

Alternative Paths for Working Life Reform? A Comparison of European and East Asian Development Strategies

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This paper expands the discussion on working life reform from the well-known European examples to cover recent developments in East Asia as well. A comparison between two European (Finland and Ireland) and two East Asian (Singapore and South Korea) workplace development strategies is carried out by making use of Naschold's model that he developed in the early 1990s. The main question is how are the macro-level differences in the developmental role of the state and the micro-level differences in the systems of industrial relations and human resource management reflected in the strategies and what policy implications might be drawn from the analysis. At the end, the paper also compares each country's strategy in relationship to its own earlier historical development and aims to analyse how radical are the strategy choices that have been made.

Key words: development strategy, policy learning, work organization, working life reform, workplace innovation

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