

EALCJ

*The European
Association
of
Labour Court
Judges*

Newsletter

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ANNUAL CONGRESS – OSLO – 29th & 30th JUNE 2007 **The Role of Collective Agreements in the development of Employee Protection**

With the assistance of the Norwegian Labour Court we are holding this year's Congress in Oslo, capital of the "Land of the Midnight Sun". What better time to be in Oslo than the end of June, just after their famous mid-summer festival?

The Congress will take place in the magnificent setting of the former **Oslo Military Academy**. Lunch will be served there on Friday and Saturday with our formal dinner at **Bjørnsgard**, the excellent restaurant of the national collection of ancient buildings transported from all over Norway.

The aim is to look at the way in which different EU and EEA countries use Collective Agreements to implement and develop employment protection, to see how we can learn from other countries and to see how EU Directives are implemented.

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Conference Hotel will be **Karl Johan Hotel** (below) in Karl Johans Gate, between the Parliament Building and the Royal Palace. Provisional bookings have been made and the price will be NOK915 (about €108) per night. To book phone +47 23 16 17 00 or e-mail - bookingansvarlig@karljohan.norlandi.no. and please quote **EALCJ** to obtain the special rate.



The **Norwegian Ministry of Labour & Social Inclusion** has kindly agreed to finance the Conference venue and two lunches together with -

Friday evening dinner at Bjørnsgard. This is a famous collection of ancient vernacular buildings collected from all over Norway. It is 20 minutes from Oslo and has an excellent restaurant and a beautiful setting.

A tour of the **Royal Palace** and on Saturday afternoon followed by sightseeing at the fjord.

The EALCJ have also arranged some other **social events**. On

Thursday evening there will be dinner for those who are able to attend at Restaurant Old City Hall, which, as the name suggests, is in the ancient City Hall. On Saturday evening there will be dinner at the Nobel Peace Centre.

There will be a Conference fee of €300.

Because Norway is not a member of the EU there will be no European Commission Funding for this Congress. This means that travel, accommodation and subsistence (including social events) will be at the delegates' own expense. We do, however, hope that the EALCJ will be able to provide some financial assistance in individual cases.

We feel that this Congress is a very exciting prospect. Tor Mehl and Elin Nykaas have done a splendid job in obtaining access to many of the best things in Oslo and I hope that you will support it.

Annual Congress – Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg, 25th and 26th November 2005

The subject of the 2005 Congress was “Corporate Re-Structuring – striking the balance between flexibility and employee protection. The Final Report has been submitted to the European Commission and is available on the EALCJ Website. Esch, the home town of our President Tom Moes, proved an excellent venue. 27 delegates attended from 14 countries and we

enjoyed Esch's quiet charm and its exceptional restaurants. It is difficult to summarise a wide-ranging debate about an issue which is central to the whole European project –

“One of the things which emerged is that the countries are not divided into those which give good protection to redundant employees and those which give little protection. There is a great range of remedies and protection available, with differences between, on the one hand, those given by collective agreements and agreements with Works Councils and, on the other hand, the, often more limited, protection for employees of small businesses. Employees of small businesses suffer just as badly if they lose their jobs as the employees of large enterprises”

Visit to China 24th June to 2nd July 2006

A delegation of 12 members of the EALCJ representing 10 nations visited China at the invitation of the Chinese Ministry of Labour and Social Security. The official Report of the visit is available on the EALCJ Website, under “*Other Events*”.

Despite some concerns expressed about showing overt support to the Chinese regime, the visit was regarded by everyone who attended at Prof. Neal's *pièce de résistance*. We had substantive and serious discussions with MoLSS, who were interested in our experiences. It was clear that they have a real interest in employee protection and are keen to

develop existing institutions and, possibly, set up new ones.

We also had a series of meetings with academics, students and young professionals. The welcome was warm and almost overwhelming. We all had a sense of the energy of a society emerging from the shadows.

Annual General Meeting – Paris 3rd September 2006

The Association's Annual General Meeting for 2006 was held in the British Embassy in the rue de Faubourg Saint-Honoré (close to the Elysée Palace and originally purchased by the Duke of Wellington in 1814 from the system of the Emperor Napoléon), followed by a buffet lunch in the Embassy's fabulous gardens, complete with the only grass tennis court in Paris.

The meeting was attended by delegates from 8 countries with apologies from 11 other delegations. The Final Report on the 2005 Congress was approved and a determination was expressed to reach out to more of the new Member States.

New Member States

Since the Paris meeting, our President, Taco van Peijpe has now identified delegates from Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and Estonia. There are always financial constraints, but we hope that the EALCJ will be able to claim that it genuinely represents the whole of the EU.

