

# communiqué



European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

## Better quality jobs will boost EU competitiveness



**Increasing focus on the quality of the labour market as a whole is necessary if Europe is to meet its target of creating the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy by 2010, according to the recent high-level EU conference on 'Better Work and Life'. Co-organised by the Foundation and the current Greek EU Presidency, the conference on 12-13 May in Alexandroupolis, concluded that creating more and better jobs will ensure sustainable economic growth and greater social cohesion.**

While acknowledging the significance of the quantitative targets set by EU governments in recent years, it has become increasingly important to also examine the quality aspects that affect the work and life of EU citizens. The modern workplace needs to respond to increasing productivity and competitiveness at the same time as offering greater employment protection, better social security and improved pension rights. The conference was thus

organised in an effort to encourage European social policymakers to explore how quality can contribute to achieving better jobs in an enlarged European economy, and how quality can be promoted through strong partnerships. 'Quality that affects the work and life of EU citizens is an issue firmly embedded in the business culture,' says **Raymond-Pierre Bodin**, the Foundation's Director. 'The challenge today is to introduce it into both the economic and social fields.'

In the same context, the conference concluded that labour markets, employment relations, and working and living conditions in candidate countries differ significantly from the EU Member States and quality matters are important in their modernisation process in order to ensure a smooth accession to the EU and a normal functioning after accession.

### Promoting social partnerships

Concrete experiences in the EU Member States show that strong

### Social dialogue a vital tool for acceding countries in preparation for EMU

Social dialogue is important for the acceding countries in their preparations for European Monetary Union, just as it was for the current Eurozone countries decades ago.

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### Industrial restructuring for economic and social growth

A public hearing on industrial restructuring across Europe, co-organised by the Foundation and the Employment and Social Affairs Committee of the European Parliament, takes place on 17 June 2003.

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### Understanding the knowledge society

The challenges facing Ireland in advancing the innovation-driven stage of socio-economic development was explored at the first Irish Knowledge society foresight meeting in Dublin on 11 June 2003.

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### Improving labour protection for economically dependent workers

The increase in numbers of economically dependent workers – those who are officially self-employed but depend on one single employer for their income – challenges the existing regulatory framework and the current system of labour protection available.

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### Changes to the European industrial relations landscape

A continued decline in trade union membership, increasing pressures on employer organisations, as well as several major mergers across the EU, resulted in significant changes to the structure of European social partner organisations during 2002.

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# Social dialogue a vital tool for acceding countries in preparation for EMU

**The role of social dialogue for the acceding countries is very important in their preparations for European Monetary Union (EMU), just as it was for the current Eurozone countries decades ago. This was the conclusion of the social partners and government representatives from EU and acceding countries gathered in Vienna, Austria, on 26-28 May. The aim of the workshop was to produce national development plans aimed at aligning economic growth with high levels of employment and social protection in Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia.**

‘Social dialogue played an important role in bridging differences among the current Eurozone countries preparing for Economic and Monetary Union,’ says **Christian Welz**, of the Foundation. ‘By focusing on producing concrete national development plans, we believe we can transfer these experiences to the acceding countries. And this despite the limitations of their fragile industrial relations systems suffering from declining trade union

membership, decentralised collective bargaining systems and asymmetrical tripartite structures with strong governments and weak social partners.’

## The second phase

The initiative is the second phase of the ‘Promotion of social dialogue in central and eastern European candidate countries’ project, a collaborative effort between the Foundation and the Swedish Work Life and EU Enlargement initiative. In 2002, development programmes were established within the framework of the project for Estonia, Hungary, Malta, Poland and Slovenia, tackling youth unemployment through social dialogue and improving social convergence with the social partners.

## Using the Maastricht criteria

The economic development plans will be submitted to the national Ministries of Labour in the respective candidate countries as well as to national tripartite bodies in order to prepare for eventual implementation and mechanisms. ‘Each national programme includes



Bengt Knave of the Swedish Worklife and EU Enlargement initiative (second from left), with Timo Kauppinen, Elisabeth Lagerlöf and Christian Welz of the Foundation, at the conference in Vienna.

an analysis of the country’s economic development in the perspective of the Maastricht convergence criteria,’ says **Timo Kauppinen**, of the Foundation. ‘The national reports primarily deal with the national systems of industrial relations and their potential, but also cover their capacity to support the Maastricht convergence process by means of social dialogue.’

More information about the workshop is available on [http://www.eurofound.eu.int/industrial/social-dialogue/prog\\_03.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/industrial/social-dialogue/prog_03.htm)

# Industrial restructuring for economic and social growth

**The anticipation and management of industrial change in an enlarged European Union is the focus of a high-level hearing co-organised by the Foundation and the Employment and Social Affairs Committee of the European Parliament in Brussels on 17 June, 2003. High-level policymakers, experts, enterprise and trade unions representatives and regional actors will come together to debate the vexed issue of industrial restructuring across Europe.**

Patterns vary from one country to another and equally across sectors. ‘Two concrete restructuring cases will highlight innovative practices and approaches to tackling restructuring situations,’ says **Jacques Terrenoire** of the Foundation’s European Monitoring Centre of Change (EMCC), the Parliament’s partner in this event. ‘The first case study is Swedish telecom TeliaSonera whose redeployment and re-education concept allowed for downsizing

without redundancies. The second is Italian steel company Falck and the Region Nord-Milano local partnership for job creation and new enterprise structures.’

The event will also hear Members of the European Parliament address European social partners and representatives of the European Commission on the matter.

Further information on the event can be found at [www.eurofound.eu.int/newsroom/archive\\_news/news\\_030611.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/newsroom/archive_news/news_030611.htm)

# Understanding the knowledge society

**The challenges facing Ireland in advancing the innovation-driven stage of socio-economic development was explored at the first Irish Knowledge Society Foresight meeting in Dublin on 11 June 2003. This gathering set out to evaluate the country's performance across a range of newly-devised knowledge society advancement indicators.**



Raymond-Pierre Bodin, the Foundation's Director, with Helena Acheson, Forfás (Irish Enterprise and Technology Board) and Dermot McCarthy, Secretary General of the Department of the Taoiseach.

**W**e want to increase understanding of the 'drivers' of the knowledge society and to anticipate the potential impacts on living conditions, working conditions and industrial relations,' says **Timo Kauppinen**, leader of the Foundation project. 'Using the foresight methodology, we hope to inform and facilitate policymaking by outlining strategic visions that can be related to present-day decisions.'

Ireland, Greece, Germany and Finland have piloted the establishment of national foresight points. A report comparing the progress of all EU Member States towards fully fledged knowledge society economies will be published towards the end of 2003. The Foundation is currently preparing a comprehensive Handbook on Knowledge Society Foresight which will soon be made available on [www.eurofound.eu.int](http://www.eurofound.eu.int)

## Improving labour protection for economically dependent workers

**Industrial restructuring, outsourcing and temporary work arrangements have led to an increased number of economically dependent workers in recent years. This is the focus of the European Parliament public hearing to take place on 19 June in Brussels.**

**T**he emergence of economically dependent workers – those who are officially self-employed but depend on one single employer for their income – challenges the existing regulatory framework and the current system of labour protection available.

'Labour legislation should be improved and we need to encourage social dialogue to take up the issue to better reflect the reality of this evolving employment relationship,' says **Stavroula Demetriades**, research coordinator of the industrial relations section. 'There is also a need for representation for economically dependent workers and trade unions could consider providing incentives for recruitment.'

### A growing feature of the European labour market

Economically dependent workers

## EXTERNAL EVENTS

### EMCC company network seminar: Restructuring for growth and job creation

Stockholm, Sweden, 12-13 June 2003  
Foundation event

### EPSU gender equality conference

Brussels, Belgium, 16 June 2003  
External event, European Federation of Public Service Unions

### Public hearing on industrial restructuring, European Parliament

Brussels, Belgium, 17 June 2003  
Foundation event, jointly organised by the Employment and Social Affairs Committee of the European Parliament and the Foundation

### Public hearing on 'Economically dependent work', employment law and industrial relations.

Brussels, Belgium, 19 June 2003  
External event, European Parliament

### Group of specialists on employment for marginalised groups

Strasbourg, France, 19 June 2003  
External event, Council of Europe

### Irish congress of trade unions, biennial conference

Tralee, Ireland, 1 July 2003  
External event, ICTU

### Living and working conditions in 2010

Ljubljana, Slovenia, 1-2 September 2003  
Foundation event

represent on average 1% of the European workforce. However, the growth of 'free service contracts' or the equivalent type of contracts increased in Austria by over 60% between 1998 and 2000, by almost 40% in Greece between 1999 and 2000, and by some 14% in Portugal between 2000 and 2001.

The Foundation report, *Economically dependent workers, employment law and industrial relations*, suggests that labour legislation should be adapted in response to this rising trend and underlines the importance of including social dialogue in any attempts to tackle this issue of concern.

The comparative report is available on [www.eurofound.eu.int/2002/05/study/TN0205101S.html](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/2002/05/study/TN0205101S.html)

NEWS IN BRIEF

## Evaluating the Foundation's role and influence on time issues

A new publication on time and time-related issues, drawing on the vast body of work the Foundation has carried out since its inception in 1975, outlines to what extent these issues have been addressed at European and national levels. The report represents a new departure from other Foundation publications since it includes a public evaluation of the Foundation's role and influence in the domain, critically assessing both the management of research and the dissemination of findings.

The report is available on [www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0309.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0309.htm)

## Making Europe a better place to live and work

The Foundation's work has contributed more efficiently to the EU social policy agenda in 2002, in particular to equal opportunities for men and women, financial participation and temporary agency work,' says **Raymond-Pierre Bodin**, the Foundation's Director, on the publication of the Foundation's Annual report 2002. 'We still, however, see a strong need to link the Foundation's analysis of living conditions to both the changing nature of employment, work organisation, and working conditions and to the modernisation of social protection and social welfare services.'

In 2002, monitoring activities have been incorporated into each core area of the Foundation's work, marking a shift in the balance between monitoring activities and strategic research. Also, 2002 saw concerted efforts to consolidate and present Foundation research on specific topics in a user-friendly format, drawing on existing Foundation research and providing an overview of work on themes linked to the EU social policy agenda.

The Annual report 2002 is available on <http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0318.htm>

## 'Open door' policy for Foundation's information centre

The Foundation's information centre is currently being upgraded to improve access to information for Foundation staff, visitors and external research collaborators. The first phase saw an architectural overhaul of the library, making way for modern workplaces. The second phase involves improving online research tools, access to current information and databases.

'We are opening the door for collaboration and the exchange of information with research institutes across Europe in an effort to promote and improve the work of the Foundation,' says Foundation librarian **Jan Vandamme**.

Contact the Foundation's documentation centre at e-mail [information@eurofound.eu.int](mailto:information@eurofound.eu.int)

PUBLICATIONS

**A new organisation of time over working life (info sheet)**

EN: [www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0344.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0344.htm)

**Age et conditions de travail (report)**

FR: [www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF02107.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF02107.htm)

**Annual report 2002**

All languages: [www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/General.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/General.htm)

**Care workers: matching supply and demand (conference report)**

EN: [www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0362.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0362.htm)

**Case studies in the graphics and media sector (EMCC)**

EN: [www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EMCC.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EMCC.htm)

**Economically dependent workers (infosheet)**

EN: [www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0353.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0353.htm)

**EIRObserver no 3/03**

EN: [www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0351.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0351.htm)

**Employment and labour market insertion strategies as a tool for social inclusion (conference summary)**

EN: [www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0310.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0310.htm)

**Illness, disability and social inclusion (infosheet)**

EN: [www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0332.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0332.htm)

**Industrial relations developments in Europe 2002 (report)**

EN: [www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0338.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0338.htm)

**Interactions between the labour market and social protection (conference report)**

EN: [www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0343.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0343.htm)

**Monitoring quality of life in Europe**

EN: [www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF02108.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF02108.htm) (report)  
EN: [www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0341.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0341.htm) (infosheet)

**Social dialogue and EMU in the candidate countries (report)**

EN: [www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0340.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0340.htm)

**Towards a sustainable corporate social responsibility (infosheet)**

EN: [www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0331.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0331.htm)

**Working time preferences and work-life balance in the EU (report)**

EN: [www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0342.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF0342.htm)

Free publications can be downloaded directly from the website and priced publications can be ordered online ([www.eurofound.eu.int](http://www.eurofound.eu.int)). They can also be ordered from your usual bookshop or from one of the sales agents of the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities (addresses available at [www.eur-op.eu.int](http://www.eur-op.eu.int)).

# Changes to the European industrial relations landscape

**A continued decline in trade union membership, increasing pressures on employer organisations, as well as several major mergers across the European Union, resulted in significant changes to the structure of European social partner organisations during 2002.**

The report *Industrial relations developments in Europe 2002* is the first joint publication between the Foundation and the European Commission in the field of industrial relations.

‘It examines a wide range of key issues covered by collective bargaining. These include pay, working time, job security and equal opportunities and diversity issues,’ says **Stavroula Demetriades**, research coordinator of the industrial relations team at the Foundation. It also looks at legislative developments and the organisation and role of the social partners, industrial action, employee participation, new forms of work (especially telework) and vocational training. The Commission’s

contribution focuses on social dialogue developments throughout Europe while the Foundation provides wide-ranging information on industrial relations shifts as well as the thematic chapter on migration trends.

## **Job security in times of restructuring**

At the labour market level, job security remained a key concern for trade unions in many countries, as waves of enterprise restructuring and downsizing continued to sweep across Europe. Some countries, notably Spain, Greece, Italy and Finland, saw some innovative agreements to maintain job security.

The gender pay gap remains wide, averaging 20% across the EU and Norway despite efforts by Belgium and Finland to address the issue by establishing a legal framework for equal pay.

## **Mapping migration across Europe**

Migration has reached record levels in recent years with 19 million non-nationals currently living in EU Member States, accounting for 5.1% of the EU’s total population. In most

countries, migrants are concentrated at the top and the bottom ends of the labour market. The average migrant worker – especially from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) – is in a disadvantaged position when compared to nationals in terms of working and living conditions.

As EU governments address the issues of controlled immigration and labour shortages, and social partners focus on migrants’ employment rates and pay conditions, the report analyses the labour market and employment situation for migrant workers across Europe and outlines the key elements of government policy and legislation in this area.

The report can be downloaded at [www.eiro.eurofound.eu.int/annualreports.htm](http://www.eiro.eurofound.eu.int/annualreports.htm)



# Better quality jobs will boost EU competitiveness

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partnerships have delivered progress on economic and social goals. The conference provided an important forum for the exchange of experiences and views, and contributed to the main issues of the Greek EU Presidency agenda: implementation of the social policy agenda; promotion of employment and modernisation of work organisation; modernisation of social protection and social inclusion; gender equality; social dialogue. Debate focused on better quality of work, employment and life and looked into various experiences and positive examples, revolving around employment status, work and non-work time management, and modernisation of work organisation.

## **Conflicting evidence**

The discussion indicated clearly that there is conflicting evidence, data, research and experiences in our quest to achieve the desirable and appropriate balance in reconciling these two objectives: better work and life. It was agreed that more effort is necessary to develop additional labour market measures to promote, encourage and sustain labour market flexibility. They should equally help to underpin the quality and value, socially as well as economically, of the very diverse range of experiences in European countries and in those outside Europe as well.

Most participants and speakers also agreed that a more strategic,

integrated and nuanced policy was needed to look at the overall labour market. This would also tackle the measures necessary to balance the need to create employment with the reality of providing workplace reform, flexibility, social protection, pension reform and lifelong education and training. The challenge remains as to what strategies should be adopted to tackle the issues of low pay, income inequalities, flexible working arrangements, childcare and parental responsibilities as well as the issues facing an ageing population and an ageing workforce.

Further information on the event can be downloaded at [www.eurofound.eu.int/industrial/better\\_work-life.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/industrial/better_work-life.htm)

INSIDE THE FOUNDATION

# Raising the Foundation's profile in Portugal

**'The Foundation's research and recommendations are important to improving working and living conditions in Portugal,' commented Fernando d'Oliveira Neves, Portugal's new ambassador to Ireland, during a visit to the Foundation on 6 June 2003.**

Ambassador d'Oliveira Neves discussed how to increase involvement of representatives from

the Portuguese government and social partners in the Foundation's work. The meeting with Director Raymond-Pierre Bodin and Deputy

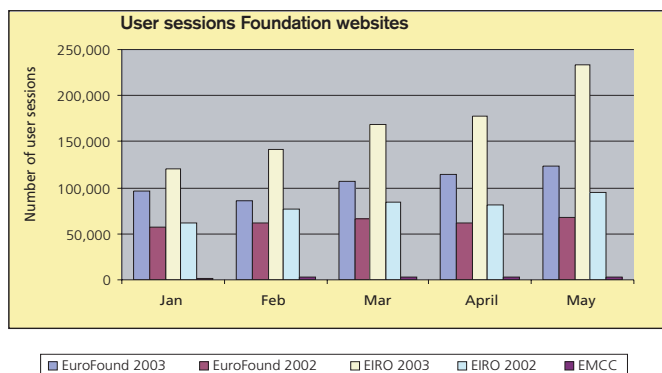
Director Willy Buschak, focused on corporate social responsibility, lifelong learning and collective bargaining.



Ambassador Fernando d'Oliveira Neves (centre), with Director Raymond-Pierre Bodin (right), Deputy Director Willy Buschak, Maria Santos and Cristina Frawley of the Foundation, outside Loughlinstown House.

## Web focus continues

The online publishing of all Foundation work has driven the numbers of website user sessions to new record levels.



## Staff changes

Jørn Pedersen, retired research manager, died at his home in France on 8 April 2003.

Sally Ann Sloan, receptionist, left the Foundation on 30 April 2003.

Jean-Christophe Gayrand from France, will join the Foundation on 1 July as accounting officer.

Jacques Prieu retired from the Foundation at the end of March after 17 years in the translation service

## communiqué

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