



DIARY

This issue of *Eurofound News* marks a profound transition in the organisation's history. Jorma Karppinen leaves the organisation on 30 November at the end of his five-year mandate, to be replaced by Juan Menéndez-Valdés. Mr Karppinen sought to boost Eurofound's efficacy in meeting its goals, by driving the organisation-wide implementation of a one-stop-shop project management tool and the development of a comprehensive system of indicators to evaluate Eurofound's corporate performance.

During Mr Karppinen's tenure, Eurofound's research capacity was greatly boosted by an intensive recruitment drive for research expertise and the research work itself underwent profound changes, having had to quickly adapt to the altered social and economic circumstances of the financial crisis and recession; another transition reflected in its work is the ending of the 10-year scope of the Lisbon Strategy, and its replacement by the new Europe 2020 strategy, which it will fall to Mr Menéndez-Valdés to implement in the body of Eurofound's work.

Mr Menéndez-Valdés takes up the post of Director on 1 December; prior to this, he was responsible for education and training, and employment and migration issues at the Spanish Confederation of Employers' Organisations. Furthermore, since 1999, he has been a member of the Governing Board of Cedefop, Eurofound's sister agency (which deals with vocational training), serving as chair of the Board from 2007 to 2009. Eurofound wishes Mr Karppinen well in his next ventures, and welcomes Mr Menéndez-Valdés to a new chapter in the agency's history.

Short-time working and flexicurity

Short-time working and temporary layoff schemes have the potential to act as a concrete implementation of flexicurity, according to the annual report for 2010 from Eurofound's European Restructuring Monitor (ERM), presented at the European Employment Forum in Brussels on 24 November.

In the face of falling demand and slumps in production, short-time working and temporary layoff schemes are being used to reduce working time while – often using public funds – protecting workers' incomes and company solvency; frequently, the time spent not working is used for training instead. The report examines these schemes in detail: it finds that they offer internal numerical flexibility for the employer, and job and income security for the employee; where training is conducted, this contributes to employment security. The report also proposes that the genuine consensus that has been achieved among social partners in formulating these schemes could be harnessed to develop reduced working time schemes in a more active policy direction. Read *Extending flexicurity – The potential of short-time working schemes* at www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef1071.htm

Working conditions slow to improve

The working conditions of Europeans have not – overall – dramatically changed over the last decade, according to the first findings from Eurofound's fifth European Working Conditions Survey, released at a joint conference with the Belgian EU Presidency on 16–17 November.

For instance, work intensity remains at a high level for many, the extent to which workers can make their own decisions about how they do their job has not improved (leaving a large number of workers ill-equipped to deal with work's demands) and European workers remain as exposed to physical hazards as they did 20 years ago. However, in 2010 in the EU15, training paid for by employers was at its highest level since 1995 for the EU15, with 34% of workers receiving training in the last 12 months. And around 60% of workers feel that they would be able to do their current job at the age of 60, a marginal increase since 2000. For more on the survey's findings, go to www.eurofound.europa.eu/ewco/surveys/ewcs2010/index.htm

NEWS IN PICTURES

Eurofound launches fifth Working Conditions Survey findings

Pictured at the conference – 'Working longer through better working conditions, new modes of work and career organisation', where Eurofound launched the first findings of its fifth European Working Conditions Survey – MEP **Elisabeth Morin-Chartier** and **Michal Boni**, Minister in the Polish government.



Commerce sector needs better social dialogue

At a meeting of the European Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee in Brussels on 29 November., Eurofound presented data from its research into the commerce sector (the wholesale and retail trade). Of all European workers, 14% are employed in the commerce sector, which links manufacturers with around 493 million consumers in the EU every day. Change is expected to remain a constant feature in the sector, even when the overall economic situation stabilises. However, the social dialogue needed to manage this change is poorly developed: experience to date of social dialogue in the sector has, in most countries, not been very positive. Moreover, data from Eurofound's European Company Survey indicates that collective bargaining coverage and the degree of employee representation in the sector is generally low. Given this deficit, improving and extending social dialogue is a prerequisite for managing change.

For more, go to www.eurofound.europa.eu/events/2010/commerce2911/index.htm

Presidency draws on Eurofound experience

In searching for measures to promote the social inclusion of older people, EU policies give special attention to encouraging volunteering. In a conference in Brussels on 6–7 December, 'Volunteering as a means of empowerment and social inclusion – a bridge between the European years 2010 and 2011', Eurofound is running a workshop examining the potential for this. The conference, organised in Brussels by the European Volunteer Centre, bridges the European Year of Social Exclusion (2010) and that of Volunteering (2011). Previous Eurofound research on the subject has been recently published in a working paper that looks at experiences in five Member States. The paper draws a number of conclusions from these experiences – for instance, that it is important that flexible ways of participation be possible for older people (through, for example, short-term projects or clearly defined, manageable tasks). A key factor for success is the opportunity to gain new skills.

Read *Measures for social inclusion of the elderly: The case of volunteering* at www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef1055.htm

Public sector loses most jobs

In light of huge national debts resulting from the financial crisis, cost-cutting in the public sector has had a marked impact on job losses, as recorded by Eurofound's European Restructuring Monitor (ERM) over the third quarter of 2010. Of all sectors, public administration had by far the greatest number of job losses (as announced in the media in the last quarter), with nearly 70,000 jobs gone. This was followed by auto manufacturing (with more than 7,000 jobs lost), finance-related services (6,000 jobs) and health and social work (over 5,000 jobs). Despite the extensive job losses in the automotive sector, however, there are also signs of recovery: some companies that had dismissed employees due to the recession are now rehiring. In fact, the sector announced the most new jobs (nearly 7,000) in the last quarter.

Download the *ERM quarterly* from www.eurofound.europa.eu/emcc/erm/index.htm

Social dialogue in the banking sector – the global view

Recent Eurofound research has looked in detail at the impact of the financial crisis and recession upon the banking sector; most recently, on 22–23 November, Eurofound held a conference 'Social dialogue and recession in the banking sector' in Rome, which looked at industrial relations in the sector from a global perspective, comparing the challenges faced by the banking sector in the EU with those in Japan, the US, Brazil, China and India, and seeking to develop a better understanding of how social dialogue can play a role in coping with recession. Participants included professionals working in banking services, as well as representatives of governments, NGOs, trade unions and employer organisations. For more information on the event, go to www.eurofound.europa.eu/events/2010/confrome2211/index.htm

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Company initiatives for workers with care responsibilities for disabled children or adults – Working paper
www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef1062.htm

Financing and operating active labour market programmes during the crisis – Background paper
www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef1066.htm

Flexibility profiles of European companies
www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef1060.htm

EMCC case studies: Upskilling in the recession – the ProAct short-time working scheme in Wales (UK)
www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef1056.htm

EMCC case studies: Short-time working in the legal sector – the Flex Programme at Norton Rose (UK)
www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef1058.htm

Entwicklungen auf dem Gebiet der Arbeitsbeziehungen im europäischen Handelssektor (Zusammenfassung)
www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef10811_de.htm

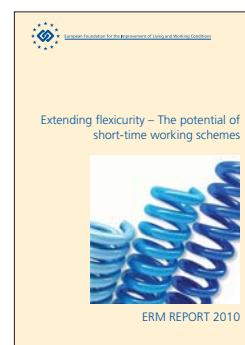
Managing household debts: Social service provision in the EU – Working paper
www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef1070.htm

Repräsentativität der europäischen sektoralen Organisationen der Sozialpartner (Informationsblatt)
www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef1072_de.htm

Restructuring in Belgium – Background paper
www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef1080.htm

Publication of the month

Extending flexicurity – the potential of short-time working schemes



www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef1071.htm