Industrial relations data
Update on available quantitative and qualitative data and underlying methodologies and data collection efforts
Participants in the Conference are invited to express their views on how data collection efforts can be improved in respect of industrial relations data (trade union density and collective bargaining coverage rates) and the difficulties that they may encounter in this regard with a view to presenting proposed guidelines, survey methods and definitions that could lead to the proposal of a new standard at the next ICLS.
Introduction

Industrial relations (IR) and freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining (FACB rights)

- Core of the ILO’s normative foundations (ILO Convention nos. 87 and 98)
- FACB rights - enabling rights
- Heart of healthy IR & vital in enabling employers and workers to associate and efficiently negotiate work relations
- Essential foundation for social dialogue, effective labour market governance, achievement of decent work
- Key to the advancement of social justice
- Play central role in the attainment of SDGs (SDG 8, SDG 10, SDG 16)
  - SDG indicator 8.8.2 on labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining)
Industrial relations data

Comprehensive, timely and reliable data on workers’ and employers’ organizations and collective bargaining

- Assess the extent and quality of IR, state of labour market performance, economic outcomes
- Support policy formulation and implementation and key information for social partners
- Allows for cross-country, regional and over time comparison
- Vital to monitor progress towards the realization of FACB rights

Challenges in data collection and measuring industrial relations

- Data availability
- Data sources
- Method of calculation
- Highly determined by national context – requires qualitative information
ILOSTAT social dialogue and IR data page

Quantitative data
- Trade union density rates
- Collective bargaining coverage rate

Qualitative data
- SDG indicator 8.8.2

Introduction
Ensuring adequate working conditions is crucial for our well-being and that of our families. Social dialogue - which includes negotiations and consultations among labour market actors, collective bargaining, and dispute prevention and resolution - helps promote adequate working conditions, peace, and social justice. Successful social dialogue can resolve economic and social issues and effectively address economic crises, impacting stability, labour market governance, and the economy.

Unions are independent workers’ organizations constituted for the purpose of furthering and defending the interests of workers. As such, they play a key role in the quest to achieve better remuneration and working conditions. Similarly, the scope, coverage, and frequency of collective bargaining, the items negotiated, and the outcome of negotiations have a great impact on workers’ conditions. Meanwhile, grievances and conflicts are an inevitable part of the employment relationship. The objective of public policy is to manage conflict and promote sound labour relations by creating a system for the effective prevention and settlement of labour disputes. The number, frequency, duration, and scope of strikes and lockouts all have a great impact on the labour market, the economy, and workers’ well-being.

To assess the extent of social dialogue, reliable data on unions and unionization, employers’ organizations, collective bargaining, and industrial disputes is essential. This page presents statistics and
Definitions and method of computation

Trade union density rate:

- share of employed persons who are members of a trade union

\[
= \frac{\text{Number of employed who are members of a trade union}}{\text{Total employment}} \times 100
\]

Collective bargaining coverage rate:

- share of employed persons whose working conditions are determined by one or more collective agreement currently in force

\[
= \frac{\text{Number of employed whose working conditions are determined by a CBA}}{\text{Total employment with right to CB}} \times 100
\]
Definitions and method of computation

For comparability purposes the scope of trade union density and collective bargaining coverage in ILOSTAT covers employees only (excluding independent workers and dependent workers other than employees)

Trade union density rate:

\[
\text{Trade union density rate} = \frac{\text{Number of employees who are members of a trade union}}{\text{Total number of employees}} \times 100
\]

Collective bargaining coverage rate:

\[
\text{Collective bargaining coverage rate} = \frac{\text{Number of employees whose working conditions are determined by a CBA}}{\text{Total number of employees with right to CB}} \times 100
\]
Updating ILO’s IR database

ILO 2022 Flagship report on Social Dialogue

Trade union density rates: **139 countries**
- 26 new countries added to the database
- 67 countries updated

Collective bargaining coverage rates: **99 countries**
- 12 new countries added to the database
- 65 countries updated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Trade union density rate</th>
<th>Collective bargaining coverage rate</th>
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# Updating ILO’s IR database

## Three primary channels of data collection/update
- Annual ILOSTAT questionnaire
- Microdata from labour force and other household surveys
- Special enquiries

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<th>Channel</th>
<th>Trade union density rate</th>
<th>Collective bargaining coverage rate</th>
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<td>No. of countries</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
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<td>Microdata repository</td>
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<td>Special enquiry</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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</table>
Challenges in data collection

Data availability

- Data: not collected or considered unreliable
- Data comparison across countries and over time limited (different data sources, time series breaks)
- ILOSTAT questionnaire: response rate low and quality of data poor
- Administrative records: not comprehensive, do not follow rigorous recording procedures
  - Not created with statistical purposes but to serve administrative, regulatory, legislative requirements
- Labour force surveys: respondents may not always know whether or not they are covered by collective agreement
- Disaggregation – rarely available

Method of calculation

- Reference population: defining precisely what categories of workers should be included
- Aligning definitions correctly with labour and statistical standards
Next step – new guidelines and statistical standard?

ILO: global reference point for IR data and source of technical support

- 2011: trade union membership and collective bargaining integrated into ILOSTAT questionnaire
- Repeated efforts made to continuous data collection and expansion

ILO: pioneering work on methodology

- 1926 ICLS Resolution concerning statistics of collective agreements
- No international statistical standard on statistics of workers’ and employers’ organizations
- 2013: ILO Decent Work Indicators Guidelines (ILO Manual)
- 2020: Guidebook: How and why to collect and use data on industrial relations

External sources

- UNECE’s Statistical framework for Measuring Quality of Employment
- OECD/AIAS ICTWSS Database
Points for reflection

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Thank you!
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