



LABOUR LAW SEMINAR

Post-communism and the Regulation of Industrial Relations in an Enlarged European Union

Ten post-communist Eastern European countries have now become members of the enlarged European Union and in so doing have transformed the political, social and economic map of Europe. One of the key tests of democratic transformation in post-communist countries has been the creation of free and independent trade unions with rights to collective bargaining. Academic orthodoxy, until recently, has been that a general rejection of collectivism by workers in post-communist states and 'labour quiescence' were direct legacies of the communist era. However, with European enlargement a new framework of labour rights and regulation has been instituted in Eastern Europe. This paper draws on survey data from the ex-Soviet Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to explore how far attitudes may be changing among both employers and employees towards issues of labour representation that would facilitate the emergence of 'social dialogue' at workplace level and the implementation of labour rights in line with broader European norms.

Charles Woolfson is Professor of Labour Studies in the School of Law at the University of Glasgow. During 2004-2007 he has been on extended leave of absence as European Commission-appointed 'Marie Curie Chair' based at the University of Latvia. He has lived in the Baltic States for the last six years, conducting an ongoing programme of comparative research on issues of industrial relations, working environment and Corporate Social Responsibility in post-communist societies.

DATE: Friday 3rd August 2007
TIME: 1:00 pm
PLACE: Room 920 (Ninth Floor) - Melbourne Law School
RSVP: Jessica Cotton
Tel: (03) 8344 8924
Email: jcotton@unimelb.edu.au

A light lunch will be served