

Hans **Böckler**
Stiftung 

Fakten für eine faire Arbeitswelt.

Research Support Programme

Published by: Hans-Böckler-Stiftung
Hans-Böckler-Straße 39
40476 Düsseldorf
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Responsible: Nikolaus Simon

Editor: Erika Mezger

Graphic Design: FGK Agentur für Markenführung, Düsseldorf
© Joker Foto: Journalismus

Printed by: Schäfer Druck GmbH, Düsseldorf

Updated edition, december 2008

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The Hans Böckler Foundation (Hans-Böckler-Stiftung) is the arm of the German Federation of Trade Unions (DGB) concerned with promoting codetermination, research and studies. All its activities and services are aimed at making a contribution to an improvement in the social position of employees.

The Foundation plays a part in ensuring that paid work is organised in a humane and democratic way, whilst ensuring equality of opportunity. As a sponsor of academic studies, the Hans-Böckler Foundation links the promotion of talent and co-determination. The Foundation conducts its own research through its two research institutes, the Institute for Economic & Social Sciences (WSI¹) and the Institute for Macro-economics and Business Research (IMK²). The research programmes of the HBF promoted support the publishing of the latest scientific findings through cooperation with external research institutes, so that the social and political framework of the world of work and of society is based on firm foundations. Particularly at times of developing crises in the welfare state and employment market, research findings can assist stakeholders in codetermination to structure work on a sustainable basis and to secure or create employment.

The Hans Böckler Foundation's Research Support Programme aims to ensure that research findings are applied in practice. This programme is characterised by the fact that it simultaneously assists interest groups and promotes scientific knowledge: The Foundation initiates and finances research in universities and institutes and links it to the results of its own research for transfer into the public domain and for practitioners.

The transfer of research findings is achieved through Hans-Böckler Foundation publications and also, thanks to the support of project committees, through workshops and conferences.

The Hans Böckler Foundation's understanding of science and its practical application demand a clear framework and the setting of priorities. The Research Support Programme focuses on four areas of research, which are coordinated with the WSI and IMK and complement and augment their priority research areas. The themes selected concentrate on the priorities of the Hans Böckler Foundation and its social policy objectives. The core areas of the programme are supplemented by research strands to facilitate a flexible response to social policy challenges and current priorities. Both the core topics and research strands are systematically underpinned through the cross-cutting themes of globalisation and the European integration process, equal opportunities for men and women and the requirements for social, economic and ecological sustainability.

¹ Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaftlichen Institut

² Institut für Makroökonomie und Konjunkturforschung

The research supported by the Hans Böckler Foundation and the research programmes of WSI received a positive external evaluation in 2004. Plans are in place for regular repeat external evaluations, which in future will include IMK. This research support programme continues on from previous research, whilst at the same time recognising the latest scientific findings and the changed parameters in society. Such innovation demonstrates greater use of topic-specific bidding in terms of codetermination, the role of the employee in innovative processes, coping strategies for demographic change in companies and administrations, as well as for strategies relating to social inclusion in the European arena.

In this context, the programme represents an outline concept for the promotion and support policy that aspires to change and adaptability.



Michael Sommer

Chairman of the German Federation of Trade Unions (DGB)
Chairman of the Board of the Hans Böckler Foundation



Objectives and guiding principles of research promotion at the Hans Böckler Foundation

Taking part in meaningful and self-determined paid employment is a fundamental requirement for individual life chances and the co-determination of a democratic society. The central issue in the research programme is therefore: “How can people live and work in a self-determined way?”

The research we initiate and promote is intended to contribute towards actively shaping innovative technological and environmental processes and those associated with the organisation of work. It is also intended to help to achieve greater democracy and equal rights for men and women in the workplace and society in general.

The Hans Böckler Foundation's Research Support Programme simultaneously assists interest groups and promotes scientific knowledge; it is intended to broaden the knowledge base underpinning the work of

social actors, and in particular that of stakeholders in codetermination. This firstly involves reacting to the need for advice as arising in social practice. At the same time, it also involves timely anticipation of socially relevant developments and problems. In each case, the Foundation wishes to promote the very best of research and to advance the acquisition of scientific findings. It is dedicated to the highest theoretical and methodological standards. The type of research promoted is therefore intent upon combining fundamental research with application in practice. This requirement does, however, have consequences. The Foundation attaches great importance to project development, the research process itself and the transfer of findings in a well-ordered exchange between academics and practitioners.

The building and maintaining of profile and the limited resources at the Hans Böckler Foundation's



disposal make it necessary to concentrate on certain themes.

The Research Support Programme has four priority areas:

1. Changes in paid employment
2. Structural change – innovations and employment
3. Changes in codetermination
4. The future of the welfare state/social policy

Each of these priority research areas is subdivided into research strands which are meaningful as priorities in terms of the social policy objectives of the Hans Böckler Foundation and current scientific debate. This means that the research programme can also address global themes such as the shift from an industrial society to a service and knowledge-based society, vocational training and qualifications, roles and significance of negotiating partners, the history of the trade union movement, demographic change and migration processes – that is changing content that does not

necessarily need to be translated into priority areas in the programme.

For all four areas of research, three cross-cutting themes have equal standing:

- the process of globalisation and European integration and the implication of these in terms of codetermination and representation of interests
- the model of sustainability with its social, economic and environmental dimensions
- equal rights for men and women in all areas of society

Developments in the workplace and society, as well as foreseeable future developments, are as likely to lead to shifts in the emphasis of the research strands and cross-cutting themes as continuing to gain in knowledge through research that has already been carried out. In this context, we should consider it an "intelligent" research support programme".



Speculation about the end of the work society has not been borne out. Nevertheless, there have been and continue to be significant changes in the nature of paid work. Because of structural change or less stable forms of employment, more and more people in paid work face unemployment or uncertainty about their employment in the course of their working life. The shift from the industrial society to a service and knowledge-based society, combined with a new strategic approach to company and human resources policy, continues to bring about changes in work content, work requirements and employment situations. Employees also have wider access to specialist, social and non-vocational training. Economic pressure is increasingly shifting to employees' area of responsibility in terms of work organisation. For many groups of employees, this is making their working lives more intensive and more time-consuming.

performance and training. They suggest that there is inequality of opportunity when it comes to obtaining paid employment. They also suggest a decline in the importance of traditional work structures because of the increasing trends towards part-time work, temporary employment, fixed-term employment and freelance work. However, even within employment relationships which are guaranteed under social and employment law, the nature of "normal work" is becoming more fluid because of interventions in work organisation and the requirement for new skill mixes.

The continuing process of change in paid employment, which, thematically speaking, is at the heart of this priority research area can no longer be summed up by using just one model. Working conditions and situations differ according to the sector, the company culture, gender and skills. This is reflected in the complex effects of various

1. Changes in paid employment

However, changes in paid employment are not unilaterally confined to control processes within companies. The employment policy of the social partners is also having an important impact on working conditions and situations. A not insignificant consideration is that of employees' demands and their notion of justice, and social and moral standards, which are having an effect on their behaviour with regard to their approach to work. Conversely, developments in paid employment are having repercussions on social standards and on individual life patterns.

As yet, no clear picture has emerged of the impact of these developments on the future of work and society. Only some initial trends are apparent, which suggest wide variations in working conditions and demands as regards

working arrangements as regards company policy, employment policy and equal opportunities and social policy. The developments outlined here offer potential for broadening work competences and greater scope for improving work/life balance. Conversely, we cannot rule out the risk of overburdening workers, of rigid work structures and of destabilisation of the paid employment models and profiles, which could have a negative impact on lifestyles.

In order to take advantage of the opportunities inherent in changes in paid employment and keep the corresponding risks in check, intervention is necessary in terms of employment and equal opportunities policy, in line with the realities of pluralism in the workplace. Empirical research can provide useful guidelines here. Such research is required to identify typical features of the complex



changes in the world of work and in society and to determine their impact. Research must take account of developments in good time. Also, with a view to solving problems in practice, it should help to determine future regulatory requirements and shape innovative employment policy approaches. The research projects can consequently contribute to the determination and structuring of “good work”.

The ability to observe and analyse that underpins a scientific approach must relate to consideration of a variety of different levels:

From a company and employment policy point of view, we need to consider the impact of work organisation arrangements, which are becoming increasingly non-uniform and more flexible as regards working time, space and definitions of performance, on employment prospects, job

The multiplicity of individual themes touched upon in both analytical dimensions needs to be subject to a process of selection and concentration. In the context of research which aims to be relevant in practice and help in formulating policy, there are six interconnected theme strands at the heart of this priority area.

1.1. Differentiation of work in the standard employment relationship

The majority of employment relationships are still regulated by existing employment law and social systems. Nevertheless, there is a clearly discernible trend towards differentiation of work and training conditions. This applies to work in both the manufacturing and service sectors. In both employment sectors there are areas of work in which recognised structural models for work and the associated pressures continue to exist or are being



specifications and requirements, stability of employment and actual career paths for various groups of employees and/or job seekers.

From a social perspective, we need to consider the impact changes in paid employment have on the working life of employees and on social conditions in general. On the one hand, this involves achieving transparency as regards the processes of equal opportunities and social integration and/or discrimination and social exclusion that are associated with paid employment. On the other hand gender-democratic and sustainable quality criteria for paid employment need to be identified, which also take account of demographic changes caused by changing age profiles and immigration patterns.

revitalised. At the same time, in other employment sectors we are witnessing the growing importance of work patterns that are increasingly geared towards self-organisation and self-responsibility on the part of employees. Empirical research is required to critically examine how the quality of work is changing within the process of new concepts for organising work, what gains in independence are conceded to the groups of employees affected and what specific training requirements and pressures are demanded of or placed upon them.

Furthermore, it is necessary to identify new contradictions with regard to training requirements and employment opportunities and the conditions associated with them.

This is because whilst a trend towards increasing levels of training has been detected, it has at the same time become evident that certified training is not necessarily a key determinant for actual career opportunities. Social and non-vocational skills are becoming increasingly important in certain employment sectors, as opposed to specialist skills. Formal levels of qualification now provide ever less evidence of actual work pressures, professional success and status within a company. Against this background, research promoted within this priority area is also intended to demonstrate what is established and recognised as a qualification and what employment policy intervention may possibly be required.

One of the key factors in the process of driving forward the increasing differentiation of work is the growing flexibility in working hours. The extent and impact of such flexible arrangements therefore needs to be determined. Projects promoted within this priority area are therefore expected not just to analyse the company and employment policy dimensions of flexible working hours, but also at the same time to investigate their effects in terms of lifestyle, society and equality of opportunity. These should not merely look at the short term. Career perspectives, that is changes in working time, working conditions and workplace situations throughout paid working life should also form part of the areas to be studied.

1.2. Differentiation of work through temporary and fixed-term forms of employment

The growth in fixed-term employment relationships, temporary employment, artificial self-employed status and part-time working is also leading to increasing differentiation in working conditions. However, what these forms of employment do have in common is that standards under employment law apply less than hitherto and the social security systems associated with standard employment relationships are no longer adequate. However, employment relationships of this kind can no longer be described as "atypical", because the growth in employment in the industrial and service sectors is at present chiefly associated with employment relationships of this kind. These forms of employment need to be investigated with regard to material working conditions, social security aspects, specific pressures and conditions for ensuring that qualification standards are maintained. It would be of interest to determine how these forms of employment are distributed as a function of gender, national origin and qualifications. The findings of such research will point to

any necessary changes in employment and social law. Another gap in our knowledge appears to be the conditions in which workers shift from contractually unstable forms of employment to permanent employment, and what employment policy can do to stabilise the process of transferring to secure employment relationships. A critical examination is also required of how forms of work, which are unstable as regards working hours or location, can lead to social exclusion. It is also necessary, if we are to analyse these forms of employment, to be in possession of information about how employees themselves view their working conditions, not only in relation to the quality of their work or in terms of their employment career but also as regards work/life balance.

1.3. Paid employment and work in the community

The third thematic strand within this priority area aims to shed light on what to some extent are purely theoretical debates on the status and impact of forms of work that have arisen outside the paid employment arena. There has been a great deal of discussion about the fact that the traditional full-time standard employment career is not a sustainable model for the future. Instead, it is being advocated that paid employment should be increasingly combined with other forms of work in society, such as community work, care work and work as a self-provider [Eigenarbeit]. However, it remains to be established empirically whether such forms of work promote processes of social integration and whether they are effective in ensuring sustainable development and a fair distribution of work in terms of gender. Nor is it clear what repercussions there are on the provision and organisation of paid employment and whether they will provide a pathway to it. It is also worth investigating whether and how informal forms of work fit into existing regulations as regards social and employment market policy. In order to obtain more reliable information on this, this priority area of research does not aim solely to research traditional paid employment. The extent of informal work and structural conditions under which informal work is performed, together with its specific characteristics and its advantages and disadvantages are also analysed to the extent that it interacts with paid employment.



1.4. Age-appropriate employment work

The fourth aspect of research in this area is about matching requirements resulting from demographic change with the future shape of paid employment. Despite indications that the average age of the working population is rising, human resources policy is at present dominated by the assumption that older employees will not remain in paid employment. The majority of people in paid employment continue to take early retirement for health reasons, but with a reduced pension, or for reasons associated with conditions in the workplace. In contrast to the present situation of older employees [altersgerechte Erwerbsarbeit], there is now recognition that demographically sensitive structuring of paid employment cannot only be instigated at the end of a standard employment career [altersgerechte Erwerbsarbeit]. For this reason, work in this priority area is also required to point towards what a preventative policy with regard to employment, working hours and training that reflects demographic trends could encompass. Specific obstacles and conditions for long-term employment capability and extended standard employment careers should be determined and the personal, economic, commercial and social implications and/or cost/benefit impacts balanced against long-term employment concepts. Project emphasis of this thematic strand lies in the description of innovative employment concepts, which will enable employees to stay healthy longer and continue to be motivated in their paid employment and which, with an ageing workforce, will ensure productivity and innovation.

1.5. Sustainable employment work

The fifth research strand relates to the need to ensure sustainability in shaping paid employment for the future. This involves determining sustainable quality criteria for work, implementing these criteria in company and organisational action zones and identifying employment policy requirements and areas where there is scope for action. The particular requirement of this research strand is to identify implementable options for future employment policy that satisfy standard definitions of sustainability criteria such as "intergenerational responsibility", "social solidarity", "environmental quality" and "quality of life". This assumes interdisciplinary analyses and assessments of the social, environmental and economic interactions associated with changes in paid employment and of attempts to shape employment policy linked with social and environmental policy measures.

1.6. Paid employment and gender relations

The thematic strands described above have clear gender aspects. A basic assumption of this priority research support area is therefore that gender-differentiated research perspectives and analyses are a compulsory element of projects receiving support. Currently there is a need to address the impact of family oriented reforms in respect of childcare facilities. Will traditional gender relationships in the workplace and family change as a result of the development of institutionalised childcare facilities and the support of paternal care? No less relevant, but barely recognised by the public at large, are gender implications and their effect on paid employment as a result of the increase in care requirements and associated reforms. At the same time, the implications of equal rights policy for the future shape of paid employment and/or the analysis of the classification of conditions for paid employment for women are an explicit strand within this priority area. This is because despite the increasing career-focus and gainful employment of women, the issue of equal rights for women in the workplace and society at large remains to be resolved. This is partly due to the fact that traditional structures of social and private division of labour have proven to be extremely hard to change. The situation of women in paid employment is nevertheless not uniform, quite the contrary in fact. There is an increasing differentiation in work experiences for women, as well as the new segmentation of the employment market. Against this background, the "Paid work and gender relations" research strand aims to make it transparent how inequalities in gender relations are reproduced in the social organisation of work and day-to-day activities within companies, and how these inequalities can be resolved.



The pace of globalisation has accelerated as a result of new company strategies, the formation of global value-added chains and the introduction of digital technologies. As a consequence, Germany's economy has come under considerable pressure to adapt. Efforts to increase Germany's ability to compete and innovate have therefore been stepped up in recent years. The first success stories are there to be seen: Germany's economy has caught up in key technologies such as bio-technology; in the renewable energy sector, it leads the way. Nevertheless, there are still considerable deficits.

There is a need for a process of reform to increase the German economy's capacity for innovation and adjustment. However, it is not clear what path towards modernisation a reform policy will lead to. A neo-classically-oriented option places great emphasis on the

tives of creating more jobs in various sectors of the employment market and sustainable economic structures.

Resulting from these overall objectives, we then have the individual research strands, which relate to a succession of levels: the region, the sector, the nation state, the European Union and the world economy.

2.1. Regional policy

Research projects relating to regional policy are of particular importance for the Hans Böckler Foundation. Research promotion is concentrated on projects, which examine how regional development processes and their outcomes are controlled. Special attention is paid to regions that are lagging behind, in order to prevent any further widening of the gap in levels of regio-

2. Structural change – innovations and employment

deregulation of markets, in particular labour markets. A consequence of this would be extensive restructuring or even dismantling of the "German model". A second option would be to consider a development path that would preserve the 'essentials' of the "German model" whilst accepting the need for greater flexibility. These broadly defined alternative options represent opposing economic approaches.

Under the "Structural change – innovations and employment" priority area, the Hans Böckler Foundation primarily supports projects that aim to investigate the economic dynamic and innovations, cooperation between public and private bodies (public/private partnerships) and the control of economic processes. This means that the projects are geared towards the objec-

nal wealth. Examples of good practice can be described or developed. "Successful" regions can provide a model from which others can learn.

This interplay with globalisation may have dangerous consequences. Regions can be left out in the cold, not only at world level, but also within Europe and even within Germany. They can become bogged down in dangerous structural crises. Backward regions with agricultural structures cannot get on the road to positive economic development that could lead to a trend towards the harmonisation of living standards. They do not have sufficient potential of their own and are therefore more attractive in development terms to companies that are less demanding technologically speaking.

Lack of innovation can therefore have a negative impact on social cohesion. On the other hand, a regional innovation strategy without the inclusion of a policy to reduce social differences can be less effective.

An approach of this kind to the promotion of regional policy projects involves stimulating and supporting a participatory approach. Research must be aimed at an analysis of working methods and at propagating both the substance and form of public/private partnerships. New forms of cooperation based on using development coalitions to achieve regional change should be examined. Furthermore, the integrative approach of projects of this kind should be reinforced by including issues surrounding employment market policy and the development of competences.

some services in Germany is lagging behind other economies. Nevertheless, Germany's industrial base is also vital for positive economic development. Many sectors still have comparative advantages on world markets. They prove the strength of the "German model" with its particular emphasis on industrial relations. However, the German model needs to prove itself in the context of globalisation given its impact on traditional export and growth sectors, and it needs to be adapted accordingly.

As in the case of regional policy, research is being undertaken into approaches to public/private partnership structures with the participation of employees and their organisations, in order to step up sector policies and get them under way. These are intended to serve as models of good practice for sectoral policy and are equally important for new and old sectors alike.



2.2. Sectoral policy

Under the second thematic strand, the Foundation promotes research into sector-specific modernisation policy. In particular, modernised and expanding sectors of the "old" economy and new sectors such as bio-technology or new types of energy and services will have a substantial contribution to make to solving employment market problems.

Although substantial progress has been made in the development of innovative sectors in recent years, so that it need not be assumed that Germany's future as a location for investment is under threat, a continuing policy of modernisation and innovation is needed. It needs to be borne in mind here that the quality of

The increasing interconnection of different sectors makes it clear that an approach limited to examining individual sectors and sub-policies is deceptive. A successful sectoral policy aims increasingly at integrative approaches to the promotion of clusters and structural, employment market and training policy. In this context the interests of employees and trade unions should be involved in an application-oriented fashion. In particular, the question of conditions under which workers and their representatives can apply their competence to the process of modernisation of commercial sectors through innovation. This kind of approach also needs to be seen against the background of the key strategic importance of new sectors or modernised sectors for the future of trade unions.

2.3. Macroeconomic control

The third thematic strand aims to identify the problems of macroeconomic control and new regulatory approaches. In view of continuing high levels of unemployment, increasing social inequality and environmental problems, research is needed that departs from the mainstream in considering new regulatory approaches and re-examining the "old" issues of macroeconomic control by means of monetary and financial policy, against the background of the changed circumstances of the world economy and Europe. This includes discussion of issues relating to regulatory policy.

The Hans Böckler Foundation promotes research into basic issues of this kind. Its intention in doing this is to initiate a political and scientific debate that has been neglected in Germany in recent years. In this context, particular attention is to be paid to how the objectives and approaches of the trade unions can be included and how suitable mechanisms for practical implementation can be found.

There is no denying that there is also the issue, at overall economic level, of the economic impact of demographic changes. The increase in the number of older people will have a dramatic effect on demand structures (e.g. a greater weighting towards the health and care sector), sectoral structures and on employment market and training policies. In future, any macroeconomic modernisation policy will be obliged, to an even greater extent than before, to take advantage of the experience of older workers.

If migration increases as a result of globalisation, the eastward enlargement of the European Union and growing differences in income, this will also have a significant effect on labour markets in Germany. The advantages of an increase in immigration will not be felt without some degree of intervention: targeted action is needed to avoid possible risks. Projects are needed to investigate the whole range of potential impacts and to identify approaches for possible strategies.

2.4. Effects of a single European economic area

Within the European Union, the introduction of monetary union has triggered a strong move towards the establishment of a single economic area. The fourth strand is particularly concerned with the resultant consequences for national economic policies and for European coordination. Furthermore, the eastward enlargement of the European Union will have a significant impact on the geographical distribution of economic sectors and on the structure and functioning of the labour markets.

Monetary union and eastward enlargement of the EU will lead to a restructuring of economic areas with both winners and losers. Although the bottom line is probably that the advantages will outweigh the disadvantages, there is nevertheless a very high probability that the burdens will be unequally distributed between companies and their employees, and that there will also be an imbalance amongst employees themselves. This new development and the expected disruption in structures will have a far-reaching impact on employees and trade unions and they certainly have not been the subject of sufficient research. The projects will, on the one hand, be concerned with the consequences of European monetary union in individual

areas of economic policy, and in particular employment market and employment policies. On the other hand, projects will develop possible starting points for better coordination of economic policy measures at European level. Lastly, there is a particular need for projects on the impact of the eastward enlargement of the EU as regards the aspects outlined above. In addition to these issues, we wish to promote, on a case-by-case basis, comparative studies between the various economic and employment market policies of European countries.

2.5. Globalisation and its consequences

The fifth research strand is concerned with identifying the impact of globalisation, particularly on employment markets. Assessments by experts and politicians of the consequences of globalisation throughout the world and in relation to the domestic economy vary so dramatically that the debate has sometimes come to resemble a religious war. A string of studies and Commission reports has done little to change this. Worldwide economic downturns and crises on the financial markets and in the newly industrialised countries are indicative of the instability of the world economy. A higher standard of living, preferably for all, combined with maintaining and reinforcing social cohesion cannot be achieved by means of the free-market forces of globalisation.

In this area, the Hans Böckler Foundation will concentrate on promoting projects that in terms of shaping policy deal with the problems of controlling and regulating global processes, to the extent that these processes are significant for employees. This includes in particular issues relating to the regulation and control of both internal and external employment markets. Areas to be examined and assessed include the achievement of core work standards, of voluntary agreements such as 'codes of conduct' for globalised companies, and the implementation of agreements promoting sustainable development. At the same time, the aim of projects of this kind should be to reinforce international cooperation by employees and their organisations.



16|17 II. Priority support areas for research

The German model for codetermination has been marked by great institutional continuity right up to the present day. At the same time, no one would deny that social and macroeconomic change and changes within companies since the 1990s have posed pivotal challenges for codetermination. The increasingly elderly age profile of the working population means there is a need for new company-based and collectively-bargained further training and qualification concepts that support lifelong learning and integrate employees into the work process in accordance with their capabilities. Women's participation in the employment market, which has been increasing for years, together with their wish for companies to help them to combine family responsibilities with career continuity, is making new demands of modern forms of codetermination. Furthermore, continuing migration and the associated integration of non-native employees into the work and production

sentative codetermination is being supplemented by direct participation and new forms of employee representation. More than ever before, works councils and trades unions are faced with the task of involving employees more closely in their work as representatives, so as to constructively link together the, to some extent, conflicting interests of different groups of workers as regards worker protection and the shaping of their own working life, and in order to integrate new forms of participation into the existing codetermination model.

The Works Council Constitution Law is an important basis for coping with these changes. However, changes in the world of work mean that the basic legal framework for codetermination needs to be adapted. The amendment of the Works Council Constitution in 2001 extended the number of internal company organisations representing workers' interests and simplified

3. Changes in codetermination

process will be of increasing importance for stakeholders in codetermination.

The progressive Europeanisation and internationalisation of production is leading, at plant and company level, to internal and external adjustments by means of restructuring of work organisation and to company decentralisation. The further development of information and communication technology is accelerating this process, facilitating cross-border production and services and resulting in new kinds of work. The consequent changes in working life have both pros and cons for employees: there is a risk that the new scope available to the individual as a result of increased responsibility and self-organisation will be cancelled out by increasing pressure on performance. At the same time, repre-

the election of works councils in small and medium-sized enterprises. At the same time, it is intended to use the law to strengthen works councils' and employees' scope for shaping their working life and problem solving at company level.

At present, the questions of security of employment and of international competition for investment are at the heart of work by works councils and trade unions, which need to find satisfactory answers to these questions. For the time being, it has remained possible to meet companies' needs for flexibility by means of appropriate collectively bargained arrangements and/or by concluding plant agreements. This procedure makes it possible to bring industrial relations more closely in line with operational requirements. It is not, however,



clear what the long-term impact of this process of making decisions at company level will be on codetermination.

On the basis of these processes of change and their effect on industrial relations in Germany, it is intended that research projects should contribute to achieving wider codetermination at plant, company and collective bargaining level. The six thematic strands resulting from this in terms of future-oriented codetermination research are described below.

3.1. Requirements for structuring work relating to the representation of workers' interests

As a consequence of global competition, heavier demands than ever before are being made of works councils and trade union representatives in order to

more fully than before into representational work, which calls for works council members to have additional mediation and moderating skills. Research into supporting training and advisory approaches and developing positive company models in the framework of a cooperative company culture therefore needs to generate fresh stimuli for codetermination practice at plant and company level.

Detailed investigation is also required to establish how far the outcome of company initiatives and (new) legal regulations are compatible with the system of codetermination e.g. in the area of material worker participation.

Also, in terms of increasing requirements for knowledge, qualification and independence of employees, their expectations and interests in terms of code-



cope with structuring and problem-solving requirements at plant and collective-bargaining level. Economic, environmental and social requirements at plant and company level need to be linked through the management of targeted operational knowledge. One issue that research needs to address is the extent to which structuring codetermination can be combined with the requirements of an adequate protection policy. For stakeholders in codetermination to come up with their own proposals requires personal, social, methodological and specialist knowledge and skills. Negotiating skills, professional communication, and knowledge of managerial and employment law are among the key qualifications works council members need to possess. Added to this is the challenge of integrating employees' individual interests and participation requirements

termination, and regulation of those interests, must be placed at the heart of the research.

3.2. Company and collectively bargained human resources and performance policy

The restructuring of industrial production to create integrated production systems with group-, team- and project-oriented working methods and new service sectors has extended company wages and performance policy. Performance-related payments have increased and new tools for measuring and rewarding performance (target setting, profit sharing and staff shares) have been introduced. The unions are at present attempting to link in-house training with collectively bargained performance and pay policy. The aim is to

raise the profile of lifelong learning and retention of employability. At the same time, companies' treatment of certain groups of employees presents new challenges for industrial human resources policy and cooperation with those representing workers' interests. In addition to new approaches to age-appropriate employment, companies and workers' representatives will in future be faced with the task of integrating women's desire for equal rights, flexible working hours and flexible work patterns into their human resources strategies. Last but not least, the rising number of foreign workers means that companies will have to develop suitable integration programmes in conjunction with workers' representatives. Research projects should enable problems to be identified at an early stage and solutions to be developed.

In this context, the industrial relations director will continue to play a pivotal role. His/her involvement in the personnel field will enable him/her to influence key human resources policy and strategy issues and to fulfil vital mediation functions between employees, stakeholders in codetermination and company management. The purpose of existing research projects is to investigate the role and function of industrial relations directors in today's world of reorganisation, flexible working arrangements and the introduction of new management strategies.

3.3. Representation of workers' interests in areas without codetermination

The concept of being an "entrepreneur of one's own labour power" [Arbeitskraftunternehmer] marks the creation of a new type of worker status found not only in the new ICT sectors, which to a large extent do not have worker representation, but also in traditional industries. It meets companies' needs but is also being accepted to a certain extent by employees who have a new conception of their own role and seek greater autonomy at work. Flexible forms of work organisation such as project-based work and teamwork also presume independent working. At the same time there is a risk of workers being overstressed because of inadequate self-organisation and heavy time pressure. This results in new tasks for stakeholders in codetermination. On the one hand, they need to respond to employees' need for self-determination and on the other hand, they need to limit the negative effects of the increasing room for manoeuvre at work on the part of employees. Research needs to demonstrate how the conflict between the

various interests of different groups of employees can be resolved and how works councils' and trade unions' need for collective arrangements can be met. Alternative approaches to codetermination and participation that have been tried out in practice need to be worked up and examined in relation to their significance in terms of company culture and their relationship to codetermination.

As in the past, the number of businesses without a works council is high. Why they are not set up and which role the stance of employers and employees plays in this respect has received very little attention in terms of scientific research. There is also very little known about the extent and structural potential for the regulation of interests without a works council. The Foundation is seeking to address this research deficit.

3.4. The amended Works Council Constitution in practice

The amendment of the Works Council Constitution in 2001 dealt with important developments such as the erosion of demarcation in companies and the effects of this on codetermination. The input of works councils in relation to structuring work and production processes in a sustainable and environmentally acceptable way is strengthened in the amended law. What is new is the specific encouragement of participation by women in works councils: women must now be represented in accordance with their representation in the workforce, so that they are better placed to influence equal rights requirements at plant and company level. There is now also legal support for the integration of colleagues from other countries. Last but not least, the simplified election procedure introduced is a key instrument for reducing the number of small and medium-sized enterprises without codetermination. It is intended that future research work should examine the interaction between individual amendments to the law and company practice and critically analyse the implementation of the new arrangements.

3.5. Europeanisation and internationalisation of codetermination

The pace of European law-making associated with European integration remains dynamic. The institutionalisation of European Works Councils (EWCs) with information and consultation rights represents an initial and successful first step towards European worker

participation arrangements. The extent to which various different industrial relations cultures are reflected in the work of European Works Councils is an issue that to a large extent remains unresolved. The decision on the statute of the Societas Europaea (SE), the European Company, and the directive on worker participation supplement the existing "negotiated Europeanisation" model of the EWCs. The SE also relies on negotiation-based solutions. In this respect, an important research question is, for example, whether through the negotiated SE works council, which will generally have rights beyond those of EBR competencies, there will be new impetus for effective codetermination at supranational level. At this point, in addition to consulting workers through the unions, additional knowledge about the company and management strategies of potential companies is needed. In this context, it remains to be resolved to what extent the debate initiated by the EU on corporate social responsibility (CSR) will take off and result in the establishment of European participation systems. The eastward enlargement of the EU brings with it, above all, new issues relating to the coordination of collective bargaining policy at European level. The influence of a developing European codetermination culture on the regulation of working conditions at international level also poses a relevant research question.

3.6. Corporate codetermination

The codetermined supervisory board has the task of representing the interests of the shareholders and the employees viz-a-viz the board of directors or the management board, and to advise and monitor the respective management organ. In view of the growing challenges resulting from increased international competition, growing capital market influence, the broadening of responsibility in terms of monitoring and decision-making and the greater relevance of scientific work, the task of the supervisory board members will also be more demanding.

Whilst there are more recent outline studies on the experiences of employee representatives in the supervisory board and on the structure of supervisory boards, there is a particular lack of papers that look at the terms and conditions involved in successful supervisory board activity.

With the founding of European Companies (SE), differentiated solutions are also negotiated for the structure of the supervisory board. The number of members is often smaller. The comparison of possible SE supervisory board types and the structural and practical correlation with the rights of the SE works council negotiated at the same time are at the centre of future supported research into the codetermined supervisory board.



20|21 II. Priority support areas for research

There can scarcely be any other area of policy that is coming under such severe political pressure to change as social policy. Social policy is facing enormous challenges because of continuing employment problems, the accelerated pace of social and economic change, demographic trends, the increasing individualisation of society and the processes of Europeanisation and globalisation of the economy. In response to this situation, some people are calling for increased welfare benefits in order to alleviate social problems. On the other hand, there are those who are critical of the current level of state social welfare benefits and are calling for a massive reduction. These people believe that over-regulation motivated by social policy, combined with an over-generous welfare state in Germany, are impeding economic efficiency and job creation. They are also of the view that social policy itself is at the root of the problems it is intended to counteract. Talk about

cohesion, and that they indeed complement each other. Social policy is seen as a prerequisite for structuring the market economy in a socially acceptable way. Social policy as a means of guaranteeing people's basic livelihood is regarded, from this viewpoint, as being appropriate for a modern democratic society. With this model, various developments and perspectives are brought together to create the focus for research activities.

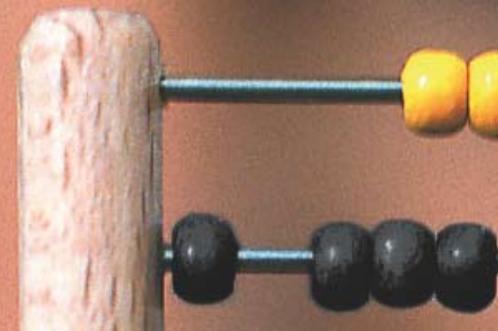
If Germany's welfare state is examined from a comparative European standpoint, it becomes apparent that the German system is essentially still a system for insuring against the risks inherent in paid employment, based on the model of a male breadwinner with a continuous standard employment career. In comparison with other neighbouring European countries with a similarly high level of economic performance

4. Future of the welfare state/social policy

"structural fossilisation" was the epitome of this kind of criticism in the 1990s. Those who support the "pure" market economy believe that the state should not interfere in the functioning of the market, on the grounds that any intervention brings with it sacrifices in terms of growth and welfare. They consider that the state should restrict itself to its core competences and should only guarantee free and fair competition in the economy.

In contrast to this, the model for the priority support area, "Future of the welfare state/social policy", is an active economy and welfare state. It is based on the maxim that in the long term economic progress is only possible in conjunction with social progress, that there is no conflict between economic progress and social

(Switzerland, France, United Kingdom, Netherlands) it offers this "clientele" above-average benefits as regards guaranteeing the beneficiary's standard of living in the core systems. However, this does not apply to the growing number of people whose employment career does not reflect this model, in particular women. With regard to the financing of the German system, it is evident that there is a particularly heavy burden on the standard employment relationship, through contributions based on gross earnings. However, Germany's social welfare system is not exceptional in terms of the overall volume of financial expenditure, despite widespread assumptions to the contrary.



It is beginning to emerge that a common European social area is to be created over the next few years. This means that welfare states based on varying social policy models (Scandinavian/continental/Anglo-Saxon models) will be up for debate, with their varying proportions of state, company and private control. A new policy mix of welfare state and private provision will be developed. This innovative remodelling of the welfare state, which is intended to combine social justice with economic efficiency, will have to fuse social security with flexibility ("flexicurity"). In this context, the "flexicurity" model is characterised by the way it reacts appropriately to various life cycle phases and does not give priority to providing security for standard employment careers.

Under the programme, research on "Future of the welfare state/social policy" is to be brought toge-

Against the background of the problems described above, the following research strands have been defined for the "Future of the welfare state/social policy" priority support area:

4.1. Quality assurance in the welfare state

Innovation, quality and solidarity are objectives that also indicate the direction to be taken in further developing the distribution of money and services. Research into quality assurance should relate both to social security systems and to state social administration, giving due weight to the long-term importance of European integration. In the competition between various welfare state models, the model most likely to win will be the one that succeeds best in encouraging modernising processes in the social security system with regard to employment and provides for a well-



ther under the lead concepts of "innovation, quality and solidarity". The "European comparisons" approach and the gender-policy perspective should be taken into account as appropriate cross-cutting issues. A proactive approach to questions of social cohesion should form the focus. Of particular interest is the question of whether for the creation of social cohesion in the European and international comparison, there are good or even very good practical examples for pathways to inclusion and the ability to achieve it.

balanced combination of state systems and of public and private expenditure. Preference will be given to projects which bring together national and European reform perspectives at a high conceptual level, whilst remaining relevant to practice. In this respect, analyses of pathway dependency and pathway creation are of particular interest.

4.2. New control and policy mix

A particular aspect to consider in designing workable social welfare systems is the way social security work is divided between the state system, intermediate bodies and private provision. The welfare state will in future have to make increasing use of all resources available within society and available to its "clientele". The future viability of the welfare state will probably depend on this.

It is impossible to imagine how, against the background of the changing role of the family and an ageing society, the necessary social and care services can be delivered solely via contribution-based ("pay as you go") systems. Privately financed services and voluntary commitments will in future have to be linked together in a systematic way. It can be seen here that there is scope for close links with consideration of an "active and activating welfare state". Research into this is extraordinarily important, precisely in order to counteract the use of the concept of activation in a way that is counterproductive in terms of social and health policy. It needs to be considered what activation types, tools and conditions are possible and appropriate with regard to given democratic and social policy targets, what activation tools are appropriate for particular target groups and how a good balance between activation and self-responsibility, and between self-provision and state provision, can succeed.

4.3. Social security systems protecting against poverty

Social cohesion issues continue to be important. The differentiation of issues relating to policy on poverty and heavy dependence on social welfare of larger families and single parents makes it necessary to restructure the system of social insurance against the risks of poverty. Benefits must be reliable and targeted in order to guarantee an income/need balance that enables people to participate in a developed society. This involves structuring the social insurance system in such a way as to prevent poverty and a targeted improvement in tax-financed transfer payments geared to specific situations of need. This will in particular require further development of approaches to a "need-oriented basic income guarantee" and other qualitative approaches geared to life situations. Group-specific distribution effects should also be focused upon. Further research into the comparative distribution of wealth in Europe is needed. This research strand will be shaped in close cooperation with the WSI, which has a priority research support area relating to distribution policy.

4.4. Active health promotion

Research into further development of the health-care system is considered particularly important, not least because of demographic change. Health can be a promoter of growth by creating jobs in the service sector through high increases in productivity. Healthcare implies managing health risks both before and after they occur, i.e. prevention, treatment and rehabilitation. A fundamental point here is the finding, which has often been proved, that the healthcare system has so far not developed any effective means of preventing

acute illnesses from turning into chronic illnesses. There has also been a failure to adequately develop the necessary coordination between the various sub-components of provision. The traditional requirement for a preventive and sustainable health policy combined with greater effectiveness and efficiency has not been met. This research strand takes this problem on board.

4.5. Gender mainstreaming in social policy

The social policy research strands outlined here have a variety of gender policy implications. In order to give gender mainstreaming a firm foundation in social policy, the social position of men and women needs to be addressed. The subject of childcare is of great importance against the background of various issues relevant to social policy. This is once again the subject of public debate as a central component of family policy. An important factor is the increasing number of working mothers. However, not only are more and more mothers working, there are also, conversely, many mothers who have been unable to realise their aspirations as regards work. Against the background of a foreseeable labour shortage for demographic reasons, this "hidden reserve" also needs to be mobilised. This can be achieved largely by improving the compatibility of work and family life. In order to achieve this, the provision of children's day care centres needs to be improved not only quantitatively, especially for small children, but it also needs to be brought into line with needs in the widest sense. One area where research is needed as a matter of priority is an analysis in social policy terms of quality assurance in children's day care centres, and also the issue of quality assurance of child care as a service provided in a social context. However, the issue of greater responsiveness to need must be linked with the issue of how long-term

financing of child care in Germany can be ensured by means of additional financial resources. A systematic analytical examination of the advantages and disadvantages and of the structuring possibilities of various demand-oriented control and financing models (e.g. Familienkasse or family finance office) has still to be carried out.



Research organisation and management

The Hans Böckler Foundation's articles of association, work plan and Research Support Programme underpin its research organisation.

Projects supported by the Hans Böckler Foundation should enhance the ability of social actors, in particular stakeholders in codetermination, to act in relation to unsolved problems regarding work and society. In order to achieve these objectives, the projects must yield scientific findings and the knowledge required as a basis for appropriate action. Research requirements are determined at the Hans Böckler Foundation by means of exchanges between academics and practitioners. Only graduate researchers may apply for research support from the Hans Böckler Foundation. They should relate to priority support areas under the Research Support Programme, Hans-Böckler Foundation invitations to bid, or also to public invitations to submit research proposals in which the Hans Böckler Foundation from time to time participates.

The Department for the Promotion of Research provides advice and support to researchers during the application procedure. Written notes for applicants can either be requested from the specialist departments or accessed on the Internet (www.boeckler.de).

The Hans Böckler Foundation promotes

- Reports, expert reports, and short studies
- Literature studies and/or secondary analyses
- Empirical research projects.

Reports, expert reports, short studies, literature studies and secondary analyses are intended to address gaps in knowledge that emerge at short notice. They provide information on the status of research, provide know-how and analyse current social problems. Empirical research projects are of a more medium or long-term nature. They yield theory-led and focused knowledge for orienting and shaping policies.

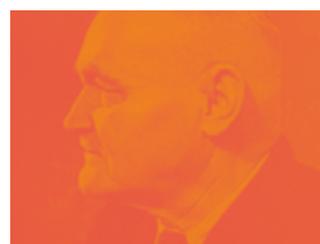
Research transfer is regarded as being particularly important as part of the Hans Böckler Foundation's approach to promoting research. It is expected that applications to the Foundation for research support should take account of the objective of knowledge transfer at the project development stage, and that this should be built into the project at all stages, including the final stage. A continuous exchange about theory and practice and knowledge transfer also assist the cooperation between academics and practitioners, for example in the project committees that the Foundation convenes. Other means of ensuring transfer are workshops, seminars, publications and press releases.

Decisions on support for projects are a matter for the Hans Böckler Foundation. The senior management team, the management board's Science Committee and the Foundation's management board consider and reach decisions on applications in accordance with a procedure that varies depending on the level of funding applied for. In all cases where the project support being applied for exceeds EUR 25,000, there is a procedure for initial appraisal by external experts.

The socio-political and scientific relevance of a research project and its specific contribution to the Foundation's Research Support Programme are key selection criteria. Furthermore, every project application is examined to determine whether it takes account of the cross-cutting themes of globalisation and the European integration process, the model of future sustainability and equal rights for men and women.



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