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## A study on the impact of work motivation and job search behavior on reemployment among unemployed aged 45 and older

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# Introduction

Unemployment among older adults (45+) is a growing problem. Due to the raising of the retirement age persons are obliged to work longer. However, unemployment rates are the highest for persons aged 45 to 65 years and their chances on reemployment are much weaker compared to younger persons. Therefore, it is important to understand more about the factors influencing reemployment within this specific age group.
In other samples of unemployed persons, job search behavior was found to be related to reemployment or job attainment. Following the ideas of Blau (1994) we distinguish preparatory and active job search activities. *Preparatory* job search activities refer to the planning phase (enrolling in an employment agency) and *active* job search activities refer to the job search and choice phase (applying for a job).
According to Self Determination Theory motivation can range from autonomous (intrinsic) to more controlled (extrinsic). Previous studies showed that money was the most important incentive to work, followed by more intrinsic motives like social contacts and feeling useful.
Job search behavior and work motivation are important factors in finding employment, but they were never investigated within a population of older unemployed persons.

## Research question

What is the relation between work motivation, job search behavior and reemployment at one-year follow-up within a population of unemployed persons aged 45 and older?

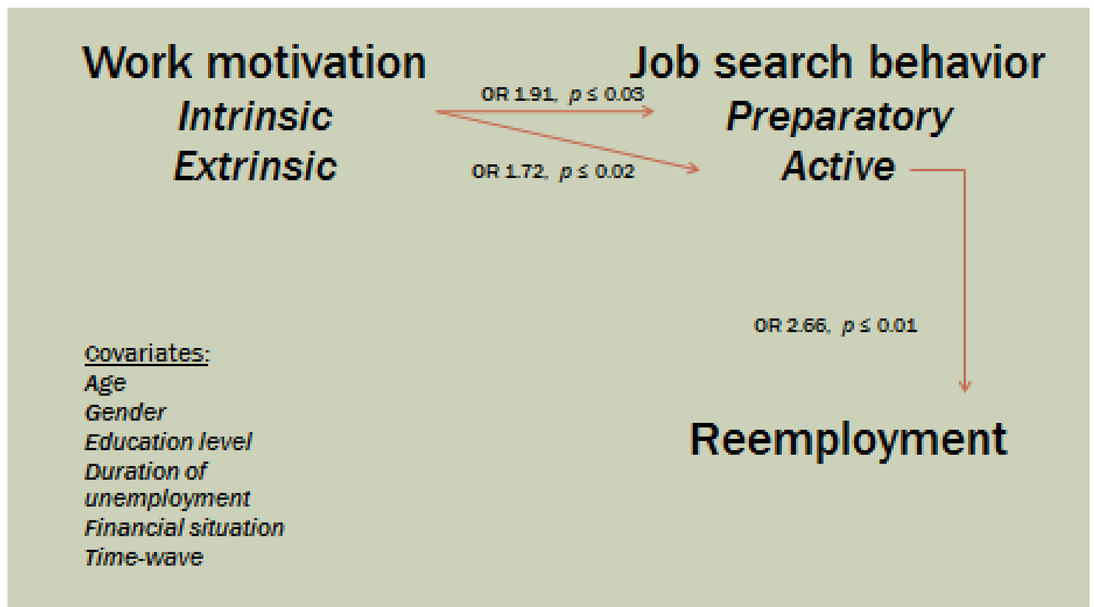
## Method

In a prospective cohort study, we investigated a sample of 502 unemployed Dutch citizens aged 45-64 years that completed online questionnaires within the longitudinal Study on Transitions in Employment, Ability and Motivation (STREAM).
Reemployment was assessed at one-year follow-up.

### Statistical analyses

Logistic regression analyses were conducted for answering the research question, using IBM SPSS Statistics 20.
All analyses were adjusted for *age*, *gender*, *education level*, *duration of unemployment*, *financial situation* and *time-wave*.

## RESULTS




## Conclusion

Within this specific sample of unemployed persons aged 45-64 years, intrinsic motivation to work was predicting preparatory and active job search behavior and active job search behavior was important for getting reemployed. This study suggests that it is important to focus on job search strategies and not so much on financial incentives in supporting older unemployed to re-enter the labour market.

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