated results in one study suggest that the duration of unemployment plays a key role in relation to the attitudes of unemployed persons about employment [23]. Such results were presented in another study in which the authors summarize the conclusions in the following statement: the longer the period of unemployment, the more the time unit in which people look for employment decreases [24]. Moreover, the higher the level of motivation, the more the actors are engaged in finding a job, which increases the finding of the same [23]. Regarding motivation, it has been proven that the long-term unemployed will be less likely to be re-employed because a longer period of unemployment is perceived as the cause of a lack of motivation [25] [26].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The paper will analyse data on persons older than 15 and younger than 64 living in households in Croatia, France, Greece, Italy and Spain in the period from 2008 to 2018 based on the EU LFS official data set from the RPP 35 project /2020-LFS¹¹. In this chapter, the variables used in the paper and the methodology of their calculation are defined, and the sample of the research is presented.

In the context of the research assumption, the motivation for looking for a new job is defined by the following formula;

$$M_{TNP} = \frac{\sum_{i=0}^n M_n}{V_{TN}}$$

Source: author's elaboration based on [27]

In the formula, the term M_{TNP} indicates the motivation for looking for a new job. The expression $\sum_{i=0}^n M_n$ represents the total number of methods used to find a job. The expression V_{TN} indicates the duration of unemployment. The formula was derived and adapted to work variables based on research on motivation and the search for new employment. In one of the studies, the time perspective of the job search is highlighted as a key factor, and it is concluded that postponing the job search is also negatively related to the status of re-employment [27].

¹¹ The data presented in this paper are a segment of the empirical part of the author's doctoral dissertation, in which the author analysed the connection between the nominal variables' unemployment duration and the workers motivation to look for a new job.

Table 1 shows the codification and description of the variables used in the analysis of the research assumption.

Table 1. Codification and description of variables

Variable	Variable description
M_{TNP 1}	person contacted the Public Employment Service
M_{TNP 2}	person contacted a private employment agency
M_{TNP 3}	person contacted the employer directly
M_{TNP 4}	person asked friends, relatives, trade union,
M_{TNP 5}	person posted an ad or responded to a job ad
M_{TNP 6}	person studied advertisements in newspapers or magazines
M_{TNP 7}	person was looking for land, premises or equipment for work
M_{TNP 8}	person requested permits, licenses, financial resources for work
V_{TN 1}	unemployment duration up to 1 month
V_{TN 2}	unemployment duration from 1 to 2 months
V_{TN 3}	unemployment duration of 3 to 5 months
χ^2	χ^2 test value
p	statistical significance level

Source: author's elaboration

In the research hypothesis, contingency tables will be determined and the χ^2 -test will be applied to examine the connection between two nominal variables.

The following table shows the total number of respondents in the sample according to classes, i.e. age groups and EU countries (Croatia, France, Greece, Italy and Spain) in the period from 2008 to 2018.

Table 2. Total number of respondents in the sample according to classes, ie. age groups and EU countries

Classes	15 – 24 years	25 – 54 years	55 – 64 years	Total
Country				
Croatia	5,698	14,397	2,355	22,450
France	54,106	150,527	23,863	228,496
Greece	31,277	163,993	20,381	215,651
Italy	53,311	181,234	19,977	254,522
Spain	19,226	75,019	12,290	106,535
Σ	163,618	585,170	78,866	827,654

Source: author's elaboration based on data from the RPP 35/2020-LFS project

According to table 2, it is evident that in the sample there is the largest representation of people who are in the age group from 25 to 54 years, because this group also has the largest number of working population. In the analysed sample, observing the total number of respondents in all three categories, there are 827,654 respondents in the period from 2008 to 2018.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The following tables will analyse the impact of the unemployment duration on the workers motivation to look for a new job in Croatia, France, Greece, Italy and Spain in the period from 2008 to 2018.

During the statistical analysis, contingency tables will be determined and the χ^2 -test will be applied to examine the connection between two nominal variables..

In the statistical processing of the research assumption for each EU country, a statistically significant connection will be identified between the nominal variables of *unemployment duration* and *workers motivation to look for a new job*.

In the contingency table 3, there are the frequencies of respondents depending on the time period in which they are looking for a job and the methods used to find a new job for Croatia. In the context of the research assumption, using the χ^2 -test, the relationship between the nominal variables of *unemployment duration* and *workers motivation to look for a new job* was examined [28].

Table 3. Results of the χ^2 -test for the relationship between the nominal variables of unemployment duration and workers motivation to look for a new job for Croatia

	M _{TNP} 1	M _{TNP} 2	M _{TNP} 3	M _{TNP} 4	M _{TNP} 5	M _{TNP} 6	M _{TNP} 7	M _{TNP} 8
V _{TN} 1	288	710	1175	1109	856	618	339	106
V _{TN} 2	131	377	658	643	561	372	179	83
V _{TN} 3	784	1672	2457	2236	1938	1467	972	328
$\chi^2 = 89.26; p < 0,01$								

Source: author's elaboration

It is evident from the table that the connection between the nominal variables of *unemployment duration* and *workers motivation to look for a new job* in the sample of respondents from Croatia is statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) and the research assumption for Croatia is confirmed.

In contingency table 4, there are the frequencies of respondents depending on the time period in which they are looking for a job and the methods used to find a new job for France. In the context of the research assumption, using the χ^2 -test, the relationship between the nominal variables of *unemployment duration* and *workers motivation to look for a new job* was examined [28].

Table 4. Results of the χ^2 -test for the relationship between the nominal variables of unemployment duration and workers motivation to look for a new job for France

	M _{TNP} 1	M _{TNP} 2	M _{TNP} 3	M _{TNP} 4	M _{TNP} 5	M _{TNP} 6	M _{TNP} 7	M _{TNP} 8
V _{TN} 1	4390	9505	14445	17869	14983	8610	1047	40
V _{TN} 2	2197	4971	7445	9124	7808	4569	520	22
V _{TN} 3	9588	17453	21812	21174	15235	7686	811	47
$\chi^2 = 3813.76; p < 0,01$								

Source: author's elaboration

It is evident from the table that the association between the nominal variables of *unemployment duration* and *the workers motivation to look for a new job* in the sample of respondents from France is statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) and the research assumption for France is confirmed.

In the contingency table 5, there are the frequencies of respondents depending on the time period in which they are looking for a job and the methods used to find a new job for Greece. In the context of the research assumption, using the χ^2 -test, the relationship between the nominal variables of *unemployment duration* and *workers motivation to look for a new job* was examined [28].

Table 5. Results of the χ^2 -test for the relationship between the nominal variables of unemployment duration and workers motivation to look for a new job for Greece

	M _{TNP} 1	M _{TNP} 2	M _{TNP} 3	M _{TNP} 4	M _{TNP} 5	M _{TNP} 6	M _{TNP} 7	M _{TNP} 8
V _{TN} 1	1614	5359	8443	10574	10394	6132	1598	597
V _{TN} 2	589	2188	4756	6296	6811	3898	1203	460
V _{TN} 3	2935	10472	23281	29077	33315	19433	4895	2219
$\chi^2 = 1023.78; p < 0,01$								

Source: author's elaboration

It is evident from the table that the connection between the nominal variables of *unemployment duration* and *the workers motivation to look for a new job* on the sample of respondents from Greece is statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) and the research assumption for Greece is confirmed.

In the contingency table 6, there are the frequencies of respondents depending on the time period in which they are looking for a job and the methods used to find a new job for Italy. In the context of the research assumption, using the χ^2 -test, the relationship between the nominal variables of *unemployment duration and workers motivation to look for a new job* was examined [28].

Table 6. Results of the χ^2 -test for the relationship between the nominal variables of unemployment duration and workers motivation to look for a new job for Italy

	M _{TNP} 1	M _{TNP} 2	M _{TNP} 3	M _{TNP} 4	M _{TNP} 5	M _{TNP} 6	M _{TNP} 7	M _{TNP} 8
V _{TN} 1	6096	9807	12265	13110	11340	8415	2504	907
V _{TN} 2	2849	4634	6111	6668	5727	4278	1267	475
V _{TN} 3	16587	22615	26677	26153	20321	13306	3471	1295
$\chi^2 = 1790.40$; $p < 0,01$								

Source: author's elaboration

It is evident from the table that the association between the nominal variables of *unemployment duration and the workers motivation to look for a new job* in the sample of respondents from Italy is statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) and the research assumption for Italy is confirmed.

In the contingency table 7, there are the frequencies of respondents depending on the time period in which they are looking for a job and the methods used to find a new job for Spain. In the context of the research assumption, using the χ^2 -test, the relationship between the nominal variables of *unemployment duration and workers motivation to look for a new job* was examined [28].

Table 7. Results of the χ^2 -test for the relationship between the nominal variables of unemployment duration and workers motivation to look for a new job for Spain

	M _{TNP} 1	M _{TNP} 2	M _{TNP} 3	M _{TNP} 4	M _{TNP} 5	M _{TNP} 6	M _{TNP} 7	M _{TNP} 8
V _{TN} 1	2133	4806	6268	7058	6459	5100	1728	535
V _{TN} 2	884	2027	3031	3365	3150	2416	853	266
V _{TN} 3	2753	6201	8110	9050	7726	5636	1609	489
$\chi^2 = 240.39$; $p < 0,01$								

Source: author's elaboration

It is evident from the table that the association between the nominal variables of *unemployment duration and the workers motivation to look for a new job* in the sample of respondents from Spain is statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) and the research assumption for Spain is confirmed.

DISCUSSION

The paper analysed the correlation between the variables of unemployment duration and the worker's motivation to look for a new job, where the connection between the nominal variables of unemployment duration and the worker's motivation to look for a new job was confirmed, and it is statistically significant, thus confirming the research hypothesis. Through the analysis of the results in the empirical part of the work, it can be concluded that in the first month from the date of unemployment, the highest level of motivation of workers to look for a new job is accumulated, and in that period of time, the following methods for finding a job are used the most; going to tests and/or interviews, studying advertisements in newspapers or magazines and publication of an advertisement or response to a job advertisement.

Based on the results of the relevant studies that will be presented below, the implications of the results based on the set research assumption will be argued and highlighted.

There are significant differences in the length of the job search according to age and the unemployment rate [29]. Likewise, longer periods of unemployment reduce the prospects for re-employment because workers lose knowledge, motivation and confidence [22] [30] [31]. Equally, employers perceive long periods of unemployment as a negative signal of workers' abilities. The aforementioned was confirmed by the research hypothesis, which states that the time period of unemployment is correlated with the age structure of workers and their motivation to look for a new job. The results in the empirical part of the paper confirm the research [22] [30] [31] which points out

that the motivation to look for a new job is the highest in the first month after the onset of unemployment and then slightly decreases, but again from the third by the fifth month it increases, but not to the level it was in the first month.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH LINES

The research showed that the time period of unemployment is correlated with the workers motivation to look for a new job in all countries, and the results of the research indicate the fact that the workers motivation to look for a new job is the highest in the first month after the onset of unemployment, and in that period they mostly use different methods to find a job. After one month, the motivation to find a job decreases slightly, but it increases again from the third to the fifth month, but not to the level it was in the first month.

Recommendations for future research in this aspect refer to identifying the level of motivation in the period of time after six months from the onset of unemployment and analyzing the effect of other methods for finding a job, such as contacting the employer directly, contacting private employment agencies and the public employment office, and contacting friends, relatives and/or union. It would be interesting to find out what the motivation is for entering into an entrepreneurial venture, because there are certainly methods for finding work and looking for land, space or equipment for work, and seeking permits, licenses and financial resources for work. In some countries, unfortunately, entering into an entrepreneurial venture is characterized to a greater extent by ventures out of necessity, which in the long run proves to be wrong, and leads to a low contribution to the creation of new value and new employment. Government policies should be more effective in the aspect of raising awareness that the entrepreneurial environment is a limiting factor in the development of entrepreneurship and that unemployed people should be encouraged to acquire additional competencies that will enable them to become self-employed. A higher level of job security would certainly be achieved through better training programs that increase the employability of job seekers. The above is followed by the fact that in certain labour markets, the necessary skills needed to balance the labour market should be determined, which would include relevant, mutually consistent, economic and social law, social partners and important parts of civil society.

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