## Case Study Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Study Title</th>
<th>Decent Work for Domestic Workers in Uruguay <em>(Overview only)</em></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implemented by</td>
<td>International Labour Organization</td>
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<td>Funded by</td>
<td>International Labour Organization with support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Luxembourg</td>
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<td>Location</td>
<td>Uruguay</td>
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<td>Focus Areas</td>
<td>1. Care&lt;br&gt;2. Women workers in the informal economy</td>
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<td>Start Date End date</td>
<td>January 2011</td>
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## Abstract

*Project context:*

Uruguay, the first country to ratify the Domestic Workers Convention No. 189, 2011, is among the countries with most advanced legislation in terms of protecting domestic workers. In 2006, the government adopted Law 18.065, extending rights to domestic workers and including domestic work in the national system for the negotiation of collective agreements. As in many countries, challenges remain with respect to compliance. This is particularly visible in the fact that less than half of domestic workers are covered by social security.

Collective bargaining over employment conditions in domestic work was established in 2006, when the law regulating the domestic work sector was adopted. The outcome of rounds of negotiation in 2008 and 2010 included a wage raise, premium for time service, compensation for night work, and the creation of the Domestic Worker Day on August 19 as a paid holiday. The group also agreed to form a Tripartite Commission on Occupational Health. The Uruguayan government has also launched several initiatives to improve working conditions in the domestic work sector, including a country-wide campaign launched by the Social Security Bank (BPS) in 2004 to improve the social security coverage of domestic workers.

Leading up to the adoption of C189, the ILO supported the tripartite constituents in Uruguay to advocate for the adoption of C189. Following its adoption in 2011, the ILO provided support to promote ratification of C189, and to ensure its implementation, notably through capacity building of the workers’ and employers’ organizations.

*Knowledge-based Policy Development:*
Over the years, the tripartite constituents succeeded in concluding several collective agreements covering the domestic work sector. Since 2008, three agreements have been reached through the council on wages, working conditions and benefits, universally applicable to the sector, including to migrant domestic workers. These agreements increased social security registrations by 58.2 per cent between 2006 and 2014\(^1\), while wages rose from 55.5 per cent of the wages paid to other women in 2006 to 73.5 per cent in 2014. Labour inspections and a grievance mechanism have helped achieve these results. Capacity building of both the union and the homemakers’ association was a vital factor in the success of the negotiations. To support these policy achievements, the ILO produced a study on domestic work and ILO Convention 189, which was used to guide policy dialogue.

Social norms changed:

Uruguay provides an excellent example of how the tripartite constituents have shifted public awareness to improve compliance among employers. In Article 8 of the second collective agreement, concluded in 2008, the parties make a commitment “to work jointly in order to raise awareness of formalizing domestic employment contracts in the whole country, by setting out dissemination policies for the present agreement and other applicable regulations and trying to eradicate informality and illegality”. This included an extensive campaign by the labour inspectorate, which included door to door visits in specific neighbourhoods to inform employers of their rights and responsibilities. The SUTD also started organizing public awareness events for Domestic Workers’ Day, on the 19\(^{th}\) of August.

A manual for employers of domestic works was produced to raise awareness about rights and obligations of employers in the sector, and is widely available, including through the website of the employers’ organization, the Liga de Amas de Casa, Consumidores y Usuarios de la Republica Oriental del Uruguay (LACCU).

Strengthening voice and representation:

Achieving these results required the capacity building of all three constituents. Towards ratification of C189, the ILO provided technical assistance to the Minister and Viceminister of Labour, as well as to the Bicameral Women’s Committee to analyse the provisions of the convention. The ILO supported trade union workshops for the domestic workers’ union SUTD to identify strengths and weaknesses and areas of capacity building. This included consultations with domestic workers across the country to identify the key characteristics of domestic work in Uruguay, and to raise awareness about the provisions of C189. The SUTD also established a website, to increase its visibility and capacity for communication.

Uruguay is also one of the few countries with an organization representing employers of domestic workers, the Liga de Amas de Casa, Consumidores y Usuarios de la Republica Oriental del Uruguay (LACCU). Though long-standing, this organization had only just begun to represent the interests of employers of domestic

workers, and required capacity building to advocate for and negotiate domestic workers’ standards. Efforts were also made to coordinate with BPS to provide legal advice to employers of domestic workers. The LACCU now also has a web page that includes detailed information on laws and policies governing domestic work, as well as FAQs and good practices to guide employers. The LACCU also engaged actively in identifying strategies to improve compliance among employers.

*Disclaimer: The case studies are written by implementing organizations. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the Panel members.*