



9th RIODD Conference

"Environment-labour relationships"



**Bordeaux University
Legal and Judicial Centre
35, Place Pey Berland
33000 BORDEAUX**

1 - 3 October 2014

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université
de **BORDEAUX**



COMPTRASEC
// Centre de droit comparé du travail et de la sécurité sociale //

CALL FOR COMMUNICATIONS

RIODD will be holding its ninth annual conference in Bordeaux from 1 to 3 October 2014.

The 9th annual RIODD conference is hosted by COMPTRASEC¹ (Centre for Comparative Labour and Social Security Law), UMR CNRS 5114 at Bordeaux University. This multidisciplinary, international, scientific event is held in the context of the reorganisation of Bordeaux University, with the ambition of developing a multidisciplinary research dynamic, linking human and social sciences, medical sciences, and physical and technical sciences. The environment has gradually been integrated into research in these varied disciplines and it is now essential to provide a forum for discussing this cross-disciplinary research, in order to identify shared themes.

For this reason, the symposium has been prepared in partnership with several departments of Bordeaux University and associated institutions (IRSTEA, GREThA, CRDEI, ISCJ, ADESS, and IRGO). The organisers will, therefore, make every effort to highlight these issues through a relevant selection of contributions and themed workshops.

The topic of the 2014 RIODD conference focuses on the relationship between "Environment and Labour". This specific issue will form the backbone of the 2014 conference. However, as it does every year, the scientific committee of the RIODD conference will examine all proposed presentations on the usual RIODD topics: responsible and alternative finance, CSR, governance, enterprises and society, performance indicators, economic and social pillars of sustainable development, etc. (non-exhaustive list) , focusing both on their theoretical (precision of the theoretical framework, epistemological issues, robustness of the references..., etc.) and/or empirical qualities (quality and relevance of the field studied, originality, precision of the study, robustness of material subjected to interpretation, etc.). The committee will base their acceptance on an assessment of both of these dimensions. No theoretical avenue is privileged a priori and all proposals within the broader field of social sciences (management, law, political science, economics, ethnology, sociology, geography, history, philosophy, info-com, etc.) will be given the fullest consideration.

However, the Organising Committee of the 9th RIODD Conference particularly encourages contributions on the theme:

"Environment-labour relationships" »

The relationships between the "environment" and "labour" are complex. On the one hand, they are highly conflictual. Thus, the impact of economic growth on natural resources, climate change, and even health may lead to its being called into question, particularly in terms of industrial employment. On the other hand, these relationships stimulate reflections on consumption and production patterns, productive organisations, and the responsibilities/liabilities of private and public stakeholders, from government administrations to enterprises... This ambivalence is not a new phenomenon, but it has been singularly intensified by the depletion of natural resources on a global scale, leading to an increasing vulnerability of people and their environment. For this reason, it is important to develop

¹ <http://comptrasec.u-bordeaux4.fr>

innovative, multidisciplinary research to understand how this ambivalence has grown, is evolving, being regulated, etc., in a new space-time format.

Some feel that the importance of environmental issues transcends the balance of power that forms the theoretical basis for the salaried work relationship. From the perspective of sustainable development, any formal or informal economy still largely based on labour would be obliged to make financial choices between social and environmental protection and these choices would be under particularly high pressure during financial crises. If a conciliation-based approach seems difficult, it is certainly because environmental and labour concerns convey diverging representations and conflicts of interest. Furthermore, these concerns are difficult to integrate in decision-making processes, including in those in the public sphere, as they are perceived mainly in terms of constraints or costs.

New behaviours are, however, worth investigating, as they explore the possibilities of a more satisfactory regulation of the environmental consequences of human productive activities. In particular, this is the case when enterprises make the environment a development factor, associating environmental and social programmes with their image via a (public/private) "label". Complex, non-judicial channels for regulating conflicts concerning access to environmental resources or environmental damage deserve more in-depth, multidisciplinary investigation. How can we assess the economic and financial impact of these initiatives, or even the legal nature and scope of these instruments? How is corporate environmental and, more broadly, societal responsibility developing, with regard to the emergence of new players in the legal field and, more generally, in the political and economic arena?

Governments are not completely absent from these regulation mechanisms, thus reserving space for law alongside other forms of regulation. Indeed, while they participate in developing new instruments (ISO 26000 standard), or even implementing them, they still continue to use standard legal instruments, such as green taxation or the civil, administrative, or criminal liability of the stakeholders, while, at the same time, adopting tools usually mobilised by private organisations (environmental labelling, etc.). Environmental and/or societal criteria have also been introduced into government procurement procedures. In all these cases, the state has introduced new ways of articulating the relationship between private and public stakeholders.

Moving analysis of the "labour and environment" relationship forward from these initial observations requires a focus on the way that sciences, in all their diversity, approach the interests at stake and the way the stakeholders deal with the following, non-exclusive list of issues.

1. Technology, labour organization, and environment

What does the history of science and technology teach us about environment/labour relations? What risks and/or opportunities are related to the destruction of industrial jobs and the possible creation of green jobs? How do organisations deal with this reality and these prospects?

2. Health-safety at work and environmental issues

Work transforms the environment and, consequently, impacts human health, which generates new risks, as well as new types of excessively demanding tasks and stress. How does the health-care industry react to this issue?

3. Production organisation and territories

The aim here is to envisage labour/environment relations from a sectoral perspective. Are we witnessing new ways of redefining territories under the pressure of environmental and professional constraints? How does the location of production activities shape the settlement of populations and does this generate migratory flows? How are environmental migrations caused and, possibly, exploited by industries?

4. Liabilities and risks

The main focus will be on the link between risk prevention and systems of liability. One example is the of cost of major environmental risks and their insurability. How is the precautionary approach actually applied in practice? What is the environmental cost of NICT?

5. Labour relations, social movements, and conflicts

What positions (adaptation-resistance) have been adopted by stakeholders and institutional and non-institutional organisations? What is the role of staff representative bodies in enterprises, trade union organisations, and NGOs? To what extent are they involved in managing tensions, conflicts of interest, and social, or even societal, dialogue arising out of the relationship between the environment and labour?