

International Labour Process Conference 2023

Special Theme: Fair and Decent Work in the Global Economy?

12th - 14th April 2023

University of Strathclyde, Glasgow.

We are pleased to announce that the next International Labour Process Conference will take place at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, through the Department of Work, Employment and Organisation (WEO). The conference returns to Strathclyde after a number of years. WEO is one of the strongest departments in the field of work and employment in the UK and is home to the Scottish Centre for Employment Research and the Centre for the Political Economy of Labour (CPEL). Glasgow is well-known for its cultural and historical heritage, and its own labour history.

Call for papers

ILPC is among the most important global events for research, analysis, and empirical and theoretical discussion in the field of labour studies, the labour process and capitalist transformations. Each year, the conference brings together scholars and policymakers in sociology, business and management, industrial relations, organisational analysis and other disciplines to present their research, promote international collaborations and initiate processes of shared knowledge creation.

The conference welcomes papers on any aspect of labour processes, labour markets, labour organising and labour reproduction. Illustrative examples of topics include:

- Labour process and other critical theories of labour issues
- Labour mobility and its implication for managerial rules and labour process
- Migrant workers and forms of organizing and resistance in the workplace and beyond
- Industrial relations, representation, and trade union strategies
- Labour process and reproduction process
- Power, inequality and labour market segmentation
- Worker's voice, or silence, participation, mobilization and solidarities
- Skills, knowledge and labour process
- Gender, race, ethnicity and class at work
- Technology, control and autonomy
- Changing forms of employment relations in a global perspective (e.g. unfree, forced, informal)
- Time, space and the labour process
- Political economy, workplace regimes, global value chains and mobility

Abstracts (deadline below) are externally evaluated and should be between 350 and 500 words. Key words should be given that indicate the focus of research and the methods used. The

abstract should contain clear information about theoretical orientation, findings, methodology, and what contribution is being made to knowledge. Abstracts of papers that are concerned solely with theoretical or conceptual matters will need to provide clear information on how they address and advance relevant debates. We encourage contributions from the Global South and North.

Conference Theme

The 2022 Conference focusses on *Fair and Decent Work in the Global Economy?* Achieving fair and decent work is a complex, ongoing challenge in all forms of employment (traditional and platform based). Differences in the labour process, and the impact of economic, social, political and sectoral dynamics need to be understood. The theme of Fair and Decent Work also embraces a wide variety of interpretations, with regulatory interventions at various levels (i.e. via International Labour Organisation, European Union, National, Devolved/Federal governments, Sectoral and Regional). Despite these initiatives, non-standardised, flexible and increasingly precarious work and with-it deepening inequalities along lines of class, gender and race persist and intensify. The impact of the ILO's Decent Work agenda, recent EU Social Aspect initiatives that have favoured 'soft' regulation, and various national, devolved/federal and local level measures are limited because they fail to challenge the power of capital through lacking the capacity to compel employers into changing course and improving job quality.

Access to rights, security, living wages and dignity at work are unevenly distributed across the globe. The above initiatives for fair and decent work emerge from the northern hemisphere, which is characterised by a highly variegated picture of job quality between and within countries. Large parts of the global working population in the southern hemisphere, have always worked under conditions of insecurity. Work in the southern hemisphere is made up of formal and informal work, free and unfree labour, illicit and legalised employment, coupled with suppression of dissent and dismantling of labour regulation. The latter conditions are also a feature of economies in the northern hemisphere, e.g. the UK. Part of the explanation for these conditions lies with international production, trade and investments, which are increasingly organised within so-called global value chains (GVCs). GVCs are characterised by low prices paid to suppliers that create pressure down the supply chain to reduce costs, leaving workers especially women at the end of the pay scale. There is a lack of labour protection in law and/or practice, and excessive long hours and overtime work owing to the use of lean production systems, seasonal demand and volatile sourcing contracts, which in turn raises concerns about occupational safety and health and work-life balance. Leading economies in the 'north' are linked to this degradation of work through historical and inequitable trade regimes with working in the southern hemisphere.

Moreover, as economies and labour markets emerge from restrictions of COVID-19, the theme of Fair and Decent Work has received further attention as the value of so called 'essential workers' in health, social care, logistics, transport, retail etc have come to fore. Moreover, the long-term health of workers (mental and physical) is also an increasing priority as the impact of long-covid emerges. Such realisation, however, also comes alongside further pressure on employers to cut costs, so potentially undermining efforts to reinvigorate the Fair and Decent Work agenda.

The Conference intends to address the role of Fair and Decent Work agendas on the international labour process, through widening the lens beyond the still commonly referenced, social welfare state and the related anglophone, western context. The conference invites new theoretical and empirical contributions regarding how fair and decent work agendas are evolving and challenging the growing precarity and intensification of work in the Global North (including Nordic modules) and South. We are also seeking contributions that highlight the intersections between the hemispheres and the groups caught up in this intensification.

Proposals for special streams

ILPC is not a fully streamed conference and most proposals for papers are submitted to the general conference and are only themed by the organiser for the final programme at a later stage to ensure that sessions have some coherence. In the past decade the conference has welcomed special Streams based on international collaborations and address topics that can broaden the ILPC audience. Stream proposals should include a) a detailed description of the proposed stream, including title and key convenors; b) a discussion of how the stream will address the criteria for inclusion listed above.

Stream organisers should circulate the call for papers as well as select the abstract and to programme the stream in cooperation with the Conference organiser.

If you are interested in organising a special Stream, please send a proposal to organiser (ILPC2023-conf@strath.ac.uk), not exceeding 750 words, no later than the **31st July 2022**.

The conference organiser will discuss with the ILPC Steering Group and a decision will be made in time for the second, amended Call for Papers. Decisions of acceptance will be communicated by 31th of August 2022.

Abstract Submission Deadline

Abstract submission through the ILPC website (www.ilpc.org.uk) will open at the start of September 2022 with a deadline of **31st October 2022**. Decisions of acceptance will be made by early December 2022.

Work in the Global Economy

***Work in the Global Economy* is the interdisciplinary peer-reviewed journal that builds upon a tradition of shared scholarship and a commitment to theory building and rigorous empirical enquiry that has been exemplified by the annual International Labour Process Conference (ILPC). All ILPC attendees are strongly encouraged to consider submitting papers from the conference to the journal. [Work in the Global Economy | Bristol University Press \(bristoluniversitypressdigital.com\)](http://www.bristoluniversitypressdigital.com)**

The journal promotes understanding of work, and connections to work, in all forms and dimensions. The Editors welcome wide-ranging contributions that extend and deepen connections between all aspects of the division of labour: from the production networks that

underpin the global economy, to the gendered and racial divides that shape how work is allocated and organised.

WGE welcomes submissions for Research Articles (up to 9500 words in length). Please submit your papers on our online submission system here:

<https://www.editorialmanager.com/wge/default1.aspx>

Preconference doctoral workshop

ILPC also has a great tradition of welcoming PhD students and focusing on the needs of early-stage researchers. ILPC 2023 will feature a pre-conference workshop dedicated to PhD students who wish to gain knowledge of labour process analysis, its history and debates. It will also provide an informal environment in which to share experiences and develop relationships. Doctoral papers are not streamed separately at the conference. You will be asked to identify whether you are a doctoral student on registration and whether you wish to attend the doctoral workshop.

Venue and organisation

The University of Strathclyde is based right in the very heart of Glasgow, next to its bars and restaurants near the Merchant City. Since 1796, the University has been ‘a place of useful learning’. It is Glasgow's second-oldest university, having received its royal charter in 1964. The Conference will be mainly held in the University's Technology and Innovation Centre (TIC). For more information please see - <https://www.strath.ac.uk/>

The 2023 Organising Team

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