

# communiqué



European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

Issue 8, September 2006

## DIRECTOR'S DIARY

### Greater labour mobility fits with the Lisbon objectives

Analysis by the Foundation of the 2005 Eurobarometer survey on geographical and labour mobility reveals that European citizens are indeed willing to move to another region or another Member State for the purposes of employment. Greater mobility is good news for Europe in terms of achieving the objectives of the Lisbon Agenda, which require a skilled and adaptable labour force and a more open and more accessible labour market.

However, the process of integrating new migrants into host societies must be planned and managed. Increasingly, it is local authorities who are charged with the task of effectively implementing integration policy to ensure that the benefits of immigration are experienced by all. It is important for the local authorities to be able to exchange views and share experiences on successful integration policy. The Foundation will be contributing its expertise in migration and labour mobility at the launch of the newly created European Network of Cities for Local Integration Policy for Migrants (CLIP) in Dublin on 11 September. The CLIP action research project brings together representatives from some 30 cities from across the European Union, with the aim of analysing good practice in sustainable integration policy on a variety of issues.

Further afield, also in September, the Foundation will present its recent findings in industrial relations at the 14th World Congress of the International Industrial Relations Association in Lima, Peru. And at the start of October, at a conference organised under the auspices of the Finnish Presidency in Helsinki, the Foundation will gather experts from across Europe to discuss policy recommendations on how demands for staff in social care can be met.

**Jorma Karppinen**  
Director

## Working time developments in Europe

Workers in the former EU15 countries and Norway continue to work 1.5 hours less per week than those in the new Member States, according to the annual update on working time developments in Europe from the Foundation's European Industrial Relations Observatory (EIRO). In 2005, the average collectively agreed working week was 38.6 hours, similar to the working week in 2004.

Workers in the 10 new Member States work, on average, 101 hours a year (nearly 6%) longer than their counterparts in the EU15; this equates to more than two and a half weeks a year. In the EU25, the average collectively agreed annual working time was 1,748.4 hours. In the EU15, it was 1,707.8 hours, compared to 1,808.8 hours in the new Member States. However, annual working time in Greece and Ireland is similar to the average for the new Member States, while in Cyprus and the Czech Republic it is closer to the EU15 average. The longest average annual working hours in the EU are in Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Slovenia and Poland, while the shortest are in France, Denmark and Germany.

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

## Life satisfaction high in Romania

Romanians are generally optimistic about the future and show high levels of overall life satisfaction and happiness, despite poor material conditions and an inadequate standard of housing, according to the Foundation's European Quality of Life Survey for Romania.

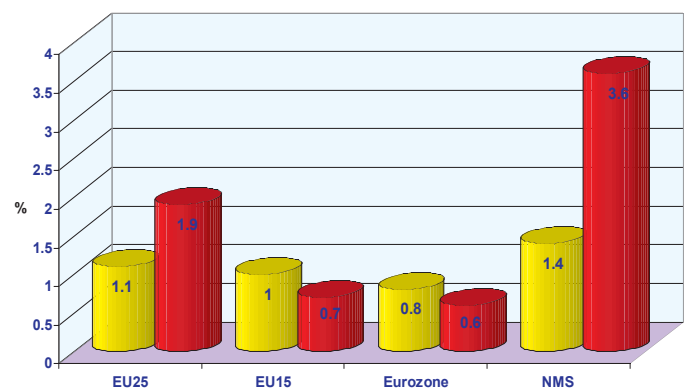
Two out of five Romanians are having difficulties in making ends meet, according to findings from the Foundation's research. The report shows that living conditions and employment in Romania have improved since 2003, and the country now has a stable, functioning market economy. However, the Foundation's research reveals large income inequalities with particular pressure on single parents, large families and the unemployed. Three out of every four Romanians cannot afford a week's annual holiday and one household out of three has built up debts for utility bills such as electricity, water and gas over the past 12 months.

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

## RESEARCH IN BRIEF

### Real pay increases in 2005

The average real increase for all 28 countries examined by the latest annual update on pay by the Foundation's European Industrial Relations Observatory (EIRO) stood at 1.4% in 2004, climbing to 1.9% in 2005. To indicate real pay increases, the table adjusts the increases for inflation.



Source: EIRO and Eurostat

## Social dimensions of housing

In its analysis of the European Quality of Life Survey, the Foundation argues that harmonising housing conditions across the EU is a necessary precondition for meeting the European targets of improving quality of life, combating social exclusion and discrimination and strengthening social cohesion. While housing issues do not lie specifically within the EU's scope of core responsibilities, the report found evidence in all countries surveyed (the EU25, along with Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey) that a good standard of housing is, along with an adequate level of income, an essential component of quality of life and a valid indicator of a household's material conditions.

Download the report at [www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef0594.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef0594.htm)

## Foundation involvement at the 14th IIRA World Congress

The Foundation is hosting two seminars during the 14th World Congress of the International Industrial Relations Association in Lima, Peru, on 11–14 September. The first seminar aims to benchmark European industrial relations models against those in other countries – the discussion will form the basis of a framework for drawing up country profiles for Australia, Brazil, China, India, Japan, South Africa and the United States. In the second seminar, the Foundation will address the impact of globalisation on industrial relations systems, in particular from the perspectives of management and union representatives.

More information about the event is available at [www.apert.com.pe](http://www.apert.com.pe)

## The future of employment in social care in Europe

With the ageing of the population in Europe, there is increasing pressure on health and social care systems across the European Union. There is clearly a need for more and better quality employment in care services to meet this increasing demand. The Foundation will discuss this topic during a major conference entitled 'The future of employment in social care in Europe', under the auspices of the current Finnish Presidency of the European Union. The conference will draw on experiences and lessons learned from initiatives from across the EU25, Bulgaria and Romania, in order to identify key pointers for the creation of good quality jobs in social care over the next five to 10 years. It will address such issues as improving the working conditions of care workers and their qualifications, as well as changing the gender and age balance of the sector. The conference will take place in Helsinki on 2–3 October 2006 and is organised by the Foundation in cooperation with the National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health (STAKES) and the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (FIOH).

More information on [www.eurofound.eu.int/events/confhelsinki2006/index.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/events/confhelsinki2006/index.htm)

## Foundation Focus looks at age and employment

If Europe is to maintain its current standard of living 'it is crucial that people work longer... governments, social partners and individuals must share the responsibility for making it happen', argues Commissioner Vladimir Špidla in an interview in the latest issue of *Foundation Focus*, which investigates the subject of Europe's ageing workforce. Based on recent results of Foundation research, this issue examines the topic from different angles, underscored by the European policy perspective. Findings from the Fourth European Working Conditions Survey on working conditions illustrate the importance of adapting working conditions to suit an ageing workforce. Case studies on successful age management show how companies can introduce age-adapted schemes and training for older workers. Other articles examine the incidence of both phased and early retirement schemes across Europe, the need for better care services for the older population and the quality of life experienced by older people.

Download the new Foundation Focus at [www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef0658.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef0658.htm)

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### The future of employment in social care in Europe

2–3 October, Helsinki, Finland  
Foundation, with STAKES and the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (FIOH)

### Human capital, adaptability and employability

5–6 October, Milan, Italy  
European Institute of Public Administration

### Social dialogue capacity building at sectoral and local level

9–10 October, Dubrovnik, Croatia  
Foundation own event

### Recent trends in industrial relations in Europe

19–20 October, Istanbul, Turkey  
Turkish Confederation of Employer Associations

### Foundation Forum 2006

#### 'Competitive Europe - Social Europe: partners or rivals?'

2–3 November, Dublin, Ireland  
Foundation own event

## PUBLICATIONS

Unless otherwise stated, publications are in English

### Employment developments in childcare services for school-age children

[www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef0632.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef0632.htm)

### Employment guidance services for people with disabilities

[www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef0633.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef0633.htm)

### ERM Quarterly Issue 2 2006

[www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef0661.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef0661.htm)

### First European Quality of Life Survey: Social dimensions of housing

[www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef0594.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef0594.htm)

### Long distance mobility in Europe: Getting the balance right (résumé)

[www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef0636.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef0636.htm)

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## Publication of the month

### Restructuring and Employment in the EU



[www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef0638.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef0638.htm)