

Mapping the changing nature of employment

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While the crisis Europe is currently enduring has had a profound impact in many areas, one of the most concerning ones lies in its high unemployment rates. According to the latest Eurostat figures, over 26 million citizens in the EU-27 - 10.9% of the working-age population - were unemployed in June 2013. This is up 0.4% from the year before, a period over which US unemployment went down from 8.2 to 7.6%.

Combine this trend with the likes of industry restructuring and relocation towards low-wage economies, an [ageing population](#) that challenges Europe's pension systems, a growing gap between education and access to jobs, as well as the increasingly precarious nature of jobs, and you get yourself quite a dangerous cocktail.

As a means to answer some of the fundamental questions regarding Europe's future job market, the CHANGINGEMPLOYMENT ('The changing nature of employment in Europe in the context of challenges, threats and opportunities for employees and employers') project was kicked off on 24 May at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. This Marie Curie International Training network will see an eminent team of specialist supervisors - as well as an experienced researcher dedicated to dissemination and outreach - support 15 researchers (12 PhD students and three post-doctoral). They will be helped in this endeavour by eight European universities as well as social and industry partners, including the European Trade Union Institute, Consultingeuropa, EDF, Edrington, the International Labour Organisation, Neuroedukacja, UNISON, Volvo and CAIRDE.

'This is an outstanding research agenda bringing together a range of critical [social scientists](#) and new researchers concerned with the transformation of employment relations and conditions of work across Europe,' says Professor Paul Stewart, Project Coordinator from the University of Strathclyde's Department of Human Resource Management. 'The research will identify the nature of the restructuring of European labour markets and economies as a result of current economic and social change, and the impact that this has on work relations and working lives.'

Three themes have been selected as focuses of the research: management and employee relations, inclusion and exclusion at work, as well as employee well-being and work-life quality. 'Over the next four

years we will develop a cross-European interdisciplinary network of policy-focused social scientists skilled in understanding, analysing and responding to social and institutional employment changes,' Prof. Stewart explains.

CHANGINGEMPLOYMENT received around EUR 4.6 million from the EU. The project will finish in November 2016.

More information: www.changingemployment.eu/

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