“Job search assistance programs for the unemployed”: Discussion

Gesine Stephan
IAB and University of Erlangen-Nuremberg
## The Importance of Meetings

### What Happens at Meetings?
- Counseling / job search assistance
- Monitoring

### Strands of the Economic Literature on Meetings*
- Ex ante effects of invitations
- Ex ante effects of sanctions for non show-ups
- **Ex post effects of increased counseling**
- Ex post effects of additional caseworkers
- Ex post effects of increased monitoring
- Interaction between caseworkers and clients
- General equilibrium effects of intensified counseling

*) Excellent literature overview in Pederson/Rosholm/Svarer (2012)
### Contents of both talks in this session

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rosholm lecture</th>
<th>Lechner lecture</th>
<th>Policy importance</th>
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| • Focus on *frequency of meetings*  
• Randomized experiments for Denmark  
• Frequent meetings increase employment rates; different results for men and women | • Focus on *caseworkers’ strategies*  
• Statistical matching analysis for Switzerland, linking caseworker data and data on unemployed persons  
• Better results for caseworkers with strong employer network, who are less cooperative, and who have similar characteristics as their clients | High, as meetings seem to be cost-efficient, and allocating clients to “similar caseworkers” might improve the effectiveness of meetings |
## Some points for discussion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Question</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>External validity</td>
<td>Can results be generalized across countries? (country-specific organization of the PES, cultural aspects)</td>
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<td>Performance of performance</td>
<td>Role of the performance system of local labor market agencies?</td>
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<td>standards</td>
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<td>“Black box”</td>
<td>Through which channels do meetings with a caseworker work? More intensive job search, lower reservation wages,</td>
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<td>concessions in other dimensions?</td>
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<td>Effect heterogeneity</td>
<td>Why seem meetings to be less effective for long-term unemployed?</td>
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### Results from a recent German study

#### New study for Germany
- Boockmann/Osiander/Stops/Verbeek (2013, mimeo)
- Similar approach as the Swiss studies
- Participation rate caseworkers in survey 40 percent

#### Effect of caseworkers’ strategies and perceptions on exits into employment (E) & out of unemployment (O)
- Focus on quick re-integration + E / + O
- Clients responsible for own unemployment ~ E / + O
- Use of sanctions ~ E / + O
- Co-operation with clients ~ E / ~ O
- Importance of regulations for own actions + E / + O (but only in the short run)
- Work perceived as self-determined ~ E / ~ O

#### Conclusion
In line with Lechner’s findings that caseworker strategies have an impact on the effectiveness of meetings – but channels might differ across countries