

# communiqué



European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

Issue 3, March 2006

## DIRECTOR'S DIARY

### Reaching out to the public

European agencies are called upon to play a more prominent role in communicating the idea and vision of Europe: to bridge the gap between the European Union and its citizens. In their daily work, the 24 European agencies deal with issues and tasks that touch on citizens' lives in many different ways. Many of the agencies are currently ensuring that their communication activities contribute to the recent European Commission initiative on *Debating Europe, involving people*.

Communicating with the general public has been central to the Foundation's communication strategy for the past two years. In its series of visits to Member States, the Foundation has to date covered twelve countries and reached some 18 million Europeans via the media. These road shows are an ideal opportunity to present the Foundation's current findings and data in a national perspective, as well as engage in bilateral discussions with social partners and government, NGOs and academics. The Foundation's recently expanded network of National Outreach Centres, information relays in the Member States, also play an important role in getting the message across. The Foundation's combined websites register more than 4.5 million user sessions per year. In 2005, the Foundation organised over 100 events which provided ample opportunities to present its findings and data.

This month, the Foundation will contribute to the debate on healthy ageing at a high-profile event during the Austrian EU Presidency in Vienna on 8 March. At the same time, it will take its road show on quality of life to Luxembourg on 8–9 March and to Bulgaria 20–21 March. Later, the Foundation will launch the findings of the recently completed study on temporary agency work.

**Jorma Karppinen**  
Director

## Laying the foundations for better monitoring

The Foundation launches a European network of observatories for the collection and dissemination of news and analysis, aimed at expanding and improving the existing services for its clientele.

On 1 March the Foundation will put in place a new way of organising information-gathering and analysis, aimed at creating greater synergies between its monitoring tools. The new network of researchers, spanning 30 countries in Europe, will feed information and news on recent developments in industrial relations, quality of work and employment, and restructuring to the Foundation's three monitoring tools: the European Industrial Relations Observatory (EIRO), the European Working Conditions Observatory (EWCO), and the European Restructuring Monitor (ERM). The new network will also play a role in reaching the national policy debate and support the dissemination of the Foundation's knowledge to the general public.

Read more on [www.eurofound.eu.int/press/communiqué/2006/march/newsletter2.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/press/communiqué/2006/march/newsletter2.htm)

## Expanding business activities in manufacturing, retail and transport sectors

The Foundation's *European Restructuring Monitor Quarterly* reports continued net job losses across the 27 countries it monitors. More than half of the new jobs announced are located in the new EU Member States.

A total of 80,485 new jobs were announced in Europe's financial media as a result of 146 company restructuring cases reported in the latest *European Restructuring Monitor Quarterly* for the last quarter of 2005. In total, the European Restructuring Monitor (ERM) recorded 360 cases of company restructuring across the area it monitors: the former EU15, the 10 new Member States and two acceding countries, Bulgaria and Romania. Over half of the planned new job creations – 44,126 – related to expanding business activities in the new EU Member States. Poland (18,002), Romania (13,195) and Slovakia (12,929) expect to create the new jobs, mainly in the manufacturing, retail, and transport and communication sectors.

Read more on [www.eurofound.eu.int/press/communiqué/2006/march/newsletter3.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/press/communiqué/2006/march/newsletter3.htm)

## NEWS IN PICTURES



**José Manuel Barroso**, President of the European Commission greets **Jorma Karppinen**, the Foundation's Director, at the meeting of the Heads of EU Agencies in Brussels, on 24 January 2006.

Copyright: © ERIK LUNTANG / EUP-IMAGES

## Spotlight on quality of life in Bulgaria

One in five Bulgarians reports that they have difficulties in fulfilling family responsibilities because of the amount of time spent at work, according to the 2003 Quality of Life in Europe Survey. The Foundation will present the findings and recent analysis from the survey to government officials and social partners at a seminar in Sofia on 20 March. During the two-day visit, the Foundation will host bilateral meetings with their Bulgarian stakeholders. The findings from the survey paint a stark picture of living conditions in the country but the Foundation hopes the analysis can contribute to the current process of macroeconomic and structural reform in the run-up to full membership of the European Union in 2007.

More information is available on [www.eurofound.eu.int/areas/qualityoflife/eqls.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/areas/qualityoflife/eqls.htm)

## Healthy ageing essential for Europe

Good health and sufficient income are regarded by older people in Europe as key determinants of the quality of life, according to unpublished research findings which the Foundation will present at a conference on *Healthy ageing in Europe*. The conference, organised by the European Federation of Older Persons (EURAG) under the auspices of the Austrian EU Presidency, will take place in Vienna on 8–9 March. While the majority of older people are fit, active, and living independently, people in the ten new EU Member States report both more poor health and longstanding illness or disability than people in the former EU15 countries. While developing initiatives to support a healthy lifestyle and behaviour are important, the Foundation argues for more attention to the mental well-being of older people and to opportunities for involvement in community life.

## Support measures for business creation after restructuring

Governments, social partners and enterprises across Europe are increasing their joint commitment to support more business creation as a consequence of restructuring, a new report from the Foundation's European Monitoring Centre on Change (EMCC) reveals. There is limited evidence for this support, however, and practices are not widespread, mainly due to existing legal and administrative barriers, and the limited access to finance and seed capital. The report maps and analyses existing support measures, regulatory initiatives and collective agreements that foster business creation and entrepreneurship following restructuring. It argues that raising awareness of good practise of business creation is vital in order to change the negative perceptions about restructuring. It shows how restructuring can be turned into an opportunity for creating jobs by presenting five case studies.

Read the full report on [www.emcc.eurofound.eu.int](http://www.emcc.eurofound.eu.int) later in March

## Changing social security structures

Existing 'flexicurity' arrangements in the EU Member States are an essential part of an effective mobility and adaptability policy. A new report by the Foundation on *Working time options over the life course: Changing social security structures* indicates that the Netherlands and Sweden provide the most innovative and integrated working time and related income support over the working life. Measures in these two countries support effective social security arrangements for the individual and their family, but not at the expense of the financial sustainability of the social security system. The report provides a detailed analysis of three main issues in relation to social security: breaks in employment careers, reduced working hours and flexible working time schemes.

Find the new report on [www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef05101.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef05101.htm)

© 2005 European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, Wyattville Road, Loughlinstown, Dublin 18, Ireland. Tel: +353-1-204 3100, fax: +353-1-282 6456, email: [information@eurofound.eu.int](mailto:information@eurofound.eu.int), internet: [www.eurofound.eu.int/newsroom/index.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/newsroom/index.htm).

Communiqué is published 10 times per year and is available free of charge. Any item in this publication may be reproduced without further permission if the source is acknowledged. Circulation: 15,500.

EF/06/10/EN

### Healthy ageing in Europe

8–9 March 2006, Vienna, Austria  
EURAG Austria  
EU Presidency Symposium

### People in construction

17 March 2006, Brussels, Belgium  
European Institute for Construction Labour Research

### Planning the future of industrial relations

17–18 March 2006, Modena, Italy  
Marco Biagi Foundation

### Capacity building for social dialogue

20–22 March 2006, Ljubljana, Slovenia  
Foundation own event

### Company Network seminar on regional development agencies

21–22 March 2006, Strathclyde, Scotland  
Foundation own event (EMCC)

## PUBLICATIONS

Unless otherwise stated, publications are in English

### Employment, industrial relations and working conditions in the European rail transport sector

<http://www.emcc.eurofound.eu.int/content/source/eu06011a.html>

### ERM Quarterly No. 4 2005

<http://www.emcc.eurofound.eu.int/erm/index.php?template=quarterly>

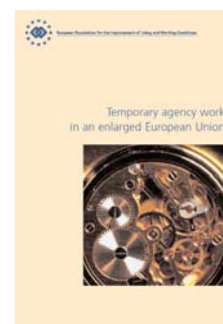
### Working time options over the life course: New work patterns and company strategies

[www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef05160.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef05160.htm)

Free publications can be downloaded directly from the website and priced publications can be ordered online at [www.eurofound.eu.int](http://www.eurofound.eu.int). They can also be ordered from bookshops or from one of the sales agents of the Office of Official Publication of the European Communities. More information is available at [www.eur-op.eu.int](http://www.eur-op.eu.int).

## Publication of the Month

### Temporary agency work in an enlarged Europe



[www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef05139.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef05139.htm)