

# HEMISPHERIC WORKSHOP

## “FUTURE OF WORK AND NEW EMPLOYMENT DYNAMICS IN THE AMERICAS”

 May 16-17, 2024

 San José, Costa Rica and on-line

 [rialnet.org](http://rialnet.org)

### BASE DOCUMENT AND UPDATED AGENDA

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#### 1. Background and justification

The world of work is in a moment of great transformation, caused mainly by accelerated technological and environmental changes, the latter led by climate change.

Accelerated technological changes, digital transformation, artificial intelligence and, overall, the different manifestations of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR or Industry 4.0) are impacting occupations, the skills required to function in the world of work, and labor relations. In recent years, new occupations have emerged, such as social media managers or Big Data analysts, while the skills that are valued in the labor market change, digital skills become essential in numerous professions and jobs, and the need for 'lifelong learning' is established<sup>12</sup>. In addition, labor relations and the way we work have also been substantially transformed by technology. Teleworking and work through digital platforms, both promoted and deepened by the pandemic<sup>3</sup>, are clear manifestations of this transformation.

On the other hand, climate change has a direct impact on the world of work from multiple angles. Extreme climate events, such as hurricanes, floods, and droughts - which have been exacerbated in recent years in Latin America and the Caribbean<sup>4</sup> -, directly affect economic activity, productivity, and employment; furthermore, the so-called “thermal stress”, a direct effect of global warming and characterized by excessive heat, has been recognized as a very serious risk for the health and safety of workers<sup>5</sup>. Correspondingly, the response to climate change and the efforts to achieve environmentally sustainable economies and societies - framed in the concept of just transition - pose changes and opportunities for jobs, industries, and productive sectors, and require developing a strategic vision and a multidimensional and intersectoral response, in which the Ministries of Labor and social actors must actively engage.

<sup>1</sup> World Economic Forum (2024). Putting skills first. Opportunities for building efficient and equitable labour markets.

<sup>2</sup> World Bank (2019). World Development Report (WDR) 2019: The Changing Nature of Work

<sup>3</sup> ILO (2024). Realizing decent work in the platform economy. World Bank (2023). Working Without Borders: The promise and peril of online gig work.

<sup>4</sup> World Meteorological Organization (2022). State of the Climate in Latin America and the Caribbean 2021.

<sup>5</sup> ILO (2019). Working on a warmer planet: The impact of heat stress on labour productivity and decent work

Aware of these dynamics and the transcendental moment that the world of work in the Americas is going through, the authorities of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML) of the OAS, incorporated the “future of work and new forms of employment” as a priority of their Work Plan 2022-2024, and defined a series of actions to address it, including discussions within the IACML Working Groups and the holding of a Workshop of the Inter-American Network for Labor Administration (RIAL) on the topic. The latter is described in this document.

Within the framework of the OAS, the Ministries of Labor and social actors of the Americas have focused the analysis on the impact of digital transformation in the world of work, on aspects linked to training and employment, skills development, and the coordination between the world of education and the world of work<sup>6</sup>. Recently, they are addressing the other dimension of digital transformation in employment: its impact on labor relations and the new forms of employment, particularly platform work, following-up to the commitment made during the XXI IACML in 2021:

“We will analyze, with the contribution of tripartite social dialogue, the development, design, and implementation of appropriate regulations that address the opportunities and challenges of existing and new forms of work, such as work on digital platforms, telework, work from home, and alternating between the workplace and remote work. We will promote regional cooperation in this matter, as well as in other areas related to the future of work and sustainable enterprises.” (Art. 25 of the Declaration of Buenos Aires, adopted by the Ministers of Labor at the XXI IACML/OAS, 2021).

During the meeting of the Working Groups of the IACML/OAS in September 2023, government delegates, representatives of workers and employers and international organizations analyzed the phenomenon of work in digital platform, finding it necessary to deepen cooperation and the exchange between countries on the subject and recognizing the challenges it poses for public policies and the regulation of the world of work<sup>7</sup>.

The next Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML) of the OAS will be held in October 2024 in Bogotá, Colombia under the theme “The future of work in the Americas: laying the foundations for peace, social justice and climate action”, and one of its topics will be the future of work and the just transition. This opens a new priority area for political dialogue and labor collaboration on labor and employment in the Americas.

Just Transition is a “systemic, multidimensional and multi-stakeholder approach that optimizes the social and economic opportunities of climate action whilst minimizing risks and managing challenges.”<sup>8</sup>. Its incorporation into the lines of action of the Ministries of Labor in the region makes it possible to achieve social objectives by acting as an engine of growth and generator of decent jobs, which also contributes to the eradication of poverty and social inclusion. Moreover, given it incorporates the concept of green jobs, a just transition contributes to the

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<sup>6</sup> Through the RIAL/OAS, three Workshops have been held to address this topic between the Ministries of Labor and Education: [Intersectoral Workshop on Youth Employment, Brazil, 2016](#), [Intersectoral Workshop on "Skills for the future: Coordination between the Ministries of Education and Labor", Chile, 2019](#), [Intersectoral Workshop "Towards a Stronger Coordination between Education and Labor in the Americas", Argentina, 2023](#).

<sup>7</sup> OAS (2023). Document of Summary and main ideas of the Meeting of Working Group 1 of the XXI IACML (CIMT-21/GT1-GT2/doc.11/23 rev.1).

<sup>8</sup> ILO (2023). Green Jobs, an Opportunity for Women in Latin America.

conservation, restoration, and improvement of the quality of the environment in any economic sector.<sup>9</sup>

The sustainable development agenda and particularly climate change, requires the design and development of employment policies and labor policies that guarantee decent jobs and sustainable enterprises within the framework of a just transition. To this end, the dialogue among the Ministries of Labor themselves, workers and employers is a unique opportunity to identify, exchange and analyze policies that address and mitigate the negative effects of climate change, encourage working environments that are decent, safe, and healthy, and at the same time enhance the contributions of the world of work on the path to achieving environmentally sustainable economies and societies.

## 2. Description and objectives

The Workshop “**Future of work and new employment dynamics in the Americas**” will be held in San José, Costa Rica, under a hybrid format, allowing on-line or in-person participation. It will bring together representatives of Ministries of Labor, representatives of workers and employers -grouped in COSATE and CEATAL-, and international organizations to exchange experiences and analyze the dynamics and trends of the future of work, particularly associated with new forms of employment and just transition, according to the objectives established below.

This is an activity of the Inter-American Network for Labor Administration (RIAL), co-organized by the OAS, the Ministry of Labor and Social Security of Costa Rica and the ILO, and is part of the Work Plan 2022-2024 of the IACML.

### **General objective:**

- Increase knowledge and strengthen the capacities of Ministries of Labor and social actors to enhance the opportunities and mitigate the risks posed by technological advances and climate change responses to the world of work.

### **Specific objectives:**

- Foster a regional debate on opportunities and challenges for the world of work brought upon by technological advances, particularly how they impact new forms of employment, and by the response to climate change.
- Identify, exchange, and analyze policies and measures adopted by the Ministries of Labor to address new forms of employment derived from technological advances, and develop recommendations to ensure that they have positive effects on working conditions, labor rights, and labor relations.
- Identify, exchange, and analyze initiatives of Ministries of Labor and social actors to address and mitigate the negative effects of climate change in the world of work, as well

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<sup>9</sup> ILO (2015). Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all.

as enhance the contributions of the world of work towards achieving environmentally sustainable economies and societies.

- Develop policy recommendations to guide the response of Ministries of Labor regarding new forms of employment and climate change and ensure that this response guarantees decent work and supports a just transition, while also providing new possibilities for those left on the margins of conventional labor markets.

**Participants:**

- Officials from the OAS Ministries of Labor responsible for or involved with the topics addressed in the Workshop.
- Representatives of workers and employers, grouped in the advisory bodies of the IACML - COSATE and CEATAL-.
- Representatives of international organizations and other interested stakeholders.

### 3. Updated Agenda, including Guiding Questions

**DAY 1 – May 16**

8:00 – 9:00 On-site registration and opening of Zoom virtual room (CST – Costa Rica time, *please check local time*)

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

- Jesús Schucry Giacomán, Director of the Department of Human Development, Education and Employment of the Organization of American States (OAS)
- Juan Hunt, Director for the Office for Central America of the International Labour Organization (ILO)
- Minister Andrés Romero Rodríguez, Minister of Labor and Social Security of Costa Rica

9:30 – 13:00 **1st Session – Digital transformation in the world of work: challenges and opportunities**

Moderator: Alexander Astorga, Vice-Minister of the Social Area, Ministry of Labor and Social Security of Costa Rica, Vice-Chair of the Working Group 1 of the IACML/OAS

**Guiding Questions for presentations and dialogue:**

1. What are the main challenges and opportunities that digital transformation and artificial intelligence pose for the future of work and labor relations, and how are they being addressed in your country?

*Please indicate progress and challenges faced in the treatment and regulation of artificial intelligence at work, as well as recommendations for actions that can be taken at the regional level on the matter.*

2. What policies, programs or initiatives has your Ministry developed to address the new forms of employment and self-employment that arise from the digital transformation, particularly gig work through digital platforms?

*Please consider efforts related to social protection, health and safety at work, labor rights, and collective bargaining, among others.*

**9:40 – 11:00 Introductory presentations (15 minutes)**

- **OAS** – María Claudia Camacho, Chief of Labor and Employment Section, Dept. Human Development, Education and Employment
- **ILO** – Tulio Cravo, Regional Specialist in Public Policies and Productivity, ILO Regional Office for the Americas and the Caribbean
- **World Bank** – Nadina Iacob, Digital Economy Consultant for report “Working across Borders: The Promise and Peril of Online Gig Work”
- **OECD** – Stijn Broecke, Senior Economist in the Employment, Labor and Social Affairs Directorate of the OECD, leader of the Future of Work initiative
- **CEPAL** – Andrés Espejo, Specialist of the Social Development Division

**11:00 – 11:30 Question and answer section (30 minutes)**

**11:30 – 11:45 Break (15 minutes)**

**11:45– 12:15 National experiences** – Demonstrative presentations to start the dialogue (15 minutes each)

- **Colombia** – Claudia Naranjo, Director of Employment Creation and Protection, Ministry of Labor
- **Chile** – Antonia Morales Vera, Advisor of the Minister of Labor

**12:15– 13:00 Open dialogue among all delegations (45 minutes)** – Based on Guiding Questions

**13:00 – 14:30 Lunch** – Offered by the organizers to all participants

14:30 – 17:00 *(Continuation)* - **1st Session – Digital transformation in the world of work: challenges and opportunities**

**National experiences** (15 minutes each)

- **Paraguay** – Danilo Sanabria, Director of Opinions and Summaries of the General Directorate of Legal Advice, Ministry of Labor
- **United States** – Mark A. Mittelhauser, Associate Deputy Undersecretary for International Affairs (USDOL)

**Social actors' perspective** (15 minutes each)

- Employers' representative – CEATAL. Ewa Staworzynska, Director of Corporate Responsibility and Labor Affairs, United States Council for International Business (USCIB)
- Workers' representative – COSATE. Marta Pujadas, Chair of the Trade Union Technical Advisory Council

**Open dialogue among all delegations** (1 hour and 30 minutes) – Based on Guiding Questions

**DAY 2 – May 17**

9:00 – 13:00 **2nd Session – Just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies**

Moderator: Marcelo Tapia, Chief of International Affairs, Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare of Chile, Chair of the Working Group 1 of the IACML/OAS

**Guiding Questions for presentations and dialogue:**

1. What policies, programs or initiatives has your Ministry developed to achieve a just transition and address the effects of climate change on the world of work?

*Please consider actions to provide greater resilience to the world of work in the face of natural disasters, address “thermal stress,” promote green jobs, and improve training, skilling and re-skilling, among others.*

2. What contributions can Ministries of Labor and social actors make to achieve environmentally sustainable economies and societies? Are they participating (and in which way) in major discussions at the national and regional level on climate change and sustainable development?

9:00 – 9:45 **Introductory presentations** (15 minutes each)

- **OAS** – Mark Lambrides, Director of the Department of Sustainable Development
- **ILO** – Moustapha Kamal Gueye, Director of the Priority Action Programme on just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies
- **IDB** – Dulce Baptista, Senior Specialist, Labor Markets and Social Security Division

9:45 – 10:15 **National experiences** (15 minutes each)

- **The Bahamas** – Minister Pia Glover-Rolle, Minister of Labor and the Public Service
- **Costa Rica** – Vice-minister Juan Manuel Cordero, Vice-minister of the Social Area

10:15 – 10:45 Break

10:45 – 11:15 **Social actors' perspective** (15 minutes each)

- Workers' representative – COSATE. Marta Pujadas, Chair of the Trade Union Technical Advisory Council
- Employers' representative – CEATAL. Armando Urtecho, Executive Director of the Honduran Council for Private Enterprise (COHEP) and spokesperson of the Business Technical Advisory Committee on Labor Matters

11:15 – 13:00 **Open dialogue among all delegations** – Based on Guiding Questions

13:00 – 14:00 **Lunch** – Offered by the organizers to all participants

14:00 – 16:00 **3rd Session – Sub-groups exercise**

Moderator: Rosa-Mae Whittier, Director of International Affairs Unit, Ministry of Labor of Trinidad and Tobago, Vicechair of the Working Group 1 of the IACML/OAS

**Guiding Question for subgroups:**

3. What lessons learned and policy recommendations can be proposed to guide the responses of the Ministries of Labor to address: 1) new forms of employment, and 2) climate change, and ensuring that these responses guarantee decent work and support a just transition in the face?

16:00 – 16:30 **Break** (Moderators of subgroups refine conclusions)

16:30 – 17:15 **Presentation of sub-group conclusions**

17:15 – 17:30 **Closing remarks**

- Jesús Schucry Giacoman, Director of the Department of Human Development, Education and Employment of the Organization of American States (OAS)
- Juan Hunt, Director for the Office for Central America of the International Labour Organization (ILO)
- Vice-minister Juan Manuel Cordero, Vice-minister of the Social Area, Ministry of Labor and Social Security of Costa Rica