

2024 SOCIAL DIALOGUE AND DEMOCRACY



2024

Social Dialogue and Democracy

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AIOE	All India Organisation of Employers
AITUC	All India Trade Union Congress
BMS	Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh
CITU	Centre of India Trade Unions
CONASAMI	National Commission for Minimum Wages
EFI	Employers' Federation of India
FACB	Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining
FORLAC	Formalization of Labour in Latin America and the Caribbean
HMS	Hind Mazdoor Sabha
ILC	Indian Labour Conference
ILO	International Labour Organisation
INDERLAB	Labour Reform Indicators and Statistics
IFAT	Indian Federation of App-based Transport Workers
INGEI	National Institute of Statistics and Geography
NREGA	National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
RIF	Régimen de Incorporación Fiscal (Fiscal Incorporation Regime)
SEWA	Self-Employed Women's Association
SCOPE	Standing Conference of Public Enterprises
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprises
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People
USMCA	United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement
WIEGO	Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing

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Executive summary

The research project on social dialogue and democracy elaborates the interrelationship between social dialogue mechanisms, the phenomenon of labour informality and democratic quality, examining how social dialogue mechanisms can guarantee rights in the informal labour market and foster democracy. In order to provide a practical justification for our findings, we examine two case studies: Mexico and India. The objective is to understand how social dialogue enhances democratic processes, the mechanisms through which it influences policy-making, and the roles of various stakeholders in facilitating effective dialogue. This study addresses the following research questions: What are the links and interactions between social dialogue, the informal labour sector and democracy? What social dialogue mechanisms and strategies can facilitate the guarantee of rights for the informal labour sector, and how do these dynamics foster democracy?

Employing a mixed-method approach, the research combines interviews and desk reviews to understand social dialogue dynamics comprehensively. Methods include a thorough literature review and interviews with stakeholders, detailed case studies of significant instances of social dialogue's impact on democracy, and statistical analysis of international data to identify trends and correlations between social dialogue and democratic indicators.

Key findings reveal that social dialogue enhances democratic processes by fostering inclusivity, representation, transparency, and accountability. Collaborative dialogue among stakeholders leads to more comprehensive and sustainable policy decisions, bridging societal gaps and promoting consensus. The role of stakeholders varies, with governments creating enabling environments, businesses aligning practices with social goals, and civil society advocating for marginalised voices. Maintaining regular feedback and evaluation mechanisms is critical to understanding the structural causes of labour informality and establishing action plans to address it.

The research has several implications for policy and practice. It recommends strengthening legal and institutional frameworks to support social dialogue, encouraging capacity building for effective stakeholder engagement, and promoting social dialogue. Practical applications include developing platforms for regular stakeholder interaction, implementing mechanisms to ensure transparency and accountability, and fostering a culture of open communication and mutual respect.

The report concludes that the inclusion and protection of the informal labour sector through social dialogue mechanisms can strengthen democracy by promoting the participation and fair representation of all workers. Social inclusion through fiscal, political, and governmental mechanisms should end informal labour, not criminalization. This study explores how more innovative mechanisms regarding

social dialogue and strengthening the democratic principle can ensure the informal sector's inclusion, participation and institutionalisation to protect workers.

1. Introduction

1. Introduction

Today, we have technological shifts, climate change, COVID-19, and the energy transition, which generally impact livelihood. The consequences of these disruptions are a consolidation of economic power, inequalities and growing precarity. Some can find resources to adapt to the diverse disruptions, while others are hit the hardest. The asymmetries of power lead to a larger share of workers who do not have a voice. Without a voice, the workers are often invisible in regulations and policies. This is why social dialogue is essential, as through an effective method, workers are empowered, and democratic involvement is improved. We could consider collective bargaining, direct consultation, negotiations, and information-sharing methods. This study will address the pieces of literature and the methodology surrounding this project's main research questions: What are the links and interactions between social dialogue, the informal labour sector, and democracy? What mechanisms and strategies (best practices) of social dialogue can facilitate the guarantee of rights of the informal labour sector, and how do these dynamics foster democracy? To respond to our main research questions, we are acknowledging sub-questions, including what successful social and political mechanisms have been used in the late 20th and the 21st century to promote social dialogue with workers from the informal sector. Have effective communication, consultation, and dialogue mechanisms been seen to encourage the rise of democracy sense and indicators? How can social dialogue be fostered in contexts with very high labour informality? How have countries fostered democracy through social dialogue?

The aim and flow of the investigation are to identify the generalities and links of three main axes: social dialogue, informal labour sector, and democracy, and then apply and dive into two case studies: India and Mexico. We analyse the interactions of political, legal, and social activities to identify relationships and dependencies.

Within the analytical framework, we address four points of contact: participation and representation, consultation, governance and collective bargaining. The analytical framework will demonstrate the relationship between the three principal axes, social dialogue, democracy, and informal labour, as well as the role of the modern market economy in the interaction of the different points of contact.

This research will start with a literature review of the primary and secondary sources used to deliver the final report and presentation. It will offer a deeper analysis of social dialogue, democracy, and labour informality. It will then dive into the methodology, which consists of sections 5 and 6 (Points of contact and Data Collection Strategy) to demonstrate the main findings of the two case studies: India and Mexico. A thematic scheme will be used to compare the case studies, including social justice, legal reform and innovative practice. Finally, we present policy recommendations for further research.

2. Literature Review

2. Literature review

2.1 Social Dialogue

a. General definitions and concepts.

Countries have different definitions of social dialogue; nevertheless, we will base ourselves on the definition of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), which the OECD has approved. Thus, social dialogue's definition "includes all types of negotiation, consultation or simply exchange of information between, or among, representatives of governments, employers and workers, on issues of common interest relating to economic and social policy" (ILO, 2019). There have been challenges in defining worker's and employer's representatives, especially in an informal economy and other non-unionised contexts. These challenges are essential in the question of legitimacy. The essence of social dialogue lies in tripartism, the concurrence and involvement of all interested parties at all stages to ensure an egalitarian dynamic with effective representation, which is crucial for social justice. To be effective, social dialogue needs to be tripartite, collective, representative, and equitable.

The main objective of social dialogue is to facilitate consensus, link to democracy, and diffuse social tension. Successful social dialogue and processes can resolve critical issues, "encourage good governance, advance social and industrial peace and stability and boost economic progress" (ILO, 2023a). Social dialogue englobes many concepts; nonetheless, we will highlight the concepts of vulnerable workers, representation, migrants, collective and social rights, horizontal and decolonised effective social dialogue, social inclusion versus social integration and consultation.

b. Limitations of the literature.

Reports from non-governmental and international organisations are essential in our research as all states have agreed upon the exact text. However, documents and reports can hide information for political interests and discretion. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the context of India and Mexico fully, not to have a minimal contextual comprehension.

However, social dialogue has limitations at the institutional level and with actors. These would include:

1. Trust
2. Unequal representation
3. Resources
4. Political interferences
5. Economic pressures
6. Changing labour markets
7. Resistance to change

The ILO deepens the explanation of the limitations of social dialogue by stating the challenges at the institutional level: “lack of supportive structure; lack of stability and sustainability of operation; lack of enforcement and monitoring mechanisms; weak integration of tripartite institutions into national policy-making and governance; lack of commitment on the part of technical ministries towards tripartite social dialogue” (Grimshaw et al., 2017).

Another potential role of social dialogue is as an instrument for civic education/engagement in the democratic process. Social dialogue mechanisms provide education for employers, including in the informal economy. This instrument is beyond the scope of our study; nevertheless, it opens a door for new research.

(See Annexe 1: the importance of social dialogue)

2.2 Democracy

a. General definitions and concepts.

The definition itself has been a relevant topic for international law; however, there are few works on a general definition of democracy in international law. Burchill (2006), Fox (2013) and Charlesworth (2015) have worked on the path of democracy as a practice and its emergency in the agenda of international law. Moreover, the side of academia, such as Carothers (2006), questions developing a discourse of democracy as a legitimization device used by governments with superficial commitments to democracy. Here, the link between democracy and social justice is clear: having equal opportunities is a common ground.

Nevertheless, for the current project, being aware of the multiple approaches and discussions about democracy, we will address the topic based on the current work of ILO and OECD. The main reason is we are assimilating concrete aspects of democracy with social justice, and both entities have worked intensely on it. Moreover, based on the work of ILO (1996), democracy implies dialogue, which is why it seeks to develop capacities of representative organisations and protect fundamental human rights such as freedom of association, equality of opportunity and treatment and freedom from forced or compulsory labour. In that sense, to understand the components of democracy, we will consult the glossary addressed by the OECD Manual on Information, Consultation and Participation in the Development of Public Policies; democracy represents a specific way of interaction between public institutions and citizens—an interaction where it all depends on the consent of the citizens (OECD, 2006).

To identify general issues concerning democracy, we must refer to the work of the Global Forum and Ministerial Meeting on Building Trust and Reinforcing Democracy (OECD, 2021) - a periodic survey

of over 50,000 OECD citizens on the drivers of their trust in governments. The outcomes are primarily related to the perception of participation by citizens as long as higher involvement is linked to higher levels of faith, which can be considered a prerequisite of political action. For that, it is also necessary to look at citizen participation processes, such as the guidelines provided by [OECD \(2022\)](#).

Finally, to have a more expansive view of how democracy is perceived and the actual status of it worldwide constantly updated, being aware that it is the most referred one by international organisations and scholars, we will consult the Democracy Index provided by [Economist Intelligence Unit \(2021\)](#). To have more information about the strength of democracy, access to information, civil rights and political liberties, and the status of the rule of law in countries globally, we will use the [Sustainable Governance Indicators \(SGI\)](#) that provide monitoring of the status of democracy.

b. Democracy within social dialogue

While social dialogue is an important tool in attending to the needs of society, it is not only relevant when it comes to huge or deeply-rooted societal problems. There are two different approaches to social dialogue. First, many governments have embraced the idea that participation and social dialogue are required to address complex problems. Second, dialogue practitioners understand social dialogue as a necessary tool for daily use and argue that bringing people together is not enough (Pruitt, 2007, p.15). As Bunge (2024) pointed out in our interview, there is a need to take dialogue seriously. There is a common practice during electoral campaigns to call out for more dialogue, but with a lack of a defined and well-shaped outcome, we can denominate it as a calling for general dialogue. This will allow for identifying the need for accurate, common ground that enables dialogue and concrete outcomes. For instance, identify the need for independence of trade unions and employers in order to represent their interests to participate in social dialogue, not just for formal participation, but a concrete one. In that sense, there has to be a map, a specific path to walk through when social dialogue is called out.

For instance, to analyse the level of democracy in Mexico fifteen years after the alternation in government (2000), and secondly, to offer concrete proposals to the National Electoral Institute (INE) in order to contribute to the consolidation in Mexico, not only of democracy itself but an ethics democracy. This form of government comprises representatives elected with a profile of values and principles that drive them to meet the tasks that the office confers upon them successfully.

c. Assimilation with the case studies.

To immerse in the status of democracy in Mexico, it has been widely studied not only the understanding of democracy but also the challenges related, precisely, to corruption inside the foundations of political systems in the country. [Bautista \(2016\)](#) and [Benton \(2012\)](#) work on the main elements for the

consolidation of democracy fifteen years after the alternation in government (since 2000), based on desk work and surveys in the field. Also, Bautista develops suggestions for Mexican democratic consolidation focused on the systemic problem of corruption and clientelism.

In relation to India's democracy, [Price \(2022\)](#) provides a great understanding of its main challenges, which can be directly related to social dialogue. For instance, we are aware that the Mexican status of democracy, unstable economic development, and criminality in the political system connected with corruption have been leading to increasingly polarised discourses in India. Moreover, [Sarkar and Sinha \(2022\)](#) worked on the dual impact of politics in the informal labour sector. Based on empirical data, they provide a vast understanding of how informal workers can relate to politics due to clientelism and violence dynamics. As [Tudor \(2023\)](#) explains, the lack of tolerance to opposition discourses, media censorship and centralisation of power are crucial elements to bear when addressing democracy practices and citizen participation and engagement.

d. Elements and Mechanisms

Focusing on the strength of political institutions and large-scale democracy requirements, there are six important features to pay particular attention to: elected officials, free, fair, and frequent elections, freedom of expression, alternative sources of information, associational autonomy and inclusive citizenship (Dahl, 1998). Moreover, we identified that the sessional conditions for democracy include:

1. Control of the military and police by elected officials.
2. Democratic beliefs and political culture.
3. Continuous education.

Democracy can unfold effectively through different elements and mechanisms. Social dialogue and democracy are intertwined, and the main components to strengthen them are as follows:

- Through elections, which must be accessible to all citizens and without restrictions such as discrimination or unfair electoral practices, democracy can be effective for the legitimacy of democratic governance—the rule of law with no abuses in power.
- Freedom of expression is essential for democracy to be effective as it allows citizens to express their opinions and engage in political discourse without fear of reprisal.
- Through education, democracy can be effective due to the participation of individuals in civic activities. Individuals can be empowered as they understand the importance of their participation in democratic processes.
- Equitable representation is adequate for democracy as barriers must not be involved from participating in politics without discrimination.

- Effective and proactive dialogue is needed to resolve potential conflicts within the democracy and maintain stability and trust.

In order to deploy and intensify the practice of the elements, two external components need to be considered: modern market economy and society and subcultural pluralism (Dahl, 1998). This means to be aware of the surroundings where democracy and social dialogue are held and used.

e. Limitations of the literature.

The de facto understanding of democracy and its implications for daily workers are critical factors in our research. That can lead to limitations in having a complete picture of the political, social, and economic factors influencing democracy in Mexico and India. Moreover, due to the dynamics of political relations, there can even be third parties influencing the development of democracy in a local field. For instance, questions about the influence of the United States of America on Mexico's engagement with democratic practices and factual policies correlate with that commitment (Emmerich, 2010). Also, because democracy's social perception is an ongoing subject, discussions about it are still being debated in the public spaces of our case studies. This affects social dialogue as it requires the participation of society. Hence, new concepts and factors can arise through the research.

Democracy within social dialogue presents diverse complexities, reflecting the dynamic and different nature of democratic engagement in different societies. These limitations arise due to the need to balance competing interests, values and identities while ensuring that democratic principles are upheld.

Within the social dialogue, democracy can involve multiple stakeholders with various perspectives, including civil societies, government officials, political parties, labour unions, businesses and marginalised groups. Therefore, reaching a consensus might be difficult due to the various perspectives that must be considered. Furthermore, all stakeholders might have different interests. For example, businesses may prioritise economic growth and profitability, while labour unions may focus on workers' rights and fair wages. Therefore, dialogue is needed to reach a consensus; however, it might take time, and this can serve as a platform to discuss other societal issues, such as work benefits, poverty or circular economy.

However, not all participants have the same power or resources within social dialogue. Marginalised groups such as minorities or women may have difficulties being heard and attaining their interests. On the other hand, social dialogue may be useful in building trust and combatting misinformation through social media.

(See Annexe 2 for the importance of democracy)

2.3 Informality Labour

a. General definitions and concepts.

The conceptual framework proposed by Fields' "Defining and Measuring Informal Employment" (2005) is a tremendously interesting report for measuring labour informality. Among other elements, it highlights the need to consider concepts such as measures of confusion due to different observations from different actors such as companies or governments. This report makes an instrumental distinction between those employed informally and those employed in the informal sector.

The analysis of global trends in labour informality shows the relationship between identifying over/regulation and confiscatory fiscal policies as significant causes of informal employment (Bosch, Maloney, and Pages, 2007). Moreover, ILO's report on Decent Work and the Informal Economy underscores the risks associated with labour informality, identifying it as a driver of inequality and a barrier to decent work and social justice. Finally, Chen (2007) highlights the importance of regional and sectoral collaboration to ensure labour protection by downplaying the importance of international cooperation with interdisciplinary approaches such as socio-economic indices and security indices and underscoring the complexity of labour informality (ILO, 2019).

The ILO defines informal economy as "both perspectives and as all economic activities by workers and economic units that are - in law or practice - not covered or insufficiently covered by formal arrangements" (ILO, 2012b). The activities of the informal economy are not included in the law and thus operate outside the formal sector. Hence, their practice is not covered, meaning the law is not enforced or applied (ILO, 2015).

(See Annexe 3: reasons and rise of informality)

b. Implications of Informality

Implications of informality can have repercussions towards workers. This is due to the lack of rights, access to services, and exclusion from dialogue and representative mechanisms. Hence, there is a situation of vulnerability. Therefore, as Gabriela Ramos (2020) underlined, "the voice of workers and the share of wages in GDP have been declining". The existent inequalities are exposing individuals to risks and unfair conditions. Hence, social dialogue is needed for better working conditions as "evidence shows that countries with inclusive social dialogue tend to have a higher share of income going to the bottom 40% of income distribution" (Ramos, 2020). Collective bargaining reinforces conditions at the

middle and low end of distributions. Thus, recognising formal labour is the primary means to acquire labour rights. However, because it is very improbable we will soon reach the eradication of informality, the well-being of workers and decent work has to be seen integrally. Aleksynska (2024) explained that the reduction of informality is possible; however, eradicating informal labour is not possible due to the need of a holistic approach (ILO, 2015).

c. Assimilation with the case studies.

Labour Informality in India

The paper "India Informal Employment Trends" by Raveendran (2021) highlights the informality of India's labour force, identifying historical background and cultural elements as the main drivers. A change in the country's economic structure is essential to formalise the labour force within the country, such as a sectoral transition from agriculture to services. Thus, a larger share of the workforce is to be employed in services, engendering a decrease in agriculture's employment due to productivity increase.

"Measuring Informal Economy in India" by Chandrasekhar and Gosh (2022) focuses on the challenges for econometric and statistical measurement of the informal sector in India due to the lack of indices and controls on the employed part of the population and the prevalence of informality in various economic sectors. However, the 21st International Conference of Labour Statisticians has adopted new measures on the informal economy in October 2023, helping countries to collect data and make policies for workers in the informal economy (ILOSTAT, 2023).

Finally, Nalwaya (2024) highlights that the main characteristics of informality in India are strongly influenced by the still persistent caste system and the severe discrimination against vulnerable groups such as women, ethnic or religious minorities and migrants. A more protective approach towards marginalised groups is confirmed as one of the main principles of economic and labour policy to ensure the protection of these individuals.

Informality in Mexico

It is worth noting that unlike in India, the Mexican state's power of economic intervention is more significant, as shown by Flo reports at regional and national levels, as well as programmes such as FORLAC at the level of sectoral economic intervention. However, despite the greater scope for political action in the Latin American state, informality continues to pose a severe problem and hinder the nation's economic development.

The INEGI report (2018) provides a regional and analytical overview of informality region by region in Mexico. We can see how the data on informality varies greatly depending on the territory in which

we are located within the Mesoamerican state, with the Southeast and Southwest regions being the most affected by the phenomenon of labour informality.

A fundamental element of the Mexican analysis is given by the high variance at the regional level among the different federal states since the data provided by paper sources such as INEGI (2018) reflect how more economically advanced northern states present more remarkable economic development, more significant legal protection at the labour level and, in short, less informality in the different sectors of economic activity. Safety of the indigenous peoples in the Mexican territory, where different groups such as the Mayans in Yucatan present strong social and economic discrimination, exponentially increasing the level of economic informality in these marginalised groups due to racial, ethnic, racial and ethnographic reasons, will be highlighted.

d. Limitations of the literature.

The different literature analysed on informality at the global and national levels shows us the complexity of the social and economic situation, the impact on various vulnerable groups such as migrant women and Indigenous minorities, and the need for a systematic interchange at the state level. The social dialogue that will be developed in the previous pages shows us a form of intervention and dialogue between the different interests of employers, professionals and states, which can give a comprehensive solution to the question of normality, of course incorporating gender and decolonising perspectives, guaranteeing a non-discriminatory and fair response.

Based on our interview with ILO Mexico and Emilio Bunge (2024), which aligns with Recommendation 204 of the ILO, we gathered the following key elements to consider in attempts and practices to reduce informality:

1. Dissemination of information to workers and employers to empower and promote organisation and access to rights.
2. The success or failure of formalisation depends not only on how ethical employers are but also on the prospect of attractive public policies for the employer (financially viable) and the employee.
3. There must be direct support in terms of resources and technology to make registration (formalisation) attractive.
4. Policies aimed at eradicating informality should not seek to suppress subsistence activities but rather support them through a holistic approach. This includes support for SMEs, improving working conditions and enhancing access to social protection.
5. Formalisation processes and measures to facilitate transitions to formality must be tailored to specific circumstances faced by different countries and categories of economic units or workers.

3. Points of Contact

3 Points of Contact

3.1 Participation and Representation

a. Definition and concept

Participation and representation are the political and civil culture, social capital, civil engagement, public and collective decision-making, and workers' empowerment. In other words, it is the availability and willingness of the social sector to engage in political and civil life.

b. Within informality

Participation and representation in informal labour refer to the involvement and advocacy of workers outside formal employment systems.

Concerning participation in informal labour, three different contributions must be considered: types of informal labour, demographics and economic contribution. The types of informal labour include self-employment (street vendors, shop owners and more), casual or temporary work (domestic workers, agricultural workers and day labourers), and unregistered enterprises. The demographics include gender, age, and education, while the economic contribution is significant as it contributes to GDP and provides essential services and goods.

The representation in informal labour has challenges, forms of representation and mechanisms of advocacy. The challenges include the lack of legal protection as often informal workers do not have access to legal rights as well as organisation difficulties. The forms of representation include member-based organisations (for example SEWA in India), trade unions and associations (StreetNet International, supports street vendors and informal traders globally), NGOs and advocacy groups (for example, WIEGO), and community organisations. The mechanisms of advocacy that are crucial for the representation of informal labour include collective bargaining, policy influence and social movements. Successful attempts to the representation in informal labour can be portrayed through initiatives and contexts. Regulatory frameworks where successful representation involves frameworks that recognise the rights of informal workers, For example, South Africa's extension of labour laws to cover domestic workers has improved working conditions. Government initiatives has shown success as it provides resources and infrastructure for informal workers. Kenya's recognition and support for the motorcycle taxi operators through formal registration and training have improved their bargaining power. and organisation capacity.

c. Within social dialogue

Participation and representation in social dialogue are important for fostering inclusive and effective labour relations and policy-making. Diverse areas must be investigated to identify participation and representation within social dialogue.

- **Inclusivity.** It is essential for participation and representation as it ensures relevant stakeholders, including marginalised and underrepresented groups, have a voice in the dialogue process. Inclusivity ensures that diverse perspectives are considered, leading to more comprehensive and equitable outcomes. This includes trade unions, which often do not engage with informal workers.
- **Legitimacy and trust.** This is needed in this point of contact as demonstrating clear communication about the process and decisions made during social dialogue builds trust.
- **Capacity building.** Providing sufficient resources to support the participation of all relevant stakeholders is crucial in identifying the participation and representation within social dialogue.
- **Communication.** Open channels are an instrument within social dialogue for participation and representation as they maintain open and continuous dialogue among all parties involved.
- **Institutional framework.** Establishing legal frameworks that support institutionalised social dialogue is needed to investigate the point of contact's involvement in social dialogue.

Within social dialogue, participation and representation do have benefits, involving:

- Policies and agreements that reflect the diverse interests of all stakeholders tend to be more comprehensive and sustainable.
- Inclusive dialogue processes can foster greater social cohesion and reduce conflicts.
- Effective social dialogue with participation and representation can lead to more stable industrial relations, reducing the frequency of labour disputes.

However, some challenges are important to raise:

- Disparities in power and resources among stakeholders can hinder participation and representation
- Political resistance and cultural norms can impact the participation of certain groups.
- Limited financial and human resources can restrict the ability of some groups to participate effectively.

d. Within Democracy

Participation and representation are fundamental in democracy as they ensure that the government reflects the people's will and considers citizens to have a significant role in decision-making.

Participation in democracy refers to the diverse ways citizens engage in the political process. This includes voting, political campaigns, demonstrations, public consultations, digital participation and membership in political parties and NGOs. Legitimacy, accountability, representation, and civic engagement are important as they foster the country's democracy. The OECD Trust survey has demonstrated a lack of opportunities for political voices. They highlighted that “more than four in ten respondents (42.8%) say it is unlikely that their government would adopt opinions expressed in a public consultation” (OECD, 2023, p.11), thus demonstrating that many countries are not participatory in political processes. As Aleksynska (2024) highlighted, without social dialogue, democracy cannot be observed; therefore, communication needs to be increased for better democracy.

Representation in democracy highlights the mechanism by which elected officials serve as representatives of the people, making decisions and enacting policies on their behalf. The different forms are electoral, proportional, majoritarian, descriptive and substantive representation. Nevertheless, these representatives need social dialogue to install democracy within their respective countries. The challenges are the disparities in representation, manipulation and influence.

(See Annexe 4: standards)

e. Index and evaluation

Indexes and evaluation frameworks are essential tools for measuring the effectiveness of participation and representation in social dialogue, democracy and informal labour. These tools help assess the dialogue processes' inclusivity, fairness, and impact. An index can provide a quantitative measure of various aspects, such as:

- Voter turnout
- Social media and digital interaction
- Literacy - legal and political literacy of workers about their rights, labour representatives, news on the subject (actualities), mechanisms of labour protection, etc.

Evaluation involves setting clear goals, developing indicators of success, and regularly assessing progress against these indicators. Continuous monitoring and evaluation allow for adjustments to be made, improving the effectiveness and responsiveness of the dialogue over time.

3.3 Consultation

a. Definition and concept

Convention 87 and Convention 98 of ILO are key international labour standards that focus on the rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining. Convention 87 ensures the protection of the right of workers and employers to join and form organisations of their choosing. Convention 98 protects workers against anti-union discrimination and promotes collective bargaining.

Based on the Convention 169 of ILO, there is a need to consult indigenous communities in relation to relocation. But the law doesn't say if the outcome of the consultation is going to be applied by the national institution or how it has to be taken into account. Moreover, there is no clear understanding of whether the consultation is or has to be a resource in other contexts of limiting or affecting fundamental rights.

In accordance with the ILO Convention 169, there is a need for consultation and participation rights in a large number of provisions. Consent is only explicitly required in relation to the relocation of indigenous communities. In both Convention 169 and the UNDRIP, consultation, participation and consent rights have a central place. The scope of the consultation, participation, and consent requirements broadened significantly with the adoption of the UNDRIP. While ILO Convention 169 and the UNDRIP differ in terms of their scope, legal nature, and support, they also overlap and complement each other. Both sets of standards contain a broad, general framework of consultation and participation provisions, and a number of specific consultation rights, most importantly in relation to lands and resources.

In general terms, outside the specific regime of consultation for indigenous communities, the current practice is that consultation needs to come from a political willingness to host it. Once again, here social dialogue stands as a great tool to involve more people in the final outcomes of political decisions.

b. Within informality

There have been some attempts to work on consultation within the informality labour field. There are some features what need to be taken into account:

- Before: common ground and identification of historical oppositions, as well as previous dynamics and regulations.
- During: Call for those who are already organised, find more ways to allow everyone to access consultations.
- After: follow-up strategies need to be held in accordance to the needs of the citizens.

c. Within social dialogue

Within the framework of democracy and social dialogue, there are some specific points to bear in mind: corruption and criminal organisations, especially when it comes to social perception and participation in political scenarios. These two factors present, especially in the case of Mexico, can determine the impact of how people perceive the need or plausible opportunity to join social dialogues.

- Referendum as direct participation in social dialogue.
- Consultation for indigenous communities.
- Consultation in the implementation of working groups.

Within social dialogue processes, it is needed to distinguish between access to trade unions and the inclusion of member-based organisations. Access to trade unions involves formal membership and representation within established labour structures, offering workers legal support and collective rights. While the inclusion of member-based organisation ensures that informal workers and non-traditional sectors have a voice in discussions.

d. Within democracy

About upgrading representation, participation and openness in public life, the OECD Trust survey¹ found a widespread sense of lack of opportunities to exercise effective political voice in many countries. Less than one third of people (30.2%), say the political system in their country lets them have a say. In fact, more than four-in-ten respondents (42.8%) say it is unlikely that their government would adopt opinions expressed in a public consultation. Governments need to take a close look at how they are meeting the increased expectations of citizens for public participation and democratic representation” (OECD, 2023).

Moreover, focusing on consultation as a form of participation, there are three approaches to bear in mind:

1. Channels of participation, distinguishing traditional types of participation, such as working in a political party, and newer types of engagement and online political participation, such as posting or sharing political publications. Thus, if individuals consider “the system responsive and feel capable of participating through existing mechanisms, they would tend to participate more through traditional or pre-existing channels” (Prats and Meunier, 2021, p.6). Nevertheless, digital participation provides opportunities to improve democratic processes,

¹ This report presents the main findings of the first OECD cross-national survey of trust in government and public institutions, representing over 50,000 responses across 22 OECD countries. Participating countries were: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, Korea, Latvia, Luxembourg, Mexico, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

allowing the participation of people previously excluded and increasing the transparency of political processes (Prats and Meunier, 2021, p.6).

2. The types of participation differ by their character. It includes activities that are performed individually and those performed collectively in the public sphere.
3. The forms of participation operate within the system, using its tools, mechanisms and channels, such as voting, and those that operate outside it, such as boycotting. Even if both actions may reflect discontent, this dimension distinguishes “voice” responses from “exit” actions and their impact on representative democracies (Prats and Meunier, 2021).

(See Annexe 5: Standards)

e. Index and evaluation

Having these elements as the standard practice for consultation for Indigenous communities, the questions should be how to adapt and still consider this common ground of prior consultation in scenarios such as informality labour sectors.

Following our interview with Echeverria from ILO Mexico, it is recommended that any evaluation gathers the following three elements:

- Continuous evaluation. When structures no longer work, for example, dialogue meetings, the structures can be corrupted. The impact was so significant that there was a transition from labour dialogue boards to the judiciary. A movement within the country (academics, unions, civil society) realised that this tripartite structure no longer worked: evidence of corruption, delays in procedures, etc.
- Interinstitutional cooperation. After the reform, dialogue tables were opened that included more actors. In any case, there are limitations, mainly the need for inter-institutional collaboration.
- The democratisation of work centres. Through free and secret voting by all workers, they can choose who represents them as a union. If this is strengthened, perhaps there can be some positive impact on greater democracy.

3.3 Collective Rights

a. Definition and concept

Collective rights, or collective bargaining, offer a mechanism for regulating employment terms and work conditions. Many scopes of collective rights are known; however, we would like to focus on occupational Safety and Health and collective agreements for inclusion and trade protection.

According to Miller (1999), collective rights need “to distinguish between collective rights against other social groups and rights held against individuals. Collective rights of the former kind include, but are not exhausted by, rights of a social group held against the larger community it belongs to”. Therefore, collective rights are portrayed as the rights of a social group.

We will emphasise Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) and collective inclusion and trade protection agreements. International labour standards strongly emphasise a culture of preventive safety and health, adopting and implementing a national OSH policy, and tripartite consultation in formulating, implementing, and reviewing such a policy. OSH regulations and policies combine promotional, participatory and protective standards, leveraging the complementarities between them to make each standard more effective in achieving its objectives. The importance of dealing with the OSH is due to its inclusion in most contracts and its highlight on protecting workers at the workplace.

In recent years, the scope of collective agreements in many countries, sectors and enterprises has expanded to address inequality and exclusion in labour markets. The most prominent initiatives in this regard are commitments to equal pay for equal work, balancing care responsibilities and work, addressing violence and harassment at work, eliminating discrimination, ensuring equality of opportunity and treatment, and promoting inclusive labour protection. Collective agreements reflect a joint commitment by employers (and their organisations) and trade unions to pursue inclusion.

b. Within informality

Workers in the informal economy also have collective rights, as they are part of OSH, collective agreements, and trade protection. We must include the right to organise and the Collective Bargaining Convention 1949 (No.98); these conventions give workers in the informal economy a voice and thus facilitate gains and agreements. Kumar (2024) highlighted that the right to organisation is also fundamental for workers in the informal economy, as workers must be organised to participate in social dialogue. Nevertheless, the ILO acknowledges workers' rights in the informal economy; these rights have not often been extended to them. Thus, as seen in the informal section of the report, collective bargaining does not always extend to the informal labour market. As highlighted by WIEGO,

“Most often, negotiations take place in ad hoc meetings – often arising out of a crisis – or in consultative forums without statutory obligation on the part of the authorities, and enforceable agreements or continuity” (WIEGO, 2024).

c. Within social dialogue

The Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining (FACB) is the basis for social dialogue and refer to the rights of workers and employers to freely form and join organizations and to negotiate collectively through representatives. When collective rights are involved in social dialogue, good faith is involved between negotiating parties (ILO, 2022). Parties involved are trade union organisations at national, local and regional levels. Collective rights within social dialogue are valuable for promoting and protecting the rights and interests of workers by extending democracy in the workplace. Social dialogue is a tested instrument for managing economic and social change while maintaining societal consensus. Workers and enterprises can improve working conditions through social dialogue, including the OSH, collective agreements, and trade protection.

d. Within Democracy

Collective rights are fundamental rights and principles in democracies. Therefore, Member States must respect and give access to workers and enterprises. However, collective rights are at risk in certain OECD countries. Trade Unions and OSH should be protected; however, this is not the case in many countries. As Aleksynska highlighted, social dialogue is a pillar of democracy. Therefore, if “trade unions are a pillar of democracy, but freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining is under attack” (TUAC, 2023), social dialogue and democracy are both under threat. Therefore, strengthening the relations between democracy and trade unions will reinforce collective bargaining for workers.

Nevertheless, collective rights within democracy still face challenges. Employers and workers are challenged, which prevents them from exercising their rights and principles. In some countries, institutions for social dialogue either do not exist or, if they do, are inefficient. The labour administration often does not have sufficient resources and capacity, which increases the challenges for collective rights within democracy. For example, some governments “do not involve the social partners in policymaking due to a lack of political will and/or a lack of capacity, do not involve the social partners” (ILO, 2012, p.4). Therefore, social dialogue must include collective bargaining as it protects workers.

(See Annexe 6: Standards)

e. Index and evaluation

Collective bargaining, unionisation rate and coverage by collective agreements, can be used as an indicator of social dialogue as it can be measured by the number of workers employed with a formal or informal contract. This would demonstrate the conditions of employment and the difference in pay.

However, there is potential that the evaluation illustrates the need for freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining for better inclusion. Nevertheless, “union density only measures the extent of unionisation and tells us very little about the influence or bargaining power of unions” (Hayter & Stoevska, 2009, p.2). Moreover, it is necessary to interpret the data with a special social and political context and according to the institutional and legal framework.

3.4 Governance

a. Definition and concept

Governance involves the processes, systems, and policies through which various stakeholders articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations, and mediate their differences. It is about the mechanisms, processes, and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights and obligations, and mediate their differences.

Governance is critical for ensuring that different interests within a society are balanced and that the rights and obligations of all stakeholders are respected. It is the foundation of a functioning society and includes the oversight and direction of public policy and resource allocation.

b. Within informality

Governance within informality refers to the management and regulation of unstructured and often unregulated sectors of the economy, where informal practices and networks replace formal institutions. This encompasses how informal rules and systems operate effectively outside traditional or legal governance structures, particularly in informal employment or unregistered businesses (General principles from OECD discussions on informality).

Informality involves managing economic activities not monitored by any form of government. Effective governance in this context means ensuring that these activities are brought into compliance with regulatory frameworks, reducing risks for those operating informally.

c. Within social dialogue

Within the social dialogue, governance involves the frameworks and processes facilitating engagement and negotiation between government bodies, employers, and worker representatives. This aims to promote consensus-building and democratic involvement among the critical stakeholders in formulating policies related to labour and employment.

Social dialogue ensures that all parties, especially in the labour sector, have a voice in governance, which helps craft policies that are fair and beneficial for all stakeholders. This dialogue is key to maintaining industrial peace and workforce satisfaction.

d. Within democracy

Governance within democracy emphasises the role of diverse participatory processes and institutions that uphold democratic principles. This includes ensuring transparency, accountability, and inclusive participation in decision-making that affect the public at various administrative levels (General principles from ILO governance discussions).

Democracy thrives on good governance, ensuring the representation processes are transparent and fair. Governance within democracy is about making sure that power is exercised justly and that the government remains accountable to its people.

(See Annexe 7: Standards)

e. Index and evaluation

Index and evaluation in governance involve using various metrics and indicators to assess governance practices' effectiveness, efficiency, and integrity. This can include transparency indices, corruption perception indices, and other evaluative tools that provide comparative data on governance performance across different regions or sectors.

Indexes and evaluations measure the effectiveness of governance, providing a quantitative basis to assess and improve government performance. These tools are essential for continuous improvement in governance practice (General principles from OECD discussions on governance evaluation).

4. Data Collection Strategy

4. Data Collection Strategy

4.1 Methodological Approach

Our primary tool to visualise and systematise our research is a Venn Diagram, where we first analyse the interconnectivity between social dialogue and democracy and examine the relation between social dialogue, democracy, and informal labour. This research employs a mixed-method approach with interviews and desk reviews to comprehensively understand how social dialogue interconnects with democracy and informal labour.



Figure 1: Interconnectivity between three main concepts

Our research approach follows a linear process of conceptualisation stages. Two principal streams that run along in a parallel way direct this process:

- Thematic block analysis
- description of qualitative data through quantitative grading.

4.2 Desk Reviews

The research begins by thoroughly reviewing the existing literature on social dialogue, democracy, and informal labour. This includes academic articles, books, policy papers, and reports from international organisations such as the OECD and the ILO. The literature review aims to identify key theories, concepts, and frameworks previously explored and gaps in the current understanding of the topic. Desk reviews will be essential to identify gaps in the existing literature. By systematically reviewing previous literature, researchers can locate areas that have been under-explored, which can then be addressed. This contributes to advancing knowledge and ensures that the research is relevant and fills a critical void in the field.

a. Exploratory Sequential Design Method - Descriptive Data

In two clear steps, looking at qualitative and quantitative data is essential in this research to make a measurable description. First, through quantitative data, we will feed the understanding of concepts, context, and dynamics of thematic blocks in their individuality and interactions with each other. Second, by using qualitative data, we will rate and finish off our interpretations from the qualitative data.

This parallel analytical stream will be dictated by an exploratory sequential design method as we collect qualitative data first, followed by quantitative data to explore the topics and case studies further and grade the data and interpretations made.

4.3 Interviews

To gather first-hand insights, the research conducts surveys and in-depth interviews with various stakeholders (Annexes 8 and 9). These include international organisation representatives and academic experts. The interviews provide qualitative insights into social dialogue initiatives' processes, challenges, and outcomes. Interviews also gather in-depth insights from relevant stakeholders about their experiences, perceptions, and suggestions regarding social dialogue, democracy, and informal labour processes.

4.4 Case Studies

The research includes detailed case studies in India and Mexico of specific instances where social dialogue has significantly impacted democratic processes. These case studies are selected based on criteria such as geographic diversity, the presence of social dialogue mechanisms, and the availability of data. Each case study thoroughly examines the context, key actors, dialogue processes, and outcomes. This approach allows for an in-depth understanding of the factors contributing to successful social dialogue and its impact on democracy.

Furthermore, India and Mexico were selected for their unique socio-economic and political contexts, which provide diverse perspectives on the role of social dialogue in fostering democracy. With its sizeable informal labour sector and recent economic reforms, India contrasts with Mexico's extensive history of labour movements and current challenges with labour informality. These countries offer valuable insights into how social dialogue mechanisms can be tailored to different environments to promote democratic governance.

4.5 Data Analysis

The individuality of each context does not present a real constraint. To measure and analyse the points of contact, generate comparisons and standardise minimum criteria of social dialogue mechanisms in informality to promote democracy, general and standardised tools have to be used. These tools will be the indexes.

Statistics will help us to perceive certain levels of satisfaction and success or crisis and collapse to qualify the different mechanisms, laws, relations, policies, and dynamics analysed in the field as adequate and effective (Annexe 10: Statistics Table). When analysing quantitative data, we will be aware of following the principles and guidelines of the OECD's Frascati Manual (2015).

Following legal parameters, we will use the Inter-American Court of Human Rights margin on the qualifiers adequate and effective to evaluate the mechanisms, dynamics and policies in each case and situation.

It is important to emphasise that our ratings and observations are not absolute, and we limit ourselves to describing design and implementation outcomes of, as mentioned, mechanisms, dynamics, and policies. It is challenging to generate cross-cutting judgments without looking at each particular situation.

4.6 Cross-Comparative Analysis

A cross-comparative analysis is conducted to compare the findings from India and Mexico. This will be done through thematic comparisons, including innovative practices, social justice and legal reform. This analysis helps identify common factors contributing to the success or failure of social dialogue initiatives across different contexts. It also highlights how cultural, economic, and political factors influence the efficacy of social dialogue in supporting democracy and informal labour.

4.7 Synthesis and Reporting

The final stage involves synthesising the findings from the literature review, interviews, case studies, and data analysis. The synthesis aims to integrate the various insights into a coherent narrative that addresses the research questions. The results are then reported comprehensively, with clear policy recommendations and practical applications for enhancing social dialogue, informal labour and democratic governance.

By employing this mixed-method approach, the research ensures a robust and holistic understanding of the complex interplay between social dialogue, informal labour and democracy, providing valuable insights for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers.

4.8 Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations are expected to arise in the research project. We identify language, online database, political interpretation of statistics, and using a mixed methodology as potential constraints in the study.

For instance, many government archives can't be found digitally, and information can be outdated when possible. Another constraint could be that available data on labour informality and democracy indices can be misleading or mis-collected due to the country's political image. As observed in the literature review, a limitation is the composition of the representatives of employers and workers; thus, how are the representatives selected or nominated?

We have to be precise in defining the boundaries and scope of the research. The most challenging delimitation is the depth of research. Our thematic axis and case studies are deep and complex blocks with many information sources and contextual considerations. We must focus mainly on the cross-over matrix of the blocks to answer our research questions.

5. Case Studies

5. Main Findings on good practices: a comparative analysis of case studies

In our research, we decided to dive into the case studies of Mexico and India. The Permanent Mission of India (2018), the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (2022), the ILO, and foundations, including the Fair Wear Foundation (2019), all mention the use of social dialogue in India and Mexico. According to the Permanent Mission of India and the ILO, India and Mexico follow a tripartite consultative body according to Convention 144, meaning that the governments are also involved in the process (International Organisation of Employers, 2003, p.2). In both countries, the structures for tripartite consultation are functioning, nevertheless, the regularity and effectiveness of these consultations may vary. The consistency of social dialogue remain a challenge, but the frameworks provided by Convention 144 support efforts to strengthen these processes (ILO, 2017) (Government of India Ministry of Labour & Employment, 2024). Therefore, governments "consult, negotiate with and involve independent and representative employers' and workers' organisations in the formulation of socioeconomic and labour market policies impacting on the world of work and [...] legal framework" (International Organisation of Employers, 2003, p.2). As highlighted by the Fair Wear Foundation and Mondial FNV, Indian workers are generally represented by independent trade unions, which are legally protected and can intervene on behalf of workers. Nevertheless, trade union density in India is low and collective bargaining agreements protecting workers are unknown (Natives, 2019). Although India's laws protect the freedom of associations and collective bargaining rights, these rights are not actualised in practice.

Concerning Mexico, the ILO, the International Trade Union Confederation and the Fair Wear Foundation estimate that there has been a loss of union power even if there were efforts made to promote independent unions, defend the rights of association, the individual and collective worker rights, develop union solidarity and union freedom (Covarrubias, 2021, p.23). According to the ILO, this is a reflection of a policy of labour repression (sometimes known as a national policy of "labour pacification") rather than progress in workers' fulfilment (ILO, 2021). Therefore, it is essential to look at both studies to have the ability to guide towards social dialogue with intercessions with democracy and informal labour.

5.1 Legal Reform

a. Informal Labour within legal reforms

Informality in India's labour market refers to the large segment of employment that operates outside the formal regulatory and legal framework. This includes jobs without social security benefits, labour rights, or formal employment contracts. The informal sector represents a significant part of India's

economy, providing livelihoods to most of its workforce. However, there is a lack of income and employment security, consequently impacting employers' health. The Indian employers are “not covered by the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, which recognises the collective bargaining rights of workers” (Indian Labour Government, 1947). Despite India's economic growth, the informal sector remains a pervasive aspect of its economy, involving traditional informal activities and increasingly informal employment within formally registered enterprises. This dual nature of informality presents unique challenges, such as job insecurity and lack of benefits, which disproportionately affect women and marginalised groups.

On the other hand, Mexico has trended from some political campaigns to support the criminalization of informality identified by Echeverria from ILO Mexico. This comes from an extreme perspective of eradication of what is out of the “formal” regime. There is no understanding of the complexity of informal labour nor the economic advantages of considering these labour agents and economic ones. As well known, criminalisation should be understood as the last resource of regulation due to its severe limitations to human freedom and development. However, in contexts where polarisation is not only well spread but also used as a tool in the political field, it can be hazardous to accept such public policies.

Furthermore, following our interview with Echeverria from ILO Mexico,

“We can still see the aftermath of the pandemic: informality rates in Mexico were reducing before the pandemic, when the crisis informality rose again, the numbers before the pandemic haven't been recuperated. (...) Legal categories of workers and their distinction in protection - de jure and de facto exclusion to informal workers because they don't have access to reach social dialogue - limitations to access organisms/institutions to give them a voice - limitations to labour rights from the start because of legal categories of workers”.

The government's willingness to have the regulation of labour informality on discussion is there, however, there are still some regulations and mindsets to change that add complexity to it. In the legal reforms, the Federal Labour Law is key; it mainly gathers some of the content of the ILO Conventions 189 and 169 and the recommendation 42 of ILO. This shows an openness from the government to implement international standards in labour reform. Our main finding is the creation of the Tripartite Committee, which includes dialogue and negotiations between more civil society stakeholders so that it gets out of the bubble of government agents.

b. Social Dialogue within legal reforms

Social dialogue is instrumental in shaping sustainable economic growth, ensuring social justice, and fostering high-trust work relations that improve business performance and enhance workers' share in

rising profits. However, the ILO has emphasised “the need for India to uphold its international commitments by engaging in effective social dialogue and tripartite consultation before implementing new laws or revising existing ones” (Sarkar, 2021). This is due to recent developments demonstrating the challenges of effective social dialogue in India. The new labour codes have been criticised for missing the tripartite consultations essential for equitable reforms (Sarkar, 2021). In India, social dialogue includes tripartite dialogues involving the government, employers, and worker organisations and extends to collective bargaining and workplace cooperation. This includes institutions such as the ILC (Indian Labour Conference), a platform for representatives from the government, employers, and workers to discuss and resolve labour issues and Minimum Wages Advisory Boards, which was set up to recommend minimum wages for different workers categories. This framework is crucial for maintaining industrial harmony and addressing the concerns of non-regular and contract workers, especially in the context of the country's economic liberalisation and labour market changes since 1991.

In Mexico, a few social dialogue structures exist: the tripartite Minimum Wage Commission, Infonavit or the tripartite Committee on Productivity (provided for in the Federal Labour Law), which promotes and opens the door for more stakeholders in social dialogues. However, there are some challenges to be addressed. Bureaucracy and corruption are huge problems here. For instance, the committee was established in 2012 but didn't start running until a couple of years ago. Also, the corruption rates keep increasing and profoundly affecting the government as an institution, which is reflected in the generalised untrust of the population.

Moreover, a problem is the mindset of prohibition and eradication concerning the informal sector. The government needs to work hard to swiftly change from prohibition to coexistence, which will allow informal workers to be recognised as an important part of the economy. Due to the existence of general consultations, where different organisations are invited to express their different points of view, not everyone responds to them. There must be a balance because it is very easy to complain, but there are situations where there is no response to the timely invitation. Sometimes, these consultations are not completely inclusive either - in the most representative or large ones, there are minorities without a voice (ex., rural worker, but who is perhaps represented by a cooperative). The state needs to push for consultations, at least consulting those already organised.

On the other hand, when it comes to dialogue, the dynamics in a nation and cooperation between civil society organisations and unions, there are clashes between these different types of organisations: clashes of interest that are historically opposed. These power relationships must be studied, and this information must be conveyed to governments so that they can be more inclusive.

c. Efforts and approaches to transition from informality to formal labour

India has been putting effort into approaching the transition from informality to formal labour. However, there is a major informal sector. Nevertheless, India has been implementing policies to help the informal sector. India includes multiple-employer bargaining, which takes different forms. The first step is the ad-hoc representatives of contract workers, who are the negotiators, either with the contractors or the principal employer. The second step is the workers' union, which is part of the dialogue with the principal employer to reach an agreement on understanding (Ebisui, 2012). Another effort has been the direct negotiation between the workers and the contractors. However, the limitation is that through direct negotiations, workers in desperate need of work can be manipulated (Aleksynska, 2024). To counter these limitations, Kumar has explained, "In India, self-help promotion groups and banking schemes have been put in place to open accounts for savings to be put there if they need a loan. Thus, they could have up to 7 times their savings".

In the case of Mexico, as noted by our interview with Bunge (2024), the government's approach has been to sanction informal labour practices. Mexico has been using tax incentives for formalisation and introducing labour reform to enhance labour rights and conditions. Régimen de Incorporación Fiscal (Fiscal Incorporation Regime, RIF) has been implemented to lower tax rates and compliance requirements for small businesses transitioning to the formal sector. The government has been taking other approaches such as training and education and social security extensions. Hence, the transition to formal labour might not be even less appealing for the workers. However, our main finding is INDERLAB, a digital platform that gathers index and data on implementing the Labour System Reform, such as the proportionality of salaries between union workers and independent ones. This is extremely important when gathering information to decide on giving incentives or regulating the transitions to the formal labour market: who to contact, when and how.

5.2 Innovative Practices

a. Social organisations related to labour purposes

In India, social organisations are dedicated to labour purposes. They protect workers' rights, promote fair labour practices, and advocate policies that benefit the workforce. These organisations are fundamental to improving the conditions of workers and advocating for labour rights. They play a crucial role in protecting and promoting labour rights in India by providing educational programs, healthcare, legal assistance, and policy advocacy. In December 2021, the Supreme Court "agreed to hear a petition filed by one union (Indian Federation of App-based Transport Workers (IFAT)) representing 20,000 home delivery workers, which called for social security benefits to be extended to workers of app-based platforms" (Chaturvedi, 2021). Therefore, in India, unions have the power to

improve working conditions; however, negotiations and social dialogue are needed, even today, to improve workers' rights.

An example of a labour organisation in India is the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC). Its objective is to represent the interests of workers across sectors, including manufacturing, services, and more. It advocates for workers' rights, safe conditions, and social security benefits (AITUC, 2024). Other workers organisations include Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS), Centre of India Trade Unions (CITU), and Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA), and more can be found in the Constituents on the ILO website. The employer's organisations include the Council of Indian Employers, the ILO constituent organisation, an umbrella organization of three employers bodies: the All India Organization of Employers (AIOE), Employers' Federation of India (EFI) and the Standing Conference of Public Enterprises (SCOPE). These organisations have been in place to help workers in the informal economy to organise through (ILO, 2019):

- Organise individual informal economy workers or operators into sector trade unions.
- Associate or affiliate informal economy associations to the existing sector trade unions.
- Recognize informal economy associations as trade unions and affiliate them to the national centre.
- Associate groups of informal economy operators as cooperatives.

(ILO, 2019, p.22)

In Mexico, the innovative practices concerning social organisations and labour informality have not come from government action. We found the ongoing recognition of non-formal organisations by going beyond trade unions and including social groups in social dialogue that the law might not recognize but operate as an association in the informal labour field. Acknowledging and recognising non-formal organisations allows them to participate in the social dialogue and represent their members effectively. They already operate as an association, and the government can benefit from the information they can gather, but the workers can also benefit from being listened to and considering the decisions that can affect them. For instance, during our interview research with Bunge and Echeverria, we got information about the household workers and workers in the trash that unite themselves through technology. They started to become more organised due to the limitations of the pandemic, and they use social media such as Facebook and WhatsApp to identify themselves and coordinate their needs and actions in that regard.

Technology is also important for the government, and we found that some platforms can gather valuable information and provide a space for social dialogue.

In that sense, we found **WIEGO**, a global network focused on empowering the working poor, especially women, in the informal economy. This platform not only gathers information about this non-formal organisation but also helps them to cooperate.

b. Democratic organisations related to labour purposes

As explained above, the AITUC and other workers and employers organisations are part of the democratic organisations that are related to labour purposes. Other democratic organisations may include the Indian National Trade Union Congress, which focuses on improving workers' conditions, providing social security, and ensuring fair wages. Another important democratic organisation directed at labour purposes is the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA), which aims to empower self-employed women workers by providing them with access to legal aid, market opportunities, and financial services. These organisations' essential functions are collective bargaining, legal support, advocacy, organising protests, and ensuring social security and welfare. Nevertheless, there are limitations with democratic organisations, which include the changing economic landscape (the economy in India is informal, and thus it might be harder to organise with workers in non-traditional employment setups), political and legal barriers, globalisation (India is an evolving society that is constantly changing and thus there is an international competition and influence of multinational corporations, impacting local labour markets) and internal fragmentation (the difference in strategies can fragment labour movement, reducing effectiveness).

ILO Mexico highlighted that domestic workers found themselves without any protection from the government, lacking coverage by the Labour Federal Law, and developing a way to support and help themselves. First of all, an identification system; they (primarily women) recognised that as long as they were working indoors, there was no possible connection between them daily. They needed to find a common meeting point. There, technology and social media were the options to dive in. Once they gather on a specific platform, they can start talking about their needs, concerns, and experiences. The dialogue was taking shape. They ensemble an internal system to support each other and become stronger. Afterwards, they empowered themselves and came out to the political public arena once understanding the importance of their work as an organisation.

For instance, highlighted by the interview with Echeverria from ILO Mexico, "forums and surveys system (...) such as INTERLAB is a platform that analyses the proportionality of salaried workers between unionised and those who are not. Sometimes, measurements cannot be made due to lack of resources. If there is a focus on social networks, consider that bots exist and can affect votes. Likewise, on the internet, a lot of misinformation was evident during the pandemic. At the same time, it must be checked if there was a state response in reality".

checked if there was a state response in reality".

5.3 Promotion of Social Justice

a. Contextual analysis

Access to social justice has been evolving throughout the years in India. However, what are the new strategies, and how can social dialogue ensure these strategies are implemented? As Singh (2021) highlighted, "Today, a vast social revolution is taking place in the judicial process, the law is fast changing, and the problems of the poor are coming to the forefront". India needs to produce new methods and strategies to provide access to justice for individuals who do not have access to fundamental human rights.

While India has been progressing in social justice, there is still a big gap between the rich and the poor, which is growing daily. Courts have been performing to make social justice successful.

India is a diverse country; thus, social justice is a cornerstone of equality, progress, and unity. India's rich languages, religions, cultures, and socio-economic backgrounds are strengths and challenges. Social justice is a powerful mechanism for mitigating inequalities and promoting harmony.

In Mexico, due to historical knowledge of political practices, there is a sense of not progressing as expected on social justice. There have been some reasons behind it, first of all, illegal or irregular practices related to electoral campaigns, relations with the drug cartels and criminal organisations in general, and corruption in "buying" votes. Secondly, there is no clear pattern of how authorities and citizens understand democracy; the concept of democracy in practice can be understood as the government of people and for the people, allowing no consensus on what it means to have social justice. However, another understanding of democracy and its relation with social justice is the process of active participation in political decisions. These practices are deep-rooted in Mexican consciousness and refrain, or at least put into question, the value and importance of participation in the public sphere.

b. Mechanisms to promote social justice

It is crucial to prioritise the advancement of social justice in India to tackle long-standing disparities and create a fair society. This entails the inclusion of marginalised populations, formalising previously unregulated sectors, promoting open discussions among diverse communities, and safeguarding essential social rights like education, healthcare, and social security for all citizens. Promoting social justice refers to addressing "fair labour relationships between employers and employees in the formal market" (Araújo & Meneses, 2018, p.1). Promoting social justice highlights the need for inclusion within societies where participation is at its fullest and equitable. Therefore, there are three mechanisms to promote social justice in India (Singh, 2021, p.141).

1. The provision of socio-economic and political rights is found in the Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State Policy.
2. Adopting the socio-economic development model to achieve socialism by reducing the gap between the poor and the rich, providing equal opportunity.
3. Providing particular courses of action for the vulnerable in India while implementing the Difference Principle.

There is a need to check other factors when discussing social justice, dialogue, and the guarantee of social rights: economic framework. Governments lacking a public policymaker approach tend to ignore “economic hardships, a key spur to protests about the delivery of services, his measure of governmental accountability. This lack of attention to neoliberalism is problematic insofar as it ignores the resources that governments have available to address social needs, that is to be accountable to their various constituencies. How are we to measure accountability if we do not take into account the diminution of governmental prerogatives under neoliberalism” (Shefner, 2012). In that sense, any kind of comparative analysis of mechanisms and institutions for promoting democracy through labour informality needs to bear in mind what the citizens understand as economic well-being based on how the citizens tend to make decisions about labour opportunities.

That is why we focused on the examples of consultation and forums that Mexico successfully implemented. Mexico has ratified the Convention 169 of ILO and needs to implement consultation for indigenous communities, and we think this practice can be translated to the informal labour sector, especially the 3 key elements: free, prior and informed. Public perception is key in social dialogue; the Mexican population do not feel moved to be part of the dialogue, so consultations can be a great way to start including this specific sector in the government decisions.

Public forums are also part of this, and we found examples: First, we upgraded school buildings in Mexico with social participation. This meant including parents, educators, and students in renovating and constructing different infrastructure and improvements to the school. The primary outcome was how the organisation was set, enabling different civil society stakeholders to participate in social justice. Second, there is Navegador Indígena, a platform that gathers information from 11 countries from the region in relation to the protection of labour rights from different stakeholders, as shown in the report.

Moreover, the FORLAC (Formalization of Labour in Latin America and the Caribbean) initiative focuses on sectoral economic intervention to integrate informal workers into the formal economy. These programs provide incentives and support for formalisation, aiming to improve workers' access to social

protection and labour rights. This can help influence the government's decisions on how to regulate the informal labour sector, as shown in the report.

And last but not least, it was important to provide direct support and incentives for employers and workers to transition to the formal sector. This should include financial and technology resources. Here, the main focus is to acknowledge the importance of a transition without compromising the livelihoods of employers and workers.

5.4 Comparative Analysis

Promoting democracy in the informal labour sector and through social dialogue is critical for enhancing workers' rights and improving governance. Mexico and India, having large informal sectors and vibrant democracies, employ various mechanisms and institutions to promote democracy in these domains.

	India	Mexico	Comparison
Social Dialogue Policies	Predominantly sectoral unions. Limited but growing tripartite dialogue.	Institutionalised tripartite dialogue involving unions and employers.	The tripartite bodies, such as the National Commission for Minimum Wages (CONASAMI), focus on specific issues like minimum wages. At the same time, India's Indian Labour Conference (ILC) serves as a broader forum for labour policy discussions.
Connection to Democracy	Greater centralization in capital and democracy in current development.	A strong tradition of social dialogue and civic participation with an established democracy.	Mexico's labour reforms and India's labour codes both enhance the legal framework for social dialogue, promoting democratic participation and better governance in labour markets. Mexico Labour's law reform (2019) aimed to improve workers' rights and align with the USMCA (United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement). The reforms ensures freedom of association, collective bargaining, and enhancing dispute resolution mechanisms. India's Labour Code reform (2020) reinforced 29 labour laws into four labour codes: the Code on Wages, the Industrial Relations Code, the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, and the Social Security Code. Mexico's alignment with international labour standards, particularly

			through the influence of the USMCA and ILO, contrasts with India's more domestically driven process, even if India also considers ILO guidelines. Nevertheless, both countries faced challenges in achieving full consensus, demonstrating the inherent tensions in balancing the interests of workers, employers, and the state.
Informal Work	Informality levels of 80% with policies focused on formalisation and social protection.	High informality of 56%, focusing on labour protection and integration of informal workers into formal system.	Both countries have policies targeting the informal sector, but their approaches differ. Mexico's social programs like Prospera whose aim is to reduce poverty and promote social justice. Prospera provides cash transfers to low-income families, conditional on specific actions such as school attendance. They believe that by improving education and health outcomes, they can indirectly support the integration of informal workers into the formal economy, India's National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) and SEWA provide direct support and advocacy for informal workers. NREGA aims to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of wage employment per financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. SEWA is a trade union for women working in the informal sector. They provide a wide range of services, including childcare, legal services, microfinance, and healthcare, to help women in the informal sector organise and advocate for their rights, enhancing their working conditions and social security. Mexico and India have different strategies to support informal workers; Mexico focuses on legal reforms and social programs to create an environment favourable to formalisation. It contrasts with India, which provides direct employment guarantees and

			organises informal workers to enhance security and their rights.
Impact on Social Dialogue	Informality and bureaucracy limit the improvement of social conditions.	Focus on labour rights and social justice has led to significant reforms.	Mexico and India have developed robust mechanisms and institutions for promoting democracy in the informal labour sector and through social dialogue, though their approaches and specific initiatives differ. Mexico emphasises union democracy and transparency, while India focuses on comprehensive labour reforms and social security for informal workers.

6. Conclusion: Policy Recommendations

6. Conclusion: Policy Recommendation

What mechanisms and strategies (best practices) of social dialogue can facilitate the guarantee of rights within the informal labour sector, and how do these dynamics foster democracy?

As our first endeavour, we plunged into the study of convergence between social dialogue, informal labour, and democracy, focusing on case studies from Mexico and India. We perceived two organisation structures: organic and institutionalised (formal or informal).

Organic structures are grounded in social and anthropological relations, built around cultural, familial, economic and geographical dynamics. These structures are the starting point towards a more institutionalised organisation for labour and democratic purposes. In both Mexico and India, societal dynamics are central to organisational structures. Family guilds maintain trades across generations in India, while in Mexico, trade organisations are similarly based on family and community networks. Depending on these social relations, activities, hierarchies, representations, and decisions around the trade will develop and fall into.

Necessity reinforces these community structures. Limited state reach compels people to rely on these organic networks for survival, fostering a historical and cultural foundation for participation. Without basic needs met, participation in democratic processes remains low. Thus, social support networks are crucial for further organisation and participation, prioritising immediate, tangible needs over abstract governmental affairs.

We suggest rethinking the transition from informal to formal labour. Rather than viewing formality as a rigid framework, it should be a spectrum that includes effective, existing organisations. Policies should focus on inclusivity and accessibility, incorporating informal labour into formal frameworks without disrupting their efficiency.

Our goal is not to eradicate informality but to integrate diverse socio-economic organisations to enrich democracy. Understanding the needs and management of informality from the workers themselves is key. Social dialogue mechanisms should be inclusive, representative, and focused on protection rather than eradicating the informal sector.

Continuous evaluation and dissemination of these mechanisms are essential. Inter-agency cooperation can ensure these strategies address the structural causes of informality and adapt to new challenges. Institutionalising social structures may increase democratic engagement, but over-institutionalisation could hinder participation.

a. Institutionalisation

Corroborate a quantitative correlation or consequence between the strength of social structures and the efficiency and participation in institutionalised structures. It would be worth it to enquire if increasing the formalisation of dynamics, such as transitioning from informal to formal structures and organisation, correlates with the increment of the democratic index. In other words, it is a question of whether institutionalising social organisations could be an approach to increase democratic engagement or whether too much institutionalisation is detrimental to democratic participation and enabling results. A similar question would be if organic social organisations are more practical in protecting workers in informality and whether this protection and institutional guarantee influence the democratic participation of workers. Under the same topic, a final query we propose is whether the pursuit of square institutionalisation of social structures and labour dynamics criminalises workers and frustrates the aim of formalisation.

b. Trust and Participation

India and Mexico lead the global polls on Leader Approval Rating in first and second, respectively. This year, 2024, both countries had elections that closed on the same weekend and reaffirmed the massive popular support of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Andrés Manuel Lopez Obrador. Having the most beloved democratic leaders did not increase voter turnout; on the contrary, India dropped 1.7% and Mexico 2.5%, which remained among the world's average electoral participation. It could be a minor unrelated drop, but having recent historical elections and similar democratic phenomena in both countries could surge an interesting line of research to remark on a correlation between approval, trust, and active democratic participation. A quantitative measurement could begin by comparing trust and acceptance of government institutions, inscription and consolidation of trade unions and labour forums for social justice, against voter turnout and political vocalisation in social media and other communication/manifestation platforms. Another investigation on the same topic could be the quantitative relevance of trust as a transition pathway from “informal” to “formal” organisations.

In conclusion, governments should establish regular forums for stakeholder engagement, such as quarterly meetings between labour unions, employer associations, and government representatives. Additionally, implementing transparent evaluation mechanisms, like public reporting on the outcomes of social dialogue initiatives and independent audits of these processes, can ensure accountability and continuous improvement.

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8. Appendices

8. Appendices

Annexe 1: Importance of Social Dialogue

Social dialogue results from many social movements seeking decent working conditions and labour justice, culminating in forming a horizontal and equal forum to facilitate consensus among employers, employees, and the State.

Workers and employers are crucial when approaching social dialogue. Social dialogue guarantees labour rights, spaces for reconciliation, participation and representativeness, consultations, and governance. Effective collective bargaining gives rise to two fundamental principles and rights at work, which are necessary for democracy. Social dialogue protects and promotes workers' rights and reinforces democracy and human rights. Its importance lies in its instruments, which are fundamental to managing economic and social change while maintaining consensus (ILO, 2022). Collective bargaining, participation and representativeness, consultations and governance are crucial to improve the conditions of workers. Social dialogue has expanded the possibilities of workers' participation as they can ask questions surrounding their contract protection, which must include, for example, safety and health at the workplace. As ILO indicates, "Trade union organisations [...] are the major means by which workers participate in social dialogue and as such serve as indispensable instruments for working people to improve their quality of life and to promote equitable and sustainable development of the society as a whole" (ILO, 2022, p.1).

Good governance and consultations will advance social and industrial development, promoting stability and, thus, boost the economy (ILO, 2023b). As Aleksynska (2024) highlighted, social dialogue is the pillar of democracy and, therefore, is key to balancing the interests of workers and maintaining industrial relations.

Global Deal demonstrates the importance of social dialogue as it "absorbs shocks and preserves jobs, manages industrial disputes, creates the stability needs for the smooth functioning of the production process, improving investment in human capital and productivity while offsetting the risks in global supply chains" (Grimshaw et al., 2017; Janssen, 2021).

Annexe 2: Importance of democracy

Democracy is important in social justice as the democratic principles and participation lead to social justice and can prevent inequalities. In many countries, rights are not guaranteed, including the rights of workers. This results in limited controls, police violence and erosion of the rule of law. In particular, discrimination is still very much present, limiting people to exercise their rights. The number of

countries restricting the registration of trade unions have risen. The right to strike, for example, has been violated by 85% of countries ([ITUC, Global Rights Index 2020](#)). Since Covid-19, more countries have violated the rules of law related to workers.

Within democracy and social justice, transparency is crucial in order to protect and guarantee the workers rights. Through transparency, governments can also be accountable to their citizens through forms of public oversight. This accountability helps to check the potential abuse of power. Transparency can ensure that citizens are informed, which can be done through social dialogue.

Through dialogue, inclusive policies with diverse perspectives can be considered and enforce democracy and social justice. Fostering a culture of negotiation and social dialogue, democracy can address the different conflicts and inequalities in a manner that respects the rights of everyone. In order to do so, the needs of people need to be acknowledged by the people taking final decisions. However, because there is no perfect solution and sometimes the government sources are not enough, citizens organise themselves and find solutions according to their specific needs.

Annexe 3: Reasons and Rise of Informality

There is not an only reason, nor a same degree of intensity of the following reasons behind informality. They can present themselves all together or not depending on the different labour sectors.

1. Lack of access to different labour regimes².
2. Social and labour marginalisation policies³.
3. Criminalisation of informality.
4. Diversification of activities and lifestyles.
5. By choice.

Facing this scenario, the Labor Reform arises from different consultations and pressure that occurred for a long time. Problems about the so-called “protection contracts” that sought social (but artificial) peace and that at the end of the day, protected the employer more to avoid the existence of strikes.

In that sense, it is important to understand the causes of informality to know the plan of action towards it, and stop patronising informality and its approaches. Do not criminalise the idea of people wanting to

² Definition of labour regime: “the dominant way in which labour is recruited, compensated, and disciplined” (Bair, 2019, p.488). Through this definition, we can link to the issue of limited financial resources of SMEs to comply with labour and tax regimes. Thus, there might a strong motive due to the reluctance towards tax compliance.

³ For example: labour intensive production techniques

be in informality, and don't see informality as a bad thing, rather than conditions of policies unable to reach and protect every worker. Complexity does not mean impossibility to regulate.

Rise of Informality

The rise of informality within the social dialogue and democracy prospect can be seen through a wide range of activities from street vending to informal domestic work. These factors can be seen within social dialogue and democracy.

Within social dialogue, the cause of an increase of informality is often due to:

- Informal workers' lack of representation in traditional labour unions and employer associations. This exclusion weakens their voice in social dialogue mechanisms, which are platforms where workers, employers, and governments negotiate labour standards and policies.
- The heterogeneity within informal work makes it difficult to organise collective action. Informal workers are dispersed across diverse sectors, making unified representation and advocacy challenging.

Within democracy, the causes differ from social dialogue and can be identified in the following:

- Informal workers often face economic and social vulnerabilities that limit their participation in democratic processes. Their precarious employment status and lack of social security can discourage political engagement and voting.
- The rise of informal labour can exacerbate income inequality and social exclusion, undermining democratic principles of equality and social justice. Informal workers typically have lower incomes and lack access to social protections, reinforcing cycles of poverty and marginalisation.
- High levels of informality pose challenges for governance, as informal workers are harder to reach with public services and social protections. This can lead to gaps in social safety nets and increased reliance on informal networks for support.

Annexe 4: Standards in participation and representation

The standards of participation involve the following:

- Inclusivity: ensuring all groups have access to participate in democratic processes.
- Transparency: providing clear and transparent information as well as ensuring decision-making processes are open for all.
- Accessibility: making participation accessible to all groups.
- Accountability: ensuring decisions are reflecting the inputs.

As seen above, these are essential for participation within social dialogue, however, it is relevant to underline them for democracy and informal labour.

Participation have diverse practices, which can be highlighted:

- Voting: India and Mexico have been going through the 2024 elections, an important highlight for this research project.
- Public consultations
- Civil society engagement
- Digital participation

Nevertheless, we can identify the standards of representation:

- Equity: Ensuring that the representation reflects the demographic composition of the population.
- Responsiveness: Representatives should regularly consult with and report back to their constituents.
- Integrity: Upholding ethical standards for representatives, including transparency about conflicts of interest and sources of campaign funding.

The practices of representation involve:

- Constituency systems
- Legislature processes
- Regular reporting

Participation and representation, supported by standards and practices, are foundational to effective social dialogue and democracy. Ensuring inclusivity, accountability, and transparency, while building the capacity of stakeholders and adapting to cultural contexts, enhances the quality and impact of social dialogue. By adhering to these principles and practices, social dialogue can contribute significantly to more democratic, equitable, and sustainable outcomes.

Annexe 5: Standards in consultation

We found that the essential elements of consultation must be considered and apply in any source and deployment of consultation, where the active participation of citizens is key. In that sense, the FPIC elements go as follows:

- “Free” or “Freely” implies that consent is obtained without coercion, intimidation, or manipulation.

- “Prior” should imply consent is sought “sufficiently in advance of any authorization or commencement of activities” and in a manner that respects time requirements for internal deliberation and debate within communities.
- “Informed”, generally it should include information that covers: “The nature, size, pace, reversibility and scope of any proposed project or activity,” the reasons for the project, accurate timeframes, and which areas will be affected by the project.

Annexe 6: Standards in collective rights

Collective bargaining and its capacity for autonomous co-regulation can contribute to the inclusive and effective governance of work and just technological and environmental transitions with decent work. However, this is only possible to the extent afforded under the broader regulatory framework, which encourages and promotes the full development of voluntary collective bargaining.

Employers’ and workers’ organisations play a critical role in this regard. They provide agency and give a voice to groups directly affected by policies. Therefore, there is a need to attempt to promote collective rights outside of the workplace. As underlined by Kumar and Aleksynska (2024), there could be a multiplayer bargaining to deal with non-standard workers and thus, workers are not directly employed by the “principal” employer. Thus, regularisation and employment security must be involved to protect workers. Today, the “new trend is the evolution of trade unions to encompass the most vulnerable and low paid workers in labour markets, informal workers, migrant workers, domestic workers, those in diverse work arrangements and, most recently, platform workers” (ILO, 2023b). Thus, there are attempts to keep to the most vulnerable workers due to manipulation.

Annexe 7: Standards and practices

This refers to the established norms and operational procedures that guide the conduct of governance. These are typically agreed upon standards that ensure governance is conducted in a fair, transparent, and accountable manner, adhering to both legal frameworks and ethical considerations. (General insights from ILO on social dialogue).

Standards and practices are benchmarks that guide the quality and integrity of governance. They help in creating a predictable and reliable environment for policy-making and implementation, crucial for stability and development.

Annexe 7: Standards in Governance

This refers to the established norms and operational procedures that guide the conduct of governance. These are typically agreed upon standards that ensure governance is conducted in a fair, transparent,

and accountable manner, adhering to both legal frameworks and ethical considerations. (General insights from ILO on social dialogue).

Standards and practices are benchmarks that guide the quality and integrity of governance. They help in creating a predictable and reliable environment for policy-making and implementation, crucial for stability and development.

Annexe 8: *Interviewees*

Nidhi	Professor in India
Elizabeth Echeverria M	ILO Mexico
Arun Kumar	ILO Bangkok
Emilio Bunge	UNAM Mexico
Mariya Aleksynska	OECD Policy Analyst

Annexe 9: *Interview Questions*

Main Questions

1. What do you understand by "formal" and "informal" in the context of labor sectors in countries like Mexico and India?
2. How does the presence of informal sectors impact social dialogue and democratic processes within a society?
3. How formal or informal are the structures that promote social dialogue in the labor sector in countries like Mexico and India?
4. Which are the main struggles or problems to tackle in the work for social dialogue within the informal labour sector?
5. In your opinion, how does the acknowledgment and protection of collective rights promote inclusivity?
6. What mechanisms have been successful in creating social dialogue in the informal sector? What structures, mechanisms, institutions, practices, laws, or agreements promote effective and guaranteed social dialogue?
7. Would you propose any other point of interaction and correlation between the axes of social dialogue, informal labour, and democracy? How can these be integrated into ongoing social dialogues?
8. Is the reduction, or even eradication, of informal labour a goal? Or could there be other

objectives that lead to social welfare and worker protection?

9. Who should be involved at the discussion table for plural participation and consequently the effectiveness of social dialogue?

Secondary Questions

10. How does the quality and effectiveness of governance institutions impact social cohesion and economic development within a country?
11. How does India's diverse cultural landscape influence the dynamics of democracy and governance at local, regional, and national levels?
12. How does the density of worker representatives within a country influence labour rights, workplace conditions, and socio-economic equality?

Annexe 10: Statistics Table

	INDIA	MEXICO	Comparative Analysis	Sources
Population	1,417,173.17 (1st country world ranking)	127,504.13 (10th country world ranking)	Both enormously populated countries 11 times difference.	Link.
Land extension	3,287,260 Km ²	1,964,375 km ²	Almost double in size	
Government system	Federal (with hybrid features) Republic Parliamentary	Federal Republic Presidential	Both are similar in their government system.	
Electoral system	power distribution between union government and states	Direct and Representative Democracy	Both are similar, however, they proceed differently.	
Poverty Index (2023)	18.7%	36.3%	As of the latest available data, India's poverty index is lower than Mexico's. The conclusions were relied on the countries MPO at the World Bank.	https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/e408a7e21ba62d843bdd90dc37e61b57-0500032021/related/mpo-mex.pdf https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/5d1783db09a0e09d15bbcea8ef0cec0b-0500052021/related/mpo-ind.pdf
Trust in government index 2023	76%	47%	The gap between both countries is significant, demonstrating that in India, the citizens have more trust in the government.	Link.
Voter turnout 2024	66%	61%	Spain 53% France 72%	

			USA 66%	
Informal labour rates	+80%	51%	The informal labour in India is higher than in Mexico, showed by the diverse sources that we have used.	Link. Link. Monitor del Mercado Laboral del Instituto Mexicano para la Competitividad (IMCO)
Trade union rates	15% (2020)	22%	The number of trade unions in Mexico is higher than in India.	https://labourbureau.gov.in/uploads/pdf/TU-2020-report.pdf