

## **Labor law instruments and mechanisms and their role in improving performance and motivation of personnel**

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With this report, I would like first and foremost to express gratitude to all members of the Foundation for giving the opportunity to conduct the research project in Sweden as well as get acquainted with the Swedish culture and its achievements.

For more than five years I have been closely working with the labor law in Russia both within academic and business environment. I am strongly convinced that the human potential is one of the most important factors for the overall growth of any country and that one of the strategic tasks of labor law today is to create the most appropriate conditions for this potential to strive.

However current labor law in Russia does not always provide such conditions, which leads to underperformance, lack of responsibility and demotivation of the employees, who do not feel like part of the companies.

During three months in Sweden, I had an opportunity to look at these issues from both Swedish as well as international perspective, and to learn more about the labor law mechanisms that can contribute to the desired changes in Russia.

At the time of my stay I had an appointment at the Faculty of law at Lund University as a visiting researcher in the field of labor law.

I had a great opportunity to be part of the course in Fundamental Labor rights, which was conducted by former senior officials of International Labor Organization, who had wide experience of working with different countries including Sweden and Russia. Every class turned out to be an ongoing discussion, where I could get answers to any question together with valuable insights. I have learned a lot about freedom of association and collective bargaining, as well as different forms of workplace representation.

Thanks to Lee Swepston, former director of the International Labour Organization department of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, I had a chance to look differently at the role of the labour inspectorate in Russia and see it as a part of the solution and not like a threat for the employers as it unfortunately so often appears to be nowadays.

While conducting research at the Lund University I was able to get acquainted with highly recognized specialists in the labor law field. I had a valuable chance to express my concerns and ask questions to the Deputy Director-General and Executive Director of the International Labour Office, Mr. Kari Tapiola. Thanks to Mr. Kari Tapiola, I found out more about the underestimated power of compromises and consensus between employers and employees, as well as the failure of many employees in Russia to understand the nature of delegation of authority and decision-making.



I observed that more effective cooperation between employees and employers provides the basis for sound labor relations. The inclusiveness of collective bargaining and agreements helps reducing inequality and allows employees to feel like part of the system. No surprise, the level of union membership in Sweden is one of the highest in the world.

Thanks to ManpowerGroup Sweden, I have not only been able to keep in touch with the local office, on regular bases meeting people who work with personnel on the ground, but also had a very interesting interview with company's specialist in labor law. He shared the experience of negotiating collective agreements across the country within different industries as well as helped me to better understand the pros and cons of the "Swedish model". I am also proud to say that it was my first interview conducted in the Swedish language.

However, having studied the history of trade unions in Sweden and Russia, I came to the conclusion that the Swedish model is not something that Russia can currently build, and it is worth looking into alternative channels of workplace representation. I paid special attention to the board-level representation in Sweden and I believe that it is

something that could be applied in Russia, given that the idea of compromises is respected by parties.

In addition, immersion into the Swedish culture allowed me to start using Swedish language both in everyday life as well as for scientific research, and it opened new opportunities to study Swedish labor law with original sources that I hope to further explore.

However, my takeout from this research and experience is not limited to the labor law. I have been in Sweden during the time of important political elections. Having witnessed involvement of Swedish people in political life and their passion for democracy, I concluded that participation is one of the important characteristics of Swedish society overall and workplace participation is just one part of it.

In general, awareness and inclusiveness of people can lead to a better motivation and performance and I am very excited to share my findings with the employers in Russia and try to apply some of the best practices in real life.

I cannot conclude my report without mentioning the cultural part of the program. During three months I have been able to visit Gothenburg and Stockholm. Trip to Stockholm has been definitely one of the most memorable events, thanks to Disa Håstad and her ongoing support I immediately felt myself as part of the group, met very enthusiastic and interesting people and had a privilege to attend the tea party hosted by Örjan and Benedicte Berner, getting to know the brightest people in Sweden, real professionals in their respective fields.

The last but not the least - it is a great honour for me to have become a part of the Sverker Åström Foundation team. As representatives of Russia in Sweden, we have a chance to introduce Swedish people to Russian culture and we have a big responsibility in this role

too. I believe that building a long-lasting relationship between people of two countries on the ground is one of the most powerful tools of diplomacy, a special gratitude to Sverker Åström's foundation for its continuous contribution to that.

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