

Editorial

The current number (2007-4) of the *South-East Europe Review for Labour and Social Affairs (SEER)* addresses two major issues: regional development; and labour relations.

As is well-known, small nation states with correspondingly-sized territories and economies are a characteristic of south-east Europe, representing very different phases of the nation-building process. In this issue we take a look at two countries that are experiencing turbulent times, Serbia and Moldova.

As regards Serbia, Edita Kastratović identifies the key economic and social factors in identifying a balanced regional development for Serbia while also examining relevant EU policies. Next, Vladimir Marinković looks at the case of human resources in Serbia and delivers a full-scale analysis of labour market developments in Serbia during the transition process, including patterns of economic activity and educational attainment.

The second region that is discussed in these pages of the *SEER* is the hotly-disputed and unique case of Transnistria, a region that has unilaterally declared independence within the sovereign country of Moldova. Two articles represent different opinions, showing facts and opinions in open discussion. The article by Mihály Borsi, originally published in the monthly newsletter of the Budapest-based ICEG European Research Center, focuses on the status and economy of the unrecognised but *de facto* independent region, putting it also into the perspective of international political attention. Angela and Igor Munteanu examine the disputed region from a more historical perspective, going back to Soviet times and highlighting the strategic interests of Russia behind the conflict and which are also of key importance in understanding the unique economic fundamentals of this unsettled region.

Our second focus topic in this edition is the development of labour relations in the broader region. Arjan Vliegthart gives an analysis of the development of employee representation on post-socialist supervisory boards, drawn from the example of the twenty-year history of the Hungarian corporate governance system. Whether the move from a more German-inspired Rhineland model of corporate governance towards a more Anglo Saxon-oriented model could be seen as a general trend in the region remains as yet to be seen.

The article by Romana Careja – ‘Are trade unions effective accounting actors?’ – builds on an analysis of union-government relations in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovak Republic between 1990 and 2004, using a combination of document analysis (reports and union documents) and a secondary analysis of the specialist literature.

Banu Uçkan examines trade union rights in Turkey from the perspective of EU integration, giving a detailed overview and analysis of the Turkish industrial relations system and its latest developments.

In the rest of this edition, we give space to several other topics that are related to the economic and social development of south-east Europe.

Ivaylo Mihaylov and Diana Velitchkova analyse the status and prospects of the Bulgarian banking system drawing on the background and conditions of a united European market.

Wolfgang Tiede and Sabina Krispenz provide an overview of the first draft of the Moldovan Law on public-private partnerships and put this into international comparison.

Finally we have a book review by Jörg Jurkeit on ‘Bruno S. Sergi and Qerim R. Qerimi (2007): The Political Economy of South Eastern Europe from 1990 to the Present’.

Bela Galgoczi
Calvin Allen

April 2008