

Editorial

This editorial has two purposes: to introduce myself as the Journal's new Editor-in-Chief, and to introduce this special double issue on compliance and enforcement.

I would like to thank Professors Guy Davidov and Pnina Alon-Shenker for their careful stewardship of the Journal over the past five or so years. During this time, the Journal has gone from strength to strength, and is now widely recognized around the world as the home of cutting-edge articles on a range of topics of current interest in international and comparative labour law and industrial relations. Theirs are big shoes to fill. I am delighted that they have both agreed to remain involved with the Journal as members of the International Advisory Board.

My ambition for the Journal is to continue along the trajectory Guy and Pnina have set, providing a place to publish outstanding individual contributions submitted in open competition, and offering a home for special issues of carefully curated papers on a particular theme, perhaps stemming from a conference or workshop. I am particularly keen to receive submissions or special issue proposals from scholars working in regions and countries less frequently represented in the pages of the Journal hitherto, recognizing the fact that – despite significant differences between legal systems and contexts – the challenges of securing decent working conditions and good industrial relations are the same the world over. We all have much to learn from one another, wherever we may be.

I am pleased to be working with the Journal's long-serving Managing Editors, William Bromwich and Olga Rymkevich, who ensure the smooth running of the Journal's production process, Suzanne Leppen, our Editor at Kluwer, the Scientific Directors (Alan Neal, Tiziano Treu and Manfred Weiss) and the International Advisory Board. It is a great honour to have taken on the Editorship and I am looking forward to the challenges ahead.

This edition of the Journal, which combines issues 2 and 3 of 2021, is a special issue concerned with questions of compliance with, and enforcement of, labour law. It stems from a conference organized by Professor Guy Davidov at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem where most of the papers in this issue were presented. I am excited to be able to publish the collected thoughts of a number of leading scholars on compliance and enforcement, and although each article is a free-standing contribution, read together they illuminate many different facets of these important but often neglected topics.

The contributions analyse a range of different approaches to enforcing labour law, examining public enforcement mechanisms such as labour inspectorates or the use of the criminal law, and private enforcement through complaints and litigation brought by working people themselves. They address core questions of how employers behave – for example, how we might understand the operation of deterrence in practice – and the impact of non-compliance on groups of working people already disadvantaged by precarious employment arrangements and low pay. As several of the authors point out, it is all very well having interesting ideas about the content of labour rights, but this is of no use to ordinary working people if those rights are disregarded. The authors have taken up the challenge of exploring questions of compliance and enforcement, and I hope this special issue will inspire many other members of the scholarly community to follow suit.

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