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Press release

Unemployment insurance reintegration measures must be closer to labour market

Bern, 22 September 2015 – The Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO) has audited professional reintegration measures. These measures must be organised more in the mainstream labour market. Temporary employment programmes must be reserved for people who are likely to face long-term unemployment.

In 2013, temporary employment programmes and internships took in close to 34,800 jobseekers, i.e. one fifth of registered unemployed persons. The total cost of these reintegration measures for unemployment insurance was almost CHF 190 million.

The SFAO carried out an audit of both of these reintegration measures – internships and temporary employment programmes – out of the eleven mechanisms which unemployment insurance has at its disposal. This audit focused on the implementation and the supervision of these measures at the federal level and in eight cantons (Aargau, Bern, Geneva, Lucerne, Schwyz, St. Gallen, Ticino and Valais). The SFAO completed its investigation by conducting surveys of the beneficiaries of reintegration measures, organisers and host institutions.

Two thirds of the participants have found work again, only half found the temporary employment programme useful

65% of the participants found work after their temporary employment programme, as opposed to 90% of interns. These reintegration figures are not directly comparable. By contrast, participant assessments of the programmes revealed that 80% of the interns appreciated this measure while two thirds of the participants in the cantons of Bern, Geneva and Aargau found the temporary employment programmes useful. In the other cantons, between a half and one third gave a positive answer.

Being close to the labour market is an important factor. Internships and some temporary employment programmes occur in the mainstream labour market. The

remaining temporary employment programmes occur in workshops funded publicly. The closer the reintegration measures are to the labour market, the better the experience gained by the people involved.

The SFAO concludes that the internships and temporary employment programmes in the labour market must be implemented more often. Workshops should be used with more restraint. They are admittedly justified but they are also more costly. More focus is required on people who are likely to be unemployed in the longer term.

Badly presented objectives and missing certificates

All too often, the participants in a temporary employment programme stated that they were not aware of the objectives of the programme. The SFAO also found that too many jobseekers did not receive a written certificate at the end of their temporary employment programme. These aspects must be improved during discussions with the advisers.

These issues must be tackled by the cantons and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO). Moreover, the SFAO has found that there is a lack of supervision over mainstream labour market placement which should be observed more systematically to ensure it does not compete with the private sector.

Further details

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The audit report is available on the SFAO's website: www.cdf.admin.ch