

localise



LOCALISE
The Local Governance of Social Cohesion, WP6

The Individualisation of Interventions

Sweden Country Analysis

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1.1 Introduction

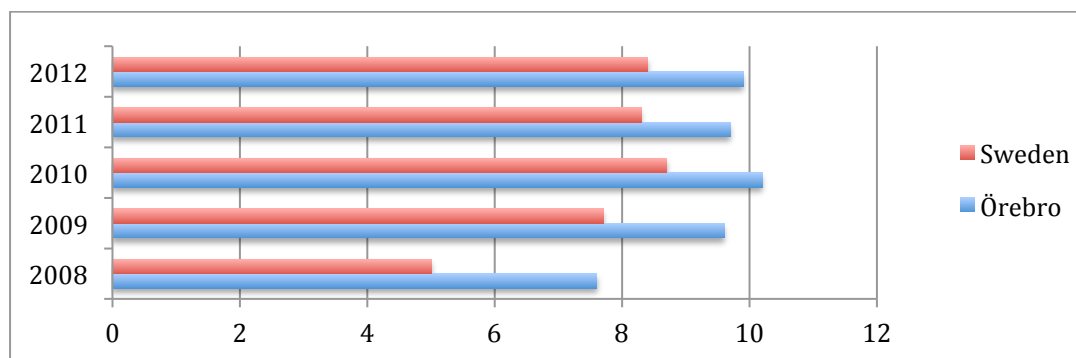
Individualisation is a powerful discourse in contemporary labour markets. Against this background, the aim of this report is to assess the extent to which interventions directed at long-term unemployed are actually individualised and tailored to their needs or interests. We are also interested in other ways that individualisation may play out in the local practices in relation to long-term unemployed, such as a possible individualisation of risk and responsibility. Thus, aspects of individualisation versus standardisation of services for long term unemployed are focused, as well as issues related to responsabilisation and individual agency. Following the theory paper, three hypotheses are to be explored. The *first hypothesis* is that the organizational practices/governance systems applied set limits for the actual scope for individualised interventions. The *second hypothesis* is that inter-organizational (inter-agency) boundaries (and interests) also limit the actual scope for individualised interventions. The *third hypothesis* is that interventions individualise responsibilities for employment, while they lead to the standardisation of new collective categories of job-seekers.

Örebro was selected as the most innovative of the three cases studied in WP 4. Örebro municipality is the administrative centre in the region of Örebro, and has 138 000 inhabitants and is situated in the inland of Sweden, 200 kilometres west of Stockholm. In Örebro, there are well established collaborative structures between local PES office, SSIA and municipality. Meetings at management level, intermediate level and case worker level are arranged regularly, and there are many attempts to align services offered by the organisations in the field of unemployment services. In addition to this, the municipality has developed methods to improve the chances for long term unemployed to enter the labour market; one example of this is social aspects included in procurement procedures. Also in relation to the third sector and private sector, there have been innovative measures where the municipality has shown a strong commitment to involve both third sector and private sector actors in the efforts to improve transition from unemployment to employment.

1.2 Methodology

In Örebro municipality the unemployment level was slightly higher than the national average over the last five years.

Diagram 1. Open unemployment in Örebro municipality and Sweden 2008-2012



Source: Public Employment Service (PES)

Long term unemployed is, according to national definition used by the Public employment services, a person who has been registered as unemployed for a period exceeding six months (for unemployed below the age of 25 three months) and *not taking part in an activation program* during this period. However, as will be discussed in the report, a large proportion of all who register as unemployed are referred to some kind of activation, removing them from the official PES statistics as openly unemployed. In December 2013, over 3 500 individuals were categorised as open unemployed. In addition to this, over 3 200 individuals were activated in one of the programs offered by PES. One fifth of all who were registered as unemployed in Örebro municipality, had been unemployed more than 24 months. About 80 per cent of those who took part in activation/labour market programs offered by PES were enrolled in either Job and development guarantee, or the Youth and job guarantee. Only three per cent took part in training (*arbetsmarknadsutbildning*) (www.mstatkommun.arbetsformedlingen.se).

Data collection:

From September to December 2013, twelve interviews with case workers and eight with long term unemployed were carried out. Interviews with case workers lasted between one and two hours (average 1.5-2 hours); all were recorded and transcribed.¹ Access was given by the local management of the SSIA, the PES and the municipality.²

Table 1. Interviews with case workers

	Organisation	Gender	Education	Work tasks	Experience of case work (in years)
1	PES	F	Occupational therapists	Work rehabilitation	10 – 20
2	PES	M	Secondary school	Work rehabilitation	> 20
3	PES	F	MA in social sciences	Work rehabilitation and Direct service	10 – 20
4	PES	M	Secondary school	Direct service	10 – 20
5	PES	F	Vocational and career counsellor	Job and development guarantee	< 10
6	PES	F	Social worker	Social investigation (consultancy)	> 20
7	Municipality	F	Social worker	Social assistance	> 20
8	Municipality	F	Social worker	Social assistance	> 20
9	Municipality	F	Social worker	Social assistance	10 – 20
10	Municipality	F	Vocational and career counsellor	Investigation (consultancy)	10 – 20
11	SSIA	F	Secondary school	Health insurance and coordination	> 20 years
12	SSIA	F	MA in European studies	Health insurance and coordination	< 5

The case workers were highly experienced and knowledgeable about routines of the organisations and confident in relation to their work. This was an advantage as many of the questions were related to every day routines, control and categorisation procedures. However, the informants highlighted that due to high turnover of staff, many unemployed would in fact not meet experienced case workers. Therefore, it is important to note that the sample does not necessarily give a representative picture of the work performed by case workers in general in each organisation. The informants' high knowledge of support systems available, experience with direct work with clients with complex life situation and personal network with other professionals most likely facilitates a holistic approach in client work. Another, slightly different, consideration of the biased selection is the informants' identification with the employing organisation. The case workers could be seen as the "faithful servant", selected by

¹ We are grateful to Anja Johansson who transcribed all of the interviews for WP 6 and 7.

² The access was facilitated by previously established contacts (during WP 4 and 5).

the management to give an idealised picture of the organisation. However, our perception is that the case workers took an independent role, highlighting discrepancies between policy and practice, and discussed barriers to an individualised approach in the work with clients. Confidentiality was granted, which affected the willingness to discuss openly for some of the informants. The interviews took place in the office of the case workers and in the meeting rooms where case workers meet clients. Two of the informants have a slightly different role than a regular case worker, and were used as (internal) consultants.

Eight long term unemployed were interviewed. Interviews lasted between one and one and a half hour, all but one were recorded and transcribed.³ Two programs for long term unemployed were selected, one focusing job coaching and cv-writing skills and one on work rehabilitation. The Coordination union ran the rehabilitation project and a local housing company ran the project focusing CV-writing and job search. Resources from the PES and the municipality funded both projects. It remains an open question to what extent the participants can be seen as representative for the over all population of long term unemployed in Örebro. However, it is clear that the content of the CV-writing program is very much in line with other similar activation programs, and the rehabilitation projects stands out as a program for more vulnerable individuals with a need for work rehabilitation and individualised support. Most informants were approached directly by the interviewer, during extended study visits.⁴ One interview was organised by the project manager. All interviews were carried out on the premises of the projects. It should be noted, that most interviews were challenging and emotional; most of the informants had a very complicated life situation and problems that seriously affected their general well being.

³ One of the informants did not want to be recorded, and the interview was written down during the interview (interviewer taking notes directly in a worddocument during the interview).

⁴ Access was facilitated by excellent cooperation of the project management.

Table 2: Long term unemployed

IP	Gender	Age	Referring organisation	Time in unemployment (time since last employment)	Education and previous work experience	Family situation
1	F	60-64	PES (and SA)	> 10 years	Secondary school, administrative work.	Single (adult child)
2	M	40-49	PES	< 5 years	Low qualified jobs in transport sector.	Single (no children)
3	F	50-59	PES	< 5 years	Occasional work in care sector and in family business.	Single - (five children, four adult)
4	M	50-59	PES	< 5 years	Various work experience from mainly unqualified work.	Married, 2 children.
5	F	25-29	PES	< 5 years	Work experience mainly through activation programs.	Single, no children.
6	F	30-39	PES	> 10 years	Some experience from domestic work.	Single, two children (no custody).
7	F	30-39	PES	< 5 years	Some internships related to university degree in administration.	Married, two children.
8	F	40-49	SSIA	< 5 years	Work in elderly care.	Married, two children.

Unemployment spells varied between 1 and 20 years. Four of the informants had a history of migration. Informants were between 25 and 62 years old, and a majority of those interviewed were female. Woman and men did not interact to a greater extent in the daily activities, and the "female spaces" was more easily accessible for me as a woman, which explains the sample. The long term unemployed received financial compensation from the SSIA, activation support. However, they all had a financially constrained situation and to manage costs for living, they relied heavily on economic support from spouses, children and/or parents. Informants, who lacked this kind of family and network support, instead received means tested social assistance.

1.3 Organisational and governance context

The public employment service (PES) has the overall responsibility for activation of long term unemployed. In order to qualify for financial compensation (unemployment insurance, activity support and social assistance) during unemployment a registration at the local PES office is required. Compliance with the action plan developed by the PES case workers is a condition for receiving the compensations.

The municipality is responsible for the means tested social assistance, and organises activation for unemployed clients. The activation is considered a complement (and not a substitute) to the activation programs offered by PES, and the Social service act stipulates for the case worker to consult PES before referring to a municipal activation program. There are a number of activation programs offered; some are run as a regular activity within the municipal organisation, others are run as projects with funding from for instance the European social fund or the Coordination union.

The SSIA is responsible for administrating the sickness insurance. However, SSIA also has the responsibility to coordinate involved actors in the process of transition from sick leave (back) to the labour market. The coordination responsibility implies a close cooperation with health care actors and the PES, if the person is without employment. This responsibility has been emphasised through the introduced time limits in the sickness insurance, and the introduction of the rehabilitation chain in 2008. The rehabilitation chain means a gradual transfer from the SSIA to the PES, a process that is done in close cooperation between case workers from PES and SSIA in “mutual assessment” (*gemensam kartläggning*).

So, in Sweden, case workers from the PES, the municipality and the SSIA work directly with long term unemployed. Type of compensation claimed by the unemployed decides which organisation(s) conduct direct work with the client. Hence, a person who is long term unemployed can have two, or possibly even three, case workers at the same time, depending on health related circumstances and financial situation. The case workers are responsible for decisions affecting the right to financial compensation for the unemployed and work towards the goal of financial independence of the unemployed, either through employment or education.

1.4 The governance structure of everyday work

Trajectories:

When registering at PES, in the first meeting with a case worker, information about previous work experience, educational background and field of interest (in relation to work) is gathered and documented in the internal computer system. An action plan is made, and most unemployed will proceed to individual job search. On a regular basis, the unemployed will have to report to the case workers which jobs he or she has applied, in order to keep financial benefits (unemployment insurance or activation support). The case worker will also send suggestions on suitable vacancies, based on the information gathered.

In the initial phase of unemployment, PES offers a range of open services, such as such information meetings, employers' fairs, seminars on cv-writing skills and so forth. There is a national hot-line where issues can be raised with case workers, and there is an open floor called *Direct service* in the local PES office, open from 10 am to 6 pm Monday to Friday where case workers can be consulted. There is also extensive information available on the website of PES. The unemployed is expected to apply for relevant jobs and report these to the case worker, according to the action plan. The case worker can suggest available (and suitable) vacancies, and to keep the financial compensation, the unemployed has to apply for these. There is an emphasis on the responsibility of the individual to search for employment on his or her own.

When the person is enrolled in the *Job and development guarantee*, normally after fourteen months after registration at PES, or when a person has been receiving unemployment insurance for 300 days, efforts to support the individual are intensified. The time limit for the Job guarantee for youth (below 25 years old) is only three months. In Örebro municipality, one third of the participants in the Job and development guarantee have reached the third phase (mstatkommun.arbetsformedlingen.se). Complementary actors that have been procured by PES on national level conduct most of the job coaching. In Örebro however, there are also actors who are not procured, and instead funded directly by PES and municipality, or the Coordination union. Placements on work places can have different purposes, either as job training (*arbetsträning*), or as a way to estimate a persons work

capacity (*arbetsprövning*). If the time in the guarantee exceeds 450 days, occupation organised by a complementing actor is the only available option.

If a case worker suspects that the unemployed has a reduced work capacity, investigations can be made leading to more intensified support. This can be initiated in any stage of unemployment period, but in order to facilitate for early detection, a question on “reduced work capacity” is asked the unemployed upon registration. Specialists (social workers, psychologists and physiotherapists), conduct investigations with the aim to assess the person’s work capacity. If the person’s work capacity is considered to be reduced, the unemployed is (if she or he agrees to) coded accordingly. The functional impairment code grants access to a more extensive set of services, such as *adaptions of the work place*, *wage subsidies (lönebidrag)*, *personal assistant (personligt biträde)* and a *special introduction support (särskilt introduktion- och uppföljingsstöd)* (see also Garsten & Jacobsson 2013). The latter means that someone can assist the person with reduced work capacity on the work place.

For an unemployed person who applies for social assistance, the first contact with the municipality is the reception, or intake. A brief investigation is made, and cases that are assessed to last for more than three months is sent to one of the teams, either adults or youth (18-25). Even before the assessment starts, the unemployed is referred to the *Road sign (Vägvisaren)*. This is a municipal service offering counselling to unemployed. Within two weeks a meeting is scheduled, where previous work experience, education, own estimations on chances to find employment are discussed. This investigation is followed by a second, made by the assigned social worker. Based on the conclusions from these two investigations, the social worker refers the client to an activation program.

For the unemployed who is on sick leave, case workers at SSIA conduct a brief phone investigation within two weeks, and a personal meeting is to be scheduled within six months. Following the regulations of the rehabilitation chain, the case workers contact PES case workers for a *mutual assessment (gemensam kartläggning)*, when the person is to start work rehabilitation organised by PES. The time limits of the rehabilitation chain do not apply for unemployed, as their work capacity is evaluated towards the entire labour market from the very first day of sickness leave. For those who have exhausted their right to sickness benefits, after two and a half year, a referral to Work life introduction, a three months program

organised by PES is made. After this, if the person is still sick, a new period of sickness leave can be granted.

The role of the case worker and their every day work:

Case workers in PES, whose official term is *placement officer (platsförmedlare)* are responsible for supporting individuals on their way to employment. Case workers work primarily with specific groups of unemployed, defined by length of unemployment and need for work rehabilitation. For the unemployed, this means a frequent change of case worker. One exception to this, are the case workers working with rehabilitation cases. Another logic applies here; a change in case workers is considered unsuitable and efforts are made to avoid changes.

Say, I have a person, who is in activity. But, the question is, maybe we should keep them as my case anyway, in spite of that. Because, very often, they are really sensitive for changes in case workers. Well, it is, simply not very good to change (case worker). PES 1

However, most case workers are responsible for unemployed only temporary. Tasks conducted by the case workers on an everyday basis are varied, and can consist of meetings with unemployed (individual and group), three or more party talks (coordination on case worker level SSIA and municipality), matching of unemployed with requests from employers, visiting employer and actors who are involved in the activation of unemployed, and administration. Administration refers to for instance decisions making in relation to interventions for unemployed (*fatta beslut om åtgärd*), daily notes (documentation), construction of action plans, control and follow up on decisions, control of activity of unemployed etc. The interviewees spend a considerable amount of time on administration; according to some informants as much as up to two thirds of the work day.

During the day, the case worker takes on, and moves between, different roles; from broker matching employer with unemployed, to bureaucrat protecting rules, to coach guiding unemployed to the labour market and so on. One informant describes his role as a bureaucrat following rules on reporting job-search of unemployed to the unemployment insurance.

We have an incredible system of rules that we have to follow; (for example, my comment) we have the responsibility to exercise control in relation to the unemployment insurance. PES 3

Another case worker describes her role as a promoter for subsidised employments, trying to convince employers to employ a person on work training with funding from PES:

And I bring all these really nice supports (subsidised employments, my comment) we have, and try to promote them (to the employer, my comment). PES 2⁵

Case load is high, sometimes well over two hundred clients per case worker. Most case workers from PES who were interviewed describe a situation where ability to prioritise and organise the work are central aspects of their work. However, much of the work is prioritized by the system, and by the ways which the work is organised, and not by the case workers individually. The documentation system used within PES is a tool that supports case workers in their planning, and the system does some of the prioritizing automatically; for instance, alerting the case worker when action plans have to be renewed and when follow ups are due. The time slots when case workers are scheduled for *Direct service*, meetings with case workers from other organisations and unemployed who call on their attention via phone or e-mail and so on are other activities that case worker have to respond to . The fragmented role of the case workers, and the internal division of work, reduce the possibilities for case workers to prioritize according to professional judgment and individual needs of the unemployed.

Terminology:

In PES, the official term used to classify the target group is *job-seeker (arbetsökande)*. In the interviews with case workers, unemployed are mainly referred to as *seekers (sökande)* indicating that job seeking is viewed upon as the main priority. Individuals who receive support from SSIA are referred to as *customers (kunder)* in the official documentation and by case workers. There are no other alternatives for citizens than the SSIA in issues related to the sickness insurance, which renders some peculiarity to the terminology. (Several public agencies in Sweden has opted to use the customer concept as a way to signal service-orientation.) In social services, the official documentation refers to unemployed recipients of

⁵ Previous research also indicates that the sanction element makes it hard to establish trust between client and staff, and the staff has to balance between the role of 'welfare policeman' and 'compassionate officer' (e.g. Howard 2006; Hensing et al. 1997).

social assistance as *social assistance recipient (biståndsmottagare)*, *unemployed (arbetslösa)* and *client (klient)*. The term used by the informants is *client (klient)* but also the *individual (individen)*. The different terminology used in the SSIA, the PES and the municipality gives an indication of what aspects of a persons life is in focus for case workers. By using the customer concept, the financial aspects of the relationship between unemployed and case worker is emphasised. The job-seeker concept leads us into assumption that the job-seeking (and not rehabilitation or training) is the main focus of the organisation. The client concept, used with social services, has a long history in social work in Sweden and other countries. The *client* concept has been contested by the term *service user*, but more so on a political than on practice level, at least in Sweden (Mc Laughlin 2009, Socialstyrelsen 2003).

Monitoring and control:

There are different systems of control within PES, SSIA and the municipality, and the case workers give different meanings to the systems of monitoring. For the SSIA case worker, control and monitoring constitute an important aspect affecting their day do day work, as well as for the case workers in PES. (Both these agencies are strictly governed by management by objectives and retrospective control.) In the municipality, control and monitoring seem to play, if not insignificant, at least a minor role. The more elaborated system of control in PES and SSIA leads to more restrictions on case workers, who are generally aware of the content of the control and possible sanctions if the work is not performed according to the regulations. The case workers at the municipality do have a system of internal control, but the knowledge on what aspects of their work is monitored is generally low. One case worker from the municipality explains:

Well, I hardly know. It is Pro Capita (the internal documentation system, my comment), the ones who are in charge of our system, they control... But, well, I don't know. They check us, and we get a mail that you have been in some way controlled during this month. Bla bla bla bla, and if you want to know more, you will have to ask your management, but nobody really cares. M1

Another case worker describes how the control is often related to the work of the case workers, but rather to the *client*, with the aim to detect possible fraud. This, in fact, could be a way to understand the low interest in control mechanisms that case workers seem to have. Another factor is that the work performed by case workers in the field of activation, is not

standardised the same way as the work in the national agencies. Even if there are outspoken policy intentions in relation to activation in the municipality, case workers do not use manuals or other standardised tools in their investigation.⁶ This, of course, makes control more difficult to execute.

In the PES, control system is a central aspect of the work. Case workers are well aware of its relevance, not least since achieved goals are discussed in their monthly result dialogue, held with case workers and management. The control and monitoring is less elaborated for case workers who primarily work with work rehabilitation. One case worker describes:

Well, it is not really the case, when we work so intense with unemployed, because, we can talk about things. But my colleagues, they are measured on flow (flöde), how many they get into work, how many they get in to work placements, and if they have too few in activation when they are in the guarantees, they are measured on that.
PES 4.

This indicates, that the closer the case worker work with the client, the less is the work measured in quantity. Instead, room for discussions related to individual clients can be conducted with superiors directly, which is also a way to monitor and control the work but rather from a qualitative aspects. However, most of the work conducted in PES is evaluated and monitored in relation to the set goals. One case workers describes the dilemma when quantitative measures dominate; and little or no room is left for qualitative aspects of the work:

Well, I can feel, like it is only the hard aspects, the quantitative goals that are set up, that we count. If we have contact with employers, and... well. Because, if you write a good action plan, or an outstanding daily note, that is not visible, if you do not emphasise this yourself in a meeting with your superior when discussing salary, for instance. But, it is really only these hard... those visible things that can be counted. That is what we end up talking about. PES 1

Another case worker describes a dilemma in these monitoring systems. The importance giving to quantitative data generates extra administration, as it leads to demands on the case worker to document in order to “satisfy the system”.

The (administration, my comment) is not really made in order to be useful for us, I think. Some administration is done only to satisfy the system, and it is like, ok, we are measured on this, from above. That things look ok. (PES 2)

The symbolic value of meeting the set goals is closely related to the on going political priorities. One case worker describes:

The activity reports (reporting applied jobs), it is a lot of activity reporting today. Everything is about this, right now. Actually, from our superiors, they have told us, that if you do the activity reports and early detection, you can forget the other things (goals, my comment), everything else will be forgiven. PES 3

As discussed previously, case workers at PES are confronted with a huge variety of tasks, and high case loads and prioritizing the work is essential – and this includes goals that are measured. This shows the importance of the institutional environment on the case work – and the political dimensions for case workers implementing labour market policies. Legitimacy is maintained by complying with current high profile political issues.

In SSIA, also a national agency, monitoring aspects are essential to the every day case worker. As in PES, certain goals are highlighted as more important to comply with than others.

Right now, we have a goal that we have to have personal meeting with 75% of those who have been on sick leave longer than six months. SSIA 2

These kind of standardised goals and monitoring system reduce the scope for professional judgement, and is a mechanism that enhances standardised procedures in individual case work.

Relation with clients: Reluctant case workers and demanding clients

The relation between case worker and clients is complex. The first aspect important to highlight is the uneven distribution of power. Case workers do possess power over the individual in important aspects; and their power is immanent in the organisational structures. Case workers have power to decide over the right to financial compensation for individuals. This puts the client in an inferior position from the very start, as financial aspects are of course crucial for those who lack employment. The case workers have authority do distribute other resources available within the organisation, such as rehabilitation, training, activation, investigations etc. These resources are (at least in some cases) attractive for the individual without employment.

The overall picture of the relation between case worker from PES and the unemployed, is the importance of the bureaucratic dimension of the relation, and the lack of social dimension. The frequent changes in case worker undermines any real chances to build a social relation; however, the expectations from the unemployed on the case worker are bureaucratic *as well* as a social. For instance, one of the informants discussed his expectations on PES, demanding information about a transfer to the third phase (occupation) in the Job and development guarantee. In spite his efforts to find out who his case worker was for the time being, and what the transfer meant for his financial compensation and possibilities to receive other kinds of support from PES, he was left unknowing. Not until the senior management at the local PES office was approached, he received answers on who his case worker was, and what kind of financial compensation he would receive. Others referred to the importance of decisions (*beslut*) made by case workers, in order to keep financial benefits. Both of these examples show *bureaucratic* expectations long term unemployed had on PES, and on their case workers. When expectations are not met, the frustration is immanent and often explained by the internal structure in the PES and the high case load for case workers. One long term unemployed describes:

Well, I do not care that you have lot to do. When people call, they should call back, I think. Well. I have so many... (...) I have 200 cases before I can take you, he said. (...) They are too few, too little staff. IP 2

In terms of social expectations on the case workers, this can be understood as the clients' expectations on case workers ability to respond to their expressed needs in terms of information or support. A person who wanted assistance and information argues:

They have educations, but... When I asked if... I need help with this education. They just said, check for your self, you can check that for your self. I think this is a little bit bad, like, why does she say that to me? She is supposed to help me, in order to be able to apply for a training they have. I think that is somewhat negative, well, specially this person. IP 2

Others see the lack of support from case workers as, not of flaw of the individual case worker, but as a sign of discrimination an unfair treatment:

Like, if I ask about a training, maybe she is a little bit negative, towards me. And not when she helps others.

I: You mean, as if she would help others in another way?

Yes.

I: Why do you think so?

Because, maybe, because I am an immigrant. And maybe she helps most Swedish people. For instance. IP 3

So, whereas limitations for the case worker to provide services to the unemployed might be immanent in the organisational structures, as part of the standardised services available depending on for instance length in unemployment, and time spent in the Job and development guarantee, the unemployed looks for other explanations.

From the perspective of the case workers, the high case load is a reason for not meeting clients, and to minimize the social dimension of the relation. A case load close to 300 makes it difficult to meet all clients. Instead, group meetings are organised, phone and e-mail is preferred as opposed to meeting in person, which would be more time consuming. So, the relation between case workers and unemployed is characterized by the case workers' attempts to *reduce* the interaction with clients and still comply with the organisational demands to meet set goals, and unemployed look for strategies to *increase* interaction with case workers in order to receive the help and support they believe they are entitled to.

1.5 Individualisation – standardisation of interventions

Interventions offered by the PES for unemployed follow two tracks, depending on the categorisation of the unemployed. On the one hand, the interventions offered long term unemployed are highly standardised, and duration of unemployment and available services are deciding factors for which services are made available for the individual. This is the case for the absolute majority of unemployed. However, if the unemployed is detected and categorised as a person with reduced work capacity, or if the person is referred to PES by another national agency, the interventions offered can be highly individualised⁷. However, the procedures leading to the interventions are seemingly standardised for all.

The standardised interventions:

Services available during the first period of unemployment, before the Job and development guarantee is due, are mainly open seminars in the local PES office, individual job search activities and consultation by case workers in the *Direct service*. The unemployed is expected to fend for him/herself with the general support available at PES. Meetings with case workers are scarce, and the information gathered about the unemployed relates to previous work experience and education, suitable future employers and issues related to financial compensation. This technical information has to be documented in the internal documentation system used at PES. The meetings are, in general, relatively short. One informant describes:

Everyone gets a case worker (handläggare), straight away. (...) And we can not sit for hours and do this; this is a fairly quick thing. (...) The system is, when a job seeker gets here, you have to consider these, different things, before you can even start to discuss, what kind of help a person actually wants. IP 3

Depending on the aspects related to age, financial compensation, different action plans are made. The same case worker describes:

You have those who are below 25, and you divide them into two groups, those with unemployment insurance and those without. And those over 25, and those with unemployment insurance and those without. They all get different action plans. We have different templates for these groups, which we have to fill out. IP 3

⁷ The number of persons coded as functionally impaired has increased dramatically in Sweden. In 1992, 10 per cent of all registered unemployed at PES Sweden were coded as such while in 2011 the corresponding number was 25.3 per cent (see Garsten & Jacobsson 2013). Case workers have an incentive to use the code and clients to accept it, as a way to get individualised support.

Health related questions, or questions related to problems of a social dimension are not asked in this first contact with the PES. Even if questions of a more sensitive nature were to be asked, current legislation (on personal data protection) prevents documentation; for instance, information about criminal record or health condition. The only exception is if the unemployed himself/herself would raise the matter in relation to a question concerning reduced work capacity.

Based on the discussion above, case workers seem, in fact, not to have enough knowledge about the unemployed to offer individualised services, nor do they have access to required tools to be able to offer such. Individualisation of services is at this stage of unemployment restricted to the job suggestions made by the case worker to the unemployed. In case jobs that are suitable considering previous experience and education are suggested, we could talk about an individualised service.

When the unemployment period exceeds the time limits for the guarantees, the person is categorised as long term unemployed. This implies that the Job and development guarantee is due, and for those below 25 the Youth and job guarantee. There are major changes in the interventions available for the unemployed, however doubtful to what extent services are individualised and/or tailor made for the individuals needs. The long term unemployed person can be offered work training, placements, job-coaches, courses in cv-writing skills, as well as training.

One of the case workers describes that group meetings have replaced individual meetings, due to the heavy case load. In these meetings long term unemployed are asked to consider what kind of activation they prefer; training, work placements or job-coaching offered by complementary actors. Case workers consider training and work placements as the better options:

In the group meeting, we want them to find options; like, can they arrange a work placement on their own. Do you have any contacts? Or, is there a training that you have been waiting for, or that might interest you. Then we would prefer these two options. Because, that is what we see, these go into employment faster. Work placement is the intervention I find most people go into employment. PES 2

Despite this, the most common track is job-coaching offered by complementary actors. Work placements and training are resources that are not always readily available (Liljeberg et al 2013). That available resources, rather than individual needs or professional considerations, decide what services are given is a serious problem for many human services organisations,

and PES is no exception. In this case, the activation can be understood in terms of the symbolic value to the organisation, fulfilling expectations shaped by a strong activation discourse.

Once the unemployed is participating in an activation program, the case worker has merely a follow up responsibility for the job seeker. This means that there are in fact two strong motivational factors for case workers to refer clients to programs, even if they are not always considered the preferred option. Case workers reduce their pile of active cases by referring them to activation programs. One case worker who works with unemployed in the guarantees, explains:

Of the 70 unemployed that I am responsible for, 60 per cent have to be in some kind of activity. They should not be here, at PES, on me. Because actually, according to the rules, I would have to meet all of them on a daily basis, all the time. PES 2

The second incentive for the case worker is related to the goals set up by PES centrally, stating that 60 per cent of all clients in the guarantees should be in activation. Monitoring is an important part of the work in PES, and meeting the set goals important for case workers, not least since this discussed in individual result dialogues, held with superiors.

In terms of the services offered by the complementary actors for long term unemployed in the Job and development guarantee, these are described as standardised and similar in their methodological approaches.

You have to be in activity in 450 days. Activity, followed by activity, followed by activity. You can be at one place in three months, and then, you will get a new plan. Three months at another place. So, it is really like a roving (flackande), actually. And, well, I think, what is really different... In what way do they offer different things? Actually, it is pretty much the same.

I: Can you give an example?

Well, it is, we have work training. We have something that is called "Job of the day", and there is Örebro Manpower (Örebro bemanning). They work pretty much the same way. It is coaching. We coach you; we try to find a work placement. But we call it something different. (...) And I call the job seeker and ask how things are going. And no, it is the same thing, all of it! Coaching, and things like this. So, maybe it is all the same, but the provider tries to find a certain profile. And, I guess, it is pretty much the same. So, I believe all interventions are somewhat alike. But I also think, maybe there are not so many ways this can be done. Maybe there are no exciting ways that you can do this. PES 3

Even if the programs are standardised in content, the ratio staff – unemployed is quite different in the activation programs than in the regular work within PES. This gives at hand far better opportunities for the staff in the job-coaching programs to get to know the unemployed and, possibly, to see and take consideration to their individual needs. This is also described by the long term unemployed interviewed; the support offered in the job-coach programs is perceived as being more personal, more individualised and more qualitative than the support they receive from case workers at PES. However, the unemployed follow a standardised schedule, where attendance is compulsory. Most of the programs offer, apart from job-search and cv-writing, lectures by actors, such as debt counselling, health related issues, union and workers right and study visits. This kind of information could be seen as a way to meet individual needs of long term unemployed, even if conducted in a standardised way. An important note to this, however, is the very different background and conditions of participants in the job-coach programs. The selection of participants to the complementary actors are highly standardised; a computer decides which program the unemployed should attend. Participants in programs offered by complementary actors are selected by chance, according to the procurement procedures that have been done by PES centrally.

No, the job seekers do not choose (program, my comment), the system chooses. It follows the results of the procurement, and there is a "next in line" system. The procurement states that first we have to fill the places in Kompensia (on of the four complementing actors mentioned by the case workers, my comment.) and that is done by the computer. PES 3

These standardised selection procedures, based on chance rather than individual needs and situation, contribute to a situation where groups can be quite heterogeneous. For instance, in the program where most interviews for this study was conducted, the group consisted of about 30 participants; some with university degrees and others with no reading or writing skills, some expressing very high motivation and strong expectations to find employment labour market, others who had resigned and saw no solutions in their job search.

Individualised interventions:

If, however, the unemployed is detected and categorised as a person whose work capacity needs to be clarified, or, if the person is referred to PES by another authority, interventions seem to be all but standardised. Work psychologists and social workers can refer the client to further investigations. These investigations aim to clarify if the unemployed has a reduced

work capacity, deriving from the psychological or social problems. This can, for instance, be learning disabilities, a criminal record, substance abuse, a difficult family situation or other social problems. However, a reduced work capacity should not be seen as an objective assessment based only on the problem of the unemployed; a reduced work capacity is also defined in relation to the actual demand on the labour market (Garsten and Jacobsson 2013). The investigation aims to estimate the person's ability to work, and to assess the need for support and adaption of work place, as well as need for coordination with other authorities. The information gathered by the consultants is different in character than the information documented by case workers. The regular case workers do not document information that can be considered as sensitive (such as criminal record, social problems), due to legislation on data protection. This implies, that in most cases, the case workers would only know the personal situation of the unemployed if a) the client tells the case worker, b) if an investigation has been made. Case workers are frequently changed, meetings with case workers are scarce and often short, it seems unlikely that case workers have knowledge about other problems than those directly related to the unemployment (such as level of education, previous work experience and so on). The long term unemployed, according to the interviews, are generally not asked about their private situation and nor do they feel inclined to tell the case worker. One informant describes answers a question whether the PES case worker has a good grasp of the situation she is in:

Well, I don't know actually. I have not had him for such a long time. So he does not know me really that well. (...) He has the file, maybe it is written a lot in the file.

(...) K: Well, ok. Has he ever asked about your previous work experiences or you private life? Your situation, your life situation?

No, he has not done that. (IP 1)

Another informant who has been in a very turbulent domestic situation, explains why she has not told her case worker about her problems:

It was of a more private character. I did not know that I could actually tell PES, that I had had a difficult situation.

I: Did you not want to?

No, I did not realise that I could... My case worker writes, what have you done, and I said, well, I have sent (the applications, my comment).

However, the logic is the reverse in the investigations made by the consultants, and different areas of life are discussed in the assessment. If a persons work capacity is considered being reduced, there are highly individualised interventions available. Adaption of the work place

could possibly be the most individualised intervention found within the interventions for unemployed; as the adaption is entirely based on the individual needs of the client in order to perform the work tasks – all according to the investigations made by social workers and work psychologists. The case workers who worked with rehabilitation all described situations where the unemployed were offered services well beyond the standard interventions from PES. For instance, one job seeker who did not manage to go on public transport because of social phobia was accompanied on the bus to and from work by a personal assistant paid by PES. Others, with alcohol problems, were given the chance to go to rehabilitation during working hours, and yet others were. Important to note, is that most of these cases referred to have some kind of subsidised employment, where the PES pays a large percentage of the salary. This kind of individualised support is also available to those who enter PES via SSIA. Work life rehabilitation can mean a highly individualised system to support the individual back to the labour market.

So, the way that a person becomes a target person/client of PES has significant importance in relation to standardisation and individualisation of interventions offered to the person. A person who registers by him or herself as unemployed, follows a highly standardised track (if he or she is not detected as a person with suspected reduced work capacity) with standardised interventions. Unemployed who start their enrolment at the local PES office by referral from another authority, such as the Prison and probation services or SSIA, have access to individualised services and support through for instance work rehabilitation programs or subsidised employments. The case workers working with this group have another view on access to tools and resources than the case workers working with “regular” unemployed, stating that resources at hand give good opportunities for individualising interventions.⁸

This, of course, raises serious questions on issues related to process of how the individual needs of the unemployed are detected (and not detected), and where the boundaries are drawn between “regular unemployed” and “unemployed with reduced work capacity”. One case worker from PES working with rehabilitation (unemployed with codes on reduced work capacity) argues:

I think I have really good conditions to offer interventions according to the need of the individual (skraddarsy). The big problem is the great mass, well, the great mass

⁸ This reflects general trend of dualisation of labour market policies based on a classification of ‘normal job-seekers’ and ‘at risk clients’ (e.g. Caswell et al 2010,, Garsten & Jacobsson 2013).

that is never identified, or detected. It is an issue on rule of law (rättsäkerhet). Those that we do not find. That is a big thing, and, well, it is really sad. PES 4

Based on the interviews, the role of the case workers is an important factor for how trajectory of long term unemployed, but also the role of the unemployed. If the unemployed is successful in describing his or her personal needs, the chances improve for the person to get individualised help. However, the system is complex and knowledge about resources available from PES is generally low based on the interviews with both case workers and long term unemployed. This lack of information, on behalf of the long term unemployed, constitutes a barrier for the unemployed to express needs and place demands on the PES.

Individual action plans

Case workers at PES should, according to regulations, construct action plans for all unemployed. In the action plan, the obligations of the unemployed are to be documented; for instance, job search or participation in an activation program. However, the action plans seem to have more of a latent than a manifest purpose. The content of the action plan is not described as an important, neither by case workers or unemployed. Some of the long term unemployed are unaware of the existence, and those who are, do not talk about the content of the plan. The plan has implications for the unemployed only when it is to be renewed – a renewal of a plan means a possible meeting with a case worker. One long term unemployed explains:

I: How often do you meet your case worker at PES?

Well, I guess when my action plan is to be renewed. Hardly even then. IP 4

Another informant describe his view on the content of the plan:

I: What does it mean for you, when you get your plan renewed?

To me it means nothing. I keep on searching for jobs like I always do. IP 5

For the unemployed, the most important documents from the case workers are the *decisions* (beslut). The decisions state what kind of activation the unemployed should participate in, and the unemployed is dependent on the decisions to take part in activation, in order to receive financial compensation/activation support. If the case worker fails to make relevant decisions, this is a problem for the individual:

And, when I was in this activity, she (the case worker, my comment) had not made any decisions. So, I had to mail her, and check. IP 3

So, several of the interviewees were unaware of the existence of their action plan, and did not see the lack of one as a problem – quite the contrary to the decisions. The lack of, or delay of, decisions from the case workers were considered a major problem.

For case workers, the important documentation in relation to the unemployed is not put down in the action plan, but in the “daily notes” documented in the computer system of the PES, AIS. It is through the *daily notes*, that the case workers can follow a case. One case worker explains:

I feel I can get more from a good system of daily notes, and a proper system of reminders (påminnelser). We have these tools, as well. But many end up doing double work (daily notes and action plans, my note), and many write (only) daily notes and do not care about the action plan. PES 3

An important difference between the action plan and the daily notes is the way the unemployed gets access to the information. The action plan is a document that is signed and printed, and given to the unemployed. The daily notes are not, and are only handed out on direct request by the unemployed.

Perception of activation by the unemployed

The unemployed, in general, have a positive view of the activation program they attend. Staffs are considered to be helpful, friendly, dedicated and knowledgeable. The social dimension of being part of a group is highlighted as an important aspect of activation. Most of the informants, the mere fact of having something to do and some where to go seems to be a justification in itself for the activation.

Well, you meet other people, you discuss, and you learn from others. How they think and what they do. Just to get out and meet a lot of people at the same time, instead of sitting at home and become isolated. IP 5

The content of the program was not questioned, not even the parts where it is not obvious in what way the activities would facilitate the reintegration of the labour market or increase their competencies. One example is for instance a boule tournament compulsory for all participants, and study visit in the library for a person with substantial knowledge of literature search and other resources available at the public library. Even if most participants do express

a positive view on the current program they participate in, some have a more dejected attitude to activation programs in general.

I: The activation programs you have participated in, do you feel that they have increased your chances in finding employment?

R: No, not at all. It is like artificial respiration.

I: Artificial respiration?

R: Yes, exactly, you do have something temporarily, you have something to do. But it has not brought me any further.

I: And what has it been like, taking part in the programs?

R. No... Well, disconsolately, sometimes. Most of the time they do not give anything. Because all these things I have participated in, it has not led to anything. (IP 1)

The lack of obstruction or questioning of the program has to be understood in the light of the subordinate position of the long term unemployed. The connection between financial compensation and activation creates a system of “obedient citizens” where objections and non-compliance will lead to sanctions. One participant, highly qualified with a university degree in economics, describes how she would never question the activation, as losing the activity support would seriously affect her financial situation. Being responsible for two small children, this was simply not an option. The strong normative aspects in relation to activation and the work line concept also contribute to the “non obtrusiveness” of participants. Many of the participants compare the activation programs with a regular work, and demand from themselves and from fellow participants to be on time and to participate in planned activities.

1.6 Categorization and legibility

At the PES, there are several tools that case workers use in their every day work with unemployed. One of the most important categorisations made within PES, is the distinction between unemployed with normal work capacity, and unemployed with reduced work capacity. Other categorisations are age, job sector affiliation (*branch tillhörighet*), time in unemployment etc. However, length in unemployment and division between regular unemployed and unemployed with reduced work capacity are the most important distinction in terms of what services can be offered by the PES.

When a person registers at the PES, a file is opened. Personal data, previous work experiences, unemployment insurance etc. is collected, and documented in the internal computer system of the PES. Recently a special assessment support (*bedömningsstöd*) was introduced; in order facilitate early detection of unemployed with special needs risking long term unemployment. The unemployed is asked if he or she has in any way have a reduced work capacity. The willingness of the unemployed to highlight aspects that could reduce their chances of regular employment cannot be taken for granted. As the case worker is supposed to support the individual in the matching process, and to find a suitable vacancy, it is likely that the unemployed emphasises strengths and competencies, rather than weaknesses. The unemployed is an active part in the construction process, and there is an immanent need for clients to construct themselves in relation to the services they wish to receive. Several of the case workers highlight what they perceive as a problem, when unemployed overestimates their own capacity in relation to the labour market. One case worker describes:

It is about self-awareness, and self confidence. Some, they believe they can do much more than they actually are able to (mäktar med). PES 1

There is also certain reluctance on behalf of the case worker to categorise the person with increased risk of becoming long term unemployed. One case worker explains:

No, most of them will not get an early intervention, because, you think, or you hope, that based on their previous experience, if they have completed secondary education, that they have a professional training, that they will get a job. But that is not reality today, because many might go up to 250 days, and get a warning from the unemployment insurance that the time soon is up. And of course, if we get a signal there, well the risk is increased, they we can go and make an early intervention, to do something to prevent long term unemployment. And to reduce the risk of exhausting the unemployment insurance. PES 3

Considering the huge emphasis on activation programs to enhance the motivation of unemployed, this is a very interesting finding. This seemingly mis-match between analysis of problem and solutions presented, emanates from the normative pressure on the organisations. The “standard stories” (Tilly 2002) and widespread belief that unemployed could – if they only want to – get a job, are deeply rooted in modern society. For organisational survival, it can be far more important to meet the expectations from the institutional environment than to act upon the problems such as they are understood by the case workers.

The assessment support used when registering unemployed, is described as fairly basic, and in the end, the professional judgement of the case worker is an important factor in detecting clients with special needs. This emphasises, yet again, the role of the case worker. For instance, it can be easier for a more experienced case worker to ask sensitive and personal questions of a sensitive; for instance concerning substance intake and other social problems.

Other tools to assess the unemployed are used by the social workers and work psychologists who can be consulted by case workers. If the person is categorised as having a reduced work capacity, a new range of labour market policies become available. In the social investigation, questions related to the entire life situation of the unemployed are asked. These include family situation, substance intake, and interests of the unemployed. However, there is always a tight connection to the labour market in that sense that the case workers have to consider the chances for the person on the labour market.

A case worker always has to do an assessment in relation to work, is it at all reasonable to think work? Could this person handle a work situation? And, for instance, the person could think that it is, but at the same time come to my office intoxicated. And, well, then I think this is not really the right thing. PES 5

Only one of the long term unemployed can actually relate to investigations being made in relation to work capacity. This is a person who has been on sick leave for a very long time, and has taken part in various investigations. She is in general pleased with the investigations as such, but is highly critical of how the results of the test have been used. For instance, several investigations have come to the conclusion that she is in need of psychological therapy, but she has been offered none. Her financial situation does not permit her to purchase this kind of therapy on her own. To her, the meaningfulness of investigations is directly linked to what kind of support can be given to her, based on the investigation.

Most of the interviewed long term unemployed had not, to their knowledge, experienced any assessment tools being used by PES case workers. This can have many explanations. First of all, the informants might not actually be aware of tests or assessment tools that possibly have been used. One case worker describes this in following way:

They can actually have been in some of these interventions, but they just choose not to tell you. Or, they might actually not be aware. In my work, I do not tell seekers, "we are going clarify your conditions for work, and I will use a specific method." No, I would not say like that at all. PES 4

The overall knowledge of what “was going on” in the cases was generally low among the informants. Thus, assessment might have been done, but the unemployed has understood this as a normal part of the procedure and not taken any notice on this as a “different” experience. Another explanation is, in fact, related to the sample. The majority of the long term unemployed interviewed participated in a job-coaching project, and *had not been* categorised as clients with reduced work capacity or special needs. Instead, they were very much treated as regular unemployed, following the standardised interventions schemes in the Job and development guarantee.

To sum up, there are two aspects that are important for the process of categorisation and detection of clients with special needs and in the risk of becoming long term unemployed: First of all, unemployed with ability (and willingness) to “self diagnosis”. Those unemployed who articulate to the case workers their special needs have increased chances of being detected. Secondly, an observant and experienced case worker can more easily detect problems had have the courage to bring up sensitive issues. However, case workers draw a line when they argue that the problems of the unemployed are so severe that work is not considered an option. If this is the case, the person is no longer considered belonging to the target group of the organisation and instead referred to other organisations, such as social services or health care.

Municipality: In social services, investigations made cover a range of areas of a person’s life. Case workers document aspects that are part of the investigation process, and inherent in the documentation system, on background, previous experiences, health, social situation and personal goals of the unemployed. However, when doing so, they do not follow a manual; rather, the informants describe that experience and “gut feeling” are important in their investigation methods. Assessments of the work capacity of individual clients are made, but not so much by using tools and assessment forms, but rather by placing individuals in

activities that are supposed to give answers to a persons ability to work (arbetsprövning) and by discussing with clients. It is hard to draw a line to those areas of life that are important for the case workers of social services. One informant describes how this is related to case worker - not all would see the same things, and not all would act the same way. Some would draw the line earlier, and some would have a more flexible approach to this. She describes an episode from her work like this:

Right now, there is a group from criminal, organised, gangs that I have as cases. They have connections between them, and they have become my clients. There is, of course, a reason for that. To sum up, they are in my lap. You have a background of drugs, criminality. They want a job and activation, but maybe they would like to combine these two worlds... But. And you suddenly become homeless. And, well, you have had a bad treatment (bemötande) from (other parts of, my comment) social services. Well, it gets really personal, and they want me to be there. To accompany them, to the probation office, for instance. M1

In this description, fairly all aspects of the individual life sphere appear to be relevant for the case worker. There is also a willingness to support the individual in other areas – which are not directly related to work or financial situation, for instance accompany the client to the probation office. This indicates a much more holistic approach than taken by the case workers from the PES and the SSIA, where such a treatment appears highly unlikely. Room for manoeuvre and professional judgement is significantly higher for case workers within social services, than in PES and SSIA. The lack of control (from superiors) is one explanation, but also lack of standardised manuals and guidelines in relation to the every day work with clients. Even if evidence based social services has been heavily enforced by for instance the National board for health and social services; this has not (yet) spread to the work with social assistance. The municipal self governance, as well as strong(er) professional groups within social services are other background factors that matter.

1.7 Responsibilisation and agency

Lack of compensation and the threat of being expelled:

By non compliance on suggestions made by PES and social services in the area of activation, there is always an immanent threat of loosing the financial compensation. This was discussed in the previous section. Only one of the informants had direct experience of becoming expelled from the unemployment insurance; and also from social assistance. She had been expelled by the unemployment insurance; reasons unknown to her. The case worker in the municipality denied social assistance, arguing that she had not shown enough motivation and actively been seeking employment. It took more than half a year to get back into a system of financial compensation. During this time, she borrowed money from relatives and friends.

Well, it was the social services, I do not really know why, but they thought I did not have enough motivation in my job search. So, I did not get any money, and it was hard to get by. (IP 1)

It should be noted, that during this time she was carrying the financial responsibility for herself and her teenage daughter. This shows, that financial sanctions can be very much a reality to unemployed.

Knowledge and expertise - of clients and case workers

The complexity of rules and regulations regarding both financial benefits and activation programs cannot be understated. The case workers highlighted the challenges in keeping updated with laws and regulations, and the importance of having a very good grasp of support systems in different policy fields. They do not think that the unemployed have a real chance in grasping the over all context, and some of the informants high light the problem with the terminology used by the PES. For someone who wants to access the services of the organisation, it is not all that easy to differentiate between work training, assessment of work capacity, work placement etc. The impression from the interviews with the long term unemployed were that most of them were not very familiar with overall policies and regulations of the respective public authorities. In addition to this, most of them had very little knowledge of what kind of information the case workers had access to, why (on what grounds) they received a specific financial compensation, why they participated in one

program and not in another, where they should turn in case they felt a mistake had been made by the case worker and so on. They were, simply, very much in the hands of individual case workers. The system is highly complex, which leads to difficulties for individuals to claim their rights.

Scope for choice

The scope for choice, as understood by the participants, was limited in relation to activation through PES. The incentives for complying are obvious, as the financial compensation is at risk. One participant in the job-search project argues:

I: Who is responsible for you being here (in the project)?

*It is my... the case worker that I have. (...) He told me to start here. (...) I opposed, and said I have been in this type of activation program before. But he did not take any considerations to that. (...) And, if I want to get any money at all, I do get some, a couple of thousand each month, and I would not get anything if I would not agree.
IP1*

The case workers from the municipality tend to have a more flexible approach to activation and more margin for individualised services than the PES. The methods of control are not as elaborated, and the room for professional judgement are higher within the municipal organisation than at PES. The PES has to uphold and defend the national policies and the work line, more so than the municipality. One of the long term unemployed who had had experience with case workers both from PES and municipality, and argues following:

Well, the social services have listened more to what I want (than PES, my comment). Or, I think she realises better that I will not get a job, the PES does not want to realise that. (...) Yes, those at PES, they do not want to admit, that I will not get anything. Because, they say, you can always get a job. Something might turn up, that is what they say (...) IP 1

The PES has, as do all human service organisations, an immanent need protect the organisation and restrict resources – the demand by far exceeds available services. Increased agency for the unemployed, therefore, is not an obvious goal for the organisation. As shown in the previous text, clients executing individual agency do have advantages (see section on reluctant case worker and demanding client). If all unemployed were to be encouraged in terms of agency, however, this would lead to an intensified pressure on the case workers. As discussed previously, the case workers in PES are already under very high pressure with case

loads between two and three hundred clients. Increased agency on behalf of clients could, for the case workers as well as the organisation, be considered a goal in itself *only if* agency meant a move away from the organisation and away from organisations resources. This is also a possible explanation as to why not more effort is put into simplifying the system and to “enlight” unemployed of the resources and services available at PES. Rather, for the organisation, a certain level of “confusion” can be positive, as it protects the organisation from demands and reduces pressure on case workers.

Responsibilisation through the work of the case workers

Case workers emphasise the responsibility of the individual to find their way back to the labour market. For instance, one case worker from SSIA discuss her role and her expectations on the client:

(It depends on), sometimes they are very talkative. And want to bring up everything in their life. But you have to steer them, we are no social workers (kuratorer), actually. Sometimes they want to open their heart completely, and in this first contact, you take them back to the path, in a nice way. And...Put some responsibility on the person, actually.

I: What do you mean by that?

Well, have a contact with the employer, for instance. And that they should... Take contacts.. And maybe different questions, how they are going to do about getting back to the labour market.

(...) They have to be part of their own rehabilitation. That is why I mean that you should put some responsibility on them. For instance, if you are unemployed; for that person early contacts and early activation (aktiviteter) is good. Like, to start to think about what you would like to do. Where would you like to... Work train (arbetsträna), which area, what, to tell, them, there is a tool on PES homepage where they can test themselves. What field of work they are closest to. I usually encourage those things, that they start to do things. SSIA 1

All case workers who were interviewed, in PES, SSIA as well as municipality, had taken part in training in Motivational interviewing (MI). The method was initially used in therapeutic work with clients with substance abuse, and has become very popular in case work in Sweden. According to the National board of health and social services, empathy and reflexivity in listening, as well as conflict avoidance are main components of the methods. The method focuses on encouraging clients to belief in personal change. The role of the case

worker is to help the client to articulate his or her problem, and find own arguments for a changed behaviour. The training in MI is 3-4 days, and no Swedish studies have been made on the relevance in the field of unemployment. However, the method clearly puts emphasis on the responsibility of the unemployed for finding employment, and is very much in line with the over all emphasis on the individuals' responsibility for finding a solution to their unemployment.

Responsibilisation and individualisation through activation programs

The average time between registering as unemployed and inclusion of the Job and development guarantee is two years (Liljeberg et al 2013). This means, that most unemployed will have very little support from case workers during the first two years of unemployment, as they are expected to fend for themselves in finding a job. However, many of the informants for this study had been unemployed for a much a much longer period, and most of them had participated in various activation programs, often with similar content. The activities in the program are mainly equivalent to full time employment, that is, 40 hours a week. The concept of 40 hours week activity is motivated by normative assumptions of a regular working life; the unemployed has to be able to demonstrate an ability to be active 40 hours a week, and should also become accustomed to this. There are very few exceptions to this rule, for instance, parents with small children (over one year) are required to participate full time, clients over 60 years old and so on. The following quote demonstrates the view on full time activation. This is a case worker from the municipality explaining the rationale behind activation.

I: How many hours a day do you want the person to be in (activity)?

8 hours. It is just like an ordinary...

I: Like an ordinary work day?

Yes, exactly. That is what we aim for (...)

I: But, what about specific circumstances, like if the person has small children? Do you say, well, we just demand part time, like 75 per cent of a full working week (in activation)?

No, no, no. Absolutely not. That is not on the map. Absolutely not.

I: So, that is not an option?

No, and, why should it be? Why should we make a difference between a person who receives social assistance and a normal worker, or a normal person? We are all normal persons, all of us. So, I do not think that is an option. M3

So, full time activation is seen as a goal, and full time working hours is setting the norm. To comply with this norm, in fact, seems more important than the actual content of the programs. One exception to the full time norm, is when there is an outspoken need for work rehabilitation; hours of activity can be reduced according to the individual situation.

The daily activities in the activation programs, as well as the rationale explained in project applications and similar, very explicitly emphasise the individual responsibility for finding a job. For instance, shortcomings in self-confidence, lack of belief in work capacity and unwillingness to look for jobs in other regions and areas of work are described as reasons for long term unemployment (www.esf.se/sv/Projektbank/Sok-projekt/ - Dagens jobb). Much effort is put in changing the participants' behaviour in relation to job search. This is expressed by a project manager of an activation program in the local news paper:

We have the ambition, that the person who looks for a job should become more offensive in their job search, that he or she gets the courage to become more active and spontaneous. Even, as concrete, that you have the courage to knock on doors, says Karl Elfman (Lindenytt 2013-05-14).

This individualisation though activation is also found in the daily routines in the job-search project where most of the interviews were conducted. In the morning meeting, mandatory for all participants, the management of the project put much focus on encouraging individuals to become more active, and to show more initiative in contacts with potential employers. To become more persistent, to knock on the doors, to call the HR departments and so on was described as the key to success. Often, participants were asked to share their experiences of the jobs they had applied for recently. This was followed by questions on what they should have done differently; indirectly pointing out that the individual would, in fact, be responsible if the job was not offered.

Sport, and fitness, are often components of the weekly schedule in activation programs. The sport activities can, in part, be a way to fill out the time as activation is supposed to be equivalent to a working hour. Another aspect however, is sport activities as a tool for reinforcing individual responsabilisation. As an example of this, in one of the activation programs visited, the following scene played out in. A sport tournament was organised by the management of the project; a mandatory activity for participants. One

participant, who suffered from severe pain in wrists and ankles, did not want to participate. She was persistent that she could not participate, but did at first not explain why. The staff from the project, as a response, argued that there is no such thing as "can not". Instead, an attitude saying "everything is possible" should be applied, in sports as well as in job search. The episode demonstrates in a very explicit way how responsabilisation and individualisation is "created" in the daily activities of activation programs. Indicating to her, and other participants of the game, that "failure" to participate in the tournament was related to lack of motivation and "wrong" attitude, is directly transferable to the discussions on unemployment. By indicating that "failure" on the labour market is related to lack of motivation and "wrong" attitude, the individual is made responsible for the situation he or she is in.

The long term unemployed, however, have a different view. Almost all of the informants express a very high motivation in relation to work. Work, or employment, is described as the solution to many of the problems they have, and they describe how they have been actively seeking jobs for years. Rather than lack of motivation, the situation on the labour market is seen as the biggest barrier to their chances for finding employment; high unemployment and increased competition over available jobs. One informant explains how the procurement of services in the public sector dramatically changed his chances on the labour market. He had been working for the same organisation for years, delivering equipment and other goods to health clinics throughout the region. When the service was privatised and made subject to procurement procedures, another company was hired. He, and his fellow colleagues became unemployed. Since then, he has had big difficulties finding employment. He says:

And this was a really good job, I liked it. It was just a shame they lost the procurement. IP2.

Other long term unemployed refer to different circumstances in their life, affecting their chances to find a job. For instance, one person lost his driving licence due to drunk driving. His financial situation prevents him from taking the exam for a new licences, which has effects on his competitiveness on a labour market where driving licence often is a minimum requirement. Other long term unemployed refer to migration, family situation and health issues preventing them from finding a place on the labour market. The responsabilisation through activation programs implies the intense focus on the individual, leaves no room for more structural explanations to unemployment (see Engstrand & Vesterberg 2012).

Downsizing of human capital

When interventions are standardised and the scope of choice is limited, activation programs to run the risk of reducing human capital, instead of reinforcing the same. Instead of supplying individuals with necessary skills and expertise, the programs risk moving participants further away from the labour market by focusing on for instance cv-writing instead of developing and maintaining skills. In fact, participants are in danger of losing the very same competences they are referring to in their CV and applications.

My applications are not true, they were true 20 years ago, but not now. I can not do those things I write in my CV, I used to know them, 20 years ago. But not any more.
IP 1

Another long term unemployed refer to previous qualifications in trainings and educations becoming out dated, and that the current activation does not supply her with new competencies, which makes her attractive on the labour market.

Other unemployed discuss the dilemma of standardised activation programs in relation to the time limits. Some of the informants consider their computer skills as too weak to be able to successfully apply for a job on the regular labour market. However, only when they entered the Job and development guarantee, participation in a daily CV-writing activity was made available for them. For the unemployed who consider structured support in job search corresponds to their individual needs, a long time period without structured activation can be counterproductive.

The informants give ample examples of how they have been enrolled in programs against their wish, but the need for financial compensation make them comply with the suggestions made by PES. Others have wished for specific interventions, such as training, but have been denied. The informants are generally not aware of the reasons, but instead refers to “evil” or “bad” case workers. On the other hand, there are cases when the unemployed have the feeling of “taking things in their own hand” and have managed to get the kind of support they have wished for.

Another example when standardised activation is a barrier for investing in human capital, is related to education. When participating in an activation program, forty hours attendance is expected. One of the long term unemployed had articulated her desire to participate in a training in administration, rather than a CV-writing program. In the training,

she would get access to a work placement, which she considered valuable for her future chances on the labour market. However, she was denied, and received no explanation by the case worker why this was not possible. Instead of the training in administration that she did not receive, she takes evening courses in order to qualify for university courses. She has a clear picture of what kind of human capital investment she needs in order into the labour market and, but instead, she is referred to a cv-writing program.

1.8 Conclusions

Four aspects of the findings are of special relevance for this report. First of all, standardisation of interventions characterise the activation for most long term unemployed. Rather than individual need, time in unemployment and available resources within PES decide what support is offered to the individual, and when the support is offered. The exception is long term unemployed who become categorised as having a reduced work capacity. The coding gives access to individualised services and, maybe just as important, to case workers who have time and knowledge about the specific needs of the individual. For the individuals it comes at the price of accepting to be labelled as functionally impaired (*funktionsnedsatt*), which is in itself a standardised collective category.

This brings us to the second point. The role of the PES case worker is highly fragmented. The different roles case workers take on in order to meet set goals, in combination with a very high case load, enforces the bureaucratic dimension of the relation with the unemployed. Case workers, in order to protect themselves from an overwhelming work load, find strategies to restrict contacts with unemployed. For instance, one strategy is to organise group meetings instead of individual meetings. Another strategy is to restrict face to face meetings and encourage mail-contact or quick phone calls, which gives less room (and time) for unemployed to express their individual needs. This implies, less individualisation of services for long term unemployed.

The third point is related to knowledge, on behalf of both case workers and long term unemployed. On the one hand, the system of activation programs is highly complex. The information available on the webpage of PES is, if not endless, at least very comprehensive. For anyone who is not familiar with the rules and regulations, it is not always easy to understand the differences between the programs, and what makes a person qualify for specific services. There is a problem of transparency. On the other hand, the life situation for long term unemployed can be very complex. The case workers do not document, are not obliged to (and do not seem to have the time) to ask about individual problems. So, the unemployed do not know enough about the services available in order to be able to claim them. And the case workers do not know enough about the individual needs of the unemployed to be able to offer appropriate support (even if it was available). Instead, services are offered according to standardised procedures, as rituals that make sense in an otherwise all too complex world.

The fourth point is related to agency and the subordinate position of the long term unemployed. The financial aspects of the relation reinforce the uneven power distribution between case worker and unemployed. Non-compliance in relation to suggestions made by the

PES case worker endangers the financial compensation; unemployment insurance, activity support as well as social assistance. Thus, long term unemployed have to cooperate in order to keep the financial compensation, even if the activation, according to the unemployed, does not increase the chances for finding employment.

The fifth point is related to the very strong emphasis on individual responsibility for the unemployment. Most long term unemployed are referred to job coaching programs, where the motivation of the participants is at constant scrutiny. By reinforcing the activeness in job search, in contacts with employers and to demonstrate personal commitment and ambition, the programs make the long term unemployed responsible for their failure, or success for that matter, if they become employed.

To conclude, the voice and choice opportunities for the long-term unemployed are severely constrained due to the factors just described. The organizational practices and governance systems applied (including time and resource constraints) set limits for the actual scope for individualised interventions (hypothesis 1). Services are made available to long term unemployed primarily according to standardised procedures within the organisation; for instance, duration of unemployment, rather than individual need. Interorganisational boundaries prevent individualised services, when information is not shared and no formal coordinating structures exist (hypothesis 2). Individualised interventions are available primarily for weak groups or functionally impaired (*funktionsnedsatt*), where the individuals have to 'qualify' for those categories in order to access special support (hypothesis 3; see Garsten & Jacobsson 2013). Thus, individualisation plays mainly as an individualisation of responsibility rather than as individualisation of support.

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Appendix A – Interview scenario SLB

Intervju scenario med handläggare

Informera IP om:

- Syftet med intervjun
- Hur materialet kommer att hanteras (konfidentiellt)
- Vem kommer att använda materialet, och hur.
- Var resultaten kommer att publiceras.

Ta fasta på demografiska aspekter så som:

- Ålder
- Kön

Fråga om:

- Utbildningsbakgrund
- Yrkesbakgrund
- Särskilda utbildningar för att arbeta med LTU
- År – erfarenhet av att vara handläggare.
- Om relevant, fråga om förändringar över tid i arbetet med klienter.
- Heltid/deltid Full time/part time

I. Kontextuell information om organisationen

Syftet är att få information om de huvusakliga uppgifterna som organisationen har, ansvarsområden, antal anställda, specifik roll för den intervjuade handläggaren - allt för att kunna anpassa frågorna i intervjun).

- o Kan du berätta mig om hur du tolkar den här organisationens uppdrag (Vill vi ha den lilla enhetens uppdrag? Arbetsgrupp/enhet/myndighet – hur ”nära” den egna praktiken ska den här frågan vara? Jag utgår från att det är den egna arbetsgruppen.)
- o Vad är din roll i arbetsgruppen/enheten (organisationen?)
- o Hur många är anställda i den här enheten (organisationen) som du arbetar i?

I. Kontextualiserad information om strukturen på det vardagliga arbetet. Hur går det vardagliga arbetet till?

(Syftet är att få förståelse för kontextuella faktorer som skapar klient-handläggarerelationer och som har konsekvenser för individualisering. Ex. arbetsbörda,

andra ansvarsområden (utöver klientarbetet – ex pappersarbete), sätt att hantera tidspress, antal klienter per handläggare, uppfattning om den professionella rollen, samarbete och strukturen på mötet/interaktionen med klienter.)

- o Kan du berätta för mig hur en typisk dag på ditt arbete ser ut?
- o Hur många klienter träffar du om dagen? Hur mycket tid har du i genomsnitt för en person?
- o Har du tid för att förbereda dig inför att du träffar en klient?
- o Vilka andra ansvarsområden har du som tar upp din arbetstid? Pappersarbete (menar ni dokumentation när ni säger pappersarbete?) Projektansökningar, utvärderingar, uppföljningar med mera.
- o Hur gör du för att hantera dina olika arbetsuppgifter? Är det något du måste prioritera bort för att du inte har tillräckligt med tid? Vad prioriterar du främst?
- o Hur ser du på din roll i förhållande till klienten? Vad är din uppgift i förhållande till klienten? Och hur ser du på din roll i förhållande till organisationen?
- o Känner du dig personligt ansvarig för dina klienter?
- o Vad händer när en klient kontaktar din organisation för första gången. Vad händer sedan?
- o Vem möter han/hon?
- o Finns det en utsedd handläggare som är ansvarig för klienten/ärendet?
- o Är det någon som ”monitor” vad som händer med klienten?
- o Hur många personer inom din organisation arbetar med en långtidsarbetslös klient – i genomsnitt?
- o Finns det beskrivet någonstans hur många arbetslösa du ska träffa per dag/månad? Hur bestäms hur många ärenden du får?
- o Kan du beskriva hur ett typiskt möte med en arbetslös klient går till?
- o Är de här mötena inbokade?
- o Hur lång tid tar ett ”vanligt” möte med en arbetslös?
- o Vem initierar mötet – är det du, eller klienten, eller någon annan?
- o Hur ofta träffar du en långtidsarbetslös person?
- o Var träffar du den arbetslöse? (Om möjligt, anteckna den spatiala organisationen)
- o Kontaktar du klienter vid fler tillfällen än de planerade mötena? Till exempel via telefon eller mail? När gör du det?

III. Kontroll och monitoring inom organisationen.

(Vi vill veta hur handläggare kontrolleras i organisationen (ex genom dokumentation, indikatorer, uppföljningar, ”professional bodies”.) Vad kontrolleras – om handläggarna agerar utifrån gällande lagstiftning eller inte? Om handläggaren möter fastställda indikatorer? Om arbetet ligger i linje med professionella riktlinjer? Hur påverkar

kontrollen arbetet med klienterna? Vad gör handläggarna för att få ”goda resultat”?

- o På vilket sätt kontrolleras ditt arbete av gruppchefer och andra överordnade?
- o Utifrån vilka kriterier bedöms ditt arbete? (När har du gjort ett bra jobb?)
- o Finns det vissa indikatorer som du förväntas arbeta för att uppnå?
(Kvalitetsindikatorer, ex). (Om möjligt, samla in blanka formulär där kriterierna finns uppräddade).
- o Vad är det som mäts?
- o Vem definierar/bestämmer vad som ska mätas?
- o Är de här indikatorerna/upsatta målen relevanta för ditt arbete?
- o Vad händer om det är svårt att möta målen?
- o I vilken utsträckning upplever du att de här indikatorerna och specificerade målen påverkar vad du gör i ditt dagliga arbete?
- o Kan du bli belönad när du gjort ett ”bra arbete” (utifrån indikatorerna / de uppsatta målen). Hur blir du belönad?
- o Har det någonsin hänt att du, eller någon av dina kollegor, fått reprimander för hur ni utfört arbetet med klienter? Vilken typ av arbete handlade det om, vad hade du/han/hon gjort? Vad är din syn på det?
- o Hur påverkar målen och indikatorerna
- o Vad händer om en arbetslös person är missnöjd med en handläggare och lämnar in en (formell) skrivelse om det?

IV. People-processing

(Vi vill få reda på vilka verktyg som används i arbetet. Exempelvis administrativa formulär, intervju guider, psykologiska tester, individuella handlingsplaner med mera. Det handlar om verktyg som används i det direkt arbetet med klienten, procedurer och rutiner kring klientarbetet. Syftet är också att få reda på vilken betydelse dessa verktyg har på relationen mellan handläggare och klient.)

- o Vilka verktyg använder du dig av när du arbetar med personer som är långtidsarbetslösa?
Formulär, intervju guider, psykologiska tester, individuella handlingsplaner med mera. (Om möjligt, be om att få ta del av kopior på ”blanka” dokument.)
- o Vilken funktion fyller de här verktygen?
- o Hur ser du på användbarheten, eller nyttan, av dessa verktyg (formulär, intervju guider, psykologiska tester, individuella handlingsplaner? Hur hjälper de dig i ditt arbete med klienter? Vilka instrument föredrar du? Varför?

- o Kan du påverka hur de här verktygen är utformade? Hur anpassar du ditt arbete till verktygen
- o Har du en plan för vilka frågor du ska ställa under ett möte med en långtidsarbetslös? (En mall, en lista med frågor eller liknande) (Om möjligt, samla in.)
- o Hur har den här planen/mallen/frågeformuläret utvecklats? Av vem?
- o Använder andra handläggare samma plan? Är det obligatoriskt att använda planen?
- o Vad tycker du om innehållet?
- o Hur använder du informationen som du samlar in?

- o Ska den arbetslösa personen fylla i några formulär/tester/andra dokument?
- o Vilken typ av dokument? (Samla in alla relevanta ”blanka” dokument.)
- o Vilken information innehåller de här dokumenten (som klienten fyller i).
- o Vad används de till? Är det obligatoriskt? Vad tycker du om innehållet?
- o Diskuterar du reslutaten av de här testen/dokumenterna med den arbetslöse? Hur hjälper de den enskilde att bedöma sin situation?
- o Tar du själv anteckningar under mötet, eller på vilket sätt samlar du in information om klienten? Hur då?
- o Vilken typ av information samlar du in? Har andra tillgång till informationen? Vem? Hur används informationen?
- o Diskuterar du enskilda klienter med dina kollegor? Kan du berätta om hur det går till (vad pratar ni om, när pratar ni, med vilka pratar du)

(Nu vill vi veta hur handläggare hanterar ”ovanliga” eller ”komplicerade” situationer. Vilken typ av ovanliga situationer uppkommer? Vilka klienter får mer tid? Hur hanterar de komplexa ärenden/svåra klienter? Vad är ett komplicerat fall/svår klient? VI vill veta vad som händer när en persons situation och beteende inte passar in i de på förhand definierade kategorierna som verktyg, rutiner är uppbyggda kring. Det kan handla om ”sårbara” klienter och är relaterat till förutsättningar att arbeta individualiserat.)

- o Om det finns en på förhand bestämd frågeformulär/plan för mötet med klienten: Händer det någonsin att det är svårt att hålla sig till de frågorna som finns i frågeguiderna?
- o Vilka sorters problem upplever du att det kan uppstå i möten med långtidsarbetslös? Hur hanterar du det?
- o Har personer med komplexa problem/svåra situationer något gemensamt? Kan du beskriva det för mig?

(Vi är intresserade av kategoriseringen av klienter som är inbyggd i organisationens struktur och diskurs – och som finns i de verktyg som används. Vi vill veta vilka dimensioner av en människas liv som uppfattas som relevanta för handläggaren.)

- o Vilket begrepp använder du när du pratar om arbetslösa? Klient, sökande, brukare,

- o medborgare... (Hur ser du på det begreppet?)
- o Har du speciella stödjande (councelling) samtal med arbetslösa klienter?
- o Om ja: Hur är mötena organiserade? Vem närvarar?
- o Om ja: Kan du berätta om innehållet i dessa samtal?
- o Om ja: Hur avlöper ett typiskt stödjande samtal? Kan du ge mig ett exempel?
- o Vilka slags tester använder du? (Eller kan du be någon annan utföra någon form av tester?)
- o Om ja: vad är syftet med de här testen?
- o Vilka formulär används för att dokumentera resultaten?

(Syftet är att ta reda på vilka livsområden som är relevanta för aktiveringen av huvudorganisationen och andra organisationer. Att inte ta hänsyn till vissa områden kan vara avgörande för resultaten, till exempel bostadsituation, hälsa och sjukvård, ekonomisk situation, familjesituation, attityder, utbildning, erfarenheter och skills.)

- o Vilka egenskaper eller individuella förutsättningar, har betydelse när man planerar en (aktiverings)åtgärd för den arbetslöse? (till exempel personlighet, utbildning, förmåga att lära sig saker etc.)
- o Varför just dessa? (Vem har bestämt det – och varför är de viktiga)
- o Du berättade tidigare att du samlar in information om dina klienter i xxx (refer to what your interviewee actually said). Hur ser det ut med andra problem som individer kan ha – som kan minska deras chanser på arbetsmarknaden. Till exempel en svår familjesituation, hälsoproblem, hemlöshet, alkoholproblem med mera. (refer to life problems which were not mentioned)? Vilka är dina förutsättningar att kunna ta hänsyn till den här typen av problem när du arbetar med klienten?
- o I vilken utsträckning är en persons ”anställningsbarhet” relevant i ditt arbete? Vad baseras en människas anställningsbarhet på – vilka dimensioner är relevanta (ex utbildning, erfarenheter, personlighet, skills)?
- o På vilket sätt kan andra anställda inom din organisation underlätta för klienten att komma närmare arbetsmarknaden? Andra organisationer och verksamheter här i Örebro?
- o Vad gör du om personen har ett problem som är utanför din organisations ansvarsområde? Har jag förstått frågan rätt?

V. Aktiveringen / åtgärderna / insatserna

(Syftet är att förstå hur handläggare beslutar om insatser och åtgärder för en klient, arbetsgången, tidsramar, villkorande och klientens möjligheter att själv påverka sin situation (valmöjligheter)).

- o Hur planerar du för insatser/åtgärder för en långtidsarbetslös klient?
- o Har varje klient en ”individuell handlingsplan”? (Vilket begrepp används.) Kan du beskriva vad som ingår i den individuella handlingsplanen? (Be om en kopia av en ”blank” handlingsplan.)
- o Vad innehåller planen för information?

- o Hur kommer man fram till vad som ska stå i handlingsplanen? Vilken roll/funktion fyller handlingsplanen, enligt dig?
- o Vad föreslår du en arbetslös klient?
 - o Vad är det som avgör vad du kan erbjuda?
 - o Hur ser stegen ut – vad följer efter en åtgärd?
 - o Vilka tidsramar finns att ta hänsyn till?

- o Vilken roll har den arbetslösa i planeringen?
- o I vilken utsträckning kan man skraddarsy interventioner/åtgärder för enskilda klienter?
- o Vilka möjligheter har den enskilde klienten att aktivt välja insats/åtgärd?

- o Upplever du att du kan anpassa arbetet (vara flexibel) utifrån enskilda klienters behov och önskemål? Kan du beskriva hur det går till när du gör det? (Vilka hinder finns det för att anpassa arbetet utifrån individens förutsättningar/behov/önskemål?).
- o Använder du dig av ditt ”handlingsutrymme”?
- o I vilken utsträckning kan klienter välja eller påverka beslutet om insatser/åtgärder? Vad hindrar?

- o Hur är ansvaret för respektive part formulerat i handlingsplanen? Vilket ansvar har du (och din organisation) – vilket ansvar har den enskilde?

- o När åtgärder sätts in, vad måste den enskilde göra för att få hjälp? Är det några moment som är obligatoriska för den arbetslöse? Finns det rutiner för att kontrollera att den arbetslöse gör det den ska?
- o Vilka sanktionsmöjligheter finns det – om klienten inte gör det den ska. När används sanktionerna?

VI. Information mellan organisationer:

(Syftet är att få en överblick över samarbetet med handläggare som arbetar i andra organisationer, hur samarbetet är organiserat i dagliga rutiner, när klienter hänvisas till andra organisationer, arbetsindledning mellan organisationer.)

- o Samarbetar du med andra organisationer i ditt dagliga arbete med långtidsarbetslösa?
- o Vilka?
- o Vad består samarbetet av?
- o Vilken betydelse har samarbetet för de arbetslösa? Har samarbetet betydelse för deras förutsättningar att få ett arbete? Öka deras välbefinnande?
- o Tycker du att det finns ett väl fungerande samarbete med andra organisationer kring den enskilde klienten?
- o Varför inte?

- Vilka är utmaningarna i samarbetet med andra organisationer?
 - Hur uppstår problem i samarbetet? Hur hanterar du dessa?
 - Kan du berätta lite om dina erfarenheter kring samarbete med andra aktörer – hur ser du på den här typen av samarbete?
-
- Informerar du långtidsarbetslösa klienter om andra organisationer/verksamheter som kan ge stöd och hjälp till arbetslösa? Vilka då (tänk vidare än bara FK och AF – även frivilligorganisationer, kyrkan etc.) I vilka situationer hänvisar du dem till dessa organisationer?
 - Vill du tillägga någonting?
 - Tack för din tid och din medverkan!

Appendix B – Interview scenario LTU

Intervjuscenario med långtidsarbetslösa.

Informera IP om

- Syftet med intervjun
- Hur materialet kommer hanteras (konfidentiellt)
- Vem som kommer använda materialet och hur (anonymt)
- Var kommer resultaten publiceras.

Uppmärksamma demografiska aspekter så som:

- Ålder
- Kön

I. Den intervjuades livssituation

(Vi vill få en övergripande bild av intervjupersonens livssituation; det vill säga demografisk bakgrund, socioekonomisk profil, tidigare kontakt med olika stödsystem i relation till situationen som arbetslös med mera).

- Kan du berätta lite om dig själv?
- Har du familj?
- Hur ser din utbildningsbakgrund ut?
- Vilka erfarenheter har du från arbetslivet?
- Vad var det senaste jobbet du hade? Hur länge var du anställd? Vad hände efter det?
- Hur länge har du varit arbetslös?
- Är det här första gången du varit i kontakt med arbetsförmedlingen?
- Har du fått hjälp tidigare från arbetsförmedlingen?
- If no: Kan du berätta om den första kontakten du hade med Arbetsförmedlingen...
- Har du sökt eller fått stöd och hjälp från andra organisationer än arbetsförmedlingen (socialtjänsten) för att få hjälp att hitta ett arbete? Andra organisationer, företag eller föreningar? (Här kommer personen sannolikt att prata om den insats du deltar i – ex jobbpunkt väst och socialtjänsten).
- Om ja: hur kom det sig och vad hände?

II. Mötet med arbetsförmedlingen

a) Relationer mellan arbetslös och arbetsförmedling

(Vi vill veta om vägen in i arbetsförmedlingen, hur relationen mellan arbetslös och arbetsförmedling är strukturerad och vilken karaktär relationen har.)

- Nu ska vi prata lite om arbetsförmedlingen. Hur länge har du varit inskriven på arbetsförmedlingen?

- Hur ofta har du varit hos arbetsförmedlingen under den tiden?
- Vem träffade du, senast när du var där?
- Vad handlade mötet om? Kan du ge exempel på vad ni pratade om?
- När du är där, blir du uppmuntrad att ställa frågor till din handläggare?
- Svarar de på dina frågor på ett bra sätt?
- Och hur pratar din handläggare med dig (är han/hon trevlig, likgiltig, otrevlig)?
- Har du upplevt att du blivit pressad av någon på arbetsförmedlingen? Vad har det handlat om? (Upplevelsen kan vara både positiv och negativ – berätta och beskriv.)
- Kan du beskriva ett typiskt möte med en handläggare på arbetsförmedlingen?
- Hur skulle du själv beskriva er relation?

b) Diagnostisering och kategorisering

(Det här handlar om kontakterna mellan den arbetslöse och arbetsförmedling, i syfte att lära mer om hur den individuella handlingsplanen lagts upp. Vi är intresserade av hur den enskilde kategoriseras och vilka områden som diskuteras, vilka frågor som ställs, vilka livsområden som är intressanta för handläggaren, och vilka problem som ignoreras.)

- Tycker du att din handläggare som du träffar, har en bra bild av dina erfarenheter och kunskaper?
- Om inte: Vilken information har de inte?
- Jag skulle vilja veta mer om hur det går till när någon från arbetsförmedlingen frågar dig om din situation, för att bestämma vad du kan få för typ av stöd. Kommer du ihåg något sådant möte? När var det?
- Vad frågade han/hon om då?
- Fick du frågor som handlade om utbildning? Erfarenheter i arbetslivet? Ditt privatliv?
- Frågade hon/han något om dina egna förväntningar?
- Frågade han/hon vad du helst vill göra, vilken typ av jobb du vill ha?
- Var det något som du tyckte var konstigt, eller förvånande, med de här frågorna? Vad då?
- Förklarade hon/han syftet med frågorna?
- Sa han/hon något om hur dina svar skulle användas?
- Fick du fylla i några formulär (på papper eller i dator)? Vilka då, vad handlade de om?
- Förklarade han/hon varför du skulle fylla ut formulären?

- Vet du om du har gjort några typer av test som säger något om styrkor och svagheter (personlighetstest, färdighetstest etc.). Sådana test görs ofta av anordnare – det vill säga när personen är i en insats. Jag antar att flera kommer att referera till dessa, och inte direkt till arbetsförmedlingens tester. Men det är kanske inget problem?
- If yes: vad handlade testen om, vad var det för frågor?
- Hur upplevde du själv testet?
- Har testet varit användbart på något sätt? Hur då?

- Eller upplever du att testen är problematiska på något sätt? Hur då?
- Har du diskuterat resultaten av testen med någon, har du fått tillfälle att kommentera resultaten?
- Om ja; hur gick det till?
- På vilket sätt har dina synpunkter på testen haft betydelse för vad som hände sedan?

c) Insatser och villkorade

(Nu vill vi veta vad resultatet av kontakterna med arbetsförmedlingen blev, och vilken roll villkor spelar. Fick personen den information som han/hon ville ha? Diskuterades alternativa lösningar på problemet? Vad uppmanades den arbetslösa att göra efter kontakten med handläggaren? Var han hon/tvungen att göra något? Vilka sanktioner användes?)

- Var du överens med din handläggare om den fortsatta planen? (Nu är vi alltså tillbaka till kontakten med af – och inte med anordnaren).
- Kan du berätta vad planeringen bestod av, vad skulle du göra?
- Vem gjorde planeringen, var det du eller handläggaren, eller ni tillsammans?
- Skrevs planeringen ned någonstans?
- Var det här en individuell handlingsplan? Och här kommer det bli komplicerat –för sannolikt finns en handlingsplan hos af, en hos kommunen socialtjänst och antagligen också en handlingsplan hos aktören – insatsen. Kanske tre handlingsplaner, med andra ord. Är vi intresserade av alla handlingsplaner, eller bara AF?
- Hur beskrivs ditt ansvar för att hitta ett arbete i planen?
- Har du varit tvungen att skriva på planen?
- Vad tror du hade hänt om du inte hade skrivit på? Berättade handläggaren något om det?
- Har det hänt dig någon gång, eller varit nära att hända (det vill säga sanktionerna).
- Vilka erbjudanden eller förslag fick du från arbetsförmedlingen (vi vill veta om erbjudanden om jobb, insatser, ersättningar etc.)
- Vilka valmöjligheter hade du? Eller var det bara ett erbjudande som du var tvungen att ta?
- Vilka stöd, insatser har du haft nytta av? Kan du berätta om stödet och på vilket sätt du haft nytta av stödet?
- För att få stödet (eller ersättningen) var det något som du var tvungen att göra?
- Måste du göra något själv, för att få tillgång till stödet? Vad?
- På vilket sätt kontrolleras om du har gjort det du ska för att få ersättning eller det stöd du har rätt till? Är det någon typ av uppföljningar, eller utvärderingar?
- Hur går kontrollen till?
- Hur upplever du det?
- Är det bra för dig? Hur då?
- Eller har kontrollen/uppföljningen snarare en negativ inverkan på dig? Hur då?
- Har du upplevt någon gång att du blivit “tvingad” in i en åtgärd, trots att du inte velat det?
- Om ja: Kan du berätta om det?

- Har du fått förslag eller erbjudanden från arbetsförmedlingen som du inte har utnyttjat? Vad då, och varför utnyttjade du det inte? Fick det några konsekvenser?

d) Agency

(Syftet är att få reda på den enskildes handlingsutrymme och beroende på handläggare, arbetsförmedling, regler och information)

- Upplever du att du kunnat påverka det stöd du får av arbetsförmedlingen? På vilket sätt, kan du ge exempel? (Eller är vi intresserade av vilket stöd han/hon får i insatserna och ev av socialtjänsten också?)
- Kan du försvara dig (och dina intressen) mot arbetsförmedlingen? (se ovan)
- Om ja: Hur då?
- Om nej: Varför inte?
- Har du hänt att du själv fått reda på någon typ av stöd som du velat ha, men som du inte fått information från din handläggare om? Vad gjorde du då?
- Har det funnits tillfällen när du verkligen velat ha en viss typ av hjälp eller stöd, men inte fått det? Kan du berätta om det? Vad gjorde du då?
- Har det funnits tillfällen när du inte varit nöjd med de insatser som arbetsförmedlingen har gett dig? Kan du berätta om det, vad gjorde du då?
- Har du varit osams, eller haft en konflikt med din handläggare någon gång? Vad handlade det om? Vad gjorde du? (bara af, eller även anordnare och socialtjänst?)

III. Ansvar & responsabilization

(Vi vil veta hur den enskilde upplever hennes/hans egna ansvar för den uppkomna situationen och hur den arbetslöse tror att handläggaren ser på samma fråga.)

- Har du fått den information du behöver av arbetsförmedlingen?
- Har det varit lätt att få tag på de personer du velat träffa/få kontakt med?
- Tycker du att du vet vad som händer, och vilket ansvar du har och vilket ansvar arbetsförmedlingen har i förhållande till handlingsplanen?
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- Om du själv får beskriva orsakerna till att du är arbetslös, vad skulle du säga då?
- Finns det någonting du hade kunnat göra för att inte vara arbetslös? Vad?
- Upplever du att du på något sätt själv är ansvarig för din arbetslöshet? På vilket sätt då?
- Vem, eller vad, är ansvarig för att du ska komma ur arbetslösheten?
- Hur tror du att arbetsförmedlingen ser på vem som bär ansvaret för att du ska få jobb. Är det deras eller ditt ansvar?
- Vad tycker du själv att du behöver för att kunna få ett jobb?
- Vilket ansvar har arbetsförmedlingen (eller andra aktörer som är involverade – ex. jobbpoint väst, socialtjänsten)?
- Vilket ansvar har arbetsförmedlingen, enligt den individuella handlingsplanen?

IV. Relationen med anställda på andra myndigheter/aktörer

(Syftet är att få reda på om den arbetslöse hänvisats till andra myndigheter/aktörer som en del av den hjälpen personen erbjuds. Och hur den arbetslöse upplever samarbetet mellan dessa aktörer.)

- Har du hänvisats till andra organisationer? Vilka? Varför då? (Ex socialtjänst, jobbpunkt väst eller andra anordnare).
- Om ja; Vad är dina erfarenheter av det stödet?
- Har det hjälpt dig? På vilket sätt?
- Eller har det komplicerat situationen? Hur då?
- Hur ser du på samarbetet mellan olika organisationer (det vill säga arbetsförmedling, socialtjänst, Jobbpunkt väst, Försäkringskassan...)

V. Bedömning av people prosseing och påverkan på välmående och agency.

(Vi vill veta om, och på vilket sätt, den arbetslöses livssituation har förändrats utifrån det stöd/behandling som han/jon har fått. Har man kommit närmare en ösning på de upplevda problemen? Vad har förbättrats? Vilka områden har inte förbättrats? Vad har försämrats?)

- Utifrån din upplevelse, på vilket sätt har det stöd du fått betydelse för dig? Hur ser du på de erbjudanden du har fått från arbetsförmedlingen?
- Tycker du att (Jobbpunkt väst, socialtjänst etc.) tar dina behov på allvar? Varför, varför inte?
- Tycker du att arbetsförmedlingen tagit hänsyn till vad DU vill? Eller har du blivit tvingad att ta del av en viss typ av insats?
- Upplever du att den individuella handlingsplanen varit användbar? Hur då/Varför inte? Gagnar planen dina intressen? Varför inte?
- Kan du berätta lite mer om ditt nuvarande liv och din situation på arbetsmarknaden?
- Har det blivit bättre eller sämre sedan du kontaktade arbetsförmedlingen? Vilken roll har arbetsförmedlingen spelat? Och vilken roll har insatserna som du fått spelat? (Har de bidragit till att du kan få ett jobb? Eller är det på helt andra sätt och med hjälp av andra du kommer att få ett jobb, den dagen du får det?)
- Avslutningsvis skulle jag vilja fråga dig om hur du ser på dina erfarenheter med arbetsförmedlingen (och andra aktörer som varit involverade).

Tack för din tid och ditt samarbete!