Reviewer's report

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

Version: 1 Date: 11 April 2006

Reviewer: Eunice Rodriguez

Reviewer's report:

General
This study could make a good contribution to the existing literature as a descriptive study of the situation in Lithuania, because there are no previous studies documenting the association between unemployment and depression in that country. This study does not add much to the already well established evidence of association between unemployment and depression. It is cross-sectional and therefore it does not contribute to clarify the direction of the association.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1) Clarification of the analytical methods—which now are just described in one paragraph at the end of the methods section.

2) In the results section (page 8), the authors claim that “the long-term unemployed express more depression symptoms than do the short-term unemployed”. Yet that conclusion is simply based on a correlation analysis, but no regression analysis is performed to see if that correlation disappears once we take into consideration the different socio-demographic characteristics of both groups (e.g., different age, education, levels etc.)

In Table 1 the authors indicate that “the short-term unemployed were younger, more educated and reside in urban areas in comparison with the long-term unemployed respondents”. Those reasons could also account for the observed differences in depression outcomes and need to be explored. Without this basic step the results and discussion sections become just speculation.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests