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May 21, 2019 13:00 BST

Economic rebound ushers in gradual recovery of trust in Europe

As citizens across the EU prepare to cast their vote in the European elections, the latest [Living and working in Europe](#) report from Eurofound looks at how work and life has changed in the EU since 2015. It shows that Europe continues to strive forward in terms of employment, income and prosperity and that this is gradually improving levels of trust. However, the lingering malaise of the financial crisis, unease over migration, and perceptions of inequality has dampened feelings of progress for many.

The last four years of the outgoing European Parliament and Commission have been marked by considerable challenge, particularly those related to the migrant crisis, growing populism and Brexit. Despite this, the emphasis on economic growth and generating employment has largely paid dividends, with employment reaching an all-time high in 2018 and unemployment dropping to the lowest rate recorded in the EU since Eurostat began its monthly records in January 2000.

The [Living and working in Europe](#) publication notes how wage and income inequalities are starting to contract, and the process of convergence – stalled by the Great Recession – is tentatively starting again. As a result, levels of trust in the EU institutions have been increasing since 2013, although they are still down on pre-crisis levels.

Despite these improvements, many Europeans still feel the insecurities created by the crisis. Unemployment remains high in a number of Member States, particularly those in the south of Europe, and over half the EU population worry about their income in old age. The gender employment gap has also stagnated at around 11.5%, and concerns remain around issues related to tensions between ethnic and religious groups, gender inequalities, and the accessibility and quality of public services.

[Living and working in Europe](#) is an important resource in that brings together the issues that Europe has faced in quality of life, employment and working conditions in recent years, the progress that has been made, and the principle challenges that remain. It also showcases the research that has been done in these areas and offers policy recommendations as to what can be done in the future.

Europe has rebounded from considerable challenges over the past five years and will need to continue to adapt to meet new ones created by demographic change, automation, and the need to deliver social dividends from economic growth. The new Parliament and Commission will have plenty to do. Eurofound, for its part, will continue to deliver the research needed to support policies that can further improve the life and work of people in Europe.

- Get the main points and download the report: [Living and working in Europe 2015-2018](#)
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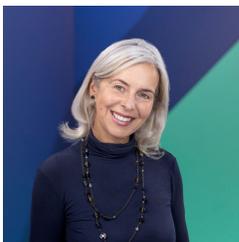
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