

**ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENTS AND
THE NEW EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP IN EUROPE**

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ABSTRACT

Across the globe, in all sectors of the economy, the legal boundaries between fixed term contractors (FTCs) and permanent employees are blurred as soon as FTCs fill permanent positions and permanent employees are laid off en masse for economic purposes. This thesis, through interviews of practitioners, review of legislative debates and business case stories, analyzes the new employment relationship in three European countries (France, Germany, the United Kingdom) and brings new elements to the job security debate.

The result of the research highlights the most salient features of European economic layoffs legal regulation, i.e. the definition of a collective and the empowerment of a valid interlocutor to the management that shares decision control and selection control. Fixed term contracts are legally defined, on the opposite, by restricting their length, renewals and grounds. The author supports the European approach of legal differentiation between fixed term contractors and permanent employees but urges to go beyond that approach through the recognition of a time delineated notion of “collective” for FTCs as well as the addition of intermittent work periods for seniority.

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