



all praised Labour Productivity, Investment in Human Capital and Youth Employment: Comparative Developments and Global Responses (Bulletin of Comparative Labour Relations):

Unemployment levels are on the rise nearly everywhere, and the rate is particularly high among young people. If this trend is not reversed, the potential long-term economic and social damage is incalculable. For this reason a particular urgency attended an international conference on the subject held in March 2009 at the Marco Biagi Foundation in Modena, Italy, in the course of which specialists in labour law, human resources management, labour economics, sociology, education, and statistics met to present and compare research. This issue of the Bulletin of Comparative Labour Relations includes a selection of the papers presented at that conference. Although the selected essays present findings on specific issues in particular countries, the general applicability at the global level is evident. Assessing measures taken to deal with youth unemployment in thirteen countries (Italy, Spain, Russia, Sweden, Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Israel, Nigeria, the United States, China, and Singapore), twenty-five leading authorities describe and analyse such aspects of the problem as the following: vocational education and training; quality of employment as well as quantity; links between educational institutions and local, national and international enterprises; consultation and co-operation between employers' associations and trade unions; job security vs. employment security; funding for postgraduate programmes, internships, and on-the-job vocational training; career development for future managers; safeguards for workers in a framework of flexibility; labour market pressure from unskilled immigrant workers; 'earn-as-you-learn' schemes; work in the informal economy; and the rationale behind the phasing out of passive labour market measures for school leavers such as unemployment benefit. Admirably fulfilling the need for a critical analysis of today's increasing rate of youth unemployment with a comparative and interdisciplinary approach - and highlighting in particular the growing mismatch between the expectations of graduates and what the labour market is actually able to deliver - the research papers in this volume provide invaluable indicators for labour lawyers, educators, and policymakers seeking to address this issue in their specific regional and national contexts.