

Industrial Relations Research Unit
Warwick Business School
University of Warwick

Annual Report, 2006

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

IRRU embraces the research activities of the industrial relations community at Warwick Business School (WBS). IRRU's aims are to produce high quality, independent research which is critical in nature; thereby to contribute to the conceptual and empirical development of the field; and to improve the information and analysis available to national and European-level policy and practitioner communities. Achieving these aims requires securing research funding to support the employment of dedicated research staff and thereby maintain a critical mass of active researchers. Successful funding applications underpinned the launch early in 2006 of a major project on employee information and consultation arrangements and, at the same time, the expansion of IRRU's established role monitoring and analysing UK developments for the European Industrial Relations Observatory. This expansion involves the addition of a similar role for two further on-line European observatories, and also the provision of substantial EU-wide, comparative analysis for all three observatories. In addition, our own income-generating activities have continued to support a senior researcher and a further doctoral studentship award. Achieving our aims also requires sustained engagement with the policy and practitioner communities, at national, regional and European levels. In addition to the ongoing activity detailed in this report, IRRU continually looks for further opportunities to strengthen the impact of our research findings amongst policy makers and practitioners.

Five main themes frame IRRU's research programme, and research activity around each is elaborated later in the report. Main developments under each theme during 2006 included:

- ❖ **Europeanisation and internationalisation of employment relations.** The large-scale survey of employment practice in organisational context of multinational companies operating in the UK, funded by ESRC, realised in-depth, structured interviews with senior HR managers in just over three hundred companies. Analysis of the findings is underway. Plans for comparing findings with three parallel surveys being undertaken in Canada, Ireland and Spain were the focus of an international workshop involving the respective research teams. Earlier ESRC-funded research on multinational companies' employment practice in the EU's new member states was extended in two new directions.
- ❖ **Equality and diversity.** Findings from the study of stakeholder involvement in diversity management initiatives, funded by the European Social Fund, have been analysed, written-up for publication and presented to academic and practitioner audiences. Several publications resulted from the ESRC-funded study of British trade unions' women groups. The study has been extended by the addition of a comparison with such groups in Canada.
- ❖ **Pay, performance and employment relations.** Analysis and writing up of the case studies and focused surveys undertaken for the ESRC/EPSRC AIM Research programme project has resulted in a range of outputs, targeted at policymakers and practitioners and at the academic community. These include the development of an analytical framework to grasp small firms' strategies and practices. Thirteen company case studies were completed for the ESRC-funded study of the interface between variable payments schemes and collective bargaining, and analysis of both the UK and – in collaboration with teams undertaking parallel studies in Austria, Norway and Spain – comparative findings continues.
- ❖ **Employee representation and employee voice.** In addition to the major DTI-commissioned project on the impact of the UK's Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations mentioned above, two other new studies commenced. One is a

longitudinal investigation of trade union organising academies; the other is examining union organisation and mobilisation of fixed-term contract workers in the entertainment and higher education sectors.

- ❖ **Legal regulation of employment.** The research on employee information and consultation intersects with this theme. IRRU staff collaborated with colleagues from WBS's Centre for Small and Medium-sized Enterprise on a DTI-funded study of Employment Tribunals and firm size.

International comparison and international collaboration is a common element running through several projects under the first three of these themes. An important focus for IRRU's comparative analysis has continued to be Europe, embracing the new member states of central Europe. In addition, opportunities for comparative analysis across the north Atlantic have been opened up, focusing initially on collaboration with Canadian colleagues. IRRU is also in the process of developing links with the Industrial and Labor Relations School at Cornell University in the US. As part of this endeavour IRRU welcomed a professorial colleague from Cornell on an international visiting fellowship, and hosted a meeting with Cornell faculty.

The speaker for the fifth annual Warwick-Acas public lecture in honour of Sir Pat Lowry was the then Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, the Rt Hon Alan Johnson MP. The lecture reflected on the Government's approach to employment legislation, aimed at combining the goals of social justice and economic efficiency, and set out key priorities for the coming period. The West Midlands Employment Relations Forum, which is jointly organised by IRRU and Acas Midlands, together with the regional bodies of the CBI, TUC and EEF, held three successful events during 2006. The Forum, which brings together companies, public service organisations, trade unions and employment relations professionals across the west Midlands aims to promote discussion of key developments and raise the profile of employment relations in the region.

1 STAFFING

There are currently 19 academic staff in IRRU, twelve of whom are also members of the Industrial Relations and Organisational Behaviour (IROB) subject group of Warwick Business School. IRRU has 11 associate fellows. IRRU's membership during 2006 is listed in Appendix A.

During 2006 Andrew Charlwood was appointed to an associate professorship (formerly a senior lectureship) and will join IRRU when he takes up his appointment in February 2007. Martyn Wright resigned from his lectureship and Molly Gray left in December at the end of her contract working on the study of variable payments systems. In addition two colleagues in the research centre on Skills, Knowledge and Organisational Performance (SKOPE) who were also members of IRRU, Ewart Keep and Caroline Lloyd, transferred to Cardiff University as the Warwick part of the SKOPE centre moved to Cardiff.

Sylvia Rohlfer was awarded her PhD at the University of Warwick.

Professor Rosemary Batt (Cornell University) visited Warwick as an International Visiting Fellow, under the Advanced Institute of Management grant of Paul Edwards. She gave seminars at Cardiff and Manchester as well as Warwick, and also participated in European conferences in Italy and Denmark.

Min Li, of the South China University of Technology, visited IRRU for the year 2006. She was funded by the Chinese government. As detailed below, she worked in particular on

employment relations in small firms in China, drawing on research instruments developed by IRRU colleagues.

IRRU welcomed three further international visitors during 2006:

- Richard Long (University of Saskatchewan), September 2005 - May 2006;
- Laurent Taskin (IST, Université Catholique du Louvain), January - March;
- Janice Foley (University of Regina), May.

2 RESEARCH PROJECTS

Theme 1: Europeanisation and internationalisation of employment relations

Employment practice in multinational companies

The ESRC-funded large scale survey of employment practice in organisational context in multinational companies (MNCs) involves Paul Edwards and Paul Marginson in collaboration with Associate Fellow Anthony Ferner, and Olga Tregaskis, both from De Montfort University and Associate Fellow Tony Edwards from Kings College London. In 2005 we reported on the outcome of the first fieldwork phase which involved a short telephone interview with companies which had been identified from database searches as being eligible for the survey. A report summarising key findings was made available to the 903 MNCs which participated in this phase of the study. The findings also formed the basis for two papers. The first, led by Tregaskis and presented at the EGOS conference in July, examined the impact of company structure and nationality on the influence exercised by the corporate HR function over the policies pursued in the UK operations. The second, led by Tony Edwards and Marginson, examined the factors shaping whether MNCs had adopted a CSR code and whether this code was negotiated with an international trade union organisation or European Works Councils. The paper, which was presented at two conferences over the summer and subsequently at an ILO workshop in December, found that CSR codes are more widespread amongst US-based MNCs than amongst companies based in continental Europe and Japan (with UK-based MNCs lying between these two groups). Where a code exists, however, it is most likely to have resulted from negotiations with representatives of employees in German- and Nordic-based MNCs and least likely in US-based companies.

The second phase of fieldwork involved a more in-depth, face-to-face interview with a senior HR manager in the UK operation drawn from the sub-set of the 903 MNCs participating in the telephone screener which had indicated willingness to engage with such a follow-up interview. The fieldwork period extended from December 2005 up until June 2006. Interviews were secured with respondents in 302 MNCs, and averaged 75 minutes in length. The dataset was made available by GfK NOP, which had been contracted to undertake the fieldwork, to the research team in August. The initial phase of analysis focused on the preparation of an overview report of main findings, aimed at participating companies in the first instance. This was completed by the end of the year. Analysis of the dataset will continue through 2007 with the preparation of several papers for conference presentation.

As indicated in last year's report, parallel surveys are being undertaken by research teams in Canada, Ireland and Spain looking at employment practice in the operations of MNCs in their respective countries. In addition, research teams in Mexico and Australia are seeking funding for similar, parallel surveys. Members of the six international teams met for a workshop in Montréal in September, to discuss the rich analytical possibilities and technical and organisational challenges involved in a cross-country comparison of the different datasets.

The workshop coincided with the launch of the findings from the Canadian survey at a conference involving policy-makers, senior practitioners and academics. Plans for comparative analysis of the first four surveys will be taken forward during 2007.

Multinational companies in the EU's new member states and industrial relations

Guglielmo Meardi's research on multinationals in the new EU member states has developed in two directions, examining their impact on: employment relations practices; and on relocations. He started a new project, in co-operation with the University of Vienna and funded by the Austrian government, comparing the employment practice in central and eastern Europe of British multinational investors with Austrian and German ones in a service and a manufacturing sector. The study looks in particular at trends in employee participation. A first workshop for the selection of the case studies and the definition of questionnaires was held in Vienna in December. On the second, together with Paul Marginson he co-organised a joint IRRU-Fafo-Friedrich Ebert Foundation workshop in Oslo, on the 10-11 November, on the relocation of services and production to central and eastern Europe. It was attended by around twenty experts from various EU countries and provided much up-to-date information on current developments and trends, such as relocation-induced concession bargaining in Germany, and new union campaigns in Poland and Scandinavia. Meardi and Marginson presented a paper on the potential and actual incidence of relocations under EU enlargement and union responses at this workshop (and an earlier version at an international conference). The paper was written with other European colleagues who collaborated on their recent ESRC-funded research project (summarised in last year's report). Drawing on the findings from the study of German- and US-owned automotive supply companies' operations in Hungary, Poland and Slovenia the paper develops a contingency framework for understanding threats and actual incidences of relocation and their industrial relations implications.

Trade unions in post-socialist societies

Guglielmo Meardi continued his research with Prof. Simon Clarke on trade unions in post-socialist societies. Two workshops were held in Moscow in April and December, looking at case studies of trade union 'best practices' in both domestic and foreign companies in Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and Belarus. Innovative organizing practices are still rare, but some are emerging especially in foreign-owned companies, such as Ford in St Petersburg. A dissemination workshop to trade unions will be held in Moscow in spring 2007.

European Works Councils

During 2006, Associate Fellow Mark Carley (SPIRE Associates) and Mark Hall co-authored a report for the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions on European Works Councils (EWCs) and transnational restructuring. This reviews the academic literature on the role of EWCs in handling restructuring, examines the restructuring provisions included in agreements establishing EWCs and assesses the evidence on actual practice drawing on case studies previously carried out for the Foundation. The report was published at the end of the year.

Other research

Guglielmo Meardi has started exploratory research on Polish migrants and labour market regulation in the West Midlands. Migrants' knowledge of employment regulations seems to be good, as is their propensity to join trade unions. If confirmed, this contrasts with findings from studies of previous migration waves, a difference which calls for more in-depth research. He is organising an international workshop on the issue to be held in Warwick in spring 2007.

Theme 2: Equality and Diversity

The involvement of stakeholders in diversity management

During 2006 results from the ESF funded project involving Anne-marie Greene, Gill Kirton (Queen Mary, University of London) and Deborah Dean on 'Stakeholder Involvement in Diversity Management' have been further analysed and written up. Findings from the programme of interviews undertaken with 57 diversity practitioners across 46 organisations in the UK are reported in the box below. Papers relating to these findings and those from the in-depth case studies undertaken in two large organisations (one each in the private and public sectors – summarised in last year's report), have been presented at four international conferences. One paper has already been accepted for journal publication, and two more have been submitted to journals. In addition, a contract for a monograph based on the project findings (jointly authored with Gill Kirton) has been signed. The ESF project has also identified a number of areas of interest for future research. A research funding bid has recently been submitted to the ESRC on the strategies and practices of diversity consultants, an area identified as one calling for further research in the ESF-funded project.

Diversity Practitioner Perspectives

Fifty-seven diversity practitioners were interviewed, including management champions in organisations from the private, public and voluntary sectors; trade unions equality officers; and officers of campaigning organisations.

- ❖ Practitioners were highly positive about the shift from equal opportunities to diversity management. They believed that integrating the social justice case (more typically associated with equal opportunities) and the business case (the emphasis of diversity management) is both possible and advantageous. There was some awareness of diversity's potential dangers, including losing focus on discrimination and disadvantage as policy priorities.
- ❖ Nonetheless, the examples they provided of their organisations' policy initiatives were geared towards addressing discrimination and under-representation, particularly on grounds of gender and race/ethnicity. There are aspirations towards policies that focused on changing cultures and attitudes rather than only addressing discrimination, but very few organisations have introduced concrete culture change initiatives.
- ❖ It was widely believed that senior management in the organisations concerned was committed to equality and diversity, and it was considered important to involve non-management employees in policy-making. However, only a few organisations appeared to have the integrated, multi-channel forms of employee involvement that could potentially lead to significant input by non-management employees.
- ❖ Achieving line-management 'buy-in' was identified as the greatest challenge now facing organisations. The compliance approach associated with traditional equal opportunities was seen to be limited when it comes to accomplishing the organisational transformation that is necessary for equality and the valuing of diversity. The challenge is to get managers to actually believe in the positive messages about the benefits of a diverse workforce.
- ❖ Employee involvement mechanisms in the majority of organisations were still limited and often superficial. In unionised organisations it was felt that there was a mutually advantageous 'voice' role for trade unions, suggesting potential for a partnership approach on equality and diversity.

Women in trade unions

Jane Parker's ESRC Post-Doctoral Fellowship on women's groups in British unions formally concluded on 31 March 2006. Four main outputs were either published or completed during 2006. Drawing on data from a national survey of TUC affiliates, an article in *Economic and*

Industrial Democracy mapped women's group (WG) presence across unions and analysed the attention they give to union member diversity (as well as gender) in pursuit of equality and better interest representation. Significantly, it emerged that most members belong to unions where WGs tackle diversity to some extent. The article examines the implications of this and other findings for WG and union renewal strategy, research and theory. A second article, in *Human Resource Management Journal*, asks what impact WGs have made on advancing union goals (substantive, procedural and institutional). Based on two surveys of national union equality officers and lay representatives and on interviews and documentary evidence, the analysis reveals that WGs have generally made a positive contribution and can increasingly be regarded as internal union critics well situated to analyse the relevance of union goals from the standpoint of at least one substantial constituent group while recognising the need for union regeneration that unifies members. Third, a conference paper presented at the IREC 2006 in Ljubljana broadened this research focus to examine the meaning of WGs for union (revival) goals *and* strategies. A fourth paper, 'Collectivism in context: Women's Groups in British Unions' has just been submitted for publication. It subjects the different types of data to qualitative (content) and quantitative (regression) analyses, in order to highlight the links between similarities in environmental (cf. union) conditions and WG progress across unions, as well as revealing more complex relationships between environmental factors and WG start-up and development.

Parker also continued to collaborate with Janice Foley, of the University of Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada in order to extend her research on British unions' WGs' activities to the Canadian union setting. The collaboration is facilitated by a WBS Research Development Fund award, which enabled Parker's two national survey instruments to be administered to senior Canadian unionists. Foley also undertook follow-up qualitative interviews to elicit data which would expand on those produced by the survey responses. Foley's visit to IRRU during May enabled joint publications to be planned, comparing British and Canadian union women's group activities and roles and union member activism, as well as a joint presentation of emerging findings and issues to an IRRU workshop.

Regulating for equality

Linda Dickens has been drawing on her own previous work and that of others to critically consider the development of British anti-discrimination legislation in the field of employment since the 1970s. An article entitled 'The Road is Long. Thirty years of anti-discrimination legislation in Britain' will be published next year in the *British Journal of Industrial Relations*. The time is appropriate for such reflection with the promise of a Single Equality Act in 2009, to replace the numerous current discrimination statutes, Regulations and Orders, and the birth of a new institution in 2007 - the Commission for Equality and Human Rights which will subsume and widen the coverage of three existing separate equality bodies, becoming fully operational in 2009. The article discusses the development and nature of British anti-discrimination legislation and its enforcement, tracking positive change (such as the new positive equality duties) and commenting on problems and limitations which, Dickens, argues arise from the nature of the legislative provisions and approach, the concepts underpinning them, and their practical operation. She suggests that there is now an ideal opportunity to address the limitations of British equality law and enforcement mechanisms highlighted in the article, some of which reflect priorities and practicalities of an age long gone, to provide a better fit with the contemporary nature of employment and employing organisations, and to draw upon improved understanding of the nature of discrimination and the legislative measures likely to promote fair representation, equality and diversity.

Theme 3: Pay, performance and employment relations

Employment relations, business support and performance in small firms

This project involves Paul Edwards, Sukanya Sen-Gupta and Chin-Ju Tsai; it is part of their work with the Advanced Institute of Management Research. The logic of the study was set out in last year's report. Essentially, it is examining 3 contrasting sectors with a view to:

- improving understanding of employment relations practice and the effect on employees;
- exploring linkages between practice in this field and firms' context, in particular their location in advice networks and any developments in relation to 'communities of practice';
- and, if possible, to examine connections between these first 2 elements and the business performance of firms.

Throughout, the study takes a contextualized approach. For example, what drives employment practice will be shaped by the sectoral context of a firm. And the way in which, and extent to which, such practice affects performance is also likely to be deeply dependent on context.

The bulk of the fieldwork was conducted during 2005. This work was completed in 2006, with a total of 89 firms being studied; in 32 of them, data were collected from employees (with a total sample of 384). The extent of the employee survey was less than originally intended, which mainly reflects issues of access in the kinds of firm being studied. The data are none the less extensive, and more complete than those in many previous studies of small firms.

Attention in 2006 turned to analysis and dissemination of the results. Four substantial conference papers were presented. The first two laid out empirical results from the analysis of the employee data. The summary of findings in the box below outlines some of the key results to date, drawn from these two papers and from the associated work on employee commitment in small firms described below. The third paper addressed business support networks and firms' use of and embeddedness in the networks. The fourth paper, given at the Academy of Management conference, developed the researchers' analytical framework to grasp small firms' strategies and practice. This framework was initially developed in a paper published in *Organization* this year. It was further elaborated in an AIM working paper, which in turn formed the basis of an AIM research brief. A further elaboration of the framework, including empirical illustrations from the research and outlining a new research programme, was near completion at the end of the year. Edwards also wrote a paper with Associate Fellow Mark Gilman, testing out the analytical framework on four high tech firms.

The third and fourth of these papers have clear policy implications. In the case of the third, these relate to public policy, in particular the kinds of business support made available. The paper addressed these implications, and they were also spelt out at an AIM conference in Cardiff conference. The researchers plan a workshop in 2007 that will bring together the relevant policy community to address these implications further. The fourth paper's implications were spelt out in the AIM research brief.

As for performance, the research team are working on a paper on employment relations outcomes and their determinants. The paper examines the associations between organizational performance, employee attitudes, HRM practices and HR outcomes. Provisional results suggest that firms with higher market strength have more positive employee attitudes towards job autonomy and reward for performance, that the association between business performance and employee attitudes is partially mediated by HRM practices, and that employee attitudes are positively related to HR outcomes.

Employee Commitment and Satisfaction in the Small Firm

Small firms, employing fewer than 250 employees, account for about 60 per cent of employment in most modern economies. The situation of workers in these firms has attracted a less than commensurate interest among researchers. A limited but important line of debate has been characterised by three positions.

- ‘Small is beautiful’: close working relationships and the absence of bureaucracy generate harmony.
- Autocracy: small firms often pay low wages and operate in competitive markets, leading to autocracy in the workplace.
- Contingency: small firms are shaped by their market situations, and little if anything of their workplace relations depend on size alone.

Though the third is an advance on the first two, it leaves open the question of just what it is about the market that leads to certain workplace relationships rather than others. And in extreme form it denies that enterprise size plays any role at all.

New research by Paul Edwards, Sukanya Sen Gupta and Chin-Ju Tsai, conducted under the ESRC/EPSRC Advanced Institute of Management Research (AIM) programme, has moved beyond these stereotypical positions. It is based on two sources. First, their own primary research has addressed employment relations in 89 firms, in 32 of which data on employee attitudes were collected (with a total sample of 384 employees). These firms were chosen to offer as specific a view as possible of distinctive types of small firm. With one exception, the firms had fewer than 100 employees. And they came from three tightly defined sectors: ICT; media and TV production; and food manufacturing.

Second, the authoritative 2004 Workplace Employment Relations Survey (WERS) was analysed in relation to the size of firm and employee attitudes – in collaborative work embracing Warwick colleagues from the Centre for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, David Storey and George Saridakis, and Robert Blackburn of Kingston University. WERS 2004 has data on over 600 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and 4,000 of their employees.

There are three key findings. First, there is a genuine size effect which, other things equal, tends to promote employee satisfaction at work. Second, the effect works differently in different sectors. Third, satisfaction does not mean harmony or shared interests between managers and workers. These three conclusions are developed in turn below.

Size and ‘Morale’

The WERS analysis addressed an index of ‘employee needs’, made up of employee reports on 22 items including satisfaction with pay and views of how fairly managers treated workers. Even after controlling for a wide range of factors embracing employees’ individual characteristics (such as age and education) and those of their workplaces (including sector and a set of HR practices) the index showed a more positive picture the smaller the size of the firm.

The more detailed study of 89 firms supported this result. Though the three sectors were deliberately chosen to be very different, on several key indicators such as employee attitudes to management and satisfaction with job autonomy there was remarkable similarity across all the firms.

Interviews with managers and with some of the employees in the Warwick sample, together with more in-depth investigation in six firms, suggested a key reason for the result. Workers and managers work alongside each other, and the level of effort expended by managers is visible to workers. As we will see, this does not mean that there is a sense of harmony. But it does mean that there is awareness of a shared endeavour.

Wage-effort bargains and the sectoral context

This generic tendency within small firms was shaped by two factors. The first is the overall market situation of the firm. The firms studied had established niches in their markets which meant that rewards were felt to be reasonable. For those adopting an ‘autocracy’ perspective, such a position might be written off as unusual. But the WERS evidence shows that small firms often have considerable longevity; also that market conditions as a whole are not worse than those facing large firms.

A minority of small firms are indeed under intense pressure. Other research by Edwards – with associate fellow Monder Ram – shows that here wages can be extremely low. It also examines the ways in which illegal employment is produced and reproduced among small firms. Even under such conditions, however, straight autocracy is rare, and there is instead a form of negotiated order based on family and often kinship ties. Shared misery and negotiation to make the best of a difficult situation characterise such workplaces. Even under extreme conditions small firms are not characterised by autocracy. Under more standard conditions, there is a degree of space within which a reasonable balance of reward and effort can be struck.

The second factor relating to the firms studied is the distinct balance of effort and reward. In the food firms, for example, low wages were balanced by a largely undemanding pace of work and the fact that workers could find space to develop personal relationships. This was underpinned by the limited degree of mechanization, so that the anonymity of work in large and rationalized plants was absent. In media companies, by contrast, there was a demanding work pace, and pay was not high for professional staff; the benefits lay in the interest of the job and the distant prospect of media stardom.

Satisfaction but not harmony

Some images of the small firm suggest wholly common interests as reflected for example in the sharing of rewards and of risk. Even in the two professional sectors, these images were inaccurate. Any kind of profit sharing was extremely rare. Most firms paid basic salaries, sometimes with a bonus at the end of the year. Such bonuses were rare, and their size and distribution was wholly in the hands of managers. Other aspects of reward were also subject to management discretion. Generally, fringe benefits such as sick pay were absent, but valued employees might be allowed some paid time off. Such choices were made by managers as they saw fit. Employees were treated not as equals but as staff to be assessed. Performance in the two professional sectors was thus appraised in some detail, and even some of the food firms had developed detailed appraisal schemes.

Workers were plainly aware of these arrangements. They made a clear distinction between themselves and managers. They also recognised that promotion opportunities were often limited, and could see the reasons for this, namely, the small size of the firms and the lack of space at the top. Whilst they also valued the training that was available within their current jobs, they could still see the realities of ownership and control.

In sum, workers in small firms are reasonably satisfied because of the benefits of informality and the sectorally distinctive structure of a wage-effort bargain. But they are constrained by their own skills in terms of the jobs that they can seek, and satisfaction is in relation to what they can reasonably expect. It is not a reflection of deeper contentment, still less conscious choice of jobs. And they recognise also a divide between them and their managers. Pragmatic acceptance, rather than deep-seated loyalty, characterised their views of their jobs.

Employee commitment in small firms

Building on their collaboration with David Storey and George Saridakis of WBS's Centre for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises in work on employment tribunals and size of firm (see under Theme 5 below), Paul Edwards and Sukanya Sen-Gupta are involved in a new partnership in which four researchers have been joined by Robert Blackburn (Kingston University). The value of Edwards' AIM fellowship – in promoting co-operation between researchers who, though physically close, come from different disciplines and research traditions and who had not previously worked together – is worth underlining.

This team is addressing two issues. First, it is using new data from the 2004 Workplace Employment Relations Survey to examine the effects of firm size on employee commitment and satisfaction. The research shows that, even controlling for a wide range of other factors, small firm size is associated with satisfaction and commitment. The summary of findings in the box above offers reasons for the result. Second, the team is investigating the value of the 'innovation' in WERS of reducing the size threshold for inclusion in the survey. Both strands

of work have generated conference papers, and the first has been written up in paper submitted to a journal.

Related studies on small firms

Informal and illegal labour: Research on the informal sector and illegal labour by Paul Edwards and Associate Fellow Monder Ram, mentioned in last year's report, has progressed. Two new empirical papers were published, and a third was completed and at the time of writing is at second review stage with a journal.

Employment relations in small firms in Europe: Edwards and Ram co-ordinated a study for the European Industrial Relations Observatory on employment relations in small firms in the major European countries. The results were published during the year [available at <http://eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2006/02/study/tn0602101s.html>] and presented at a conference organised by the European Foundation in Berlin.

Small firms in the Chinese clothing industry: Visiting Fellow Min Li adapted research instruments developed by the AIM team and applied them in a case study of firms from the Guandong Province. A paper jointly written with Edwards argued that Chinese clothing factories are not always the sweatshops of popular imagination. It showed that some workers could earn well above average manufacturing income. There was a form of bargained paternalism which could be explained by three factors: booming market demand, which put workers in short supply and pressed up earnings; a non-rationalized production system which made employers dependent on workers; and kin and familial obligations.

Variable payments systems

This 3-year study involves a cross-sector, cross-country analysis of the relationship between variable payments systems and collective bargaining. Funded by ESRC under a European Science Foundation initiative, Jim Arrowsmith, Molly Gray and Paul Marginson are working in collaboration with the University of Vienna (Institute of Sociology), the FAFO research institute in Oslo and – since late 2005 – a team based at the Autonomous University of Barcelona and the University of Barcelona. The study focuses on practice and developments in two sectors: banking and the manufacture of machinery and equipment. It is addressing the forms of variable pay utilised; management's goals in introducing such schemes; problems of implementation; and the impact of (differing) collective bargaining arrangements on the introduction, forms and operation of variable pay schemes. The four countries have very different systems of collective bargaining, enabling investigation of the impact of different systems on the diffusion of different types of variable pay scheme and the extent to which the introduction, implementation and ongoing operation of variable pay are the subject of collective regulation.

In 2005 we reported on emerging findings on variable payments systems (VPS) from the sector-level field research in banking and machinery and equipment in the UK. The major activities this year have been: completion of 13 company case studies (6 in banking, 7 in machinery and equipment); progressing analysis and writing up of the UK findings; and organising and commencing the comparative analysis in collaboration with the Austrian, Norwegian and Spanish research teams. In machinery and equipment, key findings to emerge from the company case studies, which focus on blue-collar employees, are:

- older forms of individual- and group-based VPS, such as piecework and PBR, have been discontinued where companies were still using them;
- companies, with one exception, are not implementing individual appraisal-related performance pay for blue-collar employees;

- the most widespread form of VPS is bonus related to company (group or business unit) performance
- management rationales for particular VPS are not always well specified
- trade unions accept and even support VPS under some circumstances, for example is schemes provide additional earnings opportunities and criteria are ‘objective’
- union involvement in negotiating, modifying and taking out VPS is apparent in individual, work group and site schemes but absent in supra-site company bonuses

Main initial findings from the company case studies in the UK banking sector are summarised in the box below.

Variable Pay and Collective Bargaining in UK Retail Banking

The introduction of variable forms of pay has long been seen as problematic for trade unions and collective bargaining. Variable payments systems (VPS), such as discretionary bonuses or individual appraisal pay, visibly weaken the significance of trade unions in setting employee pay. Unions instinctively prefer collective approaches to pay-setting, on solidaristic and transaction cost grounds, and fear that VPS might involve work intensification through more rigorous target-setting and monitoring.

Yet, low inflation also means unions might view some forms of VPS as a means of delivering inflation-plus settlements (pragmatic adjustment), and employee concerns over substantive and procedural equity can lead to increased engagement with the union. Moreover, employers might not want to marginalise trade unions - they can offer ‘voice’ functions, identifying employee concerns and grievances, and ‘legitimacy’ in the process of implementation and revision. These issues have largely remained unaddressed. Does VPS help undermine collective bargaining, reconfigure it or in certain ways even reinvigorate it?

UK banking makes an ideal test case for examining these issues. It employs over half a million people and has one of the highest trade union member densities in the private sector. The introduction of VPS occurred rapidly from the late 1980s, when trade unions were already threatened by de-regulation, rationalisation and the termination of multi-employer bargaining. Banks moved quickly to replace automatic seniority pay - seen as increasingly costly and divorced from performance - with merit pay increases linked to appraisal. In a low inflationary environment, a greater proportion of employee earnings also came to depend on incentive pay and individual or team bonuses. These were driven as forms of motivation and reward in order to reinforce the rapid transformation of ‘tellers’ to ‘sellers’.

The banking sector research examined VPS and industrial relations developments in six major financial services companies, including joint stock banks and building societies. Some key findings on the sector’s two main forms of VPS are outlined below.

Bonus schemes

Team-based bonuses are commonly used, with staff in customer-facing roles also attracting individual incentive pay. Taken together, these bonuses amount to 3-7% of earnings on average. Objectives are to incentivise, in support of targets, but the shift to individual schemes has been somewhat reversed following tighter regulation by the FSA.

All except one company also use significant corporate bonuses such as profit-share, which amount to some 12-14% of earnings. These originated in a formerly favourable tax regime: current objectives are to reward, sharing corporate success without increasing fixed pay costs; to communicate corporate goals; and to retain staff, given that other companies offer similar schemes.

The position of the trade unions over bonuses is ambiguous: they want members to achieve higher earnings, but not so much if this represents a dampening effect on pensionable pay and means that a significant proportion of earnings is at risk. However, unions do not view incentive bonuses as suppressing the basic pay ‘pot’, partly because they are often a relatively low proportion of earnings, but also because they are self-generating and employers still need to compete on basic pay to recruit and retain staff.

More problematically, unions have increasing difficulty representing members with 'one voice', given polarisation between sales-averse long-service staff and younger recruits. This also helps explain why they might be reluctant to collectively bargain over bonuses, which would also effectively endorse schemes to which they may remain ideologically (if not practically) opposed. Their main priority is to monitor schemes for procedural 'fairness', in terms of reasonable and achievable targets, criteria and broad outcomes.

Merit pay

Service-related pay was replaced by performance arrangements in the early 1990s. A total spend is agreed with the union but the allocation is commonly on the basis of a matrix involving scale position and performance, as assessed by management appraisal. Basically, higher performers who are lower paid receive higher proportionate increases than those who are lower performing and have progressed further up the scales. The large banks were at the forefront, but smaller banks and the building societies cautiously followed suit. Crucially, merit pay is seen by management as underpinning a rigorous performance management system: getting employees to focus on the things that they need to do, communicating that message and developing managers to support and recognise the work of employees in the desired way. It is the performance management system that is seen to motivate and equip employees to higher performance, rather than merit pay itself - not least since the scope for pay dispersion is limited by the size of pay 'pots', which remain generally linked to inflation.

There is full information and consultation of the trade unions around the apparatus of merit pay (appraisal scheme, matrix formula, market pay data, progression schemes etc). Negotiation always occurs over the pay pot and, in all but one of the companies studied, about the distribution between ratings bands. A de facto RPI-plus mechanism thus operates concerning the level of the overall pot. Unions are relatively sanguine about 'market rates', as in practice they generally tend to reflect movements in RPI anyway, but the banks' benchmarked data also provide a basis for unions to argue about relative inequities, albeit in the language of the 'market'.

However, unions dislike the principle of performance-related pay, which they believe was introduced for ideological and cost-cutting reasons, though at the time companies argued most staff would be better off. They are routinely mandated by conference resolutions to claim a standardised pay settlement linked to inflation, but there are differences in how far they have come to a pragmatic acceptance in practice. This is shaped by management attitudes (in turn related to ownership and business conditions) and union capacity to push their own preferences, plus how particular schemes and demographics lead to competing constituencies in the membership and a balance between winners and losers. Unions also have to be realistic about what they want to achieve in the broad scheme of things, given that there will be other major priorities such as pensions; off-shoring and outsourcing; and redundancy terms.

Nevertheless, union pressure has contributed to standardisation. If the concern with respect to bonuses is procedural fairness, with merit pay - the union priority as it represents fixed increases to members' basic pensionable salaries - there remains a strong substantive dimension too. Management seem to accept this because the role of merit pay is mainly to reinforce the performance management process, and because bonuses are their primary vehicle for variable pay.

Workplace change

Work continued on Paul Edwards's long-standing co-operation with Prof. Jacques Bélanger (Université Laval) on the development of a framework to analyse patterns of workplace co-operation and conflict. A journal paper was published setting out a formal framework. Preparation of a companion paper, aimed at identifying causal influences on workplaces' locations within the framework, is well underway. A third paper was also written and submitted to a journal; it systematically compares the formal framework with the other main extant means of generalizing from workplace studies (based on a review of published ethnographies), and draws conclusions as to the strengths and weaknesses of the two approaches.

Other developments

Paul Edwards co-operated with his AIM colleague Rick Delbridge in organizing a one-day workshop on 'rethinking UK productivity'. This brought together leading academics and practitioners to complement other AIM research on productivity by exploring key processes at the level of the workplace. An AIM working paper appeared in December 2006, focusing on the two central issues of the utilization of skills and work organization.

Edwards also worked with the deputy director of AIM, Andy Neely, on two symposia on performance measurement. These were given at a conference in London and at the Academy of Management.

Theme 4: Employee representation and employee voice

Impact of the UK's employee information and consultation legislation

IRRU's research on the impact of the UK's Information and Consultation of Employees (ICE) Regulations straddles this theme and that on legal regulation. Work began in early 2006 on a major DTI-funded research project investigating organisational responses to the Regulations, following the success of the joint Warwick/Bath tender as reported last year. The research team comprises Mark Hall, Jane Parker and Michael Terry at Warwick, John Purcell (of the University of Bath until his transfer along with the Bath part of the project to Warwick in early 2007) and Susan Hutchinson (who now works at the University of the West of England). The research is co-sponsored by Acas and the CIPD, and an advisory group of DTI, Acas and CIPD representatives is overseeing the project. The project is currently funded until the end of 2007, and a decision on the funding of the projected third and fourth years of the research will be taken during 2007.

Reflecting the phased implementation of the Regulations, the research involves a first wave of case studies which started in 2006 in organisations with 150+ employees, followed by a second wave in organisations with 100-149 employees starting in April 2007. Subject to the continuation of funding, a third wave of case studies would begin in April 2008 in organisations with 50-99 employees. The research includes in-depth semi-structured interviews with senior management, trade unions (where present) and employee representatives, as well as an employee survey conducted in participating organisations.

A key feature of the research is its longitudinal dimension, under which developments in participating companies will be tracked over a two-year period. The initial research visit focuses on the business and employment relations context, the particular arrangements established and the factors shaping management and employee/union approaches to information and consultation. This is to be followed the next year by telephone interviews to monitor interim developments, and the following year by a final full return visit to assess the impacts of information and consultation practices in terms of quality of management decision-making, employee commitment, employment relations climate and organisational effectiveness. The employee survey is also to be repeated at yearly intervals.

During 2006, case studies began in 13 'wave 1' organisations of varying sizes and with a range of employment relations cultures. Draft case reports were completed on seven organisations and the employee survey was piloted in two, and a detailed progress report was submitted to the advisory group at the end of the year. Completion of case reports, employee surveys in the remainder of the 'wave 1' organisations, data analysis and the preparation of a draft overview report of key findings from the initial phase of the research are scheduled for

the first quarter of 2007. Eight 'wave 2' case studies of medium sized employers with 100-150 employees are due to begin from April 2007.

Mark Hall's earlier research of initial responses to the ICE Regulations formed the basis of several publications and papers during the 2006. An article was published in the *Industrial Relations Journal* offering an interim assessment of employer and trade union approaches to the legislation one year on from its introduction. The article reviewed the emerging patterns of implementation in the light of the legislation's 'reflexive' design. The available evidence suggests considerable employer-led activity in terms of reviewing, modifying and introducing information and consultation arrangements but a relative rarity of formal 'pre-existing agreements', despite the protection they offer against the Regulations' statutory procedures being invoked by employees. This picture is consistent with a 'risk assessment' rather than a 'compliance' approach by management, facilitated by union ambivalence towards the legislation and low use of its provisions by employees.

Hall also gave a conference presentation on the UK's experience of recent EU Directives and national legislation affecting employee representation at the workplace at a European seminar organised by the Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium. Articles on early case law developments under the ICE Regulations were published by the European Industrial Relations Observatory and European Works Councils Bulletin.

Trade union organisation and mobilisation of contingent workers

Deborah Dean and Melanie Simms have been undertaking a programme of in-depth interviews with union officials, activists and members, as part of a project, funded by the Warwick Research Development Fund, on 'Rethinking Mobilisation: Two Cases of Contingent Workers'. The project is examining two case studies of British unions where there is evidence of significant and, to some extent, successful mobilisation and representation of two groups of unionised workers where non-standard working predominates. The two groups are fixed-term workers in UK Higher Education Institutions, and performers in the entertainment industry. The two forms of work share surprising similarities: the work is relatively high status and skilled, work is normally for a fixed period, periods of unemployment between contracts are common, and both groups work in unionised sectors. Further, both groups share characteristics of individualised geographical dispersal with a strong intra-group competitive element. The two different groups are of particular theoretical interest because their professional and labour market status characterises the kind of workers unions need to organise if they are to expand beyond existing membership strongholds.

The aim is to compare and contrast significant dimensions of the two campaigns and consider wider implications of these cases for the contemporary labour movement. Initial findings suggest that the pay-centred campaigns explored in the study adopted an approach focused on building strong membership activism. Yet rather than building wide community-labour alliances, these campaigns built support from *profession-specific* alliances (for example with service users). The data suggest that despite these occupational groups being comparatively disadvantaged in terms of their labour market position, they were able to successfully mobilise because of two key factors: the ability to secure power resources both within their union and beyond, and the ability to construct collective identities amongst disparate, competitive and geographically dispersed groups of workers.

Evaluating recent developments in training trade union organisers

This study by Melanie Simms and Jane Holgate (London Metropolitan), funded by the Nuffield Foundation, is reviewing the activities and impact of the TUC Organising Academy,

which trains trade union organisers, and of the academies established by three large trade unions (GMB, TGWU, USDAW). Emerging findings are that:

- a large proportion (over 80%) of TUC Organising Academy graduates have stayed in the broadly-defined 'political sphere' i.e. jobs within the trade union movement, lobbying activities, party politics, and social movement activism;
- the establishment of union-level organising training within the three individual unions seems to be driven by a perception of particular training needs (typically for activists, although sometimes for union employees) rather than as 'competition' to the TUC Organising Academy;
- the emergence of different models of organiser training suggests that 1) unions are continuing to invest heavily in organising activity, 2) different models of organising are emerging in UK unions, 3) organising is still seen as a relatively specialist activity, and 4) responsibility for organising activity is driven primarily from strategic levels of the unions involved.
- there is still a relative lack of evidence of investment in systematically targeting workplaces and sectors with little history of trade unionism (distant expansion). There are some cases - including some successful ones - but the most notable pattern of organising has been consolidation and expansion into closely related areas to those of existing union strength.

Theme 5: Legal regulation of the employment relationship

The impact of employment relations legislation

Linda Dickens and Mark Hall developed their work for the DTI reported last year, which reviewed research into the impact of recent employment relations legislation, to write a paper published in the *Human Resource Management Journal*. Entitled 'Fairness - up to a point. Assessing the impact of New Labour's employment legislation', the article summarises key findings from research into the impact of the significant extension in the legal regulation of the employment relationship since 1997 and identifies factors affecting legislative impact and employer compliance. Tensions and priorities in the pursuit of social and economic policy objectives underpinning the legislation are discussed. Dickens and Hall argue that the willingness to promote social justice, fairness and security is contingent on the extent that it can be argued to promote and support business interests and to underpin (employers' views of) economic efficiency. While the working out of the relationship between fairness/security and efficiency/competitiveness in the practical operation of the post-1997 legislation remains to be investigated fully, they conclude that the problematic synthesis of social and economic goals within the legislative package is likely to be reflected in its operation. Greater fairness at work can be expected – up to a point.

Employment Tribunals and size of firm

As reported last year, Paul Edwards and Sukanya Sen-Gupta are working with David Storey and George Saridakis of WBS's Centre for Small and Medium-sized Enterprise on a DTI-funded study of small firms' experience of Employment Tribunals. The research, which was covered in a piece in the *Financial Times* and which also won a prize at the Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship conference, assessed small firms' relative risk of entering the ET process, their relative chances of success, and influences on their success rate. It found that they are more likely to lose ETs but that this was largely due to the extent to which they not only had disciplinary procedures but used them effectively. An academic paper is under review with a journal.

Other Research

European Working Conditions Survey – follow-up qualitative study

Jane Parker successfully tendered for the UK part of a study commissioned by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions to follow up the Foundation's third European Working Conditions Survey undertaken in 2005 and involving structured interviews with a large sample of workers across Europe. The follow-up, qualitative study, involved in-depth interviews with a small number (twenty) of those participating in the 2005 survey in each country, including the UK. Parker led a team of five IRRU-based researchers (involving also Duncan Adam, Jim Arrowsmith, Sukanya Sen-Gupta and former colleague Helen Newell) in undertaking, writing up and analysing the programme of interviews in the UK. Parker completed a comprehensive national report in December, which will be published on the Foundation's website. The national reports will also inform an overview report by the overall project coordinators.

Regulating and resolving disputes in public services

Linda Dickens, working with Lorenzo Bordogna of the University of Milan, convened a Special Seminar on Regulating and Resolving Collective Disputes in Public Services at the IIRA 14th World Congress held in Peru in September 2006. A distinguished international group of contributors was assembled from Italy, Southern Africa, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Slovenia and Korea. Papers addressed the different approaches taken across countries to regulate public services collective disputes (e.g. permitting or removal of the right to strike in essential services; issues around minimum service provision etc.) and the institutions and processes relating to their avoidance and resolution. Dickens' own contribution to the seminar (co-authored with Ian Kessler of Templeton College Oxford) was entitled 'Dispute Resolution and the Modernisation of the Public Services in Britain: The Case of Local Government Pay Commission'. Dickens and Bordogna currently are co-editing a special issue of the *Journal of Industrial Relations* based on papers produced for the seminar, to be published in 2008.

Social movement unionism

Jane Parker has started research on social movement unionism (SMU), with a particular focus on the role of the TUC. Data garnered from interviews with a number of TUC officials provide the basis for an analysis of the TUC's role in a number of recent SMU initiatives, which is being written up in a paper for conference presentation.

Doctoral Research

IRRU staff continued to supervise a number of students researching topics in industrial relations through 2006. Students are registered under Warwick Business School's doctoral programme. The twelve students concerned, and the topics they are researching, are listed in Appendix B. Enda Hannon, Aline Hoffmann and Sylvia Rohlfer were awarded their PhDs during the year. A further two students submitted their thesis during the year, and are awaiting examination.

Since 1998, IRRU has sought to encourage applications for doctoral research in industrial relations through the Hugh Clegg Research Studentship scheme, funded by income generated through Warwick Industrial Relations Limited (see Appendix E). Typically, awards make a contribution to the living expenses and/or fees of students during their first 3 years of

registration. Five of the students listed in Appendix B have received support under the scheme.

European Observatory Network

March 2006 saw the start of two major new contracts with the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, each lasting four years, under which IRRU has taken on a significantly enhanced role within the Foundation's network of EU-wide 'observatories'. The network embraces the European Industrial Relations Observatory (EIRO), the European Working Conditions Observatory (EWCO) and the European Restructuring Monitor (ERM).

IRRU has been the UK national centre for EIRO since its establishment in 1996, and has been EWCO's UK correspondent since 2005. As reported last year, in late 2005 IRRU successfully tendered to be the single UK national centre providing input to all three observatories. This involves the on-line publication of up-to-date information on key employment and industrial relations developments, restructuring cases, research and policy analysis, aimed primarily at practitioners and policymakers at national and EU levels. A joint tender with Industrial Relations Services (IRS) to become one of only four European research institutes responsible for coordinating a range of EU-wide comparative analytical reports for the three observatories was also successful.

As the UK national centre for EIRO, IRRU provides a range of inputs including *information updates* on key UK developments and debates, and national contributions to *comparative analytical reports* which focus on a particular topical issue and its treatment across Europe and to sectoral *representativeness studies* which assess the representative capacity of employers' organisations and trade unions. These various inputs appear as records on EIRO's online database, which is publicly accessible at <http://www.eiro.eurofound.eu.int>. During 2006, the UK's input to EIRO continued to be co-ordinated and edited by Mark Hall and Jim Arrowsmith, who were also responsible for writing a proportion of the required material. Other IRRU members and UK researchers also provided information updates and contributions to comparative analytical reports and representativeness studies.

EWCO (<http://www.eurofound.eu.int/ewco>) was established more recently than EIRO and IRRU became its UK correspondent in 2005. It covers career and employment security, the health and well-being of workers, skills and work-life balance, with a particular focus on survey-based material. Again, IRRU provides a range of inputs including *information updates*, *survey data reports*, covering key national surveys in the working conditions field, and national contributions to *comparative analytical reports*. The UK's input to EWCO is co-ordinated and edited by Jane Parker.

IRRU began to contribute to the ERM (<http://www.emcc.eurofound.eu.int/erm>) in March 2006. This involves reviewing daily newspapers and the business press for cases of restructuring that: entail an announced or actual reduction of at least 100 jobs; involve sites employing more than 250 people and affect at least 10% of workforce; or create at least 100 jobs. Brief details of all such cases are recorded in standardised *fact sheets*, which allows for the compilation of EU-wide statistics comparing countries, sectors, types of restructuring and employment effects. This work is undertaken by Sophie Gamwell and Thomas Prosser, both doctoral researchers within IRRU. National contributions to *comparative analytical reports* are also required.

In January 2006, Paul Edwards and IRRU Associate Fellow Monder Ram (De Montfort University) completed a comparative analytical report on 'Employment relations in SMEs'

(as reported under Theme 3 above). Under its new contract to coordinate EU-wide comparative analytical reports for the three observatories, the IRRU/IRS consortium undertook to produce eight reports during the March 2006-February 2007 contract period: 'Working time developments 2005', 'Pay developments 2005', 'Gender and career development', 'Place of work', 'EIRO annual review 2006', 'Working time developments 2006', 'Pay developments 2006' and 'The impact of the working time Directive for the road transport sector on collective bargaining'. The first three of these had been submitted by the end of 2006.

A comprehensive listing of IRRU's inputs to the three observatories during 2006 is contained in Appendix C. At the end of the year, IRRU received a very positive assessment of its input to the observatories from the network's management team at the European Foundation. Under each criterion, IRRU's input was rated as 'meets requirements' or 'exceptional'. Reviewers commented on IRRU's 'strong performance in all aspects' and on the 'very good quality' of IRRU's input, and IRRU was described as 'the best [ERM] correspondent in the EU 15'.

3 PUBLICATIONS AND PRACTITIONER ENGAGEMENT

IRRU aims to address its research findings both to academics and to practitioners and policy makers. In addition to publishing books, reports and articles in academic journals and presenting papers at academic conferences, IRRU staff disseminate findings from research, and highlight their implications, in practitioner-oriented publications and in presentations to high-level policy and practitioner audiences in the UK, elsewhere in Europe and in north America. IRRU is also involved in organising well-regarded national and regional events.

Academic publications and dissemination

A full list of publications and papers presented at conferences during 2006 is provided in Appendix C. IRRU members published 6 books and reports during the year, 22 articles in thirteen different refereed journals and 11 chapters in edited books. The conferences at which IRRU staff presented papers during 2006 included international conferences in the fields of business and management, diversity, economic sociology and organisation studies, as well as industrial relations.

Four papers were published in IRRU's refereed *Warwick Papers in Industrial Relations* series, which Jim Arrowsmith continued to edit the series for most of the year, a role he has undertaken for 5 years. Trevor Colling took over as editor in November. Publication of Warwick Papers in on-line through IRRU's web-site, where conference and research papers by IRRU staff are also made available. The web-site is located at: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/wbs/research/irru/>

Linda Dickens' co-edited book with Alan Neal of Warwick's Law Department, entitled *The Changing Institutional Face of British Employment Relations* and published by Kluwer, was launched at the 2006 Lowry lecture (see below) by the Chair of Acas, Rita Donaghy. The volume, detailed in last year's report, marks the 30th anniversary of the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service.

It was reported last year that as part of his ESRC/EPSRC AIM fellowship, Paul Edwards organised a series of events aimed at 'capacity building' in the industrial relations research community. During 2006 gave five further 'capacity building' presentations at conferences and workshops.

Through its research seminar series, IRRU provides a forum for the presentation of findings from research projects which are coming to completion. Speakers include colleagues at other institutions and also IRRU staff. During 2006 the series, which involved twelve seminars, was coordinated by Deborah Dean and Sylvia Rohlfer.

Practitioner engagement and dissemination

The thirteenth issue of IRRU Briefing was published in early 2006, and circulated widely amongst practitioner and academic communities. The Briefing had been redesigned since the previous issue. The issue carried features on Ardha Danieli's project examining the scope and limits of the business case for the employment of disabled people; findings from a survey, coordinated by Mark Hall, of member companies of the West Midlands Employment Relations Forum on responses to the UK's employee information and consultation legislation; and on Trevor Colling's research on trade union approaches towards using the law to enforce collective and individual rights. The fourteenth issue will appear early in 2007.

European Works Councils Bulletin, which Mark Hall and Associate Fellow Mark Carley have co-edited since its inception, ceased publication at the end of 2006 after eleven years and 66 issues. During this period, the Bulletin was widely acknowledged as Europe's leading specialist publication on EWCs and related matters. Its subscribers included key employment relations policymakers and practitioners at EU level and in over 30 countries, especially multinational companies, employers' organisations, trade unions, government departments, law firms and management consultancies.

In its 11-year existence, EWCB has monitored and analysed: the national implementation of the EWCs Directive; the spread of EWC agreements and developments in their substantive content; key legal cases at EU and national levels; the impact of EU enlargement on EWCs; and research findings concerning the operation and influence of EWCs in practice. EWCB has carried case studies of EWCs in a wide range of multinational companies, as well as articles by high-profile external contributors including three EU social affairs commissioners, the general secretaries of both the ETUC and Unice, academic experts and leading management consultants. In addition to focusing on EWCs, the Bulletin has covered the EU's wider employee consultation agenda, including the adoption and implementation of the European Company Statute and the information and consultation Directive, and related international developments such as the negotiation of global agreements and codes of conduct.

Over the same period, EWCs have become an established feature of industrial relations in many multinational companies: half of all existing EWCs have built up ten years or more of practical experience. But as EWCs have matured, practitioners' need for specialist advice and information on EWCs has diminished. There has also been a recent slow-down in EU legislative initiatives in the area of employee consultation and, in particular, the long-running debate about revising the EWCs Directive has not resulted in any proposals from the European Commission for significant legislative reform. These factors have been reflected in the decline in EWCB subscriptions and revenues which prompted the decision to cease production.

European Works Councils Bulletin has been a highly successful venture. For more than a decade it boosted IRRU's profile amongst key 'user' groups, particularly the European Commission and multinational companies, and has generated significant income to IRRU's research funds (see Appendix E).

The fifth annual Warwick-Acas public lecture in honour of Sir Pat Lowry was given by the Rt Hon Alan Johnson MP, then Secretary of State for Trade and Industry. Held at Warwick in

March, the lecture was delivered to an invited audience of leading employment relations practitioners and academics. In the lecture, Alan Johnson reflected on the achievements of the Government in fashioning a new framework of individual rights for workers, underpinned by an approach aimed at combining social justice and economic efficiency. Against the background of the subsequent publication of a Government policy paper on labour market strategy, the Secretary of State set out key priorities for the current Parliament and argued that addressing these called for a change in approach towards employment law.

The West Midlands Employment Relations Forum is jointly organised by IRRU and Acas Midlands, with the support of the regional organisations of the 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; encourage research and analysis of regional employment relations developments; and raise the profile of employment relations in policy debate and policy formation in the West Midlands. Forum membership includes companies, public sector organisations, trade unions and specialist industrial relations organisations (e.g. law firms). Three main half-day events were held during the year on 'Flexible Working', 'Employing Migrant Workers' and 'Age Discrimination: legislation and practice' respectively. IRRU took particular responsibility for organising the third of these, at which Jim Arrowsmith's key note presentation drew implications for practice from a review of several recent research studies on age discrimination. Towards raising the profile of employment relations in policy formation, IRRU was commissioned to undertake a regional analysis of the 2004 Workplace Employment Relations Survey focussing on those workplaces surveyed which were located in the West Midlands. A report was near completion at the end of the year, and the findings will form part of the Forum's input into the consultation process around the revision of the Regional Economic Strategy.

The report prepared by Jim Arrowsmith on Temporary Agency Working (TAW) in the enlarged European Union, commissioned by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, was published in February 2006. As indicated last year, preparation of the report involved close collaboration with employers' representatives and trade unions at European level through the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee (SSDC) for TAW. The SSDC endorsed the final report and a joint press conference was held at the European Parliament in Brussels to release the results. Arrowsmith presented the findings to the social partners, academics and European Foundation and European Commission officials at conferences in Berlin and Budapest. The report was the single Foundation publication to be cited in the Commission's Green Paper on 'Modernising Labour Law', published in November 2006.

At the invitation of Equity, Deborah Dean provided the UK research contribution (based on her doctoral research on women performers as workers and subsequent publications) to a meeting of European entertainment industry unions focused on the employment implications of representations of women in theatre, film and television, which was held in Sweden in March.

Linda Dickens was invited by the DTI to make a presentation at the launch conference of the Workplace Employment Relations Survey 2004 held in London in July 2006, addressing the findings on equality and work-life balance. She developed this presentation into an article published in the *Industrial Law Journal* in December: Equality and Work-life Balance: what's happening at the Workplace?

As reported in section 2 above, policy implications of findings from the Advanced Institute of Management Research work on employment relations, business support and performance in

small firms, involving Paul Edwards, Sukanya Sen-Gupta and Chin-Ju Tsai, have been addressed in two papers. Those from the paper elaborating the researchers' analytical framework mapping small firms' strategies and practices were spelled out in an AIM Research Brief which has been circulated widely to policy-makers and practitioner organizations. Key findings from Edwards and Sen-Gupta's joint work with colleagues in WBS's Centre for Small and Medium-sized enterprise on Employment Tribunals and size of firm were reported in the *Financial Times*.

Paul Edwards has continued to draw out the public policy implications of UK workplace research, building on ideas developed by former IRRU Director and Emeritus Professor Keith Sisson. A paper was prepared for the Work Foundation laying out an approach to the governance of the employment relationship. This was presented at a seminar and subsequently published in early 2007. It argues for a new approach based on the idea of workplace justice. Current public policy speaks of fairness, but offers few concrete mechanisms that actively promote worker participation; an ironic result is that 'business friendly' approaches to legislation in fact fail to advance workplace improvement. The paper outlines a set of concrete proposals. A related piece of work was commissioned by the Canadian government and presented at a Ministerial Roundtable in Ottawa in December.

Paul Marginson gave a presentation and paper analysing trends and developments in transnational collective negotiations in multinational companies at a European Commission-sponsored symposium in March. Linked to an expert report on a possible European legislative measure facilitating transnational collective bargaining, the symposium brought together leading representatives of employers and trade unions and national- and European-level public officials. In September, Marginson was invited to address the opening session of an international conference for leading practitioners and academics on HRM in multinational companies organized by inter-disciplinary CRIMT research centre based at the Université de Montréal. His presentation focused on the challenges which EU integration and enlargement pose for European-based multinationals.

Associate Fellow Tony Edwards presented the paper on multinational companies and CSR codes, which he and Marginson had led on (see section 2 above), at an ILO workshop on CSR codes and international framework agreements in December. Participants at the workshop included international trade union and employers organisation, as well as ILO, officials.

Guglielmo Meardi and Paul Marginson presented findings from their ESRC-funded research on employment practice in the operations of American- and German-owned companies in central Europe to the 'Ost [East] Forum' organised by the FAFO research institute in Oslo in November. The Forum brings together leading employers, trade unions and public officials in Norway. Meardi was also invited to present / act as a discussant at workshops on EU enlargement, relocation of production and services, implications for industrial relations and union responses, organised by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Working and Living Conditions (Warsaw, June) and the EU-funded network AgirE (Florence, December).

Key findings from Jane Parker's ESRC-funded study of womens' groups in British trade unions have been distributed to senior trade union officers in Canada through her collaboration with Janice Foley of the University of Regina, Saskatchewan.

4 RESEARCH FUNDING

IRRU's research projects are funded by a range of research, governmental and non-governmental organisations. The sources of funding for ongoing projects and those which

were completed during 2006 are listed in Appendix D. The major new contracts commencing in 2006 relate to the DTI-commissioned study of the impact of the UK's employee information and consultation legislation within organisations, and the two contracts for the European Foundation's Observatory Network, relating to IRRU's national input as the UK centre and to its activity in comparative analysis respectively.

In addition Paul Edwards was a co-applicant on a successful bid, led by Prof. Jeremy Dale and colleagues in Warwick Medical School, to the BUPA Foundation for a 2 year study assessing organisational interventions to promote employee well-being and occupational health.

IRRU's own income generating activities, particularly publication of *European Works Councils Bulletin*, resulted in a £21,000 gift aid donation from Warwick Industrial Relations Ltd (see Appendix E) at the end of the 2005-06 financial year. In part, this funding was allocated to augment Mark Hall's time for research on implementation of the UK's legislation on employee information and consultation and its impact. It also supported the creation of a further Hugh Clegg doctoral studentship commencing in October 2006.

5 PUBLIC AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND DISTINCTIONS

Linda Dickens and Paul Marginson have continued to be active as members of the Academic Steering Committee which is organising the International Industrial Relations Association's (IIRA) 8th European Regional Congress, which will take place in Manchester in September 2007. Dickens convened and chaired three meetings of the Committee during 2006, which includes the President of BUIRA and nine other senior academics in the field from several of the leading UK institutions teaching and researching industrial relations. Marginson is coordinator of one of the four main themes for the Congress, around which the call for papers was structured. As reported last year, IRRU, along with the other institutions represented on the organising committee, committed £1,000 towards supporting the participation in the Congress of new researchers and those from low income countries in the enlarged European Union. Full details of the Congress can be found on the web-site www.iiraeurope07.org

Linda Dickens continued her work as an Acas Disputes Arbitrator and Mediator. She is also a Deputy Chair of the Central Arbitration Committee. Her 6-year term as a member of the Executive Committee of the IIRA was completed in September. Dickens is a member of the advisory boards for the Working Lives Research Institute based at London Metropolitan University and the Centre for Diversity Policy Research at Oxford Brookes University. During the year the IIRA decided to launch a publication series with the theme of international and comparative industrial relations. Dickens accepted an invitation to join the three member editorial board.

Deborah Dean is a member of the committee for the European Conference on Research Methodology for Business and Management Studies.

Paul Edwards was elected Chair of the Social Science Group of the British Academy. In addition to chairing the group, the position makes him an *ex officio* member of the Academy's Council and Policy Advisory Committee. Edwards continued his work on the business and management sub-panel for the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise, and became a member of the EPSRC's College of Assessors for research grants. He also joined the University's Senate as a WBS representative. Edwards, and also Paul Marginson, continue to serve on the DTI Advisory Forum on the Impact of Employment Legislation.

Anne-marie Greene has continued to jointly convene the IIRA's Gender and Industrial Relations Study Group.

Sukanya Sen-Gupta won third prize in the Best Doctoral Thesis in Europe competition organized by the European Doctoral Programme Association (EDAMBA). She and Paul Edwards won a 'best paper in track' award at the Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship conference.

Ardha Danieli, Anne-marie Greene and Sonia Liff are Associate Editors of *Gender, Work and Organization*. Danieli and Greene are also members of the Editorial Board of *Equal Opportunities International* and Danieli of the Editorial Board of *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: an International Journal*. Linda Dickens was invited to become an Associate Editor of the *Journal of Industrial Relations*, and continued to serve as a member of Editorial Boards for the *Industrial Law Journal*, *Employee Relations: The International Journal* and *Journal of Interdisciplinary Gender Studies*. Paul Edwards was invited to become an Associate Editor of *Human Relations*, and continued to serve on the Editorial Boards for *Relations Industrielles*, *Work and Stress* and *Work and Occupations* and the International Advisory Board of *British Journal of Industrial Relations*. Paul Marginson is a member of the International Advisory Board of *European Journal of Industrial Relations*.

Appendix A

IRRU Staff during 2006

Academic and Research Staff

Jim Arrowsmith
Trevor Colling
Ardha Danieli
Deborah Dean
Linda Dickens
Paul Edwards
Molly Gray
Anne-marie Greene
Mark Hall
Sonia Liff
Paul Marginson
Guglielmo Meardi
Jane Parker
Sylvia Rohlfer
Sukanya Sen Gupta
Melanie Simms
Keith Sisson*
Mike Terry
Chin-Ju Tsai
* Emeritus Professor

SKOPE Staff who are also members of IRRU [until September]

Ewart Keep
Caroline Lloyd

Clerical and Support Staff

Duncan Adam Survey Research Assistant
Val Jephcott IRRU Research Unit Co-ordinator

Associate and Visiting Fellows

Jacques Bélanger (Université Laval, Québec)
Mark Carley
Tony Edwards (King's College, London)
Anthony Ferner (De Montfort University)
Mark Gilman (University of Kent)
Richard Hyman (LSE)
Valeria Pulignano (Catholic University, Leuven)
Helen Rainbird (University of Birmingham)
Monder Ram (De Montfort University)
Judy Wajeman (Australian National University)
David Winchester

Appendix B

Doctoral Researchers and Topics

Domenico Bevilacqua [^]	Labour management, business development, and social and economic actors: A study of manufacturing SMEs in the Marche region, Italy
Heather Connolly [†]	Constructing union organisation and collective action: an ethnographic study of an autonomous French union
Chris Edger	Innovative HRM and M&A; 'Before, during and after' the event
Michael Frize	Trade union responses to the EU's Information and Consultation Directive
Sophie Gamwell	Temporary Agency Workers: issues of unionisation and representation in a triangular employment relationship
Enda Hannon* [†]	Are skills central to high value-added competitive strategies? Evidence from the Irish and English dairy industries
Annette Hayden* [†]	Regional integration and the effects on labour management strategy and practice in multinational companies
Aline Hoffmann	Interest Aggregation and Solidarity in French and German Central Works Councils: Lessons to be learned for EWCs
Benjamin Hopkins*	The use of non-standard labour in UK manufacturing and the effect on employees, employers, trade unions and the UK manufacturing sector
Aristea Koukiadaki* [†]	Information and Consultation Rights of Employees: A Policy Cycle Approach
Thomas Prosser [†]	Effective Social Dialogue through 'soft law'? An analysis of the implementation of the 'new phase' of the European Social Dialogue
Sylvia Rohlfer* [†]	The Impact of Company Benchmarking on Human Resources and Industrial Relations in UK and German-owned MNCs

* Hugh Clegg Research Studentship

[†] ESRC award

[^] University studentship linked to IRRU's ESRC/EPSRC AIM Research project

Appendix C

IRRU Publications during 2006

Note: This list covers work done within the IRRU programme. Names in square brackets are people who are not members of IRRU.

Books and Reports

- J Arrowsmith, *Temporary Agency Work in an Enlarged European Union*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.
- [M Carley] and M Hall, *European Works Councils and transnational restructuring*, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities/European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2006, 96pp
- [R Delbridge], P Edwards, [J Forth, P Miskell and J Payne], *The Organisation of Productivity: Rethinking Skills and Work Organisation*, AIM Report, 39 pp.
- L Dickens and A Neal, (eds), *The Changing Institutional Face of British Employment Relations*, Kluwer Law International
- P Edwards, [T Edwards, A Ferner], P Marginson and [O Tregaskis], *Employment Practices in Multinational Companies in Organisational Context: feedback report to participating companies*, Kings College, London; Leicester Business School; WBS, 42pp
- [M Korczynski, R Hodson] and P Edwards, (eds), *Social Theory at Work*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 502 pp.

Journal Articles and Book Chapters

- [P Almond], T Colling, [T Edwards and A Ferner], 'Conclusions', *American Multinationals in Europe: Managing Employment Relations Across National Borders*, in P Almond and A Ferner (eds.), Oxford University Press, 271-290
- J Arrowsmith and P Marginson, 'The European cross-border dimension to collective bargaining in multi-national companies', *European Journal of Industrial Relations*, 12:3, 245-66
- [J Bélanger] and P Edwards, 'Towards a Political Economy Framework: TNCs as National and Global Players', in A Ferner, J Quintanilla and C Sanchez-Rundé, eds, *Multinationals, Institutions and the Construction of Transnational Practices*, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 35-54.
- T Colling, [P Gunnigle, J Quantanilla and A Tempel], 'Collective representation and participation', *American Multinationals in Europe: Managing Employment Relations Across National Borders*, in P Almond and A Ferner, (eds.), Oxford University Press, 95-118
- T Colling and [I Clark], 'What happened when the Americans took over Britain's electricity industry? Exploring trans-national sector effects on employment relations', *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 17, 1624-1643
- T Colling, 'What space for unions on the floor of rights? Trade unions and the enforcement of statutory individual employment rights', *Industrial Law Journal*, 35, 140-160
- A Danieli, 'Gender, the missing link in industrial relations' *Industrial Relations Journal*, 37, 329-343
- A Danieli and [P Wheeler], 'Employment policy and disabled people, old wine in new glasses?' *Disability and Society* 21, 5: 485-498
- L Dickens, 'Re-regulation for gender equality: from 'either or' to both', *Industrial Relations Journal*, 37, 299-309

- L Dickens, 'Equality and Work-Life Balance: what's happening at the workplace?', *Industrial Law Journal*, 35, 445-449
- L Dickens and M Hall, 'Fairness - up to a point. Assessing the impact of New Labour's employment legislation', *Human Resource Management Journal*, 16, 338-356
- L Dickens and Alan Neal, 'Changing Times Changing Needs', in L Dickens and Alan Neal (eds.) *Changing Institutional Face of British Employment Relations* Kluwer Law International
- P Edwards, 'Power and Ideology in the Workplace: Going Beyond even the Second Version of the Three-dimensional View', *Work, Employment and Society*, 20, 3, 571-82.
- P Edwards, 'Il ristrutturato mercato del lavoro inglese', in Associazione Nuovi Lavori, ed., *Il 'Nuovo' nel Mercato Lavoro* (Rome: Sapere), 58-68.
- P Edwards and [M Ram], 'Surviving on the Margins of the Economy: Working Relationships in Small Low-wage Firms', *Journal of Management Studies*, 43, 4, 895-916.
- P Edwards, [J Bélanger] and M Wright, 'The Bases of Compromise in the Workplace: A Theoretical Framework', *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 44, 1, 125-46.
- P Edwards, S Sen Gupta, C Tsai and [M Ram], 'The Structuring of Working Relationships in Small Firms: Towards a Formal Framework', *Organization*, 13, 5, 701-24.
- A Greene and [G Kirton], 'Trade Unions and Diversity', *Handbook of Workplace Diversity*, in A. Konrad, P. Prasad and Pringle, J. (eds.), London: Sage, 489-510
- M Hall, 'A cool response to the ICE Regulations? Employer and trade union approaches to the new legal framework for information and consultation', *Industrial Relations Journal*, 37, 456-472
- [E Heery] and M Simms, 'Union organising under certification law in Britain in G. Gall (ed.) *Union Recognition: Organising and Bargaining Outcomes*. Routledge.
- [T Jones, M Ram] and P Edwards, 'Ethnic Minority Business and the Employment of Illegal Immigrants', *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, 18, 2, 133-50.
- [T Jones, M Ram] and P Edwards, 'Shades of Grey in the Informal Economy', *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 26, 9/10, 357-73.
- [G Kirton] and A Greene, 'The Discourse of Diversity in Unionised Contexts: Views from Trade Union Equality Officers', *Personnel Review*, 34, 431-448
- P Marginson, 'Europeanisation and regime competition: industrial relations and EU enlargement', *Industrielle Beziehungen*, 13, 97-117
- P Marginson and G Meardi, 'EU Enlargement and the FDI Channel of Industrial Relations Transfer', *Industrial Relations Journal*, 37, 92-110
- [R McIlroy] and P Marginson, 'The West Midlands: a mixture of promising and faltering steps', *Regulating New Forms of Employment: local experiments and social innovation in Europe*, in I Regalia (ed), Routledge, 202-229
- G Meardi, 'I sindacati nell'Europa postcomunista: attori scomparsi?', *Guida ai paesi dell'Europa centrale, orientale e balcanica*, in L. Chiodi and F. Privitera (eds), Bologna, Il Mulino, 15-24
- G Meardi, 'Multinationals 'Heaven' Uncovering and Understanding Worker Responses to Multinational Companies in Post-communist Central Europe', *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 17, 155-83
- G Meardi, 'Social Pacts on the Road to EMU: A Comparison of the Italian and Polish Experiences', *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 27, 197-222
- G Meardi and [A Toth], 'Who is Hybridising What? Insights on MNCs employment practices in Central Europe', *Multinationals and the construction of transnational practices: Convergence*

and Diversity in the Global Economy, in A Ferner, J Quintanilla and C Sanchez-Runde (eds), London: Palgrave, 155-83

J. Parker, 'Towards Equality and Renewal: Women's Groups, Diversity and Democracy in British Unions', *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 27, 429-467

J. Parker, 'Trade Union Women's Groups and their Effects on Union Goals', *Human Resources Management Journal*, 16, 411-431

[S Sayce], A Greene and [P B Ackers], 'Small is beautiful? The development of women's activism in a small union', *Industrial Relations Journal*, 37, 400-414

M Simms, 'The transition from organizing to recognition: a case study' in G. Gall (ed.) *Union Recognition: Organising and Bargaining Outcomes*. Routledge.

C Tsai, 'High Performance Work Systems and Organizational Performance: an Empirical Study of Taiwan's Semiconductor Design Firms', *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 17, 9, 1512-1530

Conference Papers and presentations

J Arrowsmith, 'Temporary agency work in the enlarged European Union', European Foundation workshop on Industrial Relations in the EU, Japan, US, India and Japan', European Commission Office, Berlin, November

J Arrowsmith, 'Temporary agency work in Hungary and the EU', Conference on 'The regulation and practice of temporary agency work: Hungarian experiences and international initiatives', Ministry of Labour, Budapest, May

J Arrowsmith, M Gray, P Marginson, 'Variable pay and collective bargaining in UK retail banking', BUIRA annual conference, Galway, June

[R A Blackburn], P Edwards, [G Saridakis], S Sen Gupta and [D J. Storey], 'Burying Bleak House: Formality and Job Satisfaction in Smaller Workplaces and Single Enterprises', Employment Relations Unit annual conference, Cardiff, September.

D Dean, A Greene, [G Kirton and C Creegan], 'No them, no us? Managing diversity and collectivity', BUIRA annual conference, Galway, July

L Dickens 'Equality and Work Life Balance'. WERS 2004 Launch Conference, London, July

P Edwards, 'Non-standard work and labour market re-structuring in the UK', Associazione Nuovi Lavori conference on 'The "Latest" in the Labour Market', Rome, February.

P Edwards, 'Work Relations in Low-wage Firms', European Work and Employment Relations Centre conference, Manchester, February.

P Edwards, 'Risk and Uncertainty at the Bottom of the (UK) Labour Market', British Academy of Management HRM Study Group conference, King's College London, May.

P Edwards, 'Preparing Research Grants', presentation to doctoral students' workshop, BUIRA annual conference, Galway, June.

P Edwards, 'Performance Measurement and the Management of Employees', presentation at Performance Management Association annual conference, London, July.

P Edwards, 'Measuring Research Performance', presentation at Performance Management Association annual conference, London, July.

P Edwards, S Sen Gupta, C Tsai and M Ram, 'The Employment Relationship in Small Firms: an Emergent Research Program', Academy of Management annual conference, Atlanta, August.

- P Edwards, 'The Political Economy Perspective on MNCs', presentation to Professional Development Workshop, Academy of Management, Atlanta, August.
- P Edwards, 'Performance Measurement and the Management of Employees: Blinded by Logic?' presentation to performance management symposium, Academy of Management, Atlanta, August.
- P Edwards, 'Preparing Research Grant Applications: A Grant Holder's Perspective', British Academy of Management workshop, London, October.
- P Edwards, 'High Performance Models and SMEs', Advanced Institute of Management conference, Cardiff, October.
- P Edwards, S Sen Gupta and C Tsai, 'The Relevance of Business Networks: Contextualized Cases in Three Sectors', Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship annual conference, Cardiff, October.
- P Edwards, 'Employment Relations in SMEs in Europe', European Foundation workshop on Industrial Relations in Europe and Other Countries, Berlin, November.
- P Edwards, 'Workplace Regimes and the Governance of the Employment Relationship: Re-establishing the Connections in Liberal Market Economies', paper for Canadian Government Ministerial Roundtable, Ottawa, December, 21 pp.
- [T Edwards], P Marginson, P Edwards, [A Ferner and O Tregaskis], 'Corporate social responsibility in multinational companies', SASE 2006 Conference, Trier, June
- [T Edwards], P Marginson, P Edwards, [A Ferner and O Tregaskis], 'Corporate social responsibility in multinational companies', IREC 2006 Conference, Ljubljana
- [M Fichter] and G Meardi, 'The politics of globalisation in Europe', International Industrial Relations Association World Congress, Lima, September
- A Greene, 'Reflections on the Developing Activist's Network: Solidarity more real than imagined?', Industrial Relations in Europe Conference, Ljubljana, August
- M Hall, 'A boost for workplace democracy in Europe? The impact of recent EU Directives and national policy changes on employee representation in the workplace: the UK', European workshop on A boost for workplace democracy in Europe? Catholic University of Leuven, November
- [I Kessler] and L Dickens 'Dispute Resolution and the Modernisation of the Public Services in Britain: The Case of Local Government Pay Commission'. IIRA 14th World Congress, Lima, September
- [G Kirton], A Greene and D Dean, 'The Multi-dimensional Nature of Work in the 'Diversity Industry'', Industrial Relations in Europe Conference, Ljubljana, August
- [G Kirton], A Greene and D Dean, 'The Multi-dimensional Nature of Work in the 'Diversity Industry'', EURODIV Conference on 'Qualitative Diversity Research: Looking ahead', Leuven, September
- S Liff, 'Virtually Solved?', Technology and Gender Inequalities day conference, ESRC's Gender Equality Network contribution to ESRC Social Science Week 06.
- P Marginson, 'European MNCs: challenges of EU market integration and enlargement', International Conference on Human Resource Management in Multinational Companies, Montreal, September
- P Marginson, 'Transnational agreements in enterprises: the current state of play', Colloque sur les négociations collectives transnationales, Paris, March

- [S MacDonald] and S Liff, 'The Heart of the House' Space in the construction of organisational identities. *Managing Identities in Complex organisations - an international workshop*, Lund, May.
- [S MacDonald], D Dean and [B Sullivan-Taylor], 'Exploring the Emotional Landscape of Fieldwork', Joint Symposium on Current Developments in Ethnographic Research in the Social and Management Sciences, The University of Liverpool Management School,
- G Meardi, 'Multinationals in the New EU Member States and the Revitalisation of Trade Unions'. Conference on Trade Unions in Central eastern Europe and Russia, Hatfield, March
- G Meardi, P Marginson, [M Fichter, M Frybes, M Stanojevic and A Toth], 'The complexity of relocation and the diversity of union responses', IREC 2006 Conference, Ljubljana, September and Workshop on Eastwards Relocation of Production and Services in Europe, Oslo, November
- J Parker, 'Eyes on the Same Prize? The meaning of women's groups for union (revival) goals and strategies', *Industrial Relations in Europe Conference*, Ljubljana, September.
- [G Saridakis], S Sen Gupta, P Edwards and [D J Storey], 'Employment Tribunal Cases: The Impact of Enterprise Size on Incidence and Outcomes', *Employment Relations Unit annual conference*, Cardiff, September.
- S Sen Gupta, P Edwards, and C Tsai, 'The Meanings of Work in "Good" and "Bad" Jobs', *International Labour Process Conference*, London, April.
- S Sen Gupta, [G Saridakis], P Edwards, and [D J Storey], 'Employment Tribunal Cases: the Impact of Enterprise Size on Incidence and Outcomes', *Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship annual conference*, Cardiff, October.
- M Simms, "'They need to learn to be collective...': Interest formation in greenfield organising campaigns'. *BUIRA annual conference*, Galway, July
- M Simms, [J Holgate, J Perry and M Smith], 'International organising strategies', *Global Unions conference*, New York, February
- [O Tregaskis], P Edwards, [T Edwards, A Ferner] and P Marginson, 'Multinational Companies: Multi-level Control and the Role of the Corporate HR Function', *EGOS annual conference*, Bergen, July.
- C Tsai, 'Managing Human Resources in the High-Tech Companies', *European Academy of Management Annual Conference (EURAM)*, Oslo, May
- C Tsai, S Sen Gupta and P Edwards, 'Small Firm Workers in the New Economy: Perceptions of Work in Three Sectors', *BUIRA annual conference*, Galway, June.

Research/ practitioner seminar presentations

- J Arrowsmith, 'Age discrimination: key messages from recent research', *West Midlands Employment Relations Forum*, Birmingham, November.
- P Edwards, 'Developing IR and HR Research as a Field', seminar presentation, Keele University, March.
- P Edwards, 'Towards a Political Economy of the MNC', seminar presentation, Cass Business School, City University, London, May.
- P Edwards, 'Justice in the Workplace: Towards a New Approach', *Work Foundation seminar*, London, November.
- P Edwards, 'Workplace Relations and Productivity', *Canadian Government Ministerial Roundtable*, Ottawa, December.

P Edwards, 'Critical Realism and Industrial Relations', doctoral workshop, Université de Montréal, December.

G Meardi and P Marginson, 'Employment practices in US and German companies in central eastern Europe', FAFO Ost Forum, Oslo, November

Shorter publications

A Danieli, 'Examining the Business Case for the Employment of Disabled People', *IRRU Briefing*, no 13, 3-4

T Colling, 'Exploring 'Legal Mobilisation': Trade Union Action to Enforce Statutory Individual Employment Rights', *IRRU Briefing*, no 13, 8-9

P Edwards, S Sen Gupta, C Tsai and [M Ram], 'From Modern to Paternalistic: How Does Your Firm Type Affect Your Performance?' AIM Executive Briefing, 19 pp.

M Hall, 'Unions review EWCs in graphical sector', *European Works Councils Bulletin* 61 (January/February), 9-11

M Hall, 'Irish information and consultation Act finalised', *European Works Councils Bulletin* 63 (May/June), 13-16

M Hall, 'New statistics chart spread of EWCs', *European Works Councils Bulletin* 64 (July/August 2006), 4-6

M Hall, 'New EWC agreements reviewed', *European Works Councils Bulletin* 65 (September/October), 4-6

M Hall, 'EMCEF adopts coordination strategy for EWCs', *European Works Councils Bulletin* 65 (September/October), 15-16

M Hall, A Koukiadaki and D Adam, 'Survey highlights active employer responses to new employee consultation law', *IRRU Briefing*, no 13, 5-7

P Marginson, 'La réalité actuelle des accords transnationaux dans les entreprises', *Les Cahiers de la Fondation*, Paris, Europe et Société, 65-66

Warwick Papers in Industrial Relations and other working papers series

P Edwards, 'Industrial Relations and Critical Realism: IR's Tacit Contribution', *Warwick Papers in Industrial Relations*, No 80, Warwick Business School, 21pp

[T Edwards, O Tregaskis], P Edwards, [A Ferner] and P Marginson, 'Charting the Contours of Multinationals in Britain', Employment practices in Multinational Companies project, http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/wbs/projects/mncemployment/conference_papers/, 25pp

P Marginson, 'Between Europeanisation and regime competition: labour market regulation following EU enlargement', *Warwick Papers in Industrial Relations*, No. 79, Warwick Business School, 24pp

T Prosser, 'Is the 'new phase' of the European Social Dialogue the development of an autonomous and effective form of social dialogue?' *Warwick Papers in Industrial Relations*, No. 82 Warwick Business School, 23pp

IRRU/UK contributions to the European Industrial Relations Observatory (EIRO), European Working Conditions Observatory (EWCO) and European Restructuring Monitor (ERM) submitted during 2006

EIRO information updates

January 2006	Academics vote in favour of new university and college union (M Hall) Organisational responses to the employee consultation Regulations (M Hall)
February 2006	CAC issues first ruling in information and consultation case (M Hall) Voluntary approach to equal pay reviews is failing, says EOC (M Hall) Measuring up to equality – the TUC equality audit 2005 (G Kirton)
March 2006	Publisher required by law to disclose company data (M Hall) Anti-age discrimination regulations published (M Hall) Commission proposes measures to tackle gender pay gap (M Hall)
April 2006	Government criticised over occupational pension schemes (H Newell) Government to increase national minimum wage (M Hall) Strike over local government pension reform (H Newell) Further education to play key role in government's skills strategy (J Payne) Ruling highlights poor industrial relations at Asda (T Edwards)
May 2006	Government publishes employment relations strategy paper (M Hall) Peugeot announces closure of Coventry plant (J Arrowsmith) Research shows fall in union recognition agreements (J Arrowsmith)
June 2006	Vauxhall announces job losses at Ellesmere Port plant (J Batchelor) Concern over sale of BAE's stake in Airbus (T Edwards) Employer survey finds staff absence at record low (J Arrowsmith)
July 2006	Government proposes reform of national pension system (H Newell) Workplace survey indicates mixed impact of legislation on employer practice (P Marginson) Government launches consultation on extra holiday entitlement (M Carley) Unions and employers differ over conditions of temporary agency workers (J Arrowsmith)
August 2006	Employment relations in SMEs (P Edwards) Strike at Asda averted following deal on staff representation (M Carley) GMB pulls out of 'super union' merger talks (M Carley) Tribunal issues ruling on information and consultation requirements (M Hall)
September 2006	New Act gives extended rights to parental leave (M Hall)
October 2006	CBI survey highlights adverse impact of recent employment legislation (M Hall) Union confederation adopts new policy statement on Europe (M Hall) European Court finds UK in breach of working time Directive (M Carley)

November 2006	Survey reveals stress to be the biggest problem at work (M Carley) Employers and unions divided over stalemate in EU discussions on working time opt-out (M Hall) Surveys highlight growing problem of workplace bullying (J Arrowsmith)
December 2006	Research studies suggest employers need to do more about age discrimination (J Arrowsmith) Major skills review sets ambitious new targets (J Payne) Survey maps trends in variable pay (M Gray) Major union merger moves closer (M Hall)

EWCO information updates

May 2006	Survey explores age-related policies, practices and preferences (J Payne)
July 2006	Pregnancy discrimination in the workplace (J Payne)
September 2006	Factors influencing take-up of paternity leave (M Frize)
November 2006	Improvements in pay, working time and job security (J Arrowsmith)

ERM fact sheets

250 fact sheets on cases of restructuring in UK undertakings (S Gamwell/T Prosser)

UK contributions to comparative analytical reports

EIRO – Industrial relations in the print media sector (J Arrowsmith)

EIRO – Annual review for the UK 2005 (M Hall)

EIRO – Pay developments 2005 (J Arrowsmith)

EIRO – Working time developments 2005 (J Arrowsmith)

EIRO – Teleworking (J Parker)

Representativeness study – Telecommunications (M Simms)

Representativeness study – Agriculture (H Newell)

ERM – Legal framework (G Kirton)

Representativeness study – Railways (D Adam)

EIRO – Industrial relations in the public sector (S Bach)

ERM – Individual measures (M Simms)

EIRO – Gender and career development (H Newell)

ERM – Job creation measures (H Newell)

EWCO – Fact sheets on working conditions (H Newell)

EWCO – Place of work (A Broughton)

EWCO – Migrant workers (D Winchester)

ERM – Actors (G Kirton)

Representativeness study – Gas (M Frize)

Comparative analytical reports

EIRO – Employment relations in SMEs (P Edwards and M Ram)

EIRO – Pay developments 2005 (M Carley)

EIRO – Working time developments 2005 (M Carley)

EIRO – Gender and career development (H Newell)

Forthcoming publications

D Dean, ‘Performing industrial relations: the centrality of gender in regulation of work in theatre and television’, *Industrial Relations Journal*, 38

P Edwards, ‘Justice in the Workplace: Why It Is Important and Why a New Public Policy Initiative is Needed’, Work Foundation, <http://www.theworkfoundation.com/Assets/PDFs/justice1.pdf>

L Dickens, ‘The Road is Long. Thirty years of equality legislation in Britain’, *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 45

[G Kirton], A Greene and D Dean, ‘British Diversity Professionals as Change Agents - Tempered Radicals or Liberal Reformers?’, *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 18

[E Léonard, R Erne], P Marginson and [S Smismans], ‘New structures, forms and processes of governance in European industrial relations’, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

[S MacDonald] and S Liff, ‘Working for the Family’, *Human Resource Management Journal*, 17

M Simms, ‘Managed activism: two union organising campaigns in the not-for-profit sector’ *Industrial Relations Journal*, 38

Appendix D: Research Funding

New, ongoing and completed grants during 2006

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Mark Hall) for UK national centre of EIRO/EWCO/EMCC	€98,266	01/03/06 – 28/02/07
European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Mark Hall and [Andrea Broughton]) for comparative analysis of industrial relations, working conditions, restructuring	€118,704	01/03/06 – 28/02/07
European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Mark Hall) for UK national centre of European Industrial Relations Observatory	£40,500	1/03/05 – 28/02/06
European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Paul Marginson) for UK national centre of European Working Conditions Observatory	£13,152	1/04/05 – 31/03/06
European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Jim Arrowsmith) <i>Comparative Overview on Temporary Agency Work</i>	£6,328	09/09/05-08/02/06
Department of Trade and Industry (Mark Hall, Mike Terry and [John Purcell]) <i>Information and consultation of employees – longitudinal employer case studies</i>	£189,910	01/03/06 – 31/12/07
European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Jane Parker) for European Working Conditions post-test research (UK)	€23,160	01/04/06 – 31/12/06
Nuffield Foundation (Melanie Simms and [Jane Holgate]) <i>'An evaluation of recent developments in trade union organiser training'</i>	£11,756	01/09/06 – 31/12/07
University of Vienna / Austrian Ministry of Labour (Guglielmo Meardi) <i>'Market Efficiency and Employee Participation Practice'</i>	€18,300	01/09/06 - 28/02/09

Economic and Social Research Council Post-doctoral Research Fellowship (Jane Parker) <i>'Womens Groups in British Unions'</i>	£27,235	01/10/03 – 31/03/06
ESRC/EPSRC Advanced Institute of Management Research (Paul Edwards) <i>'Organizational Roots of Productivity'</i>	£389,636	01/02/04 – 30/09/07
European Science Foundation / ESRC (Paul Marginson and Jim Arrowsmith) <i>'Variable Pay and Collective Bargaining'</i>	£146,775	01/07/04 – 30/06/07
Economic and Social Research Council ([Anthony Ferner], Paul Marginson, Paul Edwards, [Tony Edwards] and [Olga Tregaskis]) <i>'Employment Practice of MNCs: a large-scale survey'</i>	£308,249	01/10/04 – 31/08/07
Gift Aid donation from Warwick Industrial Relations Ltd (see Appendix E)	£21,000	31/03/06

Appendix E

Warwick Industrial Relations Ltd

IRRU established Warwick Industrial Relations Ltd (WIRL) in 1994. The company is recognised and approved by the university authorities. Under its memorandum of association, WIRL's objects are:

- to enable the members of the company to become involved in legally-contracted joint ventures which promote the reputation and research activities of IRRU;
- to provide a framework for organising and developing the contract research undertaken by members of the company; and
- to generate resources to help finance the research activities of IRRU, while providing members of the company with opportunities to improve their earnings.

WIRL owns a 50% share of *European Works Councils Bulletin* and a 25% share of *European Journal of Industrial Relations*, and receives royalties from these sources as well as from the specialist report series published jointly with Industrial Relations Services. Where appropriate, the financial arrangements for IRRU members' participation in contract research projects are handled via the company.

Each financial year WIRL's end-of year surplus is donated under the Gift Aid scheme to the University of Warwick Foundation to support research within IRRU. To date, this support has taken two forms. The Hugh Clegg Memorial Fund is earmarked for supporting the Hugh Clegg PhD studentships periodically advertised by IRRU. The IRRU Research Fund supports IRRU's research activities more generally. At the end of March 2006, WIRL's annual Gift Aid donation amounted to £21,000