

## *On the Launch of Japan Labor Issues*

As change affects our societies in various forms—ongoing globalization, shifts in demographic structure, and new waves of information technology—it prompts new scenarios in industrial structure, corporate organizations and activities, labor-management relations, and the ways that people work. While the forms and outcomes of these changes differ across the nations and regions of the world, we must invariably face their effects. Particularly in the field of labor, there are key issues that need to be addressed as we develop our labor policies, such as the redefinition of labor law, reform in labor markets, renewed recognition of systems for representing workers, and problems related to immigration.

With such challenges ahead, we are launching this new journal with the aim of introducing the recent developments in Japan in the field of labor to a global audience. It is comprised of five sections: “Trends,” which addresses the key points in Japanese labor issues and recent developments in labor policy, “Research,” which introduces papers covering research in the field of labor, “Judgements and Orders,” major judicial precedents related to labor and commentary on those precedents, the “Japan’s Employment System and Public Policy” series, which explain and comment on the Japanese employment system, and “Statistical Indicators,” which presents the current state of Japan’s economy and labor.

At the Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training, we have pursued research that has investigated the changes in the world of work in Japan across the years. Amid the aforementioned social changes, it is becoming increasingly difficult to envisage how the Japanese employment system will develop in the future. This new journal will keep up to date with the labor issues that Japan currently faces, presenting new developments in labor in Japan through news articles that introduce the latest issues, as well as conventional research papers like those formerly published in the *Japan Labor Review*, the predecessor to this journal. I have given this journal the title *Japan Labor Issues* to reflect our hope that readers will look to it to answer their questions, such as what factors lie at the heart of labor problems in Japan, what kinds of shifts are occurring in our employment systems, or how policies are responding to such issues.

It is my sincere hope that this journal will offer timely information and deeper insights into the state of labor to anyone with an interest in labor issues, wherever they may be in the world.

Kazuo Sugeno  
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