



## Call for Abstracts

The Third Conference of the *Regulating for Decent Work* Network

Organized by *International Labour Office* (ILO)

In collaboration with

The University of Amsterdam *Institute for Advanced Labour Studies* (AIAS),  
The University of Melbourne *Centre for Employment and Labour Relations Law*  
(CELRL),

The University of Manchester's *Fairness at Work* Research Centre (FaWRC)

The University of Duisburg-Essen *Institut Arbeit und Qualifikation* (IAQ)

### ***Regulating for Equitable and Job-Rich Growth***

**International Labour Office**

**Geneva, Switzerland**

**3-5 July 2013**

The global financial crisis continues to generate spiralling unemployment, precarious work, inequality, and pressure on collective bargaining, threatening economic and social stability in many parts of the world. Unease about the austerity agenda is accompanied by a growing recognition that the post-crisis world should not return to "business as usual." Rather, more effective and balanced models should be adopted, which would integrate employment creation in growth policies and meet equally important objectives: equity, security, job quality. While emerging and developing economies have escaped the brunt of the recession, the debate continues on how to extend labour market institutions into the informal economy, with a focus on particularly vulnerable groups, such as domestic workers. The influence of multinational enterprises in these countries, meanwhile, sustains an ongoing reflection on the role of non-state actors in regulating labour markets. At the global level, a striking feature of recent policy discourses is the use of legal indices to evaluate and compare labour law regimes. These indices are increasingly relied on both to underpin policy guidance and to justify legal reform.

The 2013 RDW Conference will centre on the role of labour market regulation when job creation is the paramount objective. Papers are invited to address labour market regulation's ideal post-crisis form, with a special focus on four thematic issues: (a) Comparing and evaluating labour regulation systems; (b) regulating informal work; (c) industrial and employment relations for inclusive growth; (d) new patterns of segmentation and new challenges for promoting inclusive labour markets.

The Third RDW Conference will be held in the International Labour Office, Geneva, from 3-5 July 2013. The Conference will be co-hosted by the University of

Amsterdam's *Institute for Advanced Labour Studies* (AIAS), the University of Melbourne's *Centre for Employment and Labour Relations Law* (CELRL), the University of Manchester's *Fairness at Work Research Centre* (FaWRC), and the University of Duisburg-Essen's *Institut Arbeit und Qualifikation* (IAQ). Researchers from all regions are welcome. In past years, the Conference has attracted researchers from a range of fields that include law, economics, industrial relations, development studies and geography.

## **Deadlines**

Abstract submission (RDW Fellowship applicants)	31 December 2012
Abstract submission (general)	31 January 2013
Communicating acceptance (fellowship applicants)	28 February 2013
Communicating acceptance (general)	31 March 2013
Full paper submission	31 May 2013

## **Conference tracks**

### **Track 1      Comparing and evaluating labour regulation systems: theory, methodology and new evidence**

Coordinators: Sandrine Cazes, Sangheon Lee, Deirdre McCann

The quantification and comparison of labour regulation is both a central innovation of contemporary labour regulation research, and an increasingly prominent driver of policy guidance. In the research literature, legal indices have been designed to assess the intensity and convergence of labour law regimes, measure the effectiveness of labour law systems, and extend the empirical analysis of regulatory institutions to a wider range of countries and regulatory sub-fields. Parallel research, meanwhile, is drawing on a diversifying range of empirical strategies to assess the effectiveness of regulatory systems (e.g. to evaluate enforcement mechanisms, measure legal awareness, assess formalisation strategies etc.)

Recent developments in the policy sphere suggest a broadening interest in measuring the capacity of labour law systems to advance social objectives, including 'worker protection.' Yet, it is increasingly recognized that the relationship between labour regulation indicators and labour market performance is far from clear, and often complicated by 'regulatory indeterminacy.' In response, recent scholarly work has contended that any viable attempt to measure worker protection must account for three dimensions of labour regulation: (a) substantive requirements; (b) scope of application; and (c) *de facto* application, or 'legal observance.'

This track invites papers which offer new insights and findings on the measurement or evaluation of legal regulation and its labour market impacts. Both theoretical and empirical papers are welcome.

### **Track 2      Regulating informal work**

Co-ordinators: Colin Fenwick, John Howe

The vast majority of the workers in the world are working at or beyond the margins of formal regulation. Workers in many cases are excluded from the formal scope of employment and labour laws, either because they work in small enterprises that are exempted from application of the law, or because they are engaged in particular forms of work that are excluded, such as domestic work. Even when formally covered by employment and labour laws, many workers can be effectively rendered informal because of the weaknesses of labour administration and inspection systems. In some societies, the capacity to exercise rights under labour law may depend on class, cultural norms, family structures, and religion. At the same time, changes in the ways that workers are contractually engaged continue to lead to greater labour market segmentation, which is associated in turn with more workers being engaged in insecure work and, in some cases, informality.

As a result of these factors, labour regulation is potentially ineffective or irrelevant in relation to workers who are most in need of its protection. The consequences are both wide-ranging and harmful, and include low per capita income, and high rates of poverty. Yet the focus of much debate about labour regulation is based on the assumption that it enjoys broad coverage, and is overly protective. Moreover, the debate is often confined to traditional labour rights such as collective bargaining and the right to join trade unions, excluding consideration of other forms of social protection for workers, including social security measures and employment policies.

Papers for this track will address one or more of the following questions: What instruments and methods are states using to expand the effective scope of formal labour regulation, and to what effect? What action are states taking to link regulation of informal work to broader socio-economic and developmental concerns and goals? What regulatory modes and tools are being used by non-state actors to address the adverse effects of informality on workers and their communities, including novel social protection initiatives, and to what effect? What evidence is available of effective innovative labour regulation, whether by states, non-state actors, or combinations of actors?

### **Track 3          Industrial and employment relations for inclusive growth**

Coordinators : Kea Tijdens, Susan Hayter, Chang-Hee Lee

This track addresses the role of the industrial relations institutions in the setting of wages, working conditions and terms of employment in a globalized world. Some hold that these institutions merely represent the interests of privileged insiders. Membership of employers' organisations and trade unions has been declining in many countries, and collective bargaining seems to be losing ground in some.

There is considerable evidence on the positive impact of these institutions on the equitable distribution of wages as well as on job security. Will the erosion of these

institutions lead to less equitable job growth and increased wage inequality, or can counter-tendencies be observed? Has the integration and deregulation of labour markets and deterioration of working conditions of 'outsiders' turned terms and conditions of employment in collective agreements (such as a decent wage, permanent contract and social insurance) into exclusive privileges? What role can industrial and employment relations institutions play in promoting inclusive and equitable employment? What is the role of minimum wage-setting institutions in this respect?

This track invites papers addressing the global and the national challenges for wage policy, industrial relations and social dialogue. Papers which offer new insights and empirical findings on the impact of globalisation on local processes of wage setting as well as the role of industrial relations actors and social dialogue in a cross-country comparison are particularly welcome.

#### **Track 4      New patterns of segmentation and new challenges for promoting inclusive labour markets**

Coordinators : Gerhard Bosch, Jill Rubery

This track calls for papers that explore the impact of the crisis and post crisis policies on the segmentation of the labour market and/or investigate new challenges for promoting inclusive rather than exclusive labour markets.

The crisis has increased labour market segmentation by reducing access to stable employment and by swelling the numbers of both the unemployed but also of those employed in new forms of less protected employment. A first key issue is thus to map the impact of these changes particularly for vulnerable groups by age, gender, ethnicity, migrant status, education and health and disability. Here papers may also address the impact of different forms of labour market regulation and policy instruments (for example training, wage subsidy, tax and benefit, equality of opportunity policies) on moderating or even intensifying problems of labour market segmentation and inequality. A second key issue is to explore the impact of the crisis on the effectiveness of current forms of protection for those who remain in employment. They can be expected to face greater work pressures and feel less able to exercise their rights to fair treatment and non-discrimination. A third key issue is to consider how post crisis policies, particularly the austerity policies adopted in the Eurozone and elsewhere, may be promoting apparently greater equality through levelling down employment standards. A key example is the emphasis on reducing protection and pay for public sector workers, rather than on raising standards for the low income or vulnerable groups. These policies raise the prospect of increasing polarization in labour markets with more limited middle level protected jobs.

Papers for this track are particular welcome, which address the changing patterns of segmentation and polarization as outcomes of both the crisis and the policy response to the crisis and the implications of these developments for social cohesion and inclusive labour markets.

## Submission of abstracts

The organizing committee invites you to submit abstracts for the 2013 RDW Conference:

- Abstracts should be in English.
- Abstracts must have a maximum of 400 words including references and appendices.
- Abstracts can be submitted on the conference website, <http://rdw.law.unimelb.edu.au/> (from 1 October 2012).
- The author(s) should indicate their preferred Conference track.
- Deadline for abstract submission (general): 31 January 2013.
  - Deadline for abstract submission (RDW fellowship applicants): 31 Dec 2012

The abstracts will be subject to a competitive review process. Guidelines for final papers will be communicated to the authors of selected abstracts. It is expected that an edited volume will be produced, drawn from selected conference papers.

## Proposals for special sessions

- Special Sessions devoted to existing research projects or specific themes are encouraged. The Special Sessions should be international in content. They will be 90 minutes in length and involve at least three presenters, a chair, and a discussant if preferred. Session abstracts should be in English.
- Session abstracts must have a maximum of 400 words including references and appendices.
- Session abstracts can be submitted on the conference website <http://rdw.law.unimelb.edu.au/> (from 1 October 2012).
- Session abstracts should describe the session as a whole, including the names and affiliations of the three presenters, the chair and the discussant, if applicable. It is not necessary to identify a Conference track.
- Session abstract submission deadline: 31 January 2013.

## Fees and expenses

There will be no fee for conference participants. Travel costs must be met from participants' own resources, although limited funds will be available for authors of selected papers who are based in developing countries (see "RDW Fellowships" below). Interest in these funds should be indicated in the abstract proposal.

## RDW Fellowships

A unique aspect of the RDW Conference is the commitment to creating an environment for global research dialogue, especially between industrialized and developing countries. In this respect, a Fellowship fund has been established to support researchers from developing countries who may otherwise be prevented

from attending. Interested researchers are strongly encouraged to submit their abstracts no later than 31 December 2012 (please note that this deadline for submission is one month earlier than the general deadline). Successful applicants will receive Fellowship grants of an amount determined by the estimated cost of travel and other expenses.

## **Conference Organizing Committee**

### ***Committee coordinators***

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## **Further information**

Further details will be available at the RDW website:

<http://rdw.law.unimelb.edu.au>

For any queries, please contact the Conference Organizing Committee at [rdw@ilo.org](mailto:rdw@ilo.org)