

## Academic publications and dissemination

A full list of publications and papers presented at conferences during 2005 is provided in Appendix C. IRRU members published 3 books and reports during the year, 20 articles in thirteen different refereed journals and 12 chapters in edited books. The conferences at which IRRU staff presented papers included international conferences in the fields of organisation studies, business and management, gender, diversity, and sociology, as well as industrial relations.

Three papers were published in the refereed *Warwick Papers in Industrial Relations* series, which is edited by Jim Arrowsmith. Publication is on-line through IRRU's web-site, which also carries research and conference papers by IRRU staff. The web-site is located at: <http://users.wbs.warwick.ac.uk/group/irru>

Paul Edwards and Associate Fellow Judy Wajcman's book *The Politics of Working Life* was published in September, and has already received favourable comment. The book is about the realities of working in organizations. It takes the reader into key and complex issues about how organizations work, such as what is happening to careers, the nature of power, and the impact of globalization. It endeavours in particular to spell out an approach to the nature of work that is strongly informed by an industrial relations perspective. A journal article by Edwards published this year also argued that this perspective has undergone robust development and has considerable future potential.

As part of his ESRC/EPSRC AIM activities, Paul Edwards organised and ran a series of 'capacity building' events, aimed at helping new researchers to appreciate the strength of the field and at offering concrete advice in such issues as winning research grants. The events were as follows:

'Grant writing workshop', 1 day, Open University, January.

'Grant writing workshop', 1 day, Bath University / UWE, September.

'Developments in the Field of HR/IR' and 'Grant Writing', 1 day, Kingston University / Royal Holloway, October.

'Developing the Potential of IR and HR Research', seminar, King's College London, November.

'Trajectories and Themes in IR Research', 1 day, Leeds / Bradford Universities, December.

Contributions to BAM Grant Writing Workshops, each 1, London, April and May.

Contribution to British Universities Industrial Relations Association doctoral training session, 2 hours, July.

Edwards also organised two AIM-sponsored seminars with international speakers on multinational companies and on comparative research, respectively, at Warwick in June.

Paul Marginson participated in a round-table session on his book co-authored with Keith Sisson, *European Integration and Industrial Relations* (published in August 2004), at the SASE Annual Conference in Budapest in June, responding to comments from two discussants (Professors Marino Regini (Milan) and Jelle Visser (Amsterdam)). He was also invited to present a paper on the themes of the book in the context of EU enlargement at the annual meeting of the German Industrial Relations Association in October. On a short visit to Montréal in April, he gave a workshop to staff and research students associated with the Canadian SSHRC-funded inter-

disciplinary research centre CRIMT on 'Industrial relations in the EU' as part of CRIMT's 'masterclass' series.

### **Practitioner engagement and dissemination**

The twelfth issue of *IRRU Briefing* was published and circulated widely amongst practitioner and academic communities in early 2005. It carried features on the duration and flexibility of working time; a study of the 2003 Survey of Employment Tribunal Applications; and on European integration and industrial relations, together with an update on IRRU's research activities. The Briefing has been redesigned for its thirteenth issue, which will appear in early 2006.

Mark Hall and IRRU associate fellow Mark Carley have continued to co-edit *European Works Councils Bulletin*. Launched in the autumn of 1995, EWCB is jointly published by IRRU and Industrial Relations Services six times a year and provides high-quality, independent analysis of all aspects of EWCs and EU information and consultation developments more generally. As well as boosting IRRU's profile amongst key 'user' groups, particularly multinational companies, the *Bulletin* continues to generate significant income to IRRU's research funds. The March/April 2005 issue of EWCB carried a specially-commissioned article by Vladimír Špidla, the EU commissioner for employment, social affairs and equal opportunities, explaining the thinking behind the European Commission's current agenda in the areas of employee information and consultation, European Works Councils and corporate restructuring.

The fourth annual public Warwick-Acas lecture in honour of Sir Pat Lowry adopted a panel, format with Rita Donaghy, Chair of Acas, giving a key-note address on the theme of the 'The changing landscape of British employment relations'. Three further panel speakers also addressed this theme: John Cridland, Deputy-Director General of the CBI, Frances O'Grady, Deputy General Secretary of the TUC and Professor William Brown, Montague Burton Professor of Industrial Relations at the University of Cambridge and Master of Darwin College. The lecture, held in March and delivered to an invited audience of leading employment relations practitioners and academics, was generously hosted by the EEF in London. Although there was common ground amongst the speakers that growing individualisation of the employment relationship called for a re-appraisal of existing institutions in the industrial relations landscape, there were contrasting perspectives on the character and extent of the institutional renewal that might be desirable. The text of the lecture was subsequently published in the Warwick Papers in Industrial Relations series (see above).

The West Midlands Employment Relations Forum was launched in 2004 as a result of an initiative taken by IRRU together with Acas Midlands and is supported by the regional CBI, EEF and TUC. The Forum aims to provide authoritative briefings and promote informed debate on key employment relations issues; enable exchanges of information and experience; facilitate benchmarking of best practice; and encourage research and analysis of regional employment relations developments. It seeks to raise the profile of employment relations in policy debate and policy formation in the West Midlands. During 2005, Forum membership totalled over 50 organisations, including companies, public sector organisations, trade unions and IR specialist organisations (e.g. law firms). Three main half-day events were organised during the year. At the first, on 'Skills at Work', the speakers were Pat Jackson (West Midlands Regional Skills Partnership) and Professor Helen Rainbird (University of Birmingham Business

School). The second event focused on 'Tackling Stress at Work', and the speakers were Dr Sayeed Khan (Chief Medical Adviser to the EEF) and Chris Rogers (Senior Adviser, Acas). Speakers at the third event, on 'Informing and Consulting Employees' were Fiona Webster (ORC Worldwide), Sarah Veale (TUC) and Mark Hall (IRRU), who presented findings on the survey of employer responses to the UK's Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations undertaken amongst Forum members (which was reported in Section 3 above). The survey was the first piece of research commissioned by the Forum.

In February, IRRU responded to the call for academic and research evidence made by the Women and Work Commission with a memorandum which outlined recent studies by IRRU staff which addressed issues of concern to the Commission. The studies, on the impact of gender equality on occupation segregation; the 'glass ceiling'; collective bargaining agenda and outcomes; and trade union organisation, education and activism, involved work by Linda Dickens, Deborah Dean, Anne-marie Greene, Sonia Liff, Jane Parker and Associate Fellow Judy Wajcman.

Jim Arrowsmith gave two presentations to the EU-level Sector Social Dialogue Committee (SSDC) for Temporary Agency Work, which includes representatives of employers' organisations and trade unions in the sector, on his European Foundation-commissioned study of temporary agency work, one the beginning of the work and the other on completion of the final report. Following its endorsement of the final report, the SSDC is cooperating with the European Foundation to publicly launch the findings early in 2006.

As part of their project on 'stakeholder involvement in managing diversity' Anne-marie Greene and Deborah Dean together with Gill Kirton (Queen Mary College) organised a second workshop for practitioners in November at which initial findings from the study were presented and discussed. Participants included many of those attending the first, 'start-up', workshop in April 2004; diversity professionals interviewed during the course of the project; and representatives from the two organisations in which case studies were conducted.

Mark Hall gave high-profile conference presentations drawing on his research on the information and consultation Regulations at the Industrial Law Society's spring conference and the CIPD's annual Harrogate conference. He was also invited to act as a panellist in the closing session of the CIPD-sponsored 'Voice and value' conference held at the London School of Economics in March.

Guglielmo Meardi organised three workshops for practitioners, in Budapest, Ljubljana and Warsaw respectively, at which findings from the ESRC-funded study of the impact of foreign direct investment on employment practice in three central European countries were presented and discussed. Participants included senior officials from employers' organisations and trade unions, managers and employee representatives from the companies participating in the research and – in Poland – officials from the US embassy and Friedrich Ebert Foundation. Meardi also published articles on the Polish elections for an Italian newspaper. He was invited as an expert commentator to participate in two seminars on EU enlargement, relocation or production and industrial relations organised by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Working and Living Conditions.