



# Understanding, anticipating and managing change

*Identifying the drivers of change*



European Monitoring Centre on Change



European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

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## *Identifying the drivers of change*

Conference to launch the  
European Monitoring Centre on Change

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## Foreword

When the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working conditions was established, it was a tangible recognition of the priority the Council of Ministers and the Commission wished to give to the quality of European citizens' lives.

The decision to ask the Foundation to set up the European Monitoring Centre on Change was a confirmation of that priority. Change is often described and discussed in the abstract, but its impact is all too practical. It affects careers and family lives. It alters companies and whole occupations. It shifts the economies and social structures of nations, regions and localities. Its impact may be for the better, or for the worse, but it is always keenly felt by individuals.

The role of the Monitoring Centre will be to give people the information and tools to enable them to anticipate and manage change and its effects. Situated as it is in the Foundation, the Monitoring Centre will do this by using its tried and tested approach: engaging people with expertise and direct experience, providing them with the means to network and interact with each other, and offering them the means to form their own strategies for change.

The Centre will be rigorous in its search for data, and in its use of data. It will be eclectic in its use of scientific, economic, market and social statistics and information. It will address the impact of change on equality and gender, working conditions, participation, and the relationship between people's working and social and family lives.

Setting up the Monitoring Centre is a great challenge. This report is based on what was said and achieved at the launch conference. We hope it will be a valuable contribution to our mission to explain the Monitoring Centre, and to engage as many interested European citizens as possible in thinking clearly about what drives change, and how it can be managed to the greatest advantage.

Raymond-Pierre Bodin,  
Director

Eric Verborgh,  
Deputy Director

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## Background to the setting up of EMCC

The European Foundation launched the European Monitoring Centre on Change (EMCC) at a conference held under the auspices of the Belgian Presidency at the Palais d'Egmont, Brussels, on 23 October 2001. The EMCC's mission is to cast a spotlight on the economic, social, business and consumer forces that drive change in the European economy. It will provide companies, the social partners, public authorities and European institutions with the data and qualitative information they need in order to manage the consequences of such change.

Establishing the Centre figured among the main proposals in the European Commission's June 2000 *Social Policy Agenda*. This proposal came about as a direct response to the call from the high-level expert group (the Gyllenhammar Group), set up by the Commission in 1997 in the wake of the major plant closures at Renault Vilvoorde in 1997, for a European operation capacity to track and analyse change. The idea was strongly supported by the social partners and endorsed at the highest level when the Presidency conclusions at the Nice Summit in December 2000 stated that the EMCC was to be set up within the Foundation.

*'The Group proposes the creation of a European Observatory on Industrial Change as a resource centre for economic data and forward studies on economic, financial, technological, territorial and social developments within the European Union.'*

*Managing change*, report of the high-level group on the economic and social implications of industrial change, November 1998

The group of some 100 experts and policy makers concerned with industrial change which came together to launch the Centre included ministers and officials from Member State governments, European Commission officials, the social partners, representatives of other labour market organisations and regional public bodies, and the Foundation's directorate and staff.

The Belgian Presidency and the Foundation decided to use the launch conference to ask these experts to contribute actively to the design of the EMCC. Their task was to examine the main phenomena, organisations and activities that drive change, and to note some of the key issues these raise for the EMCC.

*'Change is most easily noticed at times of crisis, tension and fracture, moving in a jerky way. Gradual change tends to be seen as natural. People do not realise what is changing .... Change needs to be managed, steered, guided. Some anticipate change, some don't. It is essential to act to anticipate and to manage change. To do that, you must have the necessary information. The Monitoring Centre will establish a multi-disciplinary platform to provide this centre of convergence for all the information sources.'*

Laurette Onkelinx, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Employment, Belgium

This report brings together many of the diverse issues which were highlighted at the conference and the suggestions from the experts. The collected views of the members of the groups who discussed change from different perspectives are presented here in a synthesised form. Other individual statements or views are attributed directly to those who contributed them. The summary report is intended to provide a collage of expert views on the drivers of change which should serve as a focus for the work of the EMCC, as well as giving an indication of the links and relationships between them.

The experts who attended represented many of the groups which make up the EMCC's prospective users. Their involvement served to launch the intelligent dialogue the EMCC will have with its users, not just ascertaining their information priorities but understanding and using their experience and perceptions.

### **The nature and purpose of the Centre**

The EMCC will collect for the first time in one place reliable and objective data on key aspects of industrial change. Those who work with change will be provided with a broad range of information and depth of detail. The information will be structured in such a way as to enable users to search and analyse data and strategies from a comprehensive range of international sources. It will focus on the key drivers of change, sorting through the impact of globalisation, technological advance and shifting consumer demand to pinpoint the restructuring, organisation of work and

labour, mergers and acquisitions and skills transformation consequences that affect individual workers.

*‘The Monitoring Centre is of great importance in a context where both the nature of demand and the means of production are changing in all sectors.... One consequence of these changes has been a growing need for skills in a context where in 1999-2000 overall job growth was 1% including a 3% growth in skilled jobs. It’s a question of the ability and adaptability of workers. We need to invest more in the quality of employment .... The consequences of change will not be as negative if adequate efforts have been made to adapt through training, especially the training of older workers .... Europe has advantages at a time of economic slowdown, particularly its high levels of education, and the European social model .... Since the beginning of 2001 the economic slowdown has shown how important a quality approach is. This slowdown makes the establishment of the monitoring centre even more important. ’*

Odile Quintin, Director-General, DG for Employment and Social Affairs,  
European Commission

The aim of the EMCC is to provide its users with the means to analyse change and anticipate its consequences. However, its purpose is to inform and communicate information, not to develop models to forecast future change.

The EMCC is managed by the Foundation and governed by an autonomous steering committee which reflects the composition of the Foundation’s Administrative Board.

*‘The structure of the Observatory should be light and flexible. It should be regarded primarily as an active network which brings together a great diversity of competences, building on existing tools and structures. Information and communication technologies should allow the setting up of easy ways of communication and interaction between concerned actors.’*

Joint Opinion of the Social Partners on the European Monitoring Centre on Change,  
November 2000

Raymond-Pierre Bodin, Director of the Foundation, said that the establishment of the EMCC could be seen as ‘an initiative to reduce uncertainty, organise change and at the same time plot the future’.

*'The Centre will be first and foremost a place for exchanging practice, a place for debating different practices but also a tool for analysing existing practice, a tool for comparing practices designed to update the issue of change, the levers of change, the driving of change. The Centre must therefore be a place we can find out how others are doing this, a place where knowledge is disseminated, a tool to make knowledge accessible to individuals and groups .... Here we can adopt the principles of strategic analysis and strategic planning which affirm that a strategic vision should embody three elements: preparing for the inevitable, accommodating the undesirable, and controlling what is controllable.'*

Raymond-Pierre Bodin, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

### **The EMCC and enterprise policy**

The Foundation's plans for the EMCC are closely aligned with the objectives of European enterprise policy:

- promoting an entrepreneurial culture;
- achieving higher start-up rates;
- securing better access to finance for businesses;
- improving the image of entrepreneurs;
- providing a policy framework in which innovative businesses can thrive;
- exploiting the potential of the e-economy;
- further improving the impact of the internal market.

*'Why is it so crucial that change is well-indicated and correctly managed? Because this capacity is one of the key drivers of wealth and competitiveness in an economy.'*

Pedro Ortún, Directorate-General for Enterprise, European Commission

The growing focus of this policy is an awareness that a new and more demanding type of consumer has arrived on the scene, helping to drive change in an economy that is being pressed into increasingly rapid innovation. This impacts particularly on services, and especially on the high growth business services sector. The fact that wealth creation and employment growth are now driven largely by intangibles presents

particular challenges to SMEs. They must respond to changing markets by improving productivity and quality of production and service – all of which rely heavily on workers' skills. Better education and training are credited with having contributed directly to higher growth rates in employment in the last five years.

*'Although change is not always obvious, it is continuous and inevitable.'*

Laurette Onkelinx, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Employment, Belgium

## **The role of the social partners**

The EMCC must reflect the key aspects of the European social model. It will draw information from a wide range of labour market and social interlocutors, and will ensure that it presents its information in ways that best meet their needs. Above all, it will draw on the social partners' work on the management of change, and an important indicator of its success will be the extent to which the social partners make use of its products.

The social partners have been clear about what they want, setting out the core mission and aims of the Centre in their Joint Opinion of November 2000.

*'The core mission of the Observatory would consist in monitoring drivers of change in the European economy. It would be used by its target audiences as a tool. Allowing anticipation and prospective research and analysis, and thereby facilitating adaptation at all appropriate levels: European, national, territorial and company.'*

Joint Opinion of the Social Partners on the European Monitoring Centre on Change,  
November 2000

In the Joint Opinion the social partners said that the Centre should aim to:

- identify, collect and process relevant information on the major drivers of change;
- facilitate access to such information to its target audiences;
- identify and disseminate good practices regarding adaptation to change, especially at territorial (including cross-border), sectoral and company levels;
- facilitate exchange of experience on adaptation to change.

They have emphasised in particular the importance of linking the EMCC to the expertise of organisations and networks other than those normally available to companies, unions and the bodies that represent them.

*'Change is a permanent challenge for companies, employees and social partners. Change is necessary. If you don't change you risk disappearing.... The EMCC is a centre for change, not for economic re-structuring. The main mission is to identify the data vis-à-vis the main drivers of change. It should not be restricted to an EU approach. It must look at the EEA, the candidate countries, and must also bring in other international information. Employers will do their best to work with the EMCC to clearly specify what companies expect from what is an important resource.'*

Thérèse de Liedekerke, UNICE

*'Trade unions have long recognised that change is not constrained by boundaries, even European ones. For us the Centre is not a passive information source, but rather a proactive facility linking analysis with data collection .... The Centre must contribute to the development of the social dialogue.... You can assume we will continue to be an active but also a demanding partner in your endeavour.'*

Emilio Gabaglio, ETUC

## **The scope of the challenge**

EMCC will address the following main areas of industrial change:

- the internationalisation of business and markets as large companies become world producers and small firms supply goods and service across regional and national borders;
- the changing structures of companies, of production processes and of the organisation of work as management hierarchies disappear and new technologies replace traditional forms of production, encouraging team-working and multi-skilling;
- technological change which is revolutionising communications, production and service provision in all sectors and is prevalent in all types and sizes of company;
- the decline of employment in traditional industries and the generation of new activities associated with new technologies and the growing service economy, leading to widespread restructuring of businesses,

shifting regional economic patterns, changing career structures and fresh demands on education and training at every level from secondary schooling through to continuing training and lifelong learning;

- the positive impact of the growth in the numbers of women in work, and of their growing influence in positions of power, responsibility and technical expertise, for the first time placing at employers' disposal the abilities and skills of the entire potential European workforce;
- the growth of part-time work, new contractual patterns and flexibility, and the disappearance of the 'employment for life' concept, resulting both in changed career expectations and working patterns among workers, and in new recruitment and retention practices among employers.

*'What drives change across Europe? Globalisation – economic, cultural and political, economic and monetary union – a unique event in world history, enlargement, technological change, ageing and demographic trends, including immigration, and labour market change.'*

Maria João Rodrigues, Special adviser to the Prime Minister of Portugal

The Centre's first concern will be to monitor changes that impact on the capacity of European companies and sectors to grow, create employment and build the necessary working conditions, management structures and industrial relations to sustain that employment.

*'I want to underline the importance of the directive on workers' rights and conditions in companies with more than 50 workers. You cannot have successful management of change unless undertakings take responsibility and unless workers are involved.'*

Odile Quintin, Director General, DG for Employment and Social Affairs,  
European Commission

The EMCC's parallel concern will be to present data and experiences that show how the quality of employees' working and living conditions can improve as productivity and profitability advance. It must be concerned with the implications of change for the careers and lives of individual workers.

*'The employability of an individual is his/her ability to find a niche in the labour market. Employability encompasses more than just training: it also*

*provides individuals with a better understanding of change, of the need for mobility and of the means to upgrade skills.'*

*Managing change*, report of the high-level group on the economic and social implications of industrial change, November 1998

## **Workplace and company restructuring**

Company restructuring – frequently in the form of mergers and acquisitions – is both a cause and an effect of change. It has been increasing rapidly within the European Union. In 1999 there were 12,800 mergers and acquisitions involving EU companies. This was an all-time high, representing an increase of 28% on the previous year.

Data on restructuring in the EU is still scarce. In France, where such data is collected, figures show that in 1998-9 as much as 70% of company restructuring involved mergers and acquisitions.

*'A question which arose at the start of the Gyllenhammer Group was: is it possible to predict industrial restructuring and its implications? Is it possible to predict the social consequences? Is it possible and useful to review alternatives to decisions which corporate managers intend to take? Can we move beyond a stage where social policy is disconnected from economic policy and only comes into play after the event? Can we form guidelines for a proactive policy?'*

Bruno Trentin, MEP

To restructure means to organise differently. This may come about as a result of economic pressure to maximise shareholder value or internal pressures to develop organisational capacity and competence. Data confirms the extent of all forms of company restructuring. In Germany, by no means at the top of the speed of change table, 70% of all works councils in 1997-8 reported restructuring in their companies. Much of this was workplace restructuring resulting from the introduction of new production systems.

Other types of company restructuring include:

- changes in ownership and form (through mergers and acquisitions), making companies larger;
- demergers and spin-offs, making companies smaller;

- decreases in production or service levels, having the effect of moving activity between locations or reducing locations (in the case of multinationals across borders);
- outsourcing by companies or public sector bodies.

## The speed of change in countries and sectors

In the conference workshops, change was discussed from a number of perspectives, reflecting the fact that change is by no means uniformly experienced. Most new jobs in the EU in the 1990s have been created in the services sector. These have outnumbered jobs lost in agriculture and in manufacturing. But the speed at which these changes have affected individual Member States has been far from uniform.

By and large, the poorer Member States have experienced the most rapid change in the last twenty years, and the richest have changed least. But the picture is not uniform. Some of the richer countries have experienced rapid change in some sectors but not in others.

Macro speed of change 1980-1997 (%)

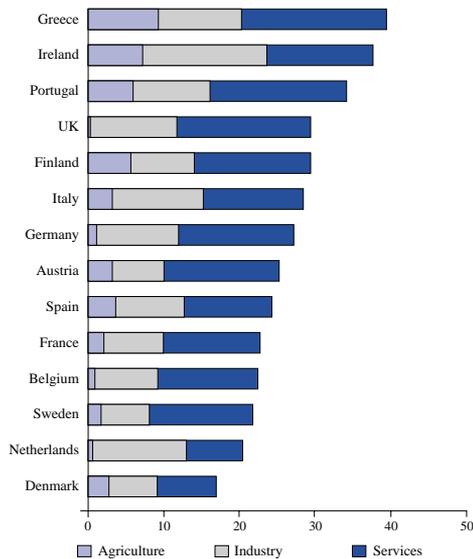
Country	Macro speed of change	Agriculture	Industry	Services
Belgium	22.6	1.0	8.2	13.3
Denmark	16.9	2.2	6.8	7.8
Germany	27.1	1.1	10.8	15.2
Greece	39.5	9.3	11.0	19.2
Spain	24.3	3.6	9.3	11.4
France	22.7	2.1	8.0	12.6
Ireland	37.8	7.2	16.4	14.1
Italy	28.5	3.2	12.1	13.3
Luxembourg	46.5	1.6	17.9	27.0
Netherlands	20.4	0.7	12.5	7.3
Austria	25.3	3.1	6.9	15.3
Portugal	34.3	5.9	10.3	18.1
Finland	29.4	5.6	8.5	15.3
Sweden	21.8	1.7	6.5	13.7
United Kingdom	29.5	0.2	11.5	17.7
EU	21.4	1.9	8.4	11.1

Note: Macro speed of change = absolute difference in shares 1980-1997 in 25 broad sectors; the term 'Industry' includes sectors of manufacturing, construction and energy.

Source: WIFO calculations using National accounts ESA, Eurostat.

‘The macro speed of change is highest in Greece, Ireland and Portugal partly because of the large decrease in the agricultural share. However, these countries are also among the top four in the speed of change in services. Ireland exhibits the highest speed of change within the industrial sector, while the slowest change occurred in France, Italy and the United Kingdom. Germany is a big country with a rather large amount of change in broad sectors, with services making a strong contribution, while the speed of change in industry (and specifically manufacturing) has been lower... Among the 25 sectors, the greatest change is the increase in “market services”, the share of which increased about one quarter of total value added for the EU total. In the industrial sector, the largest changes are the drop in the value added share of construction, within manufacturing that of the textile industry.’  
 DG Enterprise Working Paper, *Speed of Change* (September 2000).

Contributions to macro speed of change 1980-1997 (%)



Source: WIFO calculations using National accounts ESA, Eurostat.

These data on the speed of change assume added significance in the light of the European Commission’s *Competitiveness Report 2001*. This report reveals that the speed of industrial change during the period 1991–2000 is significantly related to productivity growth. The country with the highest overall speed of change – Ireland – has also experienced the highest productivity growth. Member States which changed more slowly during this ten-year period – including Germany, Italy and the UK – also grew more slowly.

The experts identified two distinct sources of change:

- external phenomena to which companies, economic sectors and regions must respond and which emanate from sources and forces beyond their control;
- internal implications arising from initiatives, innovations or failures of companies, economic sectors and regions.

From these sources of change, a large number of drivers of large and small-scale change emerge.

<b>External drivers of change</b>		
<b>Technological</b> Technical change and innovation New technology New distribution channels	<b>Societal/economic</b> Competition Globalisation Regulation and de-regulation Opening of frontiers Market behaviour The euro Mergers and acquisitions Quality of employment Quality of life Social cohesion Growing power of society Growth of personal and household services Women in employment	<b>Company</b> Adaptation to company results Changes in people, organisation and management Customer relations/customer behaviour Governance in companies Governance in local authorities

<b>Internal drivers of change</b>		
<b>Technological</b> Investment in technology Impact of technology on company structure, systems and processes	<b>Societal/economic</b> Mismatch between resources and responsibilities Women in positions of technical and managerial responsibility	<b>Company</b> Self-destruction (poor/old products) Firms changing as prices become marginal Company evolution in the face of economic and technical change Commoditisation of markets Customer pressure

These drivers of change make themselves felt differently in different contexts. For this reason, the conference was asked to examine the presence and impact of drivers in individual companies, in whole sectors of activity and in regions and localities.

## What drives change in companies?

*'There are currently two dominant drivers of change for companies. The first is political: the 11 September attack is having a drastic influence on companies and their planning. The second is innovation and new information technologies: they have reduced the innovation cycle from 2-3 years to 2-3 months.'*

Régine Matthijsen, European Round Table of Industrialists

The fact that the environment that surrounds European companies is changing is nothing new. But both the rapidity and intensity of change have accelerated greatly in the last two decades. The recent events in the US have also underlined the impact on economic and social life, as one of the powerhouses of the global economy was part of the targeted attack. This impact is extensive in the short-term, and may well prove significant in the longer-term.

### **Three main drivers of change in companies**

1. Political and legislative decisions taken at European, national and regional levels.
2. Innovation and new technology.
3. The competitive behaviour of markets responding to the demands of consumers, the drive for quality and the opportunities presented by globalisation.

The fact that companies are constantly exposed to change is positive, vital and normal. Companies respond to external change, and engineer change for their own advantage. The most successful ones manage to devise means of anticipating change and its effect. They create a capacity to respond to shocks, losses and financial crises.

*'Companies can anticipate change successfully with:*

- *three key inputs: human capital, skill and research;*
- *six key organisational virtues: flat management hierarchy, flexibility, an innovative and error-accepting climate, an outward orientation and a capacity to be responsive;*
- *four positive management characteristics: leadership, vision, optimism and ability to cooperate.'*

Karl Aiginger, Austrian Institute of Economic Research

Unwelcome change often strikes companies for negative internal reasons:

- as a consequence of bad management;
- as a consequence of bad performance and results.

Change presents difficult challenges to all companies, but small firms (SMEs) are especially vulnerable. Their small size makes their staffing relatively inflexible; their dependence on larger firms for supplies and market access reduce their independence; and their concentration on local and specialised markets makes them vulnerable to short-term change.

*'Most people in the UK are in SMEs. They have limited management, limited cash. Management is generally reactive and fairly short-term. For them the main drivers of change are: the marketplace, where strong demand makes for stability, reduces cash pressures and encourages planning and investment; technology, from which they have felt the radical impact of new working systems and just-in-time disciplines; and legislation, which they embrace with great reluctance. The pace of change is demanding a new flexibility from them.'*

John Troth, Broomfield Trading Services, UK

### ***Company strategies to manage change – issues for the Monitoring Centre***

*'The most important part of managing change is participation. Unless we explain, change will be unsuccessful.'*

Charlie McKenzie, Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union, UK

Companies are successful at managing a macro-environment that favours rapid change when they:

- establish long-term goals;
- encourage sensitivity and cooperation as a means of managing change;
- create a climate that favours determination, consistency, innovation, social security, macro stability;
- understand that micro change is favored by macro stability;
- make change a part of their internal models.

The most successful change management involves tripartite collaboration.

The increased volume of information provided by ICT makes management a more complex task, which underlines the need for workers and workers' representatives to become involved in key decisions.

Successful change management strategies take account of the interests of stakeholders as well as shareholders, the detail of the macroeconomic framework and the primacy of the need to invest in training and life-long learning.

Some companies are victims of change because they self-destruct. They produce poor and old products, they lack leadership, they lack investment, their workers are poorly trained, they provide no motivation, their workforces become demoralised. This amounts to a deathwish.

### **What drives change in sectors?**

*'We do not know what the bank of tomorrow will look like. We have an idea, but we cannot say for sure. The only thing we are sure about is that change cannot be stopped.'*

Steen Rasmussen, Banking Committee for European Social Affairs

The representatives of all the sectors represented in the discussion illustrated the degree of positive and negative uncertainty created by the most powerful drivers of change. Both were illustrated in specific terms.

On the positive side, it was acknowledged that the weight of customer preferences and demand can quite rapidly lead to the creation of new sectors. This is driving change in the services sector.

*'The cleaning industry is the result of change. This sub-sector of the service industry is only around thirty years old and came into being due to the re-organisation of production in many industrial sectors: companies were increasingly outsourcing cleaning work. Today, we see an increase in demand for cleaning services in private households due to a change in work and family life patterns. This will change the face of the cleaning industry further.'*

Olivier Richard, European Federation of the Cleaning Industry

Customer preference also has a direct impact on mergers and demergers. According to Olivier Richard, industrial customers in the cleaning sector are now demanding an increasingly wide range of services yet prefer to deal with just one partner. The consequent changes in patterns of cooperation resulting in extensive joint ventures and mergers have

consequences for job numbers, for roles and the structure of jobs within companies and for shifting requirements for training and its delivery.

*‘Production of textiles is globalised, but the markets for textiles are not. The US market and markets in Asia are well protected. To open these markets is the task of policy makers. A success would change the outlook for the sector completely.’*

Patrick Itschert, European Trade Union Federation of Textiles, Clothing and Leather

Globalisation presents a complex backdrop to change. It affects almost every sector. In the conference it emerged that of those sectors represented in the discussions, banking and the textile sector have experienced the impact of globalisation in the most profound way.

Globalisation in relation to the production of textiles has resulted in between 30% and 50% of Europe’s production capacity moving to Asia and Africa. In banking, globalisation has heralded an unprecedented number of mergers and acquisitions and the loss of about 130,000 jobs.

*‘The question remains whether these mergers are viable. Studies have shown that more than three quarters of mergers in the finance sector have failed to increase shareholder value. Cultural differences are regularly overlooked, prior information and consultation of employees does not take place. As trade unions, we are not in principle against mergers but we are against large-scale job losses.’*

Christine Asmussen, UNI-Europa

### **Three main drivers of change in sectors**

1. Customer preferences and demands which can radically change product, service and quality requirements, how work is organised and its skills requirements.
2. The impact of policy making, especially that which affects regulation and de-regulation or results in governments supporting or failing to support particular sectors.
3. Information and communication technologies: these currently impact on skills requirements more than any other change drivers.

### ***Sectoral strategies to manage change – issues for the Monitoring Centre***

European social dialogue is a key means of managing change at sectoral level. Sectors are in urgent need of better information particularly on how to map skills requirements and qualification needs, and in the form of prospective studies of market developments for specific sectors.

Observation of sectoral change must take account of the impact of two, or even all three, of these change drivers acting together. An example is the fast-growing cleaning business where customer demand for quality combined with legislative requirements for hygiene are changing the skills requirements across the sector.

In sectors where small firms are growing rapidly, the tension between establishing good working conditions and achieving productivity and growth is at its most pronounced. A particular focus is often the employment of poorly-skilled part-time workers.

In the case of other sectors, individual changes have far-reaching and multiple consequences. The decision to introduce the euro, for example, is having a major impact on the banking sector. It will increase workload in the transition period, but this may be more than offset in the longer term by the loss of currency exchange business. The net employment effect is unclear, but trade unions predict some 200,000 job losses.

### **What drives change in regions?**

The drivers of change affecting Europe's regions are even more diverse and complex than those affecting companies and sectors. Regions are hugely affected by externally-generated changes, such as the opening of borders and the globalisation of trade. Internally they experience the changes wrought by evolving local labour markets as companies face the challenges and opportunities of developing technologies and market conditions.

The *European Employment Guidelines for 2002*, the *Joint Employment Report 2001* and the *Recommendations to Member States for 2002* all highlight the growing role played by regions as Europe increasingly becomes a knowledge-based society.

Regional responses to this and other changes must reflect the views and aspirations of citizens and take account of their growing collective power and widening aspirations for increased participation. The current

perception of a democratic deficit at regional level is therefore a major issue. It is seen in two ways:

- in the perceived gap between what is done in the name of the citizen and his or her active participation in the process;
- in the growing tension between regional and national governments about where and how power is shared.

### **Three main drivers of change in regions**

1. Governance in companies and local authorities, underpinning competitiveness if it is of good quality, undermining it if it is inadequate.
2. Quality of employment and quality of life, determining the demands that citizens make of their politicians, and the quality and motivation they bring to their work.
3. Market behaviour, public interest and social cohesion issues, differing from one region to another and providing a backdrop that determines how global and sectoral changes will be interpreted and evidenced.

### ***Regional strategies to manage change – issues for the Monitoring Centre***

Local and regional economies depend critically on their workforces, but poor qualifications, inadequate rates of participation, and problems of housing and transport raise questions about the capacity of the national and sectoral levels to deliver results.

Appropriate spatial management is a key focus in the response to change. Where successful it links the management of infrastructure, environment, habitat, and research and training.

There is a need to formalise the organisation of the main regional players from different sectors, disciplines, institutions and activities into coherent, participative networks.

*‘The management of change, an incontrovertible aspect of the evolution of our society, can only become an opportunity when achieved through anticipation, a capacity to react and partnership. ’*

Jacques Chèrèque, European Resources Centre for Industrial Restructuring and Development (CERRM)

Capacity for innovation is an important aspect of response to change, and may be a key factor in distinguishing between regions that lead in terms of development and those that lag behind.

Local development methodology needs to be updated to enable those responsible to address the variety, extent and rapidity of change, to give them a better capacity for integrative action, to enable them to plan in a context of uncertainty, and to equip them with the knowledge to cope with the implications of devolution and decentralisation.

*'The problems that cities and regions face are unusually complex. This includes reducing disparities, promoting social cohesion, and making progress toward sustainable development. Local issues are not local any longer, if they ever were. But local and regional authorities often — usually — lack good information about their condition, and the research base serving them is very thin. As a result, cities and regions are taking more initiative to guide their destiny, often based on a strategic vision of the future they want. This in itself is a driver of change.'*

Josef Konvitz, OECD

Gender, specifically the increasing importance and influence of women in the European workforce, is both a result of change and a driver of further change. An important aspect of the democratic deficit is a widespread failure to take account of the views and aspirations of women – both those inside the workforce, and those who work informally or in the home.

*'Regions are at the focal point of the social and economic forces of change .... the role of regional authorities is changing .... there are new actors at regional level seeking their place and status, especially women and young people.'*

Agnès Hubert, Forward Studies Unit, European Commission

There are two key tools in managing change in regions and localities: scenario building as part of public debate and consultation, and knowledge and communication management. The effectiveness of both depends on the availability and quality of relevant data and evidence of good practice.

*'Change is characterised by tension: a tension between two, often opposing forces. It is the interaction which is the real driver of change. So the drivers of change are an expression of this tension: the relationship between governance*

*of companies and governance of regions; tension between the quality of work and the quality of life; tension between diversity and norms.'*

Robert Villeneuve, CEEP

Tackling regional disparities is now a high priority. The *European Employment Report 2001* acknowledges the developing role of regional authorities, moving from a responsibility limited to policy implementation to one where they play an active role in policy formulation and determination.

*'Knowledge, cooperation, innovation and entrepreneurship are key factors which enable regions and localities in Europe to manage change and take a proactive role in steering regional development .... Knowledge does not mean only high-tech skills but also broad-based education, which fosters adaptation to change.... The basis for development is created through intense interaction and cooperation between regional authorities, firms located in these regions, educational establishments, public bodies and research and training organisations .... It is also important that regions endeavour to identify and develop the potential for innovation .... Knowledge also gives rise to entrepreneurship .... and therefore this represents a major challenge for regions and localities in the future.'*

Luc Van den Brande, Committee of the Regions

## **The EMCC's users and their needs**

The social partners laid down guidelines for the composition of the EMCC's target audiences in their *Joint Opinion on the European Monitoring Centre on Change*:

**Companies** would get from the Observatory useful information to allow them to anticipate and respond to changes; they would also particularly benefit from experience sharing through the Observatory. Specific attention should be paid to SMEs who could benefit from the expertise available from such a resource centre.

**Social partners**, at all levels, notably at the European sectoral level, should be considered as the priority target audience. At their request, the Observatory would provide them with relevant information to draw on their debates. The Observatory should not seek to interfere in, or become a place of, social dialogue, but rather respond to the needs of such dialogue.

**National and territorial authorities** would get, through the information disseminated by the Observatory, elements allowing them to identify consequences of changes at their respective levels and to take the relevant preventive actions in order to facilitate adaptation.

**European institutions**, such as the European Parliament, the Commission, the Council of Ministers, the Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions should also benefit from the information gathered within the Observatory when shaping European policies and programmes, for instance in the field of education and training.

The Monitoring Centre will provide an opportunity to collect, analyse and compare sources and types of data currently considered incompatible. It will cross boundaries and use fresh sources. This will produce a new dynamic and a different type of analysis.

*‘What drives change is not enough. The Centre must also examine the impact of change.’*

Eric Verborgh, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

*‘Ecosoc believes that change creates new opportunities .... It is essential that the Centre’s published data is seen as reliable. It is not decision-making, it is not advisory, it is a monitoring body.’*

Ian Little, Economic and Social Committee

The success of this approach will be judged by the extent to which it helps its users to address the most difficult issues associated with change and the phenomena that drive it. The experts noted a number of these challenging implications of change:

- economic and monetary union and the risk of polarisation between working conditions, wage conditions and social protection;
- enlargement and the priority to provide assistance that will enable the candidate countries to catch up more rapidly without sacrificing the principles of social inclusion;
- technological change and the risk of the ‘digital divide’ which will only be avoided by a large-scale promotion of lifelong learning;
- demographic trends, especially the impact of ageing and the issues attending immigration and the movement of population, requiring

policies for active ageing and flexible retirement and fresh social inclusion initiatives;

*‘The Monitoring Centre must have one foot in globalisation and one foot in territory.... The Monitoring Centre needs to be able not just to note change but to ask why and how it is occurring, and how it can be accommodated. Very often real change is much deeper than changes as they are perceived.... The EMCC should also allow us to identify potential for co-operation .... and the focus of activity must be the European Employment Strategy.’*

Jacques Maire, Ministry of Employment and Solidarity, France

- labour market change leading to new forms of employment, requiring new approaches to combining flexibility and social inclusion;
- Europe’s ability to sustain its social model in the face of globalisation: this implies a new balance between competition, employment and social cohesion, national pacts and enhanced European sectoral social dialogue.

*‘The group is convinced that the European Union must focus on positive means – how to create and improve – not just on identifying what to avoid. There is a powerful dynamism in an approach built on benchmarking, innovation and social inclusion that stimulates new initiatives in business to reach the levels of the best.’*

*Managing change*, report of the High-level group on the economic and social implications of industrial change, November 1998

## **The European Monitoring Centre on Change – the next steps**

Following its launch, the construction of the European Monitoring Centre on Change has begun. The information and technical foundations are being laid. The methodologies to enable it to function as an effective information resource are being developed in consultation with user groups.

In 2002 the Centre will focus on analysing two principal drivers of change and the challenges they present to companies, sectors and regions:

- the challenges presented by information and communications technologies;
- the changes brought about by the activities of financial markets and consequent mergers, acquisitions and demergers.

Developments during this period will include:

- the launch of the EMCC web portal;
- the commissioning of a series of analysis reports: these will focus on how developments in ICT and financial markets drive change across companies, sectors and regions;
- two exchange events:
  - a workshop for up to 30 participants – which will enable a range of experts to exchange company, sectoral and regional good practice in response to the impact of ICT and financial market driven change;
  - a workshop to develop scenario building as a tool for anticipating change in companies, sectors and regions;

the publication of workshop digests, bringing the work and output of the exchange events to a wide audience.

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## List of speakers

- Karl Aiginger, Senior Research Fellow of Industrial Economics, Austrian Institute of Economic Research
- Christine Asmussen, Head of UNI Finance, Union Network International, Switzerland
- Raymond-Pierre Bodin, Director, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions
- Jacques Chèrèque, President of the European Resources Centre for Industrial Restructuring and Development (CERRM), France
- Emilio Gabaglio, General Secretary, European Trade Union Confederation
- Barbara Gerstenberger, Research Manager, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions
- Jeremy Harrison, Managing Director, Observatory of Basic Skills, UK Basic Skills Agency
- Agnès Hubert, Forward Studies Unit, European Commission
- Patrick Itschert, General Secretary, European Trade Union Federation of Textiles, Clothing and Leather
- Josef Konvitz, Head of Division, Territorial Reviews and Sustainable Development, OECD
- Thérèse de Liedekerke, Director for social affairs, Union of industrial and employers' confederations of Europe (UNICE)
- Ian Little, Chair, Economic and Social Committee
- Jacques Maire, European and International Affairs Representative, Ministry for Employment and Solidarity, France
- Régine Matthijsen, Convenor of the Industrial Relations and Social Policy Committee of the European Round Table of industrialists
- Charlie McKenzie, Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union, UK
- Jackie Morin, Head of unit, DG Employment and Social Affairs, European Commission
- Leon Noorlander, Stagiaire, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions
- Laurette Onkelinx, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for employment and labour, Belgium
- Pedro Ortún, Director, DG Enterprise, European Commission
- Reiner Plassman, Secretary General, European centre of enterprises with public participation and of enterprises of general economic interest (CEEP)
- Odile Quintin, Director-General, DG Employment and Social Affairs, European Commission
- Steen Rasmussen, Chair of the Banking Committee for European Social Affairs

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**Olivier Richard, Director-General of the European Federation of the  
Cleaning Industry**

**Maria João Rodriguez, Special Adviser to the Portuguese Prime Minister**

**Janet Smith, Research Manager, European Foundation for the  
Improvement of Living and Working Conditions**

**Bruno Trentin, Member of the European Parliament**

**John Troth, Managing Director, Broomfield Trading Services, UK**

**Luc Van den Brande, Vice-President, Committee of the Regions**

**Eric Verborgh, Deputy Director, European Foundation for the Improvement  
of Living and Working Conditions**

**Robert Villeneuve, European centre of enterprises with public participation  
and of enterprises of general economic interest (CEEP)**

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## About the speakers

### Karl Aiginger

Karl Aiginger, an Austrian national, is senior research fellow of industrial economics at the Austrian Institute of Economic Research. He is also visiting professor at Stanford University, MIT and UCLA. The key focus of his research is both industrial policy and the competitiveness of industries, sectors and countries. He is also editor in chief of the *Journal of Industry, Competition and Trade* and a contractor for reports on competitiveness (European Commissions's DG Enterprise and ERECO Consortium). Mr Aiginger is a member of the supervisory board of OIAG Holding and a member of the board of the Austrian Business Agency.

### Christine Asmussen

Born in Copenhagen, Denmark, Christine Asmussen worked for various EU institutions in Brussels, including the European Parliament and Commission, before taking up the post of policy officer with UNI-Europa (formerly Euro-FIET) at their Brussels office in 1995. In 1998 she moved to the UNI (Union Network International) Headquarters in Geneva where she occupies the post of Head of UNI Finance. UNI Finance affiliates trade unions worldwide with members in banking, insurance and central banks. In Europe, UNI-Europa Finance has 80 affiliates, which organise 1.3 million workers in the finance sector.

### Raymond-Pierre Bodin

Born in France in 1948, Raymond-Pierre Bodin (Ph D sociology) began his career in 1969 at the Ministry of Labour, first as researcher, then as official representative. From 1974 to 1989, he was professor of social psychology and sociology of labour at the Pierre Mendès-France University in Grenoble. In 1989, Mr Bodin became managing director of the plastics company Eurotec Manducher (Klöckner Group), then human resources director of Klöckner Automotive, a post he held until 1996. He was senior vice-president of Human Resources at Rhône-Poulenc Rorer (the company became Aventis Pharma in January 2000) from 1996 to 2000. Currently Director of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, Raymond-Pierre Bodin is also chair of the *Agence Nationale pour l'Emploi* (France) as well as international expert at the International Labour Office.

### Jacques Chérèque

Born in 1928, Jacques Chérèque started his career as a steel worker, becoming foreman and then production manager at the Pompey Steelworks in the Lorraine region of France. From 1966 to 1984 he had various responsibilities at the French Democratic Confederation of Labour (CFDT). He became prefect in charge of the industrial reorganisation of the Lorraine region, and from 1988 to 1991 was junior minister in charge of territorial development and reconversions in the government

led by Michel Rocard. From 1988 to March 2001, he was first vice-president of the General Council of Meurthe-et-Moselle (Lorraine) in charge of territorial development and environmental issues, and then general counsellor. He is currently regional counsellor (socialist party) of the Lorraine region, a post he will occupy until 2004. Mr Chérèque is president of CERRM (European Resources Centre for Industrial Restructuring and Development).

### **Emilio Gabaglio**

Emilio Gabaglio was born in Como, Italy. A graduate in economics of the Catholic University of Milan, he was a schoolteacher by profession when he joined the trade union movement in 1964. From the mid-sixties until 1972 he worked in the ACLI (Italian workers' Christian Association) and was elected their National President in 1969. Mr Gabaglio became CISL full-time officer in 1974, where he was elected member of the general council in 1977 (CISL delegate for TUAC and member of the Italian workers' delegation at the ILO conference) and national secretary in 1983. As a member of the ETUC Executive Committee since its third conference in 1979, Mr Gabaglio has always been involved in European affairs, and is also a member of the European Movement. He is currently General Secretary of ETUC, elected in May 1991, and reelected in 1995 and 1999.

### **Jeremy Harrison**

Jeremy Harrison is currently development manager of the UK Basic Skills Agency's Observatory of Basic Skills. He is a faculty member of the Cambridge International Land Institute located in Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge and writes and lectures on regional and local economic development. He was a member of the team that provided the European Social Fund with technical assistance for the Adapt and Employment Community Initiatives from 1995 to 2001. Prior to that he was a member of the Force technical assistance office. Mr Harrison has worked extensively with the European Commission starting in 1982.

### **Agnès Hubert**

Agnès Hubert was born in Algeria and grew up in Asia and Africa. She studied economics, philosophy and political science in Paris as well as in London. Before joining the European Commission in 1981, Ms Hubert worked as a journalist. In the Commission she worked on European north-south relations, gender equality, and communication. She was the head of the unit dealing with equal opportunities for women for five years, before she joined the Forward Studies Unit. More recently, Ms Hubert became a member of the team in charge of the preparation of the *White paper on European governance*.

### **Patrick Itschert**

A graduate in economics of the Brussels Free University, Patrick Itschert started his career as an assistant at the Foundation Roi Baudouin. He worked first as adviser to the Belgian Deputy Prime Minister's cabinet and to the Minister of Finance (in charge of issues concerning the economic development of a number of industrial sectors), and became senior advisor at the ITCB (the Textile and Garment Institute of Belgium). At the ITCB he focused on the examination of investment requests, trade policies and training of textile and garment companies. Mr Itschert later became director at the ITCB. He is currently General Secretary of the European Trade Union Federation of Textiles, Clothing and Leather (ETUF/TCL), which brings together 52 organisations from 27 European countries and has an overall membership of 1.5 million workers throughout Europe.

### **Josef W. Konvitz**

Educated at Cornell University and Princeton University, Josef Konvitz was a member of the faculty of Michigan State University from 1973 to 1992. He rose to the rank of professor on the basis of research and scholarship in urban history, economic history, and the history of technology and science. Mr Konvitz is currently Head of the 'Territorial Reviews and Sustainable Development' division at the Paris-based OECD. This division carries out reviews of the nature and scale of territorial challenges and opportunities, and considers policies at different levels of government, which should guide territorial development.

### **Thérèse de Liedekerke**

Thérèse de Liedekerke, a Belgian national, holds a degree in political science from the Université Libre de Bruxelles and a master's degree in politics of the world economy from the London School of Economics. She joined UNICE in 1990 to work in the external relations department. Three years later she became advisor in the social affairs department of the same organisation. Ms de Liedekerke has been director for social affairs at UNICE since October 1996.

### **Ian Little**

Ian Little spent seventeen years in financial roles in manufacturing industry, followed by twelve years in general management, over eight of which were as chief executive of Anderson Strathclyde PLC, a major world-wide supplier of mining machinery. He was chair of CBI Scotland from 1985 to 1987. From 1989 to March 2001 he held a portfolio of interests including public appointments, non-executive directorships while operating as an independent consultant. He has been a member of the Economic and Social Committee since 1990. He was elected chair of the Industry Section from 1996 to 1998, was vice-chair of the employers group from 1998 to 2000 and has been chair of that group since March 2000.

### **Charlie McKenzie**

Beginning his career in accountancy, Charlie McKenzie soon realised this was not for him. Working his way up from the shop floor, he is now one of the leading members of the UK's AEEU (Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union). Since 1992, after the amalgamation of the EETPU with the AEU, Mr McKenzie's emphasis has been on the development of the Union's European and International Department. In line with this he was special consultant at the EMF in Brussels, where he assisted in the development and negotiations of European works councils. In 1999, Sir Ken Jackson asked him to co-ordinate the activities of the senior regional and national officers of the union. One of the special projects deriving from this appointment was bringing together the Israeli and Palestinian trade unions by organising work programmes.

### **Jacques Maire**

Jacques Maire is European and international representative at the Ministry for Employment and Solidarity in France. He is responsible for the setting up of a delegation that comprises two sub-directorates and four bureaux (Europe, international, multilateral, cooperation), 53 agents and 15 social counsellors abroad. At European level, he has been involved in the creation and chairing of the social dialogue committee for European and international issues (CDSEI); the organisation of activities for the French Presidency; the setting up of bilateral work programmes with France's main economic partners; and the negotiation of bilateral agreements: France/ILO, France/WHO, bi- or multilateral actions of cooperation or promotion.

### **Régine Matthijsen**

Régine Matthijsen holds a degree in languages from the University of Geneva, Switzerland, as well as a degree in business administration (with an emphasis in international labour law and labour relations) from the University of Düsseldorf in Germany. She has undertaken further studies, and lectured and worked in the UK, the United States and France. For the last 15 years she has been responsible for industrial relations and social policy worldwide for Philips International N.V., the Netherlands. Ms Matthijsen has been chair of various international committees and is at present the convenor of the industrial relations and social policy committee of the ERT (European Round Table of Industrialists).

### **Jackie Morin**

Born in 1958, Mr Morin holds a Doctorate in Economic Sciences (University of Paris I). The subject of his doctoral thesis was undeclared work in Europe and its implications for economic theory. He joined the Directorate General for Employment and Social Affairs at the European Commission in 1986. In December 2000 he became head of the 'Interprofessional social dialogue, industrial relations, and adaptation to change' unit.

### **Laurette Onkelinx**

After finishing her bachelor's degree in law, Ms Onkelinx worked as both a lecturer in administrative sciences and a barrister at the court of Liège. In 1992 she became Minister for social integration, health and environment in the Belgian national government. She was later appointed Minister-President in the government of the 'Communauté Française', first in charge of civil service, childhood and health and later education, audio-visual, youth-aid and the promotion of aid. Since July 1999, she has been Deputy Prime Minister and Prime Minister for Employment in the Federal Government of Belgium. Ms Onkelinx is Vice-President of the House of Representatives in Belgium (chair of the justice committee and chair of the Socialist group), member of the Socialist Party Office and chair of the Interfederal Commission of Socialist Women.

### **Pedro Ortún**

Pedro Ortún Silvan, born in Madrid, is a trained industrial engineer, specialising in chemistry and industrial organisation. He holds a doctorate in business administration from the High School for Industrial Engineers in Madrid. Mr Ortún has worked in both the private and public sectors. He was a member of the study department of the corporate development division of the Spanish chemical group UERT and Member of the Cabinet of the Spanish Ministers of Industry and Energy. Since 1988, Mr Ortún has been working for the European Commission as Director. From 1 January 2000, he was appointed a Director in the new DG Enterprise, dealing with Services, Commerce, E-Commerce and IDA.

### **Rainer Plassman**

Rainer Plassmann, a German national, has been secretary-general of CEEP (European centre of enterprises with public participation and of enterprises of general economic interest) since October 2000. According to its statutes, the main objective of CEEP is to represent these before the European institutions. This implies defending its members' interests and promoting initiatives, formulating new proposals and producing surveys on their behalf. Before joining CEEP, Mr Plassman was head of the department for strategic affairs with Stadtwerke of Cologne, Germany. He has worked in Brussels since 1999 as a representative of the European local enterprises.

### **Odile Quintin**

Odile Quintin studied both public law and political science in Lyon. After a short experience at the Inter-university Institute of Comparative Rights in Brussels, Ms Quintin started working for the European Commission in 1971. After three years at DG Agriculture and eight years at DG Foreign Affairs, she joined DG Employment and Social Affairs in 1982. Her experience in this DG has included the areas of employment and women's equality, social security and social actions and the

European Social Fund. In 1996 she was appointed acting deputy Director-General and in July 2000 became Director-General of DG Employment and Social Affairs. In addition, Ms Quintin is a member of the board of directors of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions in Dublin and the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work in Bilbao.

### **Steen A. Rasmussen**

Steen A. Rasmussen, a Danish national, became Master of Law in 1971. Three years later he was admitted as attorney, passing his bar exam in 1976. A year later he started working for the Danish Employer's Confederation, where he later became director. During the last ten years, he has worked as managing director of the Danish Employers' Association with responsibility for the financial sector. In addition to this, Mr Rasmussen is chair of the Banking Committee for European Social Affairs and a member of the council of the Labour Market Supplementary Pension (ATP). He also acts as an industrial court judge and is still attached to the faculty of jurisprudence at the University of Copenhagen, where he assists as external examiner.

### **Olivier Richard**

Olivier Richard, a French National, worked as a permanent delegate of the European Federation of the Cleaning Industry in Brussels. In 1992, he joined UNICE, to become co-ordinator of the employers' group in the Advisory Committee for safety, hygiene and the protection of health at work. At UNICE he worked as co-ordinator for the administrative boards of the Bilbao Agency (on health and safety) and the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions in Dublin. He was later responsible for labour law, working conditions, safety and health, industrial relations and co-ordination with sectoral organisations at UNICE. Mr Richard is currently Director-General of the European Federation of the Cleaning Industry.

### **Maria João Rodrigues**

Maria João Rodrigues works as a Special Adviser to the Portuguese Prime Minister. She is also full Professor of Economics at the University of Lisbon. Ms Rodrigues currently chairs the High-Level Group on Industrial Relations and Change in Europe.

### **Bruno Trentin**

Bruno Trentin was born in France in 1926. From 1941 to 1945, he was a member of the Resistance Movement both in France and in Italy. In 1950 he joined the Italian Communist Party, and was a member of the Central Committee from 1960 to 1973 and a Member of Parliament from 1962 to 1966. From 1949, he worked at the Bureau for Economic Studies of the General Confederation of Italian Workers

(CGIL). He was elected Deputy-Secretary of CGIL in 1958. He became General Secretary of the Italian Metalworkers Federation (FIOM) in 1962 and kept this responsibility and that of General Secretary of FLM until 1977 when he was elected Confederate Secretary of CGIL. At the end of 1988, he was elected General Secretary of CGIL, an office he held until 30 June 1994. In June 1994, he took on responsibility for the programming bureau of CGIL and stayed in office until his election to the European Parliament in June 1999. Mr Trentin has a Doctorate in Law from the University of Padua, Italy.

### **John Troth**

John Troth is Managing Director of Broomfield Trading Services and his career has been in the ceramics manufacturing sector in the United Kingdom with trading experience throughout the developed world. He has also had close involvement with education and training at national level in the UK and is currently involved with higher education and careers advice and guidance.

### **Luc Van den Brande**

Luc Van den Brande studied law at the Catholic University of Leuven and worked as a barrister at the court of Mechelen from 1970. His political career started in 1975 when he joined CVP-Youth as member of the national bureau, becoming member of the national board three years later. He served fifteen years as party leader for the CVP in the Mechelen Region and became National Vice-Chairman of the CVP party in 1987. Since the early 1990s, he has been a member of the Flemish House of Representatives for the Mechelen-Turnhout region. He is currently Vice-President of the Committee of the Regions. Mr Van den Brande's other positions include Senator of Community and effective member of the parliamentary assembly of the Council of Europe and the assembly of the Union of Western Europe.

### **Eric Verborgh**

Eric Verborgh, a Belgian national, was born in 1941 in Brussels. He holds a degree in industrial psychology from the Free University of Brussels (ULB) where he started his career in 1966 as a researcher at the Institute of Sociology. In 1972 he joined the Belgian Productivity Centre as research manager. In 1978 he became programme manager at the Belgian Institute for the Improvement of Working Conditions. During those years he was also assistant at the University of Brussels and lecturer at the Ecole Ouvrière Supérieure (EOS) in Brussels. Since 1985 he has been deputy director of the European Foundation for the improvement of Living and Working Conditions in Dublin, and during the period July 1999 to April 2000 he held the post of acting director.

## **Robert Villeneuve**

Robert Villeneuve was born in France in 1938. An electrotechnics engineer, he joined EDF-GDF (Electricité de France-Gaz de France) in 1963 and held several technical positions before turning to the human resources/training area. He is currently General Controller at the Direction of Human Resources and Social Affairs of this company. From 1983 to 1991, he was Deputy Director of the ANPE (National Agency for Employment) in France. He is also associate professor at the French National School of Administration (ENA). From 1995 to 2001, he was President of the Commission on social affairs, employment and vocational training of CEEP in Brussels. Up to the end of the year 2000, he directed the EUREXTER project (Territorial excellence in Europe) and is currently involved in following up the results of this project. Mr Villeneuve is also a member of the EMCC Steering Committee set up by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions in Dublin.

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

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