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Annual Work Programme 2014

Abstract

The year 2014 marks the second year of implementation of Eurofound's four-year work programme 2013–2016, *From crisis to recovery: Better informed policies for a competitive and fair Europe*. The multiannual strategy laid down in the four-year programme provides Eurofound with a clear framework for the development of its annual programmes. The programme describes the policy context in which the Agency operates and defines the mission of the organisation and its core areas of expertise. It identifies four policy priority areas where Eurofound will provide high-quality, timely and policy-relevant knowledge as input to better informed policies. This is the Agency's strategic objective for the 2013–2016 period.

The activities proposed in the annual programme for 2014 are designed to contribute to achieving this strategic objective. They are in line with the commitments made in the four-year programme while also taking into account the organisational and policy context specific to 2014. Many activities launched in 2013 were designed to be continued or complemented by follow-up projects during 2014. In addition, a number of new projects will commence. The 2014 work programme also takes into account the sequence and work processes of Eurofound's flagship activities, the European surveys and the observatories, which require the allocation of resources in each annual programme.

Keywords

Europe, work, public policy, Eurofound

Comments

Suggested Citation

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Eurofound

Annual work programme 2014

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Introduction

The year 2014 marks the second year of implementation of Eurofound's four-year work programme 2013–2016, *From crisis to recovery: Better informed policies for a competitive and fair Europe*. The multiannual strategy laid down in the four-year programme provides Eurofound with a clear framework for the development of its annual programmes. The programme describes the policy context in which the Agency operates and defines the mission of the organisation and its core areas of expertise. It identifies four policy priority areas¹ where Eurofound will provide high-quality, timely and policy-relevant knowledge as input to better informed policies. This is the Agency's strategic objective for the 2013–2016 period.

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¹ The four policy priority areas are: 1) Increasing labour market participation and combating unemployment by creating jobs, improving labour market functioning and promoting integration; 2) Improving working conditions and making work sustainable throughout the life course; 3) Developing industrial relations to ensure equitable and productive solutions in a changing policy context; 4) Improving standards of living and promoting social cohesion in the face of economic disparities and social inequalities.

Policy context

Eurofound's 2013–2016 work programme outlines a dual challenge for the European Union and the Member States: finding a way out of the crisis while pursuing the mid-term ambition of achieving progress towards a competitive and fair Europe. For 2014, the main parameters of the policy context, as outlined in the four-year programme, have not changed: it remains a valid framework, with only limited need for updating with recent developments.

Although some positive results from efforts to stem the financial crisis are apparent – financial markets have calmed and European tools to address the sovereign debt crisis and financial instability have improved – the European Union is far from where it hoped to be when the European growth strategy, Europe 2020, was adopted in 2010.

Reforms and policies introduced in Member States have yet to lead to stable growth and higher employment in some cases. There are concerns about the effect of budget cuts, changes in tax and benefits, and wage reductions on internal demand and employment. The social situation remains critical in a number of Member States. The issue of high unemployment, together with economic inactivity, remains the most relevant challenge, particularly in its impact on young people.

The crisis has impacted on the living standards of European citizens, and Eurofound's research confirms that difficulties are not experienced in the same way either within or across Member States. The results from Eurofound's European Quality of Life Survey show a deterioration in the material situation of Europeans and a decline in the levels of optimism and trust in institutions among European citizens. Public discontent, protests and election results in some Member States show that support for European integration among citizens is further diminishing.

The crisis has also intensified the demographic challenge most Member States are facing. Net immigration from outside the EU has slowed and, according to the European Commission's analysis,² the crisis has also affected fertility rates within the EU. With the extension of life expectancy, the challenge of managing longer working lives is increasingly important. Issues surrounding the mobility of workers within the EU are also receiving growing attention, not least with labour market restrictions on Romanian and Bulgarian citizens set to end after the seven-year transition period expires on 1 January 2014.

As coordination of fiscal policies within the euro zone has developed, the social dimension of the Economic and Monetary Union is under discussion. In its October 2013 Communication, 'Strengthening the social dimension of the Economic and Monetary Union', the Commission joins the Council in calling for better surveillance of employment and social challenges, with the help of appropriate indicators, in order to reinforce the social aspects of the Economic and Monetary Union.

Europe relies on dialogue and cooperation among the key labour market players, as well as their commitment to finding solutions to further develop the European social model. Changes in European economic governance are also impacting on national social dialogue and the participation of social partners in the European Semester and the National Reform Programmes is being discussed.

The European growth strategy – Europe 2020 – has been further developed to support Member States to get back on a path of inclusive growth. The role of social policy in achieving a sustainable recovery in Europe is highlighted in the Social Investment Package, launched by the European Commission in early 2013. This road map, which complements the 2012 Employment Package and the Youth Employment Package, aims to help Member States use their social policy budget more effectively by promoting best practice and providing guidance on social investment. Eurofound will continue to support the implementation of these and other initiatives through its work in 2014.

² *EU employment and social situation – Quarterly review*, March 2013

Eurofound activities in 2014

The focus of Eurofound's 2014 work programme will be on providing knowledge that will help to address Europe's employment and social crisis.

In relation to employment, the Agency will continue to provide information on ongoing changes in the employment structure. To support policies aimed at combating unemployment, the focus will be on job creation in SMEs and on initiatives for young people. For those in employment, sustainable working conditions throughout working life, as well as company practices that improve both working conditions and company performance, will be central research interests.

The social crisis experienced in many Member States is closely related to the tightening of public budgets. Public services will receive special attention, with research examining how access, quality and effectiveness are impacted by the crisis and aiming to identify where and how they have successfully adapted to the dual challenge of increased demand for services and declining resources. These questions will guide research on a number of specific services and on social benefits. Intelligent use of scarce public funds means finding the right balance between serving immediate needs and investing today for long-term returns. By providing figures illustrating the costs of inaction, the Agency aims to assist policy initiatives that require long-term social investment.

Eurofound will address these issues of particular relevance in the 2014 policy context, together with other, longer-term commitments made in its four-year programme. The Europe-wide surveys and the observatories remain the backbone of Eurofound's work. The Agency seeks to provide high-quality, timely and policy-relevant knowledge as input to better informed policies in the four priority areas identified in its multiannual strategy and listed below.

1. Increasing labour market participation and combating unemployment by creating jobs, improving labour market functioning and promoting integration

With unemployment the biggest challenge facing the European Union, information on how labour markets are changing remains of key importance to policymakers. Through the European Monitoring Centre on Change (EMCC), Eurofound will continue to analyse the drivers of labour market change and to monitor how companies are adapting and how the structure of employment is changing. Two monitoring tools are used to facilitate this task. The European Jobs Monitor (EJM) will continue to provide figures on the kind of jobs created and destroyed in terms of wages, non-pecuniary job quality and the educational attainment of workers. Policymakers will thus receive a clear picture of which types of jobs are declining, expanding or remain stagnant. To this analysis of employment shifts will be added an analysis of labour market transitions and occupational mobility of individuals in the labour market, with the aim of identifying potential job options for new entrants and types of entry-level jobs with good prospects for positive transition. The European Restructuring Monitor (ERM), which monitors announced job loss and gain arising from restructuring, will continue to provide data on restructuring events and also document through its databases how restructuring is managed and regulated. Policymakers can access up-to-date and validated information on support instruments, legislation and, from 2014, case studies describing innovative practice at company level.

A job-rich recovery depends on the willingness of companies to create jobs, an enabling environment and framework conditions conducive to employment creation. Small and medium-sized enterprises have shown relatively high resilience in terms of job loss during the crisis. Maximising their job creation potential is crucial. Eurofound will build on previous findings to examine the characteristics of SME growth and identify what is encouraging and what is hindering job creation in SMEs. New forms of employment can also be a source of new jobs, and Eurofound will continue its investigation of specific, innovative forms of employment relations identified in the 2013 project that mapped these relations, and the associated working conditions and regulatory issues. Another route to job creation is to support those who want to start a new business as an alternative to employment by others. Start-up support measures are part of active labour market policies in most Member States. Eurofound will examine evaluations of such measures, focusing on start-ups by young people, as part of its commitment to analyse selected labour market reforms that have a positive impact

on employment. This will build on the investigation of youth entrepreneurship started in 2013, and it is expected that results will inform the implementation of Youth Guarantee programmes.

Participation of the largest possible numbers in the labour force is recognised as a prerequisite for sustainable and inclusive growth in Europe. The Social Investment Package highlights the role of women's participation in achieving this objective and calls for measures contributing to raising female employment rates. The economic effects of low female labour market participation will be explored, combined with a review of policies supporting women's employment, adding another dimension to Eurofound's wide-ranging research on inclusive labour markets, work-life balance and other related areas.

The functioning of labour markets is facilitated by public employment services. They are key agents for activation policies aimed at smoothing labour market transitions. Given the diversity of job search paths and the general employment challenge, this is an increasingly difficult task. The European Commission has therefore presented a proposal for a decision on enhanced cooperation between public employment services, aimed at facilitating mutual learning through evidence-based benchmarking. Eurofound will contribute to this exercise and will assist in the development of methodologies and indicators to assess performance of these services. The Agency will also examine transitions from unemployment to employment, including a focus on transition rates for weaker groups, such as the low-skilled, non-nationals and young people, which will help to contextualise benchmarking results for public employment services.

2. Improving working conditions and making work sustainable throughout the life course

The working environment plays a central role in enhancing the potential of the workforce. Good working conditions are also linked to a high labour market participation rate. Information on how working conditions are developing remains a priority for Eurofound, with a particular focus on whether they enable an ever-more-diverse working-age population to engage in employment and contribute to the success of companies and the growth of the economy .

The European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) has provided evidence on working conditions and how they have changed since 1991. A sixth edition of the survey is in preparation, and 2014 will see finalisation of the questionnaire and other preparatory work for fieldwork to be conducted in 2015. The expansion of the geographical scope of the survey, which would open up the possibility for a comparison of developments in working conditions beyond the EU, is envisaged in cooperation with the International Labour Organization (ILO). Eurofound's integrated observatory on industrial relations and working conditions, the European Observatory of Working Life will, from 2014 onwards, monitor relevant developments, and show how legislation, negotiation and workplace policies and practices influence working life. Reporting will include information on the national contexts as well as evidence from quantitative and qualitative research conducted at national level.

Two components of working conditions are of special interest and subject to monitoring, analysis and recommendations within the European Semester: pay and working time. Both are linked to the adjustment to changes in economic circumstances and have been monitored by Eurofound over many years. Following on from a review in 2013 of pay developments over the past decade, Eurofound will, in 2014, analyse developments in working time since 2000, exploiting its continuous data collection in this area as well as other relevant data sources. As the period covered includes times of growth and recession, this research will provide information on changes in working time in the context of changing economic conditions. The analysis of pay developments started in 2013 will be complemented with an examination of the distribution of wages before and after the crisis. Comparing different sectors will make it possible to identify probable reasons for distributional changes. Eurofound will assess to what extent changes are linked to the increase in unemployment, developments in the international economy (trade openness) or changes in productivity, among other factors.

The elements that contribute to making work sustainable throughout working life continue to be of special interest in the light of Europe's demographic challenges. The combined effect of changes in life expectancy, fertility and migration has intensified this challenge during the crisis. Building on a framework developed in 2013 describing the elements that need to be considered if more people from Europe's diverse working-age population are to be employed and stay in employment longer, Eurofound will continue its work in this area. The Agency will identify examples of national-level policies in a number of Member States that address the different dimensions of sustainable work identified by the conceptual framework and examine to what extent and how they are combined to deliver an integrated sustainable work strategy. Other projects will look at specific groups of people. Work will continue on how mid-career review and internal mobility help workers to stay in employment longer. The focus will be on company practices that encourage and enable workers to change jobs or tasks in order to extend their working life. In the context of work begun in 2013 using EWCS data to identify occupations associated with multiple disadvantages, Eurofound will identify how working conditions can be improved for workers in these occupations. Low-qualified workers will be among the groups examined.

The job-rich recovery Europe seeks depends on competitive companies with the capacity to innovate and grow. In 2014, Eurofound will use data from the third wave of the European Company Survey (ECS) (2013) to examine how practices in work organisation, human resources management, employee involvement and social dialogue are linked to company performance and innovation. Two separate analyses – one focusing on work organisation and workplace innovation, the other on direct and indirect employee involvement – will help to identify win-win situations where productivity-enhancing measures and good working conditions are successfully combined. While the ECS dataset will provide information about the prevalence of practices in the areas covered by the survey, in-depth interviews in selected companies which have participated in the survey will enable detailed exploration of the practices, the motivations behind their introduction and the outcomes as perceived by the different parties.

In the light of the European Commission's 2012 Communication, 'The EU strategy towards the eradication of trafficking in human beings 2012–2014', Eurofound has been requested to support the implementation of the EU initiative. In 2014 therefore, Eurofound will provide information on how temporary work agencies and intermediaries, such as recruitment agencies, address this issue. Eurofound will map regulations that apply especially to the recruitment of foreign workers in the Member States, looking specifically at licensing systems. The project will also identify relevant social partner initiatives aimed at preventing the trafficking of human beings.

3. Developing industrial relations to ensure equitable and productive solutions in a changing policy context

Eurofound will continue to monitor trends and developments in industrial relations and to record how the social partners are addressing current and future challenges in a bid to find solutions. Key developments will be covered by Eurofound's European Observatory of Working Life. Eurofound has observed and reported on developments in industrial relations in a systematic way since 1997. This unique knowledge base will, in 2014, be exploited to produce an overview of developments in industrial relations over time. The main focus will be on collective bargaining, changes in legislative support, bargaining incidence and outcomes (other than those related to pay and working time), trends towards centralised or decentralised bargaining and new topics covered. Building on this, and in order to assist in the continuous monitoring and analysis of industrial relations in Europe, Eurofound plans to map the key variables and criteria for comparing industrial relations, identifying gaps to be covered in future research. Various data sources, including the ECS, will be examined to test the operability of the framework. The studies on the representativeness of the social partners will be continued in order to bolster European social dialogue. Continuous research by Eurofound in this demanding area has highlighted the need to map the diverging concepts of representativeness in the Member States. Revealing and analysing these differences could help to increase the effectiveness of European-level social dialogue. Eurofound will provide an overview of definitions and of rules and regulations that are applied to establish representativeness and will compare the privileges and consequences associated with it.

Regulatory changes in the area of economic governance at EU and national level have affected the involvement and impact of the industrial relations actors at both levels. The role of social partners in National Reform Programmes and the European Semester will be examined in a 2014 project that will look at national as well as European-level involvement. Eurofound will map to what extent the social partners are involved in the design and implementation of National Reform Programmes in the different Member States and at European level. In addition to their participation in processes introduced through changes in European economic governance, the social partners are facing a variety of challenges at national level that have triggered innovative solutions. The emergence of new topics, tools and approaches will be examined in a project aimed at mapping examples of these across the Member States. The comparative nature of these studies will make them suitable for mutual learning and capacity building at European level.

4. Improving standards of living and promoting social cohesion in the face of economic disparities and social inequalities

Key social trends in the European Union point to a deepening social crisis and growing divergence within the Union. Monitoring the evolution of living conditions and quality of life is one of Eurofound's key tasks. With the analysis of data from the third European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS) largely completed in 2013, planning will start for the next survey to be conducted in 2016. Collaboration with other organisations will be explored, with specific emphasis on cooperation with Eurostat to enhance the survey's methodology. This is to ensure that the fourth EQLS serves the evolving needs for policy-relevant data, addresses information gaps and is complementary to other initiatives.

High-quality public services are a fundamental element of the European social model. It is a key challenge for providers and policymakers to maintain the effectiveness of public services and improve the resilience of social protection systems in times of diminishing public budgets. Governments need to know whether public funds are well spent and lead to convincing outcomes, promoting better living conditions and more opportunities for active participation in society. Eurofound has started to investigate two areas of public services, childcare and health services, to see how these services are adapting in times of crisis and in what ways quality and access have been maintained. In 2014, additional countries and additional subsectors will be included in the analysis. A new project will investigate the delivery of public services by private and third-sector organisations, examining both developments and the implications for access, quality and effectiveness.

The Social Investment Package calls for simple, targeted and activating social investment. In the context of limited budgets and austerity measures, Member States must ensure that the social benefits intended to support citizens in vulnerable situations are actually reaching the target groups. A new study looking at how efficient and timely provision can be achieved will identify good-practice examples of improvements in access to benefits by Member States and service providers. The question of how service provision to families has changed in response to the crisis will be examined as a next step in Eurofound's research on families in the economic crisis, which started in 2013. As public funds have been reorganised in many countries, cuts to existing services as well as the introduction of new services to support households with family responsibilities will be examined, yielding information on the impacts and evaluation of the effectiveness of these reforms. The 2013 project on the social inclusion of young people, the group most affected by the crisis, will be finalised in 2014.

A good standard of housing is an essential component of quality of life. Accommodation costs represent the biggest expenditure item for most Europeans and, for most house-buyers, by far the biggest lifetime investment. Poor housing conditions are linked to poorer health and well-being and are associated with increased risk of poverty and social exclusion that makes it more difficult to improve conditions. In 2014, Eurofound will investigate the availability, affordability and access to good-quality housing as well as general policy approaches across the EU promoting access to good-quality housing. The research will identify groups that are exposed to an acute risk of living in poor or inadequate accommodation and will examine the social and economic cost of living in low-quality housing.

Migration from third countries as a challenge for social and integration policies, on the one hand, and a contributor to functioning labour markets, on the other, was identified as a key policy issue in the four-year programme. In 2013, Eurofound started to explore the relationship between migration, labour market policies and integration policies. In 2014, this project will look at the institutional arrangements and mechanisms that link migration to labour market policies, and examine to what extent these policies are coordinated with integration policies; it will review how they are assessed and what impact a coordinated approach would have on the long-term socioeconomic integration of migrants.

Communicating knowledge, organising debate, facilitating exchange

Eurofound's communication focus in 2014 will continue to be shaped by the priority issues on the employment and social policy agendas of the EU institutions, EU social partners and EU Presidencies. Specifically in 2014, Eurofound will re-establish and develop its relationships with the new European Parliament that will be elected in May 2014, as well as with the new college of Commissioners

Consolidating the communication focus during 2013 on employment and job creation, youth and quality of life, Eurofound will, during 2014, also highlight its work in the area of sustainable work and public services in Europe. Communicating the results and analysis from the third European Company Survey completed during 2013 will be a high priority during this year, with particular emphasis on highlighting win-win practices across European workplaces as a tool to building growth and competitiveness in a Europe striving to exit the crisis.

As an effective vehicle to ensure Eurofound's contribution in these areas, and following on from previous collaboration with EU Presidencies during 2013, a focus will be on the priorities of the Greek and Italian chairs. As part of this systematic collaboration with the Presidencies, which also seeks to reach out to national level where relevant in terms of influencing or implementing EU policy, Eurofound will further strengthen its liaison and cooperation with the EESC and Council committees such as EMCO and the SPC. Building on the work carried out in 2013, Eurofound will continue to provide support in terms of information and expertise in priority areas for these committees. Moreover, Eurofound will step up its efforts to adjust and adapt its communication and its outputs to feed into the timing of the European Semester.

The concerted national outreach initiative, which commenced in 2013 with a series of country cluster meetings, will be continued in 2014. This aims to reach out to the key tripartite target groups at national level with Eurofound's relevant research and expertise. These meetings will also serve to enhance collaboration with the Governing Board members and harness the potential of the new network of correspondents.

A highlight of Eurofound's communication and information activities will be the opportunities presented by the European Institutions' focus on youth in 2013. Eurofound will draw on its comprehensive range of research in this key area of policy concern. Further contributing to the policy debate through its research into the economic and social cost of young people who are not in employment education or training (NEETs), Eurofound will also promote its new work on the implementation of the Youth Guarantee and youth entrepreneurship as well as on the social inclusion of young people and the transition of young people into work as timely inputs to the EU agenda. Drawing also on data and analysis from the third European Quality of Life Survey as well as the European Working Conditions Survey and the network of correspondents, Eurofound is well placed to provide an informed and evidence-based narrative on the pressing subject of young people and their future in Europe.

A number of high-level events are planned during 2014, some associated with the EU Presidency programmes, others on the initiative of Eurofound itself. As an annual component of Eurofound's events programme, the two sessions of the Foundation Seminar series are scheduled to take place on the theme of sustainable work.

Finally, the large-scale work that began during 2013 in upgrading and developing the Eurofound website will be progressed further during 2014 incorporating the establishment of the new integrated European Observatory of Working Life.

Strategic action and development

The implementation of a European observatory on industrial relations and working conditions will take place in 2014. This development aims to integrate the existing separate observatories for industrial relations (EIRO) and working conditions (EWCO). As indicated in the 2013–2016 work programme, this is a strategic initiative designed to provide a single platform for all Eurofound's information on working life (see Project 10). The operation follows intense preparations, including the establishment of a new network of national (and European-level) correspondents to provide expert national inputs relevant to the European debate that will allow for comparisons of developments and contextualising information. The main task of the correspondents will be to contribute to the new observatory. The network will also provide input to the EMCC in the field of employment and restructuring and will contribute to other related social policy topics. The network will be an important vehicle for Eurofound to reach out to its stakeholders. It is also expected that correspondents will be in contact with the members of Eurofound's Governing Board from their countries.

The integrated observatory is fully web-based. It will benefit from another large-scale strategic activity that started in 2013: the upgrading and further development of Eurofound's website. The objective is to increase the interactive nature of Eurofound's online communication and ensure greater accessibility and improved usability (multilingual access, search facilities and navigation, etc.), as well as consistent branding.

The Survey Methodology Working Group that was set up in 2011 will continue to pursue its aim of continuously improving survey design and methodology for survey data collection, analysis, storage and dissemination. This transversal group ensures that lessons learnt in previous waves of Eurofound's surveys feed optimally into the preparation of future surveys, such as the sixth EWCS and the fourth EQLS. Tasked with following up on the findings from the internal evaluation of the application of research methodologies in Eurofound, the Survey Methodology Working Group facilitates the streamlining of practices between the three surveys and – in collaboration with the Human Resources function – contributes to capacity building in the area of survey design, fieldwork management and survey data analysis.

Internal and external evaluation expertise will be used to provide methodological support to projects in the 2014 programme.

The inclusion of more global comparison in Eurofound's research will continue to be significant. Discussions with the ILO in the context of the sixth EWCS started in 2013.

EU agencies which have a cooperation agreement with Eurofound (EIGE, the European Institute for Gender Equality; FRA, the Fundamental Rights Agency; Cedefop, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training; EU-OSHA, the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work; and ETF, the European Training Foundation) have been consulted during the elaboration of Eurofound's 2014 programme to identify synergies and areas for cooperation. The collaboration agreements are implemented through annual action plans. Eurofound is actively involved in many of the EU agency networks such as those on scientific quality, performance development, communication and procurement.

The successful implementation of the programme requires continuous organisational development. In 2014, initiatives started in previous years will be further rolled out in relation to project management, resource planning and management, customer relations management, and further streamlining of procedures and processes for operational excellence. The new strategic plan for information and communications technology (ICT) will underpin many of these developments in ensuring a consolidation of SharePoint-based tools supporting collaboration and efficiency in the area of research, communication and internal operations. Investigation of cloud computing applications will continue.

Internal control and data protection

Eurofound continues to cooperate with the Internal Audit Service in maintaining the effectiveness of its internal control procedures and practices to safeguard financial and operational management. It will follow up on the recommendations of the 2013 Audit on Customer Relations and Stakeholder Relations Management. The Internal Control Coordinator will also monitor the implementation of the actions following recommendations from ex-post control exercises and from Eurofound evaluations.

While undertaking a series of internal assessments to confirm the reliability and integrity of data-processing operations, with a view to fully complying with Regulation (EC) 45/2001 on the protection of personal data, Eurofound is following developments in the European Parliament and European Council in relation to the adoption of a new regulation on data protection. This may have a significant impact on the way personal data is processed in the organisation. In addition, Eurofound will continue its proactive and fruitful cooperation with the European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS) and the network of Data Protection Officers (DPOs) of EU bodies. The EDPS is likely to propose new guidelines in this area and will organise specialised workshops for DPOs. The DPO team will continue to promote awareness of data protection issues in Eurofound through training and themed events.

Human resources

Eurofound's staff resources place the Agency in a strong position to deliver the 2014 programme. Internal developments as well as external challenges require a strategic positioning of the Human Resources function, working in partnership with managers and staff. The relatively young workforce and increasing compliance requirements, together with the upcoming reform of the Staff Regulations involving a reduction in staff, point to the need for more detailed workforce planning in conjunction with learning and development, knowledge-exchange initiatives and recruitment. The results of the skills-mapping exercise will feed into the selection and recruitment process, the workforce-planning tool and the new Project Management tool, and will provide strategic and long-term information to the HR Learning and Development Plan. A review of current values and the development of a competency model will be geared towards the current and future challenges of Eurofound. The creation of 'skills and competency maps' will assist in identifying and managing any gaps in relation to these challenges.

HR is involved on a continuous basis in organisational development. Initiatives started in previous years (such as reviews of the Communication function in Eurofound and the network of European observatories) are continuing in the areas of resource planning and management, various forms of collaboration, process efficiencies, quality management aimed at strengthening the Research and Communication functions, and striving for operational excellence.

Budget

The budget envisaged for the implementation of this work programme is based on a decision by the European Commission to freeze its contribution in nominal terms at the 2013 level, that is, at €20,371,000. This decrease in the available budget in real terms (inflation dependent) can be partly offset by a reduction of posts in the establishment plan (-2% in 2014).

However, it should be noted that the inclusion of Croatia for a full 12 months puts additional strain on Eurofound's finances. Any further requests for budget reductions in 2014 would, inevitably, lead to a situation where not all projects in this work programme could be fully implemented.

As in previous years, Eurofound plans to raise additional revenue from services rendered to third parties and from the Commission's Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA). The total budget for 2014 therefore amounts to €20,750,000 (+0.1% compared to 2013).

Table 1: *Revenue and expenditure 2012–2014*

Revenue

	2012 Executed budget	2013 Budget	2014 Draft budget
Title	€	€	€
1. General Subsidy	20,384,000	20,371,000	20,371,000
3. Other contributions (e.g. IPA)	604,736	200,000	200,000
5. Miscellaneous revenue	248,877	pm	pm
6. Revenue from services		160,000	179,000
Total	21,295,057	20,731,000	20,750,000

Note: 'pm' is a placeholder for amounts that potentially might become available in the future.

Expenditure

	2012 Executed budget	2013 Budget	2014 Draft budget
Title	€	€	€
1. Staff	11,224,325	11,912,000	12,000,000
2. Buildings, equipment and misc. operating expenditure	1,783,117	1,510,000	1,510,000
3. Operating expenditure	7,781,540	7,309,000	7,240,000
Total	20,788,982	21,731,000	20,750,000

Staff-related expenditure in Title 1 comprises salaries and salary-related costs as well as recruitment, training and mission costs. While the increase of 0.7% allows for the career development of staff, the expected salary freeze at the 2012 level is already included. Should, however, the Court of Justice decide the currently pending cases in favour of the plaintiffs who asked for an annulment of the Council's decisions in 2011 and 2012 not to increase the salaries of EU staff members according to the 'salary method', the increased Title 1 expenditures could not be covered by the budget as shown above. Eurofound's budgetary surpluses in 2011 and 2012, due to the decision not to grant any salary increase according to the salary method, would have to be made available to the Agency in 2014.

Expenditure on Eurofound's infrastructure, such as buildings and equipment, remains unchanged in comparison to 2013. Therefore, efficiency gains have to be achieved in order to offset the expected inflation in this area, mainly increasing costs for utilities such as electricity, gas and water.

Details on planned costs for operational projects and activities (grouped under Title 3) can be found at the end of Annex 1 ('Budget estimate for Title 3'). Here all projects are budgeted with full activity-based cost, which means that on top of the actual cash spent on them (a total of €7,240,000 for Title 3) a share of personnel and infrastructure cost is allocated to them according to the staff resources planned to be absorbed by these projects.

As described in the four-year programme 2013–2016, Eurofound groups its projects under three top-level activities: Research, Information and Communication, and Administration and Support. This activity-based budgeting (see Table 2) allows for a better understanding of the areas to which Eurofound's financial and human resources are allocated than the budgetary approach split into titles. The top-level activities can, according to management needs, be drilled down further into the four policy priority areas, the three organisational research units or any specific project (see also the detailed view at project level in Annex 1).

Eurofound intends to further strengthen its core activities (Research and Information and Communication) with an increased share of the total resources of 82% (the actual share in 2013 was 81%).

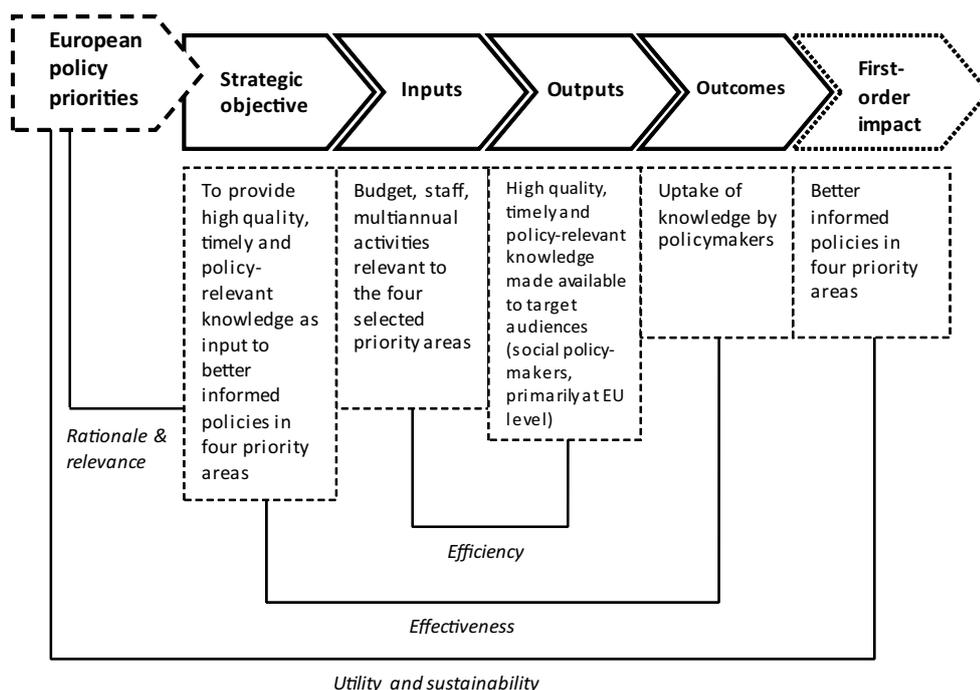
Table 2: Budget breakdown by top-level activities

Activities	2014 Draft budget €	%
Research	12,720,000	61
Information and Communication	4,242,000	20
Administration and Support	3,788,000	18
Total	20,750,000	100

Monitoring and evaluation

The external environment against which this programme will be implemented requires Eurofound to increase even further the attention it gives to the efficient and effective use of resources. Gathering performance data and analysis will continue to be a strong feature in the Agency's reporting. Eurofound is also committed to systematic interaction with its stakeholders and target groups to ensure the continuous relevance of its activities. It recognises the value of independent evaluations that focus on the programme's impact. Eurofound will pursue its monitoring and evaluation activities in 2014 according to well-established practice. Figure 1 depicts the programme framework for these activities.

Figure 1: Eurofound's monitoring and evaluation framework



The Eurofound Performance Monitoring System (EPMS) is aligned with the 2013–2016 work programme and its strategic objective, with increased emphasis on the qualitative analysis of collected and reported data, in order to be better informed regarding the uptake of knowledge created by target groups.

Eurofound will continue to pursue its commitment to ensuring the reliability of data.

The interface with the evaluation programme together with the stakeholder and target group feedback activities will be strengthened with a view to providing better insight into the uptake of Eurofound's research and its impact on the four policy priority areas of the four-year work programme.

At the level of programme evaluations, the ex-post evaluation of the completed 2009–2012 four-year programme will be a major activity in 2014. It will be conducted by independent external evaluation contractors. Eurofound's stakeholder representatives from the Governing Board, experts and European Commission evaluation staff will advise on this evaluation process. This evaluation is intended to gather reliable evidence about Eurofound's performance during the completed programme period 2009–2012, as well as to provide input to improve Eurofound's capacity to implement its current four-year programme. It will also inform the development of its future programme for the 2017–2020 period. During this programme year, evaluation expertise will support the preparation of the fourth European Quality of Life Survey.

Annex 1 - Project Descriptions

Priority area 1: Increasing labour market participation and combating unemployment by creating jobs, improving labour markets and promoting integration

Project 1: European Jobs Monitor

Research question/Reason for project

How is the employment structure changing in Europe? What are the labour market transitions that underlie recent structural change in Europe? How do developments in Europe compare with and can be explained by the new global division of labour?

Justification

Monitoring changes in labour market (through the European Monitoring Centre on Change – EMCC) is a key task of Eurofound's four-year programme. Since 2008, the European Jobs Monitor (EJM) has provided annual reports on changes not only in the number (available directly from Eurostat) but also in the type of jobs in terms of wages, educational content and, since 2013, quality. A longitudinal dimension can be added to the analysis to increase our knowledge of labour market transitions. EJM analysis is used in the Commission's flagship *Economic and Social Developments* report (in 2011 and contribution requested for 2013).

Objectives

- To describe recent changes in the type of jobs created and destroyed (in terms of wages, education and non-pecuniary quality).
- To add a longitudinal analysis to explore labour market transitions.
- To contextualise changing European employment structures in a global context.
- To improve the web accessibility of EJM data for a broader audience.

Outline of content

The EJM Report 2014 will contain three parts:

1. An update of the previous EJM analysis of employment growth by wage, educational content and job quality with the most recently available data.
2. An analysis of the patterns of labour market transitions and the occupational mobility between the various EJM rankings of jobs (wage, education and quality). This will identify jobs which are more open to new entrants and which entry-level jobs have most positive transition potential.
3. Structural change in Europe in the light of structural change in several other countries outside Europe based on the EJM methodology.

In addition, a new web tool will allow a user-driven extraction of EJM data (and charts) for a wider audience. This will provide information by Member State between 1995 and 2013 and by various EJM rankings of jobs (wage, education and non-pecuniary quality).

Methodology

The European analysis will be done in-house, following the jobs methodology of previous year and using LFS data. The recently available rotating panel of the EULFS data permits the innovative longitudinal analysis. The application of the EJM type analysis of non-European countries will be provided by researchers in the Global Jobs Network set up 2013.

Outputs³

EJM Annual report.

Project 2: European Restructuring Monitor – Events database and reporting

Research question/Reason for project

What are the employment effects of announced large-scale restructuring events in Europe?

Justification

Monitoring activities of the EMCC provide unique information on restructuring and its impact on employment in Europe. Data from the European Restructuring Monitor is used extensively by stakeholders, notably the European Commission and the European Parliament. There continues to be a need to provide data and develop further the ERM as a one-stop shop for information on restructuring.

Objectives

- To monitor and report on restructuring events and related employment impact.
- To continue to develop digital sources to improve this monitoring.

Outline of Content

Announced restructuring events are collected on a continuous basis by national correspondents. Contributions are supported by media monitoring services, editing and quality control processes. Digital monitoring of restructuring events will continue to be developed. The information collected is analysed, together with other data, in order to produce quarterly reports that include the employment impact and an annual report providing an overview of annual developments, which this year will be focused on the public sector.

Methodology

Contributions from national correspondents and digital monitoring of restructuring events. In-house research for analysis and reporting. The public sector part of the ERM annual report will incorporate work from a project of the 2013 work programme.

Outputs

- ERM quarterly 1.
- ERM quarterly 2.
- ERM quarterly 3.
- ERM quarterly 4.
- ERM Annual report.

³ Outputs are considered to be project-related: they are not necessarily an indication of the publication resulting from the project.

Project 3: ERM qualitative databases

Research question/Reason for project

What public and social partner-based measures are implemented in Member States to anticipate and manage restructuring? What are the key restructuring-related regulations in the Member States? How do companies plan and manage their restructuring?

Justification

With the aim of developing the ERM into a one-stop shop for restructuring, as indicated in Eurofound's four-year work programme, qualitative databases on restructuring support instruments and restructuring-related legislation provide key information to understand restructuring. These databases need to be further validated and updated to incorporate recent developments in policy and legislation in the Member States, and existing case studies on restructuring can be made better accessible to stakeholders. For the latter purpose, a searchable online database needs to be developed to provide stakeholders with access to the many existing restructuring case studies.

Objectives

- To improve the quality and update the information of the ERM databases on restructuring support instruments and restructuring-related legislation.
- To develop a searchable database on restructuring case studies showing how companies anticipate and manage change.

Outline of content

The information currently contained in the ERM databases on restructuring support instruments, including social partner-based initiatives, and restructuring legislation will be validated and updated. Information on statutory severance pay/redundancy compensation will be collected in a more systematic way than currently in the database.

Secondly, an ERM online database on in-depth restructuring case studies will be developed to provide easy access by applying various filter and search functions, taking into account generally established European concepts related to restructuring. The database will contain case studies previously elaborated by the EMCC.

Methodology

Eurofound staff and national correspondents will check whether the information currently contained in the ERM databases on restructuring support instruments and restructuring-related legislation is correct and incorporate amendments and additional information if necessary. This will be done by internet research and a review of evaluation reports and other literature available at national level (support instruments) and international databases (legislation). The online restructuring case study database will be designed in house, providing for various filter and output options. This will allow users to select and retrieve practices according to specific characteristics of restructuring events, as well as generally recognised concepts related to anticipating and managing change. Already existing EMCC restructuring case studies will be prepared for incorporation in this database.

Outputs

Updating of existing qualitative ERM databases.
 Establishment of a new ERM database of case studies.
 Info sheet: severance pay/redundancy payment regulations in Europe.

Project 4: Job creation in SMEs

Research question/Reason for project

What are the drivers of job creation in SMEs? What is preventing significant employment growth in SMEs? What are the characteristics of net job creation in SMEs before and in the recession? How in particular can job growth be generated in young start-ups which have a strong focus on international markets? What support is offered to help SMEs create jobs?

Justification

SMEs constitute more than 99% of European businesses and account for about two-thirds of private sector employment. Their potential contribution to job creation, one of the priorities of Eurofound's four-year work programme 2013-2016, should be exploited to the full. While research is scarce, it appears that while some SMEs are simply reluctant to grow beyond a handful of employees others (like born globals – accounting for about one fifth of all young European companies) tend to quickly create jobs with above-average wages, more autonomy and higher stability over time.

Objectives

- To identify the main drivers and barriers for job creation in SMEs.
- To analyse potential differences in the characteristics of the jobs created in SMEs before and during the recession (net job creation focus).
- To illustrate the processes of job creation in SMEs.
- To provide policy pointers for better public support for job creation in SMEs.

Outline of content

The project investigates the characteristics of job creation in SMEs. Firstly, this concerns drivers and barriers in terms of reasons for strong or weak job creation, such as the macroeconomic situation and other framework conditions (legal, fiscal, administrative), individual attitudes and values of the entrepreneur or the business model, and whether these have changed in/after the recession. Secondly, the research will investigate whether the characteristics of jobs created (e.g. wage or skill levels) in SMEs (net job creation) were influenced by the crisis. Thirdly, the processes of job creation will be analysed (e.g. who is involved, types of jobs created, procedures applied). The latter will be illustrated with the example of born globals (young companies with intensive international activities) building on previous Eurofound research, which found them to be more dynamic as regards job creation and likely to create good and sustainable jobs. These findings will be related to available public and social partner-based support to indicate improvement potentials.

Methodology

Literature review on the motivations and challenges for SME job creation conducted as part of a comparative analytical report (CAR) by national correspondents in all Member States and Norway. This may be supplemented by interviews with social partners and experts, conducted by national correspondents based on qualitative questionnaires. Further in-house analysis of case studies elaborated for Eurofound's earlier project on 'Restructuring in SMEs' to illustrate the processes of job creation. New case studies of born global SMEs (partly in-house, partly contracted), based on semi-structured questionnaires, to illustrate the motivations for, processes applied and support needs for job creation in these SMEs. In-house policy analysis examples of public and social partner-based support for job creation in SMEs (based on various EU-level databases on support instruments, literature review and previous Eurofound research). In-house analysis of all findings and expert/stakeholder workshop to discuss them.

Outputs

Comparative analytical report (overview and national contributions): Drivers and barriers of SME job growth.

Case studies: Job creation in born globals.

Consolidated report.

Project 5: New forms of employment relationships – analysis of selected new employment forms

Research question/Reason for project

What are the emerging new forms of employment in Member States? How do they contribute to employment growth? What are the implications for working conditions and social protection?

Justification

Societal, technological and economic developments are leading to new forms of employment which might help bring more people into the labour market. However, little is known so far about the characteristics of these employment forms, their potential for job creation, and their implications for working conditions and the labour market. The Commission Communication *Towards a job-rich recovery* mentions the need to map new forms of employment for policy responses supporting durable employment retention and job creation. In response to this, as well as to the background note for the Tripartite Social Forum (2011) on the implementation of the Europe 2020 flagship initiative ‘The Agenda for New Skills and Jobs’ and the Employment Package, this project aims to contribute to closing this knowledge gap.

Objectives

- To describe selected new forms of employment that are relevant in several EU Member States or of particular interest for Eurofound stakeholders.
- To conduct a comparative analysis of similar employment forms across countries and derive policy pointers.

Outline of content

In 2013, a mapping of new forms of employment across the EU27 and Norway has taken place that will result in an overview of respective developments across Europe. On this basis, individual new forms of employment will be selected to be analysed as regards their general characteristics, regulatory frameworks (including social protection and contractual issues), support instruments, working conditions and, as far as possible, implications for the labour market (e.g. undeclared work) and the adaptability of the economy.

While in 2013 the research looked at labour pools, crowd employment and mobile work, in 2014 the focus could, for example, be on investigating employment relationships diverging from traditional 1-employer–1-employee relationships, such as job-sharing, work conducted on the basis of voucher systems, co-working or temporary resource provision (like interim management). The currently considered budget would cover analysis of one to two of these employment relationship forms.

Methodology

For each of the selected new employment forms, the following methodological tools will be applied (covered by a framework contract established in 2013): literature review and data analysis (to the extent this is available), case studies including interviews with employers, employees, self-employed, policy analysis (legal regulations, public and social partner-based support instruments), expert interviews. This combination allows for a description of the characteristics of the various employment forms at national level, as well as illustrating and qualitatively assessing their impact on workers (e.g. working conditions, social protection and social dialogue where appropriate). Cross-country comparisons will be conducted in-house and will result in policy-relevant pointers.

Outputs

Topic-specific reports.

Consolidated report.

Project 6: Start-up support for young people – an assessment of selected labour market policies

Research question/Reason for project

How can start-up support to be applied in the Youth Guarantee best help young people set up new businesses? How can previous evaluations of start-up support for young people contribute to a successful implementation of the Youth Guarantee?

Justification

Job creation, particularly for young people, is a top policy priority in Europe. Eurofound has recently investigated both policy measures to address young NEETs (WP2012) and key aspects of youth entrepreneurship (WP2013). This project will build on the experiences of both projects to further develop not only the Eurofound theme of ‘youth in Europe’ but also on the four-year programme’s commitment to provide an assessment of selected labour market reforms with the aim of increasing employment. The Youth on the Move flagship initiative, the Employment Package and the Youth Opportunities Initiative have all highlighted fostering entrepreneurship, and have allocated funding to this end. According to the Council Recommendations on the establishment of a European Youth Guarantee, youth entrepreneurship is a valid means of implementing this guarantee and envisages the use of the ESF for this purpose. This project will provide valuable insights for designing and implementing start-up support measures under the Youth Guarantee.

Objectives

- To map the availability of start-up support for young people.
- To assess the results of those measures that have been previously evaluated and strengthen Eurofound’s role in policy evaluation.
- To thereby contribute to the implementation and monitoring of the Youth Opportunities Initiative, the youth employment package and the Youth Guarantee.

Outline of content

A mapping of support measures already implemented by Member States to foster start-ups by young people through targeted and general programmes. This will include both those measures established as part of a Youth Guarantee at the national level and on previously existing measures. It will deliver an assessment of start-up support measures for young people that have previously been evaluated. The lessons learnt and good practices will constructively inform the implementation of start-up support under the Youth Guarantee.

Methodology

A comparative analytical report (CAR) will be developed on the basis of a questionnaire sent to national correspondents in all Member States and Norway to identify start-up support measures available to young people and their existing evaluations. This information will be complemented by an in-depth literature review, desk research and interviews with key stakeholders. An assessment of youth start-up support measures which have been previously evaluated by means of a systematic review and meta-evaluation. This information will be validated with an expert meeting. Specific case studies of selected measures, identified as good practice, will be presented.

Outputs

National contributions from network correspondents.

Consolidated report.

Project 7: The gender employment gap: challenges and solutions

Research question/Reason for project

What is the economic cost of the lower female employment rate in many parts of Europe? What are the institutional arrangements and policies that best promote female labour force participation?

Justification

The Social Investment Package identifies women as a specific group facing particular difficulties in participating in the labour market. Acknowledging the importance of female non-paid domestic and care work, the Social Investment Package advocates that the challenges posed by continued gender disadvantage must be tackled in a more coherent manner in order to ensure a broader female participation. While there is much research on this issue, in some but not all Member States, the economic loss of the non-participation of women in the labour market and its future impact on economic growth have not been estimated in a stringent manner. The project will complement previous Eurofound research, particularly on care activities and work–life balance.

Objectives

- To map recent trends of female labour market participation, taking also into account non-paid domestic and care activities.
- To estimate economic loss due to the gender gap in employment participation in Europe.
- To investigate the future effect of reducing the gender gap in labour market participation on economic growth.
- To provide an overview of the recent most successful approaches to facilitate female labour market participation.

Outline of content

The project will map recent trends in female labour market participation in Europe, taking into account the involvement of women in non-paid domestic and care work. The project will then examine the economic loss due to the employment gender gap in the European labour market and investigate its future effects on economic growth in all Member States. Finally, and complementary to the previous Eurofound work on the gender gap and exploiting synergies with activities of the European Institute for Gender Equality, the project will review what are the institutional set-ups and policies that best promote female labour force participation in Europe.

Methodology

The mapping exercise of the labour market participation of women or of their non-paid domestic and care activities will be conducted with descriptive and multivariate statistical analyses using EULFS and other data sources. The estimation of the economic loss due to a lifetime exclusion of women from the labour market will be performed using statistical multivariate techniques on the most recent EU-SILC cross-sectional database.

As far as possible, the non-paid work of women in care activities will also be taken into account. This information will be then used to investigate the future effect of reducing the gender gap in labour market participation on economic growth. This investigation will be performed through quantitative analysis and qualitative anticipatory techniques, such as scenario analyses. Finally, the review of which institutional set-ups and policies best promote female labour force participation in Europe will be conducted with desk research, a literature review and social partners' interviews.

Outputs

Consolidated report.

Project 8: Benchmarking Public Employment Services

Research question/Reason for project

How can the existing Public Employment Services (PES) benchmarking methodology be further improved, for example by the construction of overall labour market performance indicators, and the addition of new data sources and indicators?

Justification

In June 2013, the Commission presented a proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and Council on ‘Enhanced cooperation between Public Employment Services’. This entails regular evidence-based benchmarking activities among all Public Employment Services, taking into account different systems of service provision. The point of these benchmarking activities is to assist in PES learning. PES is increasingly seen to be a key means of improving the efficiency of labour markets in the Member States.

Objectives

- To contribute, together with the Secretariat of the Public Employment Services Network, to the development of methodologies and indicators to assess the performance of PES.
- To provide measures of the overall efficiency of the functioning of labour markets, with particular reference to transitions out of unemployment, in Member States. This will provide some means of contextualising or even validating the benchmarking results based on PES data.

Outline of content

1. A contribution to the design of appropriate methodologies of benchmarking PES efficiency including the identification of suitable indicators and relevant data sources emanating from both within the PES and in Europe-wide datasets.
2. An analysis of the broad measures of labour market efficiency such as the transition from unemployment to employment with some indication of the influence of the PES in these transitions. This will include some focus on the transition rates of various groups, such as the low-skilled, non-nationals and youth. The latter is included in light of the important role to be played by PES in the implementation of Youth Guarantee and apprenticeships schemes.

Methodology

The methodological contribution will largely be conducted within the framework of the Working Group of the European Network of Public Employment Services, with possible contributions to the annual report. Methodological notes will be drawn up for the Network Secretariat for possible input to the working group. To exploit the newly available transition data in the European Labour Force Survey the research will be conducted in-house.

Outputs

Consolidated report.

Priority area 2: Improving Working Conditions and making work sustainable throughout the life course

Project 9: 6th European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) – preparation and implementation

Research question/Reason for project

How can the relevance and quality of the European Working Conditions Survey and its potential to inform policies be further increased? How to manage extending the geographical scope of the survey, in cooperation with the ILO?

Justification

The 6th European Working Conditions Survey is an activity foreseen in the four-year programme 2013–2016. Planning for the 6th EWCS began in 2013, with the fieldwork agency planned to be in place by the end of 2013. Intensive preparation with the contractor will take place throughout 2014, with a view to the launch of fieldwork early in 2015.

As the ILO has expressed an interest in developing cooperation with Eurofound for the monitoring of working conditions through the implementation of a survey, the opportunity for enhancing the geographical scope of the survey is being explored, and this will be pursued to the extent that is possible.

Objectives

- To develop and finalise data collection procedures in a timely fashion, to allow fieldwork to be carried out in 2015.
- To finalise the 6th EWCS questionnaire and ensure high-quality translation into all relevant languages.
- To develop, as far as is practicable, survey instruments (questionnaires, guidelines etc.) that are adaptable to the measurement of working conditions in a global perspective.

Outline of content

2014 will be dedicated to the preparation of fieldwork. The procurement exercise for preparation and fieldwork of the 6th wave is planned to be completed in the last quarter of 2013.

Activities contributing to the preparation of the fieldwork are the following:

- advanced translation of the source questionnaire into two languages, with a view to identifying the hidden cultural values of the questionnaire, as well as issues that need to be flagged for translators;
- pre-test;
- translation;
- sampling plans;
- fieldwork planning;
- quality assurance management.

These activities will be undertaken with a view to the possible implementation of the survey beyond Europe. Eurofound has developed cooperation with the ILO on the global working conditions survey and it is hoped to extend this significantly in the 6th wave. The preparations for conducting the 6th wave within the EU should therefore be made with

a view to facilitating the eventual participation of non-European countries and producing results which can be compared meaningfully between Europe and elsewhere.

Methodology

Combination of in-house and externally contracted activities in order to finalise the preparation of the 6th EWCS fieldwork; these will be organised around the finalisation of the questionnaire, its translation, the approval of registers, finalisation of sampling plans, preparation of data collection protocols as well as collection of quality control data to contribute to assessment of activities vis-à-vis planned objectives. Three coordination meetings will be organised with the ILO and partners from participating non-European countries. Web pages on the 6th EWCS will be prepared.

Outputs

Promotional card on the EWCS (all languages).

Project 10: Monitoring working life: The European Observatory of Working Life

Research question/Reason for project

What are the key trends and developments in working conditions and industrial relations in Europe? How can they be reported and analysed to support the actors and policymakers? How can presentation of and access to Eurofound's knowledge on working life be improved?

Justification

Eurofound's four-year work-programme stipulated the creation of an integrated observatory on industrial relations and working conditions. This observatory will be the access point to Eurofound's material on working life, based on surveys, input from the network of correspondents and other research. The observatory will be a key resource for data on how legislation, negotiation and workplace practice shape working conditions. The development of the observatory will be closely linked to the development of the new webpage. Preparatory work started in 2013 and included the preparation, launch and evaluation of the tender for the new contractual round for the network of correspondents; the re-design of research output generated from the network of correspondents and necessary changes in the workflow; re-design of Eurofound's content management system for web-publishing; and a pilot project on a 'community of practice' approach, in order to deepen the engagement with the network of correspondents. In 2014, activities will continue to launch the integrated observatory.

Objectives

- To monitor trends and developments in working life.
- To launch and implement an integrated observatory on industrial relations and working conditions.
- To introduce the new observatory to correspondents and staff and to train them in its use.
- To present Eurofound's material on working life in an accessible way.
- To engage deeper with Eurofound's network of correspondents.

Outline of content

From 2014 onwards, Eurofound will present all findings and activities related to working life in the new observatory on a new webpage. New contracts for the network of correspondents will come into place necessitating the training of staff and correspondents on the new tools and products.

Methodology

A major input for the integrated observatory is the network of experts (correspondents) at national and European level who monitor and report on relevant developments and latest research results. The network will provide short reports and contributions to comparative work. The design of comparative work requires consultation and exchange among the correspondents and Eurofound staff. This is organised through electronic exchange and meetings, in particular the organisation of an annual meeting of correspondents in Dublin and additional meetings with correspondents on related conferences. Training of staff and correspondents via face-to-face meetings, potentially also webinars. Launch of an online collaboration tool to engage with correspondents. Launch of the new content management system.

Outputs

Quarterly reporting 1.
Quarterly reporting 2.
Quarterly reporting 3.
Quarterly reporting 4.
Annual updates: pay
Annual updates: working time
Research in Focus.
Spotlight reports.
Industrial relations country profiles: update.
European industrial relations dictionary: update.
Annual review of industrial relations and working conditions.

Project 11: Working time developments into the 21st Century

Research question/Reason for project

What are the main trends and milestones characterising the evolution of the most important collectively agreed working time features in the European Union during the first decade of the 21st century? To what extent do they reflect macroeconomic and social developments and what is the relationship with the development of actual working time?

Justification

Working time is regulated by a combination of collective agreements and legislation, including the EU Working Time Directive (2003). Eurofound has been collecting information on collectively agreed working time for more than a decade, and information about how this has evolved will be a useful resource for social dialogue and policy debate, especially in a context where changes to working time regulation have been looked at as a way to tackle the on-going recession. In 2014, valuable data on agreed working time collected in recent years can be analysed together with other statistical information, following a similar exercise performed with wages in 2013.

Objectives

- To analyse and provide an overview of the development of collectively agreed working time in the Member States between 2000 and 2012, together with available data on actual working time and other relevant indicators.

Outline of content

A report will be produced analysing the main trends regarding collectively agreed working time in the EU during the first decade of the 21st century, taking into account the economic and social background during this period. The main source will be the data generated by Eurofound for successive annual updates on collectively agreed working time.

The project will take stock of the data and findings from the annual updates on working time compiled between 2000 and 2012. It will examine:

- the evolution of collectively agreed working hours in the Member States;
- the evolution of collectively agreed working hours in the sectors traditionally analysed in the annual updates: metalworking, banking, chemicals, retail, local and central government;
- the evolution of national statutory maximum working weeks and days;
- leave;
- the evolution of actual working time and other economic and labour market developments.

Methodology

Data from annual updates on working time since 2000 will be analysed (in-house) and set against the evolution of actual working time and the background of macro-economic and social developments. A contribution from national correspondents will be requested to assist Eurofound in the interpretation of the main characteristics of the evolution of agreed working time and actual working time in the context of other economic and labour market developments in the periods of growth and recession. This will include interpretation of data available, highlighting important key events, outlining trends and, where appropriate, analysing the social partners' views on the processes of collective bargaining on working time. Finally, an expert workshop, including correspondents, will be organised to discuss and gather comments and views on developments in the EU Member States and validate the project's output.

Outputs

Consolidated report.

Project 12: Recent developments in the distribution of wages in Europe

Research question/Reason for project

What are the recent changes in the distribution of wages? How have they evolved, particularly since the economic crisis? To what extent can the evolution of wage distribution be explained in terms of exposure to trade, developments in productivity and inflation? To what extent can they be attributed to the decrease in employment in various sectors and the increase in overall unemployment?

Justification

Wages are a key element of working conditions and main outcome of industrial relations processes. As the topic is sometimes contentious, it is essential that policymakers and Eurofound stakeholders are provided with the best available facts and figures. On the one hand, wages, together with productivity, are an important aspect of a nation's competitiveness, particularly as economies become ever more globalised. On the other hand, wages constitute the main source of income for the vast majority of EU residents and are a core aspect of an inclusive Europe. Eurofound has been carrying out work in this field, in particular focusing on agreed wages and wage-setting mechanisms, and therefore can make a new contribution on wage distribution to complement the analysis in this field.

Objectives

- To present the facts and figures on changes in the wage distribution in Europe based on the best available (and recently updated) European comparative data.
- To identify and describe some factors that can influence observed changes.

Outline of content

The analysis of recently available datasets will cover:

- the evolution of wage distributions both before and after the crisis;
- a breakdown of developments by sectors to account for the recent very radical changes in the composition of employment;
- Investigating possible reasons for distributional changes, such as the sector's exposure to trade, developments in productivity, changes in the sectorial distribution of employment and the rise of unemployment.

Methodology

All work will be performed in-house. This project is made feasible by the release of the Structure of Earnings Survey (SES) in 2013. Moreover, the new World Input–Output Database released in April 2013 by the European Commission provides the most solid trade openness data ever made available. These data sources together, with the European Labour Force Survey, will be analysed in-house.

Outputs

Consolidated report.

Project 13: Foundation Seminar Series (FSS)

Research question/Reason for project

Tripartite discussion with a focus on: trends in Europe; European and national measures; respective roles of the social partners; collective bargaining impacts; company level actions.

Justification

Since its inception, the Foundation Seminar Series (FSS) has been a forum for discussion among tripartite teams of representatives of unions, employers' organisations and governments. It has been an opportunity for the representatives to exchange ideas and practices beyond the formal frame of negotiations. Furthermore, it relates the European level of action to the work of national experts involved in implementing policies and developing actions in the field. Finally, examples from companies are key for the discussion, in combination with contributions from the academic and policy worlds. Ongoing evaluation of the FSS will inform the future of the project.

Objectives

- To promote tripartite exchange and networking at European and national level.
- To facilitate knowledge sharing and mutual learning among governments and social partners on a specific topic of importance for the European policy debate.
- To deepen knowledge of European and national policies and actions in this field amongst participating practitioners and organisations.
- To increase awareness of relevant Eurofound work.

Outline of content

The Foundation Seminar Series consists of two rounds of seminars with tripartite national participants. In a first meeting, relevant findings from Eurofound research and other sources (e.g. Commission, OECD, ILO, academic experts) are presented, followed by the identification of common concerns and divergences between national situations and the

relevance of the European level. Open discussion of the topic is encouraged: identifying challenges, opportunities, policy actions, company responses, what works and why, etc. Participants will complete an assignment between the first and second rounds, requiring cooperation among the national tripartite representatives. The results of this work will be presented and discussed in the second meeting.

The proposed topic for the FSS 2014 is ‘sustainable work’, allowing synergy with project No. 14 (‘Sustainable work throughout the life course’) and related work conducted by Eurofound in 2013 and earlier. The focus of project 14 is on national actions and programmes (including government initiatives, social partner actions and company-level actions) contributing to making work sustainable. Adopting this topic for the FSS will encourage the participants to integrate an actor-perspective to the research focus of project 14.

Methodology

One seminar comprising two sessions, the first session to be in Dublin, the second at a location in Europe to be confirmed later. The overall methodology will be redefined following the outcomes of the internal evaluation and the 2013 revised seminar lay-out.

Outputs

1st session Foundation Seminar Series.
2nd session Foundation Seminar Series.

Project 14: Sustainable work throughout the life course: national policies and strategies

Research question/Reason for project

What policy instruments can be identified that help to achieve sustainable work?

How are they implemented within countries, and to what extent are they coordinated in a coherent framework?

Justification

Improving working conditions and making work sustainable throughout the life course has been identified as a priority area for Eurofound within the four-year programme 2013–16.

The policy relevance of this topic is linked to the necessity to include and keep workers in employment longer and to include people with different needs, as highlighted in the Europe 2020 strategy. This requires rethinking and new solutions for working conditions and career paths that help workers to retain their physical and mental health – as well as motivation and productivity – throughout an extended working life. It includes policies related to working conditions throughout the life course as well as policies in a broader context, including infrastructure (e.g. care services), which facilitate employment for men and women of all ages and circumstances.

Objectives

- To identify and describe developments and implementation of policies which are linked to sustainable work in a number of countries.
- To analyse the interaction between the different levels, and topics and policy areas (e.g. older workers, equality).
- To assess if these policies are integrated in a coherent policy framework.

Outline of content

In 2013, a concept paper identifying the main dimensions of sustainable work was developed. The 2014 project will build upon it and focus on the implementation of sustainable work policies in different countries. This may include a wide range of policies at different levels. The project will identify and describe specific examples of policies in support of sustainable work. It will analyse how they are embedded in national policies, looking at articulation and coherence, and establish whether or not there is a comprehensive agenda into which different measures feed. Implementation of programmes will be examined, including measures taken to enhance the quality of work over the life course and the infrastructure put in place to facilitate this. Sectoral and company examples will be identified to see how these policies are taking shape. Finally, exploratory work will be carried out to assess the feasibility of quantifying the impact of policy changes and better integration of different policies on making work more sustainable over the life course in the light of increasing life expectancy.

Methodology

National reports will be carried out for a number of countries (up to 10), identifying and describing (through desk research) policies addressing the different dimensions of sustainable work. The reports will also inform on the articulation and implementation of policies at different levels, and their integration in a coherent framework. LFS and EWCS data will be used to provide country profiles that complement previous work (both national level and sectoral panorama as relevant). Analysis of the national measures and policies may be complemented with sectoral and company examples as relevant. An expert/stakeholder workshop will discuss the main findings. Part of the work will be in-house and other parts will be contracted out.

Outputs

Case studies (up to 10 national-level).

Consolidated report.

Project 15: Changing places: Mid-career review, internal mobility and intergenerational initiatives to extend working life

Research question/Reason for project

What are Member States and companies doing to retain workers longer by offering them career alternatives?

Justification

Since mid-2011, the European workforce is shrinking by about three million every year, due on the one hand to the baby boomers reaching retirement age and on the other not enough younger people replacing them. This situation will continue for the two decades to come until after 2030. Among other consequences, this may lead to a loss of skills and will increase difficulties in financing pension systems. It is widely argued that the most equitable solution for all generations is to enable people to work later in their life and to make sure that skills are transferred from one generation to the next. In a working life course perspective, decisions have to be made early on about career options for the future, especially for workers in arduous jobs.

In 2013, a report was prepared on contexts and regulations as well as on bridging jobs and early retirement in each Member State. In 2014, the project will look at more proactive solutions in companies and in sectors documenting practices and policies that work to facilitate internal mobility and career change. By exploring approaches that support the extension of working life, this project contributes to Eurofound's commitment to research factors underpinning sustainable work made in the four-year programme.

Objectives

- To document innovative ways of keeping people in the labour market using mid-term career checks as an early and anticipatory instrument.
- To identify successful attempts at knowledge management and skills transfer from generation to generation.

Outline of content

Building on the review done in 2013, the continuation of the project will go deeper in some selected policies to enhance the employability of mid-career and older workers through career checks and support for internal mobility. Innovative strategies of age management to actively promote new job contents for different ages and the possibility to change career early enough to avoid early exit from employment will be explored.

Methodology

Case studies to be carried out in 2014 by interviewing company managers and social partners. The initiatives will be selected according to the results of the comparative analytical report (CAR) done in 2013. Ideally there should also be complementary interviews with employees, such as a member of a workers' representation body and one or two workers who were subject to career guidance. This could also be done in focus groups, inviting up to five employees concerned to gather more information. There will be a mix of outsourced and in-house interviews. Additional secondary data analysis using in-house data (working conditions survey, company survey) and external data should complete the evaluation. A final project report will be written in-house.

Outputs

Consolidated report.

Project 16: Improving working conditions in occupations with multiple disadvantages

Research question/Reason for project

What initiatives are available to improve working conditions related to occupations characterised by multiple disadvantages? In particular, what has been the outcome especially with regard to medium-to-low-skilled and unskilled occupations?

Justification

In 2013, secondary analysis of the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) will analyse occupational profiles, identifying occupations that accumulate multiple disadvantages. This research project aims to explore the working conditions of workers in these occupations (in particular the medium-to-low-skilled and unskilled as per ISCO classification) and to identify policies that can improve these conditions and make work in these occupations more sustainable. The purpose is twofold, aiming on the one hand to map disadvantages in terms of working conditions related to the above-mentioned specific occupational groups in order to provide specific knowledge to the policymakers to design policies and initiatives to improve working conditions related to such occupations; and on the other hand, to map already existing initiatives, programmes and services in the EU Member States.

Objectives

- To further analyse the working conditions of workers in occupations exposed to multiple disadvantages, with special attention to the medium-to-low-skilled and unskilled categories.
- To map measures, policies, services, etc. aimed at improving the working conditions related to such occupations.

Outline of content

The project will build on the occupational profiles developed in 2013 (EWCS secondary analysis), focusing on identified occupational groups exposed to multiple disadvantages and on the specific working conditions that can make work in these occupations less sustainable, such as exposure to physical and psychosocial risks or differences in access to resources – like training, social support or job autonomy – that can help workers to cope with the physical or psychosocial demands of their job.

Initiatives, measures and policies aimed at improving the working conditions of workers in these occupations will be identified and described, indicating their outcomes. Also here, the focus will be on the medium-to-low skilled and unskilled occupations.

Methodology

A literature review will provide evidence of theoretical and empirical analyses on the topic. Further statistical analysis, both descriptive and inferential, of the LFS and EWCS will be carried out in order to illustrate characteristics of occupations and related working conditions. A comparative analytical report (CAR) will be developed on the basis of a questionnaire sent to national correspondents in all Member States and Norway to identify policies/ measures /services to improve working conditions in these occupations, and the outcomes of these initiatives. This may include measures in the fields of active labour market policies ALMPs (including training), career development, health and safety, wages and working time arrangements. An expert group will assist Eurofound in providing input at project inception stage as well as the pre-final stage. The final report will be submitted for peer review to two external experts.

Outputs

Consolidated report.

Project 17: Overview report of the third European Company Survey

Research question/Reason for project

What work organisation practices, human resources policies, forms of employee involvement, and social dialogue practices exist in European companies? Which factors are associated with workplace innovation and strong social and economic performance?

Justification

The European Company Survey (ECS) is one of three pan-European surveys conducted by Eurofound. Fieldwork for the 3rd ECS took place in 2013, and the first findings were due to be presented at the end of the year. The full overview report will be prepared in 2014.

Analysis of the survey will provide unique insights into the way in which workplaces can contribute to the development of 'smart' growth. The project will provide an understanding of how companies can develop and optimally apply human capital through different forms of work organisation, therefore contributing to reaching the targets set in EU 2020.

Objectives

- To present (in a descriptive overview report) the findings of the ECS on workplace practices and innovation (work organisation, human resources management, employee participation and social dialogue) in European companies.
- To present a first analysis of the link between these practices and company outcomes.

Outline of content

The overview report will provide descriptive results of the ECS on work organisation, human resources management, employee participation and social dialogue in European companies. It will build on the mapping of workplace practices and innovation to provide some first associations with outcomes. Web information and the survey mapping tool will be updated. The report will be launched at an event during which company practices will be debated.

These findings will be complemented by secondary analyses (proposed as separate projects), using more sophisticated statistical techniques, and by case studies which will be the outcome of qualitative follow-up interviews (separate project). There will also be some methodological work on the survey (for example, a non-response bias assessment).

The contractors of the secondary analyses will be asked to peer review the overview report and to build upon this report in their analysis.

Methodology

Statistical analysis of the survey data. Peer review meeting to discuss draft overview.

Outputs

Consolidated report.

Survey mapping tool: update.

Project 18: The impact of work organisation on performance, innovation and work climate in European companies (Secondary analysis of the 3rd ECS)

Research question/Reason for project

Which work organisation typologies can be distinguished and what is the prevalence of the different types in countries and sectors? How are they associated with economic, innovation and social company outcomes? What lessons can be learned from well-performing, innovative companies?

Justification

Work organisation and HRM practices are two of the main issues analysed in the ECS. This secondary analysis project will contribute to assessing the factors associated at workplace level with workplace innovation, company performance and work climate, hence providing unique insights into how work organisation and HRM practices contribute to the development of smart growth. The project will also provide a better understanding of how companies develop human capital through different forms of work organisation.

Objectives

- To identify and describe ‘bundles’ of company practices related to different forms of work organisation and accompanying HRM practices and to identify innovations in these fields.
- To assess the association of workplace bundles with company performance outcomes.
- To issue a set of policy pointers as to how governments and social partners could facilitate the application of certain practices.

Outline of content

Analysis of ECS data will aim to provide further knowledge and understanding of work organisation practices and human resources management policies implemented in European companies. It will identify combinations of practices that can be labelled as ‘workplace innovation’ or associated with performance and creativity. To classify establishments,

the project will look at areas such as the hierarchical structure, the organisation of work processes, and the influence employees have on products and processes, as well as at the wider human resource environment (e.g. training, recruitment strategies, functional flexibility). Finally, the project will look into a range of performance and human resources outcomes, to assess whether these are associated with certain ‘bundles’ of workplace practices, and what win–win practices can be identified.

This research will be developed in parallel with the other secondary analysis on employee participation in European companies and in a coherent way with other ECS-related analyses.

Methodology

In-depth statistical analysis of the data of the 3rd ECS, taking into account other relevant data sources available. Cluster analysis of ECS data (or equivalent method) on the prevalence of different forms of work organisation in European companies. Multivariate regression analysis to investigate to what extent the different organisational types (or individual bundles of work organisation practices, HR policies and forms of employee involvement) are associated with performance and innovation outcomes (e.g. financial situation, change in labour productivity; innovation) and social outcomes (e.g. work climate, but also staff retention, levels of sick leave).

Outputs

Secondary analytical report.

Project 19: Employee participation in European companies (Secondary analysis of the 3rd ECS)

Research question/Reason for project

How are direct and indirect employee participation practices⁴ in European companies related? What is the link to national industrial relations systems? What is the link between direct and indirect employee participation, HRM practices and company outcomes?

Justification

The European company survey covers the practices of employee participation and social dialogue in establishments. This secondary analysis of the 3rd ECS data will look at company practices with regard to direct and indirect employee participation, assess relationships and identify associations between practices and outcomes. This ties in with the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, insofar as workplace innovation, based on new and combined interventions in work organisation including participative work processes, is considered conducive to win–win arrangements for both companies and workers. The analysis will focus on the potential role of workplace social dialogue in fostering and resourcing participative work processes. However, workplace social dialogue does not only involve formal, representative structures operating at the strategic end of the decision spectrum. It can also be manifested informally, and at both strategic and task-based levels of the organisation. It is the relationships and interdependencies between these different forms that will be investigated in this project.

⁴ Indirect participation refers to formalised structures of participation in the company. Direct participation refers to other forms of employee involvement (e.g. staff meetings, ad-hoc groups, suggestion schemes, internal communication tools etc.).

Objectives

- To describe company practices with regard to direct and indirect employee participation.
- To analyse the relationship between direct and indirect participation, and its links to national industrial relations systems.
- To assess the association of workplace social dialogue via employee representatives and other forms of employee participation with good outcomes, and analyse their role in creating win–win arrangements for both companies and employees.

Outline of content

The project is a secondary analysis of data from the 3rd ECS. It will further deepen the descriptive survey results to be presented in the overview report.

The analysis will look at:

- direct and indirect participation in the work place and typologies of companies in this respect.
- the extent of formal workplace social dialogue and of other forms of employee participation associated with high involvement work practices.
- the relationship between indirect and direct forms of employee participation and with systems of national representation structures.
- associations between different forms of direct and indirect employee participation with outcomes in terms of company performance and work climate.

This analysis will be developed in parallel with the secondary analysis on the impact of work organisation on performance, innovation and work climate.

Methodology

In-depth statistical analysis of the 3rd ECS with regard to employee participation and social dialogue through advanced multivariate analysis. Complementary data from national or European sources will be used to further contextualise and enrich the results of the analysis.

Outputs

Secondary analytical report.

Project 20: Third European Company Survey: Qualitative follow-up interviews on the development of workplace innovation in companies

Research question/Reason for project

What motivates company actors (management, employee representatives, employees) to develop innovative practices and what are their respective roles? What are the conditions they point to for achieving win–win arrangements? What can we learn from good examples identified through the ECS?

Justification

Fieldwork for the third European Company Survey was completed in 2013 and first findings published. Preparatory work for qualitative follow-up interviews with representatives of selected companies which participated in the ECS was

foreseen in the 2013 work programme. The project design, procurement, definition of criteria to select establishments, drafting of interview guides and related materials will have been completed. The interviews to be conducted as part of the 2014 project will generate new data on workplace innovation and the motivations and roles of the different actors in achieving it.

Objectives

- To collect data and in-depth, qualitative information on company practices with regard to workplace innovation from managers, employee representatives and employees in selected establishments previously surveyed in the ECS.
- To describe the motivations and actions of different workplace actors (employees, representatives and managers) and how they contribute to outcomes in terms of participation and performance.
- To identify workplace practices that could benefit both performance and quality of work.
- To explore the links between certain workplace practices and organisational outcomes.
- To explore the possibilities to establish a virtual forum for exchange with HR practitioners.

Outline of content

The project is a continuation of 2013 work. Following preparatory work in 2013, the interviews will take place in the first half of 2014 followed by analysis of the information collected. Conclusions will be drawn and reported in an overview report. The interviews will explore the practices in the establishment (HR practices, work organisation, employee participation), the motivations and roles of those involved in developing innovative practices, and the outcomes.

Interviews will also be used to explore the possibilities to establish a virtual forum for exchange with HR practitioners, building on contacts and suggestions for high-quality HR fora from interview partners.

Methodology

In-depth, qualitative interviews will be conducted in up to 60 establishments, identified from the ECS dataset. Following definition of the criteria for country selection and establishment selection in 2013, a contract will be signed for the implementation of the research in 2014. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted in the selected establishments with managers, employee representatives and a selection of employees. A mini case-study will be developed for each company, and an overview report analysing the data will be prepared. An expert meeting will discuss the preliminary results.

Outputs

Consolidated report.

Project 21: Regulation of labour market intermediaries and the role of social partners in preventing trafficking of labour

Research question/Reason for project

How are legal temporary work agencies and other intermediaries in the Member States regulated and has regulation changed recently? What are the procedures for establishing intermediaries in terms of registration obligations, licensing systems, etc.? Are there specific requirements concerning the recruitment and placement of workers from outside the EU?

Justification

The European Commission (DG HOME) has requested Eurofound to contribute to the development of a best practice guide for public authorities on the monitoring and enforcement of temporary work agencies and intermediary agencies such as job recruitment agencies to prevent trafficking in human beings. The guide should include licensing systems and work related to the liability of such agencies. Eurofound has previously published research on temporary agency work on which it can build (Temporary agency work in an enlarged EU (2006); Temporary agency work and collective bargaining in the EU (2009)). This new project will be a follow-up in the specific context of the concern to combat trafficking in human beings.

Objectives

- To map the current situation in the different Member States regarding the regulation of temporary work agencies and intermediaries, and particularly the regulation of their activities in the placement of workers from outside the EU.
- To identify relevant social partner initiatives aiming to prevent the trafficking of human beings.

Outline of content

The project will review the two Eurofound studies on temporary agency work mentioned above, updating them as relevant. Particular attention will be paid to the procedures and obligations for registration and licensing of temporary work agencies and other intermediaries, and to the regulation of their role in the placement of workers from outside the EU. National correspondents will also identify initiatives by social partners aiming to combat trafficking. In those countries where there is a national body grouping temporary agencies, they will be asked about their concerns, and actions in relation to trafficking prevention.

Methodology

Desk research (in-house). A comparative analytical report (CAR) will be developed on the basis of a questionnaire sent to national correspondents in all Member States and Norway.

Outputs

Comparative analytical report (overview and national contributions).

Priority area 3: Developing industrial relations to ensure equitable and productive solutions in a changing policy context

Project 22: Developments in collective bargaining and social dialogue into the 21st century

Research question/Reason for project

This project takes stock of Eurofound's previous work in order to assess:

- What are the main trends in industrial relations in the European Union with regard to collective bargaining, social dialogue, and industrial relations structures over the past 15 years?
- To what extent can the mapped forms and instances of interaction be regarded as 'new' developments (i.e. new for the applying Member State or new throughout the EU)?

Justification

One of Eurofound's strengths is the continuity of research in its core areas of expertise over a number of years. Collective bargaining has been covered by both the EIRO network (since 1997) and the EWCO network (since 2003). The launch of the integrated European Observatory of Working Life in 2014 is a good occasion to take stock of existing research, providing fresh access to the data and a condensed overview of developments over the past 15 years. A similar exercise is in progress for pay developments into the 21st century (WP 2013) and for working time developments into the 21st century (Project 11). In addition, insights gained from this project can feed into the development of the proposed comparative framework of industrial relations.

Objectives

- To give an overview of developments in collective bargaining and social dialogue from 1997-2013 across countries and topical areas.
- To identify the main trends in industrial relations from 1997 to 2013, covering collective bargaining, social dialogue, structures for social dialogue, legislative support, etc.
- To collect data on selected key variables and indicators of industrial relations that could feed into the proposed comparative framework.
- To present the material in an accessible way on an updated webpage (i.e. using timelines and other forms of data visualisation).

Outline of content

The project will take stock of information gathered over the past 15 years by the network of correspondents in relation to trends in industrial relations. This will contain information on collective bargaining, social dialogue, dialogue structures and topics covered. In a first step, the (mainly qualitative) information will be mapped and classified. The data will then be analysed with the aim of assessing to what extent common trends are present across Europe. This will include the following: changes in legislative support; reports on the incidence and outcomes of collective bargaining over time, in particular those going beyond the area of pay and working time; the structures and processes in place for making social dialogue happen; the involvement of the different actors (bipartite, tripartite or multi-partite).

Methodology

Amalgamation of data from the series of annual reviews (1997–2013), EIRO information updates, outcomes of a number of selected CARs (EIRO+ EWCO), where questions on collective bargaining or social dialogue were posed. The collected material will be systematically reviewed to identify trends and those practices which seem to be new developments in industrial relations. Based on these data, a set of key variables will be derived by country and over time (years or periods). This will mainly contain nominally coded data and developed in close cooperation with the proposed project for developing a comparative framework for industrial relations. A comparative analytical report (CAR) will be drafted on the basis of a questionnaire sent to national correspondents in all Member States and Norway aimed at filling existing gaps as regards the industrial relations variables. A small number of EIRO correspondents and other industrial relations experts will be invited to a workshop to validate the results.

Outputs

Comparative analytical report (overview and national contributions).

Consolidated report.

Project 23: Mapping key dimensions of industrial relations in Europe

Research question/Reason for project

What elements can be identified as the key dimensions of a comparative framework for industrial relations? Which indicators and which data sources could be used for measuring these dimensions?

Justification

The four-year programme commits Eurofound to examining the dynamics of industrial relations and to analysing, in a comparative way, how industrial relations systems are changing and adapting to new challenges. This strand of research activity would be facilitated by identification of key dimensions of industrial relations, indicators and data sources that can be used to describe and assess developments across the Member States. Improving the tools for assisting comparative research in this field is likely to result in higher policy relevance of findings.

Objectives

- To establish the key dimensions for comparing industrial relations and identify associated indicators.
- To identify industrial relations data from the three waves of the European Company Survey, validate them against national data sources and apply them for testing the comparative framework.
- To identify other relevant data sources and gaps in data availability.

Outline of content

Building on a 2012 Eurofound project which examined what constitutes a meaningful social dialogue, as well as on previous projects from 2002–2004, this project will map, analyse and discuss dimensions and indicators of industrial relations. The project will then identify and assess existing data sources. This will include data from all three waves of the European Company Survey. Relevant data is also expected from the 15-year review of industrial relations developments, which is proposed for 2014 (Project 22 above). A further substantial part of data will come from the ICTWSS database (J. Visser – version 4, April 2013) to be partially integrated into the Eurofound repository. The ICTWSS database covers four key elements: trade unionism, wage-setting, state intervention and social pacts. The database contains annual data for all OECD and EU Member States since 1960. The 2013 version also contains information on employer organisations, and the extent, coverage and nature of employee and union representation. Lastly, the project will analyse how possible data gaps may be filled through future work of Eurofound. In a next step, the results may be used for comparisons with other industrial relations systems in the world.

Methodology

The project will be an in-house desk research exercise with input from an expert seminar. First, the findings on dimensions and indicators will be discussed with Eurofound's stakeholders and academic specialists in an expert workshop. The validation exercise will be based on short contributions from national correspondents in all Member States and Norway. Correspondents will be asked to look for relevant national statistics and submit them with associated metadata.

Outputs

Consolidated report.

Project 24: Representativeness studies at EU level and the concept of representativeness at national and EU level

Research question/Reason for project

Which are the representative EU-level organisations for management and labour in a number of selected sectors? What is the concept of representativeness in the Member States and what are the relevant rules and regulations? What are common elements and trends as regards representativeness? To what extent does the EU-level concept differ from the national level and how can it be developed further?

Justification

According to the European Industrial Relations Dictionary 'representativeness' is a criterion used by the European Commission to identify the organisations of 'management and labour' who must be consulted on certain issues and who may initiate social dialogue at European level (Article 154 TFEU). Eurofound has been assisting the European Commission to establish the representativeness of social partner organisations since 2006, with 31 studies on different sectors completed by May 2013. This work will continue in 2014 with the launch of a further six new, sector-related studies. The expertise acquired through conducting these studies can now be applied to investigate the apparent differences in the concept of 'representativeness' in the Member States which could lead to further development and improvement of the methodology used to establish representativeness at the European level.

Objectives

- To assess the representativeness of sector-related European-level social partner organisations in six selected sectors.
- To analyse differences in the concept of representativeness at EU and national level.
- To assess whether the methodology of the representativeness studies calls for a revision in light of the findings of the study.

Outline of content

In 2014, Eurofound will begin work on six new sectoral representativeness studies (agriculture, furniture production, extractive industries, temporary agency work, maritime transport and postal services). In parallel, the concept of representativeness as applied in the Member States will be examined, through analysing the rules, regulations and consequences of representativeness at national level. The national-level findings will then be compared to the concept of 'representativeness' in the European level context. Both strands will be brought together in a report which should lead to conclusions with regard to the further development of the methodology currently applied to establish representativeness at European level.

Methodology

The representativeness studies will be conducted applying the standard methodology.

The additional project will be an in-house desk research exercise analysing EU policy documents and academic literature. A comparative analytical report (CAR) will be developed on the basis of a questionnaire sent to national correspondents in all Member States and Norway to collect information on national-level rules, regulations and concepts of representativeness. Both parts will be brought together in an in-house overview report. The draft report will be discussed with stakeholders and academic experts in a workshop. The selected experts will also be asked to give input to the draft questionnaire.

Outputs

- REP Study 1.
- REP Study 2.
- REP Study 3.
- REP Study 4.
- REP Study 5.
- REP Study 6.

Comparative analytical report (overview and national contributions): Concept of Representativeness.

Consolidated report.

Project 25: The role of social partners in the National Reform Programmes and in the European Semester

Research question/Reason for project

What is the role of the social partners in the National Reform Programmes (NRPs)? What is the role of the social partners in the European Semester?

Justification

Eurofound's four-year programme raises the question as to how new forms of economic governance at European level are impacting on the national-level social partners. In February 2013, EMCO called for a stronger and more frequent involvement of the social partners at EU and national level in order to strengthen the social dimension on the basis of the European Employment Strategy. As reflected in discussions in EMCO meetings, actors are familiar with arrangements in their own countries but there is a lack of reliable information on practices elsewhere providing a comparative perspective. The social partners have been asked to contribute to the elaboration of National Reform Programmes, to their implementation and to the overall communication of the European Employment Strategy in the 2013 Employment Guidelines. The levels, forms and mechanisms of involvement of national-level organisations differ widely among the Member States and a mapping exercise will inform policymakers of these differences, enhancing understanding and allowing for mutual learning.

Objectives

- To map the role, at national level, of the national social partners in the design, shaping and implementation of the National Reform Programmes and policies included therein.
- To analyse the role of social partners in the European Semester.

Outline of content

This project consists of two separate strands which will be brought together in one overview report:

- Strand 1 will look into the role of the national social partners in the design, shaping and implementation of the National Reform Programmes.
- Strand 2 will analyse the evolving role of social partners in the European Semester.

Methodology

Strand 1 will develop a comparative analytical report (CAR) on the basis of a questionnaire sent to national correspondents in all Member States and Norway. Strand 2 of the project will rely on in-house research, which will use analyses of data sources and interviews with key EU level players. An expert workshop will also provide input to the report. The two strands will be brought together in an in-house overview report. Recent work in this area carried out by the European Economic and Social Committee will be taken into account.

Outputs

Comparative analytical report (overview and national contributions).

Consolidated report.

Project 26: New topics, new tools, innovative approaches by the social partners

Research question/Reason for project

What innovative approaches have the social partners developed in response to new challenges? What topics have been tackled and what tools have been used? What are the outcomes of these initiatives?

Justification

As part of the ongoing monitoring of industrial relations developments, Eurofound's four-year programme plans to explore innovative solutions that the social partners have found to address new challenges. The expectations are that social partners contribute actively to Europe's growth strategy, Europe 2020, and the job-rich recovery the EU aims to achieve. Social dialogue is expected to play a key role and evidence shows that those European countries with the most developed social partnerships are among the most successful and competitive economies in the world. Identifying and mapping what new approaches have been tried and what the outcomes have been will enhance understanding of the latest developments and facilitate mutual learning.

Objectives

- To identify innovative solutions introduced by social partners in response to new challenges, including new tools and new topics tackled.
- To map these developments and their outcomes.

Outline of content

Innovative industrial relations practices will be identified in all Member States, investigating new developments in areas such as participation/voice, employee representation, safeguarding and creating employment, competitiveness, training, skills, and promotion of innovation. Furthermore, the project should explore various 'additional services' developed by social partner organisations to answer members' and potential members' needs – such as career counselling, HR counselling, consultancy services, and targeted services vis à vis specific groups (migrants, SMEs). The mapping will include new tools that have been developed and new thematic areas which are tackled for the first time. Different levels of collective bargaining will be examined and the links between them and whether and how they have changed will be analysed. Findings from previous Eurofound research, such as the second wave of the European Company Survey on workplace social dialogue, will be considered. The project will be coordinated with the proposed 2014 research on 'Developments in collective bargaining and social dialogue into the 21st century' (Project 22). While the mapping exercise in 2014 will provide an overview of developments, further work proposed for 2015 may focus on innovations at the company level.

Methodology

A comparative analytical report (CAR) will be developed on the basis of a questionnaire sent to national correspondents in all Member States and Norway to identify innovative approaches by social partners at various levels.

Outputs

Comparative analytical report (overview and national contributions): Innovative practices in industrial relations.

Priority area 4: Improving standards of living and promoting social cohesion in the face of economic disparities and social inequalities

Project 27: EQLS: planning for the 4th wave

Research question/Reason for project

How can the relevance of the European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS) and its potential to inform European policies be further increased? What lessons can be learnt from earlier waves of the survey and from consultation with the experts and stakeholders to develop the next wave?

Justification

As foreseen in Eurofound's four-year programme 2013–2016, the next round of the EQLS is scheduled for 2016. In order to be able to carry out the data collection in 2016, technical specifications have to be ready for the procurement process which will take place in 2015. To keep up with emerging policy priorities and with the developments in the survey field, a strategy to address methodological challenges has to be prepared and implemented in 2014. To realise the potential of the EQLS to inform policy better, collaboration with other EU bodies is desirable and will be sought as part of the preparation.

Objectives

- To identify and detail priorities in terms of survey design.
- To identify stakeholder priorities and to increase the involvement of EQLS data and information users, including various sections of the European Commission.
- To achieve, if possible, cooperation agreements with other EU bodies (primarily Eurostat).
- To prepare sound technical specifications for the 4th EQLS, and to carry out the necessary methodological work and content preparation.
- To assess the feasibility of using web-based data collection, in addition to the main EQLS interview.

Outline of content

In order to improve further the quality of the samples, Eurostat support for access to the best sampling frames in each country will be sought.

The possibilities to increase sample sizes will be explored, either in all countries, or in the regions receiving EU cohesion funds. This will include a request to DG REGIO to consider co-funding a sample top-up (as was already considered for the 3rd EQLS).

In order to further fine-tune the measurement of quality of life, the survey contents will be reviewed in the light of capability approach and the advancements in indicator development such as in the OECD's Better Life Index and

Eurostat's work. The questionnaire will be reviewed and the module (set of indicators) on public services will be developed further, piloting it in 2015. By 2016, EQLS questions on the quality of public services could serve to assess the first effects of the Social Investment Package.

To open up the possibility for data-matching of the EQLS with the data of the European Statistical System (mainly SILC), the core social background variables between the two should be adjusted to an appropriate extent. A feasibility study will be carried out regarding web-based data collection in addition to the main EQLS interview. With regard to content, new themes will be explored which could be dealt with in policy briefing papers. This could help to identify thematic priorities for the 4th EQLS.

The lessons learned and ways to tackle the methodological challenges identified in the quality assessment of 3rd EQLS will be summarised in an in-house note.

Methodology

In-house work of the 4th EQLS project team with input from the Survey Methodological Working Group. External input or agreements will be sought and developed via contacts with Eurostat, other DGs, and selected experts.

Outputs

Draft technical specifications for the 4th wave.

Feasibility study on web-based data collection as an add-on to the EQLS.

Internal assessments piloting future activities as outlined above.

Project 28: Assessing childcare services in Europe

Research question/Reason for project

How can early childhood education and care best serve the needs of children? How can the quality of early childhood education and care be improved?

Justification

The benefits of good quality early childhood education and care services (i.e. formal arrangements providing care and education of children under compulsory school age) for children, their parents and society have been widely documented and include the enhancement of learning by children, participation in the labour market of their parents and a positive influence on birth rates. In the Recommendation on Child Poverty, the Commission puts emphasis on the need to invest in accessible and inclusive services and to adapt their provision to the needs of families who require additional resources and support. Eurofound focused in 2013 on evaluations showing the impact of investing in the workforce on the quality of childhood education and care services. During 2014, Eurofound will analyse how the services can be made more accessible and inclusive for children who require greater support, looking at good practice examples.

Objectives

To document examples of good practice that increase the accessibility, inclusiveness and quality of childhood education and care services.

To identify elements of childhood education and care which are particularly important in achieving these goals.

Outline of content

In 2014, Eurofound will focus on the provision of early childhood education and care services for children who are faced with challenges associated with income, neighbourhood, disability, learning difficulties or ethnicity. It will give an

overview of good practice in service delivery, paying particular attention to the costs and benefits associated with service provision. The final overview report will also include the main findings from the systematic review contracted out in 2013 on evaluations of how investing in the workforce increases the quality of services.

Methodology

Research in 2014 will include contracting out 15 case studies describing early childhood education and care services that have been evaluated and where additional resources (e.g. personnel, materials and financial resources) have been provided in order to make these services more accessible. There will be two workshops, the first to discuss the findings of the systematic review contracted out in 2013 and the second to review the draft final report that will bring together the findings from the review and the case studies.

Outputs

Literature review.

Case studies: 15 national-level.

Consolidated report.

Project 29: The impacts of the crisis on access to healthcare services

Research question/Reason for project

What are the impacts of the crisis on access to healthcare services, and what measures have been taken to maintain or improve access in the face of budget constraints?

Justification

Access to high-quality services of general interest is important in guaranteeing quality of life in Europe. It is an essential element in achieving inclusive growth, a main objective of the Europe 2020 strategy. Healthcare is a key service of general interest. Access to quality healthcare plays an important part in maintaining a productive workforce and in addressing social exclusion and poverty, as well as in tackling health inequalities. The crisis has put pressure on public budgets while at the same time it has increased demand for healthcare services. To sustain access to high-quality healthcare is a challenge for both policymakers and service providers. Evidence from the EQLS suggests that access has suffered in many Member States, especially because of increased user charges and other budget-balancing measures such as cuts in staff, services and facilities. In 2013, the focus was on access to nursing care homes for older people, ambulatory/out-patient healthcare for people with disabilities, and ambulatory/out-patient healthcare for people with mental health problems. In 2014, this will be broadened by including evidence from primary care and hospital services.

Objectives

- To map how access to healthcare services has been affected by austerity measures.
- To establish which groups have been most affected in terms of access to healthcare services and in what ways.
- To identify measures, at provider and country level, that have maintained or improved access to healthcare services in the face of austerity measures.

Outline of content

The study examines how access to healthcare has developed in countries affected by the crisis. It will investigate what service providers and governments have done to maintain or improve access while being faced with increased demand and less resources. The study will add to the results from the 2013 project by including evidence from primary care and hospital services in countries where the crisis recently has impacted on healthcare budgets and services.

Methodology

The research adds to evidence from ten country reports, a workshop, literature review and data analysis from 2013. Five of the ten country studies were initiated in late 2013 and are due to be finalised in the first half of 2014. They include three case studies each, including at least one primary care centre and one hospital in each country. One of them is written in-house. Mid-2014 an expert seminar will be held to discuss the final draft research report.

Outputs

Country reports: five.

Consolidated report.

Project 30: Delivering public services: a greater role for the private sector?

Research question/Reason for project

To what extent and in which sectors are private and non-profit services expanding and/or even replacing some parts of social public services? In what way is this linked to budget cuts and austerity measures in the wake of the crisis? What are the consequences of higher private sector involvement?

Justification

Public services have a prominent role to play in preserving the European Social Model, as highlighted by the recently published Social Investment Package, which emphasises the need for private and third sector resources to ‘complement public efforts’. The topic of public services has also been prioritised in Eurofound’s current four-year programme. The role of the private and non-profit sector in delivering public services is the subject of an on-going debate and there is a need for more and higher quality services. The questions are to what extent have private and non-profit actors increased their role and what has been the impact on the accessibility and quality of such services. This project will focus on ‘social services of general interest’ and examine where privatisation of service delivery has been intensified since the onset of the economic crisis.

Objectives

- To identify and map the countries where an expansion of the private sector in delivering social services of general interest has occurred.
- To examine whether and to what extent expansion of the private sector did or did not help in coping with the challenges Member States have had to face in recent years, with special regard to the consequences of the financial and economic crisis.
- To document the implications for access, including cost barriers, and the quality and effectiveness of selected services.

Outline of content

The 2014 project is the first phase of a possible multiannual programme. The increasing role of the private sector will be reviewed in general and investigated in more detail in selected Member States. The presence of the private sector varies in different services and there are also substantial cross-country differences. The project will examine the underlying factors behind the expansion of the private sector in public services, identifying the dynamics of this process. It will distinguish between public services which are publicly funded and provided by public and private providers, respectively, and those which are no longer publicly funded. Due to large variations, it will be essential to identify contextual, country-specific factors in this process.

Methodology

Due to its broad scope, this will be an exploratory project in 2014 which will determine the precise nature of the research for 2015. The project has the following steps:

1. Overview: examining previous research and analysing existing macrodata (for example, trends in public and private expenditure in different services, disaggregated by various components of private and public spending, insofar as data are available).
2. Other information on public/private sector share in the Member States, for example, changes in legislation which affected the expansion, outlining the reasons for changes.
3. Up to four country studies, exploring the most relevant sectors for providing information on dynamics and impacts of private sector expansion.

Outputs

Country reports: up to four.

In-house assessment in preparation for 2015 activities.

Project 31: Access to benefits in times of crisis

Research question/Reason for project

How can Member States ensure that social benefits reach those most in need? How is this being done effectively in the face of restricted budgets?

Justification

Social benefits reduce social inequalities provided that they reach the target group in an efficient and timely manner, and function as an economic stabiliser. The Social Investment Package (SIP) emphasises that well-designed benefit systems, setting the right stimuli for the beneficiary to be active up to her/his potential, enable the social and economic inclusion of different groups, one of the main objectives of Europe 2020. Unemployed and economically inactive young people, low-income households, the self-employed who fall ill for extended periods or who have little work, mobile EU citizens and pensioners living on state pensions are among the groups in vulnerable situations for whom benefits play an important role. In order to increase the impact and the sustainability of social protection systems, benefits need to reach these groups efficiently and effectively. Simplifying application procedures, reducing administrative burden and improving access to information are all important in achieving this objective and have been highlighted in the SIP.

Objectives

- To map where gaps have been identified between eligibility and take-up of social benefits.
- To provide an overview of problems which are encountered in practice in accessing benefits.
- To assess how initiatives have promoted the effective targeting of benefits.
- To describe experiences where inefficiencies were reduced or avoided, especially in terms of administrative costs and simplifying application procedures.

Outline of content

The study concerns monetary benefits which support people in vulnerable situations (e.g. minimum income schemes). It will map where gaps have been identified between eligibility and take-up, and where benefit systems have been reformed in an effort to avoid inefficiencies (e.g. in application processes) over the past five years. Case studies will

include service providers and benefit administrating agencies as well as representatives of users. They may concern particularly significant gaps, and policies aimed at reducing administrative burdens or improved information provision. This study will investigate experiences when Member States made changes in benefit schemes to avoid inefficiencies and adverse incentives, as well as measures to improve access to benefits and the actual take-up of benefits. The project will contribute to documenting the efficiency as well as the effectiveness of current support systems.

Methodology

Literature review to map where gaps have been identified between eligibility and take-up, and where benefit systems have been reformed in order to avoid administrative inefficiencies and improve access to information over the past five years.

Analysis of available datasets (EQLS, EU-SILC) for background information.

Case studies: to investigate what problems are encountered in accessing benefits in practice, to learn from experiences where waste was administratively reduced or avoided and to identify how initiatives have promoted effective targeting of benefits.

Two expert seminars for review of case studies and for review of final report.

Outputs

Consolidated report.

Project 32: Families in the economic crisis: changes in policy measures

Research question/Reason for project

How have policies responded to the risks of poverty and exclusion for families in Europe, and with what effects?

Justification

The European Commission's Recommendation on investing in children (2013) stresses the need for early intervention and prevention of child poverty. As it stands, children are the age group most at risk of poverty and social exclusion. In fact, the 2012 Annual Report of the Social Protection Committee reports an increase in the number of children living in poverty and social exclusion in 10 Member States.

Furthermore, the report points out that living in (quasi-) jobless households can be particularly problematic for children because of the possible impact on their current and future quality of life. EU-SILC 2011 data shows that close to 9% of children in the EU grow up in this kind of household but that these figures vary greatly between countries (ranging from less than 4% in Cyprus and Luxembourg to 26% in Italy); in several countries large increases have been noted since 2008.

When referring to 'families' in this project, 'families with children' or 'households with family responsibilities' is meant.

Objectives

Based on the work carried out in 2013:

- To explore differences in the impact of the crisis on the social and economic situation of households with family responsibilities between countries experiencing a similar economic downturn.

- To map relevant social policy responses (e.g. structure of social protection benefits, expenditure on housing, childcare, healthcare provisions to families, introduction of new services directed at families) while connecting the findings from the EQLS to macro-economic data.
- To identify the changes in social policy which appear to be more effective in helping families in the context of reducing the risks of poverty and social exclusion.

Outline of content

In the 2013 Work Programme, Eurofound set out to analyse the impact of the economic crisis on households with family responsibilities, using 3rd EQLS and EU-SILC 2011 data. Following identification of the types of families that can be classified as living in vulnerable situations (families that have difficulties making ends meet, experience deprivation or social exclusion, rely on state benefits), the research in 2014 looks more specifically at policy responses – including asking if these families are being targeted with help.

Different responses to families in crisis can be found across Europe: some benefits may have been reduced, affecting in particular families already in a vulnerable position (such as single parents), while governments are introducing new measures to help families that have been hit most severely. Elsewhere, there may not be a departure from previous policy, but the number and characteristics of families living in vulnerable situations has changed.

The project will map the kinds of policy responses that may play a role in helping disadvantaged families in 10 selected countries and analyse them, with the aim of pointing policymakers towards effective solutions in a variety of situations across countries.

Methodology

Research will consist of a) Analysis of macro-economic data on expenditure on social and family policies from sources such as the ESSPROS database and the OECD family database as well as data from national statistical offices (for all EU28 countries); b) Analysis of changes in social protection systems regarding families from the MISSOC database and national sources (for all EU28 countries); c) 10 country studies to map responses in social and family policy since 2007 and draw conclusions for policymakers; d) A review of the available literature and policy developments; e) An expert seminar to review the draft final report.

Outputs

Country reports: 10 (input into final report).

Consolidated report.

Project 33: Housing in Europe – the consequences of poor accommodation

Research question/Reason for project

How do housing standards in the EU Member States compare? What are the social and economic implications of poor quality housing and housing insecurity and who are the people most affected in different parts of Europe? What are the policy responses generally and how can early-intervention measures effectively reduce the risk of inadequate housing?

Justification

Accommodation costs represent the biggest expenditure item for most Europeans. Poor housing conditions are not only associated with low levels of health and well-being but are part of a vicious circle which increases the risk of poverty and social exclusion. The European Parliament, in its 2013 report on Social housing in the European Union, calls on Eurofound to carry out a study examining the cost of non-action on inadequate housing.

The European Commission's Social Investment Package (SIP) stresses the role social investment can play for people disproportionately affected by poor or insecure housing. It is also argued that confronting homelessness with a focus on prevention and early intervention can result in considerable savings on emergency housing provision, on healthcare and by preventing crime. Results from the EQLS show an increase in the proportion of Europeans who find it likely they will need to leave their accommodation because they can no longer afford it, taking into account rents or mortgages, as well as heating and other costs. While the risk of becoming homeless will be investigated as part of this project, homelessness is not covered.

Objectives

- To map the availability and affordability of adequate housing.
- To identify groups who are most affected by poor quality housing in different parts of Europe.
- To investigate how policy measures, such as early-intervention initiatives, can effectively help households at risk.
- To identify the types of social and economic costs associated with poor quality housing and housing insecurity, quantifying a selected number of these costs.

Outline of content

In 2014, the research will investigate different aspects of housing policies: mapping availability and affordability, access to good quality housing with security of tenure, and general policy approaches across the EU promoting access to housing. Based on the analysis of the EQLS and EU-SILC data, the project will identify groups that are exposed to a particularly high risk of living in poor or inadequate accommodation and it will also estimate the social and economic costs of living in such housing.

Methodology

The study will build on past work by Eurofound, for example, its research on 'managing household debts', 'families in the economic crisis' and 'housing conditions of the Roma'. It will also include a literature review on the risk factors of housing inadequacy, and analyse EQLS and EU-SILC data, to better understand the characteristics of households experiencing different levels of poor housing situations (Working Paper 1). Subsequently, the social and economic costs of poor housing will be mapped and a selection of these costs will be quantified (Working Paper 2). Finally, prevention and early intervention initiatives, including the provision of social housing, will be described and assessed. Two case studies on early intervention initiatives will be performed in-house, and two sets of three case studies each will be contracted-out (Working Paper 3). All the evidence will be brought together with a review of recent literature and input from an expert seminar into a research report written by Eurofound, to be published in 2015.

Outputs

Case studies: eight.
Internal assessment paper 1.
Internal assessment paper 2.
Internal assessment paper 3.

Project 34: Social inclusion of young people

Research question/Reason for project

What are the consequences of youth unemployment and inactivity at individual and society level? What are the policy measures and initiatives that are effective in re-integrating the individual in the labour market and in society overall?

Justification

This project was approved in 2013. To finalise work started in 2013, an expert meeting for the validation of the results will be held in 2014.

Objectives

- To organise an expert meeting to validate the results of the project.
- To finalise the project and publish results.

Outline of content

As presented in 2013, this project will provide a comprehensive overview of the impact and consequences of the long-term unemployment of young people for the individual and society. It investigates good practices in fighting long-term unemployment. Given the particular policy relevance of the debate and the recent Council recommendation, a project focus on the transferability of the Youth Guarantee programme and its implementation was added. The project also seeks to identify innovative support systems that provide a range of services and social integration strategies for young people. It looks at the institutional capacities and capabilities of service providers. Finally, it examines the financial support systems, such as income support, that are available for young people in all the Member States.

In 2014, the work will be completed and, as a new activity, an expert meeting will be organised in order to validate the results. Subject to availability of resources, research on inactivity and disengagement of young people may be complemented by investigating further improvement of indicators for NEETs, with a special focus on distinguishing better the different groups within NEETs.

Methodology

As presented in 2013, the project includes quantitative and qualitative analysis. The impact of unemployment is investigated by the statistical analysis of the European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS), as well as other surveys. Innovative support and integration systems in selected Member States are identified and examined through desk research, interviews with relevant stakeholders and external contracting. The transferability and implementation of the Youth Guarantee will be investigated through desk research and stakeholder interview. The project is finally complemented by a comparative analytical report that will investigate young people's access to income support systems. An expert meeting will validate results.

Outputs

Report: impact of unemployment and inactivity of youth.

Report: preventing long-term unemployment – transferability and implementation of Youth Guarantee.

Comparative analytical report (overview and national contributions): income support systems for young people.

Consolidated report.

Project 35: Migration, labour market policies and effective integration of third-country nationals

Research question/Reason for project

What are the institutional arrangements and mechanisms that link migration policies to labour market policies in the Member States? To what extent are different policies coordinated, including integration policies? What is the impact of the coordination of policies on the long-term socio-economic integration of migrants?

Justification

Member States face challenges and possible trade-offs between the application of sometimes restrictive migration policies and policies that address labour market demands with regard to specific segments of the labour force. The design of labour market policies and integration in the labour market is a significant factor for future social integration prospects of migrants. Eurofound has previously documented good practices of migrant integration at local and city level, but measures for more effective coordination of policies have not been examined, particularly at Member State level. Preparatory research including an expert workshop was completed in 2013. A comparative analysis of good practices will assist Member States in improving policy coordination which could support integration.

Objectives

- To map procedures, mechanisms and structures used by Member States to link their policies on migration with policies addressing labour market needs.
- To identify the key actors and forms and extent of stakeholder involvement in mechanisms applied by Member States to attract and retain migrant workers.
- To identify mechanisms which address the implications of migration and labour market policies for other policy domains and the socio-economic integration of migrants.

Outline of content

The project will examine how Member States establish, manage and coordinate policy measures aimed at attracting migrants and integrating them successfully in society. It will look into processes in a variety of policy domains (migration, labour, integration), focusing on how tools such as point systems, lists of occupations, etc. are established, who is involved in decision-making, and what mechanisms exist for the assessment and review of the processes. The project will document differences between Member States and will identify good practice leading to successful integration.

The role and level of involvement of social partners will be examined.

Methodology

A comparative analytical report (CAR) will be developed on the basis of a questionnaire sent to national correspondents in all Member States and Norway mapping policy measures. Four case studies will be used for detailed analysis of policies in selected Member States. Interviews with experts, policymakers, and stakeholders will be used to identify key criteria for analysis, as well as for peer-review of results. The final report will be based on all the inputs and work carried out in 2013 and 2014.

Outputs

Case studies: four.

Consolidated report.

Budget estimate for Title 3

Number	Title	Budget Title 3 in 2014 EUR	thereof Network of Correspondents (for info only) EUR	Full cost 2014 (Title 1 + Title 2 +Title 3) EUR	Project life-time cost 2014-2015 EUR
Priority area 1: Increasing labour market participation and combating unemployment by creating jobs, improving labour markets and promoting integration					
1	European Jobs Monitor (ongoing)	70,000		237,000	237,000
2	European Restructuring Monitor – Events database and reporting (on-going)	184,000	150,000	378,000	378,000
3	ERM qualitative databases (on-going)	65,000	65,000	195,000	195,000
4	Job creation in SMEs (new)	150,000	70,000	258,000	386,000
5	New forms of employment relationships – analysis of selected new employment forms (2013 project continued)	70,000		136,000	136,000
6	Start-up support for young people – an assessment of selected labour market policies (new)	82,000	70,000	189,000	201,000
7	The gender employment gap: challenges and solutions (new)	148,000		224,000	324,000
8	Benchmarking Public Employment Services (new)	7,000		69,000	69,000
	Effects of restructuring at regional level and approaches to deal with the consequences*	10,000		49,000	49,000
		786,000	355,000	1,735,000	1,975,000
Priority area 2: Improving working conditions and making work sustainable throughout the life course					
9	6th European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) – preparation and implementation (2013 project continued)	729,000		1,148,000	1,148,000
10	Monitoring working life: The European observatory on industrial relations and working conditions (on-going)	733,000	733,000	1,178,000	1,178,000
11	Working time developments into the 21st Century (new)	55,000	45,000	149,000	149,000
12	Recent developments in the distribution of wages in Europe (new)	10,000		150,000	150,000
14	Sustainable work throughout the life course: national policies and strategies (2013 project continued)	170,000		370,000	370,000
15	Changing places: Mid-career review, internal mobility and intergenerational initiatives to extend working life (2013 project continued)	32,000		149,000	249,000
16	Improving working conditions in occupations with multiple disadvantages (new)	95,000	70,000	198,000	198,000
17	Overview report of 3rd European Company Survey (new)	8,000		317,000	317,000
18	The impact of work organisation on performance, innovation and work climate in European companies (Secondary analysis of the 3rd ECS) (new)	65,000		135,000	135,000
19	Employee participation in European companies (Secondary analysis of the 3rd ECS) (new)	65,000		109,000	125,000
20	Third European Company Survey: Qualitative follow-up interviews on the development of workplace innovation in companies (2013 project continued)	16,000		153,000	183,000
21	Regulation of labour market intermediaries and the role of social partners in preventing trafficking of labour (new)	90,000	90,000	161,000	161,000

Number	Title	Budget Title 3 in 2014 EUR	thereof Network of Correspondents (for info only) EUR	Full cost 2014 (Title 1 + Title 2 +Title 3) EUR	Project life-time cost 2014-2015 EUR
Priority area 2: Improving working conditions and making work sustainable throughout the life course (cont'd)					
	Employment opportunities for people with chronic diseases*	25,000		57,000	57,000
	Pay developments into the 21st century - wage bargaining regimes and wage outcomes*	10,000		36,000	36,000
		2,103,000	938,000	4,310,000	4,456,000
Priority Area 3: Developing industrial relations to ensure equitable and productive solutions in a changing policy context					
22	Developments in collective bargaining and social dialogue into the 21st century (new)	102,000	90,000	192,000	192,000
23	Mapping key dimensions of industrial relations in Europe (new)	69,000	44,000	153,000	174,000
24	Representativeness studies at EU level and the concept of representativeness at national and EU level (on-going)	630,000	630,000	1,003,000	1,003,000
25	The role of social partners in the National Reform Programmes and in the European Semester (new)	70,000	70,000	192,000	192,000
26	New topics, new tools, innovative approaches by the social partners (new)	90,000	90,000	180,000	180,000
	IR beyond the EU - IR in USA, Japan and Europe	30,000		66,000	66,000
		991,000	924,000	1,786,000	1,807,000
Priority Area 4: Improving standards of living and promoting social cohesion in the face of economic disparities and social inequalities					
27	EQLS: planning for the 4th wave (new)	70,000		471,000	655,000
28	Assessing childcare services in Europe (2013 project continued)	129,000		281,000	281,000
29	The impacts of the crisis on access to healthcare services (2013 project continued)	10,000		148,000	148,000
30	Delivering public services: a greater role for the private sector? (new)	60,000		170,000	170,000
31	Access to benefits in times of crisis (new)	95,000		247,000	304,000
32	Families in the economic crisis: changes in policy measures (2013 project continued)	115,000		308,000	308,000
33	Housing in Europe – the consequences of poor accommodation (new)	120,000		341,000	525,000
34	Social inclusion of young people (2013 project continued)	40,000		248,000	248,000
35	Migration, labour market policies and effective integration of third-country nationals (2013 project continued)	144,000	44,000	275,000	275,000
	Convergence and divergence between member States - improvement of working conditions over time*	20,000		75,000	75,000
		803,000	44,000	2,564,000	2,989,000
Strategic Action and Development					
	Survey methodology working group				
Subtotal Research 2014		4,713,000	2,261,000	10,473,000	11,305,000

Annual work programme 2014

Number	Title	Budget Title 3 in 2014 EUR	thereof Network of Correspondents (for info only) EUR	Full cost 2014 (Title 1 + Title 2 +Title 3) EUR	Project life-time cost 2014-2015 EUR
Communicating knowledge, organising debate and exchange with target groups					
	Publishing	950,000			
	Editing				
	Typesetting & printing				
	Design				
	Translation				
	Web-based publishing and distribution, including web development	275,000			
	Web content development				
	Web hosting				
	Web application development				
	Stakeholder outreach	135,000			
	Visitors programme				
	Member State outreach				
	Transport and distribution				
	Customised reports				
	Media	130,000			
	Press				
	Audiovisual				
	Events and exhibitions	45,000			
	Exhibitions				
	Events				
Subtotal Information & Communication 2014		1,535,000		4,242,000	
Other Activities 2014					
13	Foundation Seminar Series (FSS) (on-going)	140,000		312,000	
	Stakeholder enquiry service and other requested activities	60,000		99,000	
	Operation of Network of Correspondents	142,000	142,000	142,000	
	Information centre	100,000		100,000	
	Evaluation programme	180,000		180,000	
	ICT	120,000		120,000	
	Governing Board	165,000		165,000	
	BLO	10,000		10,000	
	Advisory Committees	60,000		60,000	
	Other meetings (Audits, Data Protection, Agency co-ordination)	15,000		15,000	
Subtotal Other Activities 2014		992,000	142,000	1,203,000	

Number	Title	Budget Title 3 in 2014 EUR	thereof Network of Correspondents (for info only) EUR	Full cost 2014 (Title 1 + Title 2 +Title 3) EUR	Project life-time cost 2014-2015 EUR
2013 Projects continued in 2014					
	Labour market transition of young people			14,000	
	Labour market transitions in turbulent times			76,000	
	Restructuring in the public sector			41,000	
	The future of manufacturing in Europe			57,000	
	Youth entrepreneurship in Europe - Values and characteristics of young entrepreneurs			47,000	
	Facilitating geographical mobility			19,000	
	EWCO - continuation of work from 2013			129,000	
	Extent of harassment and violence at work and preventive public measures			27,000	
	Joint project between the EU OSHA and Eurofound on Psychosocial Risks			14,000	
	EIRO - continuation of work from 2013			168,000	
	Representativeness studies			77,000	
	Stakeholder enquiry service			39,000	
	Industrial relations and working conditions in central public administration			123,000	
	Analysis and reporting from the European Quality of Life Survey EU27			40,000	
	Third European Quality of Life Survey country analyses			86,000	
	The social dimension of intra EU mobility – Impact on public services			87,000	
Subtotal 2013 Projects continued in 2014				1,044,000	
Grand Total		7,240,000	2,403,000	16,962,000	

*Project funded in 2013; the budget indicated here refers to meetings to be held in 2014 (no project fiche)

Annex 2: Risk register 2014

	Description of key risks	Which projects or activities will be affected?	What existing controls or mitigating factors are in place?	Assessment of risk level with existing controls and mitigating factors applied	Risk response	Action plan
1	Delivery of knowledge in terms of scientific quality, timeliness and policy-relevance is at risk due to the high number of projects to be delivered, in combination with other demands, which may hinder the objective to provide input to better informed policies in four priority areas.	Any project with its related activities in Eurofound's work programme.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alignment with one of the policy priority areas as a deciding factor in the development process. 2. Using the communication clusters as identified in the four- year programme for setting priorities for publications and events in line with the opportunities at policy level. 3. Regular coordination and review meetings (Project steering groups, Research Board, IC Quarterly, MAC) focusing on priorities identified in projects, procurements and publications. 4. Comparing estimated time with actual time spent on research projects for learning purposes. 	Without mitigating factors this would be critical. Based on the measures in place (see previous column) the risk is non-critical but should be further reduced.	Reduce risks further through preventive actions.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support to individual staff members in task and time management. 2. Closer monitoring at management level of implications of 'ad-hoc' requests related to activities already scheduled in the work programme. 3. Review of work programme development process for 2015 and onwards.
2	The complexity and interdependence of two of Eurofound's strategic activities for 2013-2016 – the integration of two observatories and web development – poses a risk to timely implementation in line with agreed standards, impacting on reaping the intended benefits during the implementation period of the four- year programme.	European Working Life Observatory (integrating the European Industrial Relations Observatory and the European Working Conditions Observatory), and Eurofound's website	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Written outline of the stages in which the various components of these activities are to be completed and how they impact on each other with clarification of roles and responsibilities. 2. Cross-unit project management steering. 3. Monitoring at corporate level through quarterly meetings. 	Not critical	Reduce risks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dedicated support to management in respect of finalising and documenting processes, procedures and implementation plans – notably during the first quarter.
3	The strategic investment to in-source research capacity has resulted in a relatively large cohort of staff being recruited at the same time. Staff turnover in Eurofound is usually relatively low while the staff table will not increase. This combination increases the competition for career progression and the opportunity to excel and be recognised within Eurofound. Perceived failure to achieve this risks the disengagement of some staff, may result in lower morale and proves a threat to retention of talent.	In principle all projects and organisational activities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development plans at individual level. 2. Launch of workforce planning strategy. 	Not critical	Reduce risks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue with workforce planning and developing career profiles focused on job enrichment over time and actively promote existing measures such as job rotation, informed and reinforced by periodic staff engagement surveys.

