**Hemispheric Workshop**

**“Social Dialogue for a rights-based transition from informal to formal employment”**

**Base Document**

(Agenda & Informative Guide)

**October 20 and 21, 2022 – Buenos Aires, Argentina**

All event information will be updated on the website:

<http://rialnet.org/?q=en/formalization_ARG>

**CONTENT**

1. Background and justification ….…………………………………………. 1
2. Description and objective…………………………………………………… 3
3. Preliminary Agenda …………………………………………….…...……… 4
4. Guiding questions……………………………………………….……………… 5
5. Logistics and travel Information ….…………………………………….. 5
6. Information to participate on-line…….……………………..…………. 7
7. Registration Form………….……………………………………………………. 9
8. **Background and justification**

Labor informality is one of the greatest challenges facing the economies of the Americas and one of the structural characteristics of their labor markets. Half of the working population in Latin America and the Caribbean is in the informal economy, and in some countries, it exceeds levels of 70%. [[1]](#footnote-2)

Although informality is a problem stemming from multiple causes and dimensions, some of the outstanding characteristics lie in the presence of precarious jobs, lack of social protection coverage and non-compliance with labor laws. Informal employment is mainly concentrated in low-productivity units which operate outside the taxation system.

The consequences of informal employment go beyond the economic and productive scope, given that it has a close and very clear relationship with inequality, poverty, and exclusion. Indeed, it is observed that informal workers are overrepresented among the low-income population, as well as among women, youth, migrant and rural workers, and groups that have traditionally faced greater barriers to access the formal[[2]](#footnote-3) labor market. This means that labor informality reproduces and deepens dynamics of inequality and social exclusion, which makes it even more indispensable to address this issue.

The COVID-19 pandemic affected those who work in the informal sector to a greater extent, and revealed, once again, the fragility or absence of protection mechanisms to serve the individuals who make up this sector. Sanitary and confinement measures seriously hit informal workers, who, due to the characteristics of their jobs, had greater difficulties in carrying out their activities remotely. In addition, they either did not have or had limited access to health services. Unlike previous crises, the informal sector shrank in the absence of opportunities, mainly because the adopted measures were insufficient to protect the employment and income of this population. Faced with the supply constraints imposed by the health crisis, even more informal than formal jobs were lost[[3]](#footnote-4),, in part because, for the most part, the immediate measures adopted by governments were destined to preserving formal jobs.

The employment recovery that began to take place in 2021 has been led by the growth of informal employment[[4]](#footnote-5) and informality levels are expected to exceed pre-pandemic levels if the economies do not generate sufficient new formal jobs that will accompany increases in participation rates.

The fact that informality affects a considerable part of the population of Latin America and the Caribbean reinforces the need to face this problem as a regional priority, as has been reflected in the Declarations and Action Plans of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML) of the OAS through the years. In the Declaration of Buenos Aires, approved at the most recent IACML in 2021, the Ministers of Labor of the Americas committed to:

"..*continue developing active policies and human- centered strategies focused on people aimed at fostering and promoting the creation and formalization of employment, the reduction of informality and job insecurity and guided by the objectives of social justice, equity, full and productive employment, and decent work, and sustainable development*.” (Art. 8 of the Declaration of Buenos Aires )

The strategies and policies to deal with informality, understood as a multidimensional phenomenon, have addressed (and must address) multiple areas of action, including policies to promote and increase productivity, expand social protection coverage, simplify procedures to establish new enterprises, develop information and awareness campaigns on labor rights and benefits of formalization, intensify labor inspection, strengthen social dialogue to propose solutions and alternatives, and improve training, labor intermediation and skills certification systems, among others.

Therefore, promoting social dialogue between representatives of workers, employers and governments; promoting the registration and formalization of employment with labor rights and social security; ensuring universal access to social protection for informal workers and their families; and increasing productivity and its equitable distribution through social dialogue, are all central actions to achieve post-pandemic employment recovery and to continue facing the emerging changes in the world of work that arise from the 4IR. The Workshop described in this document seeks to delve into these aspects.

1. **Description and Objectives**

The Workshop **"Social Dialogue for a rights-based transition from informal to formal employment**" will be held in a hybrid format, which will allow participation in person in Buenos Aires, Argentina or virtually. It will bring together representatives of Ministries of Labor, representatives of workers and employers -grouped in COSATE and CEATAL-, and international organizations to exchange and analyze strategies to move towards labor formalization, according to the objectives set out below.

It is an activity of the Inter-American Network for Labor Administration (RIAL) of the OAS, sponsored by the Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security of Argentina, and part of the 2022-2024 Work Plan of the IACML.

The strategies to address the problem of informality, as stated in the "Background and justification" section of this document, encompass actions in very diverse fields of public policy, including economic, industrial, labor and social protection policies, among others. In order to facilitate a structured discussion and a deeper analysis, in which lessons learned and policy recommendations can be identified, this Workshop will focus on initiatives related to social protection, productivity growth and its equitable distribution, as means to promote the transition of workers from the informal to the formal economy, paying special attention to the interaction among social actors through the establishment of an effective and inclusive social dialogue.

**General objective:**

* Increase knowledge and strengthen the capacities of Ministries of Labor regarding strategies and policies related to social protection and the promotion of productivity that facilitate the transition to labor formalization through mechanisms based on social dialogue.

**Specific Objectives:**

* Identify, exchange and analyze government policies and measures aimed at promoting, in an integrated manner, universal access to social protection and the transition from the informal to the formal economy.

* Exchange and analyze policies to increase productivity and ensure the equitable distribution of its benefits, while promoting a rights-based transition to the formal economy.
* Share experiences on the role of social dialogue and the contribution of social actors to the formulation and implementation of strategies and policies that facilitate a rights-based transition to formal employment and promote universal social protection, increased productivity and its equitable distribution.
* Prepare recommendations to define lines of action that facilitate a rights-based transition from the informal to the formal economy through social dialogue.

**Language:** The meeting will have simultaneous interpretation in English and Spanish

1. **Preliminary Schedule**

**October 20**

9:00 – 9:30 **Welcome and opening remarks**

9:30 – 12:30 **1st Session – A rights-based transition to formal employment. Ensuring universal access to social protection for workers.**

* Presentations from 5 Ministries of Labor (20 minutes each)
* Open dialogue among all delegations (1 hour and 20 min)

*(Session based on Guiding Questions)*

12:00 – 2:00 Break

2:00 – 5:00 **2nd Session – Social dialogue and the contributions of social actors to labor formalization: promoting increased productivity within a framework of respect and strengthening of labor institutions.**

* Presentations by COSATE and CEATAL (20 minutes each)
* Presentations of 2 Ministries of Labor (20 minutes each)
* Open dialogue among all the delegations (1 hour and 20 min)

*(Session based on Guiding questions)*

**October 21**

9:00 – 11:00 **3rd Session** – Activity in sub-groups – based on guiding questions

11:00 – 11:30 Break (sub-groups rapporteurs refine conclusions)

11:30 – 12:15 Presentation of sub-group conclusions

12:15 – 12:30 **Closing remarks**

1. **Guiding Questions**

The following questions seek to guide the presentations and spaces for dialogue and are an important input to dynamize the debate; therefore, participants are kindly requested to prepare their answers beforehand and send them to the Technical Secretariat ([trabajo@oas.org](mailto:trabajo@oas.org)) no later than October 5, 2022. We thank you in advance for your collaboration.

For the 1st session:

1. Does your institution/country have social protection mechanisms aimed at workers who work in the informal economy? Are they, from your experience, mechanisms that promote or discourage the formalization of employment? Please share main challenges and lessons learned.

For the 2nd Session:

1. What is the role of social dialogue in the transition to the formalization of employment? Are there institutionalized mechanisms that guarantee social dialogue between the different social actors with this goal? Do you consider that social dialogue has contributed to promoting a rights-based formalization of employment?
2. How has social dialogue contributed, or how can it contribute to, simultaneously, boosting productivity and distributing its benefits, while facilitating the transition towards labor formalization?

For the 3rd Session – Activity in sub-groups:

1. ¿What are the main policy recommendations, in light of the experience of your institution, to improve the contribution of both social protection and productivity policies and strategies to the formalization of employment?
2. **Logistics and Travel information (for those who attend the workshop in-person)**

**Venue of the event:** Kirchner Cultural Center, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Adress: Sarmiento 151, C1041

**Registration**: Please complete the attached Registration Form and send it to the Technical Secretariat as soon as possible and before **September 30** to [trabajo@oas.org](mailto:trabajo@oas.org) . Government delegates should also send this form through the Permanent Mission of their country to the OAS.

**Financing**: Travel expenses shall be covered by the participating institutions. The OAS, with resources from the RIAL, will be able to co-finance travel expenses, covering accommodation for some representatives of the Ministries of Labor, COSATE and CEATAL.

Resources are limited, thereby applications will be reviewed and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Those participants who wish to obtain co-financing (accommodation expenses) must indicate this in the Registration Form and send it as soon as possible, no later than **September 30th.**

**Accommodation:** It is the responsibility of each participant to make the reservation directly at the hotel of their choice, except for those who will receive financial assistance (in such case the OAS will take care of their reservations at the official Hotel)

Please find below some options:

**5-Star Hotels**

Hotel Emperador Buenos Aires

Av. del Libertador 420, CABA

Average nightly rate: USD $300

Contact: Ms. Marcia Dardati, [mdardati@hotel-emperador.com.ar](mailto:mdardati@hotel-emperador.com.ar)

Sheraton Buenos Aires Hotel & Convention Center

San Martín 1225 1275, CABA

Average nightly rate: USD $200

Contact: Ms. Mariana Cordiano, [Mariana.Cordiano@sheraton.com](mailto:Mariana.Cordiano@sheraton.com)

**4-Star Hotels**

Hotel NH Justen

Av Corrientes 280

Average nightly rate: USD $190

Contact: Ms. Alina Nives, aj.nieves@nh-hotels.com

Hoteles Esplendor

San Martín 780

Average nightly rate: USD $120 /noche persona

Contact: Lucas Marsico, lucas.marsico@wyndhamhoteles.com

**Transportation to and from the Airport:** Each delegate is responsible for making their transportation arrangements to and from the airport in Buenos Aires. We recommend that, if possible, these be arranged directly with the hotel. If this is not possible, we share some options. The average cost in any option is from 7,300 – 7,600 Argentinian pesos (USD$ 50-53):

* + 1. Manuel Tienda León: +54 155450-9599 / +54 0810-888-5366
    2. Turismo Centro: +54 4381-5050
    3. Remises Nuevo Futuro: +54 152599-2727 / +54 154978-1486

**Entry and departure requirements from the country:**

Most countries in the region can enter Argentina with a valid passport, without the need to apply for a visa. You can check the visa regime according to your country at the following link: <http://www.migraciones.gov.ar/accesible/indexdnm.php?visas>

Regarding the health protocols, mandated by the national authorities, the mandatory requirements for entering the country for nationals or foreigners, are:

* Complete the questionnaire approved by Provision 3025/20 of the National Directorate of Migration on vaccination status and absence of symptoms of COVID-19, within 48 hours before the trip begins. Available at: <https://ddjj.migraciones.gob.ar/app/home.php>
* Submit COVID-19 health insurance (Coverage for hospitalization, isolation and/or medical transfer services).

Those who enter the country for a period of less than 24 hours and do it by land are exempted. For travelers who have an incomplete vaccination scheme, it is recommended that they take a diagnostic test within 24 hours after entering the country. The cost of the test is responsibility of the person entering the country. A vaccination scheme is considered complete when it fulfills all the requirements determined by the health authorities of the country where the traveler was vaccinated.

Although, in accordance with current provisions, the face mask is mandatory only in closed spaces, we recommend always having it at hand, in the event of a possible request by an authority.

1. **Information to participate on-line**

**Registration**: As for those who attend virtually, please complete the attached Registration Form and send it to the Technical Secretariat as soon as possible [to trabajo@oas.org](mailto:to%20trabajo@oas.org). For delegations of Ministries of Labor, please also submit this form through the Permanent Mission of your country to the OAS.

**Access to the platform and connection:** The virtual meeting will be held through the ZOOM platform of the Department of Human Development, Education and Employment.

**Link:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89949074336>

**Meeting ID:** 89949074336

**Note. Only duly accredited delegates will be allowed to enter the virtual room.**

**Audio tests:** The dialogue includes some presentations, but it will mainly consist of spaces in which the participation of all the delegations is encouraged. Therefore, we thank the delegates to connect between 1 hour and 30 minutes before the start of the meeting to do audio tests with the room in Buenos Aires, test connection, and interpretation.

For any questions about this meeting, you may contact:

**ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
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1. **Registration Form**

**Hemispheric Workshop:**

Social Dialogue for a rights-based transition from informal to formal employment

**Hybrid event**

<http://rialnet.org/?q=en/formalization_ARG>

October 20 and 21, 2022 – Buenos Aires, Argentina

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Apellidos / Last Name | Nombre / First Name | |
| Cargo / Title | | |
| Organización / Organization | | |
| País / Country | | |
| Teléfono / Telephone | | Correo Electrónico / E-mail |

Will participate

\_\_\_\_\_ In person

\_\_\_\_\_ On-line

In case of participating in person, please indicate if you require co-funding (accommodation expenses) from the RIAL/OAS: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please submit this Registration Form before **September 30** to: [trabajo@oas.org](mailto:trabajo@oas.org), and through the **Permanent Mission** of your country to the OAS.

Information pertaining to this event will be updated in:

<http://rialnet.org/?q=en/formalization_ARG>

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1. The ILO 2021 Labor Outlook estimates the informality rate for an average of 12 LAC countries in the third quarter of 2021 at 49%. In previous studies and publications, the regional average has been 53.8% (2018 Labor Overview, among others). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. The ILO Labor Outlook 2019, for example, includes revealing figures on informality and youth, the gap in working conditions between urban and rural workers, between men and women, and by educational level. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. ILO (2022). Labor Outlook 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Ibidem [↑](#footnote-ref-5)