

Editorial

This 2009-4 number of the *South-East Europe Review for Labour and Social Affairs (SEER)* continues to deal with the repercussions of the economic crisis on south-east European countries. Three thematic articles cover issues that are relevant for the whole region and point to the main pillars for dealing with the effects of the crisis: economic performance; employment protection; and the role of the banks.

Meanwhile, a number of country-specific articles deal with Serbia, Turkey and Romania. Two of these articles touch upon issues of social justice and social rights – inevitably a common thread for this journal and one that continues to present a range of concerns for trade unions and workers right across the continent, both in terms of the crisis and more generally.

Firstly, however, we commence the thematic topic of this issue with a comparative overview by Qerim Qerimi and Bruno Sergi on the macroeconomic performance of western Balkan countries prior to and during the crisis. The authors analyse the transformation process which is at work in these economies and societies in the context of the global financial crisis, and put this into the perspective of EU accession in the post-Lisbon era.

Jean-Marc Figuet and Ion Lapteacru analyse the influence of market power and the efficiency of banking institutions in the transmission of monetary policy in central and eastern European countries. Their results validate the hypothesis according to which banks in central and east European countries which have strong market power and better efficiency in the area of cost management can reduce the impact of monetary policy on their lending activity.

Thirdly, the article by Miroc Tonin presents updated indicators concerning employment protection legislation for several central and eastern European countries according to the methodology of the OECD. The author's aim is to provide hard evidence for the debate regarding the interface between employment protection legislation and labour markets and welfare.

Nergis Mütevellioglu and Rabia Bato Cizel interpret the advance of social rights in terms of being the major route in which labour can be 'decommodified'. Accordingly, the elimination of those social rights may be conceptualised as the enhancement of the dependency of labour on the market (thereafter leading to its recommodification). The purpose of their article is to examine the quantifiable social effects of the deepening deterioration of social rights in Turkey from the perspective of the right to work in healthy and safe conditions.

The article by Liviu Apostoiu examines in brief the response of trade unions to the financial crisis and to the controversial austerity measures imposed by the International Monetary Fund on Romania, from the viewpoint of the Cartel Alfa trade union. He also looks at the perspectives and the role of social dialogue in managing the crisis and considers proposals for overcoming the detrimental social consequences.

Zarko Obradović looks at the state of play on social justice during the transformation process and the crisis in Serbia from a normative point of view. He goes on to develop

conclusions and proposals for concrete social policy practices which advance the concept of social justice.

Marija Obradović delivers a historical analysis of the 2002 strategy for privatisation in Serbia that has paved the way for the economic transformation of the country in the last, turbulent decade. The review is based on documents held by the Agency of Privatisation of the Republic of Serbia.

Finally, Nataša Bogavac-Cvetković and Bojan Ilić examine crisis strategies in Serbia from point of view of market competitiveness of enterprises.

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