



# 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

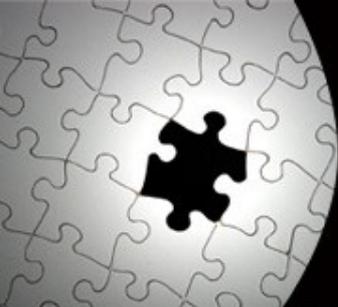
- **Offender's families**
- **Multigenerational unemployment/Long term unemployment**
- **Anti-social behaviour**
- **Educational problems**



# Inclusion criteria

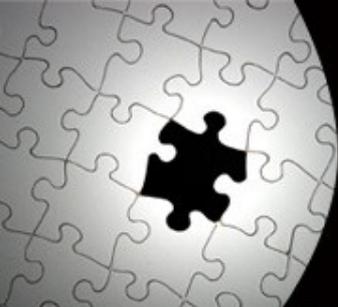
1. papers produced and published in EU countries within the last **5 years** (2009-2013). When necessary, papers published prior to this year, or in other areas (including the US), have been taken into consideration.
2. papers published in **peer reviewed scientific journals** have been given priority. For topics where peer-review papers were not available, unpublished reports or other 'grey literature' were accepted.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



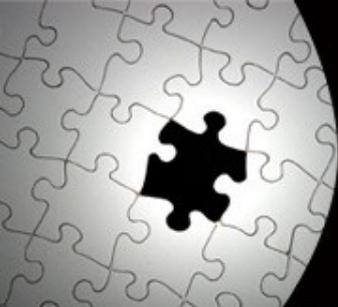
# Electronic databases and keywords

- 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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