Author's response to reviews

Title: Duration of unemployment and depression: a cross-sectional survey in Lithuania

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Answers to the Reviewers reports on the article

“Duration of unemployment and depression: a cross-sectional survey in Lithuania”

To the Editor

Our institution has rather old traditions in the investigation health inequalities in Lithuania. However, unemployment did not attract the scientists until now. Therefore, this study is the first in this field in Lithuania. In this case, the comments and insights of such well known specialists had invaluable benefit not only for this paper, but for our further scientific experience as well. Using new methodology, as it was proposed by Heimo Viinamaki, we made some new calculations and changed some results. Some modifications were made in the Methodology and Discussion sections. Tables were modified as well.

We hope that with your and reviewers help this paper became more scientific sound and appropriate to be published in your journal.

We would like to present changes (highlighted in red) we made based on the recommendations.

Reviewer Heimo Viinamaki

Minor essential revisions:
1. The reference from Nordic Journal of psychiatry 2005;59:486-491 was added to the Background section.

2. We have changed the depression cut-off point according to your recommendations. All calculations were performed using higher BDI (14/15) cut of point. According to new calculations, Table 3 and logistic regression analysis, presented in Table 4, as well as results description were changed.

3. We modified the Discussion section a little bit, though we would like to leave the discussion on the main results after the methodological issues of the study are discussed.

Reviewer Mel Bartley

Major compulsory revisions:
1. The more detailed description of sample calculation and composition was added to the Methods section.

2. Some numbers regarding the distribution of unemployed according to age and gender in Kaunas general unemployed population were added. This information is from official Labor Market Office data base. These numbers are presented in Discussion section in pages 9 and 10.

3. Some modifications were made regarding “culture of poverty”.
4. Expression “social class” was changed to “social category”.

5. There are few papers on smoking and binge drinking prevalence changes during the period of unemployment increase in Lithuania. Results from these studies showed, that smoking and drinking increased among adolescents and young adults (especially women). The most relevant reference in English: 

Reviewer Eunice Rodriguez

Major compulsory revisions:
1. The Methods section was extended and clarified.

2. Whereas we estimated that short-term unemployed were younger, more educated and resided in urban areas in comparison with the long-term unemployed respondents, we performed logistic regression analysis (Table 4) in order to estimate impact of different factors independently of each other on depression separately for short-term, long-term and for all the unemployed. Among the short-term unemployed, the risk of depression increased significantly when the person was female, had an older age and had experienced more episodes of unemployment. Among the long-term unemployed, an older age was the risk factor for development of depression. However, higher education and income were the factors that significantly decreased the risk of developing depression for short-term as well as for long-term unemployed.

We also added some evidence from the logistic regression analysis to the conclusions.