

INTRODUCTION

This issue of the Review looks at gender equality in social security schemes, selected aspects of social dialogue, and the impact of the Asian financial crisis on job stability.

Based on an extensive survey of rulings by the European Court of Justice, the opening article, by *Ingeborg Heide*, looks at the latest developments in the application of European Community law in the field of social security. While highlighting the Court's crucial role in determining how the principles of equal pay and equal treatment are transposed and enforced under national equality law in this complex field, the article shows how judicial interpretation of Community instruments is shaping the general direction of change for the European Union as a whole. Indeed, in delivering its "preliminary rulings", the European Court of Justice has not confined itself to a course of "judicial self-restraint". Rather, it actively contributes to the promotion of social rights.

The second article, by *Tayo Fashoyin*, treats social dialogue as a dynamic and expanding concept, elaborating on its content, form, role and value for social policy-making in the context of globalization. The result is a broadening of the traditional conceptual framework for social dialogue, notably the integration of "new" actors from civil society and non-governmental organizations. Drawing on the recent experience of selected developing countries and one transition country, the author shows how they have used viable, institutionalized mechanisms for social dialogue to achieve social peace, labour market adjustment and socio-economic development goals.

Although the economies of East Asia were generally quick to bounce back from the financial crisis of the late 1990s,¹ the third article, by *Joonmo Cho* and *Jaeho Keum*, shows that the crisis left deep scars on the labour market of the Republic of Korea – one of the countries most seriously affected by the crisis. Here, the sharp deterioration of job stability highlighted the need for durable social protection measures, particularly for vulnerable groups such as women and older workers. To put

¹ The Republic of Korea, for example, recorded GDP growth of 11 per cent by 1999.

their findings into comparative perspective, the authors also examine the destabilizing impact of the crisis on the Korean labour market in the light of concomitant trends in job stability in the United States.

Lastly, this issue's "Books" section features reviews of two major publications, respectively concerned with the history and future of international labour standards. There follow shorter reviews of volumes on how human capital policies can tackle inequality in the United States; democratic participation at work; workplace justice without unions; paradoxical attitudes towards unions, respectively in Canada and the United States; the gender health gap in the European workplace; and a guide to the legal protection of "whistleblowing" corporate employees in the United States. Recent ILO publications are also briefly reviewed.