

Editors' Foreword

This final issue of Volume 11 of *The International Journal* returns the spotlight to the European forum, in anticipation of the inter-governmental conference which is due to begin during 1996.

Thus, in the ARTICLES section, Jeff Kenner offers some thoughts on an aspect of legislative technique which has recently come to the forefront of European debate — the use of so-called “soft law” mechanisms to achieve particular objectives in relation to various aspects of social policy and regulation. This consideration picks up on some of the problems posed by varying views on the notion of “subsidiarity” embodied in the Treaty on European Union, and provides a number of examples which will be familiar to those who follow the kinds of instruments which have regularly made up the DOCUMENTATION section of *The International Journal* in recent years.

This wide-ranging treatment of European Union legislative policy in the social arena is set against the last of a series of ARTICLES contributed to Volume 11 of *The International Journal* from the Nordic countries, providing an opportunity to appreciate the light in which European Union initiatives are viewed at a time of enlargement to include the new Member States of Finland and Sweden, and while EEA membership continues to provide a common thread for Iceland and Norway. On this occasion, Stein Evju offers some thoughts on “European Labour Law”, seen from a Norwegian perspective.

The material presented in the DOCUMENTATION AND COMMENT section of this issue bears out the scope of activity at the level of the European Communities in the wake of the “social policy” White Paper and in anticipation of substantial controversy expected to be aroused during the forthcoming inter-governmental conference over the appropriate direction for social policy. Of particular interest is the construction of the European Parliament’s Resolution on “a coherent employment strategy for the European Union”, while a number of other items bear out well some of the observations made by Jeff Kenner in his ARTICLE on “soft law” legislative techniques.

This collection of source documentation is rounded off with the most recent report (for 1994) on the application of Community Law — another matter of direct concern for those facing the daunting challenges of the 1996 inter-governmental conference as they relate to developing employment and social policy for the European Union.

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