Preface

The main purpose of this book is to address the issue of precarious work in Europe, where the proliferation of new types of employment without the whole spectrum of rights associated with the standard employment relationship has engendered considerable labour market fragmentation and social polarisation. Precarious work, such as in the ‘gig economy’, poses unique challenges to the European social model of secure employment and decent social protection. To address these challenges, we seek to analyse the reasons for the spread of precarious work in various countries in Europe, to explain the different types of precarious work and to make proposals to address this phenomenon through improved labour regulation and practice.

Having developed the concept for the book, a group of leading scholars in the field of international and comparative labour law came together at an international seminar held in Lodz in March 2017. Following a stimulating exchange of ideas at Lodz, a followup seminar was held in Lund in April 2018. These seminars contributed to improving our comparative understanding of precarious employment and offered insight into the potential methods of regulation needed to address it at European and national level.

As editors, we are very grateful to the contributors for their commitment to the book at an early stage and for following up by producing excellent chapters in good time for publication. Thank you all for your ideas, inspiration, collaboration and camaraderie.

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