

Programme of Work for 1999



EUROPEAN FOUNDATION
for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

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The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions is an autonomous body of the European Union, created to assist the formulation of future policy on social and work-related matters. Further information can be found at the Foundation Web site at <http://www.eurofound.ie/>

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Programme of Work for 1999

The programme of work for 1999 was submitted to the Committee of Experts for its opinion at its meeting on 11 November 1998 and was approved by the Administrative Board at its meeting on 13 November 1998.

This document gives a summary of the activities planned by the Foundation in 1999, within the framework of its four-year rolling programme 1997-2000, 'Facing up to the challenges of European society'.




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Introduction**Facing up to the Challenges of
European Society****A programme for 1997-2000**

Globalisation of the market, the impact of the information society, demographic and structural change and a persistently high level of unemployment: together these factors are placing unprecedented pressure on the economic and social structure of the European Union. In this context, the Foundation has examined the contribution it can make to the planning and establishment of better living and working conditions as we move towards the 21st century. Employment will be the key focus for its future work. The related critical situation in the welfare state, coupled with the need to ensure social solidarity, link six major challenges to which the Foundation will give priority attention:

- Employment
- Sustainable development
- Equal opportunities
- Social cohesion
- Health and well-being
- Participation

The activities of the Foundation over the four years to the year 2000 will address the six challenges in an integrated way, taking into account the

relationships and links between major factors of change affecting the quality of living and working conditions in Europe.

The programme benefits from the unique composition of the Foundation's Administrative Board. It is comprised of representatives from government, the European Commission and employer and worker organisations in Member States. It is the authority responsible for the development of the programme. Through wide and interactive consultation within its representative groups it keeps the programme grounded firmly in reality. It is in this way that the Foundation effectively contributes to European policy-making.

The Foundation was established by the Council of Ministers in 1975 under the following Regulation:

The aim of the Foundation shall be to contribute to the planning and establishment of better living and working conditions through action designed to increase and disseminate knowledge likely to assist this development. With this aim in view, the task of the Foundation shall be to develop and pursue ideas on the medium- and long-term improvement of living and working conditions in the light of practical experience and to identify factors leading to change.

(Council Regulation (EEC) No. 1365/75 of 26 May 1975, Article 2)


Chapter 1**An Overview of the
Programme of Work for 1999**

The four-year rolling programme 'Facing up to the challenges of European society', summarised in the introduction, was designed in such a way that the knowledge accumulated by the Foundation will, at the turn of the century, be a source of information that can assist policy makers in the work of planning and establishing better living and working conditions.

In that context, the current programme aims to anticipate the issues that will (or may) appear on future political agendas. It has, indeed, been conceived in order to initiate, follow up or complete the research necessary for that purpose.

An examination of the programme planned for 1999 shows that, while it addresses the six challenges of the Foundation's four-year programme in an integrated manner, most activities can be grouped under two main headings: employment, and the role of the social partners.

Employment

In addressing issues related to the challenge of employment, the Foundation is focusing its work on qualitative aspects: on the one hand, it is not equipped (and it would be duplicating studies done by other bodies) to research quantitative developments (often of a macro-economic nature); on the other

hand, its main aim is to analyse the changes in the labour market in the perspective of an improvement of living and working conditions.

The following research projects will undergo major developments in this respect in 1999:

- Employment options of the future
- Jobs in EU micro firms: a trade-off between quantity and quality?
- Innovative collective and tripartite agreements on job creation, job protection and competitiveness
- Developments in the use of time
- The future of work in the information society
- Employment, family and community activities: a new balance for women and men
- Employment policies and working conditions
- Professional education and training for sustainable development
- Integrated approaches to active welfare and employment policies
- Quality of working life and quality of service in social public services
- Social implications of the EMU
- Companies and the new global dimension of social progress
- The nature and extent of financial participation in the European Union.

The role of the social partners

The quadripartite structure of the Foundation leads it quite naturally to observe, study and analyse the evolving role of the social partners (employers and workers organisations and, in a broader sense, public authorities) in relation to living and working conditions. In doing so, the Foundation is probably developing a unique position among the bodies of the European Union.

The following projects are relevant in this respect:

- Innovative collective and tripartite agreements on job creation, job protection and competitiveness
- Developments in the use of time
- Active strategies for an ageing workforce



- Equal opportunities and collective bargaining in the Member States of the EU
- Promoting gender equality at the workplace
- Design for sustainable development
- The role of social partners in sustainable development
- European employment and industrial relations glossaries
- Information and consultation in European multinational companies
- Social implications of the EMU
- Companies and the new global dimension of social progress
- The future of workers' participation in Europe
- European Industrial Relations Observatory.

In 1999, the Foundation will also carry out its **Third European Survey on Working Conditions** which will provide time series data to compare with 1991/92 and 1995/96 when the first and second surveys were carried out. This will facilitate a monitoring of the evolution of working conditions in the European Union. For this, as for other relevant projects, collaboration will be sought with the services of the European Commission (DG V) and with the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (Bilbao) with which a 'Memorandum of Understanding' was signed in 1998 in order to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication of effort.

More generally, the activities planned by the Foundation in 1999 are intended to contribute to the development of social policy at European level and, in particular, will have strong links and will complement a number of steps taken in recent months by the European Commission in a series of communications on:

- Modernising and improving social protection in the European Union
- Partnership for a new organisation of work
- The social and labour market dimension of the information society: People first - the next steps
- Adapting and promoting the social dialogue at Community level
- From guidelines to action: the national action plans for employment
- Social Action Programme 1998-2000.

In implementing its programme of work for 1999, the Foundation will link a number of activities set out in the following pages to the setting up and running of a European Network on Work Organisation, an initiative of the European Commission, confirmed in its recent communication 'Modernising the organisation of work - a positive approach to change'.



Chapter 2

Research and Development Activities

These activities concern the collection, processing and analysis of information and data, together with related debate and discussion activities, including monitoring and evaluation.

The aims of the Foundation's research are to identify and analyse new and existing problems and their causes, to assess their scale and impact, to search for solutions and to lead to conclusions, proposals and/or options which may influence EU policies and programmes.

This research process does not take place in isolation, since representatives from the Foundation's constituent groups (who are also involved in the policy-making process) are kept aware of, and discuss, its progress.

The research projects proposed in the programme of work for 1999 have been designed in order to address one or, generally, more than one of the challenges identified in the four-year rolling programme for 1997-2000: employment, equal opportunities, health and well-being, sustainable development, social cohesion, participation.

The following table shows which challenges are addressed by the different projects (described in more detail below).

Project No.	Title
0106	Developments in the use of time
0110	The future of work in the information society
0116	Information and consultation in European transnational companies
0118	European employment and industrial relations glossaries
0152	Employment options of the future
0156	Monitoring of working conditions
0166	Equal opportunities and collective bargaining in the Member States of the EU
0188	EIRO *
0194	Integrated approaches to active welfare and employment policies
0200	Social implications of the EMU
0201	Jobs in EU micro firms: a trade-off between quantity and quality?
0202	Employment, family and community activities: a new balance for women and men
0203	Employment policies and working conditions
0204	Design for sustainable development
0205	Economic instruments for sustainable development: improving the external and working environment
0206	Professional education and training for sustainable development relating to SMEs
0209	Social public services: quality of working life and quality of service
0211	Innovative collective and tripartite agreements on job creation, job protection and competitiveness
0213	Conference on the role of the social partners in sustainable development
0214	Active strategies for an ageing workforce
0215	Promoting gender equality in the workplace
0216	Work organisation and gender
0217	Companies and the new global dimension of social progress
0218	The nature and extent of financial participation in the European Union
0219	The future of workers' participation in Europe



Employment	Equal opportunities	Health and well-being	Sustainable development	Social cohesion	Participation
X		x			
X		x			x
					X
					X
X	x				
x	x	X			x
x	X				x
x	x	x			x
x	x			X	
x		x			X
X		x			
x	X			x	
x		X			
x		x	X		
		x	X		
x			X		
x				X	
X					x
x			X		x
X	x	x		x	
x	X	x			x
	X				x
x		x			X
x					X
x					X

X The project primarily addresses this challenge; a short description of the project is presented below under this challenge.

x The project has been designed to also address this challenge.

* EIRO is described in Chapter 3.

Employment challenge

Employment issues are a central focus of attention in the current work of the Foundation. Three main priorities have been identified for the Foundation's contribution to the challenge of employment:

- the potential for job creation and/or job protection
- improvement of the quality of employment
- development of improved access to employment opportunities.

Throughout the activities proposed for 1999, employment is – as shown in the previous table – the most addressed challenge.

The following projects primarily address the challenge of employment.

Employment options of the future

This project aims to improve understanding of how the qualitative aspects of different employment options meet the wishes and aspirations of the workforce as well as the issues facing companies seeking qualified personnel.

A representative survey of the population aged 16-64 targets four specific groups: persons presently employed; job returners (after a break in their employment); young entrants; presently unemployed persons. They have been asked questions in relation to the quality of their present or envisaged employment and the possibilities of access to such employment seen against a background of structural change in the world of work.

The project completed its field-work phase in 1998. Initial analysis started in 1998 and further multi-variate analysis of results will be undertaken in 1999.

A major conference during the Finnish Presidency in the second half of 1999 will discuss the findings and their significance for employment.

(Project No. 0152. Research managers: E. Köhler/T. Kauppinen/M. Heikkinen)



Jobs in EU micro firms: a trade-off between quantity and quality?

The project follows on from the conclusions of the pilot study concluded in 1998 in the project ‘SMEs and job creation’ and it consists of a major cross-country study about working and employment conditions in micro firms. It was designed to correspond to the specific work of the Foundation and aims to complement the work being done in the field of job creation by SMEs in the European Commission (DG V, DG XXIII), OECD and ILO.

The main objective is to examine the nature of and the relationship between the quantity and the quality of jobs in micro firms (1 - 9 employees); the data on job quality to be used will, in principle, be a combination of the 1996 pan-EU Survey on Working Conditions with case studies from selected countries.

A meeting about the project with researchers and experts in the field and with the representatives of the Foundation’s Administrative Board and Committee of Experts will be held in 1999 by the Foundation as a preparatory workshop for ‘Work Life 2000’, the European Conference about Jobs and Working Life to be held in 2001 during the Swedish Presidency.

(Project No. 0201. Research managers: F. Oliveira/E. Köhler)

Innovative collective and tripartite agreements on job creation, job protection and competitiveness

The focus of the project is to identify, collect and analyse innovative collective and tripartite agreements in Europe and in other industrialised countries world-wide. A key part of the analysis is the assessment of the short- and medium-term impact on employment. Innovative provisions covering the employment issue are agreed on different levels: company, sector, regional, national and international. They are regulated in different ways: joint declarations, informal agreements, collective agreements, tripartite pacts. They are integrated in different mechanisms, particularly into collective bargaining and tripartite structures. A main thrust of the project will be to benchmark European agreements with activities in other parts of the industrialised world.

In 1999, a systematic collection of innovative agreements will be finalised in eight European countries and eight industrial countries outside Europe. The

final output will be a comparative analysis. A workshop will be organised at the end of 1999. The entire activity is jointly developed and organised with the ILO in order to achieve maximum synergy.

(Project No. 0211. Research managers: H. Krieger/K. O'Kelly)

Developments in the use of time

Time in the city

In 1997, a review of experiences aimed at re-synchronising 'social times' at local level was undertaken. The research was completed and evaluated in 1998. In 1999, dissemination will begin and a workshop will be organised.

(Project No. 0106. Research managers: P. Paoli/N.N.)

Monitoring developments in working time

The objective in the forthcoming year will be to keep track of the transformation of the European Directive on certain aspects of working time into national law. Short national updates will be prepared as appropriate and will be published as working papers. The network of national experts will meet to discuss developments.

(Project No. 0106. Research managers: E. Köhler/ M. de Nanteuil)

The future of work in the information society

A series of projects in the past number of years have looked at different aspects of the impact of new information and communications technologies on living and working conditions: the electronic home, the electronic city, electronic decentralised working (teleworking), and temporal and spatial flexibilisation of work ('flexitime' and 'flexispace').

Following the publication on CD-ROM of the *European Guide for Virtual Companies*, the Foundation will endeavour to remain at the cutting edge of research.

The objective is to assess the impact of new information technologies on living and working conditions, in particular such developments as transborder applications of new information technologies (off-shore teleworking, international outsourcing).

Methodology: Case studies, whereby a probable collaboration with the ILO (discussions to that effect have started) would provide a global framework, the Foundation being responsible for European input, the ILO providing examples from the rest of the world.

(Project No. 0110. Research managers: E. Köhler/T. Kauppinen)

Active strategies for an ageing workforce

This conference is a joint initiative of the Foundation and the Finnish Ministries of Social Affairs and Health, Labour and Education, the Social Insurance Institution Finland and the Finnish Central Employment Pension Security Institute. It is also part of the Foundation's contribution to the UN Year 'Towards a Society of All Ages'.

The conference is organised in the context of the EU's employment strategy, which aims to reduce unemployment and to increase the proportion of the working age population who are active, participating in paid work. The retention and reintegration of older workers, male and female, is also an important mechanism to address financial concerns in social protection.

The conference will examine the development, implementation and evaluation of 'active strategies' – the policies and practices in favour of the maximum participation, performance and productivity of the ageing workforce. The research results covered include work done by the Foundation and others on: labour market measures to prevent unemployment and to promote reintegration of older workers; workplace initiatives to promote the skills and performance of an ageing workforce; human resource strategies to improve the relationship between work and non-work life; health promotion/reintegration activities for the ageing workforce.

Each issue raises questions about the role of the different parties involved; the place of legislation versus education or other non-regulatory measures; the contribution of different professional groups; assessment of economic, productivity and personal benefits; and implications for the attitudes and expectations of governments, employers and workers.

(Project No. 0214. Research managers: R. Anderson/N.N.)

Equal opportunities challenge

The four-year programme 1997-2000 indicates as priorities for this challenge: strategies to promote equal opportunities; the barriers to, and the potential for, improved equal opportunities and equal involvement in decision-making; and the impact of contextual developments on equal opportunities. Priority is given to gender, but other forms of direct and indirect discrimination are examined.

The Foundation endeavours to mainstream equal opportunities issues in all projects where relevant. A number of projects addressing the other challenges, particularly employment, health and well-being, social cohesion and participation, are therefore also to be considered.

The following projects are proposed as primarily addressing the challenge of equal opportunities.

Equal opportunities and collective bargaining in the Member States of the EU

This project, which started in 1994, is now reaching completion.

It analyses collective agreements on pay discrimination/pay equity, sex segregation, job access/job security, organisational cultures and structures (training on equal opportunities awareness, sexual harassment, etc.) and family-work interface (leave arrangements, working time, etc.).

During 1999, the main European synthesis report will be finalised and active dissemination of the project results will begin.

(Project No. 0166. Research managers: M. Heikkinen/H. Krieger)

Employment, family and community activities: a new balance for women and men

This project aims to analyse the nature and effects of change associated with the creation of employment in areas that have traditionally been unpaid (family or voluntary) work, such as in care, cleaning, catering. Studies in Member States are examining the character and scale of employment in household services, documenting who is taking up this employment and their working conditions, including attention to training and skills development.



The research considers how this paid work is affecting the family and community activities of these workers, particularly regarding involvement in care provision for children and adult dependants. The studies will examine implications for job creation and employment policies but also with regard to policies for social protection, social inclusion and equal opportunities. The project seeks to identify measures in the workplace and in public policy that promote the reconciliation of employment with the family and community activities of women and men.

During 1999 national studies will be completed and preparation of the European synthesis report will begin.

(Project No. 0202. Research managers: R. Anderson/P. Carotenuto)

Promoting gender equality in the workplace

This project will draw lessons from two earlier research projects on 'Equal opportunities and collective bargaining' (0166) and 'Gender and working conditions' (0156). It will also collect additional data, aiming at:

- identifying and describing gender-sensitive policies at the corporate level;
- evaluating their impact on gender equality;
- drawing up recommendations aimed at promoting gender equality in the workplace.

(Project No. 0215. Research managers: M. Heikkinen/P. Paoli/J. Costa)

Work organisation and gender

In 1998, within the framework of the EPOC project, the Foundation completed a study on 'Women's and men's voices in processes of organisational change'. The objective in 1999 will be to present and discuss the results of this study and of similar studies in Europe to policy makers, practitioners and researchers. Two issues will be at the centre of the workshop:

- equal access to new forms of work organisation;
- potential and actual contribution of new forms of work organisation to equal opportunities.

(Project No. 0216. Research managers: K. O'Kelly/H. Krieger)

Health and well-being challenge

The four-year programme 1997-2000 sets as objectives: identifying risks and groups of people at risk; developing new indicators; identifying new approaches for risk prevention. These objectives will be tackled from three complementary angles: employment, work and time.

The following projects are proposed as primarily addressing the health and well-being challenge.

Monitoring of working conditions

The survey on working conditions will be repeated for a third time, thus providing comparison with the time series from 1991/92 and 1995/96 when the first and second surveys were carried out.

Whilst keeping a set of identical questions in order to allow identification of trends, the questionnaire will be amended so as to include possible new issues and variables.

A series of secondary analyses will be carried out on a number of issues, for example:

- SMEs and working conditions;
- ageing and work;
- branch profiles;
- work organisation and working conditions;
- job profiles and working conditions.

(Project No. 0156. Research managers: P. Paoli/J. Costa)

Employment policies and working conditions

The research, which started in 1998, stems from the results of the European Survey on Working Conditions. The survey indicated an extension of flexible forms of employment and a strong correlation between these forms of employment and poor working conditions.



The research analyses the influence of corporate human resources policies on working conditions (broadly defined and covering issues such as health, participation, skills, etc.) and in particular their reliance on various forms of flexibility, both internal and external.

(Project No. 0203. Research managers: M. de Nanteuil/J. Costa/P. Paoli)

Sustainable development challenge

The four-year programme identifies sustainable patterns of production and consumption as key issues to be addressed by the Foundation's work with, more particularly, contributions aiming at the promotion of awareness and changes in behaviour, the impact of new instruments and actions in specific sectors, and the development of the concept of shared responsibility and participation by the main actors.

The following projects are proposed which primarily address the challenge of sustainable development.

Design for sustainable development

This project, which started in 1997, aims at increasing the involvement of the social partners in the development of efficient programmes securing the move towards sustainability, health and employment. A number of initiatives are being taken in order to develop further tools, information networks and training for the main actors concerned with the implementation of sustainable production, such as industry, social partners and designers. The employment potential in the move towards sustainable development is being assessed. The project links the environment and working conditions and looks into the impact of environmental management on health and safety and vice versa and how to define effective schemes combining both areas. It studies the effect of renewable resources on the environment. Practical examples of sustainable production and consumption improving the environment, health and employment will be provided. The sustainability section of the Foundation's home page on the World Wide Web will include extensive information on the topic of sustainable design, such as a database on conferences and training programmes, and an international directory of networks on sustainability.

(Project No. 0204. Research managers: H. Litske/J. Pedersen)

Economic instruments for sustainable development: improving the external and working environment

A synthesis on the use of economic and fiscal instruments in both the physical and the working environment has been prepared based on previous Foundation work and activities elsewhere (for example, the European Commission, the European Environment Agency, the OECD). The work was

initiated in 1997 as a pilot project based on two European countries. In 1998, the pilot project was extended to include four more countries in order both to provide a better basis for identifying the benefits of a harmonised approach to the physical and the working environment and also to determine what the project itself should cover so as to provide a more complete overview. In 1999, the research will be finalised and an update of the Foundation's *Catalogue of Economic Incentives for the Improvement of the Working Environment* will be carried out as preparation for a European conference on the topic in the year 2000.

(Project No. 0205. Research managers: H. Litske/J. Pedersen)

Professional education and training for sustainable development relating to SMEs

The project aims to identify the specific training needs of SMEs and the responses required at the different levels (secondary, intermediary and third level) and by the different actors (public authorities, education and training establishments, the social partners, etc.) as part of the move towards sustainable development, keeping in mind the possibility of using this process to contribute to employment creation.

The work, which will consist of an enquiry and case studies, will include the definition of occupational profiles and it will look into how the requirements can be met by existing structures and to what extent it will be necessary to introduce changes and new measures designed for SMEs in particular, taking into account national and regional differences and traditions. The training needs and responses of regulatory agencies will also be examined insofar as the way in which the latter interpret and perform their tasks can have a major impact on SMEs and how they choose to comply with present and future requirements.

An assessment and a comparative analysis of the findings of the national studies undertaken will enable the Foundation to draw conclusions on possible action at the EU and national levels. A database of training and education activities will be developed in 1999 and made available in the sustainability section of the Foundation's home page on the World Wide Web in 2000.

(Project No. 0206. Research managers: J. Pedersen/H. Litske/F. Oliveira)

Conference on the role of the social partners in sustainable development

This conference will aim to identify and highlight key areas for the future involvement of the social partners in the move towards sustainability and the ways in which the Foundation can support them in this task.

The move towards sustainable development is one of the major challenges of the European Union. It is becoming increasingly clear that one of the key issues in this context is sustainable production and consumption, in which the social partners at all levels have a crucial role to play. Given its structure and its work in recent years, the Foundation has the potential to act as facilitator in an informal debate on these issues involving representatives of the social partners, governments and the services of the Commission as well as independent researchers.

It is crucial that the conference be not only forward-looking, primarily medium-term oriented, but also that it be very focused so as to avoid a too open-ended debate. Hence, it will have to be based on high quality information with significant policy aspects. It is also essential that the conference be organised within the context of the Foundation's current four-year programme regarding the sustainable development challenge, i.e. sustainable production and consumption, and that it be linked to the major area of concern both within the EU institutions and the Administrative Board, i.e. employment.

A preparatory working group was established in 1998 composed of representatives of the various groups in the Administrative Board. It met in October 1998.

A short report combining the key presentations and the debate and setting out the results of the conference will be prepared by the Foundation and will serve as an input to the discussion and preparation of future work programmes.

(Project No. 0213. Research managers: H. Litske/J. Pedersen)



Social cohesion challenge

The objective of the Foundation's work on this challenge is primarily to contribute to the rethinking of social welfare systems and their relationship with labour market issues, more particularly by studying the concept of active citizenship, the support of local strategies by mainstream public policies, and the outcomes of innovative developments in policy and practice.

The following projects are proposed.

Integrated approaches to active welfare and employment policies

Social policies in Member States and the emerging strategies at EU level for employment and social protection focus increasingly upon social integration through linking welfare to work and through promoting employment. While measures are being taken in social protection systems to make them more employment-friendly, at the same time employment policies and services are increasingly oriented to active measures that develop skills and capacities for working life.

The reform and modernisation of the social security and labour market sectors is raising fundamental questions about concepts and objectives, as well as problems regarding the coordination of policies and services – at all levels of planning, implementation and delivery. Clearly, there are profound issues around assessing the effectiveness of more integrated measures and regarding impacts on the lives of different client groups. This project aims to assess the impact on specific groups of welfare recipients of more integrated approaches, and to identify mechanisms for more effective coordination of activation measures in employment, welfare and other significant policies.

During 1998, a framework was developed to examine mechanisms for coordination of initiatives by, primarily, welfare and employment authorities. Policies addressing the promotion of employability among recipients of social assistance were identified as a focal point. The main research phase in 1999 involves studies at national and local levels in Member States to identify and examine initiatives to coordinate these policies, to ensure both macro-level coordination and an integrated delivery at the individual level.

(Project No. 0194. Research managers: A. Parent-Thirion/R. Anderson.)

Social public services: quality of working life and quality of service

This decade has witnessed a remarkable range of reforms in the organisation and delivery of social public services such as health, housing, education and social services. During 1998 research commenced in Member States to examine how services have developed to meet the needs of several user groups – older people living alone, young unemployed and people with mental disabilities – in a more integrated and responsive manner.

The research is both documenting changes in the delivery of services and assessing quality from the users' perspective. The local case studies of service developments also document in detail changes in working conditions for providers, particularly with regard to work organisation, worker involvement and staff training. The increasing diversity of providers – from the voluntary and market sectors, as well as from public authorities – is reflected in the case studies. The project examines the effects of changes in services from the perspectives of both providers and users of the services.

In 1999 the national studies will be completed and preparation of the European synthesis report will begin.

(Project No. 0209. Research managers: R. Anderson/P. Carotenuto)



Participation challenge Participation is a core focus of the Foundation's work and is an integral part of many of its research and other activities. New and innovative approaches and practices of participation, at the workplace and in the wider community, are being considered in several projects.

More particularly, as far as workers' participation is concerned, the following projects are proposed.

European employment and industrial relations glossaries

In 1998, the Foundation published the twelfth volume of the glossaries, on Luxembourg. In 1999, the publication of the volume for Austria is envisaged. Contracts with researchers in Finland should be in place.
(Project No. 0118. Programme managers: H. Krieger/P. Long/N. Wood)

Information and consultation in European transnational companies

Between 1994 and 1998, the Foundation supported the European social partners in the establishment of European works councils by collecting, analysing, publishing and disseminating agreements signed under Article 13 of the Directive. In 1999, these activities will focus on collecting agreements signed under Article 6 of the Directive.
(Project No. 0116. Research managers: H. Krieger/K. O'Kelly)

Social implications of the EMU

In 1998, bibliographic reviews on the implications of the EMU on industrial relations, employment and working conditions were produced. In 1999, a workshop to discuss the results of the 1998 research will be organised. In addition, further focused research on the priorities identified by the 1998 bibliographic reviews will be contracted. Finally, a dissemination conference is envisaged for the year 2000.
(Project No. 0200. Research managers: J. Costa/T. Kauppinen/K. O'Kelly)

Companies and the new global dimension of social progress

The European Commission Social Action Programme 1998-2000 includes a chapter on the external dimension of social policy. According to this communication, the Commission intends to maintain support for the promotion of internationally recognised core labour standards. In the EU,

several companies and financial institutions have already designed and implemented policies that take into account the global dimension of social progress. This project will identify the different types of company policies, strategies and actions that promote social progress on the world stage and the role played by the social partners in their development.

(Project No. 0217. Research managers: J. Costa/F. Oliveira/P. Paoli)

The nature and extent of financial participation in the European Union

Financial participation has moved to the fore in the debate on the development of work organisation in the European Union and is seen as a way of promoting greater employee participation in the enterprise, through either profit-sharing or share ownership. Very little is known of the nature and extent of these forms of financial participation using a comparative methodology. This project will build on the national level information contained in PEPPER I and II. It will also investigate the links between financial participation, workplace involvement, enterprise productivity, competitiveness and employment. To update this information, a number of national reports will be commissioned. These reports will provide the basis for discussion at a seminar in autumn 1999 on the future of financial participation in the European Union.

(Project No. 0218. Research managers: K. O'Kelly/T. Kauppinen/H. Krieger)

The future of workers' participation in Europe

Workers' participation in Europe has developed around national models and varies very much between countries, sectors and companies regarding collective bargaining, direct participation, representation in works councils, health and safety committees, supervisory bodies and also participation in financial decision-making. The emergence of these four pillars of participation, during the 1990s, and the present debate on them relates to new proposals on information and consultation and European company law. So far, this debate has focused on the individual components of the four pillars. However, there is a lack of debate on the ensemble and also on the interrelationship of the different pillars of participation.

The main question to be addressed by this project is if the emerging European model of these four pillars can combine effectively to improve



economic performance, a better quality of working life, including higher job security, and greater democracy at work.

In 1999, the four pillars of participation will be discussed by a small group of experts, in the following context:

- the competition between the American and European industrial relations and labour market models;
- the influence of EMU, globalisation and sectorial change on the new emerging model;
- the reality of the Europeanisation of industrial relations.

(Project No. 0219. Research managers: K. O'Kelly/T. Kauppinen/H. Krieger)

Chapter 3

European Industrial Relations Observatory

Established in autumn 1996, the observatory is taking a specific place in the Foundation's programme as an ongoing information activity.

European Industrial Relations Observatory

The fundamental objective of the observatory is to provide authoritative and up-to-date information and analysis on industrial relations, and to capture this information in an electronic database.

The database, the main product of EIRO, has become a unique information source on European industrial relations by:

- containing accounts of the most relevant events in the field of industrial relations in Europe; supplying explanations of these events in their context;
- including comparable information on similar events over time in the different Member States and Norway;
- presenting comparative studies on topical issues in industrial relations;
- presenting further analyses based on the data that are entered in the electronic database on a monthly basis.

The main print publications are the *EIRObserver* with its comparative thematic supplements and the annual review of industrial relations trends.

Access to the electronic database (EIROnline) via the Internet is now fully operational. This project will continue in its present form with regular reviews of its ongoing activities by the Steering Committee.

An added dimension in 1999 will be the gradual integration of information from applicant countries in Central and Eastern Europe.

An international research team consisting of 16 national centres (15 EU Member States and Norway) plus an EU-level centre provide the factual material for the database in the form of news items, feature articles and comparative, issue-oriented studies, edited by an editorial team into a coherent style and format.

(Project No. 0188. Programme managers: E. Köhler/T. Kauppinen/M. Carley/N. Wood /F. Murray/B. Schmidt)


Chapter 4**Debate and Discussion
Activities**

Drawing on the quadripartite structure of its Administrative Board and involving other organisations as appropriate, the Foundation is a forum where the key social actors, on a basis of scientifically produced knowledge and data, can exchange opinions and experiences.

This dialogue between expertise and political expression gives an added value to the Foundation's research by linking it to the policy-making agenda.

In addition to activities already included in previous chapters, the Foundation plans to organise discussion activities:

ACTEUR* Group

The Foundation, in collaboration with the Commission services, will continue to convene meetings of the informal network of directors of national institutes or programmes for the improvement of working conditions and will look at the feasibility of developing it as an electronic network.

(Project No. 0099. Programme manager: B. Nolan)

* ACTEUR is an abbreviation of Amélioration des Conditions de Travail en EUROpe (improvement of working conditions in Europe).

Innovative forms of work organisation: the introduction and management of organisational change

The sixth European Ecology of Work Conference in May 1999 in Bonn will bring together innovative work organisation case studies mainly from the USA/Canada and EU Member States. However, in light of the ongoing globalisation, case studies from other parts of the world will also be featured, including from South Africa, Central/Eastern Europe, Asia and Australia/New Zealand.

The sixth European Ecology of Work Conference will link up with the world-wide activities of the planned world exhibition EXPO 2000. The conference will be featured as one of a series of global conferences on 'The Future of Work' which will help prepare the exhibition display on the same theme within EXPO 2000.

The conference will also feature in the German EU Presidency's calendar of events during the first half of 1999.

(Project No. 0115. Programme managers: E. Köhler/T. Kauppinen/F. Oliveira/K. O'Kelly)

Exchange of information with Central and Eastern European countries

The Foundation has organised exchanges of knowledge with the transition countries in Central and Eastern Europe since 1991 with the objective of assisting these countries in their endeavours towards meeting the criteria for future membership of the EU. These summer seminars will be continued in 1999. One of two proposed seminars has been agreed with the Finnish government as co-sponsor during the Finnish EU Presidency in the second half of 1999. The themes to be discussed during the seminars will be drawn from the Foundation's field of expertise and following extensive consultations with Central and Eastern European experts.

(Project No. 0145. Programme managers: E. Köhler/T. Kauppinen/K. O'Kelly/F. Oliveira/P. Carotenuto)

The Foundation will also, in 1999, start discussions about the preparation of its next four-year rolling programme (2001-2004), the decision of which, in 2000, will coincide with the Foundation's 25th anniversary.


Chapter 5**Information and Dissemination
Activities**

These are concerned with the mutual exchange, transfer and dissemination of knowledge. Complementing the research and debate functions of the Foundation, they assist in avoiding duplication of efforts, in supplying the information available and in delivering the results of the Foundation's research to its target audiences.

These activities are as follows.

Information services and systems

The Foundation's Regulation requires it to provide information which could help policy makers in the European institutions in their efforts to improve living and working conditions.

The Information Systems and Services Unit aims to facilitate the use of the Foundation's research results through the provision of an enquiry service, Internet sites and other electronic services. The information centre complements this through the collection and utilisation of information from a wide range of other sources along with Foundation material.

(Project No. 0169. Programme managers: F. Murray/B. Schmidt/N. Wood)

Multilingual programme of publications/electronic publications

This project is directed at publishing the Foundation's research results in formats that guarantee the best and widest access, in a readable presentation and with a consistency in quality.

Working in close association with the Foundation's publisher, the Office for Official Publications of the EC, this programme addresses publication of the results of research in both paper and electronic formats in the official languages of the EU within the limits of feasibility. It includes copublishing with commercial and institutional bodies across Europe and the publishing of the Foundation's work by other bodies, either in part or in whole under licence.

The growth in electronic publishing using CD ROMS, databases and the Internet means a greater emphasis on selective dissemination, 'on demand' publishing and the better management of information to publish products that are relevant, timely and accessible to the Foundation's audience.

Within the programme there will be some 40 titles published (in the order of 160 language versions in total). About 30 publications are expected to be licensed to other bodies.

(Project No. 0173. Programme managers: M. de Boer/N. Wood)

Promotions and public relations

The Foundation has as a priority objective the implementation of a planned and sustained programme of communication with targeted audiences in order to promote its work and information services and to disseminate the results of its research. To meet this objective, the Foundation engages in a number of marketing, dissemination and information-awareness activities. These are ongoing projects carried out as an integral part of the annual programme.

The marketing programme is concerned with meeting and informing groups and individuals from the Foundation's audiences, showing the Foundation's research results and current projects at relevant international exhibitions, contributing to events connected with EU presidencies, and so on. An important part of the programme is concerned with monitoring and analysing information activities to ensure that all relevant audiences are being reached.



The dissemination programme ensures that the published results of the Foundation's work are sent to the relevant audiences through targeted mail shots. In cooperation with the Office for Official Publications of the EC, specialised mailing lists for different interest groups have been developed. Thus, direct dissemination of products has become more finely tuned. Managing these mailing lists requires constant monitoring and updating, in keeping with their status as the most effective single dissemination tool.

The press programme includes the production of information tools such as the Foundation's monthly newsletter *Communiqué* and the Annual Report, as well as regular communication with the mass media.

(Project No. 0180. Programme managers: B. Nolan/N. Wood/D. Hirschfeld)

Resource database

The resource database project aims to provide the Foundation with the means for more efficient storage, retrieval and dissemination via different media of the results of its research programmes.

(Project No. 0192. Programme managers: M. de Boer/F. Murray/B. Schmidt)

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working
Conditions

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