



Systematic Review Troubled Families

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What is systematic review ?

A **systematic review** aims to comprehensively locate and synthesize research that bears on a particular question, using organized, transparent, and replicable procedures at each step in the process (Littell et al., 2008).

The purpose of this review is to:

‘inform and support the selection of best practices across Europe in the field of employability and employment of vulnerable groups (TF).

In practical terms, this review will provide ‘**hard**’ **evidence** on what works in this area, thus guiding the selection and analysis of the best practices.’

Used complementary with: survey, appreciative inquiry and peer review



Vulnerable groups for the AI Learning Network

1. Disaffected Youth:

- Disaffected youth inclusion and empowerment
- Disaffected youth employment, education and training

2. Marginalized in community

- Homelessness
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Offenders / Ex-offenders
- Mental health, physical and learning disabilities

3. Troubled families

- **Offender's families**
- **Multigenerational unemployment/Long term unemployment**
- **Anti-social behaviour**
- **Educational problems**



Inclusion criteria

1. papers produced and published in EU countries within the last **5 years** (2009-2013). When necessary, papers published prior to this year, or in other areas (including the US), have been taken into consideration.
2. papers published in **peer reviewed scientific journals** have been given priority. For topics where peer-review papers were not available, unpublished reports or other 'grey literature' were accepted.
3. to look at the **employability or/and employment** for the mentioned disadvantaged groups.
4. to present **results or impact on employability or employment** of the mentioned disadvantaged groups. Papers describing reflections or critical comments regarding different initiatives were included but were not given priority.
5. to be **in English** but also in some other EU languages. If one report was available in many languages, the English version was preferred.

But also: reports



Electronic databases and keywords

- SAGE and Taylor and Francis ('employment', 'offender's family', 'anti-social behaviour', 'vulnerable groups', 'educational problems', 'troubled families' and 'after 2009')
- At the end of this exercise 31 studies were identified as corresponding to the inclusion criteria.
- But also websites – from the partners (see the Annex)
- **STILL WORK IN PROGRESS – need for assistance !!!**



Active Inclusion

- Is a paradigm that emerged on the European agenda in 2005 during the UK's EU presidency
- Became a point of reference for strategies against poverty and exclusion.
- Core ideas: to be effective combine adequate income support, access to quality services and inclusive labour markets (see Rec. no. 2008/867/EC on the active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market)



Troubled families

Policy context

- Current economic downturn and its consequences on children and women – EC adopted Recommendation **‘Investing in Children-breaking the cycle of disadvantage’** (2013) – guidance how to tackle poverty and social exclusion through: quality childcare, family support and benefits etc.
 - One of the first principles - **‘access to adequate resources – support parents’ participation in the labour market’** (Recital 2.1)
- To respond to the civil unrest in 2011 – UK Government – Troubled Families Programme – puts together resources and expertise of many central and local authorities.
 - Troubled Families are defined as those that **‘have problems and cause problems to the community around them, putting high costs on the public sector’**.



1. Offender's families

- Severely affected by crime and social exclusion
- Most severely affected families of sex offenders.
- Severe impact on children – see Coping Project

- But interventions and research seem to focus on how families can be mobilized as social capital to support desistance.
- When measured, family employment and employability are assessed as 'side effects' (two studies).
- Research – family support services based on holistic approach are effective.

- Most effective:
 - a dedicated worker, dedicated to a family,
 - practical 'hands on' support,
 - a persistent, assertive and challenging approach,
 - considering the family as a whole – gathering the intelligence,
 - common purpose and agreed action.



2. Multigenerational unemployment

- defined as ‘three generations of families of where no-one has ever worked’
- MacDonald et al. (2013) – tested in Glasgow and concluded that ‘intergenerational culture of worklessness’ as ‘**hunting the Yeti and shooting zombies**’ – none existing – political concept
- But demonstrate how complex and multiple problems, rooted in long terms of experience of deep poverty can distance people from the labour market.
- **Long term unemployment** – not in employment for 12 months or more



Long term unemployed

- 2013 OECD report - *'Tackling Long-Term Unemployment Amongst Vulnerable Groups'* – online survey PES – process and context
- Understand the **area and the context** – use of the labour market intelligence,
- **Strategic leadership** – the development should be a part of a strategy and not in isolation,
- Target limited resources to those most in need,
- Seek sustainability and added value,
- **Person-centred** – develop personalised interventions, involve mentors or coaches,
- **Make training and support work-focused and engage employers** – combine paid employment and work experience with training to build up skills and develop attachment to the labour force.
- **Joined-up offer** – pull together provisions (such as advice, placement, training, welfare) under a single banner.
- **Partnership** – interventions should be based on strong partnerships between local communities and organisations.
- Involve workplace representatives and trade unions – involve mentors and 'buddies' in helping people overcome problems in an unfamiliar work environment.
- Embrace changing public sector roles and finance mechanisms – **involve the state** in the co-production of interventions with people and for people.
- Evaluation and dissemination – lessons are captured through evaluation and disseminated in an active manner.



Evidence

- Some of these recommendations have strong empirical support:
 - Korsu and Weglenski (2010) – Paris – the importance of urban **spatial factors** – the job accessibility and context.
 - Clarke (2014) – welfare-to-work, workfare, work first approach – call center – work for those who are **‘job ready’**- but warns on the ‘secondary labour markets’ for low skilled workers and the absence of support transition into work.
- More effective:
 - Benefits with work-based placements
 - Person centered approach – deal with complex needs of the unemployed.
 - For immigrants – strict employment protection legislation, labour demands focused on low skilled and welfare state is less generous for the unemployed (compared 5 European countries).



3. Anti-social behaviour

- England and Wales the anti-social behaviour order (ASBO) was introduced in 1998 as a civil order made against a person who has been shown to have engaged in anti-social behaviour.
- According to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the anti-social behaviour is defined as **‘caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household’**.
- In the literature – still vague definitions.
- The literature did not explore the relationship between anti-social behaviour and employment – but on the impact of informal or formal interventions on subsequent behaviours
- Promising results are displayed by interventions that:
 - Use family or systemic approach
 - Involve local stakeholders
 - Use sport-based activities to engage with youth



4. Educational problems

Policy context

- Labour market changes – increase in the number of knowledge-based jobs and decrease in the number of low skilled jobs
- EC responded with Europe 2020 initiative **Youth on the Move** and the **2012-2013 Youth Opportunities Initiative**
 - Concentrated action from states, social partners, employers etc.
 - Pathways back to education and training
 - Better contact between education and employment

New statistical indicator – NEET rate.



Evidence

- **Short term skills training programs** work with ***female, older participants and those receiving financial help***. Not working with psychiatric disabilities or other skills barriers (i.e. literacy).
- Eurofound report (2012) – Europe
 - Diversified answer paying attention to vulnerable groups
 - Increase readiness
 - Long-term solutions
 - Involvement of stakeholders – in designing and delivery
 - Client-centered work
 - Innovation
- But more attention to opening up access to and from mainstream education
- More attention to provide access to knowledge-based jobs



Discussion

- Not too many evaluated interventions based on the AI concept
- Most of the studies are either non-scalable or placed very low in the Maryland Scientific Methods Scale
- The following principles seem to be important:
 - The sequential approach – readiness, placement, support
 - Continuation of intervention – ex-offenders and mental health
 - Personalized services – customized and flexible
 - Holistic approach
 - Observe also the structural obstacles – especially for ex-offenders, disabled people
 - Contact with employers and local communities
 - ‘Good’ and enthusiastic staff and leadership



Recommendations

- Since most interventions have a long-term impact – projects or programmes lifetime should be extended to 5 or even 10 years – this would discourage ‘parking’ practices and short term / ‘quick fixes’
- More research – independent, contracted before, during and after the project (see the ‘delayed’ effects)
- The concept of active inclusion could be up graded with a access to quality and flexible education – recognizing the trend towards a knowledge-based society.
- The concept of AI should be more promoted in the social inclusion programmes
- Interventions based on AI should be part of wider public strategies of ‘good quality life’ that should incorporate interventions on employability, employment, education, training, leisure time etc.

Keywords, databases and websites

Databases	Keywords	Results (hits)	Included
Google Academic	' <u>employment</u> ' + 'vulnerable groups'+ after 2009	32 100	10 (most of them from outside Europe)
SAGE	' <u>employment</u> ' + 'vulnerable groups'+ after 2009	390	6
	' <u>employment</u> ' + 'troubled families' + after 2009	15	2
	' <u>employment</u> ' + 'offender's family' = after 2009	0	0
	' <u>employment</u> ' + 'long term unemployed' + after 2009	207	4
	' <u>employment</u> ' + 'long term unemployment' + after 2009	236	4
	' <u>employment</u> ' + 'anti-social behavior' + after 2009	557	0 (no connection to employment)
	' <u>employment</u> ' + 'educational problems' + after 2009	66	1
Taylor and Francis	' <u>employment</u> ' + 'vulnerable groups'+ after 2009	381	7
	' <u>employment</u> ' + 'troubled families' + after 2009	1064	0 (no connection to employment)
	' <u>employment</u> ' + 'offender's family' = after 2009	140	0 (almost all look at how the family can support the offender in getting employment or desist)
	' <u>employment</u> ' + 'long term unemployed' + after 2009	4927	4 (most of the papers are from outside Europe)
	' <u>employment</u> ' + 'anti-social behavior' + after 2009	3812	1
	' <u>employment</u> ' + 'educational problems' + after 2009	15737	2



Thank you !!

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