WHAT AFFECTS JOB PROSPECTS?

The Employability Indicator Project

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What affects job prospects?
The Employability Indicator Project
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Glossary

**Employability Indicator Project** (Danish: Beskæftigelses Indikator Projektet/BIP) aims to create new knowledge and insight into the Danish employment programmes to assist vulnerable unemployed persons in Denmark. The project investigates the relationship between selected indicators of job readiness and the likelihood that the unemployed person will enter the labour market.

**Socially vulnerable clients** refers to the group of unemployed who have multiple issues beyond simply being unemployed, which put them at risk of being socially excluded. Such issues, alone or in combination, could be psychological or physical disabilities, alcoholism, drug abuse, or poor professional qualifications.

**Social assistance benefit** is the economic assistance provided by the public sector to citizens who are otherwise not able to provide financially for themselves and/or their families. This benefit should be distinguished from unemployment insurance administered through an unemployment insurance fund; social assistance benefits are normally paid after unemployment benefits have expired.

**Educational aid** is a type of unemployment benefit provided to young people (below age 30) with no education who are unable to provide for themselves financially. Despite the main aim with the assistance towards young people under the age 30 is education, the educational aid should not be confused with any educational scholarship.

**Activity-ready clients** refers to the group of clients who receive social assistance benefits and who have issues beyond those of unemployment. An activity-ready client is usually a socially vulnerable client (see above) who requires additional support and is considered unable to undertake an ordinary job in the near future. Such individuals, however, might be offered other programmes to help them improve their skills, clarify their needs and become job-ready.

**Job-ready clients** are assessed as being able to undertake an ordinary job and thus become self-sufficient in the nearest future. They are considered as ready to end receiving social assistance benefits.

**Caseworkers** are employees at the job centres who are responsible for helping and advising unemployed clients so that they preferably can obtain ordinary jobs or if not, flex-jobs with reduced hours. Caseworkers assess each client individually, providing service and assistance in various aspects of the client’s daily life, including their personal and social situation and job skills enhancement.
Employment reintegration programmes initiated by the job centres refer to various employment activities for assisting unemployed persons to either acquire jobs or starting some kind of vocational training or education.

Flex-job is a term used to describe the conditions under which a client with reduced work ability can be employed. Under the flex-job arrangement, a private or public employer agrees to give special consideration to the client’s physical and/or psychological circumstances during employment, typically with reduced working hours or slowed pace of tasks. In a flex-job, the client’s work tasks are organised based on the client’s ability and pace.

Marginal job (Danish: småjob) is a term used to describe part-time jobs of few hours of work weekly. Contrary to flex-job holders, clients who undertake marginal jobs are employed under ordinary pay and working conditions, usually on a non-permanent contract. Simultaneously, they receive a correspondingly reduced unemployment benefit.
Progression towards the labour market

The Employability Indicator Project (Danish: Beskæftigelses Indikator projektet/BIP) is the most comprehensive scientific progression measurement study, nationally, as well as internationally, that focuses on what factors lead socially vulnerable recipients of social assistance benefits to take up employment.

The project has examined the relationship between selected indicators for job readiness and the likelihood that vulnerable recipients of social assistance benefits will obtain a job. In researching these indicators, we are in a much stronger position to predict what kind of assistance will be needed to help this particular group progress towards entry into the labour market.

Although Denmark has generous unemployment and social benefits, including a network of municipal job counselling centres, the Danish welfare system has not been effective in assisting vulnerable recipients of social assistance benefits to enter the labour market. This group requires special measures to obtain employment, and according to our indicator data, the job centres’ activities have not had the desired impact on helping the socially vulnerable clients obtain employment.

Not many job centres are aware of what measures are necessary in order to help vulnerable recipients of social assistance benefits on the path to job readiness and jobs. Nor are they fully aware of which guidelines to follow in managing their employment stimulation efforts.

Thus, a tool for setting and steering toward medium-term goals is needed. One such tool would be having a set of reliable indicators for the clients’ ‘labour market readiness’ that demonstrably correlate with their job probability.

We believe that we have identified these indicators.
Facts about vulnerable recipients of social assistance benefits:

- There are 60,000 activity-ready recipients of social assistance benefits in Denmark.

- 63% of all activity-ready recipients of social assistance benefits have been on public support more than 80% of the time during the preceding five years.

- The longer clients have received social assistance benefits, the less likely they are to exit the public support system. 74% of those who, after more than five years, do not receive social assistance benefits, start receiving other public service benefits (e.g., public benefits according to permanent reduced ability to work or early retirement).

- Expenditures for the group of socially vulnerable clients receiving social assistance run to approximately 11.7 billion DKK annually.

Source: Jobindsats.dk, 2017; Carsten Koch Udvalget, 2015: ‘Nye veje mod job – for borgere i udkanten af arbejdsmarkedet’.

The results of the new research show which indicators are capable of predicting whether vulnerable recipients of social assistance benefits will start searching for a job, and whether or not they will obtain a job.

This knowledge can be applied when quality assuring and evaluating the effects of various employment promotion initiatives targeted to vulnerable recipients of social assistance benefits. This knowledge is also useful for employment reintegration programmes, as it indicates the most essential factors relevant to the needs of the target group.

The project similarly illustrates how the employment reintegration programmes can be made more productive, including which measures best enable an individual to progress towards the labour market, and which activities have either no effect or tend to impede such progression.

In addition, our findings show the importance of the caseworker in promoting the client’s progress towards (re-)entering the labour market.
Introducing The Employability Indicator Project

The Employability Indicator Project is a collaborative project involving both practitioners and researchers. The project was initiated and founded by Væksthuset Den Erhvervsdrivende Fond, and Væksthusets Forskningscenter has been responsible for the project management. The research was initiated in 2011, and data collection took place from 2013 through 2016.

In the research project, 11 indicators for job readiness have been developed, based on national and international studies. Over a four-year period, the indicators were tested as a tool for measuring the progress of vulnerable recipients of social assistance benefits during their unemployment period.

Ten municipal job centres have participated in the research project. From each job centre, a number of activity-ready recipients of social assistance benefits were selected to participate in The Employability Indicator Project. Over the four years, the ten job centres conducted repeated measures of approximately 4,000 activity-ready clients. The majority of these activity-ready clients were in the age group 30 or over, though, 10% of them were younger and thus receiving a another benefit known as ‘educational aid’. Approximately 300 caseworkers were involved in the project. Over 27,000 measurements have been carried out, consisting of approximately 13,500 client responses and 13,500 caseworker responses.

Professor of economics at Aarhus University, Michael Rosholm, in collaboration with colleagues at Aarhus University, has conducted analyses of the data.
The progression measurement tool

The progression measurement tool aggregates 11 indicators for a client's job readiness. The indicators are shown in the figure below.

FIGURE 1 THE 11 INDICATORS IN THE EMPLOYABILITY INDICATOR PROJECT
Each of the selected indicators can be affected by different employment integration activities. These activities can potentially contribute to the social assistance recipient moving forward or backward on one or more of the indicators.

The indicators have been translated into two sets of questionnaires, one for the recipients of social assistance benefits, the other for their caseworker. The recipients answered the client questionnaire approximately every third month in conjunction with their meeting at the job centres. The caseworkers also completed the caseworker questionnaire approximately every third month. The specific question formulations for both questionnaires are below.

**QUESTIONS ASKED OF THE CLIENTS**
1. Are you aware of what type of work you would like to perform?
2. How do you feel about initiating contact with people whom you do not know?
3. How good are you at collaborating with others?
4. Do you have the support of family and friends when you need help?
5. Do you have the personal energy in your everyday life to focus on getting a job?
6. In general, how would you rate your (physical and mental) health in terms of being able to hold a job?
7. Do you think your skills can be used in a workplace?
8. Do you think you are able to carry out work at a workplace?
9. Do you know what to do in order to improve your job opportunities?
10. How do you search for a job?
11. How much salary would you prefer if you were offered a job?

**QUESTIONS ASKED OF THE CASEWORKER**
1. Does the client have a realistic understanding of where in the labour market, his/her competencies can be applied?
2. To what degree does the client act with determination in terms of obtaining a job?
3. How do you assess the client’s ability to seek and initiate dialogue with others?
4. How good is the client in discussing about himself/herself and his/her relevant competencies?
5. How do you assess the client’s ability to cooperate with others?
6. How do you assess the client’s ability to receive and understand instructions about a task?
7. How do you assess the client’s ability to concentrate on a task without being distracted?
8. To what extent does the client have a social network that provides support for entering the labour market?
9. To what extent is the client able to master his/her own life at the same time as focusing on obtaining a job?
10. To what extent is the client able to master any (physical and mental) health problems?
11. Do you believe that the client will get a job within the next year?

Except for questions 10 and 11 from the client questionnaire, the answers were given on a scale of 1 to 5. Through the repeated responses, it was possible to follow the client’s progress (or lack thereof) carefully.

The progression data have been linked with the DREAM database of the Danish Ministry of Employment. This combination has enabled us to analyse the correlation between the indicators and the probability that the client will obtain a job.

Further information (in Danish) about methodology and the dataset in The Employability Indicator Project can be found on Væksthusets Forskningscenter’s website: www.vaeksthusets-forskningscenter.dk.

New knowledge in three main areas
The remainder of this report describes the main conclusions of the study. These conclusions centre around three areas, addressing the following questions:

1. What is the relationship between the indicators of job readiness and the likelihood that vulnerable recipients of social assistance benefit will obtain a job?
2. Which employment reintegration programmes are likely to create progress on the path to obtaining a job?
3. What is the significance of the caseworker for the recipients of social assistance benefits and their job prospects?

For the remaining part of this paper, vulnerable recipients of social assistance benefits are referred to as ‘activity-ready clients’ or just ‘clients’, when referring to The Employability Indicator Project, we use the Danish abbreviation: BIP.

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1 All publications from The Employability Indicator Project can be downloaded from this site: www.vaeksthusets-forskningscenter.dk/projects/beskaeftigelses-indikator-projektet/
The correlation between job readiness and job prospects

In this section, we present research results regarding the correlation between the clients’ performance on the indicators of job readiness and the clients’ job search activities as well as their prospects of getting a job or starting an education.²

Initiating job search activities

The results from BIP reveal that job search activity is an essential factor in achieving employment. This also applies to the group of vulnerable activity-ready recipients of social assistance benefits. However, using the right job search channels is just as important as the search activity, since both factors have a positive impact on the clients’ job prospects.

EVERY FOURTH CLIENT IS AN ACTIVE JOB SEEKER

Only 28% of the clients in this group state that they actively search for jobs; this is nevertheless a high proportion considering that activity-ready clients are not obliged by law to actively engage in job search activities.

The clients searching for jobs use between 1 to 6 job search channels, although most use only one or two channels. The scope of the clients’ job search activity is shown in Figure 2 below.

FIGURE 2. THE NUMBER OF JOB SEARCH CHANNELS USED BY ACTIVITY-READY CLIENTS

NINE INDICATORS INCREASE THE JOB SEARCH ACTIVITIES

The analysis reveals that clients’ job search activities are dependent on how well they perform on the indicators we have measured. We have identified nine indicators that have a high degree of significance on whether or not clients will begin searching for a job. The indicators are shown in Figure 3.

FIGURE 3. THE SIGNIFICANT INDICATORS THAT INCREASE THE LIKELIHOOD OF SEARCHING FOR A JOB

CLIENT INDICATORS:
Belief in being able to handle a job
Health coping skills
Knowledge about opportunities
Everyday coping skills
Cooperation skills

CASEWORKER INDICATORS:
Caseworker’s assessment of client’s determination
Caseworker’s confidence that the client will acquire a job
Caseworker’s assessment of client’s concentration skills
Caseworker’s assessment of client’s health coping skills

INCREASED LIKELIHOOD OF STARTING JOB SEARCH

Note: Activity-ready clients aged 30 or over.

The analysis reveals that clients who improve their ability to cope with any health challenges will be more likely to start looking for a job. In addition, it is crucial that the clients feel that they can master basic challenges in their daily lives. Clients who are more aware of the opportunities available in the labour market in relation to their personal resources and challenges, will increase the likelihood that they start looking for a job. There is also a distinct correlation between the clients’ heightened belief that they can handle a job and the likelihood that they will actually look for work.

The more determination the client shows, the more likely he or she is to start searching for a job. If the client is good at concentrating and co-operating with others, it also increases the likelihood that he or she will commence the search for employment.

Finally, the analysis reveals that the caseworker’s belief in the client being able to acquire a job increases the likelihood that the client will begin searching for a
job. The higher the caseworker’s confidence in the client’s ability to find a job, the higher the likelihood that the client will either begin searching for a job or increase his/her current level of job searching activity.

**INTERNSHIPS AND JOB SEARCH ENGINES ARE EFFECTIVE SEARCH CHANNELS**

The study shows both the manner in which the clients search for jobs and which job search channels are used most frequently by this target group. These findings are an innovation compared to previous studies, which have been limited to the job search activities of job-ready clients.

Figure 4 shows the job search channels used by the clients in the project. As it turns out, the most commonly used job search channels are (1) internet-based job search engines and (2) personal networks (family, friends and acquaintances). Internships and temporary employment/recruitment agencies are the least used job search channels by this target group.

**FIGURE 4. JOB SEARCH CHANNELS USED BY ACTIVITY-READY CLIENTS**

The analysis thus reveals that some job search channels are used more frequently than others for this particular group.

Business internships and job search engines on the internet are the two job search channels that have the most significant positive correlation with increased job prospects for these clients.

The situation of internships deserves more scrutiny, since despite having the most significant relationship with job prospects, internships are one of the least used job
search channels for this group of clients. In order to use internships as a job search channel, the client must be offered an employment reintegration programme that is business-oriented. At the same time, it is also necessary for the client to take advantage of the internship in such way that he draws attention to himself and his desire to be employed at the company.

**HOW THE FINDINGS FROM THE BIP PROJECT CAN BE APPLIED**

Our analysis shows that it is essential that activity-ready recipients of social assistance obtain the skill set that enables them of having active job search activities as part of their progression towards the labour market. A client who performs better in the areas shown in Figure 3 is more likely to become an active job seeker.

The caseworkers can use this knowledge strategically by initiating and managing an employment reintegration programme in such a way that it will help improve the client’s job readiness.

Approximately every fourth client is already making an active effort to find a job. Thus, with the insight into the kind of job search channels that are most attractive to the target group, the caseworker can better support their clients’ job search activities by guiding them towards the most suitable job search activities. For example, caseworkers can prepare the clients so that they can use internships as a means of making the potential employer aware of the client’s motivation for employment.

**The path to employment**

The indicators from BIP can provide valuable insight into showing which aspects of job readiness are directly related to acquiring a job.

For the first time, researchers have had the opportunity to follow activity-ready clients over an extended period, and at the same time trace those who found employment during that particular period.

**10% OF CLIENTS ACQUIRED ORDINARY JOBS**

During the BIP project period, we have followed approximately 4,000 activity-ready clients over a four-year period, from 2013 to 2016. During this period, 21% of the activity-ready clients have at one time or other been employed in ordinary jobs.

At the end of 2016, 10% of the clients whom we have monitored in the project, were employed in ordinary jobs. An additional 6% were employed in a flex-job.
While a larger proportion of the clients obtained regular employment (full-time/part-time) than flex-job employment, the clients who obtained a flex-job were better at retaining their job than the clients who obtained regular jobs.

**SEVEN INDICATORS CORRELATE WITH THE ABILITY TO ACQUIRE A JOB**
We are now able to divide the clients from the project into two groups: those who obtained ordinary jobs and those who did not. By comparing these two groups to their scores on the BIP indicators, we can make inferences about which indicators best predict clients’ prospects of acquiring ordinary jobs.

The analysis shows that job prospects are dependent on how well the clients perform on the indicators we have measured. In particular, seven indicators are significant for predicting whether clients find jobs. The seven indicators are presented in the figure below.

**FIGURE 5. SIGNIFICANT INDICATORS OF CLIENTS’ INCREASING JOB PROSPECTS**

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<tr>
<th>CLIENT INDICATORS:</th>
<th>CASEWORKER INDICATORS:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Health coping skills</td>
<td>Caseworker’s confidence in the client’s ability to find a job</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belief in being able to handle a job</td>
<td>Caseworker’s assessment of client’s determination</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooperation skills</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Job search behaviour</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reservation wage</td>
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INCREASED LIKELIHOOD OF CLIENT ACQUIRING A JOB

Note: Activity-ready clients aged 30 or over.

The analysis shows that clients who improve their ability to cope with any health challenges are more likely to find employment. The analysis also reveals that in order for the clients to get a job, they must have confidence in their ability to handle a job. Likewise, there is also a higher chance of employment if the clients are good at cooperating with others.

The clients’ job prospects are highly related to whether their caseworker is confident of their ability to acquire a job. The more the caseworker believes in the client’s job prospects, the higher the client’s chances of getting a job.
The clients’ ability to act with determination is essential for acquiring a job. Likewise, it is crucial that they start searching for a job. Finally, it is also important that clients have realistic expectations of the level of earnings in the labour market.

HOW THE FINDINGS FROM THE BIP PROJECT CAN BE APPLIED

We now have a good idea of what factors are most important for the activity-ready clients who have found employment. This knowledge has helped us identify which employability indicators are essential for the employment reintegration programmes being able to reach the activity-ready clients.

Using the indicators as a management tool in the employment reintegration activities will allow the caseworker to monitor whether the client develops in the crucial areas. In addition, knowledge about the indicators enables the caseworker to enhance his/her cooperation with the client and adjust the employment reintegration activities accordingly. Job centres can potentially avoid long-term employment reintegration programmes that do not improve activity-ready clients’ chances of acquiring jobs. In cases where a client has not achieved any progress in their unemployment programme, effective action is required.

In Figure 6 below, we have summarised how the path to a job appears according to the project’s results. The figure shows which indicators are directly associated with increased job prospects and which job search channels are most likely to increase the likelihood of clients acquiring jobs.

FIGURE 6. THE PATH TO EMPLOYMENT

| INDICATORS ASSOCIATED WITH INCREASING LIKELIHOOD OF FINDING A JOB: |
| Health coping skills |
| Knowledge of the labour market |
| Caseworker’s confidence in the client’s job prospects |
| Determination |
| Cooperation skills |
| Job search behaviour |

| MOST EFFECTIVE JOB SEARCH CHANNELS: |
| Search using an internship |
| Search using job search engines on the internet |

JOB
The path to education

Regarding those activity-ready clients in the project who were below age 30, it is particularly interesting to look at their path to education. Although the main aim of BIP was to investigate indicators for job readiness, it turns out that the project was also able to identify indicators that were most associated with education for activity-ready young people under age 30.

16% OF THE UNDER-30 CLIENTS ENROLLED IN AN EDUCATION AFTER A YEAR

By the end of 2016, 5% of all clients in the BIP project had enrolled in a stipend-certified (SU) education programme\(^3\). However, this statistic hides the much higher education activity for those below age 30.

Among the young (below age 30) clients, 16% had started an education programme after one year, compared to only 2% of those over 30.

The difference in education behaviour among younger and older clients is hardly surprising, since the main goal for young clients under the age of 30 without education is that they enter an education programme as soon as possible. For clients over the age of 30, the goal is for them to acquire a job as soon as possible.

FOUR INDICATORS CORRELATE WITH STARTING AN EDUCATION

In our analysis, we divide the activity-ready young clients into two groups: those who commenced an education programme and those who did not. Linking the two groups with their scores on the indicators, we are now able to draw conclusions as to which indicators are most likely to predict whether young clients will start an education programme.

We found four such key indicators, presented in Figure 7.

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\(^3\) The State Education Stipend (Statens Uddannelsesstøtte/SU) is a monthly stipend given to students while enrolled in any kind of publicly recognised/certified secondary education (e.g., technical, professional, university, etc.).
The analysis shows that when activity-ready young clients succeed in starting education, it is related to their ability to master their everyday life activities. When young clients can understand and master everyday obligations, the likelihood that they will start an education increases. The analysis also shows that it is crucial to work with the young clients’ expectations for income during education, since realistic expectations of wages increase the likelihood of starting an education programme. Likewise, young clients need to have a social network that encourages and supports the importance of them starting an education.

Finally, the caseworker must show confidence in the young client’s ability to commence studying. When the caseworker believes that the client will be able to utilize the educational system, the client will be that much more likely to enroll in an education programme.

**HOW THE FINDINGS FROM THE BIP PROJECT CAN BE APPLIED**

Now that we know the key factors influencing the behaviour of the group of activity-ready young clients who have started an education, we have better knowledge for assisting those clients who have not yet entered the educational system.

The indicators can be strategically applied so as to help activity-ready young clients enter the educational system. Used as a ‘progression tool’, the indicators allow the caseworker to keep track of how the young client is developing in the most critical areas. In this way, the caseworker can better assess whether the reintegration programme options offered to the client are in fact creating some kind of progress in the crucial areas. In collaboration with the young client, the programme offerings can be adjusted to achieve the most effective impact.
The explanatory power of the BIP indicators

Explaining why some activity-ready clients acquire a job or start an education while others do not is not easy. Many factors are involved, and some mechanisms remain unclear.

In Denmark, the national statistical registry contains comprehensive information on clients without a job. For example, there is information about clients’ ethnicity, marital status, their financial dependency history and previous periods of employment and unemployment. However, the register data are not particularly effective in predicting the likelihood of clients acquiring jobs or starting education. Typically, register data can explain less than 10% of the underlying factors behind why some clients find jobs while others do not.

Throughout the project period, the BIP project has had access to register data from the DREAM database of the Danish Ministry of Employment. Thus, for each client in BIP, the DREAM register data can be linked to the project’s client progression measurement data.

In our project, we have investigated whether we are in a better position to predict activity-ready client’s job prospects when we combine the BIP indicators with the register data from DREAM. We have also compared the explanatory power of the indicators with the explanatory power from the register data.

As it turns out, the indicators in BIP enable us to predict the activity-ready clients’ likelihood of getting a job or starting an education, or even becoming active job seekers.

In the subsequent sections, we will show how our ability to explain clients’ job search activities, find jobs and start education becomes significantly higher when we link national registry data with our BIP indicators.

**FIVE TIMES BETTER IN EXPLAINING JOB SEARCH ACTIVITIES**

Register data from DREAM is not sufficient at explaining why some activity-ready clients actively look for jobs while others do not, nor can the DREAM data account for how broad their job search is. Using the register data, we can explain only 6% of the variation in whether or not clients actively search for jobs.

Including the indicators from BIP, we almost quintuple our ability to explain what factors are associated with activity-ready clients increasing their job search activities.
When we combine the register data from DREAM and our BIP indicators, our power of explanation reaches 29% of the variation in the clients’ search volume.

### TABLE 1. DATA SOURCE EXPLANATION RATE IN PERCENTAGE RELATING TO JOB SEARCH

| Only register data from DREAM | 6% |
| Register data from DREAM + BIP indicators | 29% |

Note: Activity-ready clients aged 30 or over

In view of the marked increase in the power to explain the variation, we can conclude that our indicators are vital, as they add additional knowledge and information that we previously did not have in this area. We now know much more about what kind of knowledge is essential in predicting whether or not activity-ready clients decide to undertake job search activities.

**DOUBLING THE ABILITY TO EXPLAIN JOB PROBABILITY**

Register data from DREAM is also not sufficient at predicting whether the clients actually acquire jobs. With register data, we can only explain 6% of the variation in whether or not clients find jobs.

When we combine both the register data from DREAM and the new indicators in BIP, our explanatory power to predict whether activity-ready clients acquire a job increases from 6% to 14%.

### TABLE 2. DATA SOURCE EXPLANATION RATE IN PERCENTAGE RELATING TO EMPLOYMENT

| Only register data from DREAM | 6% |
| Register data from DREAM + BIP indicators | 14% |

Note: Activity-ready clients aged 30 or over

Hence, the indicators we measure are significant in terms of directly predicting clients’ job prospects. We now know more about what kind of data is vital for predicting whether or not activity-ready clients find jobs.

It should be noted that our ability to explain job search activity is significantly higher than our ability to explain job prospects. The difference underscores the fact that the indicators in the BIP are most reliable in terms of explaining the steps on the path to ordinary jobs. An active job search is a step in that direction.
THREE TIMES BETTER IN PREDICTING EDUCATION
Register data from DREAM can explain 12% of the variation in the vulnerable clients’ probability of starting education. Although this explanatory power is considerably higher than the ability to explain job search and employment, it is still well below that which can be explained by the BIP indicators.

With the indicators in BIP, we triple the ability to explain what is vital for whether the activity-ready young clients start an education programme.

When we combine the DREAM register data with the new indicators in BIP, we can explain 41% of the variation in whether or not young clients start an education.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 3. DATA SOURCE EXPLANATION RATE IN PERCENTAGE RELATING TO EDUCATION</th>
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<tr>
<td>Only register data from DREAM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Register data from DREAM + BIP indicators</td>
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Note: Activity-ready clients under age 30

As can be seen, the indicators we have measured are once again crucial, as they can more readily explain whether or not young clients start education. Although the indicators have been chosen based on their importance regarding employment, it turns out that they are also useful for explaining whether activity-ready young clients start an education programme.

HOW THE FINDINGS FROM THE BIP PROJECT CAN BE APPLIED
The explanatory power of the statistical models significantly increases when the BIP indicators are included. This suggests that the indicators we have tested over the four-year period are highly relevant. They increase our overall knowledge of what is essential for activity-ready clients’ job search scope, job prospects and education prospects.

Though the great leap in the explanatory force is certainly significant in itself, an additional value of our study lies in the fact that the indicators, unlike register data, can be influenced by different employment reintegration activities. Gender, age, ethnicity, and so forth, are not affected by reintegration activities. Our indicators operate as tools which the caseworker can use in order to guide and stimulate the activity-ready clients’ job search and their prospects for starting to work or enrolling in an education programme.

However, it is not the progression measurements in themselves that bring activity-ready clients closer to the labour market. Rather, it is the focused cooperation
between the caseworker and the client that persists alongside the progression measurements. The focused alignment of the reintegration activities offered to the clients, brings the clients closer to the labour market. This involves helping the clients improve exactly those coping skills and competencies, which we now know increase the likelihood that they will search for and find a job.

This new knowledge from BIP provides the management levels of the job centres with additional tools for determining which factors are crucial in measuring the effect of their employment reintegration programmes targeted towards activity-ready clients. However, to obtain useful data on the effects, it is imperative that a progression measurement tool is adapted locally and implemented correctly throughout the organisation.

As for the practitioners, it is essential for them to be fully familiar with the progression measurements as a tool that can be applied for more than merely documenting impact. We have developed a set of action-oriented indicators that caseworkers can employ in their daily work with activity-ready clients.

Management of client cases cannot be based on register information, as it is rarely possible to change the characteristics of the clients that are derived from a register. Contrary, it is possible to work with a forward-looking improvement of the client’s health coping skills, concentration ability, ability to cooperate, etc. It is possible to ensure and target employment reintegration programme efforts so that they are more effective in assisting the clients in these particular circumstances. Moreover, by actively employing the ongoing progression measurements in the dialogue with the clients, caseworkers can better keep track of whether the specific measures employed have worked as they were intended. If not, the caseworker has information that is more precise and can quickly and more efficiently change the assistance strategy.
The impact of employment reintegration activities

The common denominator for all the indicators developed for job readiness in the Employability Indicator Project is that they can be influenced with different employment reintegration activities. One programme can potentially contribute to the client improving on one or more of the indicators. In this study, considering what activities work best, we therefore assess whether the programme has succeeded in creating some kind of positive change in the BIP indicators.

Clients’ participation in employment reintegration activities

We have mapped out the set of activities in which the clients have participated during the BIP project period, as registered by their caseworkers. Box 1 shows the list of activities, in which clients could possibly participate during their unemployment period. As shown, it has also been possible for the caseworker to register if the client did not participate in any activity.

In the analysis of which activities work best, the 21 employment reintegration activities were grouped into four main categories, since we also sought to examine combinations of different activities. We were compelled to work with groups of activities since the number of participating clients in each activity was too small, just as the combination of activities would end up being overwhelmingly large if not grouped.

---

| 1. | Upgrading of general skills and competencies (reading/writing skills, language, IT, communication) |
| 2. | Professional upgrading (e.g. courses, certificates) |
| 3. | Knowledge about the labour market (e.g. legislation, rules, norms in workplaces and industry knowledge) |
| 4. | Upgrading of social and personal skills |
| 5. | Job search activity |
| 6. | Networking |
| 7. | Business-, educational or job centre mentor |
| 8. | Daily coping skills (e.g. help with housing, debt, transport) |
| 9. | Diet and exercise |
| 10. | Medical assessment and/or treatment (via GP, psychiatrist, psychologist, etc.) |
| 11. | Coping with mental and/or physical health (e.g. psychoeducation, pain management) |
| 12. | Training/internship in own workplace/internal business |
| 13. | Training/internship at external workplace |
| 14. | Business centre |
| 15. | Social mentor/support contact |
| 16. | Treatment for addiction |
| 17. | Wage subsidies |
| 18. | Pre-rehabilitation |
| 19. | Temporary hours |
| 20. | Job rotation project |
| 21. | Rehabilitation |
| 22. | No activities |
The grouping of the activities is based on an assessment of the purpose of each individual activity. Hence, we have assessed whether the purpose of the activity is job-oriented, aimed at educational upgrading, whether it has a social purpose, or finally, whether the activity has a health-promoting or health-related aim.

Box 2 shows how the 21 specific employment reintegration activities have been grouped in relation to the four main groups of initiatives.

### BOX 2. CLASSIFICATION OF ACTIVITIES INTO FOUR MAIN GROUPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JOB-ORIENTED ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>UPGRADING ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>SOCIAL ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>HEALTH-ORIENTED ACTIVITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge about the labour market</td>
<td>Upgrading of general skills</td>
<td>Upgrading of social and personal skills</td>
<td>Diet and exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job search activities</td>
<td>Professional upgrading</td>
<td>Strengthening of network</td>
<td>Medical assessment/treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business-/educational-/job centre mentor</td>
<td>Pre-rehabilitation</td>
<td>Daily coping skills</td>
<td>Coping with mental/physical health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal internship</td>
<td>Rehabilitation</td>
<td>Social mentor/Support contact</td>
<td>Treatment for addiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External internship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business centre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage subsidies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary hours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job rotation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Half of the clients have participated in one activity while a fourth part have participated in a combination of two or more activities. Almost a fourth of our sample (23%) have not participated in any employment reintegration activity within the preceding three months.
If we examine the four main types of employment reintegration activities, 24% of the clients have exclusively participated in a job-oriented activity, 14% in a health-oriented activity, 6% in an upgrading activity, and 6% were involved in a social activity. ‘Combined activities’ covers all the clients who have participated in two or more main activity types simultaneously, e.g. a job-oriented activity at the same time as a health-oriented activity. 26% of participants were involved in some combination of employment reintegration activities. Of these, 18% participated in combined activities in which a job-oriented activity was included.

23% of the clients have not participated in any employment reintegration activity in the preceding three months.

33% of the clients were involved in a single activity, or a combination of activities, that aims at upgrading, improving social skills, and/or promoting health.

42% of the clients have participated in a job-oriented activity, either separately or in combination with other initiatives.
WHO IS OFFERED WHICH EMPLOYMENT REINTEGRATION ACTIVITY?
There are no significant systematic differences in what characterizes those who participated in the various types of employment reintegration activities. For example, there are similarities between those who did not participate in any activity and those who participated in a job-oriented activity. These two groups are similar regarding the proportion of clients who have a psychiatric diagnosis (purchase of psychotropic drugs) or a somatic diagnosis, the proportion of clients using prescription drugs, the proportion with a high number of medical visits, and the proportion of clients charged with or convicted of a crime.

However, some differences are also worth pointing out:

Participants in upgrading activities tend to be immigrants with non-Western backgrounds as well as unskilled workers. In addition, among participants in the upgrading activities, there is a reduced number of clients with psychiatric diagnoses and fewer people taking prescription drugs. The number of clients who have been charged and sentenced with a crime is also smaller.

Participants in social and health-oriented activities tend to be characterised by having both more moderate and more severe psychiatric diagnoses. These clients undergo numerous doctor visits, and a larger number of them have purchased psychotropic drugs and used antipsychotic prescription drugs and antidepressants.

JOB-ORIENTED REINTEGRATION ACTIVITIES ARE MOST EFFECTIVE
The analysis shows that clients who do not participate in any employment reintegration activity show a significant decline on all the indicators. Thus, if the clients do not carry out any activity, their progress toward entering the labour market does not just stagnate but actually regresses.

Clients who participate in an activity experience, on average, either stagnation or some kind of progress in their development during their unemployment period. This means that the good news is that if the client is participating in some sort of activity, he or she is no longer moving further away from getting a job. Nevertheless, there is a difference among the activities in creating progression towards the labour market.

In general, clients participating in job-oriented activities experience progress on their BIP indicators. However, the analysis also shows that if the job-oriented activity is combined with other activities, the impact is much better. Notably, the combination of job-oriented activities with upgrading and health-oriented activities proves to be particularly effective.
This means that the progression towards the labour market goes even faster if different employment reintegration activities are initiated simultaneously, such that the client can be assisted on several fronts at the same time. For example, health coping can be usefully combined with a job-oriented activity.

Upgrading activities, social, and health-oriented employment reintegration activities do not in themselves create a progression towards getting a job. In fact, they only do so when they are combined with other activities, especially with a job-oriented employment reintegration activity.
The significance of the caseworker for the client’s job prospects

The results of our analysis also show that the caseworker has an influence on the job prospects of vulnerable clients. On the following pages, we describe the main conclusions from our studies of the caseworker’s importance for the activity-ready client’s success in obtaining a job or starting an education\(^5\).\(^6\). The main conclusions are divided into three themes that answer the following questions:

1. **Consequences of change of caseworkers:**
   - How many caseworkers have the clients encountered?
   - What consequences does a change in caseworker have on the likelihood that the client will find a job or start an education programme?

2. **The correlation between caseworkers’ confidence in their clients’ ability to find a job and clients’ job search success:**
   - How much confidence in the client’s job prospects do the caseworkers have on average?
   - Is there a causal relationship between the caseworker’s confidence in the client’s job prospects and the client’s probability of actually getting a job or starting an education programme?

3. **The caseworker’s efficiency in getting clients into jobs:**
   - What is the difference between the most efficient and the least efficient caseworkers?

In the following, we present findings derived from the progression data in BIP that relate to the caseworkers’ influence on activity-ready clients’ prospects of acquiring jobs or starting an education. We have combined the BIP and DREAM data, as the two sources give us a comprehensive picture of whether clients in our sample have started searching for a job no later than a year after they have filled out the client questionnaire.

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Likewise, we have examined whether the indicator ‘caseworker’s confidence that the client will get a job’ has an influence on the client’s actual job prospects. Finally, we have investigated whether the caseworker’s confidence in clients’ job opportunities can explain why some clients find jobs/education, while others do not.

**Change of caseworker reduces the client’s job prospects**

With the BIP project, we are able to document the effect of changes of caseworkers on the clients’ prospects of finding employment or starting an education. We find that the clients’ job chances are significantly reduced each time their caseworker is changed.

Of the clients in the BIP, 40% have experienced their caseworker being changed one or more times during the period of their participation in the BIP project.

The fact that caseworker changes are a source of frustration among clients in the unemployment system has already been shown in the BIP project’s qualitative studies\(^7\). With data from the progression measurements, we now have the opportunity to quantify the impact of a change of caseworker on the client’s further chance of success.

We have examined all the responses where both clients and their caseworkers have answered the questionnaire two or more times during the BIP project period. This allows us to investigate possible changes of caseworkers between the submissions of responses every third month, and the consequences of caseworker changes on the client’s job prospects.

**HOW THE CLIENTS’ JOB PROSPECTS ARE AFFECTED**

On average, 6% of the activity-ready clients obtain employment in ordinary jobs within a year. A change of caseworker reduces job probability by 1.3 percentage points. This means that for clients with one caseworker change, the average probability of finding a job decreases from 6% to 4.7%. Thus, there is a significant reduction in job probability, which is already relatively small for this target group.

Each change of caseworker reduces the activity-ready client’s chances for employment by 22%.

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\(^7\) Danneris, S., 2016: *Er du klar til at arbejde?*. Aalborg University.
If we combine employment and education, since both are considered positive events in the client’s situation, the picture is the same. On average, 10% of the clients in the BIP study obtain employment or start an education within a year. Each change of caseworker reduces the clients’ chances of finding employment or education by 1.6 percentage points. Hence, for clients with one caseworker change, the average probability of starting a job or an education programme decreases from 10% to 8.4%.

The impact of caseworker changes on clients’ probability of finding a job or commencing education is summarised in the table below.

### TABLE 4. THE CORRELATION BETWEEN CHANGES IN CASEWORKERS AND EMPLOYMENT/EDUCATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proportion in job/education</th>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>Employment + Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6% get a job within a year.</td>
<td>10% get a job or start an education within a year.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The effect of changes of caseworkers**

- The probability of getting a job within a year decreases by 1.3 percentage points, which corresponds to a reduction of 22%.
- The probability of getting a job or starting education within a year decreases by 1.6 percentage points, which corresponds to a reduction of 16%.

### HOW THE FINDINGS FROM THE BIP PROJECT CAN BE APPLIED

The implication of our analysis is that measures should be taken to reduce the number of changes of caseworkers, as changes of staff directly degrade the client’s chances of finding a job.

Obviously, changes of caseworker staff are impossible to avoid due to normal career changes among employees, reorganisations, maternity leave, etc. Nevertheless, caseworker changes due to changes in visitation categories, social assistance, etc. and internal restructuring of the job centres should be minimised. If a change of caseworker cannot be avoided, it is essential to be aware that the management of the client’s case may suffer when it passes from one caseworker to another. Hence, consideration should be given to how caseworkers can hand over knowledge about the client’s case, including the client’s plan for job-seeking activities.
Caseworker’s confidence is crucial for client’s success

The BIP project findings show a strong correlation between the caseworker’s level of confidence in the client’s job prospects and the client’s success in finding a job or starting an education.

In the following, we will explore the causal factors behind this correlation. That is, we will investigate whether there is a direct relationship between the caseworker’s confidence that the client will find a job and the client’s actual transition to employment.

**DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THE CLIENT WILL GET A JOB WITHIN THE NEXT YEAR?**

Caseworkers in the BIP project answered the above question each time they completed a questionnaire about a client. Answers were categorized using a 5-point Likert scale with responses ranging from unconditional ‘Yes’ to ‘Sometimes’ to ‘No’. In only 6% of the responses did the caseworkers answer unconditionally ‘Yes’ to the question.

**FIGURE 9. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THE CLIENT WILL GET A JOB WITHIN THE NEXT YEAR?**

![Bar chart showing the distribution of responses to the question.]

Note: In 2% of the responses, caseworkers answered ‘Do not know’. These responses have been omitted from the analysis.

In almost half the cases, the caseworkers either did not believe the clients would find a job or had doubts. In approximately a quarter of the responses, the caseworkers stated that their belief varies, sometimes they had confidence, other times not. The last quarter of the responses cover positive assessments of the clients obtaining a job within the next year.
We have compared the caseworkers’ assessments of the clients’ prospects of getting a job within a year with the clients’ actual job situation one year after the responses. Here we found a clear positive correlation between the two, as shown in Table 5 below.

### TABLE 5. CASEWORKERS’ CONFIDENCE IN CLIENT’S ABILITY TO FIND A JOB AND ACTUAL EMPLOYMENT A YEAR LATER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONFIDENCE IN JOB</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE OF CLIENTS EMPLOYED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doubts</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good chances</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only 1% of the clients whose caseworker did not believe in them getting a job within a year were actually in employment a year later. This compares with the 27% of the clients whose caseworker believed that they would find employment within a year. Thus, the caseworker’s assessment of the clients’ job prospects is associated with the client’s future employment situation.

It is obvious that we can interpret this correlation as a result of the caseworker being able to predict the client’s future situation in the labour market, since the caseworker is knowledgeable about the client’s characteristics and current situation (history, motivation, challenges, resources, etc.).

Using further statistical analysis, we have examined the basis for the level of caseworker confidence in their clients’ job prospects. The analysis partly confirms that given their knowledge of the clients and their situation, caseworkers are in a good position to predict the client’s employment prospects.

However, our analysis similarly reveals that the caseworker's assessment is not based solely on the circumstances of the client that can be observed via the DREAM register data and the responses from the BIP questionnaires. There may, certainly, be other, unobserved circumstances of the client that can play a role in the caseworker’s assessment. Nonetheless, there may also be circumstances pertaining to the caseworker that affect how he/she assesses the client’s job prospects.

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8 For more details on this analysis, please refer to the main report, see note 5.
9 Unobserved circumstances of the client mean information about the client which the project cannot collect either through register information or the progression measurements. These circumstances may consist of observations about the client that the caseworker knows but which we cannot capture via DREAM or from The Employability Indicator Project questionnaires.
THE CASEWORKER’S GENERAL JOB ORIENTATION HAS AN IMPACT ON THE EVALUATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL CLIENT

The BIP project has examined whether the explanation for the caseworkers’ varying confidence in their clients’ job prospects derives from the caseworkers’ general attitude towards their clients. By ‘general attitude’ we mean the average level of confidence that the individual caseworker has in the job prospects of all the clients in his/her caseload. We have examined this by constructing an aggregate index of ‘caseworker’s job orientation’ in order to examine whether this general attitude would affect the caseworker’s assessment of the specific client.

The purpose of constructing such a general model of caseworker attitudes about employment is that it is not ‘contaminated’ by the caseworker’s knowledge of the individual client’s characteristics. For example, if a caseworker has 40 clients in his or her caseload, we initially calculate the caseworker’s average level of confidence in job prospects for the 39 of the clients. We call this average the ‘caseworker’s job orientation’. Next, we look at whether or not the caseworker’s general job orientation influences his/her assessment of client no. 40. In this way, we test whether or not a caseworker’s belief in a given client is influenced by factors other than what could be attributed to the specific client.

The logic behind constructing the caseworker’s ‘general job orientation’ index is illustrated in the figure below.

FIGURE 10. THE ASSESSMENT OF OTHER CLIENTS AFFECTS THE EVALUATION OF ANY CLIENT

The analysis shows that a caseworker who has a generally low job orientation about their client caseload’s ability to find a job will tend to have less confidence that the individual client acquires a job. Conversely, a caseworker with a generally high job orientation will tend to have greater confidence that any individual client acquires a job. The caseworker’s assessment of the other clients thus has a spill-over effect on the assessment of each individual client, regardless of the client’s...
characteristics. The more job-oriented the caseworker, the more likely the caseworker will be optimistic about the individual client’s job opportunities.

**JOB ORIENTATION INFLUENCES THE CLIENTS’ EMPLOYMENT POSSIBILITIES**

We now take the analysis a step further and examine whether the caseworker’s job orientation also affects the client’s actual possibilities of employment. Again, the same correlation emerges: clients who have a caseworker with a high level of confidence in clients’ ability to acquire jobs, will have a higher employment rate than clients whose caseworker has a generally lower confidence that their clients will find a job.

This relationship is illustrated graphically in Figure 11. In the figure, the caseworker responses are divided into three groups. In one group, with one third of the responses, the caseworkers make the most pessimistic assessment of their clients’ job prospects; this is shown by the yellow line. In the second group, with another third of the responses, the caseworkers make the most optimistic assessment of their clients’ job prospects; this is shown by the red line. Finally, in the middle group, shown by the green line, the caseworkers’ assessment is in the middle range.

**FIGURE 11. CASEWORKERS’ JOB ORIENTATION AND CLIENTS’ ACTUAL EMPLOYMENT**

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10 The caseworker’s average assessment is measured relative to the assessments of other caseworkers at the same job centre. The analysis takes into account that factors such as geographical location do not affect the assessment.
For that third of the responses where the caseworker has the most pessimistic job orientation, the clients’ job prospects are 5.3%, which is lower than the average job prospects of 6% (the black line in the figure). Among that third of the responses where the caseworker has the most optimistic job orientation, the clients’ job prospects are 7%.

Clients whose caseworker has an optimistic job orientation have a job probability that is 32% higher than clients whose caseworker has a pessimistic job orientation.

Once again, we should reiterate that this correlation does not cover the characteristics of the individual client. We have examined the correlation between the caseworkers’ general job orientation toward their total caseload (for example, the 39 out of 40 clients) and the individual client’s job probability (client no. 40). Thus, we find a causal relationship, such that caseworkers who have an optimistic belief in the job prospects of their total caseload are also better at helping the individual client into employment. The caseworker’s general attitude has an impact on the individual client’s job prospects.

**A GROWING CASEWORKER CONFIDENCE INCREASES JOB PROSPECTS**

In further statistical analysis, we have attempted to measure the effect on the client’s likelihood of getting a job or starting education if the caseworker increases his or her confidence in the client’s job prospects.

During the analysis, we have taken into account all available information about the client, such as information from national registry variables (age, gender, labour market history, etc.) as well as the client and caseworker indicators from BIP. The analysis shows a significant correlation between the caseworker’s growing confidence in clients’ job prospects and the clients finding employment\(^\text{11}\).

In Table 6, we illustrate the effect of an increase in the caseworker’s confidence in the individual client’s job prospects with one unit on a 5-scale. A jump of two scale steps will double the displayed effect.

\(^{11}\) The full statistical model and the level of significance can be studied in more detail in the main report, see note 5.
TABLE 6. THE CAUSAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INCREASING CASEWORKER CONFIDENCE AND CLIENTS’ JOB AND EDUCATION PROSPECTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EMPLOYMENT</th>
<th>EMPLOYMENT + EDUCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proportion in job/education</td>
<td>6% get a job within a year.</td>
<td>10% get a job or start an education within a year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The effect of each unit’s increase in caseworker’s confidence in client’s job prospects</strong></td>
<td>The probability of getting a job within a year increases by 1.3 percentage points, which corresponds to an overall increase of 22%.</td>
<td>The probability of getting a job or starting an education within a year increases by 3.3 percentage points, which corresponds to an overall increase of 33%.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These effects are quite significant. If the caseworker’s belief in the client’s prospects of acquiring a job grows with one unit on the scale from 1 to 5, the probability that the client will obtain a job within one year increases by 1.3 percentage points. Considering that only 6% of the clients obtain a job within a year, this is an enormous effect. An increase in one unit generates a 22% increase in the probability of employment.

The chances that the client will obtain a job or start an education increase by 3.3 percentage points each time the caseworker’s confidence in the client grows with a single scale step. Compared to an average of 10% of the clients commencing work or education within a year, a 3.3 percentage point increase is also quite dramatic; an increase of one unit makes it 33% more likely that a client will get a job or start an education.

Therefore, not only does the movement from having a fluctuating belief in the client’s job prospects (scale step 3) to having confidence in the client’s chances of finding a job (scale stage 4), have an effect. The effect is also generated when the level of confidence goes from no confidence at all in the client’s prospects of getting a job (scale stage 1) to the next level, doubting the client’s job prospects (scale stage 2).
Caseworker’s efficiency in getting the clients into jobs

As mentioned earlier, we know that there is a causal relationship between the caseworker’s confidence in the client’s job prospects and the actual number of clients who obtain jobs.

We also know that this effect applies in only one quarter of the cases where the caseworker has a positive assessment of the client’s job prospects. In approximately half the cases, the caseworkers do not have confidence that their clients will be able to obtain a job.

The analysis similarly reveals significant differences in how good caseworkers are at getting clients into employment. Methodologically, the caseworkers have been divided into four equally large groups, based on how efficient they are in getting their clients into jobs. Here, we notice that the least successful quarter of the caseworkers, on average, manage to obtain jobs for 7% of their clients within a year, while the most successful quarter of caseworkers obtain jobs for an average of 23% of their clients.

The difference between the most efficient and the least efficient caseworkers is thus 16 percentage points.

FIGURE 12. PROPORTION OF CLIENTS IN JOB ACCORDING TO THE CASEWORKERS’ EFFICIENCY

In this particular analysis, we use an extended employment concept. The client is defined as ‘in employment’ if he or she has had any electronically registered income. In addition to ordinary job (full-time/part-time), this includes flex-job income, wage subsidies and marginal jobs.
The question arises as to whether the difference can be explained by the most efficient caseworkers having the most resourceful clients. Certainly, this is not the case. When we extract the client’s characteristics, the differences become even more significant.

Here it is important to recall that during the analysis, we have taken into account a large number of conditions. We thus check for registry-based information such as gender, age, ethnicity, substance dependency history, geography, family status, educational background and medical or psychiatric diagnoses. Also checked are the clients’ responses to the questions in the BIP questionnaire and their progression thereof, all of which are measures of their job readiness.

Taking into account the clients’ characteristics, the difference between the least efficient and the most efficient caseworkers increases even more. The difference increases by ten percentage points to 26 percentage points. Thus, the most efficient caseworkers are far better at getting their clients into employment, even though the clients may not be the most resourceful.

In the analysis, we finally examined the potential on this area, if we were able to make all caseworkers as efficient as the most efficient ones in our study. Here we find that we could potentially double the proportion of clients who obtain a job within a year.

**TABLE 7: POLICY EXPERIMENT; ALL CASEWORKERS ARE AS EFFICIENT AS THE AVERAGE OF THE 25% MOST EFFICIENT ONES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCENARIO</th>
<th>PROPORTION OF CLIENTS IN JOB WITHIN A YEAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actual average</td>
<td>14.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy experiment with optimum efficiency among caseworkers</td>
<td>28.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasement</td>
<td>14.69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Extended employment concept including ordinary job, flex-job, wage subsidies, and marginal job.

The analysis indicates that there is high potential in making caseworkers more proficient.

**HOW THE FINDINGS FROM THE BIP PROJECT CAN BE APPLIED**

The results from our analysis emphasise that the caseworkers’ attitudes and performance are vital factors in getting a larger number of vulnerable activity-ready recipients of social assistance benefits into jobs or education programmes.
Caseworkers with a highly job-oriented mindset are more efficient at helping clients into employment than caseworkers with a little job-oriented mindset. In the caseworkers’ mindset lies the potential to influence clients’ likelihood of obtaining success in the labour market.

This calls for job centres to have a greater focus on caseworker attitudes in the future. Job centre administrators must be curious about what fosters a job-oriented mindset and approach to vulnerable clients.

In the following, we present some recommendations as to what individual caseworkers and the organisation as a whole could do to develop and support a more optimistic, job-oriented mindset.

In order for the caseworker to have confidence that the client can enter the labour market, he/she must have the proper tools with which to assist the client in achieving his or her job goals. Hence, it may be relevant to examine whether caseworkers have adequate mastery of the various methodological approaches to collaboration with the client, approaches that can create progress towards a relevant and realistic job goal.

It may also be relevant to examine whether the local range of activity offerings includes those activities that will actually improve the client’s prospects of finding a job. More work needs to be done in determining which activities are truly relevant for the particular client.

An optimistic belief in the client’s job prospects can also be related to the fact that the caseworker has adequate knowledge of the companies that can and will ultimately employ their clients. One can therefore consider whether the caseworker has available and concrete knowledge about the local labour market and knowledge of success stories about vulnerable clients who have found a footing in the labour market. If the various functions in the job centres are segmented, such as the functions of the business consultants and the caseworkers, caseworkers might not gain access to applicable knowledge about the local labour market. This issue calls for knowledge about the labour market to be provided by other means.