

communiqué



European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

Work Programme 2003



A company survey on time, an Observatory on Working Conditions, a network of national liaison centres and a monitoring tool for the quality of life for Europeans will dominate the third year of the current four-year work programme of the Foundation.

The Administrative Board of the Foundation unanimously approved the work programme for 2003 on 25 October last. The work programme acts as a guide for what will be produced and achieved at the Foundation in the coming year.

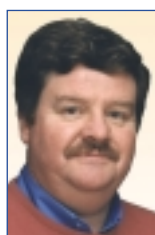


'In 2003 we will see the results of the reorganisation of our organisation,' announced **Raymond-Pierre Bodin**, Director of the Foundation. 'Despite budgetary constraints and limited human resources, we stay focused on achieving our goals.'

Quality of life for Europeans

With the conceptual framework on living conditions and quality of life in place, the next step in implementing the strategy will go

ahead in 2003. The statistical data already collected will be analysed as well as greatly enhanced with new information from an interview-based questionnaire on living conditions and the quality of life in the EU Member States and the candidate countries.



'The living conditions monitoring strategy will cover all 28 countries,' says **Robert Anderson**, research coordinator of the Living Conditions team. 'We are looking forward to results from the survey becoming available and beginning analysis of the data which will be the main focus in 2003.'

The data collected through the monitoring activities will also be used to support strategic research activities of the Living Conditions area.

Strategic research

Studies will be conducted on the supply of quality jobs in care of children and older people living at home, and strategies to combat social exclusion and unemployment in disadvantaged groups. Results from the illness

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The challenges of enlargement

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Barriers remain in poverty and social exclusion

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Quality of life central to the Foundation's work

The Foundation will focus on employment, economic resources, family life, community life, health and educational attainment in a survey on the 'quality of life of Europeans' covering 28 countries in 2003.

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EMCC web portal is open for business

The Foundation's European Monitoring Centre on Change (EMCC) has launched an Internet portal which aims to provide European institutions, public authorities, social partners and companies with the data and information they need to anticipate and manage change.

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The Brussels Liaison Office one year on

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and inclusion project will disseminated, hence contributing to the 2003 Year of People with Disabilities. The project on a new organisation of time over working life will be further developed and linked to the Foundation's new transversal project on the company-based survey of time.

The Observatory on Working Conditions



The establishment of an Observatory on Working Conditions – which it is envisaged will operate as an online monitoring tool to evaluate the quality of work and employment – is the focus for work of the Working Conditions section in 2003.

‘The aim of the observatory,’ affirms **Pascal Paoli**, research coordinator of the section, ‘is to make information from the working conditions surveys and other research in the area of quality of work and employment over the past twelve years both more available and more visual to the Foundation’s audiences.’

In addition, data emanating from the sectoral surveys on working conditions in the road transport and hotels and restaurants sectors, which were completed in 2002, will contribute to conferences and other debates during 2003.

‘Negotiating the conditions of flexibility’, ‘Review on the working poor’ and ‘Review on harassment/violence in the workplace’ comprise strategic research projects and literature reviews which will be further developed and debated during the coming year.

Expanding EIRO



Coinciding with record levels of user sessions for the web-based European Industrial Relations Observatory – showing an increase of over 200% between 2001 and 2002 – the EIRO network will be expanded to cover all the candidate countries in 2003.

‘The EIRO cross-country comparisons will be further developed to cover topics on the EU political agenda,’ declared **Stavroula Demetriades**, research coordinator of the Industrial Relations

section. ‘These include topics such as collective bargaining on occupational pensions and on childcare and parental leave, and the regulation of employee Internet use.’

The strategic research project on financial participation will focus on new forms of financial participation, including SMEs.

Company survey on time



Time issues are in focus after recent developments such as working time reductions and increased working time flexibility. Previous research in this area will be extended by investigation through a

company-based survey in 2003, involving all areas of the Foundation.

‘Our intention is to facilitate analysis of time arrangements in relation to policies at sectoral, national and European level,’ says **David Foden**, research manager in the Industrial Relations team. ‘The survey should provide a representative overview of corporate time policies and their implementation, drawing on the perspectives of both company management and worker representatives.’

European monitoring centre on change (EMCC)



In the wake of the launch of the EMCC portal on the Internet in November 2002, the EMCC team will analyse material specially developed for the portal in 2003. Two specific projects will look

at the role of the consumer in driving industrial change in the automotive sector, and the impact of globalisation on the textile sector.

‘The networking part of EMCC, which intends to bring together people to share good practice experience of change management,’ says **Jacques Terrenoire**, EMCC project manager, ‘will get a boost through our two workshops on financial markets and information and communication technology which were held in December 2002.’

Transversal themes

Following the publication in 2002 of three Foundation papers, on *Quality of work and*

employment, *Access to employment for vulnerable groups* and *Quality of women’s work and employment in 2002*, a further three papers are in the pipeline for 2003. These will cover topics around three of the Foundation’s transversal themes: ‘managing diversity’, ‘supporting social inclusion’ and ‘examining the changing use of time’.

Developmental activities

To match expected future demand, this part of the Foundation work programme is intended to identify and explore important issues which could contribute to the core areas of work. The aim is that these projects will assist in the preparation of the Foundation’s next four-year work programme 2005-2008.

For 2003, the results of the first phase of the developmental project on ‘Working conditions, living conditions and industrial relations in the knowledge society’ will feed into the core working areas and the EMCC to see in what ways these could be developed further.

A workshop to explore the issues identified during the initial phase of the developmental activity on ‘Mobility and migration into the EU: social and employment impacts’ will be held during the first half of the year.

Information and communication



The information and communication team will be reinforced in 2003 with the establishment of a network of national liaison centres, whose task is to identify issues in the national debates which are

important to the work of the Foundation, and to help in the dissemination of information.

‘Following the success of the first Foundation Forum in August 2002,’ declared **Elisabeth Lagerlöf**, head of information and communication, ‘debates in selected Member States will be organised to siphon the most current social issues, which will form the subject of discussion at the second Foundation Forum in 2004.’

The Foundation’s work programme 2003 can be downloaded from the Foundation website at www.eurofound.eu.int/about/work.htm.

The challenges of enlargement

Marjaana Valkonen, elected chair of the Foundation's Administrative Board on 25 October 2002, considers the Foundation well prepared to meet the challenges in its day-to-day work following enlargement. It will not be easy, she acknowledges, at a time when there is a growing gap between the Foundation's already stretched resources and growing demand from stakeholders and the public.

The work of the Foundation has become more visible during the past couple of years, which is of benefit to all of the Foundation's stakeholders, according to **Marjaana Valkonen**, who is head of the international department at



Marjaana Valkonen, elected chair of the Foundation's Administrative Board on 25 October 2002

SAK, Finland's largest trade union with 1.1 million members. She singles out as being especially valuable the working conditions surveys and information from the European Industrial Relations Observatory (EIRO). She also points to the great expectations arising from the newly established European Monitoring Centre on Change (EMCC).

Ms Valkonen claims that the Foundation's research and results are deemed very useful, not only in shedding light in general on developments regarding living and working conditions, and industrial relations, but also in providing a solid, objective base of knowledge and advice for policy-makers in the socio-economic field at EU-level. According to her, the Foundation's Brussels Liaison Office has an important role to play in this process.

'The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) continually refers to the Foundation in its work, and it remains highly committed to the future development of the Foundation, as does the Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe (UNICE)', affirms Ms Valkonen. 'However, the work

of the Foundation is not particularly known nor used at national level, which is something I personally wish to change. To this end, I hope that the proposed National Liaison Centres (NLCs) will play an important role, as information facilitators.'

Ms Valkonen would like to see the roles of the social partners in the candidate countries being put on a formal basis in order to facilitate the social dialogue, most importantly at EU-level. She also expressed the opinion that the European Commission proposal to further engage representatives of the civil society to improve representativeness in the candidate countries would not be of direct relevance to the Foundation 'The civil society might be able to add value to the Living Conditions, perhaps,' she stated. 'However, only the social partners should be involved in the Foundation's work on working conditions and industrial relations.'

Maintaining the tripartite structure

Marjaana Valkonen is taking on the mantle of chair of the Foundation's Administrative

Board for the second time. She is keen to be involved in the development of social Europe at this exceptional time. 'Enlargement is very important for us in Finland,' she says, 'and I want to contribute to making it work.'

Regarding the current debate on the future governance of the Foundation, Ms Valkonen says she wishes to see the current tripartite structure maintained. 'Tripartism is the strength of the Foundation and what makes it unique among EU bodies,' she declared. 'While enlargement will increase the size of an Administrative Board to a level which might prove difficult to handle, I will not deviate from maintaining the tripartite structure.'

Members of the Bureau

Chair:	Marjaana Valkonen (workers group)
Vice-chairs:	Marc Boisnel (government group)
	Jan Willem van den Braak (employers group)
	Bernard Jansen (European Commission)

Barriers remain in poverty and social exclusion

Despite measures taken by private and public actors, barriers remain which prevent the achievement of the Lisbon European Council's goals of high levels of employment and social inclusion.

'Foundation research shows that despite measures already taken by private and public actors, many barriers remain to be removed and policies need to be reassessed,' says **Philippe Bronchain**, research manager in the Living Conditions team who participated at the event. 'If not, we risk not realising the Lisbon summit objectives of improved levels of employment and social inclusion.'

The Foundation is active in researching and promoting social inclusion measures and it has contributed to the first

European Round Table Conference on Poverty and Social Exclusion on World Poverty Day on 17 October in Aarhus, Denmark. The European round table conference, which gathered key stakeholders at European level to review and discuss progress to date, was aimed at raising awareness and mobilising policy makers, practitioners and the general public.

Common European objectives to combat poverty and social exclusion were agreed by all EU Member States in June 2001, followed by national action plans.

Further information is available from **Teresa Renehan**, Information Liaison Officer, e-mail: ter@eurofound.eu.int

Quality of life central to the Foundation's work

The concept of quality of life is wider than living conditions, focusing on the scope individuals have to achieve better quality of life by their own means. The Foundation will focus on employment, economic resources, family life, community life, health and educational attainment in a monitoring strategy on the 'quality of life of Europeans', including a 28-country survey.

The Foundation's four-year programme emphasises the need to link the Foundation's assessment of living conditions to the changing nature of employment, work organisation, and working conditions, and to the modernisation of social protection and social welfare services.

"Living conditions" clearly embraces a very wide area of policy interest, with a particular need to map and understand disparities associated with age, gender, health, ethnicity and region,' asserts **Raymond-Pierre Bodin**, Director of the Foundation. 'Quality of life for Europe's population will be at the centre of the Foundation's work.'

Defining 'quality of life'

The concept report identifies the core issues around which the monitoring should focus and examines existing sources of information. It proposes that the conceptual framework should focus broadly on quality of life rather than narrowly on living conditions – quality of life viewed primarily in terms of the scope individuals have to achieve their own ends. It should seek to document resources as well as living conditions, and where possible key contextual characteristics of the various arenas in which people operate.

'An important task is to measure resources and living conditions through objective and descriptive indicators,' says **Robert Anderson**, research coordinator of the Living Conditions section. 'Another aim is to incorporate subjective information, and focus on the relationship between attitudes or assessments and resources and

conditions, and seek to cover societal as well as individual well-being.'

Multi-dimensional monitoring

The report proposes that tracking change over time is at the core of monitoring, but in the case of multi-dimensional entities such as living conditions and quality of life, it is also necessary to probe the relationships between the dimensions, and between them and external factors. This is a more complex task than the regular measurement of trends in key indicators, but an analytical rather than descriptive approach adds value and provides an essential foundation for evidence-based policy.

To that end, a limited number of core areas have been selected according to their centrality to the quality of life theme, their position on the EU policy agenda, and the feasibility of monitoring. These are the domains of employment, economic resources, family life, community life, health, educational attainment, housing, local environment and amenities, transport, public safety and crime, recreation and leisure activities, and cultural identity. The core focus will be on the first six domains.

The second step: a 28 country survey

Based on the framework, a searchable database of statistical indicators, specifically from comparable EU-wide data sources, has been developed. These and other existing data will inform analysis of the situation in both the EU and candidate countries.

However, there is also a need for new information and this will be met in part by a 28 country survey on the quality of life of Europeans which will start in 2003. A questionnaire is currently being developed with specialists from across the EU and candidate countries.

'To assist in developing this work and in the interpretation of results, a network of experts, including representatives from each of the candidate countries, will be consulted,' says **Robert Anderson**.

EXTERNAL EVENTS

Responsible European Management

Brussels, Belgium, 4 December 2002
Organiser: EUROCADRES

Preventing stress at work

Luxembourg, Luxembourg, 5 December 2002
Organiser: Inspection du Travail et des Mines

HSE Chief Scientists Seminar

London, United Kingdom, 9 December 2002
Organiser: Health and Safety Executive

Violence at Work

Paris, France, 19 December 2002
Organiser: ASSO – Entreprise et Personnel

European Forum Against Poverty and Social Exclusion

Rome, Italy, 24 January 2003
Organiser: Italian Democratici di Sinistra/EP PSE Group

PUBLICATIONS

Age and working conditions (summary)

FR:
www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF02106.htm

EIRObserver 6/02

EN: www.eiro.eurofound.eu.int/eirobserver.html

The 'Europeanisation' of industrial relations in a global perspective (literature review)

EN:
www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF02102.htm

Industrial relations in EU Member States and the candidate countries (EIRO report)

EN:
www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0284.htm

Recent trends in employee financial participation in the EU (co-publication with DG Employment)

DE, FR (EN already published)
www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0112.htm

Temps et travail: l'intensité du travail (report) FR:

www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0248.htm

Types of employment and health in the EU (report) EN:

www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0221.htm

Working conditions in candidate countries and the EU (résumé)

EN + candidate country languages:
www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0246.htm

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EMCC web portal is open for business

The Foundation's European Monitoring Centre on Change (EMCC) has just launched an Internet portal which aims to provide European institutions, public authorities, social partners and companies with the data and information they need to anticipate and manage change.

Change is often described and discussed in the abstract, but its impact is all too practical. It affects companies' performances and development, as well as the careers and family lives of employees,' affirms **Janet Smith**, research manager in the EMCC unit, at the launch of the Internet portal in Brussels on 21 November 2002. 'For this reason, anticipating change, identifying the risks and opportunities it presents and knowing how to make best use of both risks and

opportunities are important elements in the successful management of change.'



A pro-active approach to industrial change can be found on www.emcc.eurofound.eu.int

The EMCC is a place for exchanging practice, information and ideas on the management and anticipation of change. The Internet portal aims to provide reliable information on change and change

processes, and encourage and support knowledge sharing and learning.

The EMCC community

EMCC will identify business strategies and policies that support the process of change in socially acceptable ways, through data collection, analysis, investigation and networking. To achieve this, the EMCC team is building an EMCC community involving management and workforce of companies, the social partners and local authorities.

'Managing change requires solid partnerships and commitment,' emphasised **Barbara Gerstenberger** of the EMCC team. 'It is built on dialogue and a common understanding of the challenges and the opportunities change brings.'

To access the EMCC portal, go to www.emcc.eurofound.eu.int.

RESEARCH IN FIGURES

Enlargement and collective bargaining coverage

Despite lower levels of collective bargaining coverage in the candidate countries, an enlarged European Union will still outperform the levels of coverage in Japan and USA.

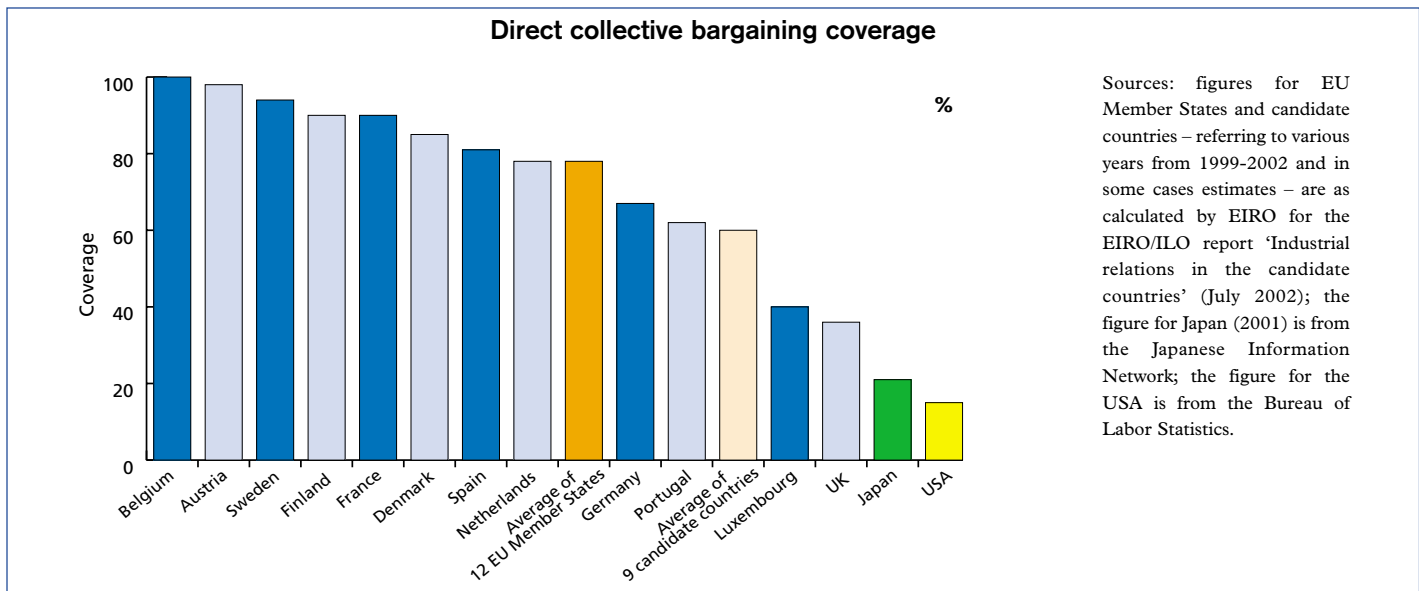
The coverage of collective bargaining – the proportion of workers who have their pay and conditions set, at least to some extent, by collective agreements – varies greatly between the European Union,

Japan and USA. In the EU, the coverage of collective bargaining is generally high, with differences between countries shown in the systems of proper sectoral agreements, of extension of sectoral collective agreements and intersectoral agreements.

Direct bargaining coverage is relatively low in the enterprise-dominated systems of Japan and the USA. The USA is very much divided between the 'union sector',

where collective bargaining determines pay and conditions, and the 'non-union sector', where management decisions govern pay and conditions.

In the candidate countries there is generally a lower level of bargaining coverage than in the current Member States, with an average rate of around 40%. The exceptions to this are Slovenia, Cyprus and Malta (and to a lesser extent Slovakia and Hungary).



The Brussels Liaison Office one year on

The Foundation's Brussels Liaison Office has got off to a flying start by establishing cooperation frameworks with the European Economic and Social Committee and the European Parliament, whereby the Foundation contributes its expertise at the beginning of the legislative work.

As part of its new information and communication strategy aimed at strengthening relations with the EU institutions, social partners, and representatives from the civil society, the Foundation set up a liaison office in Brussels in early 2002. The underlying aim is to facilitate and improve communication with the Foundation's EU-level target audiences. The day-to-day business of the office involves participating at relevant conferences, group and committee meetings, and initiating briefings and meetings with various EU decision makers.

The office is headed by Sylvie Jacquet, a native of France and a committed European.

'The attitude towards the Foundation has changed a lot in Brussels,' says **Sylvie Jacquet** at the end of her first year in the job. 'The image of the Foundation as a "grand old lady" has been replaced by that of a professional and dynamic organisation with a high

level of expertise on issues that are essential for EU citizens.'

Tapping in to the legislative process

The liaison office established two cooperation agreements with the European Economic and Social Committee and the European Parliament in 2002. The agreements aim to establish a process whereby the Foundation contributes its expertise at the beginning of the legislative work processes in both institutions.

The cooperation may take various forms, ranging from specific meetings with rapporteurs to presentations of Foundation results at seminars and study groups. In 2002, the protection of temporary workers and the representation of women among the social partners of the EU were some of the issues to which the Foundation brought its expertise, and which resulted in the Foundation's work being quoted in the final opinions and reports.

On the cards for 2003

In 2003, the Brussels Liaison Office will play an increasing role in advising the experts at the Foundation on emerging issues of importance at EU level.

In 2002 the Foundation's monitoring tools were expanded to include the



Sylvie Jacquet, head of the Foundation's Brussels Liaison Office

candidate countries. During the coming year, the Brussels Liaison Office will set about developing specific activities directed at the future new Member States. The office also envisages a closer and possibly more formal cooperation with the Directorate-General for Enlargement of the European Union.

Finally, the Liaison Office plans to extend cooperation agreements to the European Commission and to the Council, which should ensure that the Foundation's input to the EU legislative process is a rule rather than an exception.

For further information on the Foundation's Brussels Liaison Office, please contact Sylvie Jacquet, e-mail: sja@eurofound.eu.int

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