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How demanding are eligibility criteria for unemployment benefits, quantitative indicators for OECD and EU countries

Kristine Langenbucher

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HOW DEMANDING ARE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS? QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS FOR OECD AND EU COUNTRIES

Kristine Langenbucher (OECD)

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ABSTRACT

Eligibility criteria for unemployment benefits, which require recipients to actively look for work, take up suitable job offers or take part in active labour market programmes (ALMPs), or risk benefit sanctions, can play an important role in offsetting the negative impact of generous unemployment benefits on employment incentives. This paper presents information on the strictness of eligibility criteria for unemployment benefits for 40 OECD and/or EU member countries. It covers availability requirements during ALMPs and suitable work criteria, job-search requirements and monitoring of independent job-search effort, and sanctions for voluntary unemployment, refusing a job offer or participation in active labour market measures. These qualitative data are then used to compile a composite indicator of the strictness of eligibility criteria and some comparisons are made with the results of a similar exercise by the OECD in 2011. This indicator complements existing cross-country indicators relating to unemployment benefits, such as net replacement rate data from the *OECD Taxes and Benefits Database* and data on ALMP expenditure compiled annually by Eurostat and the OECD.

RÉSUMÉ

Les critères d'éligibilité aux allocations de chômage, comme l'obligation de chercher activement un emploi, accepter des offres d'emploi convenables ou participer à des programmes actifs du marché du travail (PAMT), ou encore le risque de sanctions par rapport aux prestations, peuvent jouer un rôle important pour compenser l'effet négatif d'allocations de chômage généreuses sur les incitations à l'emploi. Ce document présente des informations sur la rigueur des conditions d'éligibilité pour les allocations de chômage dans 40 pays de l'OCDE et/ou membres de l'UE. Il décrit les obligations de disponibilité pour les participants aux PAMT et les critères définissant un emploi convenable, les obligations de recherche d'emploi et le contrôle de l'effort de recherche d'emploi, ainsi que les sanctions en cas de chômage volontaire, de refus d'une offre d'emploi ou d'une proposition de participation à une mesure active du marché du travail. Ces données qualitatives sont ensuite utilisées pour construire un indicateur composite de la rigueur des critères d'éligibilité et des comparaisons avec les résultats d'une évaluation analogue réalisée par l'OCDE en 2011 sont effectuées. Cet indicateur complète des indicateurs comparatifs entre pays déjà disponibles relatifs aux prestations de chômage, tels que les taux de remplacement nets issus de la *Base de données de l'OCDE Impôts et prestations* ainsi que les données sur les dépenses des PAMT compilées annuellement par Eurostat et l'OCDE.

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HOW DEMANDING ARE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS? QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS FOR OECD AND EU COUNTRIES

1. Introduction

1. Unemployment benefits act as a safety net for individuals to smooth consumption when faced with job loss and give them time to find a new job, thereby acting as an automatic stabiliser over the economic cycle. Nevertheless, unemployment benefits also create disincentives to find employment in the shortest possible timeframe and there is a widespread consensus that a more generous level and duration of unemployment benefits is associated with longer unemployment duration and higher aggregate unemployment, other things being equal. Other features of unemployment benefit systems – notably requirements that benefit recipients are currently available for work, actively look for work, take up suitable job offers or take part in active labour market programmes (ALMPs), or risk benefit sanctions – can therefore play an important role in offsetting negative incentive impact of benefits.

2. This paper covers unemployment benefit eligibility criteria in 40 OECD and/or EU member countries which have responded to an OECD questionnaire during 2014 (see Box 1). The report provides information on availability requirements during ALMPs, suitable work criteria, monitoring of jobseekers' independent job-search efforts and sanctions for voluntary unemployment, refusing job offers and refusing ALMP placement and other interventions by the Public Employment Service (PES). These qualitative data are then used to compile a composite indicator of the strictness of eligibility criteria. This indicator complements existing cross-country indicators relating to unemployment benefits, such as benefit generosity data from the OECD Tax and Benefits database (http://www.oecd.org/social/benefits-and-wages.htm) and data on ALMP expenditure compiled annually by Eurostat and the OECD (http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DatasetCode=LMPEXP).

Box 1. **Data collection**

Data were collected through a questionnaire sent to delegates of the OECD Employment, Labour and Social Affairs Committee and/or the Indicator Sub-Group of the European Commission's Social Protection Committee. Questionnaire responses were summarised and coded by the OECD Secretariat and sent back to delegates to ensure that the summary accurately reflected the situation in each country. Delegates were also asked to highlight any policy or legal changes since 2011, when the OECD last collected this information, with responses published in Venn (2012). Countries also had the opportunity to clarify or refine responses previously provided. Both policy or legal changes and clarification of responses in comparison to the data for 2011 presented in Venn (2012) are highlighted in this report.

In most countries, responses relate to eligibility criteria for the most commonly-received type of unemployment benefit. In a number of countries there is more than one unemployment benefit, as countries have unemployment insurance and unemployment assistance. In countries where both types of benefits exist, the report relates to unemployment insurance, even though this may not cover the majority of claimants (e.g. in Germany, Ireland and the United Kingdom, the number of unemployment assistance claimants is higher than that for unemployment insurance). Other countries do not have unemployment assistance benefits, but social assistance may play a similar role and the distinction between unemployment assistance and social assistance is not precise. Australia and New Zealand do not have unemployment insurance benefits and unemployment benefits are generally non-contributory.

Respondents were asked to base their answers primarily on unemployment benefit legislation and/or official guidelines to the legislation, but also to check the operational practices of the public employment service (PES) or benefit administration where necessary. In the United States, eligibility criteria are set primarily in state-level legislation and guidelines. As a result, some eligibility criteria differ across states, implying varying scores for a number of items. In this situation, an average score for the different state situations has been applied.

3. The paper is organised as follows. Section 2 discusses why eligibility criteria are important and outlines the methodology used to calculate the indicator presented in this report and compares it to previous OECD work on unemployment benefit eligibility criteria. Section 3 summarises the unemployment benefit eligibility criteria in 40 OECD and/or EU member countries in 2014 for three sub-indicators and highlights any changes since the last OECD publication of eligibility criteria. Section 4 presents an overall strictness of eligibility criteria indicator. Section 5 discusses limitations of this indicator, and Section 6 concludes.

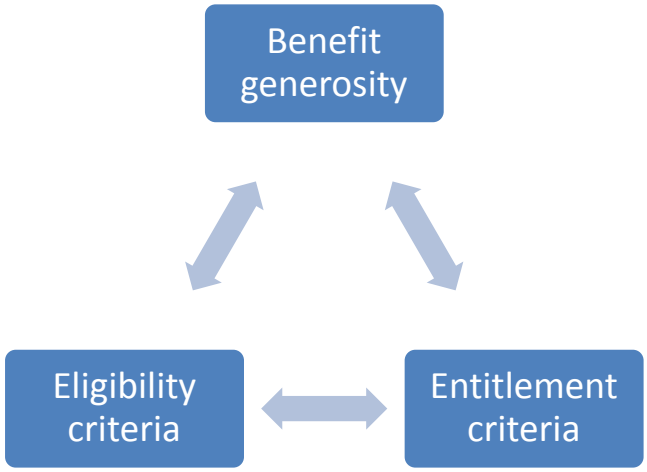
2. An indicator of the strictness of eligibility criteria

4. This section discusses the importance of unemployment benefit eligibility criteria and how they relate to other design elements of unemployment benefit systems. After a brief discussion of previous exercises to collect information on the strictness of unemployment benefit eligibility criteria, the section discusses the coding framework for the 2014 OECD unemployment benefit eligibility criteria indicator.

Why are eligibility criteria important?

5. Unemployment benefits protect workers against the loss of income from work, thus enabling them to smooth consumption as they engage in job search. However, unemployment benefits can also create disincentives for employed workers to retain their jobs and reduce the motivation of those receiving benefits to take up existing earnings opportunities. Longer entitlement periods and higher benefit levels are positively associated with the duration of unemployment. This is also reflected in unemployment exit probabilities, which increase as benefit exhaustion approaches. Unemployment benefit entitlement and eligibility criteria are meant to counteract these disincentive effects by affecting both unemployment benefit inflows through initial and ongoing entitlement criteria, and outflows through specifying the requirements for remaining eligible for unemployment benefits. Moreover, where eligibility criteria are effectively implemented, unemployment benefits act as a positive incentive for participation in the labour market and in independent or assisted job search, with potentially a net fiscal benefit, given that even without cash benefits non-participants are costly for a modern welfare state. Benefit generosity (measured through benefit levels and duration), entitlement and eligibility criteria are therefore important elements for the design of unemployment benefit systems (Figure 1).

Figure 1. **Design elements of unemployment benefit systems**



6. **Benefit generosity** varies widely throughout the OECD and EU and depend on the system of unemployment benefits in a country, i.e. whether there are both unemployment insurance and means-tested unemployment benefits or whether only one benefit type exists. In a number of countries which operate unemployment insurance benefits only (e.g. Japan, Italy, Turkey, and United States), replacement rates decline to zero in the second year of unemployment due to their limited duration and usually a lower proportion of the unemployed are covered by benefits. Where unemployment benefits expire, low-income households may be entitled to lower-level safety-net benefits, although these may be more difficult to access and in some countries they are not generally available (notably in Greece and Italy). In a large number of OECD countries, unemployment benefits are, however, of *de facto* unlimited duration. In countries such as Austria, Canada, Finland, France and Germany, unemployment assistance benefits can be claimed after the expiration of unemployment insurance benefits, although replacement rates are lower for most family types. Australia and New Zealand, by contrast, operate only means-tested unemployment assistance, with unlimited duration flat-rate benefits. Information on benefit generosity for OECD and EU countries, as measured through net replacement rates can be accessed through the OECD's tax-benefit models (http://www.oecd.org/social/benefits-and-wages.htm).

7. The second element, **entitlement criteria**, plays an important role for unemployment benefit systems, as they may exclude certain groups from receiving unemployment benefits altogether. To be entitled to unemployment insurance benefits, claimants are typically required to have a minimum employment or contribution record (e.g. a worker must have paid contributions into the insurance fund for at least 12 months in the 24 months before becoming unemployed). Individuals with short employment spells and less continuous work histories, hence, are often not covered by unemployment insurance. While such criteria serve as an initial filter, more complex rules may apply for subsequent unemployment spells in a number of countries, e.g. shorter contribution records may be required or participation in ALMPs may generate new rights to unemployment insurance. Unemployment assistance may be available to a wider range of unemployed, but is subject to a means-test and those with assets or other income in the household above a certain threshold do not quality. Information on entitlement criteria is available through the OECD's country specific descriptions of tax and benefit programmes. However, an aggregate indicator, which summarises country-specific information to compare all the contribution requirements for access to unemployment benefits, is not provided. One option for constructing such an indicator would be to simulate unemployment benefit entitlement for a number of "typical" cases with different durations of employment prior to the claim and patterns of rotation between employment and unemployment, as is currently done for "typical" cases in different family situations.

8. The third element shown in Figure 1 is the **eligibility criteria**, which are the focus of this report. Eligibility criteria refer here mainly to a range of behavioural requirements, which have to be met by those who have established a right to receive unemployment benefits. Eligibility criteria include initial waiting periods during which jobseekers do not receive benefits, conditions for being available for work, the definition of "suitable" work (types of work that must be accepted if offered), active job search and sanctions for non-compliance with these requirements. These criteria aim to prevent continued benefit receipt by those who are not immediately available for suitable work and may also act as a deterrent to claiming benefits. OECD (2015) provides an overview of a number of recent empirical studies on the impact of eligibility criteria on employment outcomes. These studies generally find that job-search monitoring and verification rules and the threat of sanctions or imposition of sanctions for non-compliance with eligibility criteria can substantially shorten benefit claim durations and increase re-employment rates. In view of the role of eligibility criteria as an important factor in explaining labour market outcomes, the OECD has continued to gather cross-country information on eligibility criteria (see next section for earlier exercises).

9. It should be kept in mind that the impact of eligibility criteria on employment outcomes and benefit recipient status depend on the implementation of activation measures in which participation is required, for example, the procedures for reporting and verification of job search and obligations to participate in active labour market programmes. Immervoll and Richardson (2011) show that, by some measures, less than half of all unemployed are covered by unemployment benefits in a large number of OECD countries, whereas coverage rates may reach 70% or more in Belgium and Germany.[1] Benefit generosity, entitlement and eligibility criteria, and perhaps a deterrence effects from PES referrals and monitoring, all impact on benefit coverage rates, as does the economic cycle and other trends in the labour market.[2]

Previous indicators of strictness

10. This report is a continuation of the OECD data collection in 2011, with results reported in Venn (2012). Her work built on earlier indicator information collected by the Danish Finance Ministry in 1997 (Ministry of Finance, 1998) and the repetition of this exercise in 2003/04 (Hasselpflug, 2005). Venn (2012) largely follows the coding approach used in Ministry of Finance (1998) and Hasselpflug (2005), but also revised some of the indicator items, to remove some inconsistencies in the older publications. Finally, she also adds an additional indicator item to her framework covering minimum employment or contribution conditions that unemployed people must meet in order to be entitled to benefits (see Box 2 below for further discussion). Unemployment benefit entitlement and eligibility criteria, however, cover different aspects of unemployment benefit legislation: entitlement criteria restrict initial access to unemployment benefits, whereas eligibility criteria affect on-going eligibility for unemployment benefits, once the initial entitlement has already been established. The indicator presented here restricts coverage to eligibility criteria.

1. Note that even in countries where not all ILO unemployed receive unemployment benefits, the number of unemployment benefit recipients may exceed the number of ILO unemployed as estimated through labour force survey data. Some unemployment benefit recipients may be temporarily exempted from active search requirements, or be subject in principle to requirements but not actually report job search in the survey, and benefits may be paid to people in part-time employment.

2. At the beginning of a recession high unemployment inflows can increase the share of benefit recipients among the stock of unemployed as recent job losers are more likely to qualify for unemployment benefits. A rising share of long-term unemployed can have the opposite effect if large numbers of unemployed are running out of unemployment benefit entitlements. Other factors driving coverage rates may include shortening average employment spells and less continuous work histories, and in a number of countries increasing shares of fixed-term contracts. The enforcement of job-search requirements may deter some claims but also increase the proportion of benefit recipients who are unemployed in the survey sense.

The 2014 OECD strictness indicator

11. The 2014 OECD eligibility criteria indicator comprises 11 items describing various aspects of eligibility criteria and sanctions and builds on the indicator developed by Venn (2012). The item coverage and wording of a number of items have changed and Box 2 provides an overview of these changes. Table 1 compares the 2011 coding framework as presented in Venn (2012) and the 2014 coding framework. Countries are allocated a score for each item from one (least strict) to five (most strict) on each of the 11 items.

12. Items 1 to 4 relate to availability for work while participating in ALMPs and the type of job offers that benefit recipients are obliged to take up, referred to in this paper as availability requirements and suitable work criteria. Item 1 describes whether a benefit recipient must be available and actively searching for work while participating in ALMPs such as training programmes or work experience placements. General availability and job-search criteria that apply to ordinary unemployment benefit recipients may be suspended if participation in the ALMP results in a movement to a different income support payment (that does not require availability) or if it is deemed that interrupting ALMP participation to take up a job offer will be detrimental to future job prospects.

Table 1. **Coding Framework**

2011 and 2014 revised framework

	Item	Score	Description 2011	Description 2014
Availability requirements and suitable work criteria	Item 1: Availability during ALMP participation	1	No demands on job availability during participation in ALMPs	No demands on availability for work during participation in ALMPs
		2	Participation in some ALMPs requires job availability	Participation in some ALMPs requires availability for work
		3	Participation in most ALMPs requires job availability	Participation in most ALMPs requires availability for work
		4	The unemployed should always be available for work while participating in ALMPs but are not required to actively search for work	The unemployed should always be available for work while participating in ALMPs, but are not required to actively search for work
		5	The unemployed should always be available and actively searching for work while participating in ALMPs	The unemployed should always be available and actively searching for work while participating in ALMPs
	Item 2: Demands on occupational mobility	1	The unemployed can refuse job offers in other occupational areas indefinitely	The unemployed can refuse job offers in other occupational areas or with lower wages indefinitely
		2	The unemployed can refuse job offers in other occupational areas for a limited period of 6 months or more	The unemployed can refuse job offers in other occupational areas or with lower wages for a limited period of 6 months or more
		3	The unemployed can refuse job offers in other occupational areas for a period of less than 6 months	The unemployed can refuse job offers in other occupational areas or with lower wages for a period of less than 6 months
		4	No explicit reservations, but the unemployed person's qualifications and the length of the unemployment spell are taken into account	No explicit reservations but the unemployed person's qualifications, previous remuneration and the length of the unemployment spell are taken into account
		5	The unemployed must accept all job offers that he/she is capable of doing	The unemployed must accept all job offers that he/she is capable of doing
	Item 3: Demands on geographical mobility	1	No demands on geographical mobility	No demands on geographical mobility
		2	The unemployed must accept a daily transportation time of up to 2 hours per day	The unemployed must accept a daily commuting time of up to 2 hours per day
		3	The unemployed must accept a daily transportation time of up to 4 hours per day	The unemployed must accept a daily commuting time of up to 4 hours per day
		4	The unemployed must accept a daily transportation time of 4+ hours per day	The unemployed must accept a daily commuting time of 4+ hours per day
		5	The unemployed must be willing to move	The unemployed must be willing to move
	Item 4: Other valid reasons for refusing job offers	1	Countries with five or more valid types of reason for refusing jobs	Countries with five valid types of reason for refusing jobs[a]
		2		
		3	Countries with three or four valid types of reason for refusing jobs	Countries with three or four valid types of reason for refusing jobs[a]
		4		
		5	Countries with two or less valid types of reason for refusing jobs	Countries with two or less valid types of reason for refusing jobs[a]
Job-search requirements and monitoring	Item 5: Frequency of job-search monitoring	1	No check of job-search activity	No check of job-search activity
		2	*Job-search activity can be checked upon request*	Infrequent or ad-hoc checking of job-search activity
		3	*Unemployed must prove job-search activity when referred to a vacancy by the PES*	Frequency of job-search activities varies for different jobseekers and/or during the unemployment spell (on average less that quarterly)
		4	The unemployed must regularly prove job-search activity	All unemployed must regularly prove job-search activity (monthly or quarterly)
		5	The unemployed must often i.e. every week or every second week prove job search	All unemployed must often i.e. every week or every second week prove job search

Table 1. **Coding Framework** *(Cont.)*

	Item	Score	Description 2011	Description 2014
Job-search requirements and monitoring	Item 6: Documentation of job-search activities	1	Not included	No formal requirement
		2		The person must regularly affirm that he or she has undertaken some actions to find work without specifying what these were (e.g. must tick a box "searched for work" on a claim continuation form)
		3		The person must regularly affirm that he or she has undertaken some actions to find work and specify what these were (e.g. keeping a job-search diary)
		4		The person must regularly supply the name and address (or equivalent documentation) of employers that he or she has contacted
		5		The person must regularly produce declarations by employers that he or she has applied to them for work
Sanctions	Item 7: Sanctions for voluntary unemployment	1	0-4 weeks (including benefit reductions)	0-4 weeks (including benefit reductions)
		2	5-9 weeks	5-9 weeks
		3	10-14 weeks	10-14 weeks
		4	More than 14 weeks	More than 14 weeks
		5	Ineligible for benefits	Ineligible for benefits
	Item 8: Sanctions for refusing job offers	1	0-4 weeks (including benefit reductions)	0-4 weeks (including benefit reductions)
		2	5-9 weeks	5-9 weeks
		3	10-14 weeks	10-14 weeks
		4	More than 14 weeks	More than 14 weeks
		5	Suspension of unemployment benefits	Loss of remaining benefit entitlement[b]
	Item 9: Sanctions for repeated refusal of job offers	1	0-4 weeks (including benefit reductions)	0-4 weeks (including benefit reductions)
		2	5-9 weeks	5-9 weeks
		3	10-14 weeks	10-14 weeks
		4	More than 14 weeks	More than 14 weeks
		5	Suspension of unemployment benefits	Loss of remaining benefit entitlement[b]
	Item 10: Sanctions for refusal/ failure to participate in counselling interviews or ALMPs	1	0-4 weeks (including benefit reductions)	0-4 weeks (including benefit reductions and sanctions until compliance)
		2	5-9 weeks	5-9 weeks
		3	10-14 weeks	10-14 weeks
		4	More than 14 weeks	More than 14 weeks
		5	Suspension of unemployment benefits	Loss of remaining benefit entitlement[b]
	Item 11: Sanctions for repeated refusal/ failure to participate in counselling interviews or ALMPs	1	0-4 weeks (including benefit reductions)	0-4 weeks (including benefit reductions and sanctions until compliance)
		2	5-9 weeks	5-9 weeks
		3	10-14 weeks	10-14 weeks
		4	More than 14 weeks	More than 14 weeks
		5	Suspension of unemployment benefits	Loss of remaining benefit entitlement[b]

Notes:

a. Valid reasons for refusing jobs are grouped into the following types: i) family or personal reasons (e.g. caring responsibilities, spouse's work, lack of child care, etc.); ii) own health or disability; iii) other working arrangements of the job (e.g. part-time, temporary contract, anti-social working hours, etc.); iv) Moral or religious reasons; and *v)* job is to replace workers on strike or lockout, or working conditions do not comply with a relevant local or sectorial collective agreement. Refusal of job offers due the wage offered being lower than the previous wage (or a proportion thereof) or unemployment benefit is included in item 2 on demands on occupational mobility, but was previously scored in item 4 for other valid reasons for refusing job offers. It is assumed that all countries require suitable jobs to have wages and working conditions consistent with legal requirements (including administrative extensions of collective agreements), that certain types of work (e.g. prostitution) are not considered suitable work and that the unemployed should not be forced to join or leave a trade union or other organisation in order to take up suitable work.

b. In some countries, as a sanction benefit entitlement may be suspended indefinitely but the individual has the possibility of restarting benefits after a short period in work (shorter than is required to generate a new benefit entitlement). In such cases, a score of 4.5 rather than 5 has been allocated. Sanction regimes in these countries are treated as stricter than in countries that impose fixed-duration sanctions, but less strict than in countries where unemployment benefit recipients lose any remaining benefit entitlement.

13. Items 2, 3 and 4 describe suitable work criteria. Legislation or guidelines typically outline under what circumstances an unemployment benefit recipient is allowed to refuse a job offer without sanction. The criteria may relate to the characteristics of the job (e.g. the occupation, wage, geographical location or working conditions) or the circumstances facing the unemployed person, which give them good cause to refuse the job offer (e.g. family responsibilities or health problems). Suitable work criteria often influence the types of job vacancies to which unemployment benefit recipients are referred by the PES, but also apply in theory to self-directed job search.

14. Item 2 describes the circumstances in which an unemployed person can refuse a job that is not in the same occupational area as their previous work experience or training. New jobseekers may be able to limit their job search to their own occupational area for the initial period of unemployment, but in most countries they are obliged to accept other jobs after an extended period of unemployment. Some initial occupational protection based on the jobseeker's work experience and skills may be adequate to ensure better matching the skills of the unemployed to employers needs and could thereby also contribute to the stability of the new job.

15. Item 3 describes the maximum commuting time that is deemed suitable for unemployed persons taking up a new job. A job with a commuting time above the maximum can be refused without sanction. In some countries, the limit is not explicit but refers to work within the same town, suburb or region as the benefit recipient's home. In these cases, it is assumed that the limit is two hours per day. Travel times are typically calculated based on using public transport, although the use of private transport may be required in areas where public transport is not available. A few countries may also require unemployed persons to move to a new location in order to take up a job offer, but usually the unemployed are then entitled to a relocation subsidy.

16. Item 4 describes factors other than occupational or geographical mobility that are taken into account when determining whether a job offer is suitable for an unemployed person. To enhance the objectivity of international comparisons, the factors cited have been classified into five types: i) family or personal reasons (e.g. caring responsibilities, spouse's work, lack of child care, etc.); ii) own health or disability; iii) other working arrangements of the job (e.g. part-time, temporary contract, anti-social working hours, etc.); iv) moral or religious reasons; or v) if the job is to replace workers on strike or lockout, or working conditions do not comply with a relevant local or sectoral collective agreement. It is assumed that all countries require suitable jobs to have wages and working conditions consistent with legal requirements (including minimum wages and administrative extensions of collective agreements), that certain types of work (e.g. prostitution) are not considered suitable work and that the unemployed should not be forced to join or leave a trade union or other organisation in order to take up suitable work. Thus these criteria are not counted for the purposes of coding this item.

17. Item 5 and 6 relate to the monitoring of jobseekers' independent job-search activities. Item 5 describes whether and how often benefit recipients must prove that they have been independently searching for work, while item 6 describes how benefit recipients need to document their independent job-search efforts.

18. The remaining items cover sanctions, which may be imposed if benefit claimants do not comply with the benefit legislation rules. Item 7 covers sanctions for voluntary unemployment, i.e. self-induced resignation from the previous job. Although sanctions for voluntary unemployment affect initial entitlement, these sanctions are also important for enforcing eligibility criteria, because otherwise claimants who are referred to a job and start in it could quit and return to benefit without the risk of a sanction. The scores of "1" to "4" refer to situations when benefit claims are suspended for a certain number of weeks, whereas a score of "5" is applied for countries where voluntary unemployment results in non-eligibility for unemployment benefit entitlement.

19. Item 8 to 11 describe sanctions applied if unemployment benefit recipients refuse job offers or breach job-search or ALMP participation requirements while receiving benefits. Item 8 covers sanctions for first refusals of job offers, including failures to attend a job interview organised by the employment service or deliberate failure of a job interview, while item 9 covers repeated refusals or failures. Item 10 covers sanctions for a first refusal or failure to participate in *i)* counselling interviews organised by the employment service or *ii)* ALMPs such as labour market training, work experience and job-creation programmes, while item 11 covers repeated refusals or failures.[3] The scores of "1" to "4" refer to situations when benefit claims are suspended for a certain number of weeks.[4] The strictest score of "5" applies if unemployment benefit payments are terminated and any remaining benefit entitlement is lost. In Denmark, Estonia, and Finland and many US states, benefit payments are suspended indefinitely but can be restarted after a short period in employment or training. A score of 4.5 is applied in these circumstances.

Box 2. **The 2014 revised coding framework**

While building on the indicator developed by Venn (2012), the 2014 OECD eligibility criteria indicator differs from Venn's indicator in a number of respects. One indicator item has been excluded and the coverage and wording of a number of items have changed.

Minimum employment/ contribution conditions

The item on minimum employment/ contribution, included in Venn's strictness indicator has been excluded from the 2014 OECD strictness indicator. The rationale is that using employment/contribution records as a condition for entitlement to unemployment *benefit* could be misleading in countries that operate multiple tiers of unemployment benefits. As discussed above, employment/contribution records are an important factor in determining entitlement to unemployment *insurance benefits*, but generally do not apply when determining entitlement to unemployment *assistance benefits*. While a number of countries only offer unemployment insurance benefits, others have unemployment assistance benefits only and the majority of countries have a combination of the two. Hence, the minimum employment/ contribution conditions item in Venn (2012) can leads to ambiguous or misleading results, as a comparison of Australia and Ireland shows. Australia is scored as "1" as there are no employment or contribution requirements and, hence, benefit access is considered as "easy". In contrast, Ireland is scored as "4", as contributions of 104 weeks are required, implying relatively strict access. However, people not qualifying for unemployment insurance have access to unemployment assistance in Ireland, suggesting that overall access is possibly easier in Ireland than in Australia, as two different benefits are available.

A cross-country comparison of unemployment benefit entitlement criteria (and the derivation of a quantitative score) should therefore be more comprehensive and consider the factors influencing entitlement to unemployment insurance and unemployment assistance benefits simultaneously. While the collection of this information seems worthwhile it goes beyond the scope of this report and could be the focus of future work.

Demands on occupational mobility

Item 2 describes the circumstances in which an unemployed person can refuse a job that is not in the same occupational area as their previous work experience (or qualifications) or because the wage offered is lower than the previous wage (or a proportion thereof) or unemployment benefits. Venn (2012) included lower wages in other valid reasons for refusing job offers (item 4). Restrictions based on previous wages have now been included in the item for demands on occupational mobility as such restrictions are closely linked with restrictions to occupational areas.

3. Some countries treat refusals to participate differently from non-deliberate failures, but for most countries there is no difference between them.

4. The score of 1 (least strict) for items 10 and 11 covers sanctions until compliance (i.e. jobseekers do not receive benefits until they attend a counselling interview or participate in an ALMP).

Box 2. **The 2014 revised coding framework** *(Cont.)*

Job-search requirements and monitoring

Items 5 and 6 in the 2014 OECD eligibility criteria indicator relate to independent job-search efforts only. Item 5 describes, if and how often benefit recipients must prove that they have been independently searching for work, while item 6 describes how benefit recipients need to document their independent job-search efforts. This is different to Venn (2012), where the proof of job search item covered both monitoring of independent job search and follow-up of outcomes from direct referrals to vacancies through the PES. Direct referrals are procedures where PES counsellors refer jobseekers to a job vacancy, with jobseekers being at risk of a benefit sanction if they fail to apply. As this procedure is quite different from monitoring of jobseekers' independent job-search activities it has been excluded from items 5 and 6. Follow-up of direct referrals is covered in the items for sanctions following refusal of a job offer, failure to attend a job interview organised by the employment service, or deliberate failure of a job interview. The possibility of imposing sanctions of course requires follow-up through the PES in the first place. An item of interest therefore would be the frequency of direct referrals through the PES. Questions on the use of direct referrals through the PES have not been included in the 2014 OECD questionnaire. OECD (2007) covers direct referrals for a number of OECD countries, but notes difficulties in comparing the information across countries.

Sanction items

Venn (2012) covered sanctions for refusing suitable job offers and participation in active labour market programmes (ALMPs) in one item. She suggested that these could be separated in future work, as sanctions for these different types of refusals differ in a number of countries. The 2014 indicator therefore separates these situations by introducing two items. The wording has also slightly changed, to cover not only ALMPs, but also other PES interventions such as counselling interviews or proof of active job search. The wording for the score of "5" for items 7 to 11 brings in some clarification into what benefit suspensions mean, i.e. the benefit claimant loses the remaining benefit entitlement.

20. As observed by Venn (2012), the choice of weights when compiling a summary indicator is necessarily subjective. The countries covered in this report have adopted different mixes of eligibility criteria and a summary indicator that includes all 11 items will hide this degree of heterogeneity in the policy mix adopted in different countries. Venn (2012) compared different weighting for the summary indicator and decided to create sub-indicators, which are then aggregated into an overall summary indictor. Each sub-indicator reflects one aspect of eligibility criteria (availability requirements; job-search requirements and monitoring; and sanctions), and the categories are themselves interesting for researchers and policy-makers. Each sub-indicator is given equal weight in the summary indicator and each item is given equal weight within its sub-indicator, which would be different to e.g. applying equal weights to all items. The same weighting mechanism is used for the 2014 indicator, with the exception of the weights for sanctions. For sanctions equal weights are applied to the three different sanction types: i) for voluntary unemployment, ii) for refused job offers and iii) for refusals or failures to participate in ALMPs and PES interventions. Sanctions for first and subsequent refusals for the latter two jointly are assigned the same weight as sanctions for voluntary unemployment. The weights are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. **Weights for eligibility criteria summary indicator**

Sub-indicators	Item	Weight in summary indicator
Availability requirements		**0.33**
	1. Availability during ALMP participation	0.08
	2. Demands on occupational mobility	0.08
	3. Demands on geographical mobility	0.08
	4. Other valid reasons for refusing job offers	0.08
Job-search requirements and monitoring		**0.33**
	5. Frequency of job-search monitoring	0.17
	6. Documentation of job-search monitoring	0.17
Sanctions		**0.33**
	7. Sanctions for voluntary unemployment	0.11
	8. Sanctions for refusing job offers	0.06
	9. Sanctions for repeated refusal of job offers	0.06
	10. Sanctions for refusing PES activities or ALMP placements	0.06
	11. Sanctions for repeated refusal of PES activities or ALMP placements	0.06
Sum of weights		1.00

3. Eligibility criteria in 2014

21. This section describes eligibility criteria for unemployment benefits in 40 OECD and/or EU member countries in mid-2014, and provides a score between one (least strict) and five (most strict) for the strictness of each item, based on the coding framework explained in the previous section. Detailed tables describing eligibility criteria in each country are provided in Annex A. Scores may have changed since 2011 due to changes in the legislation or operational guidelines for employment services. Furthermore, countries were given a chance to make clarifications on scores provided in 2011. Annex B shows the scores for 2014 and the 2011 scores incorporating the retrospective clarifications and hence may be different to those reported in Venn (2012). All score changes are discussed in this section.

Availability requirements and suitable work criteria

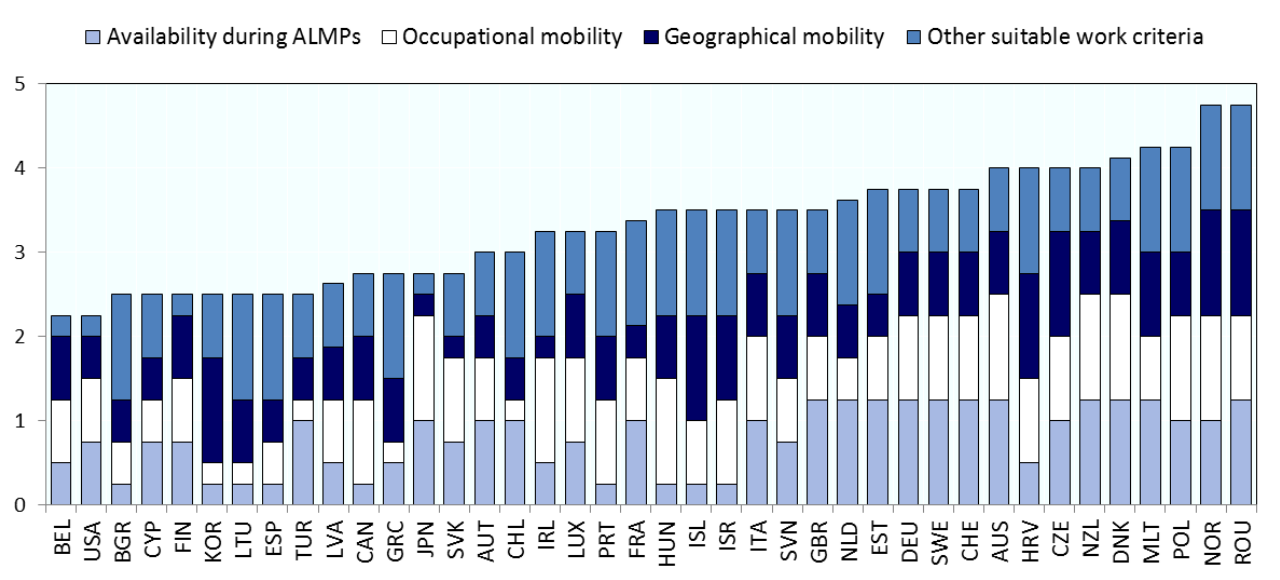
22. This section describes availability requirements for ALMP participants and suitable work criteria. Figure 2 shows the overall strictness of these requirements as measured by the indicator. Malta, Poland, Norway, and Romania allow unemployment benefit recipients few valid reasons for refusing job offers and generally require ALMP participants to be available for work. In contrast, Belgium, the United States, Bulgaria, Cyprus,[*, **] Finland, Korea, Lithuania, Spain, and Turkey allow refusals of job offers for a broad range of reasons and do not require availability during most ALMPs.

*. Note by Turkey: The information in this document with reference to "Cyprus" relates to the southern part of the Island. There is no single authority representing both Turkish and Greek Cypriot people on the Island. Turkey recognises the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Until a lasting and equitable solution is found within the context of the United Nations, Turkey shall preserve its position concerning the "Cyprus issue".

**. Note by all the European Union Member States of the OECD and the European Union: The Republic of Cyprus is recognised by all members of the United Nations with the exception of Turkey. The information in this document relates to the area under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.

Figure 2. **Strictness of availability requirements and suitable work criteria**

Scored from 1 (least strict) to 5 (most strict)



Note: See notes * and ** to p. 17.

Item 1: Availability for work during participation in ALMPs

23. In Australia, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Malta, Netherlands, New Zealand, Romania, Sweden, Switzerland, and United Kingdom, ALMP participants must remain available and actively looking for work. Ongoing availability for work, but not necessarily job search, is required in Austria, Chile, Czech Republic, France, Italy, Japan, Norway, Poland, and Turkey. Some countries, including Cyprus,[*, **] Finland, Iceland, Luxembourg, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Belgium, Croatia, Greece, Latvia, and the United States exempt participants in some ALMPs from being available for work. In Ireland, full-time ALMP participants are exempted from availability requirements, but part-time participants are expected to be actively looking for work. ALMP participants are not required to be available for work in Bulgaria, Canada, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Korea, Lithuania, Portugal, and Spain (see Annex A, Table A1 for full details).

24. Legislative changes resulted in an increased score for Croatia and Greece. In 2011, there were no demands on availability for work whilst participating in ALMPs as the status of unemployed was interrupted during participation. Since 2012 in Croatia and since June 2014 in Greece, participants of training programmes keep the status of unemployed and have to be available for work. The United Kingdom introduced a new rule for training programme participants in autumn 2011. Since then, claimants who have been in receipt of unemployment benefits for six months or more and are referred to training of up to 8 weeks duration and up to 30 hours per week can remain on unemployment benefit rather than transferring to a training allowance. This means that claimants need to continue to attend job-search reviews whilst attending the training to confirm that they are available for and actively seeking work (OECD, 2014). As the majority of training courses for unemployed benefit recipients do not require the transfer onto training allowances, the strictest score now applies to the United Kingdom. For a number of countries the 2011 scores have changed due to clarifications provided by countries. The 2011 score for the Slovak Republic the score appeared too strict,

*. See note * to p. 17.

**. See note ** to p. 17.

as participation in longer education and training programmes only requires availability during the last 2 months. Therefore, the score has been reduced. The clarification provided from Spanish authorities indicates that all unemployed must renew their registration as a jobseeker with the PES every 3 months while participating in ALMPs. However, take-up of employment during ALMP participation is completely voluntary in Spain. Therefore, Spain is assigned the lowest score for item 1.

Item 2: Demands on occupational mobility

25. In Australia, Denmark, Hungary, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, and Poland unemployment benefit recipients are required to accept any job that they are capable of doing, regardless of their previous occupation and the wage offered.[5] Canada, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Romania, the Slovak Republic, and Sweden do not have explicit occupational mobility requirements, but the unemployment benefit recipient's previous occupation, skills and/or education are taken into account. In Germany previous earnings are taken into account for the first 6 months.

26. At the other end of the spectrum, jobseekers in Chile, Greece, Korea, Lithuania, Turkey and those aged over 50 in Belgium can refuse job offers in other occupational areas indefinitely without risking sanctions. In the remaining countries, unemployment benefit recipients can refuse job offers outside their previous occupation for a limited period at the beginning of the unemployment spell, with requirements becoming stricter as the duration of unemployment lengthens. In some cases, the PES may decide that the jobseeker's previous occupation provides too few job opportunities and require jobseekers to expand their search to a wider group of occupations earlier (see Annex A, Table A2 for full details).

27. A legislative change in 2012 both in Belgium and in Malta resulted in a shortened period for occupational restrictions. The 2014 score has therefore increased. In Latvia, the definition of suitable jobs was more flexible in 2011, as jobseekers were able to indefinitely refuse jobs that did not suit their professional background and experience as well as level of Latvian language. Occupational restrictions now only apply in the first 3 months of unemployment, while wage restrictions apply during the first 6 months. In Finland, the Act on Unemployment Security concerning professional skills protection was amended in 2012, and in Canada and the United Kingdom, legislative changes came into force during 2013; in all three countries the changes did, however, not affect the score for item 2.

28. As discussed in Box 2, item 2 now also includes wage restrictions based on previous wages. This change of item coverage only impacted on the German score. Including the wage information means some restrictions based on previous earnings are possible during the initial period of unemployment, resulting in a score of "4" for Germany. In Venn (2012), the Israeli score was different to the Swiss score, although benefit legislation in both countries is similar with respect to demands for occupational mobility. The score for Israel has therefore been increased to "4" to match that of Switzerland.

Item 3: Demands on geographical mobility

29. Most countries set a time or distance limit, above which benefit recipients are justified in refusing a job offer (see Annex A, Table A3 for full details). In Iceland, Norway and Romania, unemployment benefit recipients must generally be willing to move to take up a job offer. Iceland and Romania mention that they are offered relocation or commuting subsidies to do so; Iceland and Norway mention that a valid reason for refusing a job offer that requires relocation, such as family responsibilities,

5. Although some requirements, as specified in notes to Table 1, are assumed to apply in all countries.

may be given. In Croatia, jobseekers may need to accept employment outside their place of residence if the employer bears the cost of travel by public transport and provides adequate accommodation. In Israel and New Zealand, and after three months of unemployment in Denmark and after six months in the Netherlands, longer travel times are required. Among those countries where hours of daily travel are specified, and with some exceptions in an initial period and for cases of non-standard work, etc., countries require acceptance of jobs involving daily travel of up to two, two and a half, three or (only in the case of Switzerland) up to four hours.[6] In France, geographical mobility requirements apply only after six months of unemployment. In several countries (e.g. Australia, Hungary, Lithuania, Portugal, Slovenia) required commuting times are shorter for part-time work or for jobseekers with significant family responsibilities, or in the case of Belgium and Luxembourg, due to health or age considerations. On the other hand, longer commuting times may be required if jobseekers live in traditional commuting areas or regions where people typically commute long distances (e.g. Germany and United States), and under Sweden's rule that the work can involve absence from home for up to 12 hours per day.

30. In Latvia, requirements on geographical mobility from 3 months of unemployment have increased since 2011, resulting in a score increase. A legislative change in the United Kingdom resulted in stricter geographical mobility requirements from the start of the claim, which resulted in a higher score in 2014 than 2011. In New Zealand, jobseekers were expected to accept daily commuting times of 1 to 2 hours in 2011, whereas now there are no limits on travel to work time per day and decisions are taken on a case by case basis. The score for demands on geographical mobility therefore increased. In Canada, legislative changes, which came into force in January 2013, resulted in a stricter score for item 3.

31. For a number of countries the 2011 scores are different due to clarifications provided by countries. Cyprus[*, **] reported that the jobs offered to the unemployed are usually in their district of residence (except if the unemployed person has no objection or preference for a job in a different district), resulting in score reduction, as geographical mobility beyond the area of residence is voluntary. The clarifications provided by Japan and the Slovak Republic suggested that in both countries unemployment benefit legislation does not regulate commuting times. The score has therefore been set to "1". The clarification provided by Spain, suggests that jobseekers always only had to accept a maximum travel time of two hours. The score has therefore been reduced from "3"to "2".

Item 4: Other valid reasons for refusing job offers

32. Belgium, Finland, Japan, and the United States accept a relatively large array of reasons for refusing job offers, while only limited reasons are accepted in Bulgaria, Chile, Croatia, Estonia, France, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, and Spain (see Annex A, Table A4 for full details). In Greece, the scoring for the item has changed in the opposite direction with fewer other valid reasons applying in 2014 than in 2011.

6. As mentioned above, some countries that do not specify hours of daily travel are coded as if they require less than two hours. However, in Malta this item is coded as four, even though most areas can be reached within one hour. There are no restrictions on geographical mobility other than that jobseekers are not required to move to another island to take up work.

*. See note * to p. 17.

**. See note ** to p. 17.

33. The item on other valid reasons for refusing job offers previously also included lower wages as a possible reason (see Box 2). This is now included in item 2 on occupational mobility. This resulted in a count of fewer other valid reasons for a number of countries (i.e. making the eligibility criterion for this item stricter) and, hence, increased the scores in Austria, Estonia, and France. Furthermore, for a number of countries the 2011 scores have been changed, due to clarifications provided by the countries. The score has been increased for Bulgaria, as all valid reasons relate to personal reasons. Similarly the revised description provided by Finland suggests fewer other valid reasons, resulting in a stricter score. The clarification provided by Germany suggests that there are more valid reasons for refusing job offers, resulting in a reduced score.

Job-search requirements and monitoring (item 5 and 6)

34. This section describes monitoring of jobseekers' independent job-search activities. The score for the strictness of job-search monitoring covers two different dimensions: How often benefit recipients must prove that they have been independently searching for work (item 5) and how benefit recipients need to document their independent job-search efforts (item 6). Documentation efforts have been included to provide a reflection of the quality of information that jobseekers need to provide on their independent applications. Documentation requirements make the jobseekers' efforts verifiable and, in addition, feedback on application outcomes can supply important information for the PES. It provides additional insight into the techniques jobseekers use and may provide an opportunity for the PES to help jobseekers improve their job-search techniques.

35. Figure 3 shows the overall strictness of these requirements as measured by the indicator. Malta appears to be the strictest country across the two items included in the monitoring of independent job-search efforts. While job-search is monitored on a monthly basis, documentation requirements are the strictest across countries and jobseekers may be asked to produce declarations by employers that they have applied for work within their company. Australia, Portugal and the United Kingdom require at least fortnightly job-search reviews and also have relatively strict documentation requirements. A large number of other countries, including Austria, Croatia, Estonia, Iceland, Japan, Korea, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Romania, Sweden, and Switzerland, monitor independent job-search efforts on a monthly basis. In Estonia, interviews should be at least monthly, but may be more frequent. In Croatia, some long-term unemployed may be monitored on a weekly basis. France starts with monthly monitoring once jobseekers have been unemployed for four months. In Latvia, jobseekers have to prove their job-search efforts at least once in two months and in Denmark meetings are held on a quarterly basis. Most of these countries also have relatively strict documentation requirements, with jobseekers being asked to keep job-search diaries, specify their job-search actions or even supply the name and address (or equivalent documentation) of employers that they contacted. Romania does not have any formal requirement to document applications and job-search activity.

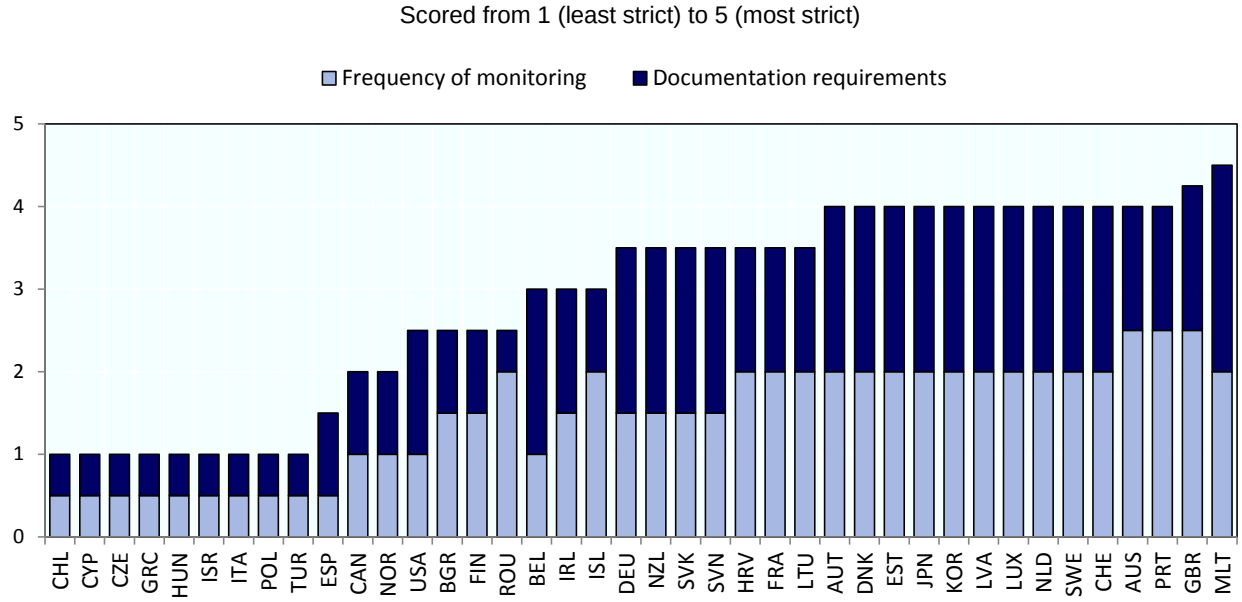
36. In Bulgaria, Finland, Germany, Ireland, New Zealand, Slovak Republic, and Slovenia the frequency of monitoring of job-search activities varies for different jobseekers and/or during the unemployment spell, but is on average less than quarterly. Belgium, Canada, Norway, and the United States only apply infrequent or ad-hoc checking of job-search activity (although, as detailed in Annex A, Table A7, relatively frequent work-search actions may be required in the United States). Even though monitoring is less frequent, most of these countries still require documentation of job-search efforts. In Chile, Cyprus[*,**], the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Poland, and Turkey the legislation does not require the regular checking of independent job-search activities. In Poland, an individual action plan may, however, be used to specify a certain number of job-search actions per week or per month.

*. See note * to p. 17.

**. See note ** to p. 17.

37. In Spain, there is no national legislation about the required reporting frequency for job-search activities, but the regional PES may nevertheless set up regular monitoring of job-search activities and since the legal amendments passed in July 2012 jobseekers may be asked to prove that they are actively looking for employment. Since 2014, jobseekers in Croatia also have to provide information about vacancy applications and similar activities, which was not required before. In comparison to 2011, the 2014 score for item 6 has therefore increased. Also in Latvia job-search documentation requirements have been tightened since 2011, resulting in a score increase. A full overview of frequency of job-search monitoring and documentation requirements can be found in Annex A, Tables A5 and A6, while comparisons of 2011 and 2014 scores can be found in Annex B.

Figure 3. **Strictness of job-search requirements and monitoring**



Note: See notes * and ** to p. 17.

38. Countries were also asked whether jobseekers need to report some minimum number of job-search actions each months. This aspect of job-search requirements is not included in the indicator. As Annex A, Table A.7, shows, the majority of countries do not require jobseekers to report a minimum number of job-search actions. Estonia, Finland, Malta, Portugal, Sweden, and Switzerland report that the number of job-search actions to be reported is determined in an individual action plan or by a placement officer on the basis of client characteristics and the local labour market. Australia, Japan, Korea, Latvia, Netherlands, Belgium, and the United States reported a minimum number of job-search actions per month, ranging from at least two per month in Japan, Korea, and Latvia, and to up to 20 actions per month in Australia (although the number is reduced in non-metropolitan areas).

Sanctions

39. Unemployment benefit recipients are typically subject to sanctions if they i) voluntarily quit their job, ii) refuse a suitable job offer (as defined under Items 2, 3 and 4) or iii) refuse/fail to participate in ALMPs and other PES interventions (e.g. counselling interviews) without a good reason. As discussed in Section 2, countries were for the first time asked to separately describe their sanction regimes for the latter two situations.[7] Countries were also asked to distinguish between first and subsequent refusals of job offers or ALMPs and other PES interventions. A full overview of these different sanction situations can be found in Annex A, Tables A8 to A11.

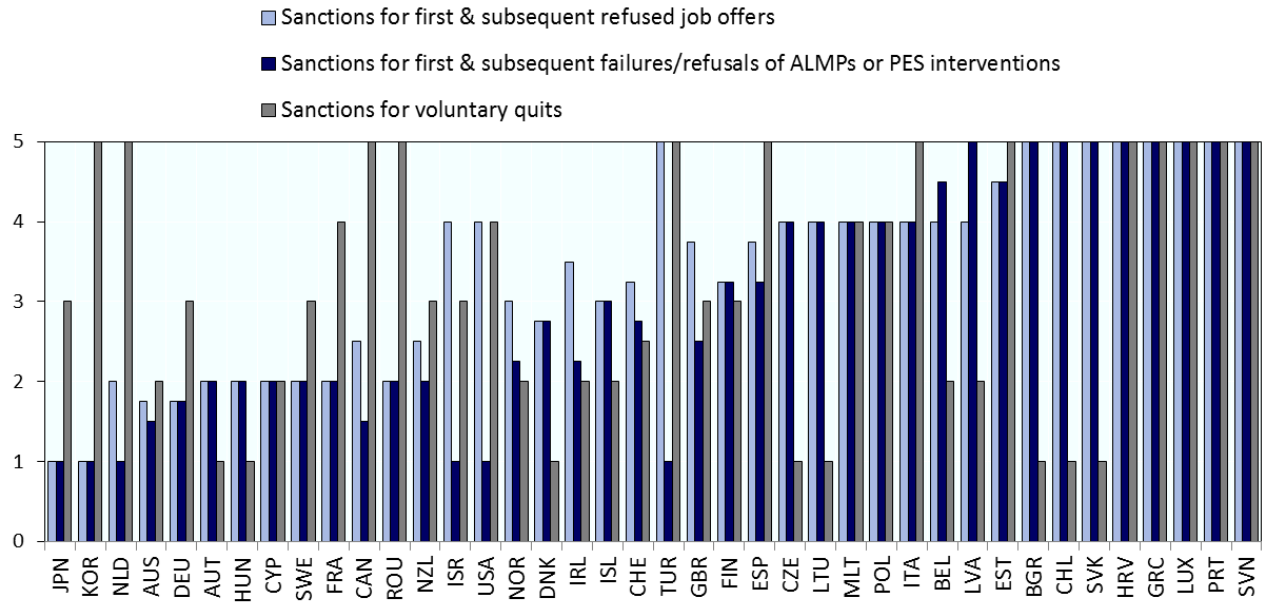
40. Figure 4 shows the scores for sanctions for voluntary quits and the weighted averages for first and subsequent refusals for refused job offers and refusal/failure to participate in ALMPs and other PES interventions. In around a fifth of countries the same sanctions apply in all three situations. In the remaining countries around half have stricter scores for voluntary quits than refused job offers or ALMPs and PES interventions, while the other half has less strict scores for voluntary quits. Worth pointing out is the situation in Bulgaria, Chile, the Czech Republic, Lithuania and the Slovak Republic that apply much stricter sanctions for refused job offers and refused participation in ALMPs and other PES interventions. Comparing sanctions for refused job offers and refused participation in ALMPs or other PES interventions shows that sanctions are the same in the vast majority of countries. Where there is a difference, usually sanctions for refused job offers are stricter than those for refusal or failure to participate in ALMPs and other PES interventions. Belgium is an exception, with stricter sanctions for refusal or failure to participate in ALMPs and other PES interventions than for refused job offers.[8]

7. Although Grubb (2001) listed sanction provisions for 13 countries, identifying differences in the sanction provisions for refusal of work vs. refusal of ALMP in four of them, in line with findings here.

8. In Belgium, the typical sanction for refused job offers or failures to report to the employment service or dropping or deliberately failing an integration measure is 10 to 14 weeks. Refusing to participate in an integration course proposed by the PES, however, results in the total suspension of unemployment benefits.

Figure 4. **Strictness of sanctions**

Scored from 1 (least strict) to 5 (most strict)



Note: See notes * and ** to p. 17.

Item 7: Sanctions for voluntary unemployment

41. A large number of countries do not pay unemployment benefits in case of voluntary unemployment, with the number of legitimate reasons that justify a voluntary quit varying (number of valid reasons provided in brackets):[9] Canada (5), Croatia (4), Estonia (2), Greece (0), Italy (2), Korea (5), Luxembourg (4), the Netherlands (4), Portugal (1), Romania (2), Slovenia (3), Spain (3), and Turkey (5). Sanctions (number legitimate exemptions shown in brackets) are relatively short (i.e. one month or less) in Austria (5) and Denmark (6). In Bulgaria (2) and the Czech Republic (4) benefit payments are not postponed, but the benefit amount is reduced. In Chile, Hungary, Lithuania, and the Slovak Republic no sanctions apply, as the reason why the previous employment ended is not examined. A full overview of sanctions for voluntary unemployment can be found in Annex A, Tables A8 and A9.

Item 8 and 9: Sanctions for refused job offers

42. In Chile, Portugal, Slovenia, Greece, Croatia, Bulgaria, the Slovak Republic, Luxembourg, and Turkey unemployment benefits are terminated and any remaining benefit entitlement lost, if the jobseeker refuses a suitable job offer. In Estonia, unemployment benefit payments are terminated if the jobseeker refuses a suitable employment offer, but they can be reinstated if the person starts a new job and loses the new job involuntarily within twelve months from the date when an unemployment insurance benefit was granted for the first time. Sanctions are relatively short (one month or less) in Denmark, Germany, Sweden, Korea, and Japan and in the Netherlands variable benefit reductions may be applied.

9. Information on valid reasons for voluntary quits is collected the first time, but not included in the scoring of the indicator.

France and Cyprus[*, **] do not apply sanctions for the first refusal of a reasonable job offer. In the remaining countries sanctions of more than one month apply, with sanctions of six months being imposed in the Czech Republic, Lithuania and Malta. In the United States sanctions vary from state to state. Some states postpone unemployment benefits for a specified number of weeks and other states postpone benefits for a variable number of weeks (usually requiring a return to work with a specified amount in wages or days of work). In addition, some states reduce the benefit amount received for the benefit year.

43. Around half of the countries with sanctions of a certain number of weeks for first refused job offer have escalating sanctions for subsequent refusals, while the remaining countries apply the same sanction for each refused job offers. Among the countries with escalating sanctions, Italy, Latvia, and Belgium terminate benefits for the second refused job offer. In Finland and Denmark, unemployment benefits are terminated once a jobseeker refused a second job offer. However, in Denmark benefits can be restored once the person worked in a regular job for at least 300 hours within 3 months or 276 hours within a 12 week period. In Finland, benefit entitlement can be restored once the jobseeker becomes employed, participates in certain PES services provided or begins full-time studies for a minimum period of 12 weeks.

44. The United Kingdom is the only country with a change in legislation, resulting in a higher score in 2014 than in 2011. For a number of countries the 2011 scores have been updated based on clarifications by countries. The score has been reduced for Cyprus[*, **] following the clarification that no sanctions apply for a first refused job offer. The score has also been reduced for Italy, as jobseekers can reclaim unemployment benefits, following a suspension of 4 months, instead of completely losing any remaining benefit entitlement. The score has also been reduced for the United States for both first and subsequent refused job offers, as not all states terminate unemployment benefits due to refused job offers. Romania clarified that, following a firs or subsequent refused job offer, a person can reapply for benefits after a 60 day suspension, which led to a score reduction. In contrast, the score for sanctions for repeated refusals of job offers for the Netherlands has been increased, as unemployment benefits may be terminated in the case of lasting non-compliance.

Item 10 and 11: Sanctions for refusal or failure to participate in ALMPs and PES interventions

45. In Chile, Portugal, Slovenia, Greece, Croatia, Bulgaria, the Slovak Republic, Luxembourg, and Latvia unemployment benefits are terminated and any remaining benefit entitlement lost, if the jobseeker refuses or fails to participate in counselling interviews or ALMPs organised by the PES. In Estonia, as for refused job offers, unemployment benefit payments can be reinstated, if the person starts a new job and loses the new job involuntarily within twelve months from the date when an unemployment insurance benefit has been granted for the first time. Sanctions are relatively short (one month or less) in Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Korea, Sweden,[10] and Turkey.[11] In France and the Netherlands benefits are reduced for a fixed period, while in New Zealand benefits are reduced until the claimant complies with the requirements. Australia does not apply sanctions for first failures or refusals; while in Israel no sanctions apply, as benefit recipients are not currently required to participate in scheduled (or un-scheduled) interventions. In Cyprus[*, **], there are no sanctions for first refusals or failures to participate in ALMPs and PES interventions; sanctions apply for subsequent refusals of PES interventions, but not for repeated refusals of ALMP participation.

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* See note ** to p. 17.

**. See note ** to p. 17.

10. In Sweden, for first failures to visit the PES as agreed benefit recipients receive a warning. For first refusals to participate in ALMPs benefits are suspended for 5 benefit days.

11. In Turkey, benefits are suspended until the claimant complies with the requirements.

46. Around half of the countries with sanctions or benefit reductions for a certain number of weeks for first failures or refusals have escalating sanctions for subsequent failures or refusals, while the remaining countries apply the same sanction for each failure or refusal to participate in counselling interviews or ALMPs organised by the PES. Among the countries with escalating sanctions, Belgium, Denmark and Finland terminate benefits for the second refusal of a job offer. In Denmark and Finland, benefit entitlement can still be restored once the person has for a minimum period worked in a regular job or (in Finland) participated in an ALMP.

47. Again, the United Kingdom is the only country with a change in legislation, resulting in stricter sanctions and, hence, a higher score for this item in 2014 than in 2011. For a number of countries the scores for 2011 have been changed, based on clarifications provided by countries. In Belgium the score has been increased to reflect two different situations more precisely: the sanction for failing to report to the employment service without sufficient justification or dropping or deliberately failing an integration measure is typically suspension of benefits for 10 to 14 weeks. The sanction for refusing to participate in an integration course proposed by the PES is the total suspension of unemployment benefit. Based on the additional information provided, the score for Romania has been reduced, as a person can reapply from unemployment benefits following a 60 day suspension, rather than having benefits terminated completely. The score has also been reduced for Cyprus[*, **], following the clarification that no sanctions apply for a first refusal or failure. For Turkey the score has been reduced from the highest score to the lowest score, as benefits are not terminated, but only suspended until the jobseeker attends the ALMP. In Spain, refusals to participate in ALMPs result in a sanction of three months. Since the amendments passed in July 2012, unemployment benefit recipients must also prove to the PES that they are actively looking for employment. Failures to do so can now result in loss of the benefit for one month. The score assigned in 2014 for first refusals/failures to participate in ALMPs or PES interventions (item 9) is the average of the two situations with sanctions of different length. Overall, Spain appears to have a less strict sanction regime than was reported in Venn (2012). However, the Spanish sanction regime now is stricter than it was in 2011.

4. Overall strictness of eligibility criteria

48. This section presents an overall strictness of eligibility criteria indicator and highlights any changes in this indicator since 2011.

Summary indicator for 2014

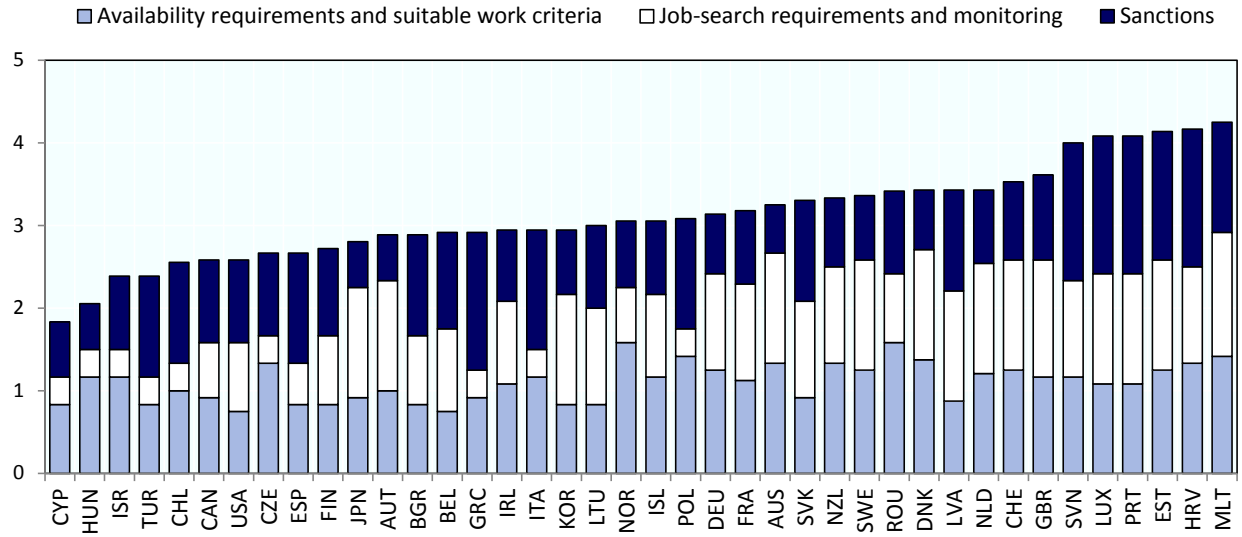
49. Figure 5 shows the overall strictness of behavioural eligibility criteria as measured by the indicator. The indicator refers to the situation in mid-2014 for all countries. Eligibility criteria and sanctions are the strictest in Malta, Croatia, Estonia, Portugal, Luxembourg and Slovenia and are the least strict in Cyprus[*, **], Hungary, Israel, and Turkey. The countries with the strictest eligibility criteria tend to have strict rules in all four sub-indicators. However, there is considerable cross-country variation in the relative importance of the different sub-indicators for the remaining countries.

* . See note * to p. 17.

** . See note ** to p. 17.

Figure 5. **Overall strictness of eligibility criteria**

Scored from 1 (least strict) to 5 (most strict)



Note: See notes * and ** to p. 17.

Changes in the indicator since 2011

50. As highlighted in Box 2, the indicator presented in Venn (2012) with mid-2011 data and the 2014 OECD indicator of unemployment benefit eligibility criteria are not directly comparable due to different coverage and definitions (see Section 3). Even when coverage and definitions did not change in comparison to Venn (2012), the descriptions and scores may have changed, as countries were given the opportunity to clarify or refine the information previously provided. This led to a number of changes, which are not driven by different item coverage or a change in countries' legislation and the descriptions and scores should have already applied in 2011. Annex B, Table B1 provides an overview of the 2011 and 2014 scores. The 2011 scores incorporate any score changes resulting from clarifications and hence, differences in the 2011 and 2014 scores are those driven by a change in legislation or operational guidelines.

51. In a number of countries there have been policy changes impacting on the eligibility criteria, in law or in practice, which do not change the scores previously assigned. Policy changes that affected the value of the summary indicator occurred in the following countries:

- **Belgium**: In 2011, jobseekers were able to restrict their availability for the first 6 months of the benefit claim. In 2014, jobseekers were only able to restrict their availability during the first three to five months. The score for demands on occupational mobility (item 2) has therefore increased.
- **Canada**: In January 2013, Employment Insurance Regulations were amended to clarify definitions of what constitutes reasonable job search and suitable employment. This resulted in a stricter score for demands on geographical mobility, as jobseekers may in some situations have to accept commuting times of more than two hours per day.
- **Croatia**: In 2011, availability for work during participation in ALMPs was not required, with the status of unemployed being interrupted. Since 2012, participants in training programmes remain in the unemployment register and are therefore available for work and placement activities. The score for availability during ALMP participation (item 1) has therefore increased. Since 2014, jobseekers also have to provide information about vacancy applications and similar activities, which was not required before. The 2014 score for item 6 has therefore increased.

- **Greece**: In 2011, availability for work during participation in ALMPs was not required, with the status of unemployed being interrupted. Since June 2014, the status of unemployed is kept for participants of training programmes, who continue to be available for work. The score for availability during ALMP participation (item 1) has therefore increased. In 2011, Greece reported a number of other valid reasons for refusing job offers. In 2014, Greece reported that no other reasons beyond occupational and geographical restrictions apply, resulting in a stricter score for other valid reasons for refusing job offers (item 4).

- **Latvia**: The definition of suitable jobs was more flexible in 2011, as jobseekers were able to indefinitely refuse jobs that did not suit their professional background and experience as well as level of Latvian language. Occupational restrictions now only apply in the first 3 months of unemployment, while wage restrictions apply during the first 6 months. The score for demands on occupational mobility (item 2) has therefore increased. Demands on geographical mobility from 3 months of unemployment have increased since 2011, resulting in a score increase of item 3. Also job-search documentation requirements have been tightened since 2011, resulting in a score increase for item 6.

- **Malta**: In 2011, jobseekers were able to refuse jobs requiring fewer skills than requested for their preferred type of job during the first year of unemployment. Since 2012, such protection now only applies during the first three months of unemployment. The score for demands on occupational mobility (item 2) has therefore increased.

- **New Zealand**: In 2011, jobseekers were expected to accept daily commuting times of 1 to 2 hours. Since then, PES internal guidelines were updated to consider the factors around suitable employment on a case by case basis, rather than specifying a travel time. The new score for demands on geographical mobility (item 3) therefore increased. In 2011, jobseekers refusing a job offer had their benefits reduced by 50% until such time as they re-complied. Further benefit reductions applied after another four weeks. Since July 2013 a benefit suspension of 13 weeks applies to jobseekers refusing a suitable job offer. In order to receive benefits, a person has to reapply for benefits following the suspension period. The suspension only applies to 50% of the benefit if the person has a partner and/or dependent children. As in 2011, benefit reductions apply to jobseekers who fail to attend a job interview or deliberately fail a job interview. Due to the stricter sanction regime for refused job offers (item 7) the score has increased.

- **United Kingdom**: A new rule for unemployment benefit recipients participating in training programmes introduced in autumn 2011 and the new unemployment benefit regulations introduced in 2013 impacted on the indicator in several ways. Since autumn 2011, the vast majority of training programme participants remain on unemployment benefits and, hence, need to continue to attend job-search reviews whilst attending the training to confirm that they are available for and actively seeking work. Therefore, the strictest score for availability during ALMPs (item 1) now applies. Daily commuting time increased since the new unemployment benefit regulations introduced in 2013, resulting in an increased score for demands on geographical mobility (item 3).The score for sanctions for repeated refusals of job offers (item 8) increased, with sanctions of 3 years now applying after a third refusal, in comparison to variable sanctions of 1 to 26 weeks in 2011. Furthermore, the score for first refusals/failures to attend ALMPs or PES interventions (item 9) increased due to stricter sanctions for non-participation in certain mandatory programmes.

5. Limitations of the indicator

52. The previous section highlighted that different countries operate unemployment benefit schemes with different availability requirements and suitable work criteria, job-search requirements and monitoring of those and sanctions for non-compliance. In this respect, the indicators presented in this paper provide a step towards having a fuller quantitative picture of the complexities of unemployment benefit systems. However, as discussed in Section 2 this picture is only partial and benefit generosity and entitlement criteria also play a major role and are not covered in this report. Furthermore, there are some limitations to these eligibility criteria indicators that warrant further attention.

Implementation and enforcement

53. As pointed out by Venn (2012), an important limitation of the indicator is that it mainly reflects the strictness of rules as they are outlined in legislation or regulations, not how they operate on the ground, although the item on the frequency of job-search monitoring captures this to some extent. PES offices in practice have some scope to interpret the rules, so there can be differences between *de jure* and *de facto* strictness of eligibility criteria. Importantly, many of the rules are only enforced through PES placement measures and other contacts: for example, jobseekers often choose which jobs to apply for, and where they are only rarely are directly referred to a specific vacancy, the availability-for-work and suitable job rules have limited relevance. Hence, stricter criteria need not necessarily have an impact. Legislation may already be as strict as the PES is willing or able to implement in practice and stricter legislation will lose touch with reality. Conversely, less strict criteria may result in more effective enforcement on the ground level. Venn (2012) mentions an example from Belgium, where a reduction of the severity of sanctions for voluntary unemployment or for refusing a suitable job offer was followed by an increase in the number of sanctions issued.

54. Sanction rates may therefore be regarded as a useful indicator of the enforcement of eligibility criteria. However, the incidence of sanctions reflects both compliance and enforcement efforts. Higher sanctions may be associated with stricter enforcement due to more regular contact with the PES. In turn, credible enforcement may achieve compliance and thus result in lower sanctions. While some enforcement efforts are covered by the item on monitoring of independent job-search efforts, they, nevertheless, only provide a partial picture. For example, data for the existence and regularity of direct referrals would be needed to assess the enforcement of sanctions for refusals of job offers. Local offices may have discretion to waiver sanctions that may not be socially desirable. While sanctions may have a positive impact on unemployment exit rates, employment may come at the cost of lower quality of post-unemployment employment outcomes (see e.g. Arni et al., 2009 and Van den Berg and Vikström, 2014) or may have adverse consequences for child welfare, family hardship, and health outcomes (see e.g. Griggs and Evans, 2010 for an overview).

55. Finally, cyclical factors may also impact on the *de facto* implementation of eligibility criteria. In depressed labour markets, PES offices may be more willing to apply exemptions, and monitoring may be constrained due to higher client to staff ratios and fewer job vacancies.

Missing items

56. The indicator covers a wide range of eligibility criteria, but the report also highlighted that it is by no means exhaustive. The sub-indicator on job-search requirements and monitoring could be refined by including the number of job-search actions that claimants have to report. While countries were asked to provide information in this area, it has not been included in the indicator as few countries have rules for the number of job-search actions (see Annex A, Table A7). As mentioned in the last sub-section, also direct referrals are not included in the indicator. While an item of interest, the information has not been gathered from countries, as national information is difficult to compare due to different national concepts and definitions, as observed by OECD (2007).

57. An addition to the sub-indicator for availability requirements would be information on how benefit claimants have to demonstrate that they are "available for work", as reflected in the ILO definition of unemployment (see Box 3). In most countries unemployment benefit legislation refers to the availability for work, but the details on defining availability vary widely. In its questionnaire, the OECD asked countries to provide information on how availability for work is enforced, but decided not to include this information in the indicator as differences between national definitions are not always distinct. Even without a quantitative indictor the information may be of interest, as it highlights varying requirements across OECD and EU countries. Countries were asked to provide information along two different dimensions (including possible exemptions):

- Availability to start work, covering requirements for the jobseeker's earliest possible start date (e.g. immediately, 24 hours, 5 working days); and

- Jobseeker's contactability, covering requirements for jobseekers to respond to communication from the employment service immediately or within a set time-frame (e.g. 24 hours, 1 week).

Box 3. **The ILO definition of unemployment**

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) definition of unemployment, adopted by the Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (Geneva, 1982), the "unemployed" comprise all persons above a specified age who during the reference period were:

- "without work", i.e. were not in paid employment or self-employment;

- "currently available for work", i.e. were available for paid employment or self-employment during the reference period; and

- "seeking work", i.e. had taken specific steps in a specified reference period to seek paid employment or self-employment. The specific steps may include registration at a public or private employment exchange; application to employers; checking at worksites, farms, factory gates, market or other assembly places; placing or answering newspaper advertisements; seeking assistance of friends or relatives; looking for land, building, machinery or equipment to establish own enterprise; arranging for financial resources; applying for permits and licences, etc.

The labour force surveys implemented in most OECD countries use a recent past week (i.e. a fixed week each month or the week preceding the survey week) as the reference period for assessment of "without work" status. In some cases, the reference period for assessment of "currently available" status is the reference week used for "without work", but in EU countries it is a two-week (forward-looking) period after that reference week. The reference period for "seeking work" status is the previous four weeks (including the survey reference week). Ongoing registration at an employment exchange without specific actions, or reading newspaper advertisements, etc. without answering them, is not usually treated as job search.

Source: ILO, "LABORSTA internet: Main statistics (annual) – Unemployment", http://laborsta.ilo.org/applv8/data/c3e.html (accessed 13 January 2015) and national labour force survey documentation.

58. The majority of countries require jobseekers to be available to start employment "immediately, "always", "every day", "at any time", "right away" or "within a few hours". This includes Austria, Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, Croatia, Cyprus[*, **], Germany, Finland, Iceland[12], Israel, Japan, Malta, Poland, Portugal[13], Sweden, Switzerland[14], and the United Kingdom. Some countries phrase the availability requirement differently, e.g. requiring jobseekers to promptly commence work (Estonia) or starting work without delay (Latvia, Luxembourg and Netherlands). Five countries mention explicit time frames regarding jobseekers' availability to start work. In Denmark, jobseekers must be able to start work the day after the person has received notice from the PES. In Ireland, jobseekers have to be available with a day or a few days, whereas in the Slovak Republic jobseekers are obliged to be available within 3 working days. In Bulgaria, jobseekers must be able to take up a job within a fortnight after being notified by the PES. Hungary allows for a longer delay, requiring jobseekers to be available to start work within 30 days. The requirements are less-narrowly defined in Australia, New Zealand, and Norway, which refer to a "reasonable timeframe" and Spain, which requires jobseekers to be available to start work at "short notice". Belgium, France, Greece, Italy, Korea, Lithuania, Romania, Slovenia, and Turkey do not have any rules in their unemployment benefit legislation or PES guidelines regarding the earliest possible start date. In the United States federal legislation does not specify any rules, but states may have established operational guidelines.

59. In contrast with the availability to start work dimension, the majority of countries do not specify explicit rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communications from the employment service.[15] Contactability rules further define the availability for work criterion, and help the PES to rapidly provide staff or send selected candidates for a job interview. A number of countries, including New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Slovenia, Spain, and the United States, do not have explicit rules regarding contactability or response times in their legislation or PES guidelines, but such requirements may be individually agreed between PES counsellors and jobseekers and are often included in individual action plans. Sweden requires jobseekers to be contactable at their current address and report any address changes immediately. Belgium states that written communications from the national PES is binding, but does not specify minimum response times. In Turkey, jobseekers are required to respond to communications sent by registered mail and in Bulgaria and Portugal jobseekers have to confirm their status only during meetings at the PES. A number of countries have contactability rules similar to those for availability to start work. In Croatia and Ireland, jobseekers have to immediately react to communications, and in the United Kingdom jobseekers need to be immediately available for job interviews. In Austria, jobseekers need to react to communications from the PES immediately, the following day or as specified in an individual agreement. In Canada and Germany, jobseekers need to be available every day. In Switzerland, jobseekers have to react within a day and in Denmark at the latest the day after the jobseeker has received notice. In the Slovak Republic jobseekers have to react within three days.

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* . See note * to p. 17.

** . See note ** to p. 17.

12. In Iceland, for the first four weeks, jobseekers are free to deny job offers without consequences.

13. In Portugal, the acceptance of a job can be postponed up the 15th day after the claimant's initial registration for work, but after that acceptance must be immediate.

14. In Switzerland unemployment insurance recipients must be ready to begin a suitable job or ALMP measure immediately. For exceptions for unemployment insurance recipients with intermediate income see Annex C, Table C1.

15. Countries without such explicit rules are Australia, Chile, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, and Romania.

6. Conclusion

60. This report presents descriptions of unemployment benefit eligibility criteria in 40 OECD and/or EU member countries, which are then used to compile three sub-indicators and a summary indicator. The indicators represent a useful addition to existing empirical measures of the characteristics of unemployment benefit schemes. However, they are not without limitations. The indicators may not always properly capture the implementation and enforcement of unemployment benefit legislation and PES guidelines and are somewhat limited in scope with regards to some features of eligibility criteria that may be important in influencing labour market outcomes (e.g. use of direct referrals). These limitations should be kept in mind when interpreting the information presented in this report and using the resulting indicator and sub-indicators of the strictness of eligibility criteria.

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ANNEX A: DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ELIBILITY CRITERIA AND SANCTIONS

Table A1. **Availability for work during participation in Active Labour Market Programmes (item 1)**

Country	Description – Availability for work during participation in Active Labour Market Programmes *(item 1)*	Score 2014
Australia	Jobseekers must meet the general requirements under the activity test - i.e. to be actively seeking and prepared to accept suitable paid work - and must participate in additional activities when required to do so. These activities may include actively looking for work and/or undertaking activities which are designed to help them become ready for work in the future. The activity test recognises that the primary focus for jobseekers who are not early school leavers should be finding work. There are some limited instances where jobseekers undertaking specified hours of certain approved activities are not required to undertake additional job search, e.g. jobseekers undertaking a full time short course, are not required to undertake additional job search or other activities. However, these jobseekers remain connected with their provider, must attend appointments, and must accept suitable paid work that fits around their study commitments. Some groups, such as jobseekers who are principal carers or those with a partial capacity to work who are meeting their requirements through paid work, study or a combination of the two for at least 30 hours per fortnight, are not required to remain connected to their employment services provider or accept any offers of suitable paid work.	5
Austria	Continuing availability for work is generally required while participating in ALMPs.	4
Belgium	Unemployed persons taking part in training organised by the regional employment service or engaged full-time in a job creation programme do not have to be available or actively looking for work. Those taking part in full-time training programmes that are not organised by the regional employment service can request to have their availability and job-search requirements lifted. Unemployed people participating in training programmes lasting less than 4 weeks or in part-time training or job creation programmes are still required to be available and looking for work.	2
Bulgaria	During participation of unemployed people in subsidised employment programmes, their registration in the employment agency is suspended and they are not provided with any information about vacancies for the duration of their participation in the programme.	1
Canada	Employment Insurance claimants participating in an approved course or program are not required to prove their continued availability.	1
Chile	The jobseeker must always be available for a job offer by the corresponding Municipal Office of Labor Mediation.	4
Croatia	Generally, persons participating in active labour market programmes (ALMPs) exit their unemployment status (conclusion of temporary work contracts, occupational training contracts and similar) and are not considered active jobseekers, that is, they are not available for work. The only exception is participation in training of the unemployed organised and financed by PES. During the period of training jobseekers remain in unemployment register and are therefore available for work and placement activities.	2
Cyprus	Continuing availability for work is required during participation in training programmes proposed by the PES and organised by the Human Resource Development Authority or the Cyprus Productivity Centre. During occupational training, approved by the Minister of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance Services, the unemployment benefit may be given to the Authority responsible for implementation of the programme instead and the unemployed person will receive a payment from the Authority. Usually though, this is not applied.	3

Country	Description – Availability for work during participation in Active Labour Market Programmes *(item 1)*	Score 2014
Czech Republic	Generally, job mediation is not provided while a person is involved in vocational training, community service and socially beneficial jobs. In case of these jobs, persons are temporarily removed from the jobseeker's list because they have a contract with the employer. If the jobseeker finds him/herself a job during vocational training, an agreement with the new employer has to be made. He can either complete the course or terminate it ahead of schedule for employment reasons without any financial sanctions.	4
Denmark	In general, the unemployed person must remain available for work during ALMP participation. If participation in/completion of a specific employability enhancement measure will most likely result in ordinary work the local job centre can decide that the unemployed person has to be available for that specific measure only. Participants in ALMPs need to continue active job search and accept job referrals.	5
Estonia	The unemployed must remain available and actively searching for work during participation in ALMPs.	5
Finland	Legislation specifies that if an unemployed person is engaged in labour market training or pursue self-motivated studies, eligibility for unemployment benefit does not require accepting any normal job. However, while using other services provided by the TE Office, the jobseeker must be prepared to accept normal jobs in order to be eligible for unemployment benefit. Good causes in legislation are not exhaustive: Should the job applicant refuse, the TE Office will assess whether continuing with the service would be more helpful for finding employment later. In this case, refusing work will not result in loss of unemployment benefit.	3
France	The unemployed must accept jobs offers during participation in ALMPs but are not obliged to provide evidence of job search.	4
Germany	The employment agency may place a jobless person in an acceptable training measure or job while this person participates in an integration programme. Unemployed persons are required to continue making their own efforts when participating in ALMPs.	5
Greece	The unemployed person must be constantly available and capable for work before participating in an ALMP. The unemployment status of every person registered with the OAED unemployment registries is interrupted as soon as the unemployed person participates in programmes for the creation of new jobs. Since June 2014, in the case of participation in training programmes, the unemployment status is not interrupted as soon as the unemployed person starts attending a training programme. Nevertheless, time in vocational training is not accounted as time of unemployment.	2
Hungary	During participation in a labour market programme the unemployed person's availability pauses.	1
Iceland	Continuous availability for work is not required if the unemployed is participating in labour-market training and job-creation programmes.	1
Ireland	Unemployed people who are participating in SOLAS full time training programmes and receiving a training allowance are removed from the Live Register and therefore are not considered to be actively seeking employment. SOLAS also offer part-time (evening) and online training programmes. Unemployed participants on these courses do not receive a training allowance from SOLAS and retain their social welfare payments while participating on the course. Therefore participants of these courses would be subject to social welfare rules and need to be actively seeking employment. Individuals on ALMPs that are part-time, including programmes under the Labour Market Activation Fund (and in receipt of social welfare allowances while participating on these courses) are expected to be actively seeking employment.	2
Israel	The unemployed are not required to remain available for work during ALMP participation.	1
Italy	There is no job search obligation for the unemployed, but one cannot refuse an adequate job offer from the Employment Centre (Centro per l'Impiego) or to take part in training or retraining activities, without any justifiable reason.	4
Japan	When people participate in public vocational training following the instruction of the head of PES, they are normally required to be willing to work. Employment Insurance benefit recipients who participate in public vocational training are not required to engage in job search or attend interviews with the PES, but it is possible for them to carry out job seeking activities voluntarily. When Employment Insurance benefit recipients receive career counselling and other vocational counselling services, they need to have willingness to work. Thus they are always available for work while receiving those services.	4
Korea	The unemployed are deemed to have searched for work during participation in ALMPs such as skills development. Additional activities for re-employment are unnecessary. Therefore, there are no demands on job availability or job seeking during participation in ALMPs.	1

Country	Description – Availability for work during participation in Active Labour Market Programmes *(item 1)*	Score 2014
Latvia	There is no requirement for continued availability for work in vocational and informal (languages, IT etc.) training. However, if the unemployed person finds a job with their own efforts, he/she is given the possibility to finish the training programme, if the newly acquired work allows for such a possibility (a stipend is not paid for this time though). The continuing availability for work is required for the participants of paid temporary public works programmes. The participant has the rights for a day off up to twice a month (paid by State Employment Agency - SEA) for the job-search activities, including counselling at SEA and job-interviews. If the participant finds a job, he/she has to inform SEA and the municipality (provider of temporary work place).	2
Lithuania	There is no requirement to be available and actively searching for work while unemployment benefit recipients take part in ALMPs such as training, work experience and subsidised job placements.	1
Luxembourg	In general, jobseekers must remain available for work while participating in ALMPs. Some exceptions exist for internships for young jobseekers or for professional training that is organised with a specific business where the jobseeker will be hired by the business at the end of the training.	3
Malta	A job offer or an interview always takes precedence over any ALMP offered by the PES. These must be backed up by relevant documentation to justify respective claims.	5
Netherlands	During participation in ALMPs the unemployed has to accept a job offer and is obliged to search for work. Unemployed enjoying their holidays or being older than 64 years are exempted from the obligations. Also exempted are unemployed that follow a 'necessary' education, unless this education will finish within 2 months.	5
New Zealand	A beneficiary granted Jobseeker Support on the ground of being available for, seeking and willing to undertake full-time employment must be available for and seeking full-time employment. If a beneficiary is in approved training they must continue to meet their work obligations, including being available for full-time employment, unless an exemption applies.	5
Norway	Jobseekers are to be available for ordinary work during participation in ALMPs. However, the PES will seldom instruct jobseekers to discontinue ALMP participation since completion is considered to increase job possibilities.	4
Poland	The unemployed must accept suitable job offers during participation in ALMPs but are not obliged to actively search for work.	4
Portugal	In principle, when the unemployed is participating in ALMPs, including vocational training, they are temporarily considered as no longer searching for work or available for work for the period of participation.	1
Romania	Unemployed persons who receive free training services must be available to start work and actively look for work. If they are offered a job they can withdraw from the training without incurring a cost.	5
Slovak Republic	In order to offer suitable employment or offer participation in any of the active labour market measures, a jobseeker is obliged to be at disposal to the Labour Office within three working days from the date of the invitation /call by the Office. For jobseekers who participate in labour market education or training for more than two months, are required to fulfil the duties to be available to the Labour Office only during the last two months before the end of education and training.	3
Slovenia	Generally, unemployed persons must be available and searching for work while participating in ALMPs. In some cases, the unemployed person and a counsellor might agree in the employment plan to exempt the unemployed person from job search. In this case, while they are participating in the ALMP, they are removed from the register of unemployed persons and registered as an ALMP participant.	3
Spain	Unemployed persons must renew their registration as a jobseeker with the PES every 3 months while participating in ALMPs. Beneficiaries of the unemployment insurance are not tied by their commitment for active engagement ("compromiso de actividad") for as long as they are taking part in training or job creation programmes. Therefore they are not necessarily available for work during that period of time, although they may still receive and take up a job offer.	1
Sweden	The unemployed person is required to be available and actively searching for work during participation in ALMPs.	5

Country	Description – Availability for work during participation in Active Labour Market Programmes *(item 1)*	Score 2014
Switzerland	Recipients of unemployment benefits must be able to leave ALMPs at any time to take up suitable employment. However, an insured person ceases to be available for recruitment during the term of a course if said course requires it. All unemployment benefit recipients, including those who participate in labour market measures, are required to search for work unless they are specifically exempted. Exemptions may be made in some circumstances, including for pregnant women or new mothers on maternity leave, in the six months preceding retirement age, if the unemployed has a suitable job starting next month, if they are developing a sustainable self-employment opportunity or if they are undertaking a motivation course to help them choose a training programme.	5
Turkey	The unemployed are required to be available for work while participating in ALMPs but are not necessarily required to actively search for jobs.	4
United Kingdom	In almost all cases, unemployed persons who participate in ALMPs, including those delivered by third party providers, have to continue actively search for employment and be available for work. There are a few exceptional cases in which this ceases to be so, the most prominent of which is when these benefit recipients are required to undertake work-related activity (including training) of 16 or more hours per week. In these cases the entitlement condition to be available for work is suspended for the period of the activity. At any one time, these exceptions affect a small minority of recipients.	5
United States	In most cases, unemployed persons who participate in ALMPs are expected to continue to be available for work unless participating in approved training.	3

Note: See notes * and ** to p. 17.

Table A2. **Demands on occupational mobility (item 2)**

Country	Description – Demands on occupational mobility *(item 2)*	Score 2014
Australia	Jobseekers should not restrict their job search to their usual occupation or work that they would prefer to do. They should seek and be prepared to accept any suitable employment.	5
Austria	In the first 100 days of drawing unemployment benefit, placement in employment not corresponding to the previous activity is not regarded as reasonable if future employment in the previous occupation is thereby made substantially more difficult. In the first 120 days of drawing unemployment benefit, employment in another occupation is considered to be reasonable only if the remuneration subject to compulsory social insurance is equal to at least 80% of the remuneration corresponding to the last assessment basis for unemployment benefit. In the remaining period of drawing unemployment benefit, employment in a different occupation is considered reasonable only if the remuneration is equal to at least 75% of previous remuneration.	3
Belgium	During the first three months of unemployment for jobseekers under age the age of 30 and for those with a professional background of less than 5 years, or during the first 5 months otherwise, job-search may be limited to employment in the usual profession or similar professions. This exemption does not apply where the employment opportunities in these professions are limited. After the initial 3 or 5 months, the unemployed must accept and seek employment in other occupations, given his qualifications and training. Jobseekers over 50 years may limit their job search to their own profession indefinitely.	3
Bulgaria	For the first 18 months of unemployment jobseekers are able to restrict their availability to job offers corresponding to their education, qualifications and state of health. After 18 months suitable work shall be any work corresponding to the state of health of the person.	2

Country	Description – Demands on occupational mobility *(item 2)*	Score 2014
Canada	Employment Insurance (EI) Regulations were amended in January 2013 to clarify definitions of what constitutes reasonable job search and suitable employment. These new regulations set out how the requirements will vary depending on a claimant's history of premium contributions and use of the EI program. Claimants are now identified and categorized into three claimant types: long-tenured workers, frequent claimants, and occasional claimants. Long-tenured workers enjoy the maximum protection and are allowed to search for a job within their usual occupation and at a similar wage (as low as 90% of previous hourly wage) for the first 18 weeks on EI. After 18 weeks, these claimants will be required to expand their job search to jobs similar to the job they normally performed and to accept wages as low as 80% of their previous hourly wage but not lower than the prevailing minimum wage. Frequent claimants receive the lowest protection and are required to expand their job search to jobs similar to the job they normally perform, at the onset of their EI claim (1-6 weeks) and accept wages as low as 80% of their previous hourly wage. As of the seventh week of their claim, they will be required to accept any work they are qualified to perform (with on the job training, if required) and to accept wages as low as 70% of their previous hourly wage but not lower than the prevailing minimum wage.	4
Chile	In the case of the job offer, a declination shall be considered justifiable if the wage offered is less than 50% of the last monthly wage earned or/and the offer is not related to past experience as completed in the form. The requirements do not change with the duration of unemployment spell.	1
Croatia	The unemployed person should accept the offered employment within the acquired professional qualifications and work experience which was determined in the Individual action plan. The provision of this rules will not apply to pregnant women, one of the parents with a child up to 8 years of age, a parent of a child with severe disabilities under special legislation if the other parent is employed, one of parents with three or more minor children if the other parent is employed, single parent who care for the child until 15 years of age, unless there is given a written statement that he accepts the job.	4
Cyprus	The unemployed person has the right to refuse a job that is not considered suitable. A job will not be considered suitable if it is in the unemployed person's usual occupation but with lower compensation or less favourable terms than expected, given the previous job, the conditions of a collective agreement or based on what good employers consider as expected. After a reasonable time period a suitable job can be considered as any job other than the person's usual occupation if it meets expectations on compensation and work terms/conditions.	2
Czech Republic	Suitable employment should correspond, as far as possible, to the unemployed person's qualifications, abilities and length of previous employment.	4
Denmark	The unemployed person has to be available for (and take on) reasonable work. Reasonable work is defined as any kind of work that the unemployed person can handle - e.g. after a short training period.	5
Estonia	During the first 20 weeks after registration as unemployed, the definition of suitable job takes into account the education, profession and earlier work experience of the unemployed person. After 20 weeks of being registered as unemployed, the person has to accept jobs that do not correspond to their education, profession or earlier work experience. During the first 20 weeks after registering as unemployed, the person can refuse jobs with salary offered lower than 60% of the person's previous average gross income, but not less than the double national minimum wage. After 20 weeks from registering as unemployed, the person is obliged to accept a job if the salary offered is higher than the unemployment benefit he/she receives and not lower than the national minimum weight.	3
Finland	The provision in the Act on Unemployment Security concerning "professional skills protection" was amended on 1 July 2012. TE Offices may no longer eliminate professional skills protection for the first three months of unemployment. This new three-month period of professional skills protection is only allowed when the person has fulfilled the six-month employment condition required to receive an unemployment allowance and is unemployed. Previously, it was possible to receive new professional skills protection even after being employed for a short time. Part-time jobs may be refused if the salary and any agreed unemployment benefit, minus the costs incurred by accepting a job, are smaller than the unemployment benefit paid while unemployed.	3

Country	Description – Demands on occupational mobility *(item 2)*	Score 2014
France	To determine the scope of the job search, the applicant's training, qualifications, knowledge and skills acquired during his professional experience, his personal and family situation, and the local labour market situation are taken into account. After three months of unemployment, the jobseeker must gradually expand the scope of job search beyond a single specialty and take up any jobs that their skills allow them to practice. Job offers can also be refused on the grounds of the salary in the first three months of unemployment. After three months, a job offer is considered reasonable if the salary is at least 95% of the previous salary; 85% after six months of unemployment and at least equal to the unemployment benefit after one year of unemployment.	3
Germany	In principle an unemployment benefit recipient may be expected to accept any job corresponding to his working capacities to the extent that general or personal reasons are not incompatible with the reasonableness of the job. A personal reason that would lead to a job offer being deemed unreasonable would be given when the possible remuneration would be significantly less than the earnings that provided the basis for determining the amount of unemployment benefit. (During the first three months, 20% less is reasonable, in the following three months 30%. After six months, a job offer is considered unreasonable only when the pay is less than unemployment benefit.)	4
Greece	Concerning the regular unemployment benefit, “a person is regarded as unemployed if, following the end or termination of his/her employment relationship he/she seeks a job, accepts to be employed in a job offered by the OAED services in his/her wider occupational sector or accepts to attend vocational training or further training programmes, and generally takes advantage of every employment possibility”. A “job in the wider occupational sector” is one belonging to the group of occupations, specializations or jobs related to the insured person’s most recent employment, vocational training, knowledge or experience.	1
Hungary	The unemployed has to accept an adequate job if offered one. Until 1/1/2011 this meant a job that suited the qualification of the unemployed person, but after the mentioned date - due to the new law that came into force - the offered job is no longer required to meet the qualification of the unemployed. Employment can also be refused if the offered wage is below his/her unemployment benefit.	5
Iceland	For the first four weeks of unemployment, the job-seeker can deny job offers without any consequences, after that period he or she is not able to restrict his/her job search to his/her occupational field, education, work experience etc.	3
Ireland	The unemployed must accept all job offers that he/she is capable of doing.	5
Israel	Suitable work is defined as the type of work in which the unemployed person worked in the three years preceding his unemployment, or any other work suiting his professional training or education level. The wages offered should be at least equal to the unemployment benefit. Unemployed persons aged under 35 years are required to accept any work.	4
Italy	Unemployed persons who benefit from a “monthly unemployment allowance” (from AspI or mini AspI), will lose their entitlement if they refuse a job offer at least 20% higher than the amount of the allowance. There are no changes over the unemployment spell.	4
Japan	Unemployed persons can refuse a job offer introduced by PES office or participation in a vocational training, when the employment to which he or she has been referred or the occupation for which he or she has been directed to take public vocational training, etc. is not appropriate in the light of his or her abilities. However, when he or she refuses a job offer introduced by PES office or participation in a directed public vocational training without any reason, benefits are stopped for a month. But in practice, PES office do not introduce a job-offer or direct a vocational training which does not fit jobseeker’s demand, since PES office are required to refer the jobseekers to an employment which matches jobseeker’s conditions, such as desired job type or the previous job.	5
Korea	The unemployed can refuse job offers by the Job Centre in cases where the workplace duties do not match with the skills and ability of the unemployed. However, in cases where the unemployed keep looking for jobs in one single workplace or they continue to make unacceptable requests given their career experience, age, skills and the labour market conditions, unemployment benefits will be denied because these activities do not qualify as active job seeking efforts.	1
Latvia	Professional background and education have to be considered when SEA provides a job offer to the unemployed person. During the first three months of unemployment spell the unemployed person has to accept the job in profession he or she has previously worked or has gained education. During next months of unemployment spell jobs of lower qualification can be offered. Suitable wage is defined as average wage of past six month the unemployed person was employed (except for the last month of employment). Suitable wage level is decreased after 6 months of unemployment spell. For the next three months it is 80% of previous wage.	3

Country	Description – Demands on occupational mobility *(item 2)*	Score 2014
Lithuania	Unemployment benefit recipients can refuse a job offer if it is in another occupation to their previous job or to the occupation that they were trained to do.	1
Luxembourg	If the PES is not able to offer a job equivalent to his last employment to a jobseeker, any proposed job offer should be in an activity related to prior occupation. The jobseeker's training and work experience are taken into account. A job offer is deemed appropriate if it is paid at a level at least equal to that of the full unemployment benefit to which the jobseeker is entitled.	4
Malta	From past experience, qualifications and skills of the unemployed are taken into account by the Employment Advisor when determining the unemployed person's job preferences. An applicant shall not be allowed to register for less than two preferences. Jobseekers can refuse a job offer if it necessitates fewer skills than his/her job preference if they have been registered for less than three months. Depending on a jobseeker's past working experiences and previous salary band, he/she may refuse job offers that carry a salary corresponding to the minimum wage if that client has been on the unemployment register for less than three months.	3
Netherlands	In general, the unemployed should look for adequate work, the definition of which is dependent on individual circumstances, such as the wage level before the person became unemployed and the nature of the activities. The longer the person is unemployed, the faster they have to accept a job at a lower education level. Non-binding guidelines suggest that the unemployed should get six months to find a job in their former occupation, educational- and income-level. After 12 months of unemployment, all kinds of work will be considered as adequate. For early school leavers and students, every job is considered as adequate.	2
New Zealand	Beneficiaries with work obligations must accept any offer of suitable employment They must not restrict their job search to vacancies within their own trade or chosen occupation, or to certain levels of remuneration (subject to legislated minimum wage requirements). Beneficiaries and partners with work obligations must make themselves available for suitable employment of i) at least 30 hours a week (beneficiaries and partners with full-time work obligations) or ii) at least 15 hours a week (beneficiaries with part-time work obligations). Although the target to meet work obligations is 15 or 30 hours per week a job can be considered suitable if the hours of work per week are around the hours required to meet their work obligations.	5
Norway	As a principal rule, unemployment benefit recipients have to be willing and able to take whatever suitable work at the tariff wage. The duty to take whatever work implies that the recipients have to take work that the person is physically and mentally suitable for.	5
Poland	The unemployed are required to accept any offer of suitable work (which pays a monthly salary of at least the minimum wage and which is subjected to social insurance) and cannot restrict job search to the occupational field or level of his/her professional qualifications or former job. However, in practice the PES do not refer unemployed persons to jobs for which they might be distinctly over-qualified.	5
Portugal	The unemployed must accept an offer of suitable employment, which consists of duties or tasks which can be performed by the unemployed person, with particular regard to their physical skills, educational qualifications and vocational training, skills and professional experience, although not necessarily in the sector or activity or occupation of their previous work.	4
Romania	The unemployed can refuse job offers if they do not fit their vocational training, level of education or skills.	4
Slovak Republic	A jobseeker is obliged to accept suitable employment offered by the Labour Office, unless there are serious reasons. Suitable employment (for the purposes of Employment services Act) is employment taking into account the health status of citizen, taking into account his qualifications, professional skills, or the type of work carried out previously. Labour Office carries out a mediation of suitable employment impartially; while respecting the choice of a citizen from the offered jobs and voluntariness of the employer when choosing of the jobseeker.	4
Slovenia	For the first three months of unemployment, the jobseeker can only be offered a job that complies with their type and level of completed education (for a first-time jobseeker or someone re-entering the labour force after a break of at least two years) or to the type and level of required education for performing the job in which the person worked in the past 12 months. After three months of unemployment, they may be offered a job with at most one level lower of education that specified above, if there are no unemployed persons for which such employment is considered appropriate.	3

Country	Description – Demands on occupational mobility *(item 2)*	Score 2014
Spain	For the beneficiaries of the unemployment insurance (both contributory and assistance level), a job offer will be considered adequate if it corresponds to the occupation indicated by the unemployed to the PES, and also one that matches his usual occupation or normal profession, or one that suits their skills and training. In any case, it will be adequate when it coincides with the last work activity only if its duration had been equal to or longer than three months. After one year of uninterrupted receipt of benefits, in addition to the above occupations or activities, the unemployed must accept any other placements that the PES deems suitable.	2
Sweden	A job is considered suitable if, considering the supply of work, it takes into reasonable consideration the benefit recipient's personal conditions, such as skills, experience and family situation. Jobs can be refused if the wage is less than 90% of his or hers established daily benefit. The benefit recipient should get a reasonable time to adapt to new circumstances such as occupational mobility. But the actual time (in days) is determined on a case-by-case basis.	4
Switzerland	The unemployed must generally accept any job that they are capable of doing, even if it is outside their previous profession. However, the unemployed has the right in the initial period of unemployment to focus his/her job search on jobs similar to his or her previous job, subject to there being enough vacancies. This right does not extend to those aged under 30, who should accept any suitable job. A job-offer may be refused, if the job comprises to a significant degree the return of the insured in his profession, provided that such a prospect is within a reasonable time. A job-offer may also be refused if it pays less than 70% of the insured income.	4
Turkey	The unemployed can search for jobs in up to 5 different occupations and is not required to accept jobs that are not on his/her occupational list The list may be updated at any time. However, they cannot refuse a job offer if it is in compliance with the unemployed person's occupation and provides a similar wage and working conditions to their previous job.	1
United Kingdom	If the Secretary of State is satisfied that the claimant will have reasonable prospects of obtaining paid work, the jobseeker can restrict their job search to work in their normal occupation can base their salary requirements on their most recent remuneration package during the first 13 weeks of unemployment. These limitations are to apply for no more than three months beginning on the date of claim.	3
United States	Within the limits of Federal law, states may take the previous occupation, experience or qualification of the unemployed into account when determining suitable work. Federal law requires that benefits not be denied for refusing to accept work if the wages, hours or other conditions of work offered are substantially less favourable to the individual than those prevailing for similar work in the locality. In some states, the unemployed is given a specific time period in which they are allowed to restrict their search to their usual occupation. However, after a period of unemployment (e.g. 13 weeks in New York, 60 days in Florida) the unemployed must search for and accept offers of work in other occupations for which they are suited.	3

Note: See notes * and ** to p. 17.

Table A3. **Demands on geographical mobility (item 3)**

Country	Description – Demands on geographical mobility *(item 3)*	Score 2014
Australia	A job would be regarded as within reasonable commuting distance if the journey between the place of work and the jobseeker's home does not normally exceed 90 minutes by whatever means of transport is normally available to the jobseeker. The commuting would also be considered reasonable if a substantial number of people living in the same area as the jobseeker regularly commute to their places of work. Reasonable travel times are shorter for principal carer parents and jobseekers with partial work capacity.	3
Austria	The unemployed have to accept up to two hours of travelling time per day (in total to and from work) to take up full-time work or 1.5 hours per day to take up part-time work. Under specific circumstances (e.g. commuter regions) longer travel time must be accepted.	2
Belgium	In general, the unemployed may refuse a job offer if the total daily commuting time is more than 4 hours or if the daily absence from home is more than 12 hours within the means of available transport. The job offer cannot be refused if the distance between home and work is less than 60km. For unemployed over 50 years, the total daily commuting time should not exceed two hours and the daily absence from home should not exceed 10 hours. In exceptional circumstances, the unemployed may refuse a job with a shorter commute, if commuting is considered too high given the age and health of the person.	3

Country	Description – Demands on geographical mobility *(item 3)*	Score 2014
Bulgaria	Suitable jobs must be in the same location or within 30km of their residence, as long as there is adequate public transport. There are financial incentives for unemployed persons who accept a job outside this area.	2
Canada	The criteria used in identifying and assessing suitable employment opportunities include personal circumstances, such as access to transportation and child care, working conditions, hours of work, and commuting time. Generally, a one hour one way commute is considered suitable. A longer commute may also be suitable if the claimant has commuted for more than an hour to work during their qualifying period or if it is not uncommon given the place the claimant resides. When assessing commuting time, consideration is given to the mode(s) of commute commonly used in the place where the claimant resides. Claimants are expected to use the means of transportation commonly used in their place of residence. Claimants are not expected to purchase a vehicle to find or accept employment. Claimants are expected to make reasonable efforts to arrange for transportation to the place of work, including if necessary, requesting assistance from the prospective employer. It is only in unusual circumstances or where the claimant has exhausted all efforts to arrange for transportation, and where there is a complete absence of transportation to the place of work, that the employment would become unsuitable.	3
Chile	The form the unemployed worker has to fill in at the OMIL includes his/her availability/willingness to work in other parts of the country and commuting costs.	2
Croatia	The unemployed person is required to accept a suitable job in the acquired profession or work experience in place of residence, outside the place of residence up to 50 km provided that the employer bears the cost of travel by public transport or organize transport to and from work; outside of the place of residence, regardless of distance, provided that there is an adequate accommodation. There are no time limits on travel-to-work time per day. The requirements do not change over the course of the unemployment spell.	5
Cyprus	There are no specific limitations on geographical mobility (it is at the discretion of the PES) but the unemployed person can refuse a job that is away from his/her area of residence and there is no convenient way to get to the proposed job by public transport (convenient with respect to time/cost). The proposed job is usually at the district of residence except if the unemployed person has no objection or preference for a job in a different district.	2
Czech Republic	Suitable employment should take into account housing options, accessibility of the workplace and the location of the person's spouse or registered partner.	5
Denmark	As a general rule, the unemployed person has to accept a total of 3 hours daily travel-to-work time using public transportation. Special rules apply in special situations - e.g. where the unemployed person lives in an area where acceptance of a longer travel-to-work time will be necessary. After three months, the unemployed person must accept more than 3 hours of total travel-to-work time.	3.5
Estonia	The uneployed person can refuse a job if his/her daily travel to and from work takes more than 2 hours or the travel cost exceeds 15% of his/her monthly salary.	2
Finland	A job applicant is considered as having good cause to refuse work offered within his/her commuting area (radius of up to 80 km from place of residence) if the daily travel-to-work time would exceed three hours on average for a full-time job or two hours for a part-time job.	3
France	After six months of unemployment, jobseekers must accept jobs that are located up to 30kms or one hour from their residence by public transport.	1.5
Germany	In terms of regional mobility jobs are considered reasonable only if the commuting time does not exceed a total of two and a half hours relative to daily working hours of more than six hours and two hours in the case of daily working hours of up to six. If in a region distances are generally longer, the unemployed beneficiary must be prepared to accept travelling such distances. Furthermore, the employment agency can insist that the unemployed beneficiary accepts a job-offer, which involves relocation. This may imply that during the first three months of employment the usual maximum commuting times could not be guaranteed. But the employment agency must take account of important reasons given by the unemployed beneficiary (e.g. family ties) that rule out moving. Financial consequences of a move must also be considered. In assessing the costs of removal it should be kept in mind that the employment agency may encourage taking up employment in a place other than the place of residence by paying the costs of separate housekeeping and removal.	3
Greece	The unemployed person may be employed far from their permanent residence if the protection of their family members is not jeopardised and if the unemployed have the ability to settle at the place of employment, in case they are unable to return home on the same day. The unemployed must accept a job in case the distance is up to 30km, provided any means of urban transport exist.	3

Country	Description – Demands on geographical mobility *(item 3)*	Score 2014
Hungary	The daily commute by public transportation between the home and the work place does not exceed three hours round trip, or two hours in respect of women supporting a child under the age of ten and single men supporting a child under the age of ten. In case of people with changed working capacity the limit is two hours.	3
Iceland	Iceland is considered as one geographical employment zone. Distance to work is usually not considered as a valid job search restriction and the unemployed is able to apply for financial support if he or she needs to move. However, in particular circumstances there can be valid reasons why the jobseeker is not able to accept a job offer far from his/her home, for example family reasons regarding children.	5
Ireland	Unemployed persons must accept all suitable job offers, within a reasonable/acceptable distance.	1
Israel	Work is considered suitable if it does not require a change in the unemployed person's place of residence (generally up to 60kms).	4
Italy	The unemployed person will only lose the allowance if they refuse an adequate job offer, which may be reached in 80 minutes by public transportation. There is no change over the unemployment spell.	3
Japan	The Employment Insurance Act does not stipulate any geographical mobility by jobseekers.	4
Korea	There is no specific requirement for geographical mobility. The unemployed are justified to refuse job offers by the Job Centre if the referred workplace or establishments do not provide accommodation or boarding services and it is deemed very difficult for the person concerned to move to commutable areas near the establishment.	5
Latvia	Travel-to-work time is taken into account when defining suitable jobs. Suitable job has to: be reachable in one hour driving (in one way) by public transport from the declared residence place of unemployed (or one hour and a half after three months of unemployment); the distance from the residence place to public transport and from the public transport to job does not exceed 2 kilometres; the transport cost does not exceed 20% from the expected gross wage.	2.5
Lithuania	The unemployed is offered a job if the distance to the work place is no longer than three hours using public transport, or two hours if he or she has a child aged under 8 years.	3
Luxembourg	A job offer will be considered as suitable if the jobseeker has a travel time of up to 2.5 hours per day. If there is no means of transportation, public or organised by the employer, the jobseeker cannot refuse to use his personal transportation, if available, provided the level of remuneration covers expenses incurred for transportation, also taking account of applicable geographical mobility aids which he may claim. Daily less than 2.5 hours may, in certain specific and exceptional cases, be regarded as excessive because of age or physical condition of the worker or where the employment must be exercised in a remote location from his residence.	3
Malta	Given Malta's limited geographical area, travel to work time and cost are not issues which impede upon a jobseeker's acceptance of a job offer. However, unemployment benefit recipients may refuse job offers available on islands which are not their resident island.	4
Netherlands	What is considered as adequate depends on individual circumstances. Non-binding guidelines suggest that during the first six months of unemployment, travel time of less than 2 hours per day is considered adequate, unless in their former job longer travel times were normal. After six months, travel time of maximum 3 hours a day is considered adequate.	2.5
New Zealand	There are no limits on travel to work time per day. Suitable employment is considered on a case by case basis, taking into account factors such as the location of the job and whether the beneficiary will be able to realistically transport themselves.	3
Norway	Jobseekers have to be willing to take up work anywhere in the country, and must be willing to move or commute to participate in the labour market or work where the work is, regardless of distance. However, there are exceptions to this rule for those with reduced health, aged over 60 years or with care obligations for children or partner, who can be defined as a “local jobseeker”. Local jobseekers have to accept a travel-to-work time up to one hour each way.	5
Poland	The unemployed are not allowed to refuse a suitable job if daily commuting time does not exceed 3 hours with public transport.	3
Portugal	The average time of travel between home and work should not exceed 25% of working hours, except in situations where the beneficiary has minor children or depends, where the percentage is 20%. The travel time can exceed 25% of working hours as long as it does not exceed the travel time in the previous job. The cost of travel to work should not be more than 10% of the gross monthly pay or the travel expenses of the previous job, unless the employer pays for travel costs.	3

Country	Description – Demands on geographical mobility *(item 3)*	Score 2014
Romania	Unemployment benefit recipients cannot refuse a suitable job, irrespective of the geographical location. If they accept a job that is more than 50km away from home or change their residence to another locality, they receive incentives granted in the form of a bonus when they are hired. Since 2013, such mobility premiums are given to both the short-term and long-term unemployed.	5
Slovak Republic	The Employment Services Act does not regulate commuting time to employment. Jobseekers who take up work after being registered at least three months may be eligible for commuting subsidies from the Labour Office for up to 6 months after starting employment (i.e. any gainful activity as an employee; the subsidy is only provided to jobseekers who were removed from the register of jobseekers due to starting employment or an equivalent labour relationship). The commuting subsidies cover travel expenses for public transport, but are not provided to employees who commute within the same municipality. Jobseekers who relocate at least 50 km to take up work may be eligible for a relocation subsidy. Jobseekers are, however, not obliged to move to a new location in order to take up a job offer.	1
Slovenia	In general, a job offer is considered adequate if the workplace is no further than a three hour drive using public transport or transportation organised by the employer from the person's place of residence and back. An unemployed person who lives alone in the same household with children under 15 years is allowed to refuse job offers involving more than 2 hours of commuting time.	3
Spain	For claimants of unemployment benefits (both contributory level and assistance level), a job offer will be considered adequate if it is located in the same location as the usual residence of the unemployed person or in another location within a radius of 30kms from their usual residence, provided that the return journey to work does not pass 25% of the duration of the working day (ordinary working days are 8 hours) or that the cost of the journey does not exceed 20% of the monthly salary, or when it is possible to find adequate accommodation in the new job's location.	2
Sweden	A job is considered suitable if the time-to-work and cost is reasonable. In practice, a reasonable time-to-work is such that it results in an absence from home of not more than 12 hours per day, which means approximately 1.5 hours in each direction for a full-time employee.	3
Switzerland	A job is not considered suitable if it requires travel of more than 2 hours each way (4 hours in total) per day by public transport. If public transport is so poor as to dramatically reduce the mobility of the unemployed, the use of a private vehicle may be required.	3
Turkey	The unemployed person cannot refuse a job offer if the workplace is in the same municipal area. Since 2011, the definition of “municipal area” has been amended as; the place that can be reached by a workplace shuttle or by maximum two means of public transport.	2
United Kingdom	Jobseekers Allowance claimants are expected to travel up to one and a half hours in each direction to find work by a route and means appropriate to their circumstances from the beginning of their claim.	3
United States	Within the limits of Federal law, states can decide what is taken into consideration when defining suitable work. States typically take commuting time and/or distance from the unemployed's residence into account when defining suitable work. Some states specify that a job offer can be refused if the commuting time is excessive. In most states commuting times of up to 2 hours/day would be considered reasonable. Longer commuting times may be considered normal in some areas or if opportunities for work in the unemployed's occupation or locality are limited.	2

Note: See notes * and ** to p. 17.

Table A4. **Other valid reasons for refusing job offers (item 4)**

Country	Description – Other valid reasons for refusing job offers *(item 4)*	Score 2014
Australia	Work may be unsuitable for the jobseeker if it requires particular skills, experience or qualifications that the person does not have, and appropriate training will not be provided by the employer; may aggravate a pre-existing illness, disability or injury and medical evidence has been provided; involves health or safety risks and would contravene an occupational health and safety law; the jobseeker is a principal carer of a child or children and appropriate care and supervision of the child(ren) is not available during the hours the person would be required to work; the terms and conditions for the work are less generous than the applicable statutory conditions; is the subject of industrial disputation; involves enlistment in the Defence Force or the Reserve Forces; is unsuitable for any other reason (e.g. on moral or religious grounds).	3
Austria	Employment is considered reasonable if it is appropriate to the physical abilities of the unemployed person, does not endanger his/her health or morals, is to be undertaken in an enterprise that is not affected by strikes or lockouts and provided that statutory child care requirements can be met.	3
Belgium	Other factors that can justify the refusal of a job offer are: physical or mental aptitude of the unemployed; the family or personal situation of the unemployed; if the unemployed can prove that they have another job which will start within 8 days; religious, philosophical or ecological objections; if the job involves work at night (except if work at night is a characteristic of the jobseeker's profession). Special exemptions apply to artists, if they can proof that taking up employment in another profession puts at risk their intellectual and physical artistic ability with a risk of deteriorating the skills required for the pursuit of their artistic activity.	1
Bulgaria	All personal grounds are taken into account when deciding on suitable employment in the first 18 months of unemployment. After 18 months, only health grounds apply.	5
Canada	Unsuitable employment is that which: arrives as a result of a labour dispute. In order not to be subject to a disqualification, the claimant must show that a refusal of a suitable job was with good cause. Good cause can stem from personal or family circumstances as well as from the employment itself. New regulations introduced in January 2013 outline further criteria for determining what constitutes "Suitable Employment": the claimant's health and physical capabilities allow them to commute to the place of work and to perform the work; the hours of work are not incompatible with the claimant's family obligations or religious convictions; the nature of the work is not contrary to the claimant's moral convictions or religious beliefs.	3
Chile	The worker could refuse a job offer or attending an interview due to an illness.	5
Croatia	The unemployed person who is kept in the CES registry longer than 12 months may refuse to accept a job offer only if the job does not correspond to his/hers assessed mental and physical abilities. Other factors that justify refusal to accept a job offer are related to pregnancy, self-supporting parenting, age and number of children and serious development disorders of children.	5
Cyprus	The unemployed person can refuse to accept a job offer if she/he has reasonable cause. For example, the jobseeker has brought a medical certificate that she/he cannot accomplish a certain type of occupation and the job offer has to do with these limitations; she/he has family or caring responsibilities and cannot take a job offer with certain job characteristics, such as shift, night or weekend work; the wage or working conditions of the job offer are below the usual rate for that job. Jobs offered by the PES are usually full-time jobs and any other reasonable cause may be accepted at the discretion of the PES. A job is not considered suitable if the job is vacant due to a strike or industrial dispute.	3
Czech Republic	Suitable employment is that with working hours of at least 80% of standard weekly hours (50% after one year of unemployment); has a contract for an indefinite period or for a fixed term longer than 3 months; and corresponds to the state of health of the unemployed person. Serious reasons for job refusal including caring for children or other dependents, school or preschool attendance of children, the location or type of employment of the spouse or registered partner, health reasons and other serious personal reasons such as ethical, moral or religious reasons.	3
Denmark	14 reasons may justify a refusal to accept a job offer. The valid reasons relate to: health problems, transportation problems, child care and other family-care obligations, specific situations related to the job offer like the reasonableness of the job offer (e.g. if the terms of employment and wages are not usual for the occupation), the right to supplementary benefits, etc., starting a new (more permanent) job, education, self-employment or military service, retirement to early retirement pay.	3
Estonia	Job offers can be refused because of health reasons.	5

Country	Description – Other valid reasons for refusing job offers *(item 4)*	Score 2014
Finland	A jobseeker can lose entitlement to unemployment benefit by refusing to accept a job offer, if the job offered can be considered suitable for him/her, considering his/her working ability, and the salary paid complies with the collective agreement in question, or, if no collective agreement is valid, the pay is considered normal and reasonable in the locality concerned, for the job in question. Moreover, the job must be one which is not affected by a strike, lock-out or boycott. A jobseeker has good cause to refuse a job offer if the work is contrary to his/her religious beliefs or conscience. The same right applies if the work involves duties that are clearly indecent or unethical. Entitlement to unemployment benefit can also be lost by refusing labour market training, if the training offered would have been suitable and the livelihood of those depending on the jobseeker would have been reasonably secured during training. A jobseeker has good cause to refuse labour market training if the training in question, or a job in the line of work in question, would be unsuitable, considering his/her state of health and working ability. The unemployed can refuse a job offer outside their commuting area if the job is not of a full-time, permanent nature that would guarantee an income, a suitable residence for the unemployed person and his/her family is not available in the new locality or considering the unemployed person's language skills or other weighty personal reasons. The regulations on good causes for refusing a job offer or employment services are not exhaustive.	1
France	In addition to the before mentioned reasons for refusing job offers also personal and family circumstances are taken into account.	5
Germany	The unemployed may refuse a job offer by the employment agency if he can give good reasons. This may, for instance, be the case if the unemployed is unable to accept the job offer for health reasons. The fact that the employment being offered is only a temporary job does not constitute a reason for refusing to accept a job offer. There is no obligation to take up self-employment. In Germany, hiring may not be made dependent on whether the individual belongs to a union. Workers may refuse this type of unlawful job offer. Other valid reasons are: Job is to replace workers on strike or lockout and moral or religious reasons.	3
Greece	Beyond occupational and geographical restrictions there are no additional valid reasons for refusing job offers.	5
Hungary	Employment can be refused if the unemployed person's health justifies his incapacity related to the job.	5
Iceland	The Directorate of Labour has to evaluate if there is a reason which justify refusal to accept a job offer or to participate in an ALMP, e.g. regarding age, social conditions associated with impaired capacity to work, care for young children or other close family members.	5
Ireland	The unemployed person must accept all job offers that he/she is capable of doing. In some cases a person may demonstrate that the restrictions are not unreasonable and that she/he has a reasonable prospect of getting full-time employment despite such restrictions. Such a restriction on availability may, in the circumstances, be regarded as reasonable.	5
Israel	The work should suit the condition of health of the unemployed person.	5
Italy	Refusal can be justified by factors concerning the benefit recipients personal life, including accidents, sickness, civilian service, pregnancy (limited to the periods of absence provided for by law), as well as the other cases of grounds for refusal recognised as such pursuant to the provisions of relevant current legislation.	3
Japan	In addition to the valid reasons named before, other valid reasons for refusing job offers include the following cases: the job is to replace workers on strike or lockout, the wage offered by the employer is unjustifiably low in comparison to the wage level usual for work in the same kind of business in the same locality and for a person of the same age range. This list is not exhaustive and the Employment Insurance Act Article 32 (1) includes other reasons which are valid under normal social conventions.	1
Korea	Valid reasons for refusing job offers are if the wage level is unfairly and unduly low, if the job does not suit the mental or physical abilities of the unemployed person (including health or disabilities) or if the job is to replace workers on strike.	3
Latvia	Next to suitable job requirements, refusal of job offer can be justified by several individual factors, such as health conditions, real constraints to start working in particular job that do not depend on the will of the unemployed person (such factors include care of the child, if child care service is not provided by municipality; and care of disabled person). The unemployed has to argue the reasons for not accepting the vacancy and the decision is made by the SEA employee and if the constraints do not depend on the will of unemployed, the refusal is justified.	3

Country	Description – Other valid reasons for refusing job offers *(item 4)*	Score 2014
Lithuania	Valid reasons for refusing participation in the ALMP is poor health/disability, childbirth, or epidemic in the region which is serviced by the particular territorial labour exchange.	5
Luxembourg	A job offer is deemed appropriate if the job is suitable for the jobseeker's physical and mental abilities. A jobseeker who previously held a full-time job can refuse a job offer of part-time work in the first 12 months of unemployment. A jobseeker who was previously voluntarily part-time can refuse job with more hours per day or week than their previous job. Family considerations, including the care of a child or children, cannot be considered in assessing the appropriateness of the job offer unless they constitute a particularly serious impediment (if so, the burden of proof is on the applicant).	3
Malta	Justifications for refusing to accept a job offer are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Refusals are justified in cases where clients provide relevant documents to support their claim. Justifications may also include claims by clients stating that they are medically unfit for that particular occupation.	5
Netherlands	In principle a benefit recipient has to accept every job offer. A person that rejects a job offer is to be sanctioned (reduction of the benefit).	5
New Zealand	A person has to demonstrate that they had a good and sufficient reason for refusing to accept a job offer or participate in a particular programme or activity. The guiding principle in determining good and sufficient reasons is one of reasonableness. Good and sufficient reasons may include (but are not limited to): the person was temporarily medically unfit; had a death or illness in the immediate family; had childcare arrangements that fell through; or had an unexpected event occur on that day. The person's individual circumstances are taken into account before they are referred to a job or an activity to ensure that they can realistically meet their obligations. Factors taken into account include: access to childcare and other family commitments, religious beliefs, number of hours and time of day, wages and whether the job is suitable.	3
Norway	Other valid reasons for refusing job offers that the unemployed person is not physically or mentally suitable for the job or if the job is paid on a commission basis.	5
Poland	The unemployed may refuse a job offer for various reasons that are not listed in the regulations, but are in practice relatively limited (e.g. moral or religious reasons). The head of the local government (starosta) ultimately decides whether the refusal is justified or not. Unsuitability of the work on medical grounds may be proved by providing an appropriate medical certificate held by the unemployed.	5
Portugal	During the first 12 months of unemployment, suitable employment must guarantee a gross pay equal to or greater than the value of the unemployment benefit plus 10%. After 12 months of unemployment, the pay must be equal or greater than the unemployment benefit. The unemployed may also refuse a job offer or participation in an ALMP on the grounds of illness or disability.	5
Romania	The unemployed can refuse a job if their health state does not allow them to do that kind of work.	5
Slovak Republic	Other valid reasons, which justify refusal to accept a job offer or to participate in an ALMP, include: the place of employment and the nature of the employment of a spouse or if the place of employment and the nature of employment not allow to accompany of a child until ten years of age to a pre-school establishment or to school; health condition; temporary incapacity for work of jobseeker; health status of close relatives which requires personal care, treatment or of accompanying; and other reasons, the seriousness of which are assessed by the Labour Office.	3
Slovenia	The unemployed can refuse a job offer, if he/she takes he is seriously ill the job will be injurious to his/her health.	5
Spain	The PES will also take into account the personal and professional circumstances of the unemployed person, including the reconciliation of work and family life and the characteristics of the proposed job.	5
Sweden	The unemployed can refuse jobs for family reasons, medical/health reasons, if they have been promised work or if the workplace is on an illegal strike.	3
Switzerland	Work is not considered suitable if it does not suit the age, personal situation or state of health of the unemployed; if it is in an enterprise that is involved in an industrial dispute; if the work involves on-call work without a guarantee of a certain volume of work; if it does not meet the terms of collective agreements or standard contracts of employment; if it is offered by a business that has made redundancies for reappointment or new commitments to significantly poorer conditions.	3
Turkey	If the offered job is not suitable with respect to the unemployed person's gender, physical and health conditions. The unemployed cannot refuse a job offer if the job provides a similar wage and working conditions to their previous job.	3

Country	Description – Other valid reasons for refusing job offers *(item 4)*	Score 2014
United Kingdom	For Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) the factors taken into account when determining whether a claimant has good reason for refusing employment include: religious or conscientious objections sincerely held; or any agreed restrictions on the claimant's availability such as caring responsibilities or health issues. The same factors apply in Universal Credit (UC), but also apply to refusing to take extra paid work. In both JSA and UC, other factors that will be considered "good reason" for a claimant refusing work are not conclusively listed in legislation. "Good reason" means considering all the available evidence and information a claimant presents covering the reasons for their actions and the circumstances which they were in.	3
United States	All states provide for disqualification due to refusal of suitable work. The states differ, however, in their approaches to defining what is suitable. Because of concerns for labour standards, Federal law requires that compensation not be denied for refusing to accept work in any of the following circumstances: (i) if the vacancy is due directly to a strike, lock-out or other labour dispute; (ii) if the wages, hours or other conditions of work offered are substantially less favourable to the individual than those prevailing for similar work in the locality; (iii) if the individual is required to join, resign, refrain from or refrain from joining any bona fide organisation as a condition of employment. Beyond this, states are free to use any criteria to define the suitability of the job. As well as occupational and geographical mobility requirements, most states define suitable work taking into account the degree of risk to the unemployed's health, safety or morals and the unemployed's physical fitness for the job.	1

Note: See notes * and ** to p. 17.

Table A5. **Frequency of job-search monitoring (item 5)**

Country	Description – Frequency of job-search monitoring *(item 5)*	Score 2014
Australia	Generally the unemployed are required to report online, by phone, in writing or in person every fortnight.	5
Austria	Unemployed persons must report their job-search efforts in person to the PES every month on average (this may vary depending on the labour market situation or their previously concluded activity agreement).	4
Belgium	The unemployed must be available for work and actively search for work. Job-search efforts may be checked for all jobseekers under the age of 55 years. In addition, after 9 months of unemployment (for those aged under 25) or 12 months of unemployment (for those aged over 25), an interview will be held to evaluate job search efforts. If the efforts are deemed sufficient, another interview will be held 9 months later. If the efforts are not sufficient, an action plan will be drawn up detailing job search efforts required, which is checked at an interview 4 months later. Earlier and more frequent interventions may apply to younger jobseekers.	2
Bulgaria	The frequency of consultations with the employment officer and the job-search interviews is determined by the phase of unemployment.	3
Canada	Claimants must prove they are available for work and unable to obtain suitable employment every day that they claim regular benefits. In addition, for regular benefits, claimants are required to attest to their availability and capability for work on their biweekly reports. They can be asked to prove that they are making reasonable and customary efforts to obtain suitable employment.	2
Chile	Unemployment benefit recipients must visit the OMIL closest to their address once a month in order to certify their unemployment status. They should also be available for training courses or job offers. However, no independent job-search activities must be proven.	1
Croatia	Each unemployed person is required to participate in the individual consultations with his/her own employment counsellor. Individual consultations include mutual contacts between the employment counsellor and the unemployed, in order to inform and advice on vacancies, outcomes of job applications and activities directed to preparing for employment and reinforcement of employability. The frequency of contacts will increase between the employment counsellor and the unemployed. The counsellor and the unemployed person should be in contact at least once every four weeks, but where it is needed, especially with long-term unemployed, counselling and consultation can be on a weekly basis. Individual consultation can be delivered face to face, by e-mail, phone or on-line.	4
Cyprus	The unemployed is not required to report any job-search actions, unless they are referred by a PES counsellor.	1
Czech Republic	Job-search activities are not regulated by the Czech Employment Act (the practise of regional branches of the Labour Office of the Czech Republic could be slightly different).	1

Country	Description – Frequency of job-search monitoring *(item 5)*	Score 2014
Denmark	When an unemployed person attends a meeting in his unemployment insurance fund concerning availability, he has to bring a plan for job-search activities (a plan that is formed at the first meeting and revised every 3 months).	4
Estonia	Frequency of reporting depends on the scheduled meetings with the officer of the EUIF, and shall not be less than once a month. The unemployed person usually contacts EUIF in person. If agreed with the person's counsellor, it is also possible to contact by self-service portal (most often used during the first three months of unemployment) or by telephone (used during the time the unemployed person participates in labour market training or other active measure and the schedule does not enable to go to PES office in person).	4
Finland	There are no time limits set. The Employment and Economic Development Office (TE Office) decides on the matter when drawing up the employment plan. The plan is drawn up in accordance with the jobseeker's service needs.	3
France	The unemployed must provide evidence of job search at interviews with an employment counsellor once every month starting from the fourth month of unemployment. More frequent interviews can be proposed for jobseekers who face particular difficulties finding work, such as youth without qualifications, workers dismissed for economic reasons or long-term unemployed.	4
Germany	Integration agreements must be reviewed at the end of six months' unemployment at the latest; in the case of young unemployed or young persons who are seeking vocational training, the review must be conducted at the end of three months at the latest. Since integration agreements are based on the results of an analysis of the respective individual's potential, all provisions regarding the number, frequency and acknowledgement of the individual's applications that are set forth in an integration agreement must also be based solely on the requirements in the individual case.	3
Greece	The unemployed are not required by legislation to provide evidence of job-search activity.	1
Hungary	There is no regular checking of job-search activities.	1
Iceland	Jobseekers have to report their independent job-search activities once a month through their personal website, when also confirming unemployment.	4
Ireland	A Case Officer interviews the customer and agrees a path to find employment with the customer which may include education or training. This Personal Progression Plan (PPP) is reviewed with the unemployed person on a regular basis. The frequency will vary between unemployed persons depending on what has been agreed in their PPP.	3
Israel	The unemployed must report to the local Employment Service Office, generally once a week (there are some exceptions - e.g. pregnant women report generally once per month). However, there is no requirement to prove job-search activity.	1
Italy	There is no requirement to prove job-search activity.	1
Japan	The unemployment benefits recipients must report the results of his/her job-search activities including details every 4 weeks.	4
Korea	The unemployed are required to report once every four weeks on average to the Job Centre, confirming their job-search activities during the recent benefit period on the standard job seeking activity form.	4
Latvia	The unemployed person has to affirm job search activities and has to provide job-search evidence in every follow-up meeting with the State Employment Agency counsellor that is held according to individual job search plan at least once in two months.	4
Lithuania	There are no requirements regarding the frequency of the meetings (or remote interaction) with the unemployed. Time for the next visit (or interaction type) is set individually. Usually unemployed persons receiving unemployment benefit (or social insurance benefit) must report on job-search activity every month.	4
Luxembourg	Jobseekers are required to prove job search efforts when requested by the PES at monthly interviews.	4
Malta	Personal Action Plan review meetings are scheduled on a monthly basis during which jobseekers are requested to provide a breakdown of job-search activities that they have undertaken.	4
Netherlands	Unemployed people have to undertake a minimum of 4 job-search activities every 4 weeks. Job search activities can be things such as writing application letters, visiting job-markets, registering at a temporary work agency, job interviews.	4
New Zealand	There is no set time frame on how often a beneficiary may be required to provide evidence on their job search. A beneficiary's circumstances, benefit duration and ability to find employment influences the level of engagement they have with Work and Income staff and how often they may be required to show evidence that they are seeking employment.	3

Country	Description – Frequency of job-search monitoring *(item 5)*	Score 2014
Norway	The unemployed have to update his or her CV at Nav.no all times. The unemployed can also be required to provide evidence of job-search as a condition for entitlement to unemployment benefit.	2
Poland	There are generally no formal job-search requirements apart from being registered as unemployed in a district labour office, reporting to the labour office at designated dates to confirm availability, or accept job offers, training or other forms of support proposed by the labour office. Since the 2014 amendment of the Act on employment promotion an Individual Action Plan (IPD) has to be drawn up no later than within the period of 60 days since the profile of assistance has been determined. At the same time, in connection with introduction of profiling of the assistance for the unemployed, the IPD must be adapted to that profile, determined for a specific unemployed person. Furthermore, as part of the IPD forms, estimated number and dates to contact with the customer adviser or other employee of the labour office are determined.	1
Portugal	Unemployment benefit recipients are obliged to report bi-monthly to the Job Centre and prove their active job-search efforts.	5
Romania	The person receiving unemployment benefits proves that actively sought a job that she/he is presented monthly by appointment or whenever it is requested, the employment agency which is registered to receive support in order to get employment. A person, receiving unemployment benefits, is required to participate in labour mediation services whenever the employment agency he/she is registered, request that.	4
Slovak Republic	A jobseeker is obliged to actively seek employment and personally prove active job search at a time and place designated by the Labour Office.	3
Slovenia	The unemployed are required to provide evidence of job-search activities. They should regularly apply for vacancies, respond to referrals from the Employment Service, attend interviews and carry out all activities agreed in the employment plan. Activities are determined in the individual employment plan for each unemployed person, therefore it is not possible to give precise information on the frequency of reporting.	3
Spain	Since the amendments passed in July 2012, the recipients of unemployment benefits (i.e. contributory and assistance level) must also prove to the Public Employment Service that they are actively looking for employment ("búsqueda activa de empleo"). However, there is no legislation about the frequency to provide evidence of job-search activities, so it is up to each regional PES to set up these conditions.	1
Sweden	Unemployed who receive unemployment benefit are required to provide evidence for their job-search activities once a month.	4
Switzerland	The unemployed should provide proof of job search to the Regional Employment Office (ORP) each month.	4
Turkey	The unemployed should be ready for job offers, but they should not need to provide evidence of their job search activities.	1
United Kingdom	The unemployed participate in fortnightly jobsearch reviews, which provide regular opportunities to make ensure they are actively seeking work and remain entitled to benefits.	5
United States	Monitoring of job search activity varies by states. Some states require regular contact with the unemployment office and others perform random audits to check work search and status. Most require individuals to keep records of job search activity and be able to provide the record upon request.	2

Note: See notes * and ** to p. 17.

Table A6. **Documentation of job-search activities (item 6)**

Country	Description – Documentation of job-search activities *(item 6)*	Score 2014
Australia	The unemployed must answer questions about salient issues such as the employment vacancies they have sought and changes in their circumstances.	3
Austria	In most cases, the unemployed person must supply the name and address of employers contacted and or supply written proof of applications.	4
Belgium	In all proceedings, the unemployed must regularly provide written procedures of their job search evidence (copies of letters of application for jobs or unsolicited applications and copies of the responses of employers, certificate of registration with temporary work agencies, etc.). In the absence of written evidence, a declaration may be acceptable provided it is accurate, credible and verifiable.	4
Bulgaria	The unemployed provide only verbal information about their job seeking activities outside the employment agency - internet, job announcements, etc.	2

Country	Description – Documentation of job-search activities *(item 6)*	Score 2014
Canada	The new EI Regulations introduced in January 2013 list the various job search activities that are considered as part of a reasonable and ongoing job search, including assessing employment opportunities (e.g. researching or searching for job vacancies online, in newspapers), contacting prospective employers; or submitting job applications.	2
Chile	It is not required to report independent applications.	1
Croatia	During meetings with employment counsellors the unemployed person is required to provide evidence of the job search through job-search diary which can be e-mailed or delivered personally to employment counsellor.	3
Cyprus	The unemployed is not required to report any job-search actions.	1
Czech Republic	As job-search activities are not regulated by the Czech Employment Act the practise of regional branches of the Labour Office of the Czech Republic could be slightly different.	1
Denmark	For quarterly meetings at the UI fund the unemployed person has to bring has to bring a plan for job-search activities and a number of examples of job applications. Finally, he has to be able to provide general information on his job-search activities. Usually the unemployed person doesn't have to provide any further formal evidence of job-search activities, unless requested by the unemployment insurance fund. If the unemployed person has failed to sufficiently search for jobs or cannot provide general information on his job-search activities, the unemployment insurance fund can require him to provide information on and evidence of all job-search activities for a period of no more than 3 months.	4
Estonia	The unemployed person must submit a list of companies contacted by him/her. The unemployed person usually contacts EUIF in person. If agreed with the person's counsellor, it is also possible to contact by self-service portal (most often used during the first three months of unemployment) or by telephone (used during the time the unemployed person participates in labour market training or other active measure and the schedule does not enable to go to PES office in person).	4
Finland	The unemployed person and the Employment and Economic Development Office (TE Office) draw up an employment plan, agreeing e.g. on the job-seeking and support services. It is usually sufficient for the jobseeker to inform the TE Office that the tasks agreed in the plan have been accomplished. However the plan may include an agreement that other evidence is required, such as copies of job applications.	2
France	During meetings with Pôle emploi counsellors the jobseeker's approaches and tools for job search (CVs, internet access, business creation project, etc.) are discussed. This includes the characteristics of the job sought, the contacts of the jobseeker, the barriers to job search etc.	3
Germany	As a rule it is agreed that jobseekers must submit evidence of their job-search actions and the results of these activities.	4
Greece	The unemployed are not required by legislation to provide evidence of job-search activity.	1
Hungary	The unemployed are not required to verify in writing their individual job-search activities.	1
Iceland	The applicant has to tick a box on his personal website, stating how many jobs he or she has applied for that month.	2
Ireland	Reviews requiring the person to show where they have looked for work.	3
Israel	There is no requirement to prove job-search activity.	1
Italy	There is no requirement to prove job-search activity.	1
Japan	The unemployment benefits recipients must report the results of his/her job-search activities including details every 4 weeks.	4
Korea	Jobseekers have to provide a written list of employers they have contacted.	4
Latvia	The job-search diary issued to the unemployed person has to include information on the fulfilment of job search activities and inform the State Employment Agency counsellor on the activities during next meeting. The unemployed person has to provide information on vacancy and to give the name and contact information of employers he or she has contacted, the date of application as well as the status of application (rejected by employer, in evaluation or accepted by employer). In case of rejection the unemployed person has to provide information on the reason for rejection.	4
Lithuania	Unemployed must follow their duties, detailed in individual unemployment activity plan, including time of the next visit to PES, planned measures, and reporting on job-search activity.	3
Luxembourg	Proof of job search takes the form of a list of employers contacted by the jobseeker.	4
Malta	Job-search activities include keeping a job-search diary with all the job applications and/ or supply the name and address of employers he or she has contacted. Clients may also be asked to produce declarations by employers that he or she has applied for work within their company.	5

Country	Description – Documentation of job-search activities *(item 6)*	Score 2014
Netherlands	The jobsearch activities can be checked by the UWV. Therefor the activities must be concrete and verifiable.	4
New Zealand	Beneficiaries with work obligations may be required to report on their job search. This can include showing evidence of emails in relation to vacancies applied for, job applications or verbally advising Work and Income staff on vacancies applied for.	4
Norway	The unemployed can be required to provide evidence of job-search as a condition for entitlement to unemployment benefit.	2
Poland	No formal requirement to document applications and job-search activity. If, according to the Individual Action Plan (IPD), the unemployed is required to report a certain number of job-search actions, the form of documentation of this actions is determined in the IPD.	1
Portugal	Jobseekers benefit claiments could be asked to proof their independent job-search efforts through e.g. a proof of sending spontaneous applications, proof of attending job interviews, proof of participation in training, responses received from employers, proof of contacts with employers, copies of announcements placed (incl. date and place where they were placed).	3
Romania	No formal requirement to document applications and job-search activity.	1
Slovak Republic	Possible formats for the documentation submitted to the PES include applications; evidence of personal search for employment with the employer; certificate from the competent authority on receipt of the application for the issuance of a license to operate or self-employment; etc.	4
Slovenia	Evidence of active job search could include copies of applications for vacancies, data obtained from official records and records from the jobseeker's employment diary.	4
Spain	The unemployed sign an "activity commitment", in which they promise to actively look for work, accept suitable job offers and participate in ALMPs to improve their employability. Since the amendments passed in July 2012, the recipients of unemployment benefits (i.e. contributory and assistance level) must also prove to the Public Employment Service that they are actively looking for employment ("búsqueda activa de empleo").	2
Sweden	The applicant reports his or hers job-search activities in an activity report that is submitted to the PES. In the activity report the unemployed person states the jobs she/he has applied for (including the name and city of the employer), and any other activities she/he has carried out in order to find work.	4
Switzerland	The insured must provide proof of his efforts to find a job by filling out a form, which details the evidence of personal research to find a job, on a monthly basis. For this purpose the insured person also has to provide all documents and written information necessary to verify these job searches.	4
Turkey	The unemployed should be ready for job offers, but they should not need to provide evidence of their job search activities.	1
United Kingdom	Both Universal Jobmatch Work Search and Work Preparation activities and non-Universal Jobmatch Work Search and Work Preparation activities should be reviewed and considered; including the Claimant's Universal Jobmatch account, any claimant commitment pack or diary/record the claimant has kept of their activities, print outs of jobs they have applied for, letters from employers and copies of updated CVs.	3.5
United States	UI claimants are to maintain a record of their job-search contacts and they must provide evidence of their job-search activities if their claim is randomly selected for audit.	3

Note: See notes * and ** to p. 17.

Table A7. **Minimum number of job-search actions**

Country	Description – Minimum number of job-search actions
Australia	Each jobseeker is required to complete a minimum number of job contacts each fortnight. The number is assessed on an individual basis, starting with a benchmark level and then adjusted by taking into account local, individual and general factors. The benchmark is generally set between 6 and 10 jobs per fortnight for metropolitan areas and 4-6 for non-metropolitan areas.
Austria	No minimum number of job-search actions specified.
Belgium	The legislation does not provide for specific number of job-search actions which need to be completed. The required number depends on many parameters but the average is 5 searches per month.
Bulgaria	No minimum number of job-search actions specified.

Country	Description – Minimum number of job-search actions
Canada	No minimum number of job-search actions specified.
Chile	No minimum number of job-search actions specified.
Croatia	No minimum number of job-search actions specified.
Cyprus	Not applicable (as the unemployed are not required to provide evidence of job-search activity)
Czech Republic	Not applicable (as the unemployed are not required to provide evidence of job-search activity)
Denmark	Caseworkers in the employment insurance funds individually agree a minimum number of job-search actions per week or month with jobseekers in an individual plan for job-search.
Estonia	The required number of job-search actions is not fixed by legislation, but depends on agreed targets, set by the person's Individual Action Plan.
Finland	No regulations or guidelines have been set on the amount; the Employment and Economic Development Office (TE Office) decides on the matter when drawing up the employment plan. The plan is drawn up in accordance with the jobseeker's service needs.
France	No minimum number of job-search actions specified.
Germany	No minimum number of job-search actions specified.
Greece	Not applicable (as the unemployed are not required to provide evidence of job-search activity)
Hungary	Not applicable (as the unemployed are not required to provide evidence of job-search activity)
Iceland	The counsellors at the Directorate of Labour have to evaluate the job seeker’s situation and the circumstances at the labour market but generally there are requirement that the unemployed has to report on at least one job-search action.
Ireland	No minimum number of job-search actions specified.
Israel	Not applicable (as the unemployed are not required to provide evidence of job-search activity)
Italy	Not applicable (as the unemployed are not required to provide evidence of job-search activity)
Japan	During that 4 weeks, more than 2 job-search activities are required, as a general rule.
Korea	Jobseekers are required to report at least 2 job-search job-search actions per month.
Latvia	At least three job search activities have to be carried out by next meeting with SEA counsellor. The exception of one activity is mandatory for unemployed persons living in area with high level unemployment.
Lithuania	No minimum number of job-search actions specified.
Luxembourg	No minimum number of job-search actions specified.
Malta	All unemployed jobseekers are obliged to draw up a Personal Action Plan (PAP), which includes those steps necessary to assist them in finding employment. Once enrolled onto a PAP, jobseekers agree to pursue a number of job-search activities on a weekly basis.
Netherlands	Unemployed people have to undertake a minimum of 4 job-search activities every 4 weeks. Job search activities can be things such as writing application letters, visiting job-markets, registering at a temporary work agency, job interviews.
New Zealand	No minimum number of job-search actions specified.
Norway	No minimum number of job-search actions specified.
Poland	No minimum number of job-search actions specified. Nevertheless, in the Individual Action Plan it can be specified, that the unemployed is required to report certain number of job-search actions per week or per month.
Portugal	The legislation does not provide for specific number of job-search actions which need to be completed. The minimum steps required to fulfil the duty of actively seeking employment are defined in the Employment Personal Plan.
Romania	No minimum number of job-search actions specified.
Slovak Republic	No minimum number of job-search actions specified.
Slovenia	No minimum number of job-search actions specified.
Spain	No minimum number of job-search actions specified.

Country	Description – Minimum number of job-search actions
Sweden	There is no regulation concerning how many job-search actions the unemployed person is required to report per month. How many actions a person needs to undertake, to be considered as active in its job-search, is decided on a case-by-case basis.
Switzerland	The quality and quantity of job search required by each person is determined according to their individual circumstances, depending on the labour market situation and personal factors such as age, qualifications, geographical mobility, language problems, etc.
Turkey	No minimum number of job-search actions specified.
United Kingdom	The Work Services Coach will set work search activities such that the claimant will conduct work search for their Expected Hours. This is the number of hours that the claimant is available for work or 35 hours per week whichever is the lower figure less the amount of time spent undertaking agreed Work Preparation activities, Voluntary work and paid work.
United States	Active work search is required, but state laws and procedures determine the required number of employer contacts. In most states, the required minimum number of work search contacts is typically between 1 and 5 per week.

Note: See notes * and ** to p. 17.

Table A8. **Sanctions in case of resignation from previous job (item 7)**

Country	Description – Sanctions in case of resignation from previous job *(item 7)*	Score 2014
Australia	If the person became unemployed due to a voluntary act or became unemployed because of misconduct, an unemployment non-payment period applies. This means that a payment is not payable to the person for 8 weeks (or 12 weeks for a person who leaves a job after receiving relocation assistance) from the date the person became unemployed.	2
Austria	If a person loses the job due to his/her own fault or terminates work voluntarily, no entitlement to benefits under the unemployment insurance scheme will apply for the first four weeks. Each case is assessed and decided upon by the Regional Advisory Board of the AMS (Austrian PES). In this case, the duration of benefits' payment is not shortened but postponed. If certain circumstances apply, the sanction can be partially or fully revoked.	1
Belgium	A worker who leaves a job without proper reason can be temporarily excluded from receiving benefits for a period of 4-52 weeks. The length of the sanction is decided on a case-by-case basis taking a number of factors into account (e.g. type of employment contract; relations with employer; personal circumstances). In place of a sanction, the unemployed can be issued with a warning in extenuating circumstances if in the two preceding years, no similar event giving rise to an exclusion occurred. The sanction can be a total loss of rights to benefits if it can be shown that the worker left the job with the deliberate intention of receiving unemployment benefits. According to sanction statistics, the typical sanction lasts between 5-13 weeks.	2
Bulgaria	Unemployed persons whose employment has been terminated on their own initiative or because of their guilty behaviour shall be granted the minimum amount of the unemployment benefit in cash for a period of 4 months.	1
Canada	A claimant is disqualified from receiving any benefits if he or she left their employment without just cause. In addition, a disqualification from EI benefits is imposed when a claimant fails to prove that leaving their employment was the only reasonable alternative available to them under the circumstances. A disqualification for voluntarily leaving employment without just cause is indefinite and applies to all weeks of the benefit period for which regular benefits are requested.	5
Chile	There are not sanctions for benefit claimants who quit their previous job voluntarily.	1
Croatia	If an unemployed person quits a job without “good cause”, he/she is not entitled to unemployment benefits.	5
Cyprus	In case the job loss is "voluntary" or due to the employee's fault then the payment of the unemployment benefit may be postponed for up to six weeks.	2

Country	Description – Sanctions in case of resignation from previous job *(item 7)*	Score 2014
Czech Republic	In case the jobseeker quits him/herself a job without serious reason or agreed on job termination with his/her employer preceding his/her Labour Office registration, the unemployment benefit amounts to 45% of average monthly net wage for the duration of the benefit period (compared with 65% for the first two months, 50% in the following 2 months and 45% in the remaining months). Total support period is 5 months for jobseekers under 50 years, 8 months for those aged 50-55 years and 11 months for those aged over 55 years. The jobseeker is not entitled to unemployment benefits if the employer terminated his/her job due to a serious breach of duty in the last 6 months before his/her inclusion in the register of jobseekers.	1
Denmark	The person is quarantined for 3 weeks where he would otherwise have been entitled to unemployment benefits. The person will be sanctioned, unless he/she has a valid reason or the resignation was not due to the individual's own fault.	1
Estonia	There is no right to receive unemployment insurance benefit if the unemployment is voluntary i.e. the employment contract has been terminated by the agreement between an employee and an employer or at the initiative of the employee. If the unemployed person has quite a job voluntarily and is now registered as unemployed, actively looking for work and has worked or engaged in other activities for at least 180 days prior to the registration as unemployed, he/she will be entitled to unemployment allowance.	5
Finland	If an unemployed person quits a job without good cause, he/she loses entitlement to unemployment benefit usually for 90 days after the termination of employment. If the remaining duration of employment would have been 5 days at a maximum, unemployment benefit will be lost for 30 days.	3
France	People quitting a job without good reason will not obtain unemployment benefit before four months after the beginning of unemployment. Good reasons can include to follow a spouse who changes residence, for non-payment of salary, etc.	4
Germany	If a person has terminated employment thus causing unemployment deliberately or through negligence without good reasons, benefits will as a general rule be suspended for twelve weeks. In addition, the period of entitlement to unemployment benefit will be cut by the suspension time, at least by a quarter of the period of entitlement.	3
Greece	In case of resignation, the unemployed person is not entitled to unemployment benefit. In Greece, the unemployed person must be out of work involuntarily and the legislation does not acknowledge any special circumstances.	5
Hungary	No sanction exists related to the way of termination of work.	1
Iceland	When an unemployment person quits a job without a "good cause" he or she is deprived of benefits for two months after application. This shortens the duration a job seeker can receive benefits. If the applicant has received a sanction before within the system, the waiting period is three months.	2
Ireland	People leaving employment voluntarily may be disqualified for a period of up to nine weeks from the date of leaving last employment.	2
Israel	An intentional and unjustified termination of work rules out payment of unemployment benefit for 90 days from the termination of work.	3
Italy	Workers whose employment relationship terminated by resignation (voluntarily unemployed) and by mutual termination cannot benefit from monthly unemployment allowance. Except for mutual termination of the work relationship within the context of the compulsory conciliation procedure before the relevant Local Labour Office, now applicable to instances of dismissal for an objective justifiable reason. (The worker may reach an out-of-courts settlement with the employer and will be eligible for unemployment benefits).	5
Japan	When a person leaves a job voluntarily without any justifiable reason, or is dismissed for a serious reason attributable to him/her, he/she will not obtain unemployment benefits before 3 months after finishing the waiting period (A total of 7 days counting from the day of the first job application).	3
Korea	Those who are discharged for their own material misconduct such as illegal appropriation or those who have voluntarily changed jobs for personal reasons do not qualify for unemployment benefits.	5
Latvia	If a person has become unemployed after the termination of an employment relationship based on his or her own initiative or due to a violation, the unemployment benefit shall be granted from the day of filing the request, but not earlier than two months after receiving the status of the unemployed. The overall duration of the benefit is not shortened.	2
Lithuania	An unemployed, who is dismissed for misconduct will receive unemployment benefits after three months of registration at the Labour exchange instead of eight days as usual. There are no sanctions for unemployed who resign voluntarily from their previous job.	1

Country	Description – Sanctions in case of resignation from previous job *(item 7)*	Score 2014
Luxembourg	Unemployment benefit is only paid in cases of involuntary unemployment. No benefit will be paid if the unemployed person left their previous job without exceptional reasons.	5
Malta	In cases where unemployed persons quit their job without good cause (supported by documentation), he/she will be registered under Part 2 of the unemployment register for six months, which means that a jobseeker will lose entitlement to benefits as well as priority on the unemployment register.	4
Netherlands	If the employee is culpable unemployed and if the employment relationship was finished without any objection from the employer, then the employee is not entitled to unemployment benefits.	5
New Zealand	A person who quits a job voluntarily is not entitled to a benefit for 13 weeks from the date his or her employment ceased. A person subject to a 13 week non-entitlement period can complete certain activities for a continuous period of 6 weeks (or until then end of the 13 week non-entitlement period, whichever is the earlier) in order to get a provisional benefit. Approved activities include full-time employment and participation in an employment skills programme or employment-related training.	3
Norway	If a person quits a job without good cause, the jobseeker will be subject to a waiting period of minimum 8 weeks before he/she will receive benefits.	2
Poland	If within a period of 6 months preceding registration, the unemployed terminated the employment contract with notice or with the agreement of the employer, the unemployed cannot obtain benefits for 90 days. If the employment contract was terminated by the employee without notice, unemployment benefit cannot be obtained for 180 days. A sanction of 180 days also applies to unemployed who, up to 6 months before registration, terminate an employment relationship with an employer that received an employment subsidy from the poviat labour office (e.g. a grant, a mobilisation benefit or financial support for hiring the unemployed 50 years and above) and the period for which the employer was awarded resources had not yet lapsed.	4
Portugal	When the employment contract ends by the employee's initiative and that end is not considered justified or with good cause, then the employee can be registered as seeking employment but cannot be a beneficiary of unemployment benefits.	5
Romania	If employment is terminated for reasons imputable to the unemployed person, they are not eligible to receive unemployment benefit.	5
Slovak Republic	When assessing entitlement to unemployment benefit, the reason why previous employment ended is not examined.	1
Slovenia	A person who is voluntarily unemployed will not be eligible for unemployment benefit.	5
Spain	To obtain unemployment benefits, workers must, among other requirements, have lost their jobs for involuntary reasons and will not be considered if their employment was voluntarily terminated.	5
Sweden	An applicant will be suspended from benefit for 45 benefit days (9 weeks) if she/he leaves his or her work without valid cause or if she/he is suspended from work owing to improper conduct. If she/he leaves a work without a valid cause a third time within the same benefit period, she/he needs to qualify for a new benefit period (fulfil the work requirement) to be entitled to unemployment benefit again.	3
Switzerland	If the unemployed left a suitable job without being sure of having a new job, they are subject to a benefit suspension of 31-60 benefit days (6-12 weeks).	2.5
Turkey	The unemployed person will not be eligible for unemployment benefit.	5
United Kingdom	Since October 2012, if a JSA claimant contributes to his own unemployment by leaving a job voluntarily without just cause a “high level” sanction of 13 weeks will apply for a 1st failure, 26 weeks for a 2nd failure within 52 weeks of a 1st failure and 156 weeks for a 3rd failure within 52 weeks of a 2nd failure. “Just cause” involves balancing the interest of the claimant with those of the wider community. Sanctions of similar length apply under Universal Credit and they also may apply to in-work claimants of Universal Credit who lose pay without food reason.	3
United States	In general, individuals will be disqualified from receiving benefits if they voluntarily quit their jobs without god cause attributable to work or for good personal cause. The states differ, however, in their approaches to defining what constitutes good cause. Individuals can purge their disqualifications for voluntarily quitting their employment, typically by returning to work or serving a period of disqualification. The specific sanctions vary from state to state. Some states also reduce the maximum benefit amount in addition to postponing benefits.	4

Note: See notes * and ** to p. 17.

Table A9. **Factors that can justify a voluntary quit without a sanction being imposed**

Country	1 Health reasons	2 Family/ personal reasons	3 Following spouse	4 Subsequent employment failed	5 New job fell through	6 Nature of work	7 Future employment assured	8 Discrimination/ harassment	9 Transport issues	10 Skills/ training	11 Business reasons	12 Ethical/ moral reasons
Australia	X					X	X		X	X	X	X
Austria	X	X						X	X		X	
Belgium	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Bulgaria	X		X									
Canada		X	X			X	X	X				
Chile	Does not apply, as no sanction exists related to the way of termination of work.											
Croatia	X		X					X			X	
Cyprus	X	X			X	X		X	X			
Czech Republic	X	X	X									X
Denmark	X	X	X				X	X	X			
Estonia								X			X	
Finland	X		X		X			X	X			
France		X	X				X					
Germany	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Greece	The unemployed person must be out of work involuntarily and the legislation does not acknowledge any special circumstances.											
Hungary	Does not apply, as no sanction exists related to the way of termination of work.											
Iceland	X	X	X					X				
Ireland	The particular circumstances of each case are examined.											
Israel						X						
Italy						X		X				
Japan	X	X	X					X	X	X		
Korea		X				X		X	X		X	
Latvia	There are no causes that could be considered as legitimate for the justification of voluntary quit and thus shortening the waiting period of 2 months.											
Lithuania	Does not apply, as no sanction exists related to the way of termination of work.											
Luxembourg	X		X		X			X				
Malta	X			X								
Netherlands	X		X	X				X				
New Zealand	X	X	X		X	X				X	X	
Norway	X	X	X	X	X	X						
Poland	X		X					X				
Portugal	X											
Romania	X				X							

Country	1 Health reasons	2 Family/ personal reasons	3 Following spouse	4 Subsequent employment failed	5 New job fell through	6 Nature of work	7 Future employment assured	8 Discrimination/ harassment	9 Transport issues	10 Skills/ training	11 Business reasons	12 Ethical/ moral reasons
Slovak Republic	Does not apply, as no sanction exists related to the way of termination of work.											
Slovenia	X	X	X									
Spain		X			X			X				
Sweden	X	X	X		X			X	X			
Switzerland	X	X	X		X			X			X	
Turkey	X							X	X		X	X
United Kingdom	Not possible to provide a list as this is case law.											
United States[a]	X	X	X		X			X	X	X		X

Note: See notes * and ** to p. 17.

1 Health reasons: The jobseeker cannot remain in his/her current type of work for health reasons (but is still available for some kinds of work);

2 Family/personal reasons: The jobseeker quits a job related to family or personal reasons (e.g. care for a child or close relative, domestic violence), therefore needs to change hours or relocate

3 Following spouse: The jobseeker needs to quit to move with a spouse who is taking up work in another part of the country; (or for young people under the age of 18 to follow their parents)

4 Subsequent employment failed: The jobseeker left a long-term job to start a new job or self-employment, but voluntarily quit during the trial period of the new job or the own business started wasn't successful; obtain better prospects with another organisation, which subsequently proved to be the wrong decision;

5 New job fell through: The jobseeker left a long-term job to start a new job, but the new job fell through (e.g. the employer terminated at the end of a trial period)

6 Nature of work: The jobseeker quit a job due to the nature of the work (e.g. seasonal work; excessive overtime; overtime which is not paid; work duties have changed significantly; employer reduced wages)

7 Future employment assured: The jobseeker quit a job because a future employment relationship is assured (often a minimum length of the new contract needs to be assured) or to take up education

8 Discrimination/harassment: The jobseeker quit a job because of discrimination, (sexual) harassment, or other serious violations of fundamental employer duties towards the employee

9 Transport issues: The jobseeker quit a job due to transport issues (e.g. following relocation of the business)

10 Skills/training: The jobseeker quit a job as it requires particular skills or qualifications that the person does not have, and appropriate training will not be provided by the employer

11 Business reasons: The jobseeker quit a job due to reasons related to the owners of the business reasons (e.g. ongoing labour dispute; imminent danger of debt overload or insolvency)

12 Ethical/moral reasons: The jobseeker quit a job as it does not any longer accord with ethical, moral or religious beliefs or other reason worthy of consideration.

a) "X" indicates a majority of states have some type of provision for that factor with some states provisions more restrictive than others. In all states, individuals who leave their work voluntarily must have good cause if they are not to be disqualified. Good cause may be determined if the employer is not paying for work done (in the case of uncertainty/viability of business). In the other examples, eligibility will depend on the individual's reason for quitting and efforts to work with the employer to resolve the issue or the circumstances at the time of the quit.

Table A10. **Sanctions for refusing job offers (item 8 and 9)**

Country	**First refusal** *(item 8)*		**Subsequent refusals** *(item 9)*	
	Description	Score 2014	Description	Score 2014
Australia	A jobseeker who refuses a suitable job without a reasonable excuse may have an 8-week penalty imposed. A jobseeker who fails to attend a job interview or during a job interview deliberately behaves in a way that results in them not receiving a job offer may lose the equivalent of a working day's payment (one tenth of their fortnightly income support payment). Jobseeker must apply for a specified number of jobs each fortnight and must act on referrals to employers from providers.	1.5	An eight week non-payment penalty is applied for every refusal of a suitable job offer.	2
Austria	If an unemployed person does not accept a reasonable job offer, the payment of benefits from the unemployment insurance scheme is suspended for as long as the job is refused, or in any event, for six weeks. Duration of benefits is shortened accordingly.	2	The period of suspension may last for up to eight weeks in case of repeated refusal to accept reasonable job offers.	2
Belgium	The penalty for refusing a suitable job or deliberately failing an interview results in a suspension of benefits for 4-52 weeks. According to sanction statistics, the typical sanction is 10-14 weeks, with the length being decided on a case-by-case basis taking various factors into account (e.g. type of offered contract, social factors, and professional background).	3	If an unemployed person refuses a second suitable job offer in the 12 months following a suspension of unemployment benefit, they lose their right to unemployment benefit and do not regain their rights until after working for sufficient number of days. If the first offence resulted only in a warning or the first suspension was more than 12 months ago, then this sanction does not apply. The unemployed could lose the right to benefits if they decline a suitable job-offer with the intent to continue to receiving benefits.	5
Bulgaria	The decline of a job offer by the unemployed person without good reason serves as sufficient grounds for termination of the registration at the employment agency, which includes the right to use its services.	5	The sanction is the same each time a job offer is refused.	5
Canada	A claimant who has not applied for, has neglected to avail themselves of or has refused an offer of suitable employment is subject to a disqualification from benefits for a period ranging from 7-12 weeks. The updated regulations have clarified the responsibilities of EI claimants, by defining what constitutes a reasonable job search and suitable employment. Claimants who cannot prove they are capable of and available for work and unable to obtain suitable employment are disentitled from receiving benefits for that working day. This excludes instances where claimants can prove they are unable to work as a result of a prescribed illness, injury or quarantine or from being engaged in jury service.	2.5	Each incident of refusal of employment is taken into consideration on its individual merits with no cumulative or escalating effect.	2.5
Chile	UI benefits are suspended if the worker declines a job offer from his/her OMIL or an interview without justification.	5	Benefits are suspended at the first refusal.	5

Country	First refusal *(item 8)*		Subsequent refusals *(item 9)*	
	Description	Score 2014	Description	Score 2014
Croatia	An unemployed person shall be indefinitely excluded from benefit if they refuse a job offer; fail to attend a job interview organised by the employment service; or deliberately fail of a job interview.	5	An unemployed person is already indefinitely excluded from benefit after his/hers first refusal/failure.	5
Cyprus	The PES issues a warning for the first refusal of a suitable job.	1	The PES applies a specific sanction to unemployed who refuses to accept two suitable job offers/ to fail to attend a job interview/ to deliberate failure of a job interview. This sanction refers to the termination of the PES jobseeker registration for a three month period. This in effect results in the suspension or termination of the unemployment benefit for the same period, or of any other benefit which is given on the assumption that he/she is registered as unemployed.	3
Czech Republic	The Labour Office can remove the jobseeker from the register of jobseekers for a period of 6 months for failing to take up suitable employment.	4	The sanction is the same each time a job offer is refused.	4
Denmark	The person is quarantined for 3 weeks where he would otherwise have been entitled to unemployment benefits.	1	If the unemployed person quits a job or an employability enhancement measure or refuses a job offer without a valid reason two times within a 12 month period he forfeits his or her right to unemployment benefits until he has worked in a regular job for at least 300 hours within 3 months or 276 hours within a 12-week period.	4.5
Estonia	An unemployed person is required to be ready to accept a suitable work and to promptly commence work. If an UIB recipient refuses to accept suitable work for the first time, the payment of UIB will be terminated. The person still has the right to receive the remaining UIB entitlement if he terminates his registration as unemployed, goes to work, loses the job involuntarily and re-registers himself as unemployed within twelve month from the date when an unemployment insurance benefit has been granted for the first time.	4.5	The same rules apply for individuals who refuse job offers more than once during a 12 months period of the UIB entitlement period. The person still has the right to receive the remaining UIB entitlement, but will always need to have a period of employment, before claiming the remaining UIB entitlement.	4.5
Finland	If an unemployed person refuses a job offer without good cause, entitlement to unemployment benefit is usually lost for a period of 60 days. It is also considered a refusal when jobseekers fail to get a job as a result of their own actions at a job interview. If the job would have lasted for no longer than two weeks, the unemployment benefit will be lost for a period of 30 days. Previously (up to 30 June 2012), this concerned jobs which would have lasted for no more than five days.	2	If an unemployed person has repeatedly behaved in a manner deemed inappropriate from a labour policy perspective, he/she loses entitlement to unemployment benefit until further notice. The established interpretation of repeatedly is the second instance of inappropriate behaviour within a period of approximately six months. Primarily, entitlement to benefit will be restored once the jobseeker becomes employed, participates in certain services provided by the TE Office or begins full-time studies for a minimum period of 12 weeks.	4.5
France	There is no penalty for refusing a reasonable job offer for the first time (sanctions apply after two or more refusals).	1	The refusal of two reasonable job offers results in cancellation of the unemployment benefit for a period of two months. In case of repeated breaches, benefits may be removed for 2-6 months or even permanently.	3

Country	First refusal *(item 8)*		Subsequent refusals *(item 9)*	
	Description	Score 2014	Description	Score 2014
Germany	In the case of unemployed persons who refuse a job offer by the employment agency, benefits will be suspended for three weeks (first refusal). Moreover, the period of entitlement to benefits will be cut by the number of days for which benefits are suspended.	1	In case unemployed persons refuse a job offer by the employment agency, benefits will be suspended for six weeks (second refusal) or twelve weeks (any subsequent refusal). Moreover, the period of entitlement to benefits will be cut by the number of days for which benefits are suspended.	2.5
Greece	The unemployed person ceases to receive unemployment benefit if he/she does not accept a job offer.	5	The unemployment benefit has already been suspended after the first refusal.	5
Hungary	The unemployment benefit (as well as other benefits) of the person is terminated in this case, and his/her file is deleted from the register of unemployed persons. The concerned person can register again after 2 months.	2	No additional sanctions exist for repeatedly refusing a job offer. The same sanction applies as for the first refusal (2 months' suspension of benefits).	2
Iceland	The sanction for a first refused job offer, failure to attend a job interview and deliberate failure of a job interview is two months.	2	The sanction for a second refused job offer, failure to attend a job interview and deliberate failure of a job interview is three months and following a third refusal unemployment benefits are terminated and the individual has to work for at least 24 months to renew his/her right to unemployment benefits.	4
Ireland	If a person refuses a job not under activation measures they may be disallowed for up to 9 weeks. Under activation measures a penalty rate is applied for 21 days and then a disallowance of up 9 weeks may be applied.	2	Same consequence as for initial refusal of job offer.	2
Israel	Refusal to accept suitable work rules out payment of unemployment benefit for 90 days from the refusal and 30 unemployment days are deducted from the remainder of the maximum period for which payment is due on the day of refusal.	4	There are no special sanctions, but if there are recurring refusals, the recurring delay of 90 days may lead to the end of the unemployment year and the 30 unemployment days deducted for each refusal may eventually lead to the negation of the entire maximum period of entitlement.	4
Italy	The unemployed loses his/her unemployment benefits and can submit a new declaration of availability to be recruited (so called DID), only after four months.	4	The unemployment benefit has already been suspended after the first refusal. The unemployed must now submit a new DID to INPS.	4
Japan	If the unemployed refuses a job offer introduced by PES without good reasons, benefits are stopped for a month.	1	The same sanction applies as in the first case of refusal.	1
Korea	Unemployment benefits are suspended for 2 weeks when the unemployed refuse job offers without justification.	1	Unemployment benefits are suspended until the unemployed accept the job offers from the Job Centre. The duration of suspension is not regulated. Therefore, the duration could be one week or just few days.	1
Latvia	The first refusal of an appropriate offer of employment does not yet result in a sanction. The participation in job interview organised by employment service can be included in individual job search plan. In case the person has agreed to participate in such an interview but does not attend, the sanctions may be applied due to failure to fulfil the duties of an unemployed person without a justified reason, i.e. the person loses the right to receive	3	The second refusal of an appropriate offer of employment results in the loss of unemployed person status, i.e. the person loses the right to receive unemployment benefits. Refusal of agreed interviews already resulted in the loss of the right to receive unemployment benefits on the first occasion.	5

Country	First refusal *(item 8)*		Subsequent refusals *(item 9)*	
	Description	Score 2014	Description	Score 2014
	unemployment benefits.			
Lithuania	Unemployment benefit is suspended if the unemployed refuse a suitable job offer, and they can re-register at the PES no earlier than six months after the suspension.	4	If the unemployed person repeatedly refuses job offers the same sanction applies again.	4
Luxembourg	An unemployment benefit recipient who refuses without justification a suitable job offer loses rights to unemployment benefit.	5	Unemployment benefits have already been suspended after the first refusal.	5
Malta	When a registered unemployed person refuses a job offer without a justifiable cause he/she will be required to fill in a Justification Form together with any supporting documentation that explains the motive behind such action. If the unemployed person's objection is not upheld, the jobseeker is moved to Part 2 of the unemployment register for six months, thus losing entitlement to benefits.	4	No special sanctions are applied when the unemployed person refuses a job offer for more than one time. The same sanction applies as for the first refusal.	4
Netherlands	If an unemployment benefit recipient refuses a full-time job-offer he/she may have his/her benefits reduced by a variable percentage ranging up to 100% (i.e. the termination of unemployment benefits). The proportion depends on the claimant's willingness to re-engage and the financial situation of the beneficiary (and his or her household) will also be taken into account. For refused part-time job offers the basis for the sanction is proportional to the hours of the refused job-offer (e.g. if unemployment benefits were based on a previous working week of 40 hours and the refused job offer is for a part-time job of 20 hours, the maximal sanction is a 50% benefit reduction).	1	Lasting non-compliance could result in a higher benefit reduction and for repeated refusals could lead to a 100% sanction (i.e. the termination of unemployment benefits).	3
New Zealand	From July 2013, if a person refuses an offer of suitable employment without a good and sufficient reason, their benefit is cancelled. A person whose benefit is cancelled is not entitled to receive it for 13 weeks from the date of cancellation and has to reapply and establish their eligibility. The suspension and cancellation only apply to 50% of the benefit if the person has a partner and/or dependent children. If a person fails to attend a job interview or deliberately fails a job interview, their benefit is reduced by 50% until such time as they re-comply. If they do not re-comply within four weeks, then the benefit is reduced by a further 50% until such time as they re-comply.	2	Each time a client refuses an offer of suitable employment without a good and sufficient reason, their benefit is cancelled and they are subject to a 13 week non-entitlement period.	3
Norway	If a jobseeker refuses a job offer, he/she loses entitlement to benefits for eight weeks.	2	Repeated refusals will result in extended sanctions. Two refusals will result in 12 weeks repeal of unemployment benefits and three refusals will result in 26 weeks repeal.	4
Poland	The unemployed loses his/her status for 120 days when refusing to take up employment without a justified reason. In that case, the unemployed simultaneously loses the right to the unemployment benefit.	4	After the second or third (or any further) refusal of employment without a justified reason, the unemployed loses his/her status and unemployment benefit entitlement for 180 days or 270 days respectively. Periods without status decrease the length of	4

Country	First refusal *(item 8)*		Subsequent refusals *(item 9)*	
	Description	Score 2014	Description	Score 2014
			entitlement to unemployment benefit after the next registration.	
Portugal	Registration at the Job Centre and entitlement to unemployment benefits is cancelled by refusal of suitable employment.	5	The unemployment benefit has already been suspended after the first refusal. Re-enrolment in job centre by beneficiaries whose registration was cancelled by unjustified action can only take place after 90 consecutive days counted from the date of the annulment decision. Benefits cannot be reinstated.	5
Romania	The unemployment benefit ceases if the person refuses unjustified an adequate job, according to his/her level of training or education. Unemployment benefit payments are restored at the date of a reapplication for benefits, not later than 60 days from the date of suspension.	2	The sanction is the same, each time a unemployment benefit recipient refuses an offer of suitable employment without a good and sufficient reason.	2
Slovak Republic	The Office will remove the jobseeker from the register of jobseeker from the day of detecting his/her lack of cooperation, which includes refusal of suitable employment. In case of removal of the jobseeker from the register of jobseekers, the jobseeker loses entitlement to unemployment benefit.	5	The unemployment benefit has already been suspended after the first refusal.	5
Slovenia	If a person refuses a suitable or appropriate employment or an interview for a job or is not seeking to gain employment, is not registered in the records of the unemployed any more, and they are not eligible for unemployment benefit.	5	The unemployment benefit has already been suspended after the first refusal.	5
Spain	Refusing an adequate job offer without good cause is considered a serious administrative offence and for the first offence will result in a loss of benefits for three months.	3	The unemployment benefit will be suspended for 6 months if the unemployed refuses a job offer twice. A third refusal entails the loss of the unemployment benefit.	4.5
Sweden	An applicant will be suspended from benefits for 5 benefit days if she/he without a valid reason prolongs the period of unemployment. Prolonging the period of unemployment can be done for example by refusing a job offer or by causing an employment not to come about due to improper behaviour (for example by not attending a job interview or deliberate failure of a job interview).	1	If an applicant prolongs the period of unemployment (by refusing a job offer, causing an employment not to come about due to improper behaviour, refuses a referral to a labour market programme that provides activity support) a second time within the same benefit period she/he is suspended for 10 days, a third time 45 days. If it is repeated a fourth time within the same benefit period she/he needs to qualify for a new benefit period (fulfil the work requirement) to be entitled to unemployment benefit again.	3
Switzerland	Refusing a suitable job offer, not appearing (without good cause) to a job interview, or deliberately failing of a job interview will result in a benefit suspension of 31-60 benefit days (6-12 weeks).	2.5	Repeated refusal of suitable job offers over a two-year period demonstrate that the unemployed is not available for work. This can result in an increase in the length of suspension of his/her unemployment benefits and subsequently in full suspension of benefits if the unemployed is sanctioned several times for the same reason. The full suspension applies after the second or third refusal, depending on the attitude of the unemployed.	4
Turkey	If the unemployed rejects the job offer without any justified reason, insurance is suspended permanently. If the unemployed refused to attend to a job interview organised by the employment	5	The unemployment benefit has already been terminated after the first refusal.	5

Country	First refusal *(item 8)*		Subsequent refusals *(item 9)*	
	Description	Score 2014	Description	Score 2014
	service without any justified reason insurance is suspended permanently. One time refuse of job interview or job offer is enough for the abolishment of unemployment insurance.			
United Kingdom	When a Jobseeker's Allowance or Universal Credit claimant refuses employment without good reason a sanction of 13 weeks will apply for a 1st failure.	3	When a Jobseeker's Allowance or Universal Credit claimant refuses employment without good reason for a second or third time a sanction of 26 weeks will apply for a 2nd failure and 156 weeks for a 3rd failure.	4.5
United States	The reason for refusing the job offer is examined. In general, individuals will be disqualified from receiving UI benefits if they refuse suitable work. The specific sanctions vary from state to state. Some states disqualify for a specified number of weeks. Other states postpone benefits until the individual has earned a certain amount of wages or worked a certain period of time.	4	The specific sanctions vary from state to state. The specific sanctions vary from state to state. Some states disqualify for a specified number of weeks. Other states postpone benefits until the individual has earned a certain amount of wages or worked a certain period of time.	4

Note: See notes * and ** to p. 17.

Table A11. **Sanctions for refusal or failure to participate in ALMPs and other PES interventions (item 10 and 11)**

Country	First refusal *(item 10)*		Subsequent refusals *(item 11)*	
	Description	Score 2014	Description	Score 2014
Australia	A jobseeker commits a connection failure if, without a reasonable excuse, they: fail to attend an appointment, fail to enter into an Employment Pathway Plan (EPP), or fail to meet job-search requirements. There is no penalty for a connection failure. Instead, the jobseeker is given a reconnection requirement. The reconnection requirement will depend on the basis for the connection failure and will be: attendance at a further appointment, to complete a jobseeker diary or another jobseeker diary, or to enter into the EPP. A jobseeker will incur a failure and financial penalty (one tenth of their fortnightly income support payment) if they fail to participate in a compulsory activity required by an EPP, fail to comply with a compliance activity, or commit misconduct while participating in an activity.	1	Persistent non-compliance with participation requirements (3 or more failures in six months) can result in a serious failure penalty, which results in a suspension of the benefit for 8 weeks.	2
Austria	If an unemployed person refuses to participate in an ALMP, the payment of benefits from the unemployment insurance scheme is suspended for the time the ALMP participation is refused, or in any event, for six weeks. Duration of benefits is shortened accordingly.	2	The period of suspension may last for up to eight weeks in case of repeated refusal to participate in ALMPs.	2
Belgium	The penalty for failing to report to the employment service without sufficient justification or dropping or deliberately failing an integration measure results in a suspension of benefits for 4-52	4	If an unemployed person is failing to report to the employment service without sufficient justification or is dropping or is deliberately failing an integration measure a second time in the 12	5

Country	First refusal *(item 10)*		Subsequent refusals *(item 11)*	
	Description	Score 2014	Description	Score 2014
	weeks. According to sanction statistics, the typical sanction is 10 to 14 weeks. The penalty for refusing to participate in an integration course proposed by the PES results in the total suspension of unemployment benefit.		months following a suspension of unemployment benefit, they lose their right to unemployment benefit and do not regain their rights until after working for sufficient number of days. If the first offence resulted only in a warning or the first suspension was more than 12 months ago, then this sanction does not apply. No escalating effect applies to sanctions for refused participation in an integration course proposed by the PES, as unemployment benefits have already been terminated after the first refusal.	
Bulgaria	Other reasons for termination of registration include failure to follow the employment officer's recommendations, failure to take the actions or keep up with the timetable and schedule of visits included in the action plan, refusal to be included in programmes, employment measures and adult training. Persons will become eligible for subsequent registration at the employment agency not earlier than 6 months after termination of the previous registration.	5	The sanctions are the same each time.	5
Canada	A claimant who fails to take action on a referral intended to assist them to find suitable employment is subject to a disqualification of 1-6 weeks.	1.5	Each incident of refusal of employment is taken into consideration on its individual merits with no cumulative or escalating effect.	1.5
Chile	If the person declines a training scholarship they will lose the remaining benefit entitlement.	5	Any remaining benefit entitlement has already been lost at the first refusal.	5
Croatia	An unemployed person shall be indefinitely excluded from benefit if they refuse participation in counselling interviews organised by the public employment service (PES) or participation in ALMPs.	5	An unemployed person is already indefinitely excluded from benefit after his/hers first refusal/failure.	5
Cyprus	There is no sanction for PES-registered jobseekers if the unemployed person refuses to submit a claim, refuses or neglected occupational training.	1	There are no sanctions for repeated refusal of ALMP participation. If the unemployed person refused to attend a counselling interview twice organised by the PES without reasonable cause, then the person is no longer considered willing to work and his/her registration is terminated for a three month period.	3
Czech Republic	The Labour Office can remove the jobseeker from the register of jobseekers for a period of 6 months for (among other things) refusing to commence or attend an agreed training course or fails to cooperate with the Labour Office.	4	The sanction is the same each time a jobseeker refuses to commence or attend an agreed training course or fails to cooperate with the Labour Office.	4
Denmark	The person is quarantined for 3 weeks where he would otherwise have been entitled to unemployment benefits.	1	If the unemployed person refuses an ALMP placement without a valid reason two times within a 12 month period he forfeits his or her right to unemployment benefits until he has worked in a regular job for at least 300 hours within 3 months or 276 hours within a 12-week period.	4.5
Estonia	An unemployed person is required to participate in the preparation of an Individual Action Plan and comply with it, to appear at the EUIF for a visit at the prescribed time and to seek employment independently and notify the EUIF of the process of	4.5	The same rules apply for individuals who refuse ALMP/PES interventions more than once during a 12 months period of the UIB entitlement period. The person still has the right to receive the remaining UIB entitlement, but will always need to have a	4.5

Country	First refusal *(item 10)*		Subsequent refusals *(item 11)*	
	Description	Score 2014	Description	Score 2014
	seeking employment. The person's Individual Action Plan contains activities necessary for finding work, labour market services necessary for employment, and other measures the person is required to take. If the UIB recipient fails to comply with the Individual Action Plan for the first time, the payment of the corresponding benefit UIB will be terminated. The person still has the right to receive the remaining UIB entitlement if he terminates his registration as unemployed, goes to work, loses the job involuntarily and re-registers himself as unemployed within twelve month from the date when an unemployment insurance benefit has been granted for the first time.		period of employment, before claiming the remaining UIB entitlement.	
Finland	Refusal, without good cause, of services offered by the TE Office usually results in loss of unemployment benefit for a period of 60 days. If a jobseeker is invited to a TE Office, but fails to show up, their job application will be discarded. If the purpose of the visit was to draw up an unemployment plan, the claimant will lose their right to unemployment benefits until the plan is drawn up (for no less than 15 days). At the beginning of 2014, a legislative amendment entered into force that makes it possible to shorten the payment period for the earnings-related part of the earnings-related allowance. If, during the first 250 days of the unemployment allowance period, the beneficiary of the earnings-related allowance is given a period without benefits or is subject to the employment condition upon refusing to participate in or dropping out of employment services, the earnings-related allowance will be paid for the last 100 days of the maximum eligibility period at an amount equivalent to if it were paid as a basic allowance.	2	If an unemployed person has repeatedly behaved in a manner deemed inappropriate from a labour policy perspective, he/she loses entitlement to unemployment benefit until further notice. The established interpretation of repeatedly is the second instance of inappropriate behaviour within a period of approximately six months. Primarily entitlement to benefit will be restored once the jobseeker becomes employed, participates in certain services provided by the TE Office or begins full-time studies for a minimum period of 12 weeks. When assessing repeated inappropriate behaviour, attention is given to the refusal and dropping out of active measures organised by the TE Office as well as neglecting to draw up and implement the unemployment plan. However, neglecting other TE Office services is not taken into consideration. The situation has remained unchanged since 2011.	4.5
France	The refusal of a service offered by the public employment service, such as participation in an ALMP, is liable to a 20% reduction in unemployment benefit for two months.	1	Repeated refusal of services offered by the PES can lead to a reduction in the unemployment benefit by 50% for 2-6 months, or it may even be permanently suspended.	3
Germany	In the case of unemployed persons who participation in an integration programme without good reasons, benefits will be suspended for three weeks (first refusal). Moreover, the period of entitlement to benefits will be cut by the number of days for which benefits are suspended.	1	In the case of unemployed persons who refuse participation in an integration without good reasons, benefits will be suspended for six weeks (second refusal) or twelve weeks (any subsequent refusal). Moreover, the period of entitlement to benefits will be cut by the number of days for which benefits are suspended.	2.5
Greece	The unemployed person ceases to receive unemployment benefit if he/she does not participate in an ALMP.	5	The unemployment benefit has already been suspended after the first refusal.	5
Hungary	The unemployment benefit (as well as other benefits) of the person is terminated in this case, and his/her file is deleted from the register of unemployed persons. The concerned person can register again after 2 months.	2	No additional sanctions exist for repeatedly refusing a job offer. The same sanction applies as for the first refusal (2 months' suspension of benefits).	2

Country	First refusal *(item 10)*		Subsequent refusals *(item 11)*	
	Description	Score 2014	Description	Score 2014
Iceland	The sanction for refusing participation in counselling interviews organised by the public employment service (PES) and ALMPs such as labour-market-training, work experience and job-creation programmes for the first time is two months.	2	The sanction for refusing participation in counselling interviews organised by the public employment service (PES) and ALMPs such as labour-market-training, work experience and job-creation programmes for the second time is two months. Following a third refusal unemployment benefits are terminated and the individual has to work for at least 24 months to renew his/her right to unemployment benefits.	4
Ireland	If a person refuses to participate in activation measures then a penalty rate (i.e. reduction of the benefit amount) is imposed for 21 days. In order to continue receiving benefits afterwards the unemployed have to reengage. Otherwise escalating sanctions apply (see item on repeated failures/refusals).	1	If after 21 days on a penalty rate the customer does not engage then a 9 weeks disqualification applies. If after the 9 weeks the person continues not engaging the claim is disallowed as the customer is not making any effort to find employment.	3.5
Israel	There is currently no required participation in scheduled interventions.	1	There is currently no required participation in scheduled interventions.	1
Italy	Unemployment benefit recipients will lose their entitlement if they refuse, without any justifiable reason, to take part in training or retraining activities. The unemployed lose his/her unemployment benefits and can submit a new declaration of availability to be recruited (so called DID), only after four months.	4	The same sanction applies as in the first case of refusal.	4
Japan	If the unemployed refuses public vocational training instructed by the head of PES without good reasons, benefits are stopped for a month.	1	The same sanction applies as in the first case of refusal.	1
Korea	Unemployment benefits are suspended for 4 weeks when the unemployed refuse to attend vocational training courses without justification.	1	Unemployment benefits are suspended until the unemployed take in the guidance and other advice from the Job Centre. The duration of suspension is not regulated. Therefore, the duration could be one week or just few days.	1
Latvia	If the participation in a particular ALMP measure is included in the individual job search plan, it becomes an obligation. Refusal of participation can lead to loss of status of unemployed person on the basis of failure to fulfil the duties of an unemployed person without a justified reason, i.e. the person loses the right to receive unemployment benefits.	5	The person has already lost the right to unemployment benefits for the first refusal.	5
Lithuania	Unemployment benefit is suspended if the unemployed refuse for no good reason to participate in an ALMP laid down in his/her employment plan, fail to arrive at a set time at the PES to accept a job offer or participate in an ALMP laid down in his/her employment plan or refuse to undergo a health check offered by the PES to establish suitability for work. Persons participating in ALMPs who lose their unemployment status can re-register at the PES no earlier than six months after the suspension.	4	If the unemployed person repeatedly refuses ALMP participation, the same sanction applies again.	4
Luxembourg	An unemployment benefit recipient who refuses without	5	Unemployment benefits have already been suspended after the	5

Country	First refusal *(item 10)*		Subsequent refusals *(item 11)*	
	Description	Score 2014	Description	Score 2014
	justification to participate in an ALMP loses rights to unemployment benefit.		first refusal.	
Malta	When a registered unemployed person refuses an ALMP placement without a justifiable cause he/she will be required to fill in a Justification Form together with any supporting documentation that explains the motive behind such action. If the unemployed person's objection is not upheld, the jobseeker is moved to Part 2 of the unemployment register for six months, thus losing entitlement to benefits.	4	No special sanctions are applied when the unemployed person refuses an ALMP placement for more than one time. The same sanction applies as for the first refusal.	4
Netherlands	The unemployed will be penalised if they do not sufficiently look for work or hamper the process of finding adequate work. The sanction will be 25% of the benefit the person receives for a period of at least 4 months.	1	If the unemployed person receives a sanction and within a period of 2 years neglects the same obligation, the sanction will increase to 50%.	1
New Zealand	If a person refuses to participate in an activity to which they have been referred without good and sufficient reason, their benefit is reduced by 50% until such time as they re-comply. If they do not re-comply within four weeks, then the benefit is reduced by a further 50% until such time as they re-comply. No sanctions are applied if a person refuses to participate in counselling interviews.	1	For a second failure to meet work obligations, the benefit is suspended until such time as they re-comply. For a third failure, the benefit is cancelled. A person whose benefit is cancelled is not entitled to receive it for 13 weeks from the date of cancellation and has to reapply and establish their eligibility. The suspension and cancellation only apply to a portion of the benefit if the person has a spouse or partner or the couple have children. No sanctions are applied if a person refuses to participate in counselling interviews.	3
Norway	If a jobseeker refuses to participate in mandatory activites, he/she loses entitlement to benefits for eight weeks. If a jobseeker fails to attend meetings at the NAV, he/she may lose entitlement to benefits for four weeks.	1.5	If a jobseeker repeatedly refuses to participate in mandatory activites, he/she loses entitlement to benefits for 12 weeks for a second refusal and 26 weeks for a third refusal. If a jobseeker repeatedly fails to attend meetings at the NAV, he/she may lose entitlement to benefits for eight weeks on the second occasion and 12 weeks on the third occasion.	3
Poland	The unemployed loses his/her status for 120 days when refusing to take training or other forms of support without a justified reason. In that case, the unemployed simultaneously loses the right to the unemployment benefit.	4	After the second or third (or any further) refusal of ALMP participation without a justified reason, the unemployed loses his/her status and unemployment benefit entitlement for 180 days or 270 days respectively. Periods without status decrease the length of entitlement to unemployment benefit after the next registration.	4
Portugal	Registration at the Job Centre and entitlement to unemployment benefits is cancelled (and the remaining unemployment benefit is lost) by the following unjustified actions: refusal to participate in vocational training, subsidised employment or other ALMPs, refusal to accept a Personal Employment Plan or by a second failure to provide proof of active job search.	5	The unemployment benefit has already been suspended after the first refusal. Re-enrolment in job centre by beneficiaries whose registration was cancelled by unjustified action can only take place after 90 consecutive days counted from the date of the annulment decision. Benefits cannot be reinstated.	5
Romania	If the unemployment benefit recipient does not report monthly by	2	The sanction is the same, each time the unemployment benefit	2

Country	First refusal *(item 10)*		Subsequent refusals *(item 11)*	
	Description	Score 2014	Description	Score 2014
	appointment or whenever requested to employment agency where he/she is registered to receive support for employment, the unemployment benefit is suspended. Unemployment benefit payments are restored at the date of a reapplication for benefits, not later than 60 days from the date of suspension.		recipient does not report monthly by appointment or whenever requested to employment agency where he/she is registered to receive support for employment.	
Slovak Republic	The Labour Office shall remove a jobseeker from the register of jobseekers from the date of detection of non-cooperation with the office, which includes refusal of a jobseeker to participate or early termination of participation in ALMPs without serious reasons (with the exception of refusal to participate in education and preparation for the labour market) or premature ending of a jobseeker's participation in an ALMPs instrument before the agreed term, without serious reasons. In case of removal of the jobseeker from the register of jobseekers, the jobseeker loses entitlement to unemployment benefit.	5	The unemployment benefit has already been suspended after the first refusal.	5
Slovenia	If a person refuses to participate in an ALMP or refuses to sign an employment plan, he/she will lose their registration in the records of the unemployed, and they are not any longer eligible for unemployment benefit.	5	The unemployment benefit has already been suspended after the first refusal.	5
Spain	Refusing to participate in an ALMP without justification is considered a serious administrative offence and for the first offence will result in a loss of benefits for three months. Since the amendments passed in July 2012, refusals of unemployment benefits recipients to comply with proving that they are actively looking for employment are considered a minor administrative offence and the first offence will result in a loss of benefit for one month.	2	The unemployment benefit will be suspended for 6 months if the unemployed refuses to participate in an ALMP twice. A third refusal entails the loss of the unemployment benefit. Since the amendments passed in July 2012, a failure to comply with the requirements of the activity commitment is considered a minor administrative offence and repeated refusals will result in a loss of benefit for three months (second refusal), six months (third refusal), or loss of benefit (fourth refusal).	4.5
Sweden	An applicant will be warned if she/he without a valid reason mismanages his or her job search. An applicant is considered to mismanage his or her job search if she/he, for example, doesn't contact or visit the PES as agreed. If an applicant who receives unemployment benefits refuses to participate in ALMPs she/he is considered to prolong the period of unemployment and she/he will be suspended from benefits for 5 benefit days.	1	If an applicant mismanages his or her job search (without a valid reason) for a second time within the same benefit period s/he is suspended from benefit for 1 benefit day, a third time for 5 benefit days, a fourth time for 10 benefit days. If it is repeated a fifth time within the same benefit period s/he needs to qualify for a new benefit period (fulfil the work requirement) to be entitled to unemployment benefit again. If an applicant prolongs unemployment (without a valid reason), for example by refusing a referral to an ALMP, a second time within the same benefit period s/he is suspended from benefit for 10 benefit days, a third time for 45 benefit days. If it is repeated a fourth time within the same benefit period s/he needs to qualify for a new benefit period (fulfil the work requirement) to be entitled to unemployment benefit again.	3
Switzerland	An insured person who, without reasonable cause, does not go to	1.5	Repeated refusal to participate in ALMPs over a two-year period	4

Country	First refusal *(item 10)*		Subsequent refusals *(item 11)*	
	Description	Score 2014	Description	Score 2014
	a consultation will receive a sanction of 5-8 days for the first failure. A person who fails to participate in an ALMP, interrupts participation without cause, or prevents through misconduct to achieve the aim of the programme will get a sanction depending on the duration of the ALMP. The maximum sanction is 60 days.		demonstrate that the unemployed is not available for work. This can result in an increase in the length of suspension of his/her unemployment benefits and subsequently in full suspension of benefits if the unemployed is sanctioned several times for the same reason. The full suspesnion applies after the second or third refusal, depending on the attitude of the unemployed.	
Turkey	If the unemployed refused to attend to a counselling interview without any justified reason insurance is suspended until he or she attends to the interview. If the unemployed refused to attend to ALMPs without any justified reason insurance is suspended until he or she attends to the ALMP.	1	The sanction is the same for every failure/refusal to attend ALMPs or counselling interviews.	1
United Kingdom	When a claimant of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) refuses a place on a training scheme or employment programme, without good reason, a low level sanction of 4 weeks will apply for a 1st failure. Under Universal Credit (UC) the period of a low level sanction is open-ended until they meet the compliance requirement, followed by a fixed period of 7 days for a first failure. When a JSA or UC claimant refuses to undertake Mandatory Work Activity without good reason a high level sanction of 13 weeks will apply for a 1st failure.	2	When a claimant of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) refuses a place on a training scheme or employment programme, without good reason, for a second time a sanction of 13 weeks applies, as for all subsequent refusals. Under Universal Credit (UC) the period the sanction for such failures is open-ended until the claimant meets the compliance requirement, followed by a fixed period of 14 days for the second failure and 28 days for the third failure. When a JSA or UC claimant refuses to undertake Mandatory Work Activity without good reason for a second or third time a high level sanction of 26 weeks will apply for the 2nd failure and 156 for a third failure.	3
United States	Participation that is directed by the state PES is required. Failure to participate will result in a sanction. Each state determines the sanction.	1	Participation that is directed by the state PES is required. Failure to participate will result in a sanction. Each state determines the sanction.	1

Note: See notes * and ** to p. 17.

ANNEX B: CHANGE IN SCORES 2011 TO 2014

Table B1. **Unemployment benefit eligibility indicator scores in 2011 and 2014**

	Availability requirements and suitable work criteria								**Job-search requirements and monitoring**				**Sanctions for…**									
	Availability for work during participation in ALMPs		Demands on occupational mobility		Demands on geographical mobility		Other valid reasons for refusing job offers		Frequency of job search reporting		Documentation of job-search		voluntary unemployment		first refused job offers		repeated refusal of job offers		first refusals/ failures of ALMPs/PES intervention		repeated refusals/ failures of ALMPs/PES intervention	
	Item 1		**Item 2**		**Item 3**		**Item 4**		**Item 5**		**Item 6**		**Item 7**		**Item 8**		**Item 9**		**Item 10**		**Item 11**	
Country	2011	2014	2011	2014	2011	2014	2011	2014	2011	2014	2011	2014	2011	2014	2011	2014	2011	2014	2011	2014	2011	2014
Australia	5	5	5	5	3	3	3	3	5	5	3	3	2	2	1.5	1.5	2	2	1	1	2	2
Austria	4	4	3	3	2	2	3	3	4	4	4	4	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Belgium	2	2	2	3	3	3	1	1	2	2	4	4	2	2	3	3	5	5	4	4	5	5
Bulgaria	1	1	2	2	2	2	5	5	3	3	2	2	1	1	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Canada	1	1	4	4	2	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	5	5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Chile	4	4	1	1	2	2	5	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Croatia	1	2	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	1	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Cyprus	3	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	3	3	1	1	3	3
Czech Republic	4	4	4	4	5	5	3	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Denmark	5	5	5	5	3.5	3.5	3	3	4	4	4	4	1	1	1	1	4.5	4.5	1	1	4.5	4.5
Estonia	5	5	3	3	2	2	5	5	4	4	4	4	5	5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5
Finland	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	1	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	2	4.5	4.5	2	2	4.5	4.5
France	4	4	3	3	1.5	1.5	5	5	4	4	3	3	4	4	1	1	3	3	1	1	3	3
Germany	5	5	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	1	1	2.5	2.5	1	1	2.5	2.5
Greece	1	2	1	1	3	3	3	5	1	1	1	1	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Hungary	1	1	5	5	3	3	5	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Iceland	1	1	3	3	5	5	5	5	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	2	2	4	4
Ireland	2	2	5	5	1	1	5	5	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	5	5	1	1	3.5	3.5
Israel	1	1	4	4	4	4	5	5	1	1	1	1	3	3	4	4	4	4	1	1	1	1
Italy	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	1	1	1	1	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Japan	4	4	5	5	1	1	1	1	4	4	4	4	3	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Korea	1	1	1	1	5	5	3	3	4	4	4	4	5	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

	Availability requirements and suitable work criteria								Job-search requirements and monitoring				Sanctions for…									
	Availability for work during participation in ALMPs		Demands on occupational mobility		Demands on geographical mobility		Other valid reasons for refusing job offers		Frequency of job search reporting		Documentation of job-search		voluntary unemployment		first refused job offers		repeated refusal of job offers		first refusals/ failures of ALMPs/PES intervention		repeated refusals/ failures of ALMPs/PES intervention	
	Item 1		**Item 2**		**Item 3**		**Item 4**		**Item 5**		**Item 6**		**Item 7**		**Item 8**		**Item 9**		**Item 10**		**Item 11**	
Country	2011	2014	2011	2014	2011	2014	2011	2014	2011	2014	2011	2014	2011	2014	2011	2014	2011	2014	2011	2014	2011	2014
Latvia	2	2	1	3	2	2.5	3	3	4	4	3	4	2	2	3	3	5	5	5	5	5	5
Lithuania	1	1	1	1	3	3	5	5	4	4	3	3	1	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Luxembourg	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Malta	5	5	2	3	4	4	5	5	4	4	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Netherlands	5	5	2	2	2.5	2.5	5	5	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	1	1	1	1
New Zealand	5	5	5	5	2	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	1	2	3	3	1	1	3	3
Norway	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	1.5	1.5	3	3
Poland	4	4	5	5	3	3	5	5	1	1	1	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Portugal	1	1	4	4	3	3	5	5	5	5	3	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Romania	5	5	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	1	1	5	5	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Slovak Republic	3	3	4	4	1	1	3	3	3	3	4	4	1	1	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Slovenia	3	3	3	3	3	3	5	5	3	3	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Spain	1	1	2	2	2	2	5	5	1	1	2	2	5	5	3	3	4.5	4.5	2	2	4.5	4.5
Sweden	5	5	4	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	1	1	3	3	1	1	3	3
Switzerland	5	5	4	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	4	4	1.5	1.5	4	4
Turkey	4	4	1	1	2	2	3	3	1	1	1	1	5	5	5	5	5	5	1	1	1	1
United Kingdom	3	5	3	3	2.5	3	3	3	5	5	3.5	3.5	3	3	3	3	3	4.5	1	2	3	3
United States	3	3	3	3	2	2	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	1	1	1	1

Note: See notes * and ** to p. 17.

ANNEX C: ENFORCEMENT OF THE AVAILABILITY FOR WORK CRITERION

Table C1. **The availability for work criterion**

Application through rules on contactability and earliest possible start dates

Country	Contactability rules	Availability to start work (earliest possible start date)	Exceptions
Australia	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service.	Jobseekers should be immediately available to take up work or be able to commence suitable employment within a reasonable timeframe.	Did not respond
Austria	Immediately, the following day or individual agreement	The unemployed must be able to take up employment immediately.	Case-by-case decisions may allow for longer delays, e.g. due to sickness.
Belgium	Jobseekers have to react to invitations for interviews at the ONEM, regional employment service or prospective employers. Otherwise, other communication channels, such as text messages or email are not binding. Failure to attend the interview at the ONEM, regional employment service or employer may result (depending on the case) in a follow-up letter with a new date by registered post. Not reacting to the follow-up letter will result in a disqualification from benefits.	Once jobseekers have been granted unemployment benefits, they must be available to take up suitable employment throughout the unemployment spell, unless they are expected from this rule (unemployed aged 60 or older). Legislation or national PES procedures, however, do not specify rules regarding the earliest possible start date.	Social and family problems, education or training, and certain activities abroad may result in a temporary suspension from these obligations.
Bulgaria	Unemployed individuals have to confirm their status during appointments at the Labour Office, but otherwise legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service	Registered jobseekers must be ready to take up a job within a fortnight after being notified by the Labour Office Directorate.	Did not respond
Canada	Claimants must be available every day	Claimants must be available every day	

Country	Contactability rules	Availability to start work (earliest possible start date)	Exceptions
Chile	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service.	The jobseeker should be always available for a job.	There are no regulations regarding longer delays. The starting date and particular circumstances must be agreed between the employer and the worker.
Croatia	Jobseeker needs to be available for PES activities and also for the employment immediately.	Jobseeker needs to be available for PES activities and also for the employment immediately. The Act and the Regulation do not specifically state availability to start work (by days or hours) within a specified period, but it means, in accordance with the Act and the Regulation, that the person is prepared to start work immediately.	
Cyprus	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service.	The jobseeker must be available to start a job immediately.	Delays are allowed in particular circumstances or if it is agreed otherwise between the employer and the jobseeker (when the jobseeker needs to find alternative care for a child or close relative etc.)
Czech Republic	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service, apart from those for direct referrals (the jobseekers have to react to a job offer within 3 working days of delivery or receipt of the official document).	The jobseeker must be prepared to start work at any time.	Longer delays are not allowed. The date of entry into employment depends on requirements of employers.
Denmark	Jobseeker must be able to respond to a phone call or electronics communication the day after the person has received notice from the PES.	Jobseeker must be able to start work the day after the person has received notice from the PES.	Did not respond
Estonia	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service.	An unemployed person must be ready to promptly commence work.	Longer delays are allowed in particular circumstances and can be agreed in the Individual Action Plan.
Finland	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service.	Legislation does not specify rules regarding the earliest possible start date. In practice the employment service may require jobseekers to start work, for example, within a few hours, if necessary.	Longer delays are not allowed. Under the Act on Unemployment Security, jobseekers must reserve a reasonable amount of time to make childcare arrangements as well as eliminate any problems with getting to work and other, similar obstacles.
France	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service.	Legislation does not specify rules regarding the earliest possible start date.	Does not apply
Germany	Unemployed persons must ensure that they are contactable by their employment office every working day.	Unemployed persons must be able to take up employment immediately.	Longer delays are not allowed. As a rule, the unemployed person's availability is a prerequisite for drawing unemployment benefit.[a]

Country	Contactability rules	Availability to start work (earliest possible start date)	Exceptions
Greece	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service.	Legislation does not specify rules regarding the earliest possible start date.	Does not apply
Hungary	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service.	The jobseeker has to be available to start work within 30 days.	Special personal circumstances can be evaluated within the framework of application for extension.
Iceland	The jobseeker must answer without any delay	Jobseekers have to be ready to start work immediately. However, for the first four weeks, jobseekers are free to deny job offers without consequences.	Not generally, but in particular circumstances there can be a valid reason why the jobseeker is not able to accept this particular job offer.
Ireland	In the main the unemployed person should be able to respond to a phone call immediately.	Legislation does not specify rules regarding the earliest possible start date. In practice, jobseekers must be available within a day or a few days.	Longer delays may be accepted for particular reasons.
Israel	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service.	The jobseeker must be available to start work immediately.	
Italy	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service.	Legislation does not specify rules regarding the earliest possible start date.	Does not apply
Japan	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service.	Jobseekers are required to be able to respond immediately to a job-offer introduced by PES office and be available at all times.	Longer delays are possible for reasons such as pregnancy, childbirth, child-rearing, nursing care for a close relative, sickness and injury.
Korea	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service.	Regulations or PES guidelines do not specify rules regarding the earliest possible start date.	Does not apply
Latvia	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service.	The unemployed person has to be ready to accept a work offer and start working without delay.	Individual factors, such as health conditions and constraints to start working that do not depend on the will of the unemployed (care of the child, if child care service is not provided by municipality; and care of disabled person) are taken into account.

Country	Contactability rules	Availability to start work (earliest possible start date)	Exceptions
Lithuania	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service, apart from those for direct referrals (jobseekers need to report back within 3 working days).	There are no specific time limits set in the legislation regarding the earliest possible start date. If employer decides that an unemployed is a suitable candidate for a position, the starting date of the work depends on the agreement between employer and unemployed (future employee).	Does not apply
Luxembourg	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service.	Legislation does not specify rules regarding the earliest possible start date. In practice the jobseekers have to be available and must be able to accept a new work situation without delay.	Does not apply
Malta	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service.	Registered unemployed should be available for employment immediately.	Longer delays are allowed if for instance a person needs to make care arrangements for children or the elderly. However, these are informal decisions which are decided between the Employment Advisor and the client.
Netherlands	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service.	Legislation does not specify rules regarding the earliest possible start date. In practice the jobseekers have to be available and must be able to accept a new work situation without delay.	An unemployed person can be temporarily relieved of the obligations to seek for a job. This is possible for example when a person has to take care of a close relative who is (very) ill.
New Zealand	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service. Requirements are individually agreed between the unemployed and caseworker.	Unemployment benefit recipients must start work within a reasonable time-frame.	
Norway	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service. Requirements are individually agreed between the unemployed and caseworker.	Legislation does not specify rules regarding the earliest possible start date. In practice the jobseekers have to be available within a reasonable timeframe, which is subjective and based on individual factors.	Does not apply
Poland	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service. Requirements are individually agreed between the unemployed and the labour office.	The person registered as the unemployed must be able and ready to take up employment. It means that in case the person is provided with the appropriate job offer, she/he must be able to take it up right away.	The labour office takes into consideration individual situation of the unemployed (e.g. childcare), yet this cannot result in a refusal to take an appropriate job offer or other form of PES assistance, nor lead to significant postponing of taking up work or vocational training. Under certain circumstances the costs of childcare can be reimbursed.
Portugal	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service,	One of the requirements to be classified as unemployed is to be immediately available for work. “Immediately available” is	When the unemployed are in training or employment measures that do not result in direct integration in the labour market, they are classified as "occupied",

Country	Contactability rules	Availability to start work (earliest possible start date)	Exceptions
	however, jobseekers have the duty of fortnightly presentation and provide proof at the job centre.	understood as the candidate's commitment to accept a job within 15 days from the time of registration. After that period, the acceptance of the job has to be immediate.	because the availability is not immediate. The length of such periods is individually agreed between the PES and the jobseeker. Subject to a 30 day notice period, UB recipients can be exempted from the availability requirements for a maximum of 30 days per annum.
Romania	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service.	Legislation does not specify rules regarding the earliest possible start date.	Does not apply
Slovak Republic	Jobseekers are obliged to be at disposal to the PES within three working days from the date of the invitation/call by the PES.	Jobseekers are obliged to be at disposal to the Office within three working days from the date of the invitation/call by the Office.	If the jobseeker supplies the certificate of temporary incapacity for work he shall not be obliged to be at disposal to the PES during the period of incapacity.
Slovenia	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service. Requirements are individually agreed between the unemployed and the PES.	Legislation or PES internal acts do not specify rules regarding the earliest possible start date.	Exemption from active job search may be justified in case of incapacity for work of the jobseeker or the need to care for a family member (sick-leave certificates are required) or other justified reasons that do not allow for a prior agreement. Other special situations (e.g. duties in the reserve police forces, training and education as part of EU projects) may also allow for an exemption.
Spain	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service. Requirements are individually agreed between the unemployed and the PES.	Legislation does not specify rules regarding the earliest possible start date. In practice, jobseekers are available to work at short notice.	The PES in the autonomous regions, which are responsible for the management of active employment policies, set up the particular circumstances to apply the availability requirements.
Sweden	A jobseeker who applies for unemployment benefits has to report his/hers address to the PES and be contactable. A change of address has to be reported immediately.	A jobseeker must be available to start work immediately.	To be considered as available to start work, the jobseeker has to be fit for work and not prevented from undertaking work. If the jobseeker has difficulties in finding alternative care for a child she/he needs to undertake measures to find an alternative care for the child within reasonable time.
Switzerland	Jobseekers usually need to ensure that they can be reached within a day. They will be contacted preferably by mail or by phone.	An insured person must be ready to begin a suitable job or ALMP measure immediately. UI recipients with intermediate income (less than the UI amount) must be willing to interrupt the job as soon as possible to take up a suitable job, which terminates the receipt of unemployment benefits.[b]	There are no exceptions to the rules regarding contactability and availability for work. They apply equally to all insured persons; i.e. a person with childcare responsibilities or those helping a family member must meet the same requirements of availability than any other insured.

Country	Contactability rules	Availability to start work (earliest possible start date)	Exceptions
Turkey	Legislation does not specify contactability rules or response times to react to PES communication. Jobseekers must answer to PES communications sent by registered mail. Failure to answer without justified reason results in UI suspension until the circumstances end.	Legislation does not specify rules regarding the earliest possible start date.	Delays may be allowed in case of unexpected events (natural disasters, death of close relative etc.).
United Kingdom	Claimants of Jobseeker's Allowance and claimants in the all work-related requirement group of Universal Credit must be willing to attend a job interview immediately.	Claimants of Jobseeker's Allowance and claimants in the all work-related requirement group of Universal Credit must be willing and able to take up employment immediately.	There are certain exceptions to requirement to be immediately available for employment for persons under a contract of service, those undertaking voluntary work, persons with caring responsibilities, persons on sick leave and persons recently released from prison.[c]
United States	Legislation does not specify rules regarding contactability or response times to react to communication from the employment service. Requirements are established in a written contact notice or call by the PES.	Legislation does not specify rules regarding the earliest possible start date. Operational PES guidelines are established by each state that address specific time frame requirements.	Does not apply

Note: See notes * and ** to p. 17.

a. In Germany, for unemployed persons who are raising children, this means that drawing unemployment benefit is possible only when arrangements have been made to ensure alternative care for the children in the event that the unemployed person receives a job offer.

b. UI recipients with intermediate income (less than the UI amount) must be willing to interrupt the job as soon as possible to take up a suitable job, which terminates the receipt of unemployment benefits. Intermediate income is a gain that the insured person earns from employment or self-employment whilst receiving unemployment benefits, the amount of the gain being less than the unemployment benefit entitlement. The insured person who earns an intermediate income has the right to be compensated for the loss of income, i.e. the difference between the income earned from employment or self-employment and the amount of unemployment benefits.

C. In the United Kingdom, persons under a contract of service must be willing and able to take up employment immediately following the statutory or contract period notice they are required to give their employer to end the contract of employment and attend a job interview within 48 hours' notice. Those undertaking voluntary work must be willing and able to take up employment on being given one weeks' notice and attend a job interview within 48 hours' notice. Persons with caring responsibilities must be willing and able to take up employment of at least 16 hours a week on being given one months' notice and attend a job interview within 48 hours' notice. Those caring for a child, if necessary, must be willing and able to take up employment of at least 16 hours per week on being given 28 days' notice; and attend a job interview within 1 week. This is provided they are willing to comply within those periods of notice. Those who are signed off sick (i.e. have a fit note from their doctor) will not be required to take up a new job until their fit note expires. Persons who have recently left prison will not be required to take up work within the first seven days of release.

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