Preface

As time goes by … it was in summer 2014 when the publisher discussed with us the idea of an international commentary on European labour law. This follows a tradition in continental systems, especially in Germany, where commentators all over the country analyse statutes, even those of minor importance. Therefore, the German publishing house Nomos took the initiative to commence this project, given that there are still relatively few commentaries on these important norms at international level.

We discussed the concept and we were quickly convinced that a commentary from a European perspective could provide additional value for any legal practitioner, as well as for legal scholars. The commentary should provide information in order to grant a specific European view, taking into account current legal debates with an EU law context. After a short period of discussion, we concluded that this book should not only provide observations on the EU legal framework. Instead, we wanted to include also international and regional labour law: specifically, the International Labour Organisation and the Council of Europe. This reflects our conviction that it is not sufficient to consider only EU legal instruments, notwithstanding their important status in many of our jurisdictions. By adopting a wider perspective, we can find both old and new tools that enrich our interpretation of domestic labour law. Moreover, looking beyond the EU provides us with external benchmarks against which to evaluate the sufficiency of current EU labour law.

This was a considerable challenge, given that there exists a large number of legal instruments and we had to engage many authors from different countries (which also means from different legal backgrounds). Understandably, it took some time to coordinate the work of all colleagues, but one year later the whole team was assembled. Over the next two years, the authors, editors, and publishers worked together closely in order to produce one of the largest existing commentaries on labour law.

Today, the reader holds a book in his or her hands that we hope will be helpful both for using the law in practice and for the academic study of law.

As editors, we are very grateful to the authors for their generous collaboration and patience. We are exceptionally thankful to the publishers for their willingness to undertake such an ambitious project and to persevere with this endeavour over several years. In particular, we owe a major debt of gratitude to Matthias Knopik and his colleagues for their constantly excellent support.

We have endeavoured to produce a high-quality manuscript, but we are conscious that given the large scale of this project, combined with the multitude of contributors, there is always scope for improvement. With a view to the enhancement of future editions of this text, the authors and editors welcome any feedback, which can be sent to olaf.deinert@jura.uni-goettingen.de.

Cassino, Dublin, Göttingen and Paris, June 2018

Edoardo Ales
Mark Bell
Olaf Deinert
Sophie Robin-Olivier
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