

Emerging Patterns of Work and Turkish Labour Market Challenges under Globalization

Readings on Labour and Employment Relations

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Roger Blanpain

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Foreword

This book is the joint outcome of various academics from several Turkish institutions of higher learning. In designing its contents, the editors have considered to include chapters dealing with new dimensions and challenges brought about by the process of globalization with emphasis on their implications for Turkey. It was born out of the editors' belief that the wide-ranging global trends, coupled with the application of neo-liberal policies, required new insights and approaches to the study of the problems of the Turkish labour market and employment relations. The book's contents are comprised of original reports or academic papers containing up-to-date information and analysis to be presented to a wider audience in the form of a book of readings. This work does not lay claim to being a basic textbook or an exhaustive coverage of its themes. While global or national specificities are of interest in their own right, the editors have chosen up each contribution by considering its potential to convey Turkey's problems as well as to cross boundaries of various themes in order to introduce new insights and meanings for other contexts.

The book aims to address the research needs of students of labour economics or employment relations in universities as well as the interests of human resource management specialists, employer associations' and labour unions' research staff. Due to various external and internal factors affecting Turkish labour adversely in recent decades, another objective of the book is to create a renewed interest in the subject matter.

About This Book

Most conventional books on labour and employment relations seem to miss the discussion of current issues of the Turkish labour market and the governance of work in Turkey from the perspective of the global economy. This book recognizes the need to explore the integration of Turkey's system of labour and employment relations through transnational connections which have reached levels that can no longer be restricted to national boundaries. Being the joint outcome of contributions from Turkish academics, this book considers the new dimensions and challenges caused by the process of globalization brought to bear upon the various dimensions of the Turkish labour market.

Social policy implications associated with globalization suggest that the benefits of free international trade have not yet been diffused to workers. Although globalization has been fuelled by deregulation in the movement of capital, labour has remained far less mobile,¹ perhaps more so in the case of Turkey than many other countries, particularly those that have become full members of the EU. In order for globalization to be sustainable, workers too must benefit from the changes in the global economy. Research is needed on ways to raise the floor on working conditions for many workers.

The book will draw on five major tracks, each track representing a certain theme involving recent issues of labour and employment relations in Turkey. The tracks are comprised of original reports or academic papers which contain information considered worthwhile to present to a wider audience in the form of a book of readings. Although the chapters have been completed at different dates, they are all of recent origin, including revisions where developments have had a substantial impact on the context, with a final updating before May 2013.

The tracks start from themes of a global, macro nature, proceeding to meso and then to micro topics, to those of a more specific and narrower scope. Track I aims to address the impact of trends in global labour mobility on Turkey's labour market with some emphasis on the impact of multinational corporations' research and development activities on skills and labour costs. Track II explores problems of education inequalities, skills development and the role of technology in the improvement of the Turkish Labour market. The focus of Track III is on two more specific areas of individual labour law and practice in Turkey, namely, first, the integration of flexicurity measures into

the 2003 Labour Act of Turkey with its associated implications for the proposed severance pay fund as a flexicurity measure, and second, the long-standing and controversial issue of subcontracted Labour with emphasis on its implications for the shipbuilding industry of Turkey. Important issues which deserve special attention for labour unionism and collective bargaining, particularly from the perspective of Turkey's relations with the International Labour Organization and the European Union, are addressed in Track IV. Finally, in an attempt to investigate areas of micro interest, Track V deals with female employment and gender-based discrimination, as well as implications of the growing awareness of 'mobbing' as a destructive workplace practice in Turkish organizations, with its behavioural and legal implications.

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