

# communiqué



European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

Issue 1, January 2005

## DIRECTOR'S DIARY

In an effort to be ever more targeted and concise in providing timely and pertinent information on issues of the highest importance in the European social policy sphere, this new look Communiqué is just one of several improvements made to facilitate communication with the Foundation's target audiences. With new research on the ageing workforce, on quality of work and quality of life, and management of change taking place during 2005, we also look forward to contributing to the European Union's mid-term review of the Lisbon strategy in 2005.



This month, we will bring the findings of the European Quality of Life Survey to government representatives, social partners, and civil society in Austria. A similar visit will take place in Hungary during February. The first steps have been taken towards completing the Fourth European Working Conditions Survey, this time including Switzerland and possibly Norway and the four candidate countries. The final touches are being made to the annual report on Industrial Relations in the EU, Japan and USA, which will be published within the coming weeks and the Foundation's own annual report is now in production.

**Willy Buschak**  
Acting Director

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

### Register for Communiqué

You can now choose in what format you wish to receive Communiqué in future – electronic or print. Please indicate your preference by registering online at [www.eurofound.eu.int/newsroom/communiqué.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/newsroom/communiqué.htm).

You can also contact the press officer:

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tel: +353-1-204 3124,  
email: [mma@eurofound.eu.int](mailto:mma@eurofound.eu.int),  
or regular post, for additional queries.

## Policies and actions for a healthy Europe

With Europe's ageing population and declining rates of fertility, the need for health and social services is set to increase dramatically. The role of the European Union in determining a long-term strategy takes on ever more importance in this respect.

Health and social services in all EU Member States face similar challenges in adjusting to demographic ageing, changing employment and family patterns, evolving technological opportunities and funding issues. To meet these challenges, reform of the health and social care funding systems is essential, first and foremost to increase efficiency, according to the most recent series of Sector Future articles from the European Monitoring Centre on Change (EMCC).

More information on [www.emcc.eurofound.eu.int/content/source/tn03008a.html](http://www.emcc.eurofound.eu.int/content/source/tn03008a.html)

## Gender equality and economic effectiveness

Europe will need to offer good quality, affordable services of general economic interest that provide - above all - equal opportunities for men and women, if it is to achieve the employment goals set out in the Lisbon objectives.

To allow more women to enter and remain in the labour market, Europe's services of general economic interest need to be improved, in particular by offering affordable and good quality care facilities for children and other dependents. In the final Foundation paper, *Equal opportunities for women and men in services of general interest*, published late in 2004, the Foundation argues that tapping the potential of female participation is increasingly seen as both an issue of gender equality and a matter of economic effectiveness. In short, it argues that employment strategies in this domain are critical for the successful achievement of the Lisbon targets.

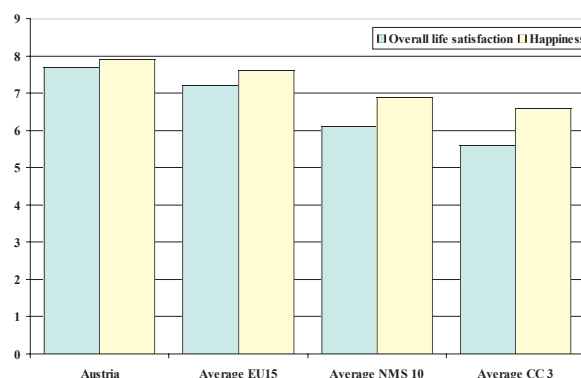
The report is available at [www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF04128.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF04128.htm)

## Research in brief

### Austrians more satisfied and happy with life

Austrians are happier and more satisfied with life than the average European, according to the European Quality of Life Survey presented to government officials, social partners, and civil society in Vienna on 27-28 January 2005. Austrians also rate the quality of their housing, social and health care services among the highest in all EU28 countries.

However, Austrians are among the least optimistic about the future in Europe, a tendency which is particularly notable among older people. What's more, a relatively large amount of Austrians report tension between generations, and few people have much trust in the state-funded pensions system.



More information on [www.eurofound.eu.int/newsroom/presspack/qual\\_life/index.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/newsroom/presspack/qual_life/index.htm)

## Fourth European Working Conditions Survey

The fieldwork for the Fourth European Working Conditions survey will be carried out in May-June 2005, following the publication of tenders on 1 January 2005. The survey will involve in-depth interviews on different aspects of working life with over 30,000 individuals in the EU25 Member States, Switzerland and possibly Norway and the four candidate countries. The Foundation has also extended the scope of the survey to include new questions on email/internet usage at work, contactability outside work and work satisfaction. It will also cover training and competence development in the workplace.

More information on [www.eurofound.eu.int/about/tenders.htm#3](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/about/tenders.htm#3)

## EIRO user review underway

With some 180,000 user sessions per month, or 6,000 per day, the European Industrial Relations Observatory (EIRO) website is considered a successful venture. But how well does EIRO meet its users' needs in terms of content, usability, and accessibility? Between mid-February and mid-March, a user survey will find out more about who exactly are the EIRO users and what do they want from the site. The three-part assessment, involving an expert review, user testing, and a user survey, is part of the ongoing review of the Foundation's websites, which began with Eurofound in late 2003. The website of the European Monitoring Centre on Change (EMCC) will be evaluated at the end of 2005.

To give your opinion on EIRO, complete the user survey on [www.eiro.eurofound.eu.int](http://www.eiro.eurofound.eu.int)

## Comprehensive tender in preparation

In an effort to optimise communication and dissemination of the Foundation's work – and to cut rising costs – preparations are underway to publish a comprehensive public tender notice in the late spring or early summer for the supply of information, editing and dissemination services for the European Industrial Relations Observatory (EIRO), the European Working Conditions Observatory (EWCO), the European Restructuring Monitor (ERM) and the Foundation's National Liaison Centres (NLCs). The ambition is to have the new service provider in operation from early 2006.

Watch out for the tender on [www.eurofound.eu.int/about/tenders.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/about/tenders.htm)

## Significant increase in industrial restructuring cases

A total of 161,009 job losses were announced as a result of 309 company restructuring cases during the last quarter of 2004, from 1 October to 31 December, according to the most recent results from the Foundation's European Restructuring Monitor (ERM). This is a significant increase over the previous period, which showed 56,170 lost jobs in 158 company restructuring cases. At the same time, however, the ERM reports the creation of 38,725 new jobs in 74 business expansion cases, which also represents an increase in the previous quarter's figures. The ERM records industrial restructuring cases as reported in daily papers and the financial press in the former EU15 Member States and in the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia. All announcements involving the reduction or creation of at least 100 jobs or affecting 10% of the workforce in sites employing 250 people or more are taken into account.

More information on [www.emcc.eurofound.eu.int/erm](http://www.emcc.eurofound.eu.int/erm)

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### International conference on occupational health services 2005

25-27 January 2005, Helsinki, Finland  
Finnish Institute of Occupational Health

### Qualité du travail et de l'emploi: un atout pour la performance économique et sociale?

2-3 February 2005, Marcy l'Étoile, France  
INTEFP

### Towards a European industrial dialogue: A contribution to the Lisbon Strategy

17-18 February 2005, Brussels, Belgium  
Confrontations Europe

### EQUAL - Free movement of good ideas

25-26 February 2005, Warsaw, Poland  
Polish government

## PUBLICATIONS

### Equal opportunities for women and men in services of general interest

EN  
[www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF04128.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF04128.htm)

### Sector futures: Food and drink (3) - The future landscape for Europe's food policy

EN  
[www.emcc.eurofound.eu.int/content/source/tn04006a.html](http://www.emcc.eurofound.eu.int/content/source/tn04006a.html)

### Working conditions improving in Estonia

EN  
[www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF04147.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF04147.htm)

### Works councils: Workplace representation and participation structures

EN  
[www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF04143.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF04143.htm)

### Social partner involvement in the 2002/2003 National Action Plans

EN  
[www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF04144.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF04144.htm)

### Employment and disability: Back to work strategies

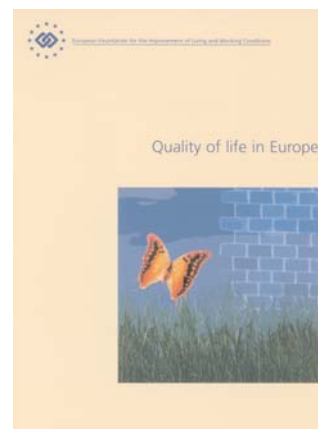
EN  
[www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF04115.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF04115.htm)

### Programme of work for 2005

EN  
[www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF04135.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/EF04135.htm)

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## Publication of the month



Quality of life in Europe