



# 1<sup>st</sup> INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON INFORMAL WORK HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING



November 9–11, 2026



Santiago de Cali, Colombia

*In-person and virtual participation*

**In collaboration with regional  
and international organizations**



Occupational Health  
in Small-Scale Enterprises  
and the Informal Sector



IEA  
International Ergonomics &  
Human Factors Association



SCE

Sociedad  
Colombiana  
de Ergonomía

25  
años  
1996-2021



## Introduction

An international and interdisciplinary platform for dialogue on health, safety, and wellbeing in informal work.

The First International Conference on Informal Work is an initiative led by Universidad del Valle, in coordination with the Global Coalition on Informal Workers' Health, Safety and Wellbeing (GCIW), the International Ergonomics Association (IEA), the Scientific Committee on Occupational Health in Small-Scale Enterprises and the Informal Sector of the International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH SC OHSSEIS), and the International Occupational Hygiene Association (IOHA), along with their partner associations in Colombia and other academic, national, and international networks and organizations interested in the health, safety, and wellbeing of informal workers.

The event will take place in Santiago de Cali, Colombia, on November 9, 10, and 11, 2026, in a hybrid format, allowing for both in-person and virtual participation. It aims to establish itself as a meeting point for academia, public and private institutions, labor organizations, and other strategic stakeholders committed to understanding and transforming informal work.



**Date:**

November 9-11, 2026



**Lead Institution:**

Universidad del Valle



**Location:**

Santiago de Cali, Colombia



**Main Partners:**

GCIW, ICOH SC

OHSSEIS, IEA, IOHA



## Why talk about informal work?

The informal economy is a structural reality that, according to current ILO estimates (2026), affects **57.9% of the global workforce**. In Latin America, this situation impacts more than half of the active population, while **in Colombia, the figure stands at 55.3%**. In Santiago de Cali, the phenomenon reaches 47.8% of the employed population (DANE, 2026), representing 533,000 people who, despite sustaining the daily economy, often work under highly precarious conditions, instability, and a lack of social protection.

This issue does not stem from a single cause; it involves the convergence of formal employment shortages, the precaritization of production chains, migratory flows, and gender gaps, compounded by new digital transformations. These factors directly impact the health, safety, and wellbeing of workers, posing an urgent challenge for current public policies and regulatory frameworks.

In response, this conference is designed as an international and interdisciplinary platform for dialogue. Over three days, the event will coordinate **keynote lectures, parallel sessions, and spaces for exchanging experiences** that link the academic expertise of Universidad del Valle with global networks. Santiago de Cali, as the host city, will thus become the epicenter for connecting scientific knowledge with social reality, seeking comprehensive solutions to the challenges of the world of work.

## Objectives



To analyze the causes, dynamics, and consequences of informal work in diverse socioeconomic contexts through multiple interdisciplinary lenses.



To promote the exchange of knowledge and strategies among various sectors to strengthen the wellbeing and protection of informal workers.



To provide insights for academic, institutional, and public policy reflection regarding health, safety, and wellbeing in informal work contexts.

## Conference themes



### 1. INFORMAL WORK IN PRODUCTION SECTORS

Agriculture, livestock, fishing, mining, artisanal production, informal manufacturing, and the work of migrants and ethnic communities in productive sectors.



### 2. INFORMAL WORK IN SERVICE SECTORS

Street vending, recycling, domestic work, paid and unpaid care work, and community or informal service provision, including the work of migrants and ethnic communities.



### 3. PLATFORM-BASED AND DIGITALLY MEDIATED WORK

Delivery, transport, gig work, digital freelance work, microtasks, algorithmic management, and the intersections between platforms, migration, and urban economies.



## Target audience and how to participate



The conference invites contributions from academia, professionals, institutions, labor and social organizations, international organizations, as well as funders and institutional partners interested in this agenda.



The conference format includes in-person and virtual attendance, oral and poster presentations, academic and institutional participation, and opportunities to engage as a partner, collaborator, or supporting entity in different components of the event.



### JOIN US AND BE PART OF THE CHANGE

Your support will help position informal work on the public agenda, strengthen the international conversation on health, safety, and wellbeing, and promote the participation of key stakeholders, including informal workers, in a space for dialogue and collective action.

**QR code for  
the official  
website:**



For registration, abstract submission, and partnership inquiries, please contact:

[citi2026cali@correounivalle.edu.co](mailto:citi2026cali@correounivalle.edu.co)





Universidad  
del Valle



GCIW  
Global Coalition on  
Informal Workers



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## HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING



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