

## Editorial: Innovating Labour Law and Industrial Relations

Russia seems to be at a crossroad. Mavrin and Rudokvas offer an overview of the present industrial relations situation, covering the discussion which is currently carried out in the perspective of enacting a new labour code. It seems that many factors are making this job quite difficult, including the selection of representative social parties as well as the implementation of a federalist scheme which would recognize considerable freedom to the different units constituting the Russian Federation. The reader will find a fresh and reliable coverage of a key-area of the world going through a complex evolution process.

Apparently, Japan is discussing very similar issues. Hiroya Nakakubo analyses the role of the employment contract taking into account the almost universal tendency towards individualisation. Also the Japanese labour legislation seems to be, in the author's view, quite obsolete. Nakakubo claims that a deep revision of labour law is necessary, although the end of this reform is not yet in sight. For different reasons, Russia and Japan do not offer clear answers to the challenges posed by the beginning of the new century.

The European scenario is still affected by a strong determination to fight long term unemployment. It seems that all innovations introduced in labour law in recent times aim at making job creation the top priority. This trend is confirmed by both Maria Josefine Meneses Leitao (discussing the Portuguese case from the angle of collective bargaining) and Tiziano Treu in his key-note address which concluded the Oslo Congress of the International Industrial Relations Association. Social dialogue remains a pillar of a rigorous employment-oriented strategy but labour law should look for more innovative techniques. *Soft laws*, such as the European Employment Strategy guidelines, are a good example of innovative arrangements. In every corner of the world labour law is under a deep revision process: *IJCLIR* will continue to look for good practices to be offered at the attention of scholars and policy makers.

Europe looks at the future, not forgetting the past, as the article of Achim Seifert on compensation policy for forced labour demonstrates.

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