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GLOBAL AND LOCAL TRAJECTORIES OF SOCIAL STANDARDISATION: THE CASES OF ARGENTINA AND BRAZIL

By

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A dissertation submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Table of Contents

TABLE OF FIGURES I
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS III
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS VII
DECLARATION IX
COPYRIGHT DECLARATION IX
ABSTRACT XI
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION 1
Research Questions 7
Methodology 9
Case study selection 10
Data sources 12
Analytical techniques 14
Limitations 17
Structure of the dissertation 18
CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL REVIEW 21
Global approaches to social standardisation 22
Global governance 23
Transnational private regulation 24
International labour regimes 27
The International labour movement 29
Transnational civil activism 30
Where is the 'South' in all this? 32
Theoretical approaches to standardisation and governance 36
Systemic perspectives 39
Framing the thesis 44
Conclusion 50
CHAPTER 3. A GLOBAL HISTORY OF SOCIAL STANDARDISATION 53
Social Standardisation as a historical process 53
Modern cleavages of social standardisation 56
The peak and fall of welfarism 62
Firms and markets as social regulators 67
Markets and human rights: The path to Sustainability 73

Global sustainable governance: Institutional developments 78
The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) 79
The United Nations Global Compact (UN GC) 85
The ISO 26000 Working Group (ISO WG SR) 89
Systemic expressions of social standardisation 94
Conclusion 99
CHAPTER 4. LOCAL TRAJECTORIES OF SOCIAL STANDARDISATION: ARGENTINA AND BRAZIL 103
Mapping local participation in social standard-setting 104
Mapping local actors 107
Network analyses 111
The Brazilian network 114
The Argentine network 116
Conclusion 117
CHAPTER 5. BRAZIL'S PATH TO STANDARDISATION: FROM DEMOCRATISATION TO SOCIAL NEOLIBERALISM 119
The Pre-1970s and 1980s: Democratisation and political re-organisation 120
The political activation of social standardisation 122
The 1990s: Liberalisation and civil consolidation 126
The rise of the social standard-setters 129
The 2000s: Social (neo)liberalism and global governance 132
Brazilian actors in social standard-setting 133
The social neoliberalism of the PT 140
The World Social Forum: Brazilian politics in global civil society 149
Sustainable politics? 152
Conclusion 154
CHAPTER 6. ARGENTINA'S WINDING ROAD TO GOVERNANCE: THE PRIMACY OF THE LOCAL 157
Peronism, democracy and neoliberalism until the 2000s 159
Standardisation in adversity 165
The 2000s: The return of the state and governance indifference 168
Politicisation and segmentation: Governance uncommunicated 173
New developments? Crises, politics and governance 183
Conclusion 187
CHAPTER 7. CONCLUSION 191

The multiple layers of social standardisation 191
theoretical implications 198
Conclusion 203
BIBLIOGRAPHY 205
APPENDIX A 265
List of Interviews 265
APPENDIX B 267
Examples of cross-sectoral initiatives 267
Examples of sectoral initiatives 271

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1: The dynamic of social standards 47
Figure 2: Global evolution of social standardisation cleavages 55
Figure 3: Evolution of ILO convention's ratifications (1946-2007) 66
Figure 4: Union density, adjusted data (1970-2000) 66
Figure 5: Case study initiatives by theme 79
Figure 6: GRI reports evolution (1999-2010) 85
Figure 7: UN GC membership (2000-2010) 89
Figure 8: Number of Latin American certificates - ISO 9000 and ISO 14000 (1993-2008) 104
Figure 9: UN GC number of subscribers per year - Argentina and Brazil (2000-2010) 105
Figure 10: UN GC total Membership - Argentina and Brazil (2000-2010) 105
Figure 11: Number of GRI reports per year (2000-2010) 106
Figure 12: Map of local participants in case study initiatives 108
Figure 13: Attendance to last three ISO WG SR 110
Figure 14: Brazilian participation network 112
Figure 15: Argentine participation network 113
Figure 16: Brazil's comparative political chart 119
Figure 17: Argentina's comparative political chart 158

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABA	Asociación de Bancos de la Argentina
ABNT	Associação Brasileira de Normas Técnicas
ABONG	Associação Brasileira de Organizações Não Governamentais
ABRINQ	Associação Brasileira dos Fabricantes de Brinquedos
ACDE	Asociacion Cristiana de Dirigentes de Empresa
ADCE	Associação de Dirigentes Cristãos de Empresa
AEA	Asociacion Empresaria Argentina
AFL	American Federation of Labor
AIP	Apparel Industry Partnership
AMCHAM	American Chamber of Commerce
ATTAC	Association pour la Taxation des Transactions financière et l'Aide aux Citoyen
BCBA	Bolsa de Comercio de Buenos Aires
BNDES	Banco Nacional do Desenvolvimento
BRIC	Brazil, Russia, India and China
CADTM	Committee for the Abolition of the Third World Debt
CALPers	California Public Employees' Retirement System
CASCO	Conformity Assessment Committee
CBJP	Comissão Brasileira de Justiça e Paz
CDES	Conselho de Desenvolvimento Econômico e Social
CEADS	Consejo Empresario Argentino para el Desarrollo Sostenible
CECAM	Centro de Calidad y Modernización
CEDHA	Centro de Derechos Humanos y Ambiente
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CERES	Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies
CGT	Confederación General del Trabajo
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CIVES	Associação Brasileira de Empresários Pela Cidadania
CLACSO	Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales
CLS	Core Labour Standards
CNBB	Conferência Nacional dos Bispos do Brasil
CNI	Confederação Nacional da Indústria
CoCs	Codes of Conduct
CONSEA	Conselho Nacional de Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional
COPOLCO	Consumer Policy Committee
CSA-TUCA	Confederación Sindical de Trabajadores de las Américas
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSN	Companhia Siderúrgica Nacional

CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CTA	Central de Trabajadores Argentinos
CUT	Central Unica dos Trabalhadores
DEVCO	Developing Country Matters Committee
DIEESE	Departamento Intersindical de Estatística e Estudos Socioeconômicos
ETI	Ethical Trading Initiative
ETUC	European Trade Union Confederation
EU	European Union
EWC	European Work Council
FAM	Federación Argentina de Municipios
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FARN	Fundación Ambiente y Recursos Naturales
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FGV	Fundação Getulio Vargas
FHC	Fernando Henrique Cardoso
FIDES	Fundação Instituto de Desenvolvimento Empresarial e Social
FIRJAN	Federação das Indústrias do Estado do Rio de Janeiro
FIESP	Federação das Indústrias do Estado de São Paulo
FLA	Fair Labor Association
FS	Força Sindical
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
FTAA (ALCA)	Free Trade Area of the Americas (Area de Libre Comercio de las Américas)
FTV	Federación de Tierra, Vivienda y Hábitat
FUNDES	Fundación para el Desarrollo Sostenible
GAO	Grupo de Articulação das ONGs brasileiras na ISO 26000
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GAVI	Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIFE	Grupo de Institutos Fundações e Empresas
GRI	Global Reporting Initiative
GUF	Global Union Federation
IAE	Instituto de Altos Estudios Empresariales
IALL	International Association of Labour Legislation
IAPG	Instituto Argentino de Petróleo y Gas
IARSE	Instituto Argentino de Responsabilidad Social Empresaria
IBASE	Instituto Brasileiro de Análises Sociais e Econômicas
IBGC	Instituto Brasileiro de Governança Corporativa
ICC	International Chamber of Commerce
ICCO	Interchurch Organization for Development Cooperation
ICFTU	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
IDEC	Instituto Brasileiro de Defesa do Consumidor

IEC	International Electrotechnical Commission
IFA	International Framework Agreement
IFC	International Finance Corporation
ILO	International Labour Organisation
INMETRO	Instituto Nacional de Metrologia, Qualidade e Tecnologia
INSPER	Instituto de Ensino e Pesquisa
IIRC	International Integrated Reporting Council
IOE	International Organisation of Employers
IOS	Instituto Observatório Social
IOSCO	International Organisation of Securities Commission
IPE	International Political Economy
IPU	International Public Unions
IR	International Relations
IRAM	Instituto Argentino de Normalización y Certificación
ISE	Índice de Sustentabilidade Empresarial
ISEAL	Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance
ISER	Instituto de Estudos da Religião
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation
ISO WG SR	ISO Working Group on Social Responsibility
ITC	International Trade Centre
ITUC	International Trade Union Confederation
Lula	Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva
MBA	Master in Business Administration
MERCOSUR	Mercado Común del Sur
MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MST	Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra
MTD	Movimiento de Trabajadores Desocupados
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NOVIB	Nederlandse Organisatie Voor Internationale Bijstand
NSP	Rede Nossa São Paulo
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PNBE	Pensamento Nacional das Bases Empresariais
PPP	Private-Public Partnerships
PRI	Principles for Responsible Investment
PT	Partido dos Trabalhadores
PV	Partido Verde
RTRS	Round Table on Responsible Soy Association
SAES	Sociedad Argentina de Evaluadores de la Salud
SAI	Social Accountability International
SEC	US Securities and Exchange Commission
SOMO	Stichting Onderzoek Multinationale Ondernemingen
SRA	Sociedad Rural Argentina
SRI	Socially Responsible Investment

STTF	Spanish Translation Task Force
TMB	Technical Management Board
TNC	Transnational Corporation
TUAC	Trade Union Advisory Committee
TWN	Third World Network
UCR	Unión Cívica Radical
UIA	Unión Industrial Argentina
UN	United Nations
UN GC	United Nations Global Compact
UN Women	UN Development Fund for Women
UNCED	UN Conference on Environment and Development
UNCHR	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIAPAC	International Union of Catholic Employers' Associations
UNIDO	UN Industrial Development Organisation
US	United States of America
WB	World Bank
WBCSD	World Business Council on Sustainable Development
WEF	World Economic Forum
WFTU	World Federation of Trade Unions
WHO	World Health Organisation
WRAP	Worldwide Responsible Apparel Production
WRC	Workers' Rights Consortium
WSF	World Social Forum
WTO	World Trade Organisation
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature
WWI	World War I
WWII	World War II
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
YPF	Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales

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DECLARATION

I declare that the work presented in this thesis, except those elements specifically declared, is all my own work carried out and finished at City University London.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the interaction between a particular type of global governance mechanism – social standardisation – and national political economic structures in two countries of the global South: Argentina and Brazil. In doing so it provides a greater understanding of the emergence of new governance structures and the growing role of actors from emerging countries. The dissertation develops three lines of analysis. First, it studies the evolution of the institutional attempts to establish global social standards since the onset of the twentieth century, with specific attention to three global governance initiatives emerging around the 2000s: the UN Global Compact, the Global Reporting Initiative, and the ISO 26000 Guidance Standard on Social Responsibility. Second, it investigates the participation in these latest initiatives of actors from Argentina and Brazil, detailing institutional connections, central players, clusters and overall participation patterns. Third, it analyses and contrasts national participation patterns in light of the trajectory of social standardisation and the political economic environment of these two countries. As a result, the dissertation offers a distinct contribution to the governance and standardisation literature by highlighting the relevance of national political variables in structuring engagement with global governance projects. The dissertation uses a combination of methodologies, sources and analytical techniques including historical analysis, network analysis, interviews with local actors, and direct observation of one instance of global standard-setting.

The main line of argument is that local participation in global initiatives of social standard-setting depends on two main elements: the pre-existence of compatible cleavages of social standardisation, and the local resonance of governance frames. Moreover, the thesis reveals that these elements are strongly connected with 'Southern' political variables regarding the pattern of political, social and economic development, the model of state-society relations, and the political discourse promoted by the government. On this basis, this thesis can explain the divergent participation patterns found in Brazil and Argentina regarding the three global case study initiatives and their overall acceptance of social standardisation programmes. The dissertation provides two main contributions: 1) it emphasises the relevance of communicative dynamics in the diffusion of global governance, relativising economistic and power-led approaches, and 2) demonstrates the relevance of Southern political institutions, traditions, and discourses in structuring global/local communications.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

This project investigates the involvement of countries of the global South in socially-oriented programmes of standardisation and governance. Thus, while significant attention has been paid to the global dimension of the 'governance of globalism' (Keohane and Nye 2000: 208), and to the proliferation of state and non-state initiatives aiming to endow global governance with a socially-conscious normative horizon, little is yet know of the circumstances shaping the participation in such initiatives of actors from the global South. This thesis addresses these challenges by analysing how national political structures shape the participation of actors from Argentina and Brazil in some of the latest initiatives of social standard-setting.

Global governance has been a major theme in post-Cold War International Relations (IR), exploring the possibilities of 'doing internationally what governments do at home' (Finkelstein 1995: 369). In this regard, substantial attention has been paid to the activities of international organisations and the formation of international regimes, but also to the growing role other actors, such as civil society organisations (CSOs) and transnational corporations (TNCs), play in the emergence of private authority (Rosenau 2006; Barnett and Duvall 2004; Hall and Biersteker 2002; Murphy 2000; Ruggie 1998; Keohane 1986; Krasner 1983). A particular section of this literature has approached this latter issue by examining the role of standardisation in the transformation of regulatory processes at the international, regional and national level in a context of economic globalisation (Malets and Quack 2013; Ponte et al 2011; Dingwerth and Pattberg 2009; Nadvi and Wältring 2004; Cashore 2002). Among these studies, the treatment of global social standards, which aim at inputting a social dimension into global governance, has been fragmented and often exclusive, ranging from new mechanisms of international coordination and global policy-making, the rise of private centres of authority, to the enhanced activism of global civil society (Falk 2004; McGrew and Held 2002; Rodrik 1997; Strange 1996). In between them lies a vast terrain of dispute over the direction and form global social norms should assume.

Within these debates, a less understood dimension are the conditions affecting the reception of global norms and governance frameworks in countries of the global South. In such cases, the regimes, networks and norms embodying global governance not only challenge the authority of the nation-state, but are often perceived as 'foreign' discourses with limited local meaning. This is attributed to the distance between the liberal direction and requirements of contemporary global social standards and governance initiatives, and Southern conditions of departure, which might involve under-developed economic systems, illiberal political models, and weak civil society organisation (Stiglitz 2002; Gray 1998). In these circumstances global

governance and norms often emerge as being imposed from abroad, associated with neoliberalism, transnational elites, neo-colonialism, or Western hegemony (Robinson 2012; Sklair 2002; Hardt and Negri 2001; Escobar 1995)

This dissertation provides two contributions to these debates. First, it examines processes of social standardisation and their connection with global governance. This dissertation understands standardisation as the process of creation of uniformities across time and space (Djelic and Quack 2012). This definition intends to decouple standardisation from standard-setting, the intentional political instances where actors negotiate with the purpose of creating a standard (Botzem and Dobusch 2012). From this perspective, standard-setting becomes a sub-category of standardisation just as standardisation is considered a sub-category of governance. This broader definition can incorporate the study of global governance beyond the state but also of non-negotiated sociological processes through which transnational structures of meaning are established, which have received substantially less attention in IR literature. Moreover, a social standardisation approach also intends to differentiate from instances of technical standard-setting in areas such as trade, banking, environmental regulation, and technology, to mention a few. Contrary to these variants, social standardisation has little presence in IR literature, though it is slightly more common in sociological and organisational studies.[1] Because of this, no conventional definition of social standardisation is readily available. Maniha (1974) indirectly sketches one, as the group of processes through which 'an organisation or society reduces the criteria of choice and narrows the range of social diversity' (Ibid: 283). This project understands social standardisation in a more restrictive sense, as the process by which the political system establishes master frames regulating the pattern of interaction among collective actors, be they civil, political or economic. The social is therefore a broadly encompassing term referring to the collective nature of the actors involved, rather than to a specific category of actors (Held 2002).

This definition involves notions such as 'framing' and 'master frames' – used extensively by new social movement theory – rather than terms such as 'norm' or 'requirement'. This is because it considers that social standardisation extends beyond parameterised rule-like forms. Rather, it is about the constitution of stable and broad 'schemas of interpretation' with significant syntactic and semantic flexibility, enabling the derivation of causal attributions, vocabularies of motive, and problem-solving schemes (Snow and Benford 1992: 139-141; Steinberg 1998). This dissertation extends the notion of framing from the realm of social movements and civil activism to understand social standardisation as a process of master frame-

[1] A search in Google.scholar by 'social standardization' generated no results (in addition to a working paper of my authorship) when searching titles and around 230 results when including text body (7 November 2012).

construction. This is an approach that only recently has started to be applied for the study of standardisation in general (Dobusch and Quack 2013).

Under this approach specific social standards and initiatives are but expressions of larger political master frames regulating the appropriateness of governance programmes: the systems of rule that (aim to) regulate patterns of collective interaction across countries. Master frames provide the 'grammar' circumscribing not only the meaning of the standards, norms and laws regulating the interaction among collective actors, but also the legitimacy conditions that processes of standard-setting have to meet, and the themes they can cover. Based on this understanding, 'programmes' of social standardisation are the operative expression of these master frames. At the same time, master frames integrate and order the relationship between diverse discursive elements, symbols, frames, and social relations. This dissertation denominates 'cleavage of social standardisation' to an organised sub-set of these elements operating on a standardising principle. The term cleavage is commonly found in party politics studies in order to refer to the political activation of a particular demographic group (Deegan-Krause 2007; Bartolini and Mair 1990; Lipset and Rokkan 1967). However, this dissertation relies extensively on this term to signal multiple discursive elements sharing a common social standardisation principle (which might result in different levels of political identity and institutionalisation). Examples of cleavages of social standardisation are the labour cleavage, the corporate cleavage, a human rights cleavage, etc. Cleavages have separate existence from master frames, and different master frames can and do integrate them in different forms. For instance, a neoliberal master frame understands the labour cleavage differently from a socialist one.

Under these definitions it becomes possible to examine a wide array of international and transnational efforts towards collective coordination and regulation as part of the process of social standardisation. This involves conventional topics such as international labour regulation (Alston 2004; Engerman 2003; Jessop 1990), but also issues such as the diffusion of socio-political and environmental standards (Hassel 2008; O'Rourke 2006; O'Brien 2004), the expansion of corporate programmes of social responsibility (Auld et al 2008; Vogel 2008), and the promotion of universal principles by civil society and other actors (Hertel 2006; Khagram et al 2002). All of these involve regulatory proposals for collective actors. On this basis, this thesis uses social standardisation to integrate findings in literatures of private and corporate governance, international regimes, international unionism, and civil activism, and develop a more comprehensive understanding of the evolution of social standard-setting at both the global and local level.

The second contribution of this dissertation is exploring the local trajectory of social standardisation. The local dimension constitutes a major gap in current literature, as this remains mostly focused on developments at a 'global' level which largely resemble the normative

environment found in the global North. This has left the study of global governance programmes as a black box that extrapolates from dominantly Anglo-European conditions of emergence, but where little is known about their actual trajectories in contexts of the global South (Bartley 2010; Buthe 2010; Graham and Woods 2006). This dissertation develops these two aspects by tracing the global evolution of social standardisation and its local trajectory in Brazil and Argentina. The first part identifies a number of cleavages of social standardisation through the twentieth century and their integration into specific programmes of governance. Following this, it focuses on the situation since the mid-1990s and develops three case studies of social standard-setting: the UN Global Compact (UN GC), the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and the Working Group of the ISO 26000 Guidance Standard on Social Responsibility (ISO WG SR). The second part examines the participation of Argentine and Brazilian actors on these three cases studies, pointing to the specific circumstances that facilitate positive and negative interactions between the governance programmes and local actors.

The empirical analyses are supported by a conceptual framework that bridges the global evolution of social standardisation with the particular trajectories and contexts of the national cases. The framework draws from a structural-semantic understanding of world society, developed in the second part of chapter 2, inspired by Niklas Luhmann's System Theory and other sociological systemic approaches. This type of theories is still of limited application within IR, though it has gained a promising recognition in the last few years (Albert and Buzan 2013; Donnelly 2012; Albert and Buzan 2011; Buzan and Albert 2010). Moreover, the dissertation proposes that this semantic understanding of governance and standardisation coheres with the conceptual apparatus of new social movement theory and communication-based notions such as framing, diffusion and resonance. This dissertation re-interprets these and other notions to approach the transnational diffusion of social standardisation – in other words, its resonance in particular national settings – as the interaction between different political master frames. On this basis, this dissertation considers social standardisation to be a transversal process to territorial distinctions. This is expressed through the notion of 'trajectory of social standardisation', which assumes that programmes of standardisation can develop globally as well as locally, following directions that might or not connect over time. Specific trajectories are crossed by diverse cleavages and discursive structures that shape institutional expressions, making them context-specific and path-dependent. Local trajectories of standardisation are expected to be significantly shaped by state-based political master frames, structures and institutions, including governmental policies, local political economy, national history, and model of state-society relations. This does not mean that local trajectories are not connected with 'external' influences, but rather that over issues of social standardisation the relationship between governance programmes and local institutions is loose, reflecting the existing gap between norms, institutional capacities, and regulatory mechanisms at the global and national

level. In this regard, the empirical examination of the circumstances that support local engagement with global initiatives of social standard-setting provides a robust platform from where to evaluate the relevant national variables conditioning the transnational diffusion of standardisation and governance.

The dissertation thus provides a three-sided comparative analysis of social standardisation and governance. The first side studies the historical trajectory of this process and the emergence of global social standard-setting approaches and initiatives. The second side contrasts this global trajectory with the local ones in Argentina and Brazil. The third emerges from contrasting the local cases with each other. Hence, on the global side the dissertation identifies three competing global programmes of social standardisation in the twentieth century. These programmes can be situated according to the period when their respective master frames acquired greater resonance, evidenced by institutional expressions at both state and interstate level. These temporal definitions are only for analytical purposes as different expressions of these programmes co-existed at different points in time, and continue to do so. The three programmes identified are a Welfarist programme between 1920s and 1960s, a Business & Trade programme between 1950s and 1980s, and a Sustainability programme since the late 1990s to date. Identifying these programmes facilitates a clearer understanding of how different social standardisation logics have evolved and intertwined over time, and their corresponding effect in the emergence and operation of different governance initiatives. This allows situating current social standard-setting initiatives in a historical perspective, highlighting their novel aspects but also the continuity of longer standardisation cleavages. It is as part of the latest Sustainability programme that the dissertation introduces the previously mentioned global case studies of social standard-setting: the UN GC, the GRI and ISO WG SR.

These global case initiatives facilitate the characterisation of the current features and dynamic of social standardisation and provide an entry point for the study of local trajectories in Argentina and Brazil. The country-based studies proceed first by mapping the patterns of participation of local actors in the three global initiatives in the 2000s, identifying central actors and clusters of actors, and drawing general conclusions over the local context through the use of different analytical tools, such as network analysis. Drawing from these results, the dissertation engages with each particular country separately, tracking key actors to explore their conditions of emergence while contextualising the political economic environment in which they developed. On this basis it becomes possible to analyse the circumstances where certain local political economic structures end up supporting governance initiatives, as it happened in Brazil, or blocking them almost entirely, as is the case in Argentina.

The contrast between the two countries is based on examining the compatibility between national political master frames and governance programmes, and the specific circumstances and forces conditioning this compatibility. Adopting a longer historical scope to

examine the local cases – ranging from the 1950s for Argentina and the 1970s for Brazil – facilitates a better understanding of how the resonance of certain governance programmes of standardisation in the 2000s is a product of longer political traditions combined with contemporary political agendas promoted by the governments. Thus, in the 2000s, the Brazilian political environment became characterised by a social neoliberal agenda that blended market liberalism with a strong social orientation. This, added to an inclusive and overlapping model of state-society relations and close contacts among corporate, civil and political actors, contributed to an active participation in the global initiatives, and a high level of resonance of the governance programmes in general. On the other hand, Argentina presents an opposing situation, with poor and fragmented participation in social standard-setting and an indifferent stance by the main social actors towards the governance programmes. This is argued to respond to central cleavages of the governance discourse, such as human rights and market liberalism, being in conflict with the nationalist state-based discourse advanced in the last decade by the government and shared by important social actors. As a result, social standard-setting programmes are understood as part of a specialised corporate agenda with low domestic political salience.

This dissertation provides two major contributions with respect to the local level. First, it specifies why two global South countries follow different trajectories of social standardisation and governance. Furthermore, it indicates that these trajectories are not so much explained by the level of integration of these countries into the global economy, their peripheral positioning in the world system, or general developmental commonalities such as experiencing similar processes of liberalisation and democratisation in the 1980s and 1990s, and statist socially-oriented political administrations in the 2000s. Instead, the empirical cases reveal that more complex circumstances are at play in the local engagement with governance programmes of social standardisation. As a result, apparently incompatible conditions for the advance of a liberal governance agenda, such as narrow state-society relations and left-wing political discourses, can end up reinforcing the acceptance of global standards and support local involvement (as in Brazil), while aggressive neoliberal reforms and the entry of foreign capital can end up doing the opposite (as in Argentina). Second, it demonstrates the advantages of approaching standardisation and governance as a bi-directional communicational process, and not as a top-down one where global norms and frameworks substitute national ones. The dissertation shows that global programmes and norms are not merely diffused from the global North to the local South, but rather result from the dynamic interaction among different political master frames and discourses operating at the international and state level simultaneously.

Hence, by developing an in-depth empirical study of the connection between national political structures and participation in global social standard-setting, this dissertation provides a nuanced analysis of the local dimension of governance and standardisation and of the

limitations of linear explanations emphasising economic globalisation or the isomorphic behaviour by local (Southern) actors. Therefore this study contributes to elucidate two areas of IR research. First, it emphasises the relevance that contemporary standard-setting initiatives have for understanding the current direction of global governance. Second, it highlights the active role of national political traditions, state-society relations and political agendas in structuring the local trajectory of transnational processes and embedding governance programmes with local resonance.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This dissertation is framed by two principal research questions: i) *How has social standardisation evolved as a global governance project?* and *ii) How is this trajectory enacted in the global South?* To answer these questions the dissertation analyses the emergence of different programmes of social standardisation and associated standard-setting initiatives as part of a macro historical process, and performs an empirical exploration of the relationship between these global standard-setting projects and the national political structures in countries of the global South, specifically in Argentina and Brazil.

A number of sub-questions order the overall development of the thesis:

I. *What social forces guide the global trajectory of social standardisation?*
II. *What is the role of the latest programme of social standardisation in global governance?*
III. *What trajectory did social standardisation follow in Argentina and Brazil?*
IV. *In what manner have these local trajectories been shaped by domestic political structures and circumstances?*

The first two sub-questions emphasise the global dimension of social standardisation and governance. At the basis of this perspective is the notion of social standardisation itself, understood as a multi-cleavage framing process which evolves through time. This notion is used not only to trace the historical evolution of multiple cleavages of social standardisation and situate contemporary social governance initiatives, but to examine the local trajectories of social standard-setting in Argentina and Brazil. Moreover, social standardisation connects the global and historical narrative of this dissertation, the object of the first pair of sub-questions, with the empirical investigations in these two countries, the object of the second pair.

The conceptual premises on which this dissertation relies treat social standardisation as both a political project and a sociological process. Drawing from constructivist and systemic

theories, this dissertation considers standardisation to be linked with the progressive specialisation and rationalisation of modern society in conditions of globalisation. In the twentieth century this process was expressed in the transition from international regulation to global governance; from a situation where most aspects of transnational regulation were handled by state-based actors through unconnected non-competing themes, to a contemporary scenario where the normative incumbencies of social standards have become global, pluralising the range of actors involved and convoluting the regulatory landscape. In this regard, the concept of social standardisation connects two aspects of international politics that are rarely addressed together by IR theory: the growing differentiation and specialisation of the world order, and the turn towards standardisation in global governance. Therefore, this dissertation links two macro processes as key drivers behind the governance dynamic: functional differentiation, a central pillar of sociological structuralism that only recently has entered governance studies (Buzan and Albert 2010; Thomas 2010; Beck 2002), and standardisation, a notion used to study transnational governance but not so to frame transnational social processes (Jessop 2008; Nadvi and Wältring 2004; Meyer and Jepperson 2000).

These two processes cut across conventional Westphalian definitions of international relations, where the state is a black box led by its own interests and power drive. Instead, this dissertation understands standardisation as transversal to state boundaries. On this premise, the dissertation intends to cuts across current debates regarding the legitimacy of private standards and governance arrangements (Fransen 2012; Vogel 2010; Börzel and Risse 2010) by understanding them as a product of the emergence of new political discourses and frames that clash with state-based definitions and institutions. This approach presumes that some of their most visible features of late social standardisation, such as voluntarism, reliance on universal models and norms, normative minimalism, and multi-sectoral participation, are not necessarily a consequence of specific political programmes but structural adaptations to the complexity of the world order. These premises guide the historical analysis providing an answer to the first pair of two sub-questions by examining the global evolution of social standardisation, distinguishing different programmes, its discourses and institutional features, and the operation of current social standard-setting initiatives.

The remaining sub-questions inquire about this process from a national perspective, engaging with the circumstances in which global governance programmes and domestic structures and political discourses interact. Answering these questions requires following the three global case studies – the UN GC, the GRI and ISO WG SR – into the contexts of Argentina and Brazil and providing a rich empirical characterisation of how global initiatives are approached and by whom. By contrasting local participation in the global case studies against local political discourses, state-society relations and political economic structures, the pattern of behaviour of local actors from these two countries is explained, providing valuable

insight on how governance programmes are locally perceived, communicated and hybridised. This dissertation considers the local environment to play an active role in shaping the relationship with global standard-setting initiatives, and studies the 'Southern' variables and dynamics involved in the process. These variables are connected with specific features that at first hand distinguish the South American political economic environment from the Northern one framing the global trajectory of social standardisation and governance. These Southern features are marked by a (presumably) hierarchical model of state-society relations, shaped by the prevalent position the state has in economy and society, the presence of corporate conglomerates, weak traditions of social and labour organisation, and market neoliberalisation.

However, even when elements of this hierarchical political economy are undoubtedly in place, this dissertation proposes that they have to be further nuanced against recent political developments in the 2000s. In particular, in the last decade there has been a clear shift to the left in the overall political project accompanied by the (re)activation of neo-corporativist and overlapping forms of state-society relations. At the same time, it is necessary to understand the effect that processes of economic and political liberalisation in the 1980s and 1990s had over local political discourses, traditions, and relations, as well as the role played by crises or developmental models under authoritarian regimes, which are dimensions that are not part of the global narrative of social standardisation.

METHODOLOGY

In order to empirically study the trajectory of social standardisation at both global and state levels, this dissertation relies on a combination of qualitative methodologies and analytical techniques. This is because the object of study of this thesis – social standardisation and governance – consists of a multi-level construct with no clearly defined boundaries, involving discursive, structural and institutional dimensions and multiple units of analysis, for instance, specific standard-setting initiatives, the participants in the initiatives, multi-sectoral networks, and state-society relations. For analytical purposes the dissertation separates developments at the global level, involving discourses and mechanisms promoted by international organisations and intended for international diffusion, and those at the national level, where each country is treated as a separate unit of analysis. In both levels, the dissertation relies on selected case studies to limit the scope of analysis. Additionally, this thesis relies on a number of analytical techniques, such as triangulation, discourse analysis, media analysis, network analysis and semi-structured interviews, dealing with multiple sources of data, to produce an evolutionary narrative that identifies key processes, actors, and their circumstances of emergence (Wendt 1987). The following sections elaborate on the case study selection, data sources, and analytical

techniques, while chapter 2 provides an extensive revision of secondary literature dealing with different aspects of social standardisation and governance.

Case study selection

The case studies used in this dissertation present two axes: a global-institutional axis and a national axis. The global institutional axis relies on the mentioned case initiatives to characterise the latest phase of the social standard-setting. These initiatives do not intend to represent the total spectrum of current global governance initiatives addressing an overlapping range of civil, labour and environmental questions,[2] but were selected based on a number of features making them particularly suitable for the purpose of this dissertation. First, the three have global agendas with a clear functional discourse that intends to transcend inter-state law-based structures. In other words, they operate through standards and standard-based mechanisms. Second, their programmes have the explicit objective of connecting social standardising with national applications and transnational networks. Third, they are recognised by the main international organisations such as the UN, the World Bank, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the OECD and International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) as relevant parts of the global governance architecture (Reed et al 2012; Hahn and Weidtmann 2012; Ponte et al 2011; Murphy and Yates 2011; Ruggie 2008a).

Hence, on a preliminary basis it can be claimed that the UN GC, at least in terms of global visibility, represents the most iconic UN-led and ILO-endorsed initiative for devising an active framework for the non-state governance of social, labour and environmental issues. The second case, the GRI, is a more specific standard-setting programme focused on the definition of standardised metrics for environmental and social reporting for organisations. This initiative however, has been endorsed by the UN GC as the preferred reporting mechanism to monitor and measure its framework as well as by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (White 1999). The third case involves the Working Group that created the ISO 26000 Guidance Standard on Social Responsibility, published in November 2010. This initiative is of relevance as it represents perhaps the latest and more institutionally complex social standard-setting project. In addition to this, the ISO remains a largely understudied actor in international politics even though it has participated quite successfully in technical and industrial normalisation for over half a century (Murphy and Yates 2009; Tamm Hallström 2004). Moreover, the multi-sectoral forum through which the ISO 26000 standard was developed included not only the UN GC and GRI but most of the central actors in social and environmental standard-setting and

[2] An exhaustive list of social and environmental standard-setting initiatives can be found in Appendix B.

governance, corporate regulation, and international regulation worldwide, including the ILO, the UN, the World Health Organisation (WHO), the European Union (EU), the OECD, and diverse international business and labour representatives.

The second axis involves two national cases of the global South: Argentina and Brazil. A priori, the selection of these cases would indicate that the dissertation is adopting a 'most-similar' comparative research strategy, where the common factors between these two neighbouring countries could be sidelined to explain the observed differences (Della Porta 2008). This strategy would be justified on a number of similarities between the countries: both went through relatively similar processes of democratisation and liberalisation during the 1980s and 1990s, both are the main leaders in MERCOSUR, both have had socially-oriented administrations since the early 2000s, and both are politically and economically inter-connected: Argentina is Brazil's second foreign market as well as its main commercial provider while Brazil is Argentina's largest trading partner. However, there are also major differences among the countries on two levels. First, on their size: Brazil is the sixth largest economy in the world in terms of nominal GDP (2011), has four times the population of Argentina, represents 70% of the GDP of MERCOSUR and is widely regarded as one of the emerging industrial powerhouses of the world. Second, there are evident differences on the level of participation of actors from each country in social standard-setting and governance. As will be explored, Brazilian actors occupied leading roles in the development of ISO 26000 and have visible presence in the higher instances of multiple governance initiatives. Moreover, the country is considered a world leader regarding corporate responsibility, sustainability and private environmental programmes, and is the only one in the region with a national norm on CSR (Correa et al 2004; UNEP 2008). Argentina does not seem to share any of these characteristics.

From this second perspective, the selection of Argentina and Brazil reflects more the application of the method of difference, which is considered more powerful to establish causal associations than the method of agreement. Accordingly, the Argentine case can be used as a 'negative' control variable against the 'positive' propositions extracted from the Brazilian situation. Such contrast enables the identification of crucial explanatory differences, the development of more generalisable conclusions, and the formulation of stronger hypotheses (Della Porta 2008; Skocpol and Somers 1980). However, it must be noted that the analysis of the national case studies is not strictly comparative: as mentioned, it proceeds by articulating a narrative of social standardisation, taking as a reference local participation in the three global case initiatives and contrasting it against domestic political structures in each country. This adjusts more to what Skocpol and Somers (1980) calls macro-analytic approach – '[moving] back and forth between alternative explanatory hypotheses and comparison of relevant aspects of the histories of two or more cases' (Ibid: 182) – rather than producing a schematic point-by-point comparative following pre-given analytical themes.

The connection between the global cases and the local ones is done first by mapping formal participation of local actors in the global case studies. This dissertation understands that formal participation is more indicative of the level of resonance of a particular governance programme and of the degree of specialisation possessed by local actors than quantifying the myriad of atomised subscribers to a certain standard, which in the best of cases are a marginal sample of the total universe and would require a different methodological approach. Moreover, focusing on formal participation has the advantage of providing a more limited set of organisations and personalities for interviewing. Nevertheless, as the three global initiatives operate on a voluntary basis, it is necessary to specify the definition of formal participation on which this dissertation relies. In the first instance it is necessary to distinguish those actors that assume an active role in the global initiatives from those that occupy peripheral and passive ones. This intends to separate 'norm-makers' from 'norm-adopters': those that somehow participate in the standard-setting process and/or actively promote the governance initiatives, and the mere users of the norms which no further involvement beyond this. Thus, the initial mapping focuses on those former actors – individuals and organisations – occupying established roles within the governance and standard-setting procedures of any of the three global initiatives by March 2012 (though posterior changes will be addressed when relevant). This excludes fixed-contract positions by nationals of these two countries in the bureaucracies and secretariats of the global initiatives. This is to minimise the effect of personal rather than institutional involvement.

Data sources

The dissertation draws from an extensive range of primary sources to characterise Argentine and Brazilian involvement, but also to explore the global trajectory of standardisation and contemporary initiatives. Preliminary observations are extracted from a diverse academic literature – comprising political science, sociology, political economy, history, international relations, industrial relations and business studies – and used mostly in the historical analysis developed in chapter 3. These observations are complemented with multiple primary sources, including annual reports by international organisations, CSOs and standard-setting bodies, minutes of meetings, statements in organisational websites, articles in newspapers and magazines, and publicly available statistics. This range of sources involves documents in English, Spanish and Portuguese languages. A separate mention is appropriate for the ISO WG SR case. All the archives covering the five-year development process of the ISO 26000 norm are publicly available, providing valuable and readily accessible data regarding the evolution of

the ISO WG SR process, participation statistics, the contributions of diverse participants, voting results, and records of various debates.[3]

A second set of primary data was obtained through semi-structured interviews with a diverse range of actors. Twenty seven open-ended and semi-structured interviews were conducted to extend, complement and reformulate descriptive observations and analytical propositions. These interviews targeted mostly Argentine and Brazilian participants in the standard-setting initiatives and other governance organisations, but also local representatives of civil society and international organisations indirectly involved with the social standardisation agenda, as well as academic experts in the field. Interviews were particularly useful given the recent nature of the initiatives under study and the scarcity of specialised academic literature dealing with local involvement in standardisation and private governance in South America.

The interviews were conducted in multiple locations. First, the author attended the 2010 Annual Plenary Meeting of ISO WG SR, the last plenary meeting before the publication of the norm, which took place in Copenhagen, Denmark on May 2010. In the capacity of guest researcher the author attended a number of official events and workshops. The contacts and observations made during this event provided a valuable source of information used throughout the dissertation. On the one side it allowed direct observation of the concluding instance of the latest project of global standard-setting as it unfolded. On the other, it permitted interacting with diverse participants from different backgrounds. The author engaged in preliminary conversations with members of multiple national delegations, in particular with members of the Argentine and Brazilian ones, with representatives from other standard-setting bodies and networks including the GRI and UN GC, government officials, and fellow researchers. Also during this event the author assisted the meetings of the Spanish Translation Task Force (STTF) of ISO 26000, attended by members of all Spanish-speaking delegations, most of them Latin American. These contacts provided the basis for snow-balling vis-à-vis the specific interviews on location conducted the following year.

The second round of interviews was conducted in the cities of Buenos Aires, Argentina and São Paulo, Brazil – where most of the participant organisations were based – during August and September 2011, and additional interviews were conducted via Skype in the following months with participants in other regions, such as Rio de Janeiro and the north of Argentina. The interviews had an approximate duration between 1 and 1.5 hours, taking place in the premises selected by the interviewee and audio-recorded with previous consent. Questions avoided personal intimacy and were shaped to the level of trust and knowledge of the respondent taking into consideration requests for privacy and anonymity. In all cases the research complied with City University London's Ethics Code and procedures. Given the

[3] These archives are available on http://www.iso.org/wgsr, accessed 21 November 2012.

number of potential candidates and limited resources and time, the logic for selecting the local interviewees prioritised participants occupying coordinating or high relevance roles in the initiatives, in order to obtain a broader vision of the standard-setting process. A second target was the representatives from local organisations involved in areas of incumbency for the global initiatives but that did not participate in them. This second group was chosen to provide the perspective of relevant outsiders. Guiding themes for the interviews were the nature of the participation of their organisations in the global initiatives and the relevance of the governance agenda for local public opinion or different social sectors. At the same time, when possible, interviewees were asked about their perception of the role of other participants and non-participants, changes in the importance of social standard-setting and governance in the last decade, and the influence of governmental decisions over these attitudes. Finally, a number of scholars were interviewed to provide a perspective from local academia on the relevance of these global programmes, and to inquire over potential explanations for the resonance of these programmes in each country.

The interviews were conducted with representatives of the following types of organisations (a detailed list is provided in Appendix A at the end of this document):

- CSR Departments in Transnational Corporations
- Industry Chambers
- Business associations
- Sustainability/CSR Consultancies
- Consumer associations
- International CSOs
- Environmental CSOs
- National Standardisation Bodies
- Academics

Analytical techniques

This dissertation adopts a number of analytical techniques to explore the data of local participation. The first technique involves the extraction of the rich qualitative data resulting from the interviews. The interview recordings were analysed in an un-coded manner, paying specific attention to commonalities in answers and comments in relation to driving forces and milestones in the local trajectories of standard-setting in each country, the use of specific 'governance' vocabulary, and the type of issues in which the interviewees considered global initiatives relevant. These observations were noted down and compared across actors from

different sectors and different countries. The objective was to triangulate a number of macro observations extracted from secondary sources, the global historical analysis, and the network analysis to be described ahead, with the perceptions on the ground in these two countries.

A second analytical technique classifies local participants by function and explores the networks of relations across them in order to gain an understanding of the general participation profile of each country. Hence, local participants in the three case study initiatives were first classified according to the functional orientation of their organisations to grasp the sectoral diversity of participants. Participants were classified according to a seven-fold typology: Business, Industry Federations, Consultancies, Academia, Trade Unions, Governmental and CSOs. This last type was further broken down into six sub-types: Business associations, Civil Rights, Environment, Labour, Standards, Consumers, and Sustainability. This extended typology disaggregates the orientation of each participant to facilitate sectoral analysis and identify clusters and cross-country patterns. These categories comprise the following types of organisations:

1. Business: profit organisations, either private or mixed.
2. Industry Federations: Official business representation bodies.
3. Consultancies: Private firms providing support services to other organisations.
4. Academia: Universities and educational centres, including think tanks.
5. Trade Unions: Recognised labour representation bodies.
6. State: Any office or agency responding exclusively to the state, in any jurisdictional level - national, provincial or municipal – including state normalisation bodies.
7. Civil society Organisations:
    a. Business Associations: focus on corporate issues but not providing official representation.
    b. Civil Rights: focus on the promotion of civil and political rights.
    c. Environment: focus on environmental issues.
    d. Labour: focus on the labour and working issues but not providing official representation.
    e. Standards: focus on the setting, monitoring or training in relation to industrial standards or certificates.
    f. Consumers: focus on consumer issues.
    g. Sustainability: focus on service provision such as consultancy and training defined in sustainability terms, including CSR.

For those cases where multiple categories could be applicable, for instance a CSO promoting both civil and labour issues, a decision was made as to its primary activity. At the

same time, actors were classified according to the role played inside a particular case initiative. In the case of the UN GC and GRI, participants are subdivided in two groups: having roles either on the Board of the organisations (but not secretariats), and any other formal role, including fiscal, advisory or technical support functions. For the case of the ISO WG SR, which is not a formal organisation in itself but a temporal working group, a distinction was made between positions in the direction of the Working Group, and participation in the national delegations attending the plenary meetings, either as experts or observers. At the same time, only participants attending at least one of the last three plenary meetings – correspondingly Copenhagen 2010, Quebec 2009 and Santiago 2008 – were considered. This last consideration is to minimise the distortion produced by the first meeting held in the Brazilian city of Bahia in 2005, where novelty and proximity accentuated the attendance of one-timers from South America.

This second typology is also used to evaluate the level of involvement and single out patterns and anomalies, as well as to enable comparisons among the two countries regarding sectoral participation and hierarchical roles. However, the specialised and often pre-determined constituencies found in the global case studies limit the effectiveness of this classification. To solve this issue the dissertation performed a broader network analysis. The network analysis provides greater detail on the direct and indirect institutional linkages among participants in the two countries, but also on linkages with relevant governance organisations or governmental actors. To limit the exponential growth of linkages only institutional or personal connections among participants and secondary organisations were considered. On the one hand, institutional connections include participation in common associations, federations, networks and partnerships, as well as personal roles such as founders, board members, advisors or executive positions. These connections are referred as 'first level' connections. Instead, when two or more organisations and/or individuals are connected via an association or partnership with a third actor, this is referred as a 'second level' connection. Links with international actors were limited to first level connections of local participants with foreign organisations and networks directly involed in the social standard-setting agenda.

Based on public primary sources such as institutional websites, documents and articles in the media, a database was created detailing these connections. This database was then inputted in the Cytoscape v2.6.3 software, an open platform for complex network analysis and visualisation. This software is capable of performing sophisticated quantitative analysis if appropriate parameters are inputted.[4] Nonetheless, the dissertation did not focus on this sort of analysis but mostly on its visualisation capabilities in order to extract qualitative conclusions. Two network plots were generated – one for each national case – applying a specific algorithm

[4] For a detailed presentation of network analysis methodology, see Wasserman and Faust (1994).

denominated Organic Layout. This algorithm operates on the following premises: 1) each node (actor) repels each other, 2) linkages among nodes act as binding springs, 3) the resulting lay out attempts to minimise the sum of centrifugal forces in the network, 4) due to this, actors with greater number of linkages are assigned a more central position as they are assumed to have greater binding capacity. In the resulting plots no pre-assigned 'weight' was attributed to specific actors; all actors are equal in the network. Nonetheless, some few modifications were inputted manually. First, each type of actor was assigned a particular colour: white for the global cases studies, blue for corporations, green for governmental bodies, grey for civil society, pink for civil business associations, orange for labour, brown for international organisations, red for specific individuals, and light green for academia. Second, 'foreign' actors (excepting the initiatives themselves) were situated manually on the edges of the figure to distinguish them from the rest. The resulting plots, presented in chapter 4, facilitate a number of macro conclusions regarding participation patterns in Argentina and Brazil, observing the density of inter-sectoral connections, the presence of multi-sectoral clusters, and the centrality and peripherality of different actors/organisations. The validity of these conclusions and their underlying causes are explored on the country-based analyses of chapters 5 and 6.

LIMITATIONS

This dissertation's methodology involves a number of limitations which stem from the selection of case studies, of data sources, and of analytical techniques. On the first hand, the selected case studies do not exhaust the universe of global social and labour standard-setting initiatives. A broader selection of cases might have led to different, or possibly more nuanced, conclusions. However, as was mentioned the selected initiatives are the ones enjoying wider recognition and visibility, but also those with more diverse participation in their organisational structures in terms of sectors and geographical regions. At the same time, relying on the cases of Argentina and Brazil certainly induces schemas with relative validity in the South American context, given common political economic structures and history, but extending results to other countries and regions would deserve further consideration (Skocpol and Somers 1980). Furthermore, given the quite contrasting results found in these two cases, the project refrains from extending its conclusions to other countries within the South American region, or to aggregate them in notions such as Latin America, the global South or the developing world, though it does acknowledge that certain insights can be used to inform other applications (Berg 2001).

A second set of limitations relates to the data sources and analytical techniques. The network analysis in particular is very sensitive to the quality and comprehensiveness of the

database and the capacity to identify linkages among actors, many of which are often not of a public nature. Additionally, the number of potential connections increases exponentially with the number of nodes. This dissertation tried to limit this by focusing on the main actors and their formal associations, but certainly there are significant informal networks as well as formal connections difficult to trace. The use of semi-structured interviews to extract information and support conclusions carries a number of limitations. For instance, the sample of interviewees selected and the problem of access. Certain key actors could not be reached or refused to comment. This was particularly the case with individuals in very high positions in certain business and political organisations. Relevant representatives of trade unions in both Argentina and Brazil also proved difficult to contact. Instead, representatives from participant corporations, medium-sized NGOs, and academics proved more readily available. Limitations of funding also affected the variety of actors that could be contacted. Some individuals were geographically distant within the country and were interviewed remotely via Skype, but this was not possible in all cases. Added to this, there are more general issues regarding the reliability and validity of qualitative data given the imperfect link between what actors say they do and what they actually do, passing through issues such as question formulation (Bray 2008; Berg 2001). This was particularly visible when interviewing mid-level corporate and organisational spokespersons, which generally remained largely within the boundaries of official positions. In these cases, it was up to the researcher to infer the extent to which their comments represent institutional or personal opinions. Language barriers did not emerge as a limitation.

STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

The dissertation comprises six chapters, in addition to this one. Chapter 2 provides the review of the literature and the guiding conceptual framework. The literature review is divided in two sections. The first explores six sets of academic literature covering different cleavages of transnational social standardisation: global governance, transnational private regulation, international labour regimes, the international labour movement, and transnational civil activism. The six set involves studies of these cleavages in the context of Argentina and Brazil. By analysing each set of literature separately this first section outlines a number of complementarities and limitations, the latter in relation to the trajectory of social standardisation in the global South. The second part of the literature review focuses on the theoretical explanations used by IR scholars to frame standardisation, starting with more conventional IR theories and moving towards systemic models with limited entry in IR studies. This section argues that certain systemic semantic approaches provide a valuable framework to study global governance and transnational standard-setting both as a transnational process as well as a

political project. The rest of the chapter develops the conceptual premises articulating this framework, connecting the structural nature of the standardisation process and its local interface with specific national variables and dynamics.

Chapter 3 develops the historical evolution of global social standardisation from the early part of the twentieth century to the early part of the 2010s. By engaging with the multiple cleavages that have promoted a transnational approach to the regulation of labour and social conditions, the first part of this chapter examines the trajectory of different programmes of social standardisation. These programmes often competed with each other, combining and recombining different cleavages and shaping diverse institutional expressions, both domestically and internationally. The second half of chapter 3 focuses on the current phase of social standardisation by introducing the three global case studies, the UN GC, the GRI and the ISO WG SR. By exploring the evolution of these initiatives as part of a common programme, this chapter can detail the current features of the social standard-setting agenda and analyse its direction, in particular given the thickening of discursive and institutional links between governance organisations.

Chapters 4 to 6 develop the local case studies of Argentina and Brazil. Chapter 4 provides the results of the analyses of Brazilian and Argentine participation in the three global case studies and maps them by country and social sector. Additionally, this chapter presents the network analysis outlining the different participation patterns these two countries display in relation to the global case initiatives. This analysis reveals major differences, with Brazil showing a dense, multi-sectoral and relatively centralised configuration, and Argentina a rather diffuse and fragmented one. Chapters 5 and 6 focus on Brazil and Argentina correspondingly, using the analyses of the previous chapter to trace the local trajectories of social standardisation. The manner in which these chapters proceed is relying on the central players identified in chapter 4, analysing their conditions of emergence and evolution, and framing these conditions against national political discourses, political economic structures, state-society relations, and other national circumstances.

Finally, chapter 7 draws together the main findings of the dissertation. This chapter summarises the major arguments and contributions of this project in relation to the research questions. It reflects on how the empirical investigations shed light on the complex structures conditioning the involvement of local actors from Argentina and Brazil in contemporary global governance initiatives. It underlines that local involvement with governance projects goes beyond correct institutional design and incentives, connecting with specific socio-political traditions and the inclusivity or exclusivity of the local political systems. Lastly, it outlines some of the broader implications this project has for the study of global governance in particular and transnational social order in general, pointing to future agendas of research.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL REVIEW

The objective of this chapter is to situate the research questions against the current state of the literature, both empirically and theoretically. The first set of research questions inquires about the extent to which global social standards can be said to constitute a system of governance, the social forces underpinning this system, and the role the latest initiatives of social standard-setting occupy within it. The second set focuses on the local trajectory of social standardisation in the national contexts of Argentina and Brazil and the interaction between governance institutions and domestic political structures. Thus, this chapter is comprised of two main parts. The first reviews the extensive literature that has engaged with empirical expressions of standardisation in general and social standards in particular. This section shows that although the concept of standardisation has gained a relevant place in the study of global governance and private regulation, social standardisation has been approached in a fragmented manner and often through competing explanations in different sets of literature. These sets often confront developments in corporate self-regulation against developments in labour governance, international regimes or civil society's role in global governance. In doing so they tend to minimise the growing institutional and discursive overlap among global governance programmes intended to regulate social patterns in these areas. In these programmes issues such as human rights, labour standards, corporate and financial practices, international conventions and environmental considerations appear generally in combined forms. Furthermore, this section highlights a key deficit crossing most of the literature in the limited studies discussing the trajectory of social standardisation and governance in the global South in general, and South America in particular. As a result, existing analyses generally extrapolate 'global' models and apply them to multiple local settings. This deficit is directly tackled by the second set of research questions, inquiring about the trajectory of social standardisation in Brazil and Argentina.

The second part of this chapter presents the perspective of different theoretical schools over issues of social standardisation. It starts by revising the position of mainstream IR theories such as realism and neoliberal institutionalism, to then move to more constructivist explanations that emphasise cultural dimensions and normative aspects rather than hard power and interests. These approaches are shown to discuss social standardisation as linked with specific macro-processes, such as the regulation of the global economic system (Drezner 2007; Vogel and Kagan 2004), the enhanced moral authority of international organisations and epistemic communities (Hall and Biersteker 2002), or the hegemony of neoliberal ideology (Sklair and Miller 2010; Guthman 2007). Nonetheless, implicit in many of these models is a hierarchical

relationship where global processes and norms trickle down to local conditions, in particular when the latter refers to developing countries. In these circumstances, national politics are generally perceived as an obstacle for standardisation, even when few studies have analysed in depth the relationship between contemporary standard-setting initiatives and local political structures. This section also introduces a number of systemic theories of sociological extraction, which despite their relatively limited use in IR literature to date, provide useful notions to approach transnational processes of standardisation and global governance. It is mainly from a sub-set of these theories that this dissertation draws the guiding conceptual premises and framework that orient the empirical analyses.

GLOBAL APPROACHES TO SOCIAL STANDARDISATION

The approach of IR literature towards standardisation has advanced from treating it as a clouded peripheral process of mostly technical relevance to highlighting its role in the constitution of markets, polities, and global governance (Djelic and Sahlin-Andersson 2006; Mattli and Buthe 2003; Kerwer 2001). Nonetheless, standardisation's longer technical tradition, with roots in nineteenth century industrialisation (Murphy 1994; Thompson 1954), is still present in conventional uses of the term, as the notion is generally applied to describe shifts in rulemaking from being based on state-centred political considerations to specialised and technocratic rationalities. This dissertation argues that the concept has broader applicability than its technical and self-regulation usage. By treating standardisation as a product of the negotiation, deliberation and confrontation of different social actors – states, civil society, corporations or epistemic communities – conventional uses have prevented approaching standardisation as a systemic process with multiple institutional expressions, where negotiated arrangements are important but not the only ones taking place.

Thus, as indicated in chapter 1, this dissertation relies on the social variant of standardisation to refer to a process (or processes) of transnational ordering and as a conceptual framework from where to engage with the different expressions and dimensions of the evolution of transnational social standards. Moreover, the issues covered by projects of social standard-setting have expanded significantly from an initial focus on labour matters, comprising a wide array of literature. Hence, the first section of the empirical literature review examines the general institutional cleavages through which social standardisation has been approached. This reveals that the gap in these literatures is not necessarily within but rather across them on four main aspects. First, social standards constitute the more heterogeneous dimension across the standardisation literature, with insufficient clarity regarding what they involve. Second, global social standards have a longer history beyond the relatively recent treatment given in the more

extensive private governance literature. Third, social standards not only perform a regulatory function but are central in framing, identity-building and transnationalisation processes. Fourth, the study of global social standards at the national level, specifically in the context of the global South, remains largely understudied.

Global governance

Global governance can be defined as 'the formal and informal bundles of rules, roles and relationships that define and regulate the social practices of state and non-state actors in international affairs' (Abbot and Snidal 2001: 346). The diversification of the actors participating in such definition and regulation has shaped what is referred as the 'governance complex', integrated by a myriad of actors including states, international organisations, transnational networks, and public and private agencies, which promote, regulate or intervene in the common affairs of humanity (McGrew and Held 2002; Rosenau 1995). The evolving definition of these common affairs has led to the enlargement of governance complexes and proliferation of governance area-issues such as global health (Buse and Walt 2000; Harman 2012); the global economy (Djelic and Quack 200; O'Brien et al 2002); global trade (Rodrik 2001); the environment (Clapp 1998; Lipschutz and Mayer 1996), global finance (Underhill and Zhang 2008; Germain 2001), and land-grabbing (Margulis and Porter 2013), to mention but a few. At the same time governance has been used to frame developments linked with the emergence of private authority, the withdrawal of the state, the political advance of market actors and the erosion of the public/private distinction (Bartley 2011a; Ruggie 2008; Bernstein and Cashore 2007; Hall and Biersteker 2002; Strange 1996). This heterogeneity seems to have diversified over time, turning governance into a conceptual 'archipelago of unconnected islands' (Hughes and Haworth 2011: 40).

Within this literature, standardisation has been often understood as part of a process of de-politicisation, political delegation, soft law, and self-regulation associated with economic globalisation in the last part of the twentieth century (Djelic and Quack 2012; Jordana and Levi-Faur 2004; Kirton and Trebicock 2004). Moreover, even when authors accept standardisation as a new form of governance – implying a new re-regulation and meta-regulation of the world order (Borraz 2007; O'Rourke 2006; Jessop 2003) – it is generally considered to embody a neoliberal-technocratic vision (Gibbon and Henriksen 2012; O'Brien et al 2002). Thus the spread of governance via standards emerges in opposition to democratic governance institutions. This dissertation goes beyond this in two ways. First, it argues that social standardisation can be approached as a multi-layered phenomenon that transcends neoliberalism and economic globalisation, as it is also linked with the rise of human rights as universal

standards, the expanded legitimacy of civil society and corporate actors in the international order, and changes in the discourses and normative agenda promoted by the UN system. Second, for all its macro formulations about de-politicisation and self-regulation, studies evaluating the local relevance and circumstances in which the normative elements of governance complexes are accepted in the often highly politicised environments of South America are quite limited, as reviewed in detail towards at the end of this empirical section.

Transnational private regulation

The role of private organisations and corporations in global governance and standardisation has been amply studied in the last two decades, since the realisation that transnational organisations were altering the functioning of state-centred world politics (Vogel 1975; Huntington 1973; Keohane and Nye 1971). Since then the involvement of private actors in global governance has come to constitute the main IR approach towards standardisation. In relation to social standardisation, the transnational private regulation literature comprises two currents that outline different contributions, although they have become increasingly connected. The first strand centres on the actions of standard-setting organisations, while the second is oriented towards the activities of firms.

The literature engaged with standard-setting has covered extensively the expansion of technical rationality over an expanding array of issues. Authors have studied how private standard-setting initiatives have emerged and consolidated in areas such as industrial quality and environmental process management (Murphy and Yates 2009; Nadvi 2008; Ponte and Gibbon 2005; Clapp 1998; Murphy 1994), accounting and reporting (Perry and Nölke 2006; Botzem and Quack 2005), food policy (Henson and Humphrey 2012; Fuchs and Clapp 2009; Borraz 2007); financial markets and corporate governance (Bebchuk and Hamdani 2009; Underhill and Zhang 2008; Kerwer 2005), internet protocols (DeNardis 2009; Mueller et al 2007), the service economy (Graz 2009), and the forestry sector (Overdevest 2010; Cashore et al 2007). These studies have examined the contributions and shortcoming of private standards from multiple perspectives, such as their flexibility over binding legislation and centralised coordination, their implications for the link between professional expertise and legitimacy, the role played by large firms, and the emergence of new standard-setting mechanisms. However, when engaging with social standards, the literature starts to show conceptual and empirical fragmentation. This is even present in their general denomination, with social standards treated as fair labour standards (Bartley 2011a; Hassel 2008; O'Rourke 2003), international accountability standards (Gilbert et al 2010; Rasche 2009), sustainability standards (Abbot 2012; Schouten and Glasbergen 2011), and occasionally as social standards per se (Arnold and

Hasse 2012; Mueller et al 2009; Charnovitz et al 2008). These different orientations in the literature often discuss the same issues and initiatives – such as certification and labelling programmes, industrial standards, labour conventions, and international codes of practice – but have different interpretations regarding the underlying dimensions of the social that these initiatives tackle: whether it is labour rights, working conditions, organisational activities, civil principles, or the social and environmental practices of firms. However, they all acknowledge that in the last two decades transnational social standard-setting has become significantly connected with the corporate domain.

As a result the technical standardisation literature ends up linking with the second strand, concerned with the governance activities of corporations and their evolution over the last twenty-five years. Among the first activities noted in the literature were the creation of corporate codes of conduct (CoCs), understood as an expression of a self-regulatory movement responding to firms' growing visibility in society and media (Jenkins et al 2002; Kolk et al 1999; Rubin 1995; Langlois and Schlegelmilch 1990). Since then scholars have analysed the development and convolution of corporate regulatory projects and their application worldwide. Thus, considerable attention has been paid to the growing acceptance of public-private partnerships (PPP) in intergovernmental and national governance (Andonova 2010; Ruggie 2008; Börzel and Risse 2002; Linder and Rosenau 2000), the spread of certification and labelling initiatives (Bartley 2011; Bartley 2007; O'Rourke 2006; O'Rourke 2003; Bartley 2003; Urminsky 2001; Diller 1999), the political relevance of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programmes (Fransen 2012; Vogel 2008; Auld et al. 2008; Standing 2007; Sahlin-Andersson 2006), and the growing intersection of business standards with non-corporate regulatory instruments (Reed 2012; Ponte et al 2011; Bartley 2011a). All these studies support the thesis that corporate initiatives no longer represent an irrelevant aspect of global governance but provide a new layer of transnational regulation, where the 'corporate connection' (Ruggie 2008) has become fundamental in any transnational attempt tackling technical, social or environmental issues. Furthermore, these analyses reveal the dynamic roles played by firms, civil society organisations, trade unions and governments in apparently 'corporate' projects. In light of this, authors have proposed multiple denominations to capture the implication of these developments, such as 'Audit Society' (Power 1999), 'NGO-Industrial complex' (Gereffi et al 2001), 'layering of rules' (Bartley 2011a), 'non-state global governance' (Bernstein and Cashore 2007), 'civil regulation' (Vogel 2008), 'regulatory standard-setting' (Abbot and Snidal 2008), 'non-state governance arrangement' (Koenig-Archibugi and MacDonald 2012), and even global labour governance (Hassel 2008; Arthurs 2008).

These studies have identified several limitations of private standard-setting, considering that at best it can complement, but hardly replace, state mechanisms. More critical approaches go further and consider CSR and multi-stakeholder standards as a deception through which

corporations seek to avoid harder regulation by states or international bodies, in any case reinforcing the neoliberal paradigm of globalisation and governance (Sklair and Miller 2010; Guthman 2007; Doane 2005; O'Brien 2002). Others base their scepticism over the limited effectiveness of private voluntary mechanisms, given structural limits imposed by economic globalisation, competition, and other institutional forces on the achievement of political consensus, civil organisation, and voluntary regulation (Fransen 2011; Mayer and Gereffi 2010; Vogel 2010; Wells 2009; Nadvi 2008; Christopherson and Lillie 2005).

Both critics and supporters have tended to remain bounded to questions of legitimacy and effectiveness. Against this, this dissertation shares the view of a more recent set of studies that brackets concerns for the effectiveness of global social standards, their appropriate institutional design and their ideological implications, and engage with them as constituting a larger system of transnational governance. This body of work suggests that in contrast with Westphalian models, transnational private governance develops in the absence of a clear centre of authority or a consensual programmatic agenda. Rather, it involves the disordered interconnection of a number of regulatory forms – including contractual arrangements, conventions, standards, rankings, and monitoring frames – loosely embedded in other forms of governance (Bartley and Smith 2008; Risse 2006; Djelic and Sahlin-Andersson 2006; Kirton and Trebicock 2004). These new 'global' configurations stress and contest conventional definitions of political roles, institutions and relationships, such as democratic representation, legitimacy, and accountability (Koenig-Archibugi and MacDonald 2012; Börzel and Risse 2010; Dingwerth and Pattberg 2009; Nadvi and Wältring 2004).

Overall, this literature indicates that private social standards have extended both thematically and institutionally, and can hardly be said to deal with mere technical or corporate issues anymore. However, most of the literature still associates private with corporate, sidelining the effect of other standardisation cleavages and social actors (Schneiberg and Bartley 2008). Moreover, the literature has only recently started to pay attention to transnational patterns of standardisation and to the networks linking different standard-setting programmes, actors and mechanisms across different levels of analysis, in particular the national one in its global South variant. These are two aspects this dissertation tackles directly by studying the evolution of social standardisation cleavages and their trajectories in two South American countries.

Notwithstanding these developments, a significant proportion of studies concerning social standardisation are still approached from the perspective of international labour law, industrial relations, and labour governance. A review of the labour-related literature confirms the gradual transition during the last century from a model of labour governance centred on inter-governmental arrangements and regimes led by organisations such as the ILO, the WTO or the UN, to multi-sectoral networks adopting a more inclusive 'civil' (as opposed to workerist)

understanding of social standardisation. The following three sets of literature explore this evolution from the perspective of labour regimes, the international labour movement, and civil society, providing an introduction to additional cleavages of standardisation.

International labour regimes

Conventionally, international regimes have been a central area of study of rationalist IR scholars. A regime is defined as 'governing arrangements constructed by states to coordinate their expectations and organise aspects of international behaviour on various issue-areas' (Kratochwil and Ruggie 1986: 759). Social regimes however have not been at the centre of these studies for a number of valid reasons; some explained ahead and others in the theoretical review section. In particular, social regimes had been discussed in the form of an international labour regime, which in any case has failed to materialise. The goal of this labour regime would have been to prevent a race-to-the-bottom competition among countries trying to flexibilise their labour laws to attract foreign investment, and make globalisation more equitable by incentivising better social conditions across the world (Schneiberg and Bartley 2008). Despite such failure, which is considered a main driver behind the rise of private initiates, international labour regulation has received significant attention due to the relevance and longevity of two key actors: the ILO and the international labour movement, which is treated in the next section.

Concerning the former, a number of studies has analysed the diminishing role of the ILO as a central actor in the coordination of labour relations under conditions of globalisation, failing to monitor and homogenise labour standards worldwide (Standing 2010; Standing 2008; Harvey 2005; Lee 1997; Murphy 1994; Cox 1977). The difficulties faced by the ILO provide nonetheless insightful observations to understand changes in different cleavages of social standardisation. For instance, authors indicate that the initial purpose of international labour law was neither ethical nor economic, but rather based on the idea that it was needed for stabilising world peace (Riegelman 1945; Goodrich 1944; Gormley 1966; Hobsbawn 1997; Edwards and Elger 1999). In these debates three actors appeared entitled to discuss social standardisation at the international level: governments, organised labour, and business. These and others studies also point to the difficulty of devising internationally agreed social and labour norms through state-centred arrangements, given the high risk of ending in regulatory deadlocks, as happened to the ILO during the Cold War period (Francke 1909; Fuster 1913; Bauer 1921; Cox 1958; Murphy 1994; Engerman 2003), and even during eighteenth and nineteenth-century debates over fair trade and slave labour (Charnovitz 1987; Reinsch 1909; Reinsch 1907).

These deadlocks serve to emphasise the historical problem of integrating diverse (and divergent) national interests, political traditions, and ideologies into global norms. These

difficulties plagued more recent alternatives to enhance an ILO-centred international labour regime. For instance, repeated attempts were made to include 'social clauses' into international trade agreements, such as the European Common Market, the International Trade Organisation (ITO), the GATT, and finally the WTO, all ending with negative results (Grandi 2006; O'Brien 2004; Staiger 2003; Chan 2003; Wilkinson 2002; Braithwaite and Drahos 2000; Leary 1996; Edgren 1979). The last attempt to go in this direction, known as the WTO-ILO social clause debate, was ultimately abandoned by the mid-1990s due to the impossibility of reconciling interests across the North-South divide as well as among civil society, business and governmental sectors. This does not mean that labour clauses stopped being included in bilateral and regional trade agreements. Nonetheless, these clauses were shown to have very limited institutionalisation in the international domain (Grandi 2009; Kay 2005; Trubek et al 2000). More recently, a social clause was also discussed in relation to the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA), but this agreement was never signed (Von Bülow 2009; Korzeniewicz and Smith 2001). A softer alternative to this was the input of social articles in voluntary frameworks by international organisations such as the UN, the ICC and the OECD, which contributed to raise awareness regarding the activities of large corporations but had limited institutional effects (Hassel 2008; Heintz 2002; Rubin 1995; Horn 1980). Is must be noted that the growing inclusivity of social actors in standard-setting bodies such as the WTO contributed to make it progressively difficult to achieve consensus over social standards, thus incentivising general and voluntary alternatives.

This dissertation considers that the failure of formal labour regimes has changed expectations regarding what is possible in international labour governance in general. This has favoured looser uses of notions such as 'global labour regime' or 'global labour standards' in contemporary texts, which have little in common with the conventional rationalistic and legalistic definitions of regimes (Haworth et al 2005; Heintz 2002; Valticos 1998). For instance, Trubek et al (2000: 1187) considers that voluntary multi-sectoral governance initiatives demonstrate that elements of a 'multilevel, public-private transnational *regime* are present in some parts of the world'. Other authors use the term labour regime is a soft sense, for instance, to refer to an arrangement where the ILO is but a moral reference among a multitude of actors (Maupain 2009; Helfer 2006; Haworth and Hughes 2003; Wilkinson 2002; Hughes 2002; Vosko 2002). Because of this, the latest direction taken by the labour regime literature ends up linking with many of the private and voluntary projects discussed in the first section (Hassel 2008; O'Brien 2002).

This dissertation draws a number of premises from this literature. One of them is that legalistic political mechanisms of labour regulation have not 'failed' because of economic globalisation, de-regulation and neoliberalism alone, but also because bureaucratic inter-governmental arrangements clash with an increasing diversified environment and politicised

actors. In this context, the turn towards governance and standardisation emerges as a solution to hierarchical mechanisms, not only as an ideological project. This is a consideration that this dissertation expands during its historical analysis in the following chapter. The second insight regards the shift away from labour as a central component of international social regulation, a point expanded next.

The International labour movement

The labour movement has been identified as a central actor in transnational social standardisation since the nineteenth century, advancing social standards in the form of workers' rights, the improvement of working conditions, the support for progressive legislation, the provision of social services, and the promotion of solidarity and equality (Gallin 2006). However, the labourist literature acknowledges two phenomena that have had a detrimental effect over the role of the labour movement in social standard-setting: globalisation and the 'civilisation' of labour. From the labour perspective these phenomena are something to be reversed, and a significant proportion of this literature assumes a sceptical when not hostile approach to developments in non-labour domains of governance of the social, such as private and corporate regulation and transnational civil society.

On the first hand, globalisation has proven a difficult environment for trade unions, which have struggled to level the asymmetric relationship between a state-based labour movement and global markets and transnational companies. This has led some labour scholars to see globalisation as directly antithetical to labour's rights (Gallin 2006; Munck 2004; Tilly 1995). This vision, where high social standards are in opposition to economic globalisation, supports a pervasive sceptical stance in the labour literature in relation to transnational standardisation and governance, both of which are seen as expressions of economic neoliberalism, the internationalisation of capital, and the decline of the authority of the state (Gall et al 2011; Munck 2010; Hyman 2005; van der Linden 2004; Munck 2004; Gallin 2002; O'Brien 2000). In these conditions, social standards are growingly shaped by 'corporate management, not governments, [becoming] responsible for decisions that have major effects on local workplaces' (Gallin 2006: 97). As a result, only a few labour scholars accept that global labour governance has become overlapped to a certain extent with transnational private initiatives, such as CSR, private certification, and public-private arrangements (Hammer 2008; Gallin 2008).

This links with the second detrimental phenomenon: the 'civilisation' of the labour domain. This implies that not only has the labour movement lost its central role in political debates, but that labour rights and definitions have been subsumed under more general and

inclusive principles, mainly: human rights. This is considered to have weakened the role of unions in standard-setting, and contributed to the de-politicisation of labour debates at the global level. As a response, some authors have explored the possibility of creating alliances with other social movements, such as the Global Justice movement or the World Social Forum, and move away from exclusive class or worker-based identities (Lerner et al 2011; Bieler and Lindberg 2011; Le Queux 2008). Others call for the emergence of a transnational form of social movement unionism which could integrate the demands of gender groups, minorities and other civil society cleavages (Waterman and Timms 2005; Waterman 2004; Waterman 2001; Lambert 2002; Moody 1997).

As a complement to this, other authors evaluate the possibility of exploiting new political opportunity structures for activism provided by globalisation and transnational supply chains (Garver et al 2007; Anner et al 2006; Lillie 2004; Herod 2001; Herod 1995). In doing so these scholars delineate new spaces of struggle, and often without intention, emphasise the diverse landscape of social standardisation in general. Criticising the efficacy of high labour diplomacy and inter-state arrangements (Standing 2008; Abbott 2007; Collombat 2007; Gumbrell-McCormick 2004; O'Brien 2000), many international and local unions have started to engage with de-centred regulatory projects, ranging from regional frameworks (Kay 2005; Compa 2001) and workplace democracy programmes (Jagodzinski 2009; Hancké 2000; Ramsay 1997), to bilateral trade union federation-TNC agreements (known as International Framework Agreements or IFAs) (Papadakis 2008; Ewing 2007; Fairbrother and Hammer 2005).

In all cases, the labour literature reluctantly confirms that the labour movement has struggled to adapt not only to a globalised environment but also to semantic changes in the overarching political master frames associated with growing liberalisation and pluralisation. This dissertation expands the notion and implications of labour becoming subsumed under a broader political discourse, and argues that contemporary labour governance is dealt mostly by initiatives that rarely stem from the labour movement. The next section closes the circle of this empirical section by examining developments within the civil society literature.

Transnational civil activism

This fourth body of literature focuses on civil society cleavages of social standardisation. Though the growing link between civil society, standardisation and governance has already been highlighted in the previous literatures, this section analyses the implications that 'one of the primary goals of transnational advocacy is to create, strengthen, implement, and monitor international norms' (Khagram et al 2002: 4) and the 'reduction of the democratic deficit in the governance of global relations' (Scholte 2002: 281). This civil connection in

standardisation is hardly new, but its relevance in governance has accentuated in the second half of the twentieth century. For instance, civil movements played a major role in labour struggles and fair trade debates since the nineteenth century, prior to the consolidation of the ILO and other international organisations (Charnovitz 1997; Drescher 1990). Similarly, the technocratic model of standardisation which underlies many of the private governance initiatives previously discussed as well as the ISO (Vogel 2008; Bartley 2003; Gereffi et al 2001), has civil origins in the early 1900s, when technical experts started to collaborate voluntarily to create standards of global application (Wood 2012; Murphy and Yates 2011; Murphy and Yates 2009; Tamm Hallström 2004; Kuert 1946).

More recently, scholars have analysed the manner in which civil society organisations have gained relevance in the international arena since the 1960s and 1970s, influencing the UN system and other international regulatory agencies on areas such as migration, conflict, health, discrimination, slavery, gender and environmental protection (Bartley 2007; Bartley 2003; Charnovitz 1997; Lipschutz and Mayer 1996; Joyner and Joyner 1974). Also, authors have highlighted the role of new international civil actors – such as transnational social movements, epistemic communities and activist networks – in the strengthening of multilateralism and global governance networks. These new social actors are considered a central component in the development of transnational solidarity and collective coordination in conditions of globalisation, enhancing aspects such as legitimacy, accountability, participation, and monitoring (Scholte 2011; McAdam et al 2007; Castells 2005; Scholte 2002; Khagram et al 2002; Witte et al 2000; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Hass 1992).

These studies emphasise how the global orientation of civil society and its potential for improving the democratic deficit of globalisation is linked with the formation of common visions and identities around the notion of universal human rights, the ultimate social standard. This notion has allowed labour struggles and corporate matters to be included in broader civil and social questions across countries, facilitating new contentious strategies against multinational companies and governments, and connecting diverse social movements, organisations and social actors. The role of human rights in civil activism has been pointed out as central in the formation of transnational campaigns aiming to improve social conditions, such as the Clean Clothes Campaign (Ross 2012), the Anti-Sweatshop movement (Connor 2004, O'Rourke 2005; Armbruster-Sandoval 2005) and the Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras (Bandy 2004), but also for gender-based networks (Kidder 2002, Fonow and Franzway 2005) and environmental-labour alliances (Silverman 2006; Gould et al 2004; Obach 2002). In all these cases universal human principles provide the semantic basis for the establishment of new political communications and the development of new agendas linking previously unconnected issues.

In contrast with the transnational private governance and regime literature, traditional civil society literature focuses on contentious politics and bottom-up, non-state, and preferably non-corporate approaches to governance. As a result, this literature often sidelines the multiple ways in which civil society, including local civil society organisations, not only collaborates with governmental and corporate actors, but participates in institutionalised top-down governance instances. Again falling into a Northern perspectivism it assumes that the independent stance of civil society in relation to state and corporate actors is widespread, ending in the application of a liberal model of state-society relations on the global level (Sellers 2011). This dissertation will show that this is not the case, but that this does not necessarily have detrimental consequences in relation to participation in global governance initiatives.

New social movement theory has also developed a conceptual framework facilitating a more specific engagement with the communicative dynamics underpinning civil mobilisation and its transnationalisation. Albeit not commonly applied to standardisation and governance, this framework provides relevant notions for the purpose of this dissertation, which will be further discussed in the theoretical section. Drawing from sociology, cognitive psychology and media studies, new social movement theory emphasises the paramount relevance of semantic processes in the establishment and reproduction of transnational communications, consensus, and political influence and action (McAdam et al 2007; Tarrow 2005; Tarrow 2001; Keck and Sikkink 1998). This theory relies on concepts such as framing, master frames and political opportunity structures to explain the diffusion, resonance, and salience of specific communications and campaigns (Tarrow 2011; Oliver and Johnston 2000; Benford and Snow 2000; Strang and Soule 1998; Entman 1993). A key mobilisation strategy, the 'boomerang effect' (Keck and Sikkink 1998), precisely relies on re-framing local struggles as the violation of broader norms – such as human rights, equality, economic fairness or environmental protection – as a key step to transnationalise civil campaigns. These are aspects that conventional state-based, economistic, and/or legalistic approaches to international regulation often tend to minimise. This dissertation adopts and extends these notions in its theoretical section to approach the local acceptance of governance initiatives and global standards, and to study the local political circumstances facilitating the local resonance of specific programmes of social standardisation.

Where is the 'South' in all this?

The previous empirical literature presented what can be understood as the 'global' approaches to social standardisation. In these texts standardisation, either social or not, remains a terrain of global rules, global discourses, global markets, global civil society, international

organisations, and actors from Western developed countries. When this global dimension is put aside, it becomes clear that the literature suffers from an absence of in-depth empirical material exploring how global standards operate within national contexts in the global South. This is the second main contribution that this dissertation provides in relation to social standardisation and governance.

Standardisation literature usually engages with the South as a 'receiver' of global standards, rarely as an active player in standard-setting (Malets and Quack 2013; Henson and Humphrey 2012; Buthe 2010; Nadvi 2008; Graham and Woods 2006; Mattli and Buthe 2003). Many scholars have signalled that the marginal role of actors from developing countries in global standard-setting responds to a number of conditions, such as lack of access, scarcity of financial resources or insufficient technical knowledge (Doces 2012; Murphy and Yates 2009; Espach 2006; Clapp 1998). However, how the political economy, political traditions and state-society relations of developing countries affect the local trajectories of global standards is rarely addressed, a point that has been identified as a major gap in this type of transnational studies (Malets and Quack 2013; Nölke 2011; Buthe 2010; Schrank 2009). This, as stated by Bartley (2010: 27), has left the local operation of private regulation as a 'black box' where processes are extrapolated from their US/European conditions of emergence and extended to other geographical locations.

When focusing on the particular cases of Argentina and Brazil the availability of material on social standardisation is very limited. With some exceptions, local political and social scientists work mostly along state-centred or social movement traditions. There is substantial literature on the political economy of Brazil and Argentina and the evolution of their state-society relations (Collier and Collier 2009; Skidmore 1999; Drake 1996; Paiva Abreu and Svirsky 1985; Cheresky 1984; Santos 1984; Hirschman 1968), the consequences of labour reforms (Cook 2007; Noronha 2000; Tokman and Martinez 1999), the implications of economic liberalisation (Pinheiro 2002; Bonelli 1998; Iazzetta 1996; Gouvea Neto 2004), the effects of MERCOSUR on trade integration (Bouzas 2002; Bernal-Meza 2008; Gouvea Neto 1998), and the political activities of social movements (Lavalle and Bueno 2011; Svampa 2007a; Seoane 2006; Seoane et al 2006; Friedman and Hochstetler 2002; Gorlier 1992). However, there are substantially fewer analyses on local participation in private standardisation and governance programmes (particularly in the Argentine case), the transnational political activities of business groups, and the participation of civil society in transnational multi-sectoral networks. Thus, by exploring the enactment of global social standards in these two countries, this dissertation fills a major empirical and conceptual gap in the literature.

However, a preliminary review of social standardisation cleavages from the perspective of these two countries already indicates that the local trajectories of social standardisation followed a different path to that of the global narrative. The private standardisation cleavage,

among the most developed in Northern literature, has received a very fragmented treatment by scholars in these countries. For instance, political scientists have amply explored the transformations the business sector has experienced through periods of liberalisation and democratisation (Ross Schneider 2010; Ross Schneider 2010a; Ross Schneider 2009; Ortiz and Schorr 2009; Ross Schneider 2004; Rabelo and Coutinho 2001; Schvarzer 1996; Grosse 1989; Vilas 1973; Wirth 1970). But the situation reverses when the focus is on corporate involvement in global governance and standard-setting (Espach 2006; Pfeiffer 2006; Sánchez and Butler 2005; Wood Jr. 2004; Caldas 2002; Wood Jr. and Caldas 2002) or the advance of soft 'foreign' doctrines such as CSR (Griesse 2007; Blowfield and Frynas 2005; Melé et al 2003; Paladino and Mohan 2002). Most studies analysing these latter issues remain either too general with a marked 'business school' orientation, for instance focusing on the practices of certain foreign TNCs in these countries (Bandeira and Parra 2009; Brown and Woods 2007; Baskin 2006), or descriptive and under-theorised (Alonso 2006; Correa et al 2004; Frynas 2006; Muro 2005). Moreover, practically none of these studies provide a nuanced perspective linking these trends with developments in the local political economy beyond references to the openness of the economy and its level of export-orientation. A notable exception is the doctoral dissertation by Espach (2006), which analyses global environmental standards in Argentina and Brazil. However, it adopts a narrow supply and demand institutionalist approach with a short temporal scope, paying limited attention to state-society relations and broader political traditions.

The local relevance of global labour norms as well as the international actions of local unions are also scarcely analysed, even when domestic studies of the labour movement are extensive. Certain texts suggest that the relationship between South American states and the ILO historically differ from the collaborative aspirations suggested by the global literature, reduced to the personal actions of elite individuals (Ferreras 2011). There are also few examinations on local involvement in the early years of the ILO or the impact ILO Conventions had in shaping domestic labour legislation (Blelloch 1941; Poblete-Trocoso 1928). Nonetheless, certain texts indicate that local trade union traditions had evolved under different paradigms to the social-appeasing logic of the ILO's early years. For example, until the 1950s the stronger and larger unions in Argentina were communist or anarchist, and were excluded from participating in international processes (Romualdi 1947; Rocker 1989). In Brazil participation in international labour bodies was illegal until 1952 and the country lacked an independent trade union federation until the 1980s (Damico 1986; TUW 1999). At the same time labour standards stemming from international bodies, and trade union involvement in Americas-wide organisations, were during most of the twentieth century considered as compliant attitudes with US or Western imperialism, and thus generally antagonised by labour and popular groups (Colistete 2012; Pozzi 1999).

More recent studies show that the linkage between organised labour and the state has remained tight both in Argentina and Brazil, consolidating the inward-oriented mentality of labour organisations in both these countries (more accentuated in Argentina) (Von Bülow 2009; Padron 2007; Cook 2004; Cook 2002). Moreover, studies demonstrate that Latin American international unionism has barely developed and has weak instances of institutionalisation even when there is ideological affinity (Carrau 2008). The few studies on this matter consider that South American unions generally adopt an opportunistic approach towards transnational networks, in some cases showing no intention to permanently participate in the international arena (Von Bülow 2009; Anner 2007).

This behaviour is also present in civil society, in contrast with the expanding civil-labour collaboration suggested by the global governance literature. Authors analysing the transnational actions of Argentine and Brazilian civil society actors observe that collaboration around social standards has sparked temporarily since the 1990s only when facing a common 'enemy', such as the US-led project for a Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (Von Bülow 2009; Saguier 2004; Korzeniewicz and Smith 2003, Korzeniewicz and Smith 2001). Even the World Social Forum (WSF), considered by many as a Latin American contribution to the globalisation of civil activism, does not adopt resolutions or coordinate political activities (Seoane and Taddei 2009; Sousa Santos 2008). Thus, the rise of civil transnationalism promoted by Northern academics is scarcely reflected in South American literature, with authors such as Serbin (2011) stating that even to this day the relations between South American CSOs and their Northern counterparts are mostly financial in nature. Even the formation of MERCOSUR has not led to the consolidation of a regional social regime or enhanced regional civil collaboration. In this sense, Artaraz (2011), Grugel (2006) and Jacobs and Maldonado (2005) conclude that regional integration projects have not enhanced social standardisation, and that most local civil society movements have found integration either irrelevant or inaccessible. Moreover, for Grugel (2006) this provides a counter-argument to the widespread notion that under conditions of globalisation regionalism creates opportunities for transnational collective action and the formation of common identities.

In this regard, a review of the local situation of social standardisation from the perspective of private governance and civil and labour activism shows that the local dimension of governance and social standardisation remains a substantial gap in the literature. Moreover, it seems to suggest that the evolution of social standardisation on these two levels, the global and the national, followed markedly different trajectories, and that the apparent global evolution – towards growing private-public relations, corporate involvement, voluntary frameworks and limited state or trade union participation – could be just a global narrative. By directly tackling this gap this dissertation provides a valuable contribution to the study of social standardisation

in South America in particular, and of the relationship between governance, standard-setting and national political economic structures in general.

THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO STANDARDISATION AND GOVERNANCE

The previous section indicated that social standardisation proceeded through diverse cleavages which were often addressed by different literatures. These cleavages represent specific social standardisation principles, such as international law, labour solidarity, corporate self-regulation, technical rationality, or humanist principles, which have institutionalised in different forms; ranging from international labour regimes and international organisations, to civil society movements and corporate initiatives. The previous literature has also shown that the orientation of social standardisation and of participants in social standard-setting has diversified, but also suggests an increasing overlap in terms of objectives and institutional configurations. These observations are to be expanded in chapter 3. Complementing the previous empirical section, the current one examines the theoretical dimensions of social standardisation and governance, reviewing the stance of the main schools of IR theory over these issues. Furthermore, it extends these perspectives by introducing less conventional theoretical approaches which cast a systemic framework to the dynamic of global standards and governance mechanisms in current conditions of globalisation.

Conventional IR approaches to standardisation can be grouped in two camps. Botzem and Dobusch (2012) for instance distinguish between a functionalist camp, whereby standard-setting is a technical problem to reduce transaction costs, and a constructivist camp, whereby standardisation implies a coordinated negotiation among dispersed agents. Similarly, Mattli and Buthe (2003) prefer to talk of realist and social institutionalist analyses, which differ on whether standards are a function of the distribution of state power or of scientific and technical considerations. This dissertation unpacks these two camps, to then add a third systemic camp from which it will draw a number of premises.

The realist camp is broadly based on the Waltzian axiom which assumes that the international is ordered by the power struggles of states in a condition of anarchy. Thus, there is no such thing as an international 'social' order *per se*: international rules, alliances and inter-state coordination are but expressions of material power balance among states (Grieco 1988; Krasner 1982; Waltz 1979). Because of this, 'battles over international institutions and over drawing up international rules like standards are therefore proxy battles over distributional outcomes, and only changes in the distribution of power bring about changes in the operation and output of institutional arrangements' (Mattli and Buthe 2003: 16). In light of this, neorealists are generally critical of notions of soft law and governance when not outright dismissing them as 'window dressing' (Abbot and Snidal 2000). This vision has a number of

shortcomings. First, neorealists overestimate the role of states in the creation of international order and standards, simultaneously underplaying the role of private and other social actors. Second, because of the connection between power and material capabilities, international standardisation is seen as a matter for the rich and powerful, mostly American and European countries, sidelining participants from other regions (Ibid). This is a common deficit already mentioned to pervade empirical studies. Third, neorealists underplay the role of ideas and expectations in the constitution of 'national' interests, as well as the importance legitimacy has for transnational coordination and regulation (Nye 1988).

Against this, neoliberal institutionalist and constructivist approaches pay greater attention to ideas and legitimacy in transnational processes. For neoliberal institutionalists standardisation becomes a matter of technical 'appropriateness' rather than power among states or firms, with such appropriateness defined on the basis of rational calculations. This school applies game theory models to evaluate the conditions in which soft law and standards result in effective institutional arrangements and regimes (Abbot and Snidal 2000; Rittberger and Mayer 1993; Nye 1988; Krasner 1983; Williamson 1979). Neorealists have criticised neoliberal institutionalism on the basis that downplaying the role of material power sidelines the 'political' dimension in standardisation. At the same time, they accuse them of overestimating the extent of rationality in political decision-making. This is because for the latter standards are appropriate if they lower transaction costs, enhance information and reduce uncertainty, generating greater collaboration between parties. Because of this, neoliberal institutionalists emphasise the role of non-state actors – such as international organisations, transnational corporations, epistemic communities and advocacy networks – as they augment the quality of information in the system and better communicate states' preferences (Drezner 2007; Adler and Hass 1992; Keohane 1986; Huntington 1973; Keohane and Nye 1971). As a result of this premise, the neoliberal institutionalist engagement with standardisation is mostly concerned with standard-setting and application; a matter of correct institutional design and devising appropriate incentives to obtain cooperation rather than competition. Moreover, studies such as Drezner (2007) conclude that global labour and social standards in particular are essentially a sham providing opportunities to cover hidden interests, what is derogatorily known as 'blue-washing' and 'green-washing' if connected with labour or environmental issues, correspondingly. This is because social standards intend to regulate an area (labour and civil norms) where there are just not enough common interests for collective coordination, involving limited benefits and high adjustments costs, with divergent views among key states. Thus, at best global social standards can relieve civil society pressure for better regulation off the state and business, but without involving serious commitment or effective enforcement.

While these two first schools provide relevant frameworks and methodologies for analysing technical instances of standardisation, and the behaviour of states and clusters of

companies, their theoretical premises hold limited value for an approach to social standardisation as proposed in this dissertation. In this regard, IR constructivism provides more appropriate tools by treating political order from a more explicit cultural perspective where standardisation does not emerge only from power or interest-based calculations. IR constructivists share with neoliberal institutionalists the premise that the international space is not anarchic but embedded in norms and values that facilitate coordination and communication (Hurd 2008; Hasenclever et al 2001; March and Olsen 1998; Ruggie 1998; Wendt 1999; Wendt 1992). Moreover, they consider that these norms and values not only orient actors' preferences but constitute them (Kratochwil and Ruggie 1986): political roles are not merely influenced by international norms, but are shaped by them. Because of this strong normative component the constitution and reproduction of legitimacy becomes a fundamental aspect of standardisation that complements the lack of coercive resources (Botzem and Dobusch 2012).

IR constructivism provides a link between the growing standardisation of social and civil values and notions such as global politics, world society and world culture, highlighting cosmopolitan processes and roles that transcend states and markets. In this regard, certain authors consider that the contemporary global order is actually shaped by the legitimacy achieved by liberal social and political standards, such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law, as well as by economic rationality (Bernstein and Cashore 2007; Barnet and Duvall 2004; Hall and Biersteker 2002; Ruggie 1998; Ruggie 1998a; Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Wendt 1995). This vision is somewhat shared by the English School of IR which considers the international system as an international society shaped by shared institutions existing between states (Dunne 2008; Buzan 1993; Bull 1977). Other IR authors have drawn from ideas stemming from Jürgen Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action to provide a sociological justification to this liberal stance. A Habermasian approach evaluates the legitimacy of social and political standards according to whether they approximate the 'ideal speech situation', defined by communicative action. Contrary to interest-oriented rational action, communicative action is fully oriented to 'understanding', meaning that the intention of the participants derives strictly from the meaning of what is being said and not by fixed preferences or power asymmetries among them (Habermas 1984). This ideal speech situation requires certain minimal conditions to be present, such as normative appropriateness, truthfulness of statements, honesty of beliefs and intentions, and freedom of the interlocutors from coercion (Habermas 1999; Linklater 2005; Linklater 1992; Habermas 1987; Habermas 1984). On this basis, a particular political arrangement or norm facilitating these conditions can be considered more inclusive and legitimate, and thus IR scholars have mobilised Habermas' concepts to evaluate the appropriateness of standard-setting mechanisms, governance institutions, deliberative forums, and resulting norms and standards (Hahn and Weidtmann 2012; Habermas 2008; Risse 2006; Risse 2000).

As a result, IR constructivists generally treat standardisation as a process of a negotiation, maintaining a strong focus on legitimacy, the appropriateness of standard-setting mechanisms, and the compatibility between fundamental values and world-visions. These ideas cross significant aspects of the private and civil governance literature previously reviewed. Nonetheless both IR constructivists and Habermasian ideas have received a number of criticisms. The more general critique is that they replicate a liberal vision of global order and culture which leaves a narrow gap between a universal communicative rationality and a universal ethics (Diez and Steans 2005; Linklater 2005; Kratochwil 2000). Moreover, because of their sanitised view of culture and society, constructivist approaches often silence the oppressive and exclusive structural elements of rationalisation and bureaucratisation processes operating in the construction of social order, nationally and transnationally (Murphy 2000; Checkel 1998). Second, this normative vision has been accused not only of being value-laden but unrealistic: real communications are too complex and fast for ideal speech situations to emerge in the circumstances of global politics (Bausch 1997; Rasch 1991; Teubner 1989). In this sense, this dissertation distinguishes a third group of systemic theories. These theories do not approach social standardisation from the perspective of normative appropriateness and correct institutional design but as a consequence of un-guided macro structural processes. Accordingly, standard-setting becomes an expression of broader processes of standardisation, pointing to a different set of fundamental social forces than cultural values and state interests, as outlined below.

Systemic perspectives

Underpinning this third set of sociological theories is the concept of functional differentiation, a pillar of modern sociology in the tradition of Weber and Durkheim that has recently been revisited in IR theory (Donnelly 2012; Buzan and Albert 2010; Beck 2000; Aron 1999; Luhmann 1990a). Functional differentiation refers to the process by which society segments according to specialised rationalities. Accordingly, contemporary society is no longer structured based on segmented forms, such as clans or tribes, nor in stratified structures such as caste, nobility or even class. Rather, it has differentiated following a long and complex historical process into multiple social functions such as the economy, politics, science, religion, art, mass media, etc., each with equal rank. Some of these functions have acquired in time growing autonomy and legitimacy as independent social spheres. In this regard, the separation of markets from state authority, that of science from religion, and the one of religion from law, are all expressions of the progressive differentiation, rationalisation and specialisation of society, and directly linked with the pluralisation of social roles. Weber exposed this notion

clearly when stating that 'the nature of modern culture, especially its technical and economic substructure, requires precisely such 'calculability' of consequences. […] Its distinctive characteristics, which make it so acceptable to capitalism, are developed all the more completely the more it 'dehumanises' itself […]' (Weber 1922: 351).[5]

Despite their influence in IR theory, in particular in its constructivist variant, these theories contest some of its basic premises, such as its focus on state actions and privileging power relations (Lawson and Shilliam 2010). Systemic theories differ also from IR constructivism in their approach to standardisation, as they treat it primarily as a structural phenomenon connected with the rationalisation of the world rather than as a political project, even if these two dimensions are clearly linked. This means that governance mechanisms and standards respond to changes in structural circumstances as well as to 'ideologies' providing master frames that encourage or reject these changes. At the same time, they emphasise that processes of social ordering involve exclusive and often oppressive elements, which the liberal strand of IR constructivism frequently minimises. Third, they propose a link between standardisation and rationalisation which is transversal to state distinctions, and thus, is transnational by definition.

A first group of systemic theories can be said to be represented by the Stanford school of sociology, also known as the American school of sociological institutionalism. This school inquires about the nature of the vast similarities displayed by modern states and organisations in relation to policies and structures despite the enormous variability of cultural and socio-economic differences worldwide (Buhari-Gulmez 2010). Its main premise is that a global polity has emerged on the basis of a global technocratic culture. In this global polity, order stems from the prominence of scientific rationality and universal rationalised models of citizenship, socioeconomic development, rational justice and technical standards, originating in Western societies but also transcending them (Reus-Smit 2008; Loya and Boli 1999; Meyer et al 1997; Meyer and Rowan 1977). In this aspect, this school shares certain parallels with neoliberal institutionalism, liberal constructivism and the English School perspective (Mattli and Buthe 2003). However, it differs from them as it considers that universal models such as Human Rights, scientific principles, and educational standards do not spread because of correct institutional design and/or the interest and convenience of states, but rather because efficiency and institutional considerations as well as states' interests are all shaped by the rationality pervading world culture. Also differing from IR constructivism, the Stanford School treats global standards and norms not as the result of purposely-oriented negotiations but largely of

[5] Habermas shares this structural diagnosis of modern society, considering that the advance of rationalisation has growingly subordinated the cultural life-word, 'disturbing the communicative infrastructure of everyday life' (Habermas and Ben-Habib 1981: 7). His theory however has intended to find a response to this, and thus its use within IR and governance was discussed as part of IR liberal constructivism in the previous section.

macro rationalisation and isomorphic processes, embodied in the role of actors such as international NGOs, scientific communities and liberal professions (Boli and Thomas 1999; Di Maggio and Powell 1983).

A second group of theories links rationalisation and standardisation not so much with industrial rationality in the tradition of Weberian thought, but rather with the capitalist tradition of Marxist one. Among them, World System Theory considers the proliferation of global social standards as a sub-process of the consolidation of the world capitalist system (Wallerstein 2006; Arrighi et al 2003; Sklair 1997; Chirot and Hall 1982). Similarly, neo-Gramscians consider social standardisation an expression of dominant neoliberal hegemony and the political and economic influence of transnational capitalist elites (Cox 2007; Tickell and Peck 2003; Murphy 1998; Germain and Kenny 1998; Cox 1983; Cox 1981). Global standards are thus ideological tools which reproduce capitalist structures. Because of this, neo-Marxist schools are sceptical of institutionalised top-down governance approaches and global standards of behaviour, and rest their emancipatory hopes on groups operating on the fringes of the status quo, such as grass-root social movements, progressive elites or revolutionary politicians (Robinson 2005; Gill 2000; Cox 1999).

Foucauldian ideas also maintain an ideological understanding of social standardisation, but rather than centring it on classes and capitalist structures attribute the regulating force to discursive and symbolic processes which are also constitutive of modern society (Lukes 2005). Accordingly, the global liberal order can be 'deconstructed' as an ensemble of governmental and control techniques that transcend specific actors and political projects (Selby 2007; Neumann and Sending 2007; Keeley 1990; Rabinow 1984; Foucault 1982). Social standardisation becomes then part of a rationalised logic of government – i.e. governmentality – that does not require any consensus or convergence to operate. These ideas relativise Marxist views where standards are an ideological product of capitalism, and somehow reverberate with the Stanford School: it is the rationalism of governmentality that makes standards compatible with a market-oriented logic, even if created with socially progressive purposes (Higgins and Tamm Hallström 2007). As part of the governmentality logic of 'rational' standards certain topics are removed from political debate by positioning them as common or technical knowledge, clouding particular benefits, temporalities and political compromises (Wood 2012; Higgins and Tamm Hallström 2007; Tamm Hallström 2004; Ewald 1990). In this sense, the greatest regulatory force operating over society is not inscribed in statutes and regimes, but is a pervasive form of utilitarian rational thought.

The challenge of neo-Marxist and Foucauldian approaches is that they fuse notions of power, ideology, rationality and discourse, and thus conceive the social order from a perspective of domination either centred on capitalism or modern techno-scientific rationality (or a combination of both). Because of this, they end up subjectivising historical processes in the

form of specific social groups, such as classes or elites, and ideological forms promoted by such groups. Society emerges then as political battleground which demands the taking of sides: if society is seen from a political lens there is not space for neutral positions. Instead, the last approaches emphasise the structural implications of the growing functional differentiation of modern society. These theories consider that society has indeed become poly-contextual; it appears as different depending on the functional perspective one adopts, and that this imposes limits on the reach of political authority.

The first approach draws from the ideas of Pierre Bourdieu. Bourdieu's theory considers modern society to be characterised not by the consolidation of a dominant form of rationality but by the co-existence of multiple rationalities assuming the form of fields. A field is defined as '…a field of forces within which the agents occupy positions that statistically determine the positions they take with respect to the field, these position-takings being aimed either at conserving or transforming the structure of relations of forces that is constitutive of the field.' (Bourdieu 2005: 30). The complexity of modern society has led to its organisation around multiple fields that cannot be unified under a single normative vision. Because of this, and in contrast with the approach of the Stanford School and liberal constructivists, legitimacy does not result from alignment with a global culture or normative premises. Rather, each social field is relatively autonomous, possessing its own logic, rules and roles, and generating its own conditions of legitimacy (Bourdieu 1989; Bourdieu 1986; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992; Navarro 2006). Bourdieu's theory highlights that fields are transversal to territorial definitions, avoiding nationalist premises commonly found in conventional IR theories (Berling 2012; Bigo and Madsen 2011; Bigo and Walker 2007). Drawing from these ideas some authors have proposed understanding transnational standard-setting and global governance as a separate social field in its own right, separated from inter and intra-state politics and relatively independent from economic processes (Dingwerth and Pattberg 2009; Bartley and Smith 2008; Djelic and Sahlin-Andersson 2006; Botzem and Quack 2005; Djelic and Quack 2003).

The last set of literature involves what is generally known as Complexity Theory, a diverse group of conceptual approaches that investigate how complex systems self-organise through time. These ideas have had limited application in debates about governance, standardisation, and IR in general (Rosenau 2006; Harrison 2006). One of its main theorists, at least in its sociological variant, is Niklas Luhmann (Albert 2010; Walby 2007; Urry 2005; Lash 2003). Inspired by the cybernetic ideas of Karl Deutsch (1951) and Talcott Parsons (1971), Luhmann considers society composed purely of communications. Moreover, a central aspect of Luhmann's theory is that both communication and society as a whole operate as closed systems: communication can only emanate from communication and the limits of communication are the limits of the social (Luhmann 1986; Luhmann 1990; Luhmann 1990a; Luhmann 1995). Simultaneously, Luhmann's accepts a Weberian understanding where social communications

have become differentiated in structures displaying functional specialisation, which emerge to allow the reproduction of meaning against rising complexity (Luhmann 2006). Luhmann denominates these semantic structures 'systems', in the form of the economy, politics, science and the mass media, but also art, sports and family, to mention a few. Similarly to Bourdieu, he also considers these systems as autonomous and self-regulating, reacting to changes in the environment according to their own logics.

Recently scholars have started to draw from Luhmann's theory to explore the controversial and unforeseen consequences of growing transnationalisation and specialisation of world politics, international law, global civil society, global finance and security (Kessler 2012; Donnelly 2012; Albert and Buzan 2011; Kessler 2009; Jaeger 2007; Teubner 2004; Albert 2004). Furthermore, in the last few years well-known IR theorists have engaged with his theory to introduce concepts of self-organisation, cybernetics and complexity in the work of the English School (Buzan and Albert 2010; Buzan 2010), neo-Marxist political economy (Jessop 2012; Cox 2007; Jessop 2008; Daly 2004) and IR constructivism (Wendt 2010; Kessler and Kratochwil 2010).

The main difference between Luhmann's theory and liberal structuralist approaches is the former's political and moral agnosticism, contrasting the cosmopolitan liberalism of Habermas and the neo-Marxism of Bourdieu. This agnosticism is a consequence of the attributed superiority of structural phenomena over agency in his theory, a position that gained him diverse criticisms (King and Thornhill 2003). From Luhmann's perspective, the fundamental structures of society are not (and cannot be) controlled by human action, individual or collective: they evolve following their own logic responding to complex systemic conditions which political projects and ideologies cannot govern. Luhmann considered modern society to have become too complex to be ordered through top-down mechanisms based on authority and purposely-defined rules. Thus, his vision relativises approaches which consider that political solutions can order the world as well as neoliberal ideals of regulating society through markets (Luhmann 1997; Luhmann 1998; Luhmann 1990b; Mudge 2008). In this regard Luhmann prefers to speak in terms of 'steering' rather than control (Broquet 2009; Kerwer 2004; Luhmann 1997a).

A number of scholars follow a complexity line of thought considering that negotiated and effective political control has become impossible in world politics. Global governance frameworks thus provide 'systems of rule' to steer but not to govern (Jessop 2012; Rosenau 2006; Urry 2005; Beck 2004; Lash 2003); governing is simply an illusion of control that no longer applies to contemporary world politics, a remnant (or a myth) of a past era. In the current situation, governance has progressively stripped itself from attachments to governmental authority and law, and relies on a diversity of legitimating power substitutes – such as inter-subjective consensus, the possession of information and knowledge, public pressure, planning,

bargaining, social activism and manipulation – operating in combination or alone in complex and unpredictable trajectories (Rosenau 2006). This has resulted in prescriptive norms and bureaucratic mechanisms being sidelined for constitutive principles that do not define but only condition outcomes. The main examples of these principles are standards, but also standardised instruments such as platforms, operating systems, communication protocols and intellectual property rights (Lash 2003); what Jessop (2012) denominates 'fast policy' instruments. Correspondingly, the recent shift to standard-based arrangements in global governance is not a consequence of neoliberal ideology and projects, but a response to the increasing complexity of the political, scientific and economic systems, the globalisation of communications, and the limitations of conventional state mechanisms.

Framing the thesis

The theoretical landscape to the question of standardisation presents an even more convoluted scenario than the empirical literature, as multiple explanations complement, overlap and exclude each other. In this scenario social standards are considered a sham regime clouding state and corporate interests, a reflection of global Western technocratic culture, an ideological tool of capitalist elites, a pervasive discourse of rationalised post-industrial society, or a steering response to the complexity of world politics. At the same time, these approaches range from those treating standardisation as an issue of the here and now, associated with specific political projects, actors and institutions during the last part of the previous century, to those connecting it with broader historical forces expressed through fields, systems, markets, governmentality, and ideologies, where the intention of political actors becomes secondary or even cursory.

This dissertation shares the general diagnostic elaborated by systemic theories, in particular by the stream of Luhmann and complexity theory. It considers that semantic-based models provide a useful and innovative framework to understand social standardisation as a process responding mainly to communicative dynamics, which involve the consolidation of certain global master frames as the primary references for regulating transnational collective interaction. On this basis, the dissertation adopts three main conceptual premises regarding the implications of complexity in world society, the shift from political control towards steering, and – as an expression of this – the proliferation of standard-based mechanisms of governance.

First, by understanding globalisation as the advance of functional differentiation this dissertation accepts the consolidation and diversification of competing globalised rationalities as ordering structures of world society. The complexity premise implies that none of these rationalities can 'monopolise' the semantic construction of the world – or better said, of world society – but rather enjoy a certain privileged influence over specific area-functions. This is the

case of science and technology, the economy, politics, the mass media, religion, and a number of other social systems. This has reinforced the tension, particularly salient in global social standards, between two main types of global logics: those norm and policy-oriented and inclined towards political legitimacy and appropriateness – present in legal, normative ethical-religious positions – and those knowledge and technically-oriented inclined towards effectiveness, applicability and innovation – found in technocratic and economic disciplines (Kerwer 2004). On this basis, this dissertation considers that the functional differentiation of society affects the political system, accentuating a split between Westphalian and globalist (or post-Westphalian) political discourses: between national master frames that reproduce the authority of the state and functional master frames that consider that political authority has been displaced from the state matrix. On this basis, it is possible to sophisticate the definition of cleavages of social standardisation provided in chapter 1, by considering them political frames operating on a non-state functional logic of collective coordination. These cleavages are global in their semantic orientation but not necessarily in their institutional origins: they can be promoted by local organisations as well as by international bodies or governments. Moreover, through time different cleavages of social standardisation enjoyed different levels of institutionalisation and visibility. The historical evolution of the institutionalisation of social standards is explored in detail in chapter 3.

Second, this dissertation accepts the turn towards steering in global governance. This includes accepting that formal political control has become impossible given complexity and functional differentiation of the world system. In these conditions not only there are no stable legalistic mechanisms of transnational transmission of authority, but also decreasing guarantees that political intervention can achieve its desired results. Accordingly, the dissertation understands that steering-oriented forms of governance are not only the product of political ideologies but also the result of structural conditions imposed by the world system over the political. From this perspective, political ideologies and projects are interpretative responses to structural conditions. Thus, issues such as the globalisation of the economy, of flows of information, the authority of science and, to a less extent, the ecumenical legitimacy of human rights, impose conditions over the design and operation of any governance project. In this context understanding global governance as 'doing internationally what states do at home' is not only simplistic but unrealistic. This does not presume the impossibility of governance but rather an understanding of it that goes beyond inter-governmental and regime-like arrangements aiming to cast a state logic over transnational issues.

In this line, combining neo-Marxian IPE with Luhmannian ideas, Bob Jessop postulated that global governance mechanisms have three main programmatic alternatives for political steering given the increasing globalisation and specialisation of the world system: de-accelerating the environment to match existing political capabilities, *laissez-faire*, or

compressing decision-making cycles (Jessop 2012: 212). The first option involves creating 'political time' by slowing down the pace and mobility of world markets – and it can be added, of information flows – to the rhythm of political decision-making cycles. The second alludes to situations where states abandon attempts for short-term political economic calculations while trying to control medium and long-term decisions and movements. The third option involves fast track decision-making and reflexive standards, privileging fast-movers while limiting the scope for democratic deliberation, consultation and negotiation. A fourth more conceptual alternative is what Jessop calls multi-spatial meta-governance (Ibid: 213), a paradigm that recognises the interactions between territorial levels, networked forms of social interaction, and the heterogeneity of actors potentially involved in global policy-making and implementation. A meta-governance system is populated with parallel power networks in an emerging, complex and chaotic pattern.

This dissertation draws from Jessop's systemic model to identify and situate in the next chapter three global programmes of social standardisation emerging in the twentieth century: a Welfarist programme based on the politicisation of labour, a Business & Trade programme commoditising labour and making social standards a result of market forces and competition, and a Sustainability programme relying on standardised instruments combining capitalist rationality with human rights. This trajectory mimics the movement towards global governance based on systems of rules operating through constitutive standards rather than prescriptive norms, as identified by complexity theories in the previous section.

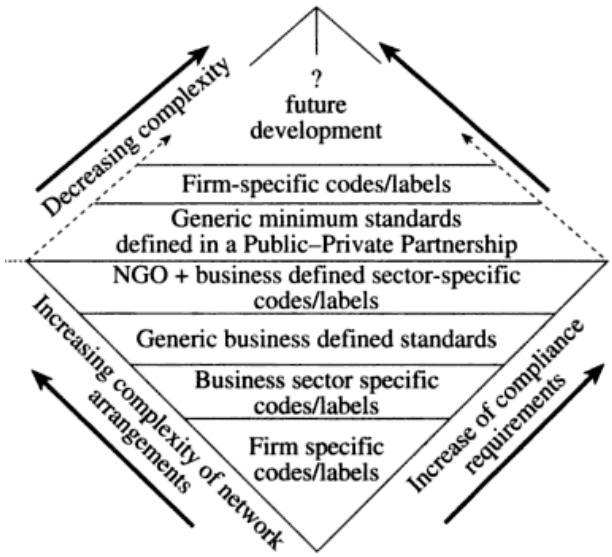
Third, the dissertation considers that this scheme also explains the empirical trajectory towards networked arrangements in social standardisation. As was shown in the empirical literature review, social standard-setting increasingly proceeds via loose multi-sectoral networks rather than through vertical bureaucratic structures and regimes led by organisations such as the ILO, the WTO or the UN. These networked forms rely on soft-law mechanisms of transnational regulation, which operate more on the discursive/legitimacy plane rather than through legal/coercive forms. However, this dissertation refrains from understanding this turn towards soft governance exclusively linked with economic (neoliberal) globalisation. Economic neoliberals surely find standardisation compatible with their ideology, but many governance developments have emerged as a response to neoliberalism and intend to limit the expansion of a market-based logic to other areas. Furthermore, it will be shown that contemporary programmes of social standardisation draw from diverse non-economic cleavages.

The expansion of networked arrangements in standard-setting also supports the conception that processes of global governance, in particular regarding social dimension, are no longer controlled by a specific group – i.e. capitalist elites or specific states – even when certain groups benefit more than others and wield greater influence. This is not to say that governance models are not shaped by their Northern conditions of emergence nor that participation is open

to everyone. However, it implies that due to globalisation and differentiation it has become increasingly difficult to aspire to a project of social standard-setting that could be run by a particular state or actor. As will be shown, the latest global social standards emerge out of the interaction of a constellation of actors where governments and international organisations are accompanied by transnational advocacy networks, epistemic communities, civil society organisations, business corporations and trade unions. At the same time, the structures and procedures of standard-setting bodies have become more diversified in geographical terms, even if still amply populated by Northern actors.

In this sense Nadvi and Wältring (2004) empirically observed the evolution of social standards in the last decades to be marked by the simultaneous diversification of institutions of standard-setting and the convergence of the normative premises underlying them, as shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: The dynamic of social standards



Source: Nadvi and Wältring (2004:88)

Through this figure the authors indicate that following an initial phase of growing complexity in network arrangements and compliance requirements – moving from firm-specific initiatives to multi-sectoral codes and labels – the trajectory of social standards inverted. In this second phase, the trend has been towards decreasing complexity in compliance requirements and decreasing complexity of network arrangements. Interestingly, this trajectory is compatible with the theoretical model proposed by Jessop, as it can be understood as a progressive move from de-centralisation and fast-policy towards a meta-governance phase where multiple standard-setting initiatives co-regulate. The empty top of the figure suggests that by 2004 the

authors expected further developments in this direction, leaving space to introduce more recent occurrences analysed by this dissertation at the end of chapter 3.

Nonetheless, the complexity theory approach reveals certain limitations which cannot be resolved in the context of this dissertation. In particular, its macro structural framework is inadequate to examine the insertion of global standards and the master frames they embody in specific national contexts. However, their semantic fundamentals – which this dissertation embraces – cohere with more applicable notions, such as those provided by new social movement theory. As was mentioned, this dissertation considers social standardisation as a process of master framing, an approach only recently applied to the study of governance by standardisation (Dobusch and Quack 2013). As these authors indicate, the parallel of standardisation with framing processes is evident as the diffusion of standards depends on the extent to which framing strategies by standard-setters resonate with the preferences of potential adopters. This dissertation extends this notion by considering that social standardisation not only evolves strategically – through actions devised by a particular group for a particular purpose – but also systemically; linked with the complex co-evolution of different social structures and discourses.

From this perspective, the question about how social standards and standardisation programmes transnationalise becomes a question about the conditions of diffusion and acceptance of master frames. It is from this perspective that the concept of resonance acquires relevance, as in order to elicit participation and subscription governance programmes need to resonate locally. This shifts the focus from emitting-side aspects of correct institutional design, to the local conditions of reception that enable communication. The concept of resonance is complex as it refers to the manner in which incoming proposals of meaning couple (or not) with existing beliefs and values. The main scholars behind this theory consider resonance a function of two main factors: credibility and salience (Benford and Snow 2000). The first factor points to the internal consistency of a given frame and that of its emitter. The latter, to the conditions making it noticeable, meaningful and memorable to specific audiences, enhancing 'the probability that receivers will perceive the information, discern meaning and thus process it, and store it in memory' (Entman 1993: 53). These conditions relate with aspects such as narrative fidelity, experiential commensurability, and centrality of the frame, which in turn are variables of the political and cultural environment of the audience (Williams 2004; Benford and Snow 2000; Steinberg 2000; Snow and Benford 1992).

However, rather than treating the receiving side as static, this dissertation considers that diffusion is a process where governance-oriented frames interact dynamically with local ones. It is assumed as well that even when state structures struggle in light of competing global rationalities, they retain a privileged role in shaping the national political master frame, and therefore the conditions of reception that facilitate a governance programme to resonate. In this

sense, governance proposals have to confront more established state master frames which could antagonise with their projects. However, even when grating relevance to the state, this dissertation rejects a treatment of the state as a separate ontological actor. Rather, the state is considered, paraphrasing Poulantzas (2000), as a social relation: a semantic construct that integrates diverse discourses, structures and roles according to certain territoriality. Accordingly, the state comprises governmental agendas and legislation, but also political economic models and state-society relations, party politics traditions, national history, etc. From this understanding the state emerges as a semantic synthesis of multiple elements in the form of an overarching master frame that stipulates – supported by prescriptive and coercive mechanisms – the relationship among social actors within a territory, and provides interpretative frameworks for engaging with developments in world society.

This approach emphasises national political structures in the global South as playing an active role in the diffusion of global social standards, contrary to the mainstream top-down approaches that were outlined in this chapter. Thus, in the cases of Argentina and Brazil – and to some extent in South America in general – a number of structural aspects come to the fore when analysing the compatibility between conditions of reception and emission. Contrary to the Western liberal ethos found in most global social-standard setting projects, the political master frames of Argentina and Brazil can be expected to be marked by their peripheral pattern of economic development, in both cases inward-oriented until the 1970s, the central position the state historically occupied in societal and economic organisation, and a traditional neo-corporatist model of state-society relations (Ross Schneider and Soskice 2009; Schrank 2009; Huber 2002; Collier 1995; Keck 1992; Collier and Collier 1991; O'Donnell 1977; Schmitter 1974). At the same time, both countries experienced democratic transitions in the 1980s – in the case of Brazil after prolonged military rule – and neoliberalisation processes during the 1990s. This makes it fundamental to gain a deeper understanding of the political economic trajectories of these two countries in order to provide a valid account of the effect these structures and discourses have over their local trajectories of social standardisation.

Therefore, the diffusion of global social standards is not approached as a linear process but as an interactive communicational one where state discourses intertwine with global ones. Thus, the compatibility between the local and global frames involves a particular dynamic where the 'arriving' global programmes are included into an ongoing national master frame, involving necessarily a certain hybridisation which can be either detrimental or favourable for its resonance. This is particularly relevant in the case of social standards, where a high level of 'hypocrisy' can be expected (the term used by the Stanford School to refer to the adoption by local actors of symbolic global frames which are structurally inconsistent or do not have substantive meaning in local contexts) (Meyer 2000:244). It is partly due to the high risk of hypocrisy that the research questions guiding this project cannot be studied from the perspective

of the design-side of the norms or by statistical models drawing from subscription rates. Rather, it is necessary to develop a deeper analysis of the structural circumstances that support or block the interaction between global governance and national political frames, which in turn clarifies participation patterns. This dissertation examines this interaction and circumstances in chapters 4 to 6.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided a review of different strands of literature covering empirical and theoretical dimensions of global governance and standardisation. The first aspect of this review revealed that social standardisation extends beyond narrow technical debates to deals with issues of labour governance and regulation, the current transnational activities of civil society movements, the expansion of corporate self-regulation and governance, the diversification of multi-stakeholder standard-setting initiatives, and the advance of private authority in general. This was shown to be connected with the progressive legitimation of civil society values and human rights, but also with the acceptance of firms as relevant channels for the governance of social issues, following diverse developments in global politics that altered the role of international organisations, trade unions, civil society, states and corporations.

The second part of this chapter focused on the theoretical approaches to governance and standardisation. These approaches covered neorealist and neoliberal perspectives, IR constructivism, and structural and systemic perspectives. This latter literature provides a number of insightful concepts for the study of standardisation as a transnational social process. Moreover, it presents a framework where the turn towards standard-based systems of governance is considered a systemic response to macro structural conditions, such as those imposed from a globalised economy, global and instant communications, and techno-scientific rationality. Based on these premises the dissertation proposes to engage with social standardisation first from the perspective of its historical trajectory. This trajectory is analysed by tracing multiple cleavages of social standardisation and their integration into different programmes of governance. These programmes reflect the general master frames orienting institutional developments in relation to standard-setting and governance both at the national and international level.

In both these aspects, empirical and theoretical, this chapter underscored the existing gap in relation to the national Southern dimension. From a theoretical perspective the gap exists in the form of models that rarely incorporate Southern variables as playing an active role in global governance, at least when they are not considered as interferences with the diffusion of global norms, or subordinated to the power of Northern countries, the periphery of the world

economy, or the hegemony of Western liberal values. In empirical terms, the gap takes the form of missing accounts of the national trajectory of social standardisation in the cases Argentina and Brazil, on the terms outlined in existing research. Thus, while there is substantial evidence in the literature on the convergence towards multi-sectoral standard-setting arrangements in the governance of social issues, there has been limited work on how this convergence is expressed in specific national settings, in particular settings where the conditions assumed for this convergence to happen cannot be taken for granted.

To start narrowing this gap chapter 3 traces the evolution of programmes of social standardisation and institutional expressions through the twentieth century, with special emphasis in the period starting since the mid-1990s when most contemporary social standard-setting initiatives consolidated. This chapter introduces the three recent global initiatives pursuing social objectives – the UN GC, the GRI and the ISO WG SR – that facilitate the characterisation of the current phase of social standardisation. These case initiatives provide the basis to identify the key local actors that enable the in-depth local analyses of subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER 3. A GLOBAL HISTORY OF SOCIAL STANDARDISATION

This chapter addresses the first set of research questions by exploring the global trajectory of social standardisation, its underlying social forces, and the role played by the latest social standard-setting initiatives in global governance. It does so by tracing the historical evolution of different programmes of social standardisation on the global level, to then introduce the three case study initiatives as part of the current phase of this process. This chapter provides the overarching analysis against which the local trajectories are to be contrasted. To perform this global analysis the chapter is divided in three parts. The first and most extensive one analyses the evolution of social standardisation through the twentieth century, identifying different cleavages, institutions and actors, and situating the contemporary global programmes. This section situates three periods when specific programmes of social standardisation consolidated, with the latest and ongoing one starting in the mid-1990s. The second section presents the three global case studies as some of the most prominent representatives of this latest phase, detailing their origin, aims and general operation. Following the development of these initiatives the section examines how the current programme of social standardisation has engulfed, discursively and programmatically, social issues previously addressed by international organisations, regimes, governments and firms. The third and final section explores the institutional expansion of the Sustainability programme in the last decade, to illustrate its consolidation as a system.

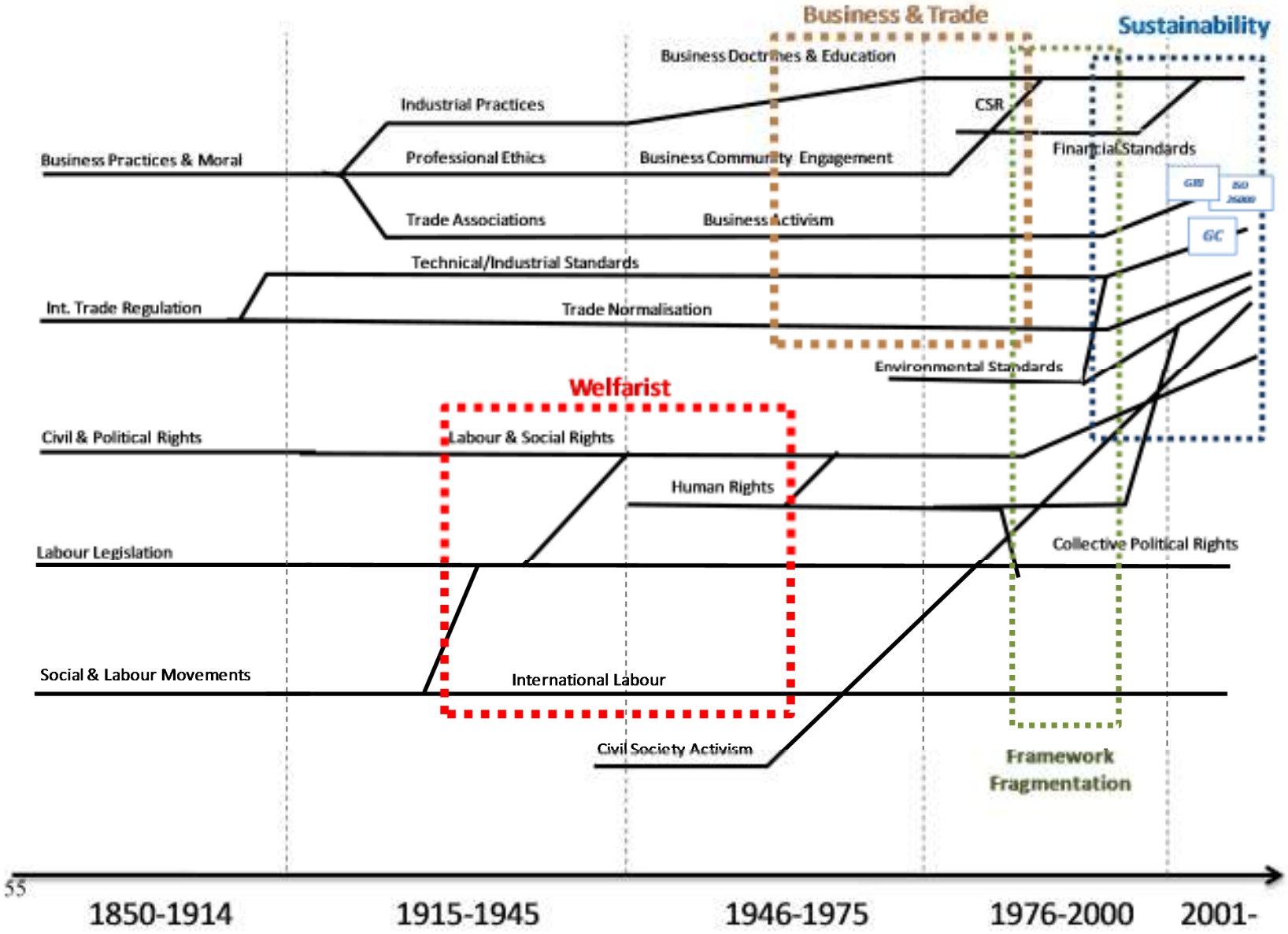
SOCIAL STANDARDISATION AS A HISTORICAL PROCESS

This dissertation approaches social standardisation as a complex historical process which involves the integration of diverse cleavages of standardisation into master frames: semantic schemas of interpretation providing an ordering grammar for how the social should be regulated internationally. This process is shown to involve two sub-processes. The first is the consolidation of these master frames into operative programmes which delineate the accepted institutional configurations for social standard-setting. The second involves the proliferation and convolution of the institutions embodying these programmes.

The general evolution of this process is summarised in Figure 2 below, which provides a map of the articulation of different standardisation cleavages from early twentieth century to the 2010s – showing how different cleavages combined, the approximate period when they did so, and their integration into wider programmes – and situates the three initiatives to be explored in the second part of the chapter. The Y-axis in Figure 2 is purposely absent to indicate

the lack of a hierarchy among the different cleavages: their vertical position is merely a graphic convenience, while the slight upward trend towards the right hand-side is only to represent their discursive convergence. Figure 2 thus situates five initial cleavages of social standardisation at the beginning of the previous century: Labour Movements, International Labour Legislation, Civil and Political Rights, International Trade Regulation, and Business Practices and Ethics. The lack of hierarchy among these cleavages does not mean that they enjoyed a similar level of institutional development: for instance, labour movements were quite organised and politically active in Europe since the last part of the nineteenth century, while international labour law or business ethics were quite incipient or peripheral. The figure clearly identifies the period when three global programmes of social standardisation – Welfarist, Business & Trade, and Sustainability – consolidated, including a fourth period of framework fragmentation between the last two.

Figure 2: Global evolution of social standardisation cleavages



Modern cleavages of social standardisation

The consolidation of the first programme of social standardisation, the Welfarist, culminated a process started towards the end of the nineteenth century when a number of proposals to set international social norms became institutionalised and growingly interrelated. These proposals covered different themes, from international trade and labour legislation to civil rights and corporate practices. In this early phase, international debates were marked by a concern for the 'labour question', calling for new forms to regulate the social effects of industrialisation and the growing demands of the labour movement. This logic supported different political discourses – from Syndicalist and Communist to Christian ones – that eventually led the governments of industrialised countries, in particular European ones, to acknowledge the crucial importance of labour regulation for preserving social order, economic stability and national security (Silver 2003; Murphy 1994; Cox 1958). However, despite its political centrality labour was not the only cleavage of social standardisation acquiring international resonance across the industrialised world in these early years. This was also the period of emergence of early corporate initiatives of social standardisation, many of which will re-appear in latter programmes of governance.

In the early 1900s the European labour movement displayed a consolidated transnational orientation given the recognition of labour as the primary social category of modern industrial society. With the impetus provided by the Second International – the international body grouping the main socialists, communists, and labour political parties of the time[6] – there was a surge in labour organisation in general and a push towards the internationalisation of labour regulation through Europe. Already in its first meeting in 1889 the Second International passed resolutions linking labour solidarity with broader political liberties, calling for standardising the eight-hour working day, the abolition of standing armies, declaring May 1st a public holiday, and committing to fight for social legislation and universal suffrage worldwide (Kolakoswki 2005). Moreover the European labour movement promoted the formation of International Trade Secretariats linking trade unions by industry across Europe and North America, with 32 in existence before WWI (Van der Linden 2004). Labour solidarity was also quite consolidated in the US, albeit it did not share the socialist orientation of its European counterparts. Instead, labour rights were promoted by a Masonic-influenced group known as the 'Knights of Labour', which by 1886 and before giving origin to the American Federation of Labour (AFL), was considered to have approximately one million members (Wright 1887).

[6] The first International, known as the International Workingmen Association, was dissolved in 1876, and was attended among others by Marx and Engels. Many of most prominent socialist leaders of the time were members of the Second, including figures such as Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Jean Jaures, Vladimir Lenin and Leon Trotsky.

It was also at the turn of the nineteenth century that the first attempts for establishing international labour legislation – internationally-agreed rules to be applied voluntarily by states to regulate labour conditions – acquired institutional form. In 1900 the International Association of Labour Legislation (IALL) was created, and led to the establishment of the first International Labour Office at Basle, Switzerland on May 1st 1901, the prototype for the ILO. The brief existence of the IALL evidenced two different visions of labour standardisation: one centred on the universal morality of labour rights, and another focusing on normative homogeneity to avoid unfair commercial competition (Francke 1909; Turmann 1922). These visions already reflected two semantic master frames competing for the appropriation of social standardisation – humanist morality and techno-scientific knowledge – which will be shown to be at play in most social standard-setting initiatives through the twentieth century

This tension was also present in the origins of the first international organisations, which represented an international trade regulation cleavage moving along the labour one. By 1914, around 30 International Public Unions (IPUs) were created, setting basic frameworks for governments and private actors to establish common norms and standards for regulating different dimensions of industry and trade: from communications and transportation standards, health and hygiene, to peace promotion (Murphy 1994; Reinsch 1909). The precursors of these IPUs considered that the transnational regulation of commercial and industrial affairs was of upmost importance for human welfare, as international agreements would reduce the inefficiencies of existing state-centred arrangements. At the same time, many of them shared an elitist and technocratic background, generally sponsored by liberal European monarchs and aristocrats; among the most cosmopolitan individuals of the time. In this regard Murphy (1994) notes that the '*noblesse oblige*' tradition among traditional elites played a fundamental role in providing a transnational spirit to early industrial normalisation, for instance, marking that a third of the attendants to the founding meeting of the Telegraphic Union of 1865 were of royal blood (Ibid: 75). This aristocratic/cosmopolitan component overlapped at the time with the rising inclusion of scientific knowledge in international affairs and the participation of experts and scientists in these international meetings, in particular from those disciplines at the centre of the industrial revolution: from medicine and engineering to applied natural sciences.

The technocratisation of international affairs provoked a tension between technical and humanist cleavages of social standardisation with governmental interests and nationalist discourses. Thus, on the one side were those embracing a humanist vision where scientific knowledge would provide universal and fair solutions to humanity's problems. On the other were politicians and bureaucrats that considered that any agreement should first accommodate national considerations. In fact, many of the aristocratic liberal cosmopolitans behind these initiatives saw the politicisation of international technical forums and IPUs ominous (Murphy 1994). Precisely to prevent such politicisation a call was made during the fifth Congress of

Electricians of 1904 to establish a purely technical and apolitical international standard-setting organisation. Two years later the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) was founded, giving origin to what Boli and Thomas (1997) denominated a 'new model for transnational standardisation'. The novelty of the IEC model consisted in that the standard-setting process was led exclusively by technical associations and experts collaborating voluntarily. These groups shared the notion that technological and industrial development, and ultimately human progress, would prosper if global technical standards were established on the consensus of practitioners and experts (Wood 2012; Tamm Hallström 2004; Loya and Boli 1999). The IEC was the first specialised standard-setting institution of this kind, providing the basis for the model adopted fifty years later by the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO). This technical model of standardisation was also applied during the first international scientific conventions over environmental issues flashing in the 1930s, discussing issues such as oil pollution, whaling, and fisheries (Torrance and Torrance 2006; Charnovitz 1997).

Two aspects of these early social standardisation cleavages would change dramatically after the interwar years. On the one hand, the transnational treatment of labour regulation promoted by the IALL would gradually shed its technical character for a more state/governmental one. On the other, social considerations across the modern business sector will propose new models for regulating the relationship between employers and employees. The institutionalisation of these two cleavages is co-related. Thus, on the one side, the politicisation of labour regulation achieved its maximum expression at the end of WWI, when advanced nations agreed that the 'labour question' was too sensitive to be left to academics, legal scholars and utopians. The creation of the ILO in 1919 embodied a vision that gained wide acceptance among policy-makers after the conflict: the improvement of working conditions and social standards was not a mere economic or ethical debate but a fundamental requirement for preserving social (and international) peace in light of growing nationalism, labour activism, and the emergence of the Soviet Union. After 1919, labour had become a geo-strategic matter. Accordingly, international labour standards should emerge from the political negotiations of state actors: governments, trade unions, and business representatives. This political view of labour acquired so much resonance after the war that an observer of the ILO's foundational treaty wrote 'I don't think international competition loomed large in the minds of those that framed Part 13 of the Treaty of Versailles' (Heaton 1927:162).

The creation of the ILO legitimised a corporatist treatment of labour at the expense of other civil cleavages. It must be noted that the nineteenth century had also witnessed the activation of multiple civil society cleavages concerned with improving social and labour conditions beyond socialist and workerist ideologies. For instance, the anti-slavery movement, the Catholic Church and other Christian associations, as well as the Chartist Movement in England, contributed to legitimate a humanist view of labour practices across Europe, and

religious considerations were present in early debates for international trade regulation and against slave work (Turmann 1922; Coats 1958). An International Abolitionist Federation had been founded in 1875 and pioneered in launching campaigns for regulating international trade according to standards of origin that discriminated goods manufactured under slave, forced or prison labour, thus representing an early fair trade movement (Charnovitz 1987). Braithwaite and Drahos (2000) indicates that the anti-slavery movement integrated multiple social standardisation discourses, as diverse as Quaker's morality in North America and England, French liberal thought, and the economic arguments of Adam Smith considering slavery an economically inefficient mode of production. However, the ILO officialised a model of international labour standardisation that excluded those social movements that failed to be incorporated into corporatist state-centred relations. The novel tripartite mechanism of the ILO – based on national delegations formed by two government representatives, one from labour and from business – was thus revolutionarily inclusive and silently exclusive. It accentuated the international profile of the labour movement and business in detriment of less organised groups, as was the case of anarchists, women associations, religious associations, and civil rights' groups (Chalmers 1936; Van Goethem 2006).

Though celebrated mostly as a labour achievement, ILO tripartism provided a major push for the sectoral and international organisation of business (Charnovitz 1987). Even more, the consolidation of an organised business movement contributed to disintegrate the 'public' origins of the first IPUs and to advance a liberal agenda through the phase of economic centralisation and conservatism between the world wars. As a matter of fact it was in the same year of the ILO's foundation that the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) was formed, upon request by US, British, French, Italian and Belgian businessmen. This organisation, which expanded dramatically in a few years, had the mission of promoting business intercourse and cooperation among countries over issues such as finance, industry and commerce (Keppel 1922). The ICC was followed by the creation of the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) in 1920 – grouping national employer associations and the official body to represent business within the ILO – and later on by a confessional employer's body which in 1949 became known as the International Union of Catholic Employers' Associations (UNIAPAC 2004). These three bodies provided new channels for local and international business to articulate a global corporate voice in light of expanding international debates over technical, trade and political issues. The ICC was active in promoting a liberal economic vision of social standardisation which would acquire prevalence fifty years later, based on minimal state intervention and low restrictions for trade. This free marketeering spirit was evident from the start: after the first official meeting in London in 1920, the main industry leaders in attendance produced a striking set of resolutions setting a programme for expanding world trade and finance. Among other points the resolution asked for the reduction of trade taxation and the

abolition of restrictions over foreign banks, discouraged government control and state enterprises, and asked for the unification of commercial practices. Moreover, it explicitly called for the creation of global technical standards with a specific resolution recommending: 'Cooperating with existing agencies in the development of standardisation' (Keppel 1922: 197). In this manner, the ICC integrated economic and technical considerations into a political project which did not mention labour, even when the issue dominated international debates at the time (Alexander 1932). This reflected an incipient distinction between economic, technical and labour standardisation cleavages, which would continue to evolve as the century advanced.

While progressing at a slower pace, the consolidation of a managerial identity also included developments regarding the social responsibility of corporations. This provided an incipient cleavage for an endogenous corporate approach to social standardisation. The basis of this second corporate cleavage was not necessarily new. The link between industrial capitalism, business morality and religious values had been explored in Max Weber's work "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism" (Weber 2005), published as early as 1904. In more applied forms this link was also present in the ideas of Robert Owen in Britain and Charles Fourier in France – who by early nineteenth century promoted co-operative ethics based on communitarian ownership of industrial property (Kolakowski 2005) – and even in pre-modern professional codes of conduct, such as those followed by medieval guilds and merchants' duties in Roman civil law (Taeusch 1932; Bunzel 1905).

However, in its modern form this cleavage provided a new distinction between the philanthropic activities of early wealthy industrialists and organised forms of business ethics paying attention to the wellbeing of workers and their communities in a systematic manner (Heald 1961). The literature points to the US for the first expressions of what later became known as the corporate 'self-regulation movement': the formulation of corporate codes of ethics by firms, trade associations and commerce chambers. For example, in the 1880-1890s US railroad companies financed the activities of the YMCA among their workers, the American Electric Railway Association adopted a code of principles in 1914, and by 1924 the US Chamber of Commerce had launched its 'Principles of Business Conduct' (Brooke Graves 1924; Heald 1957). Universities in the United States, in particular the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce and Yale University, are also indicated to have pioneered early academic research on business ethics in the first years of the twentieth century (Bunzel 1905).[7] Even early critiques on the validity of corporate standards are found at this time: in 1907 the President of Yale University considered honour codes to be more frequent among industries prone to corporate scandals, such as banks and railroads, and those that have formed large monopolies during the first phase of industrialisation (Hadley 1907).

[7] The first academic journal on business history, the Business History Review, was launched in 1926 by the Business History Society of Boston, 'credited to two Yale men' (Rich 1926: 2).

The economic expansion of the US also provided the context for the emergence of the first modern civil society movements with the explicit objective of raising the standards of liberal professions across the world. A representative of this was the Rotary Club, established in Chicago in 1905 and counting with 80,000 individual members in twenty five countries fifteen years later. In the 1920s, the Rotary launched an international campaign emphasising the relevance of setting a professional conduct guide to be followed by its members worldwide. This project was framed by the Club's ideals of service and integrity, but also aimed to advance corporate social standards in general (Brooke Graves 1924). The vision of the Rotary Club was radical for the time, differing from both the proto-neoliberal view of the ICC and the corporatist and social-democratic values behind the ILO. Its recommendations proposed to regulate the link between labour and corporations on notions of professional ethics and respect, advocating for 'rules of conduct governing the relation of employer with the employee', while considering that this link – and not the one between labour and state – was the 'only known antidote' for social unrest (Gundaker 1922: 230). This was evident in its internal organisation, as by 1926 its directing committee was organised according to four headings: relations between employer and employee, between buyer and seller, between competitors, and trade and professional relations (Garretson 1926). In this manner, the Rotary Club advanced a vision of business as an inherently international activity but that carried an unavoidable social commitment (Nollen 1924). The Rotary Club's standard-setting process was also innovative: each of its global principles was discussed in multiple local conferences throughout the world, which then would send their results to a central committee for standardisation, while simultaneously the local members pressured their own national associations to develop national codes. This is an interesting antecedent for the corporate social responsibility movement that will become more prevalent from the 1980s onwards, and for the operation of even more recent private governance initiatives.

By the 1930s a third corporate cleavage of social standardisation emerged, not based on the political identity of business or programmes of business ethics, but on the professionalisation of management practices. Modern management practices also share a more North American than European origin. This was apparently a consequence of the greater reliance on professionalised management and the codification of Taylorist and Fordist industrial practices in the US, which had almost no entry in Europe before 1914 (Dulebohn et al 1996). Furthermore, the attention paid by managers to social standards and working conditions expanded as a result of the Hawthorne experiments. These experiments took place in Chicago between 1923 and 1933 and were conducted by managers of the Western Electric Company and social scientists from MIT and Harvard (Franke 1979). The experiments were set to study scientifically the roots of workers' motivations and performance, and established a direct relation between labour standards, industrial quality and efficiency. The experiments constitute

the backbone of the Human Relations movement within academia, which will evolve into the discipline of Human Resources. Over the following decades this discipline will provide 'technical' endorsement for modern employer-employees relations and corporate social practices, integrating with the business ethics cleavage in the 1970s.

Despite these advances, the political and economic turmoil of the interwar period hardly provided a supportive context for debates about upgrading social standards. International labour cleavages were substantially weakened as a consequence of the First World War, the spread of fascist ideologies, and the economic crisis of the 1930s. Moreover, labour discourses in general became politically polarised with the consolidation of the communist project around the Soviet Union. As will be shown, this resulted in an increasing nationalisation of the labour cleavage and contributed to its marginalisation as a central dimension of international relations, at least in the Western world. The context of crisis of the interwar years also eroded progressive corporate and civil standardisation cleavages seeking to improve corporate standards, industrial practices and business ethics. It would be only after 1945 that these issues will return to international debates.

The peak and fall of welfarism

It sounds paradoxical that the fall of the project of international labour regulation will commence in the first years following WWII, considering that in 1944 the ILO's constitution was expanded to include broader social concerns, and in 1948 the UN Human Rights Charter was proclaimed, officialising the universal social standards by antonomasia (Lauterpacht 1948; Goodrich 1944). Nonetheless, this section shows that the expansion of the mandate of the only international labour body contributed to undermine it as a governance institution, as it made explicit the increasingly inappropriateness of labour-centred arrangements to provide a regulatory framework for social issues in a globalising environment.

After 1945 the re-empowered ILO launched several international conventions interpreted as the backbone the Welfarist programme and the global proclamation of the welfare state. This ideal shaped a period in history – called by Hobsbawn (1997) 'the Golden Years' – which at least in advanced economies was characterised by economic growth and strong social protections, cementing the right to collective bargaining and the central role of trade unions, and expanding the array of social benefits enjoyed by populations. This paradigm gained so much recognition that in 1964 the ILO voted to launch Convention No. 122 on Employment Policy, whose ratification implied governments to commit to full and freely chosen employment, the ultimate Keynesian ideal (Standing 2008; Standing 1999). Moreover, certain analysts agree that the Welfarist programme represented by the ILO contributed to broaden the notion of human

rights as whole, recognising the connection between fundamental human freedoms and economic rights (with some even observing that that the term 'Labour' in the ILO's name had become misleading) (Gormley 1966). There were expectations that the ILO could displace the UN as the main social international organisation, and in 1969 – at the peak of labour de-commoditisation (Standing 2008; Strang and Chang 1993) – the organisation received the Nobel Peace Prize for its contributions to global social justice and regulating working conditions across the world (Lionaes 1969). However, this triumph would be short lived.

In the same period, the Cold War had brought forward an incommensurable ideological conflict over the social and political role of labour in society. This conflict divided and paralysed the ILO's tripartite mechanism and insinuated its decline. It also politicised the international labour movement, distinguishing between capitalist and communist trade union federations: the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), correspondingly (Colistete 2012). The hegemonic position of the US in the Western world also came to clash with the inclusive workerist vision the ILO represented. Since the 1960s in particular, different US administrations promoted a new international division of labour which rejected a deliberative treatment of the labour question. The post-war lessons as understood by US political elites was that as long as the Fordist bargain could be kept – high wages and benefits in return for high productivity – political negotiations between workers and employers were not needed, especially none in a forum where communist countries and organisations had a vote (Standing 2008; Standing 1999; Murphy 1994). The paralysis of the ILO and this vision by the US resulted in a gradual transfer of the ILO's social and economic responsibilities to the UN system and to more technical international organisations, less prone to suffer ideological polarisation. The new political economic paradigm approached the labour question from the perspective of levels of economic activity and technical coordination, areas where the new Bretton Woods institutions – the IMF, the World Bank and eventually the GATT – were far more effective than the socially-oriented and highly politicised ILO. Labour departments were created within much narrower institutions: for instance the OECD established a Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) in 1961 and a business and industry committee a year later (Charnovitz 1997). By the 1970s the ILO itself had recognised this situation and started to shift its attention from international labour legislation towards technical cooperation and development (Standing 2008). But the level of politicisation of the ILO eventually became unacceptable for the US, its main financial contributor. In 1970 the US suspended its payments and in 1977 it effectively withdrew from the organisation, launching it into financial and ideological disarray. The US eventually re-joined in 1980, but only after the ILO introduced significant changes and committed to a markedly 'non-political' agenda (Armstrong et al 2004: 63). By this time, some authors noted, the ILO leadership had become co-opted by the US, displacing its European social democratic origins and turning it

into an ideological tool of liberalism against communism: 'a politically efficient mechanism for maintaining and husbanding the alliance of industrialists with those more conservative elements of the workers' movements rejecting the promise of the Russian Revolution' (Murphy 1994: 200).

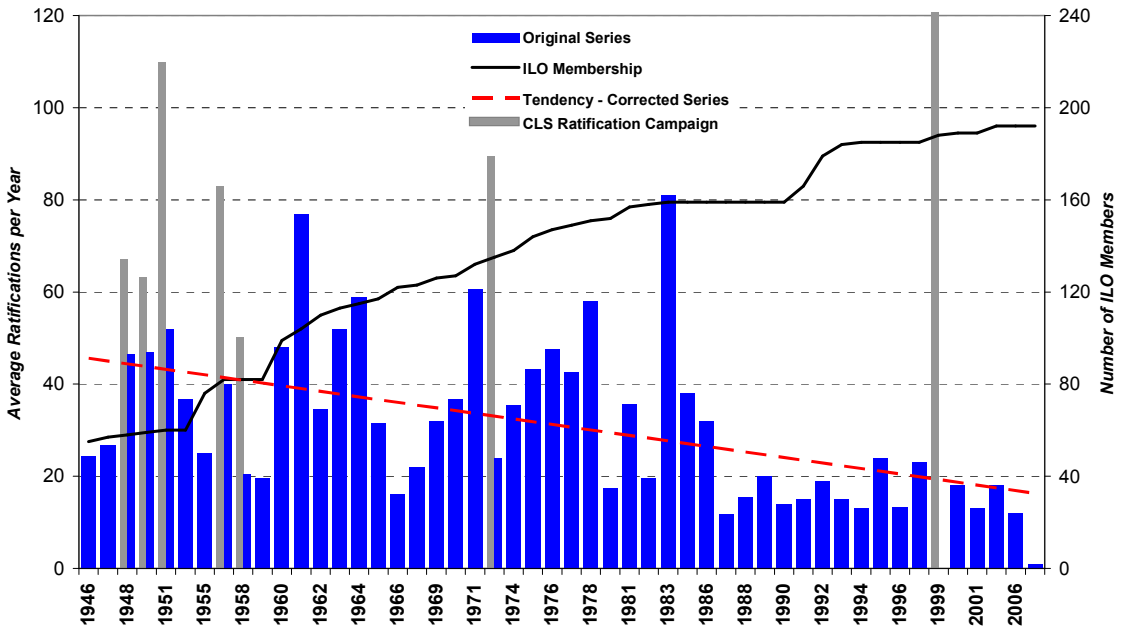
At the same time, the centrality of the labour question confronted the new social paradigm promoted by the UN based on the universality of human rights. The progressive framing of labour standards as human rights – in addition to ongoing legal debates (Kolben 2010; Alston 2004; Langille 2005) – originated tensions regarding the legitimacy of roles among those social actors oriented towards social issues, in particular between the expanding civil society sector and the more consolidated labour movement. The difference in the positions by these two sectors reflects the contrast between a state-centred treatment of labour and civil approaches to issues covered by human rights. Moreover, while human rights are by definition global, negotiations about labour conditions in the Western world had become increasingly national – in line with the corporatist model promoted by the ILO – and distant from the solidarity-based approach of earlier cosmopolitan socialism. The human rights discourse embodied a liberal pluralist model of society that rejected both the state and organised labour's monopoly over social debates, as well as corporatist arrangements where unions extracted preferential concessions from governments. This liberal paradigmatic change accentuated a legitimacy struggle between trade unions and CSOs, which became evident from the 1980s onwards. This struggle is a clear example of different master frames clashing over basic definitions of social regulation. Thus, while civil society groups claimed that their legitimacy laid in the promotion of universal causes that transcended national representation and ideological sectarianism, trade unions argued that they 'knew' which sector of society they represented, and that its leadership was generally democratically elected (Leary 1996).

In this manner, at the time of its greatest institutional recognition the Welfarist programme of social standardisation suffered a two-pronged attack. On the one side, the rise of the human rights discourse eroded the legitimacy of labour as the main social dimension. On the other, its political economic ideals were raided by the distrust of US policy-makers for socialist-inclined models, reinforced toward the 1980s by the 'technical' authority of a new economic paradigm: economic neoliberalism. This school of economic thought is acknowledged to have become a global political economic paradigm with the elections of Ronald Reagan in the US in 1981 and Margaret Thatcher in the UK in 1979, although neoliberal economic programmes had been implemented by military regimes in Latin America, for instance, in Chile since 1973 and in Argentina since 1976 (Cook 2007). Neoliberal ideas were not necessary new: 'The Road to Serfdom', von Hayek's attack on socialism and central planning, was published in 1944, in the same year that Polanyi launched its welfarist vision in 'The Great Transformation' (von Hayek 1944; Polanyi 1944). From a neoliberal perspective, the Keynesian social pact underlying the

Welfarist political economy was outright inflationary and inefficient. Against this, it promoted a turn towards supply-side economics and the (increasingly mathematised) theories of Milton Friedman and others involving 'liberalisation, deregulation, privatisation, market proxies in the residual public sector, internationalisation and reduced direct taxation' (Jessop 2010: 70), as well as the creation of 'free' labour markets. According to this theory, labour was not a social category that required state protections, but a commodity which had to be liberalised to be able to trade freely and establish its fair price.

Economic neoliberalism not only assumed a strict conceptual separation between economic and political rationality, but actually promoted the application of market rationality to other spheres of society. By the late 1980s neoliberal thought associated any form of statutory protective regulation and social standards typical of Welfarism, Keynesianism and social democracy with unemployment, rigidity and inefficiency, as reflected in the 'Eurosclerosis' dysphemism popular at the time (Best 2004; Standing 1999). As this radical technocratic paradigm gained preponderance in Western policy circles the main institutions of Welfarism were sidelined or directly dismantled. Figure 3 below shows the constant fall in the number of ratifications of ILO Conventions in the period between 1946 and 2007. The X-axis is the year of launch of the conventions. The Y-axis reflects the average number of countries that ratified such conventions at any point in time, as a convention launched in 1955 could have been ratified by a country in 1960. Because of this, the graph distinguishes in grey the effect of a specific campaign led by the ILO in 1995 which promoted ratification of seven particular conventions launched as early as 1948 (as part of its Core Labour Standards campaign, to be commented ahead). The black line shows the increase in ILO membership in the same period. The inclusion of ILO membership emphasises the decreasing effectiveness of the ILO as a global social standard-setter, particularly acute since the mid-1980s onwards: even when the membership of the ILO increased, the average number of ratifications kept falling.

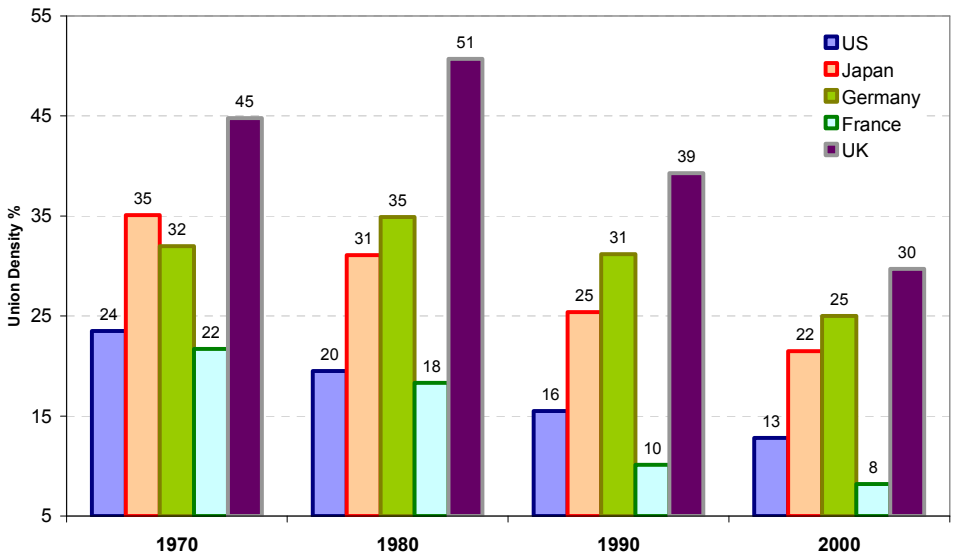
Figure 3: Evolution of ILO convention's ratifications (1946-2007)



Source: ILO Database of International Labour Standards

In addition to the ILO, trade unions in developed countries also started to lose political influence as well as social representativity. Figure 4 shows the progressive decrease in union membership in the US, Japan, France, UK and Germany since the 1970s to 2000s, with falls of between 30% and 50% in all cases (Visser 2006).

Figure 4: Union density, adjusted data (1970-2000)



Source: Visser, 2006, p45

At the end of the 1980s the ideological influence of international labour and collectivist master frames suffered a final blow with the collapse of the Soviet Union, which proved almost fatal for communist trade unions and international federations, in particular for the once powerful Soviet-backed WFTU. The remaining international trade union bodies, grouped around the liberal ICFTU, the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and ten international Trade Federations – recently renamed Global Union Federations (GUFs) – (were) distanced from central political roles and from each other in the ensuing years (O'Brien 2000). The legitimacy of ICFTU also suffered as it had been a historical supporter of the ILO model and 'high labour politics' based on lobby and close collaboration with international organisations, favouring elitist top-down approaches towards labour regulation (Gumbrell-McCormick 2004; Hyman 2005; Gallin 2002). Against this, GUFs started to pay greater attention to direct negotiations with TNCs rather than to states or the ILO, understanding that collective bargaining no longer was an issue reigned by these actors. Towards the end of the twentieth century some GUFs even adopted a more civil orientation, participating in civil society campaigns to pressure corporations and governments (Anner et al 2006; Herod 2001).

This section argued that during the Cold War period a labour-based programme of social standardisation clashed with the hierarchical structure of the international order. The paradigmatic differences between the two superpowers put labour at the centre of a battle between two radical visions that considered it either a commodity or an extension of the state itself. In the West the Welfarist programme also conflicted with the growing internationalisation of the economic system, which the US spearheaded, and with the technocratisation of economic thought. At the same time, the labour cleavage started to be seen as exclusive in light of the inclusive vision embodied by human rights and accompanying the consolidation of civil society. The decay of the Welfarist programme was contrasted by the expansion of corporate and market-oriented cleavages, including the ones mentioned in the first section of this chapter. During the 1960s and 1970s these cleavages became gradually integrated into a new master frame that distinguished between economic and political spheres, considering that is was the former that led to greater accumulation of wealth and the improvement of social standards. The expansion of this Business & Trade programme had substantial impact in redefining the role of labour and the state in society in general, and enhancing the position of business and certain civil society groups in the international order.

Firms and markets as social regulators

The demise of the Welfarist paradigm was not merely a result of economic neoliberalism. Rather it responded to the co-evolution of corporate and civil cleavages which

had remained active but not at the centred of the Welfarist programme, such as international trade regulation, business activism, corporate philanthropy, and managerial social practices. The social resonance of these cleavages accentuated as the principle that markets and technical approaches were more effective to enhance social conditions gained ground among political and academic elites. Peter Drucker, a renowned management author, wrote in 1970 that management had become a basic and dominant institution of Western civilisation, as it expressed 'the belief in the possibility of controlling man's livelihood through the systematic organisation of human resources' (Drucker 1975: 4). In this sense, the Business & Trade programme engulfed a diversity of cleavages under a master frame proposing a radical change in the central mechanisms and actors driving social standardisation: from political deliberation between governments and trade unions, to economic competition and firms as social regulators.

In the corporate sector, this vision became discussed through the notion of corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Carroll 1999). In its beginnings, the notion of CSR revolved around the convenience of imposing social standards over corporations through mandatory mechanisms such as domestic legislation. It was also in 1970 that Milton Friedman – who was to win the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences six years later – published a famous article considered to represent the orthodox neoliberal position on the matter. The article, explicitly titled 'The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase its Profits' (Friedman 1970), argued that forcing a connection between corporate performance and broader social questions would be inefficient and ultimately detrimental for society, as wealth would be destroyed and jobs will suffer. A decade later Peter Drucker contested this, arguing that Friedman's orthodox view could be superseded by the creation of appropriate incentives so that the improvement of social and environmental standards would result in economic benefits, job-creation, and wealth (Drucker 1984). This became known as the 'business case' for CSR, a vision lasting to this day suggesting that the establishment of voluntarily higher-than-required social and environmental standards can be made beneficial for both business and society. For the purpose of this dissertation, the business case for CSR provides an example of the rise of utilitarian views in social standardisation: it was no longer enough to promote social standards on religious, humanist or moral grounds, nor as part of an inclusive bargain for social order. By the 1980s social standards also had to pay off.

The debates around CSR heralded not only changes in economic thought and managerial visions but growing public awareness about the role of corporations in society. Campaigns in the US led by activists such as Ralph Nader advanced the idea of treating corporations like political entities which 'could not rely on market mechanisms on decision-making to serve society adequately' (Vogel 1975: 27). The growing weight of corporations as economic actors also made them increasingly visible public institutions, which therefore could be subjected to appropriate governance instruments. Moreover, at the end of the 1970s a number

of serious illicit activities committed by large American firms operating overseas came to light, including actions such as subversive political intervention to overthrow the governments of host countries, financing domestic partisan politics, participating in illegal arm sales, and bribing public officials (Solomon and Linville 1976). Public opinion in the US, agitated by the civil mobilisations around the Vietnam War, became increasingly critical of corporate practices on issues of accountability, compliance, transparency of decision-making, the activities of shadow interest groups, and the gap between corporate and political systems of governance. Responding directly to this situation the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the US Congress passed the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act in 1977 (Coombe Jr. 1980; Solomon and Linville 1976). This act triggered a reaction within the corporate sector as corporations (had to) acknowledged their new public and political status and the detrimental effect that civil campaigns could have on their brands and revenues. In this context, many firms turned again towards self-regulation and the practice of setting Codes of Conduct (CoC), which outlined voluntary commitments to ethical and legal principles. For large TNCs, CoCs included the promise to respect fundamental labour standards not only within their premises but throughout their supply chains, even when the legislation of the host-country did not require so (Klein 2000). The connection between the SEC's intervention and the revitalisation of the self-regulation movement by TNCs is directly confirmed by Jenkins et al (2002), which demonstrated that approximately 90% of the CoCs in existence in the US by 1985 were created after the Act was passed.

These policies by the US government were in tandem with diverse initiatives by international organisations addressing corporate social and political practices. In 1976 the OECD had launched its 'Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises', a set of recommendations for governments and enterprises to homogenise a liberal regime of foreign direct investment which also included aspects dealing with CSR (repeatedly revised as recently as 2011, with the latter issue becoming more prominent) (OECD 2011; OECD 2008). The ILO also formally recognised the relevance of TNCs as the main job-owners in 1977 when it launched the 'Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy'. This Declaration enumerated a set of standards of behaviour for corporations in areas such as employment, training, conditions of work, and industrial relations. At the same time international business associations launched programmes of good corporate practice. For example the ICC launched its 'Guidelines for International Investment' in 1972 and its 'Rules of Conduct to Combat Extortion and Bribery' in 1979 (Horn 1980), the Sullivan Principles were launched in 1977 by a religious board member of General Motors reacting against South Africa's apartheid, and the Caux Round Table Principles of 1986 were drafted by a coalition of businessmen from North America, Europe and Japan (Hassel 2008).

This first round of international initiatives set an important precedent as early coordinated international attempts to regulate the social practices of TNCs across borders, albeit they had limited adoption and lacked formal procedures for monitoring, promotion or enforcement (Hassel 2008; Heintz 2002; Klotz 1995). The UN itself started to pay attention to corporate social standards proposing a reference framework for private self-regulation. In 1975 it had formed the UN Commission on Transnational Corporations (UNCTC) with the task of creating a UN Code of Conduct that would clarify the roles and responsibilities between states and TNCs. However, the state-centred arrangement used by the UN proved incapable to generate the necessary consensus among different nations and parties. By 1993, the year when the UNCTC was dissolved, it had failed to establish the basic principles of the code, which was ultimately never published (Rubin 1995). This initiative will be shown to have finally come to fruition more than thirty years after its inception, but framed under the latest Sustainability programme.

These early efforts by international organisations can be considered expressions of a *laissez faire* logic to generate certain international coordination over standardisation, contrary to the legalistic-deliberative approach embedded in the Welfarist programme. Accordingly, both intergovernmental arrangements and corporatist labour debates were sidelined, as firms came to be considered the responsible actor and primary transmission belt for social standardisation. Nonetheless, the legitimacy of self-regulatory projects was soon contested not only by sectors of civil society and the labour movement – due to the lack of effective control mechanisms and sidelining sensitive labour issues – but by corporations themselves, which denied them any economic value (Kolk et al 1999; Rubin 1995; Langlois and Schlegelmilch 1990). As a result, no initiative or organisation acquired greater salience over others, increasingly turning global social and labour standards in a mosaic of norms, frameworks and recommendations which co-existed with the institutions of the Welfarist programme. As a result this mosaic included corporate self-regulation programmes, CSR discourses, ILO conventions, recommendations by international organisations, and even governmental regulations. This fragmentation resulted in certain analysts becoming concerned that an international regulatory void, understood as the absence of a unified overarching framework, would risk a 'race-to-the-bottom' of social standards, as countries would try to undercut the competition by progressively lowering their social regulations to attract investment and TNCs (Chan 2003; Staiger 2003).

In order to prevent this outcome, the 1990s witnessed the last attempts to establish an effective coercive regime capable of reconciling two cleavages of social standardisation that were clashing in the globalising economy: labour and international trade. As introduced in chapter 2, the most explicit attempt became known as the WTO social clause debate, taking place in the first WTO Ministerial Conference in Singapore of 1996. The goal of this project was to link ILO and Human Rights Conventions with the WTO trade agreement. This would

take the form of a number of articles defining minimum labour conditions that member countries had to meet in order to enjoy trade benefits (Chan 2003). The social clause would incentivise developing countries to comply with basic labour standards, and deter developed countries from accepting goods manufactured in non-complying countries. This would block the race-to-the-bottom of social standards as developing countries would have to comply to maintain their access to Northern markets, but also to avoid sanctions based on the WTO's Trade Dispute Settlement Mechanism (O'Brien 2004; Staiger 2003). The proposal received substantial criticism by a number of parties, including the bureaucracies of the ILO and WTO themselves. The opposition to this project provides a good example of the complex interests crossing global social standard-setting initiatives by the end of the century, in particular when they intended to establish hard law mechanisms. Simultaneously, it reflects the difficulty of articulating ethical considerations with technocratic economic rationality as the economy globalised.

Hence, sectors inside the WTO were reluctant to formalise links between technical trade conditions and 'vague' labour and social standards that could interfere with market functioning. At the same time, part of the ILO bureaucracy feared the effect this connection would have over its tradition of voluntarism and moral persuasion, the neutrality of the tripartite assembly, and the overall autonomy of the organisation (Wilkinson 2002; Haworth et al 2005). The project, brought forward by the governments of the US, France, Norway, and the European Commission, was also opposed by most developing countries and the United Kingdom, on the premise that it would provide a moral basis for protectionism. The main employer organisations such as the IOE and the ICC lobbied for maintaining the status quo in line with their free trade tradition and historical opposition against the enhancement of ILO powers (Leary 1996). Instead, international trade union federations, as well as unions from several Asian, African and Latin American countries, supported the linkage as they considered the social clause would benefit low-paid workers in labour-intensive export-focused industries and provide an effective tool to pressure corporations and states (Kirton and Trebilcock 2004). In this context no agreement was reached and the final WTO Ministerial Declaration reaffirmed the ILO as the exclusive 'competent body to set and deal with these standards' (WTO 1996). A number of related debates resurfaced during WTO meetings in Seattle in 1999 and Doha in 2001, but in the latter the initial declaration was ultimately confirmed and the social clause debate was concluded (Grandi 2009).

The failure of the WTO-ILO link cemented the division of social standard-setting into two camps: the technical-economic one, concerned with practical debates over the effects of global labour standards on economic competitivity, the area of expertise of the WTO, and a normative-political one focused on the violation of basic human and labour rights, the focus of the ILO (Lee 1997). This dissertation understands this to be distinguishing two programmes of

social standardisation in accordance with the systemic alternatives outlined in chapter 2: a soft-law *laissez faire* one, voluntary and fragmented, and a political-legalistic one aiming for coercive mechanisms but deadlocked in political deliberation. The failure of the social clause evidenced the impossibility of recreating this second programme. This resulted in a legitimacy gap which could not be resolved: on the one side, normative-political frameworks had found a widely accepted source of legitimacy in human rights, but they lacked effective mechanisms of collective coordination and application. On the other, technical-economic discourses and institutions had transnational mechanisms on the basis of trade regimes and the soft regulation of global markets and firms, but lacked legitimacy.

This situation is at the basis of the framework fragmentation identified in the right side of Figure 2 between the 1980s and 2000s. After the failure of the WTO social clause debate, attempts to narrow this gap were reflected in a number of institutional changes in social standard-setting. The most salient of them from the perspective of this analysis is the change in the policy line of the ILO itself, which this dissertation considers as the inauguration of the third and last programme of social standardisation. In 1998 the ILO launched the 'Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work' during its 86th Session, abandoning its centennial convention-setting procedure targeting diverse areas of labour and industrial relations – one hundred and fifty five Conventions, over two hundred recommendations, and five protocols – to focus on the promotion of a few basic labour principles (ILO 1998). This new agenda mimicked the approach taken by the UN with its Human Rights Declaration as it unilaterally established four fundamental labour rights as Core Labour Standards. These standards intended to define a 'new normative hierarchy' (Alston 2004: 458) to which countries had to subscribe whether they have ratified previous Conventions or not, abandoning the previous practice of selective ratification by governments. The four Core Labour Standards are: 1) Freedom of association and effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining, 2) Elimination of all forms of forced labour, 3) Abolition of child labour, and 4) Elimination of discrimination in respect to employment or occupation. Evidently, they all overlap with fundamental human rights in the UN Declaration.

The ILO Declaration of 1998 was received with controversy among specialists ranging from those considering it the ultimate defeat of the ILO's social-democratic spirit and the exhaustion of its model (Standing 2008; Elias 2007; Alston 2004; Vosko 2002), to those that treated it as a bold but pragmatic 'strategy of relevance' enabling the organisation to adapt to the global context of the end of the millennium (Helfer 2006; Haworth et al 2005; Haworth 2002; Wilkinson 2002; Hughes 2002). Whichever position is endorsed, the timing, content and style of the measure by the main international labour body represented a move away from the legalistic, corporatist, and state-based tradition of labour governance. The new approach promoted a looser normative logic: a general overarching pseudo-regime around a few minimal

global principles that might steer social standardisation but no longer aimed to regulate it in specific terms.[8] International labour governance was reduced, formally, to four Core Labour Standards and recommendations overlapping with fundamental human rights, a handful of declarations by international organisations targeting corporate behaviour, and diverse array of corporate self-regulatory initiatives making reference to both. In the process, voluntary firm-oriented standards had become the norm for the transnational governance of social issues, not laws, inter-state conventions, or formal regimes. Moreover, no central political institution for standard-setting was identifiable, or even a clear hierarchy among existing projects, as initiatives started to proliferate without any form of coordination or supervision. Out of this fragmentation a new governance master frame started to take form, aiming to bridge these initiatives and address some of their limitations.

Markets and human rights: The path to Sustainability

The reason the term 'sustainability' was chosen to denominate the latest phase of social standardisation responds to its contemporary use to characterise activities that recognise the ecumenical limitations of the social and environmental context. Problematically, the term has also become the label for much of the conceptual baggage (with a derogatory connotation) of the contemporary CSR industry. Nonetheless, already before this happened sustainability had gained ground in the discourse of private regulation and environmental governance, expanding from its original and rather technical usage in environmental debates. Moreover, as it will be shown, the term is now widely used in contemporary international policy circles, civil society initiatives, and corporate projects to refer to ideas and frameworks where globalisation, technological development, and social and environmental norms are seen as compatible elements.

The notion emerged in the late 1980s, when technical reports by international organisations started to point to the 'sustainability deficit' when referring to the looming dangers of the unrestricted exploitation of natural resources and the unbalanced distribution of wealth. In particular, the term is acknowledged to have entered the international dictionary with the publication of the UN World Commission on Environment and Development Report 'Our Common Future' in 1987 (UN 1987; Faber et al 2005). However, it was during the 1990s that the concept acquired its current form. Displaying a striking parallelism with the famous article by Friedman on CSR, the also Economics' Nobel Prize winner Robert Solow wrote a piece explaining the dangers of attaching strong moral considerations to sustainability and the

[8] Interestingly, twenty years prior to this measure an ILO official wrote an article stating that only one-tenth of the approximately eighty Conventions in existence at the time would be necessary to establish a general system of fair labour standards (Edgren 1979: 527).

limitations stemming from the intrinsic vagueness of the term (Solow 1991). Nonetheless, UN agencies, the World Bank and international NGOs such as the WWF increasingly relied on the concept to refer to the consequences of maintaining the current model of economic and industrial development, emphasising unaddressed social and environmental externalities, and suggesting alternative regulatory models. This approach gained further publicity after the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) at Rio de Janeiro (also known as Rio Earth Summit) and as some of first technical recommendations for measuring 'sustainability indicators' were proposed in 1995 by the US Department of Energy, and in 1999 by the OECD (Faber et al 2005; Goodland 1995).

The 1992 Rio Earth Summit contributed to the diffusion of the term into the corporate sector, as this was the first conference where business leaders discussed alongside diplomats and scientists the role business played in sustainable development (Morgera 2004). It was during this event that the UN recommended the CEOs of attending companies to affiliate to the new World Business Council on Sustainable Development (WBCSD). The Council was a loose association created by the Swiss industrialist Stephan Schmidheiny, who had been appointed by the Secretary General of the UNCED to promote business engagement with the global agenda (WBCSD 2012; Therien and Pouliot 2006).[9] By the end of the century the business ethics and CSR literature had appropriated the notion as part of its conceptual baggage, sidelining its technical content for a more ethical-normative one. This treatment crystallised in the ideal of the 'triple bottom line' of CSR linking economic prosperity, environmental quality and social equity, and in an array of proposals for more humane models of capitalism (van Marrewijk 2003; Balakrishnan et al 2003; Jamieson 1998; Elkington 1994).

This dissertation adopts a more conceptual view of the notion to refer the last programme of social standardisation, considering that it embodies a distinct logic to the ones of the Welfarist and Business and Trade programmes. In this sense, it proposes that the Sustainability programme operates on a master frame that combines, in a more or less explicit manner, the potential of technical-economic rationality to steer globalisation, and the enlarging universality of Western liberal civil and political rights, to endow it with some social boundaries. Figure 2 at the beginning of this chapter reflects that the Sustainability programme integrates diverse cleavages present in the precedent programmes, some that remained on the sidelines, and a number of new ones. The capacity of this programme to do so rests on its more inclusive and overarching normative premises, capable of re-framing existing regulatory proposals, and its reliance on standard-based mechanisms of governance. In this sense, this dissertation treats the Sustainability programme as a fast-policy model according to Jessop's

[9] In the next 20 years this organisation will consolidate as one of the main international business associations representing a global corporate position in relation to social and environmental standards.

typology explained in chapter 2, which prioritises normative innovation and de-centralised arrangements to steer certain variables in a particular direction.

Institutionally, the origins of this programme are found in the co-evolution of different cleavages of social standardisation, including the managerial one, corporate-oriented guidelines introduced by international organisations and business associations, and campaigns by civil society and governmental actors treating corporations as public political actors. Its consolidation followed a new wave of combined institutional attempts to narrow the gap existing within these elements. Thus, even when early CoCs were briefly praised as a promising development for corporate regulation by certain international unions (Gallin 2008), their efficacy and legitimacy was strongly questioned by the early 1990s. These criticisms comprised different issues. First, there were concerns for corporate self-regulation as a whole, arguing that CoCs were nothing more than customised statements depending on firms' preferences and goodwill, lacking consistent monitoring, enforcement and implementation mechanisms that could be publicly verified. Second, certain analysts observed that most CoCs generally avoided dealing with labour in the terms of the Welfarist programme, when not displaying explicit union-avoidance intentions and ignoring any form of collective rights (Gallin 2008; Fairbrother and Hammer 2005). These corporate self-regulatory initiatives distinguished between the civil and the labour component in social standardisation, focusing mostly on the avoidance of serious human rights violations and human resource questions over Health and Safety and wage policy, the more de-politicised areas of labour management (Urminsky 2001; Diller 1999; Kolk et al 1999). Third, and linked with the previous point, the majority of CoCs remained oriented to internal procedures, making only vague reference to international conventions. Finally, a number of several large companies with visible CoCs and CSR programmes were discovered to be in violation of basic labour standards in their operations in developing countries and export processing zones (Klein 2000).

These issues drew the attention of a number of governmental agencies, CSOs, international networks and trade unions. Inter-sectoral networks and coalitions, run by bodies such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the National Labour Committee, started to wage public campaigns against infringing TNCs (Anner 2007; Bartley and Child 2007; Novelli 2004; Kidder 2002; Klein 2000). In the US, a campaign against child labour in East Asia contributed to the introduction of the Harkin Bill, through which the US threatened to suspend imports from any country producing goods through child labour (Hertel 2006; Caraway 2006). Furthermore, the dominating discourse had changed: new civil campaigns were no longer framed in labour and domestic-law terms but through the lens of human rights. The reference to human rights as the fundamental social standards supported the expansion of contacts between civil, labour, academic and governmental actors in different countries. Networked forms of civil society association, sharing common discourses and identification with universal values,

proliferated. These were characterised by non-hierarchical forms of organisation and high information exchange, differing from the bureaucratic arrangements preferred in the past by international organisations, states, and trade unions (Khagram et al 2002; Tarrow 2001). Hence, contrary to the situation a decade before, the new anti-corporate movements developed connections with anti-globalisation movements flashing at Seattle, Davos and other events considered the front-end of neoliberal globalisation. Demands for greater social responsibility by firms, and greater consideration for social standards worldwide became intertwined with those of the Global Justice movement for greater equity, political representation, transparency and accountability (Van Elst and Walgrave 2002; Hertel 2005). In this context, corporate, civil and political actors acknowledged the inadequacy of existing initiatives to address existing social and political requirements, and triggered a second wave of social standard-setting projects.

The new social standard-setting initiatives were based on an operational model where the enhancement of compliance and legitimacy depended on two mechanisms. On the one side, there were more inclusive standard-setting procedures. On the other, it was incentivising compliance by shifting coercive power from a regime-form of regulation of markets, to the actions of civil observers, media and consumers. The primary mechanism adopted for this was certification and labelling. Labelling operates by establishing a certification process whereby an auditing organisation grants a label that a compliant organisation can apply to its products and communications. The first labelling schemes appeared in the mid-1980s as a response to the struggles between corporations and environmental movements boycotting timber exploitation, which by 1992 led to the formation of the first certification association, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). The expansion of this model implied also a move away from the corporate unilateralism found in the initial initiatives of self-regulation.

The origin of the first social certificates is not entirely private: the US Department of Labour encouraged the creation of a private labour certificates and labels, claiming that the traditional monitoring scheme relying on labour inspectors was becoming increasingly unpractical in light of economic expansion and globalisation: the ratio of labour inspectors to total US workforce had dropped from 1:46,000 in the early 1970s to 1:130,000 in 1992 (Bartley 2003: 448). On these grounds, the Department submitted a proposal for the ILO to create a 'global social label' in 1996, aiming for the certification of countries, not of firms (Bartley 2007; Bartley 2003). This proposal received similar North-South criticisms to those suffered by the WTO social clause, and the project was dropped. Two years later the ILO's Core Labour Standards were launched, effectively closing the path for a formal regime of global labour standards. In light of this, the Clinton administration convened the Fashion Industry Forum, extending invitations to US unions and NGOs to discuss self-monitoring and certification programmes for the garment industry. This non-state forum aimed at avoiding the deadlocks

present in the WTO and the ILO over labour standards. In this regard, authors such as Bartley (2007) considered that these new standard-setting initiatives were a product of the failure and standstill of traditional state and inter-state (Welfarist) mechanisms of social and labour governance, rather than of their stimuli.

In 1997, the Forum resulted in the creation of the Apparel Industry Partnership (AIP), a multi-sectoral arrangement that included public, civil society, labour unions and corporate actors from the US. The AIP established a US Workplace CoC that companies in the industry would adopt voluntarily and require their contractors to adopt, addressing issues of child labour, discrimination, working conditions, minimum wage, health and safety, and respect for workers' rights (USDL 1997). With the objective of providing certification services for the AIP several CSOs emerged such as Social Accountability International (SAI) and Fair Labour Association (FLA) in 1998. The latter also devised a private CoC based on ILO principles, which the organisation would monitor to grant its certificate, and provided reporting services to corporations and training for workers on human rights and labour standards (FLA 2013). This organisation also designed its own industrial standard series – namely SA 8000 – based on ILO and UN Conventions, and an accreditation package to certify social conditions in industrial facilities across the world (SAI 2008).[10] Similar multi-sectoral initiatives followed suit, such as the UK Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) in 1998,[11] the Fair Wear Foundation established by the Dutch Clean Clothes Campaign in 1999 (CCC 2013), and the Workers' Rights Consortium (WRC), a US group founded in 2000 by American trade unions, student labour activists, and a number of human rights, labour and religious NGOs monitoring the activities in industries supplying university garments for the US (O'Rourke 2003; O'Rourke 2006; Standing 2007).[12]

The proliferation of labelling and certification schemes during the 1990s became so noticeable that Power (1999) coined the term 'audit society' to refer to this new mode of socio-political regulation, and the literature on private regulation reviewed in chapter 1 is largely grounded on these developments (Gereffi et al 2001; Bernstein and Cashore 2007; Bartley 2010). Implicit in this model was the notion that the monitoring of social and environmental standards at the international level exceeded the capabilities of any state or central body, be it the UN, the WTO, the ILO, or of the governmental agencies from developed countries. A similar argument was identified at the beginning of the century for the creation of the non-state

[10] Since October 2012, SAI has suspended its certification services due to planned revisions in its accreditation and certification methodologies.

[11] ETI counts among its members the British Trade Union Confederation as well as the ITUC and some GUFs, plus international NGOs as Oxfam GB, Care International UK, Christian Aid and the Fair-trade Foundation (ETI 2013).

[12] The WRC Advisory Body includes representatives of organisations such as the main US union federation AFL-CIO, Harvard University, People of Faith Network, Labour Action China, Independent Monitoring Team of Honduras and the East Bay Alliance for Sustainable Economy, among many others (WRC 2007).

technical standard-setting associations such as the IEC and ISO, which opted to operate around small groups of experts rather than through large state-based multinational forums. However, while these first organisations rested on a technocratic and elitist civil component, supervised by states, the new projects integrated the humanist civil society discourse with the functional relevance of corporations. Not only this, social and labour standards were increasingly not an issue to be discussed exclusively by developed countries, as the 'owners of the jobs' – in particular for labour intensive products – had moved East and South, outside the borders of the US and Europe.

By this point, the trajectory of social standardisation became characterised by growing discursive and institutional intersections across the three governance programmes, crossing initiatives by the ILO and WTO, CSR and corporate self-regulation, and multi-sectoral industry-wide initiatives of private governance. Towards the end of the previous century the aim of integrating a secular ethical vision with universal technical-economic rationality had come again to the fore of social standardisation, after the politicisation of the Welfarist programme and the marketisation of the Business & Trade one. The novelty of the Sustainability programme, further expanded in the section ahead, is that it provided a master frame capable of narrowing, discursively and programmatically, the fragmentation of social and labour governance initiatives. Moreover, the next section reveals the extent to which latest programme of social standardisation contributed to consolidate a system of governance.

GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE GOVERNANCE: INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

The previous section indicated that the Sustainability master frame operates on a discourse that conflates the protection of human rights and labour standards, environmental considerations, corporate practices, and market-oriented mechanisms. As part of this semantic, this new master frame of social standardisation rejects national politicisation in the sense that it considers that the definition and monitoring of social standards has come to transcend state boundaries and issues of national interest, domestic party politics, and/or international geo-politics. Moreover, from this perspective the public-private divide in governance has become anachronic, as it does not reflect the emergence of new social actors, such as consumer and business associations, multi-sectoral standard-setting initiatives and certification organisations, as well as networked forms of association.

This section examines a number of institutional developments through which the Sustainability programme became a global governance programme. To do so, it studies the emergence and operation of three initiatives that originated in the late 1990s and early 2000s – the GRI, the UN GC and the ISO WG SR – to characterise the final phase of the global

trajectory of social standardisation, as shown in Figure 2. The three case study initiatives share a striking resemblance regarding their main areas of incumbency, as shown in the table below. These areas, according to the vocabulary used by the initiatives themselves, cover four overarching themes: Business, Labour, Environment, and Social.

Figure 5: Case study initiatives by theme

	GRI	***Global Compact***	***ISO 26000***
Business	Economic	Investment	Organisational Governance
Labour	Labour Practices & Decent Work	Labour	Labour Practices
Environment	Environment	Environment	Environment
Social	Product Responsibiilty Human Rights Society	Human Rights Peace Business Education Development	Human Rights Consumer Issues Community Involvement & Development Fair Operating Practices
	Source: GRI (2010)	Source: GC (2010)	Source: ISO (2010)

Figure 5Figure 5 also reveals a number of sub-areas areas addressed by these initiatives, many of which were the central concern of projects oriented by Welfarist and Business & Trade programmes, such as labour practices, organisational governance, and fair operating practices. The frameworks of these three initiatives make also reference to broader social issues beyond human rights, such as peace, development, community involvement, and consumer issues. Moreover, albeit not the main focus of this dissertation, the three have special environmental chapters, a cleavage of standardisation that became integrated with labour in the Sustainability programme. This chart thus exemplifies the normative reach that the Sustainability programme facilitated by the 2010s, promoting not only the expansion of the themes susceptible to be addressed under this governance programme, but the enlargement of the type of actors involved. The next three sub-sections analyse each of the initiatives separately in chronological order, but pointing to the co-evolution of their links with other institutions and cleavages.

The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)

The GRI has the oldest organisational roots of the three case studies, albeit all of them emerged within a span of five years at the end of the 1990s. In spite of this, the evolution of the GRI did not receive the academic or public attention enjoyed by the other two cases, in

particular by the more famous UN GC. Nonetheless, its origins provide a seamless continuation of the evolution of multi-sectoral standard-setting initiatives introduced in the previous section.

The foundation of GRI is attributed to two individuals involved in different aspects of social and environmental standard-setting since the 1980s, based on two small US CSOs which are still in existence. These individuals are Robert Massie, then President of the Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies (CERES), and Allen White, belonging to the Tellus Institute, a sustainability think tank (Brown et al 2009). The Tellus Institute was formed in 1976 by a group of physicists and mathematicians as a multi-disciplinary research and policy organisation aiming to provide scientific rigour to environmental and social campaigns (Tellus 2012). CERES was a more applied body, created in 1989 by a group of investors interested in preventing environmental devastation, motivated by the Exxon-Valdez oil spill (CERES 2010). The aims of the coalition was to connect investors' networks and public pension trustees with environmental CSOs, foundations, religious groups and labour-representatives interested in promoting sustainable patterns of corporate behaviour. By 2010 the Board of CERES included representatives of the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches, CSOs such as PAX World, the Sierra Club, the Labour Network for Sustainability and Green America, and investment groups such as CALPers and the Investor Network for Climate Risk (CERES 2011). Since their beginnings both groups were interested in new forms to apply the recommendations of the 1972 UN Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment, but also to enhance corporate social responsibility and consumer activism. Shortly after its foundation CERES launched a voluntary CoC for businesses – containing ten points based on the 1977 Sullivan Principles – that highlighted the protection of the environment and the sustainable use of natural resources, as well as other issues such as energy conservation, risk reduction, and waste disposal. By the early 1990s both organisations had moved to devise ways of linking business and capital markets with the protection of the environment. The novelty of the CERES Code was its emphasis on the methodological dimension rather than on normative questions, as it considered fundamental to develop standardised approaches for information disclosure, management commitment, auditing and reporting. The impact of the CERES principles was marginal in all regards: by 1993 only one company subscribed to them and approximately 50 firms had done so by 2010. The task of turning these principles into a practical tool was picked up by the Tellus Institute which in the early nineties developed one of the first formal frameworks for environmental reporting (GRI 2007). This framework also advocated a pragmatic rather than ethical approach to corporate self-regulation: compliance would be promoted more effectively by incorporating social and environmental indicators in increasingly standardised corporate public reports, rather than as a result of one-off audits or certification procedures.

The founders of GRI considered that in spite of the discredit of unilateral programmes of corporate governance, there were real public demands for firms to communicate their

environmental and social performance, not only to stockholders but to a broadening audience composed by the media, consumers, and academics. Moreover, they claimed that the lack of clarity in terms of content, consistency, exhaustiveness and comparability among existing public and private frameworks, was a serious deficiency of standard-based governance, and considered that such fragmentation was on the rise (White 1999; Willis 2003). At the same time, they considered that the format of nation-based standards was inappropriate to deal with the conditions imposed by a globalised economy and the actual needs of TNCs. In this regard Allen White expressed that information-based and firm-oriented mechanisms were 'the only viable tool for moving corporate behaviour in the desired direction' (White 1999: 42). Hence, in 1997 Massie and White undertook the task of standardising non-financial reporting, giving origin to the Global Reporting Initiative. The organisation's goal was to develop a professional and evolving voluntary framework setting standardised indicators to measure environmental, social and labour corporate performance. The GRI was organisationally set up as a separate entity from the organisations of their creators, with an interim Secretariat established in early 2000 to manage its daily operations. The Secretariat was moved from Boston to Amsterdam in 2002 as part of the internationalisation strategy of the organisation, considering the US was not the most appropriate environment to promote private regulation (Ibid).

The founders identified three areas in which the GRI distinguished itself from other reporting initiatives: the multi-sectoral and multi-national character of its steering committee, a 'broader' and more precise understanding of sustainable corporate behaviour, and a major emphasis on standard-setting (Ibid). The operating principle was that the GRI framework will converge with the financial reporting practices and accounting procedures familiar to public corporations, making their indicators comparable by country, industry and, fundamentally, through time (Willis 2003). In this regard, the GRI made clear its objective to standardise corporate information on social and environmental issues, and only secondarily aimed at establishing norms of its own. At the same time, the usefulness of this approach was promoted on two grounds. On the one hand, it reinforced the business case for non-financial reporting: firms would economically benefit from more transparent and effective communication with social actors, markets and investors on their social and environmental practices (Levy et al 2010). On the other, the GRI targeted civil society, considering that its framework would serve as a civil monitoring tool to benchmark, rank and inform civil campaigns, academia and media regarding corporate and organisational practices. In this manner the GRI combined the legitimacy of human rights and international conventions with technical and managerial knowledge. Its framework mimicked the technical-economic logic of financial reporting and accounting practices which were rapidly becoming standardised across the world (Botzem and Quack 2005), and included representatives from the largest consulting firms in its standard-setting process. On this basis, the GRI assumed a transnational technical orientation paying

attention to procedural considerations such as relevance, reliability, clarity, comparability, timeliness and verifiability of information. On the other, it relied on existing universal normative frameworks such as the UN Human Rights Declaration and ILO conventions and standards to define the indicators to be measured and compared. As a matter of fact, GRI's labour chapter is titled 'Labour Practices and Decent Work', in alignment with the name of the ILO agenda launched in 1999 (Etzion and Ferraro 2010).

Nonetheless, and as a reflection of the difficulty of rationalising social standards in particular, one of the founders of GRI affirmed in 1999 that the environmental dimension was covered in greater detail given that it facilitated a more technical treatment, recognising that '...GRI's treatment of social and economic aspects of sustainability [was] far less refined than its treatment of the environmental aspect' (White 1999: 39). With this, White confirmed that at the end of the twentieth century the standardisation of social issues was still on an early stage, and beyond the general and minimal international principles of human and labour rights no consensus was available regarding the precise indicators to monitor them or the mechanisms to implement them. The GRI framework would aim to do so by requiring corporations to provide qualitative indicators in five key areas of corporate-society interaction: corporate principles and ethical standards, employee relations, local and global community relations, relations with suppliers, and relations with customers (which involved labelling programmes and advertising standards).[13] In this regard, albeit GRI did not suggest specific social standards, it did identify the main social areas of corporate responsibility that would benefit from transnational standardisation and homogenisation.

At the same time, GRI addressed the question of input legitimacy – concerned with the procedures to produce global norms (Hahn and Weidtmann 2012) – by including sectoral representatives from different geographical areas and adopting a relatively open standard-setting process. In 2010 its Board was composed of members of CSOs such as Greenpeace, the Brazilian Ethos Institute of CSR, academics of different extraction, representatives of international organisations and trade unions – such as United National Environmental Programme (UNEP), the General Secretary of the OECD Trade Union Advisory Committee, and the Counsellor of the main US union AFL-CIO – and business representatives such as a partner of Ernst and Young, the Managing Director of the Indian steel conglomerate Tata Industries, and a former Vice-President of the Dutch ABN Amro Bank. In addition, its advisory group include members of the British Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, of diverse sustainability consultancies, the Dutch Trade Union Confederation, and the Argentine Centre for Human Rights and Environment (CEDHA). The guidelines themselves are created and updated by a network of voluntary 'experts' from over sixty countries elected according to

[13] These categories share a striking resemblance with the structure of the Rotary Club outlined in the first section of this chapter.

five different constituencies that were given prevalence over national segmentations: business, civil society, inter-governmental agencies, labour, and mediating institutions, which are mostly interested consultancies and think tanks. Three versions of the guidelines have so far been published – plus numerous extensions – and a fourth is expected around May 2013.

The proposed guidelines are released to public consultation for ninety days after which they are passed with recommendations to a Technical Advisory Committee and finally to a Stakeholder Council, an elected forum ordered by constituency and region. This Council is composed of twenty two seats for business actors, sixteen for CSOs, sixteen for mediating institutions and six for organised labour, renewed by parts in terms of three years, drawn according to UN-defined regions: Africa, Asia Pacific/Oceania, Latin America/Caribbean, North America/Europe/CIS, and West Asia. The main tasks of the Council involve appointing all members of the Executive Board except the Chief Executive, and providing input on policy issues (GRI 2009). The members of this council are elected by an Organisational Stakeholder Group, the ultimate source of 'democratic' representation inside the GRI. The Stakeholder Group is composed by all organisations formally affiliated to GRI – albeit this does not mean they are necessarily users of the guidelines – including firms, CSOs and research institutions interested in the standard-setting process, financial contributors, and specialised consultants, practitioners, and training providers (GRI 2012). Interestingly, organised labour representatives in the Stakeholder Council are not elected 'democratically' but appointed directly by international labour bodies. Since 2007 GRI has opened local offices in five countries, under the name of 'focal points', with the goal of increasing local awareness and cultivating relationships with local actors. These offices have the mission of stimulating harmonisation with existing national standards and initiatives. An aspect to be noted is that of the five focal points, three are in large emerging economy countries, such as Brazil – the first local office to be opened – India and China, while the remaining two are in Australia and the US. These regional and sectoral constituencies, present in different forms in the three case study initiatives, provide the basis for studying the participation by Brazilian and Argentine actors from chapter 4 onwards.

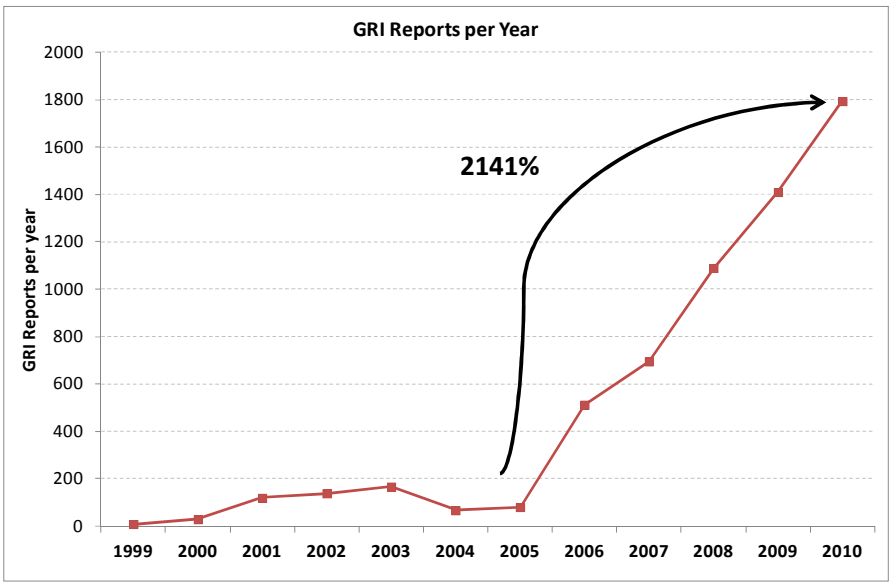
To enhance output legitimacy – the conditions defining the application of the norms – the GRI adopted a model concerned exclusively with setting standards but avoiding certification: GRI's guidelines are freely downloadable from the web and GRI does not provide any form of auditing, verification, consulting or certification of reports to companies using their guidelines (though other firms do), albeit it can comment on their application (GRI 2013). Such an approach will be shown to be shared by the UN GC and ISO WG SR. At the same time GRI operates on a policy of 'disclose or explain', the notion that an organisation using the GRI framework should provide explanations if some of the indexes are not addressed or monitored. This defines a hierarchy or 'application level' which users are recommended to state publicly, varying from entry-level organisations to advanced reporting organisations. At the same time

GRI guidelines have been tailored by sector, such as Financial Services, Food Processing, Oil and Gas, Events Organising, and NGOs, among others.

In its first years, the recognition of GRI was low. However, in April 1999 it received a legitimacy boost when the UNEP became the first international organisation to endorse its environmental charter, on the basis that its guidelines were aligned with the UN's global goals. One month after the launch of GRI's pilot programme, UNEP's Executive Director sent letters to Ministers and Secretaries of Environment around the world recommending the promotion of the GRI framework to their companies and encouraging further participation. This endorsement by UNEP is one of the first cases where a UN agency formally supported a private corporate governance initiative. Such move reflected the UN Private-Public Partnership (PPP) strategy inaugurated a year before – further discussed in the next section – promoting multi-sectoral public policy networks among states, international organisations, civil society and business actors to deal with global concerns in areas such as health, ecology and human rights (Witte et al 2000; Benner et al 2004). Furthermore, the GRI represented an opportunity for the UN to reinvigorate the programme undertaken by the UNCTC, and follow the business-oriented approach assumed by the OECD and ILO. In this sense, the GRI preceded the launch of the UN GC and other private-public developments such as the creation of the UN Foundation via a billion dollar contribution by CNN's Ted Turner and the formation of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI) through contributions from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (Utting 2000). In 2002 the GRI was officially declared a new global institution by the UN and a collaborating centre of UNEP (GRI 2002).

Since 2000 the growth of GRI users accelerated, albeit this did not result only from official endorsement. The popularity of its guidelines accentuated specially since 2005, the year when the third GRI version (G3) was launched. Interestingly, Etzion and Ferraro (2010) observed that between 1999 and 2005 the different versions of the GRI guidelines moved from being rigorous and exhaustive to conceptual and authoritative, with the G3 document having a length of 45 pages in comparison with the 104 pages in the 2002 one (Ibid). The rapid growth in users after this simplification is reflected in the figure below, with the number of companies presenting GRI reports around the world jumping from under 200 in 2005 to around 1,800 in 2010. By this year the vast majority of users remain located in OECD countries, led by the US and Spain, albeit the third position was occupied by Brazil.

Figure 6: GRI reports evolution (1999-2010)



Source: GRI Website

The United Nations Global Compact (UN GC)

The origins of the UN GC and of the GRI are a direct product of the opening up of the UN system to the corporate sector, a process started in the 1970s but peaking at the end of the 1990s (Reinicke and Deng 2000; Utting 2000). This move was part of what former Secretary General Kofi Annan called the 'quiet revolution': the necessary inclusion of non-state actors in global governance as a quest for developing more transparent, accountable and effective mechanisms of domestic and international regulation (Annan 1998). Behind this shift was not only the failure of previous UN projects on private regulation, but also the lasting effect of the anti-globalisation campaigns against corporations and international financial institutions. To promote this new agenda former Secretary General Annan became a recurrent guest at the World Economic Forum (WEF), where he advocated the notion that the UN mission could not be achieved based simply on state action, thus recognising the growing complexity of the world political environment. On this line, he considered that it had become necessary to extend towards business the recognition that civil society had enjoyed as a global policy actor since the 1960s and 1970s (Kelly 2001; Forman and Segaar 2006). In January 1999, during the WEF meeting at Davos, the UN Secretary General made reference to the social pacts and safety nets which girded the economic expansion, political stability, and social harmony in the West during the post-war years and asked for '...a similar compact on the global scale, to underpin the global

economy...' and '...unite the powers of markets with the authority of universal ideals' (UN 1999). The quest for a Sustainability programme had become official.

The agenda of Secretary General Annan called for the international business community – firms, business associations and investors – to commit to the mission of improving social and environmental standards. This call by the head of the UN system was nonetheless responded by a not so novel organisation in comparison to those behind the GRI and other private standards initiatives: the ICC. By this time the oldest of the international business chambers had lost much of influence and its leadership was interested in bringing the organisation closer to the centres of global decision-making (Therien and Pouliot 2006; Hocking and Kelly 2002; Kelly 2001). The UN call was perceived as an opportunity to reverse this situation. In 1998 the ICC made PPPs the central theme of its annual agenda and organised a series of meetings with UN officials. After the first of these meetings a common UN-ICC statement proclaimed the importance that 'thriving markets' had for social development. In September of that year the ICC launched its 'Geneva Business Declaration' asking for a speedier and more intense economic globalisation, the harmonisation of international rules, competition policy, intellectual property protection, and principally, a greater role for business in international organisations (ICC 1998).

In March 1999 the normative framework of the UN GC was put in place, involving nine fundamental principles linking human rights with labour and environmental principles. The fundamental principles to which corporations should adhere were based on the UN Declaration on Human Rights, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and the four Core Labour Standards of the ILO (plus a later-added tenth drawing from the UN Convention against Corruption of 2003) (UNGC 2009). In July, the UN Secretary General and the heads of the ILO, UNEP and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights met with the leadership of the ICC and a dozen CEOs and produced a joint statement endorsing the new Global Compact (Kell and Levin 2002). However, the UN considered that nor the ICC or the IOE represented the voice of the corporate sector with the more advanced social practices, and organised meetings with CEOs of large corporations which were not part of the ICC in November 1999 and April 2000. In December 1999, the WTO Seattle protests took place and Secretary General Annan used the WTO forum to advocate again for a more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable business environment. On January 2000 the main international labour union ICFTU and other labour leaders formally endorsed the UN GC project considering it an initiative supportive of the recently launched ILO Core Labour Standards strategy, stating that '...trade unions can strengthen corporate social responsibility and help build the social dimension of globalisation' (ICFTU 2000). Such statement by one of the main international labour bodies provides an indication of the level of acceptance this agenda had acquired by the end of the century, as even the international labour movement acknowledged that the corporate connection had become part of labour governance.

The UN GC was officially launched in July 2000 with the goal of establishing an international platform for corporations and private organisations committed to 'sustainability' and responsible business practices, to 'weave universal principles into global corporate behaviour' (Ruggie 2002: 35). On this basis, UN GC principles required corporations to respect international human rights, uphold freedom of association and ban all forms of compulsory and child labour and discrimination, to adopt a precautionary approach to environmental challenges, and to work against corruption. Additionally, the project intended to transform CSR into a global public issue, providing an institutional alternative to the confrontational approaches of civil society and the international regulatory limits of states (Kell and Ruggie 1999). To establish and oversee the development of the Compact, Secretary Annan appointed Harvard academic John Ruggie, who not only became one of the main advocates for a the link among the UN system, civil society and business, but since 2005 occupied the position of UN Secretary General Special Representative for Business and Human Rights. The approach by Ruggie intended to avoid the mistakes of the past, rejecting the idea of a CoC to be agreed by states, as the UN had attempted in the 1980s. Instead he preferred a voluntary and gradual approach to generate a consensual understanding over how corporate commitment could be translated into sustainable management practices (Ruggie 2008). The premise was that that ex-ante standards and definitions resulted in performance ceilings that became reified and generated path dependence. Rather, it was preferable to rely on minimal but universal principles that could steer corporate responsibility practices without defining them (Kell and Ruggie 1999; Williams 2004). Thus, the UN GC framework was set to provide a medium through which interested parties could interact and progressively develop 'best practices' via iterative application and functional recognition, avoiding legal or governmental imposition. In time, these practices would evolve into global standards with wider law-like recognition, such as it had occurred with human rights. In the view of its promoters this would minimise the chances of meeting the destiny of previous international regulatory proposals, where inapplicable requirements, institutional deadlocks, and/or multiple localisms condemned them to disuse or limited relevance.

On this logic, the UN GC model does not state any standard beyond its ten fundamental principles, and participants are bounded by quite basic requirements. Any participant organisation is required to send a Letter of Commitment signed by its maximum authority to the UN Secretary General, pledging to the UN GC principles, committing to engage in partnerships advancing UN goals, and agreeing to submit a progress report (plus mentioning this report in the organisation's website and annual public reports).[14] These progress reports were to be gathered and analysed by a research network, led by the Corporate Citizenship Unit at Warwick

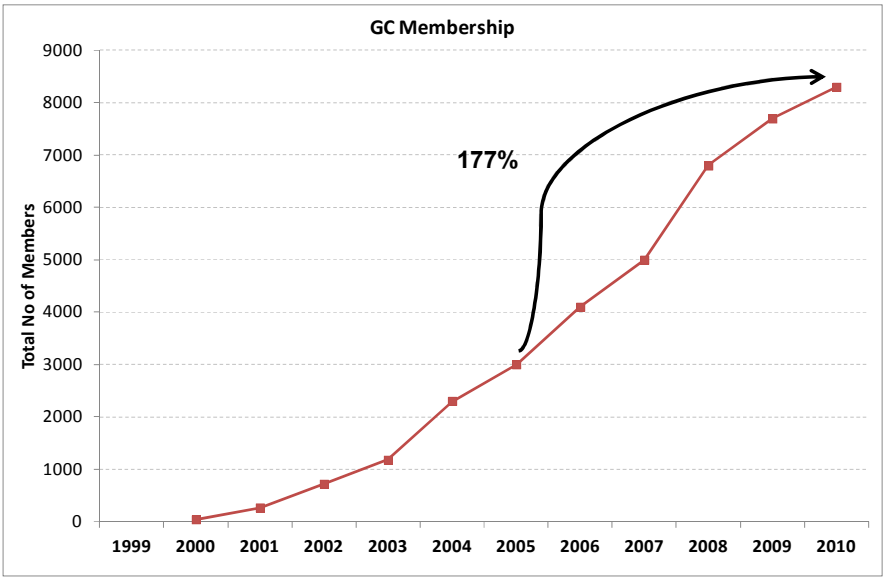
[14] More recently, the UN GC added as a condition a measurement of outcomes, but the targets are still set by the subscribing organisation.

University, and the results published and distributed to facilitate dialogue among participants and coordinate the formulation of consensus-based definitions (Ruggie 2001). The only enforcing mechanism is that failure to provide such report leads to de-listing from the Compact.

Ruggie stated that the Compact relies on three instruments to achieve its aims; Information Sharing and Learning, Policy Dialogues, and Partnerships (Ruggie 2004), with the organisation operating as an 'expanding set of nested networks' (Ruggie 2001: 374). The main network is composed by five UN agencies: the Secretary-General's Office, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNCHR), the ILO, UNEP and UNDP. Later on the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, the UN Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) and the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM, now UN Women) became also part of the project. This network, in charge of strategic direction, policy coherence and quality control, is surrounded by the main network composed by the participants in the Compact itself: mostly firms, but also NGOs, trade unions, public sector organisations, and research centres. Around these two groups there are a myriad of regional, national and sectoral initiatives, mostly in the form of local arrangements denominated Global Compact Local Networks and Forums (Ruggie 2001; Ruggie 2002), which provide most of the data to trace local participation in chapters 4 to 6. Finally, the outer layer of these networks is formed by partner initiatives and organisations associated with the UN GC; among them the ICC, the IOE, and the WBCSD. Internally, the UN GC is formed by a Board of Directors and an Office. The Board is a multi-stakeholder 20-member advisory body that meets annually to decide on overall policy and strategic direction, composed by twelve representatives of business, two of labour, two of business organisations, four of civil society, and two members of the UN GC Secretariat. It is relevant to notice that neither the UN GC nor the GRI include governments as a part of their standard-setting constituencies.

Subscribers to the Compact expanded quite rapidly: by 2010 over 9,000 organisations worldwide including 6,000 firms from over 130 countries and over 95 national networks, are listed in the UN GC website, as shown in Figure 7 below. Certain authors have indicated that the UN GC renewed corporate interest in engaging with environmental and social regulatory issues (Hocking and Kelly 2002; Kelly 2001). Nonetheless, recent articles by Berliner and Prakash (2012), Rasche et al (2012), and Knudsen (2011) conclude that the level of country participation in the UN GC depends on a diversity of causes, such as the host country's involvement in the international system, the level of democratisation and quality of corporate governance, the interference of the framework with domestic law, mimetic behaviour among leading corporations, economic calculations and ethical considerations by CEOs. It is important to emphasise that all these studies recognise that ideas appear to play a significant role behind subscription, as this cannot be explained purely through economic motives.

Figure 7: UN GC membership (2000-2010)



Source: UNGC 2010; McKinsey 2004

The UN GC has been praised by a number of commentators, some of which considered it a valuable reinvention of the UN system (Ruggie 2004) and others a necessary supplement to global regulatory approaches (Rasche 2009a). It also led to a vast range of academic literature and publications – over 350,000 results in Google.scholar – and a significant amount of criticism. The latter mostly point to three main issues: that such a framework supported the capture of the UN by big business, that its principles are vague and hard to implement, and that it lacks accountability, as it does not count with effective mechanisms to verify compliance (Ibid). Though these concerns are certainly valid, they are partially so for the purpose of this dissertation. This is because in any case the UN GC constitutes the officialisation of the Sustainability programme: the recognition of the corporate cleavages present in the Business & Trade programme as legitimate instruments of global governance. In this sense this dissertation considers that in spite of its deficiencies this initiative is representative of a multi-level networked approach to global governance, 'well positioned to act as a hub for coordinating an emergent loosely coupled meta-network of corporate responsibility initiatives' (Rasche and Gilbert 2012: 110). In other words, the mere fact that such an initiative was launched constitutes a clear expression of the current trajectory of social standardisation.

The ISO 26000 Working Group (ISO WG SR)

The last case study possibly represents the latest and most sophisticated initiative for setting global social standards. The entry of the ISO – the major technical standard-setting organisation in the world – into social standard-setting triggered a number of debates regarding

its appropriateness for such a task and the chances of producing a satisfactory output. Officially created in 1946, ISO had by the end of the century become the main representative of the technocratic model of standardisation, devising standards on issues ranging from quality and environmental management to food traceability and methods for measuring the circumference of bus tyres (Yates and Murphy 2010). With a small Central Secretariat in Geneva, the organisation coordinates a non-governmental network of national standards institutes in 164 countries. ISO's structure is constituted by approximately 230 committees and 500 sub-committees with rotating secretariats. Standards are not developed by ISO's staff itself but by members of the national normalisation institutes and tens of thousands of volunteers participating, mostly virtually, in technical committees and working groups (Wood 2012; Murphy and Yates 2009). ISO supervises this work through three high policy committees – a Conformity Assessment Committee (CASCO), a Developing Country Matters Committee (DEVCO), and a Consumer Policy Committee (COPOLCO) – all coordinated by a Technical Management Board (TMB) which is considered the 'real power' behinds ISO's technical work (Wood 2012:86).

ISO remained outside the private governance debates of the 1970s and 1980s, gaining significant visibility with the publication of its quality standard series ISO 9000 in 1987. However, in 1993 it started working on the ISO 14001 series on environmental management to guide firms in the design and monitoring of their environmental processes (Castka and Balzarova 2008; Rondinelli and Vastag 2000). This move was seen at the time to be 'shifting the organisation away from the technical standard-setting it was known for and towards 'soft' standards with significant public policy relevance' (Clapp 1998: 302). Nonetheless, social and labour issues were considered beyond ISO's scope, possibly sharing the view of GRI's founders regarding the difficulties involved in social standardisation. Nonetheless, among the private standard-setting initiatives surging at the end of the nineties a number of independent CSOs had produced social and labour standards, such as AA 1000 by the British AccountAbility and SA 8000 by SAI, the latter explicitly relying on the format of ISO 9000 and ISO 14001. These efforts were followed by national normalisation institutes in countries such as Australia, France, Japan and Brazil, which composed the official constituency of ISO, establishing national recommendations regarding issues of corporate social responsibility (Catska and Balzarova 2008). It was soon after these developments and almost in coincidence with the UN call for the new compact between society and business that certain elements within ISO proposed to create an ISO standard on social responsibility (Ward 2011; Tamm Hallström 2008).

Since 2002 COPOLCO had evaluated in a series of reports the desirability for such type of social standard. These reports evaluated, similarly to the case for GRI, that an ISO norm could resolve the framework fragmentation among existing initiatives. In particular they pointed that the '… tremendous range in quality, content, comprehensiveness and operability…' (ISO

2002: iv) of existing frameworks discouraged interested parties to seriously engage with the notion of CSR and that the absence of agreed definitions on global social standards '[…] impedes the abilities of parties to communicate with each other, and to interact' (ISO 2004:30). This situation was considered an opportunity for ISO to identify substantive principles and norms that would homogenise the normative landscape of private and corporate governance initiatives over social and labour issues, and to provide basic procedures for its operation. In addition to this, the COPOLCO reports recommended creating a norm capable of encompassing existing definitions and initiatives in the field of corporate social responsibility, sustainability, and international socio-environmental governance. In this regard, the reports suggested abandoning the 'corporate' component in the CSR term and envisioning a norm applicable to all types of organisations and not only to corporations. They also proposed that the 'social' in the resulting 'Social Responsibility' concept had to cover both human and labour dimensions and address the 'triple bottom line' of the sustainability agenda linking environmental and economic concerns (ISO 2004:25). Finally, it was advised to better account of the situation of developing countries and SMEs, both poorly addressed by existing norms and with scarce participation in both ISO and other standard-setting bodies (Heires 2008; Ruwet and Tamm Hallström 2007).

ISO adopted a more inclusive approach than the ones by the UN GC and GRI, centred on high-policy bodies, corporate users and reporting specialists. From the start, ISO's TMB was aware that traditional ISO functioning was weighted towards three main groups. These groups consisted of leading firms, national standardisation bodies, and key service providers – such as management consultancies, and certification and auditing firms – from advanced economies. This Northern inclination was generally unproblematic in the rather technical domains ISO addressed, as best practices and technological knowledge generally converged around firms and experts from developed countries. But the COPOLCO reports emphasised that maintaining this segmentation would be detrimental for legitimising a global standard on social responsibility (Castka and Balzarova 2008; Murphy and Yates 2009). Hence they recommended that the development of the new social responsibility standard should include a broader range of stakeholders, such as private standard-setters, employee and community representatives, investors, and suppliers, but also representatives from developing countries. As a response, the TMB decided to expand the network of relevant participants in the Working Group to design and debate the norm beyond engineers and business practitioners.

The constituencies of the Working Group in charge of designing the standard were divided in six groups of experts: Consumers, Governments, Industry, Labour, NGOs, and Service, Support, Research and Others (SSRO), a category grouping members of academia, normalisation institutes, consultancies and think-tanks. This typology presented a more complex arrangement than other private initiatives. For instance, it recognised a role for governments in social standardisation process, in contrast with the UN GC and GRI but also from the

mainstream logic of private governance (Bernstein and Cashore 2007; Börzel and Risse 2005). Moreover, ISO attributed particular relevance to the national level, a scheme that certain participants considered 'anachronic', as experts were organised in national delegations with experts appointed by national normalisation institutes according to relevance, willingness and sectoral representation (Murphy and Yates 2011). Each national delegation consisted of one expert and one observer in each stakeholder category, but only the experts would have voting rights in plenary meetings (ISO 2004a). The WG SR also innovated by subdividing civil society in three groups, distinguishing consumer associations – a group generally considered more economic than politically-oriented – from other CSOs as well as from academics, foundations and think-tanks.

ISO combined this national orientation with a purely functional constituency, denominated 'Liaison organisations', grouping the specialised actors of private governance, such as standard-setting organisations and networks (Vogel 2008). The representatives of Liaison organisations nonetheless had no voting rights and could only comment on the standard-setting process, albeit their support was expected by the Chairman of the WG SR to consider that consensus had been reached on a given point (ISO 2004a). Forty two Liaison organisations participated in the ISO WG SR, an heterogeneous group including many of the private standard-setters already mentioned, such as the FLA, GRI, UN GC and SAI, international associations such as the ICC, ITUC (since 2006 the successor of the ICFTU), the IOE and the WBCSD, and international and supranational organisations such as the ILO, the OECD, the European Commission, and the WHO. In this sense, the ISO WG SR brought together the main participants in social standard-setting across the three governance programmes.

The TMB also considered that its social norm would suffer if it did not address the North-South divide that historically affected other social standard-setting initiatives (O'Brien 2004; Wilkinson 2002). To do so the Secretariat decided to apply the twinning policy to the leadership of the ISO WG SR, whereby the standard-setting process was led by two normalisation institutes; one from a developed country and one from a developing one (Mattos de Lemos 2004). The project was thus chaired by Sweden's Standards Institute (SIS), and the Normalisation Institute of Brazil (ABNT). In addition several Translation Task Forces (TTFs) covering nine languages, including Spanish, Portuguese, Korean, Chinese and Arabic, were put in place by the experts themselves. These TTFs run in parallel with the English-held plenary meetings, and not a posteriori publication, with the objective of discussing points of relevance as the contents were discussed. Finally, the composition of the WG SR was levelled through the eight plenary meetings that took place between 2005 and 2010, seeking a more egalitarian distribution among experts in terms of gender, constituency, and region of origin. At the end of the process over 60% of the experts belonged to developing countries, from an initial proportion of 47% (ISO WG 2010).

The balancing of expert roles and national delegations was problematic and reflective of the difficulty of integrating functional identities and discourses with state-based ones. In principle every expert would participate in the Working Group as an individual, not as a country representative. However, the TMB reckoned that forming national positions was advisable and that national mirror committees should be established by the national normalisation bodies in order to facilitate consensus prior to voting (Ibid). This nation-based procedure showed an inclination towards political compromises inside delegations in detriment of technical-based debates. As a result, this format was criticised by CSR activists and CSR-committed firms for incentivising a lowest-common-denominator type of consensus (Murphy and Yates 2011). It was also criticised by international business associations, which at the end of the process considered that there had been insufficient consultation between the national member bodies selecting the experts and multinational stakeholders groups (ICC 2010). In other words, criticism came from groups oriented by functional views which privileged either specialised knowledge or sectoral representation over national interests, as it happened within IPUs a hundred years before.

The approach by ISO to its global norm also differed from the one adopted by the UN GC and GRI, as it aimed for a top-down standard-setting process, providing precise and consensual definitions over a question that until such moment had evolved in a rather uncoordinated manner. To ground normative definitions the UN GC, the GRI, and other private standard-setting agencies had mostly relied on international conventions and principles from organisations such as the ILO, OECD or UNESCO, and practical considerations stemming from users and experts. The ISO WG SR drew from these sources but the final version of the ISO 26000 standard published in November 2010 introduced its own definitions on basic concepts such as sustainable development, social responsibility, stakeholder, sphere of influence, and social impact, among others. Sustainable development for instance was defined as the process that 'meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs', while Social Responsibility involved the 'responsibility of an organisation for the impact of its decisions and activities on society and the environment' (ISO 2010: 3). The norm also established seven constituent principles of social responsibility, namely accountability, transparency, ethical behaviour, respect for stakeholder interests, for the rule of law, for international norms of behaviour, and for human rights. Additionally, it outlined the range of areas where this standard was applicable, covering issues such as Human Rights, Labour Practices, the Environment, Fair Operating Practices, Consumer Issues and Community Involvement and Development, as was shown in Figure 5.

At this point it is fairly evident that the three case study initiatives approached global governance through standardised mechanisms aiming at steering rather than controlling, avoiding frameworks based on prescriptive norms. In this sense it is relevant to notice that the

ISO 26000 standard, the only of the three which provides prescriptive definitions, is not only voluntary but non-certifiable. This is a different approach by ISO in relation to its previous and more technical ISO 9000 and 14001 series, which in several instances ended up being adopted as de facto market requirements, but also regarding other private governance initiatives relying on this mechanism for validation (Guler et al 2002; Clapp 1998). The final document of ISO 26000 explicitly states that the norm cannot be subjected to any certification by a third-party nor be used as a label; neither can it be subjected to customary law by nations or used as basis for international procedures (ISO 2010). In particular the ISO WG SR decided to separate ISO 26000 from any potential connection with the WTO framework (Ward 2011: 35), in line with previous conclusions regarding legalistic forms of governance. Though the reasons behind these decisions could not be investigated, it is logical to presume that the ISO WG SR was aware of the conflicts that the North-South divide had caused in other prescriptive projects, as well of the strong distrust among civil society and labour representatives for the profit-oriented labelling and certification industry (ISO 26000, 2010, pers. comm., 14 May). Because of this non-certification policy there are no official records of the level of subscription of ISO 26000. In this regard, it can be said that the ISO WG SR extended social standardisation to its maximum expression: for this standard there are no conditions or monitoring mechanisms, nor state-based or private. ISO 26000 is just a recommendation, a declaration, similar in this way to the Human Rights Declaration and ILO Core Labour Standards: a normative horizon. None of these frameworks of social standardisation can be criticised merely on their statistics of application: their goal is not so much to measure and control but to influence and order, once again; to steer.

SYSTEMIC EXPRESSIONS OF SOCIAL STANDARDISATION

This chapter has shown that over the twentieth century social standard-setting initiatives were structured according to master frames operationalised via three programmes of social standardisation. This trajectory evolves in the direction of a progressive separation from state-based definitions and mechanisms to define legitimate patterns of social standardisation, while raising the profile of the private component, both corporate and civil. This last section provides further evidence of systemic expressions accompanying this movement. Systemic behaviour in private governance and standard-setting has been observed by a number of analysts in relation to the Sustainability programme. For example, Sahlin-Andersson (2006) considers that in the 2000s social and environmental governance initiatives started to behave like steering networks: constellations of mobilising, policy-making, reporting and monitoring bodies acting as a networked entity characterised by reciprocity and co-regulation. Similarly, Arthurs (2008) observes that labour governance reflects the growing closure of a techno-professional dialogic

community that excludes uncommitted actors, and that it is from within this community that new 'solutions' are proposed, criticised, or discarded. Moreover, the analysis in Bartley and Smith (2008) shows that between 2001 and 2006 the network of labour and environmental certification organisations moved from a relatively disconnected distribution to a consolidated 'field', characterised by a high density of interconnections, common intermediaries, and common symbolic references. These authors measured that the number of organisations connected to one or more intermediate associations – those whose main purpose is certifying labour or environmental standards – grew from 2,100 to over 13,000 during that period.

As proposed in chapter 2, an advanced expression of systemic consolidation is the emergence of meta-governance: institutional attempts by the system to regulate itself. This dissertation considers that multiple expressions of meta-governance are visible as part of the consolidation of the Sustainability programme. For instance, in 2002 a number of social and environmental standard-setting bodies, including the FSC, Faitrade International, SAI and others, created the International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance (ISEAL), a non-profit organisation that articulates the sectoral position of private certificatory organisations (ISEAL 2012). The emergence of this organisation can be seen as part of the consolidation of a new identity within the certification industry, distinct from that of other regulatory initiatives and from their national backgrounds. Additionally, it provides a superb example of the meta-governance within the field: in 2004 ISEAL launched a 'Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards', in other words, a standard for standard-setting. A year after this, ISO launched the ISO WG SR project to consensually define the key concepts, principles and issue-areas of social responsibility and sustainability initiatives in general, with ISEAL participating in the Working Group.

Moreover, there is evidence suggesting that the development of these case initiatives contributed to drive systemic consolidation forward. It was mentioned that between 2005 and 2010 the membership of the UN GC increased by almost 200%, while the number of public reports referring to GRI did so by around 2,000%. Murphy and Yates (2011) indicates that ISO's involvement in social responsibility consolidated organic links between standard-setting bodies and companies around the world that did not exist when initiatives such as the UN GC and SAI were launched. The ISO Conference celebrating the second anniversary of ISO 26000 in 2012 stated that a Google search on this standard generates currently over two million results (Lazarte 2012). Beyond their public recognition, the new initiatives consolidated links across social standardising initiatives. When the ISO WG SR was launched it moved to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the ILO, followed by one with the UN GC in November 2006 (ISO 2006), and one with the OECD in May 2008 (ISO 2008), three very different representatives of global governance. These MoUs confirmed the intention among these organisations to collaborate, engage in mutual consultation, and achieve normative

consistency in their frameworks (although they did not imply formal endorsement of the final standard). At the same time, standard-setting organisations started to participate in each other's processes. Not only the most relevant sustainability organisations participated as Liaison organisations in the ISO WG SR but for instance, the chairman of SAI became a member of GRI's Stakeholder Council (until 2007) and one of the directors of FSC is a member of the GRI's Board. Additionally, the initiatives started to highlight commonalities among each other, considering that they all represented different aspects of a common agenda. In 2007 the GRI and the UN GC published a common platform titled 'Creating a value platform for sustainability' pointing to the complementarities and synergies between the two projects in terms of goals and frameworks (UNGC 2007). In 2008, these two organisations launched a joint user guide with the Earth Charter, a set of environmentally-oriented principles launched in 2000 inspired in the Stockholm Brundtland Commission, the 1992 Earth Summit, and the 'Our Common Future' Report (Earth 2011). When the ISO 26000 document was concluded in 2010 both the GRI and UN GC rapidly published compatibility documents (GRI 2010; UNGC 2010a). At the same time, the final ISO 26000 document includes an extensive list of initiatives addressing some of its principles. This list, reproduced in this dissertation as Appendix B, includes intergovernmental frameworks, such as the UN GC, the OECD's principles and ETI, multi-stakeholder initiatives, such as the GRI and SAI, labour-corporate IFAs, and single-sector initiatives, such as those by the ICC and the Sullivan Principles.[15]

There are also some indications that ISO 26000 is gaining ground on the local level. During the last plenary meeting diverse representatives of national standardisation institutes stated their intention to align or create national norms based on the ISO norm (ISO 26000 Working Group, 2010, pers. comm., 14 May) with Danish government officials openly declaring that their goals was to replace its national directive with it (DBA 2010). A year after its publication, the European Commission mentioned the ISO 26000 guidance standard among the internationally recognised frameworks comprising the EU Strategy on Corporate Responsibility, alongside the UN GC, ILO Conventions, and OECD principles (EC 2012; EC 2011). In November 2012, an ISO official declared that at least sixty countries have adopted ISO 26000 and twenty more were considering doing so, though the exact meaning of 'adoption' in this statement could not be verified (Lazarte 2012).

A third expression of systemic consolidation is the transformation of roles in social standard-setting. In the last fifteen years private standard-setters have become accepted participants in international regulatory forums such as ISO and the ILO, trade union federations collaborate in the definition of private governance frameworks, and the UN system has adopted

[15] Ward (2011) indicates that this list generated some controversy inside the ISO WG SR as some participants saw it as de facto 'grand-fathering' of ISO over other standards, while UN GC representatives complained that it did not recognise the prominence that the UN initiative deserved.

typical Sustainability-oriented approaches based on co-regulation, multi-sectoral networks, standardised procedures and benchmarks. In 2006 the ILO launched its own CSR-In Focus Initiative connecting CSR with the principles of the 1977 Declaration of Multinational Enterprises, in 2008 it organised a combined conference on the matter with the OECD, and in 2009 it launched a specialised CSR Helpdesk (ILO 2009). Certain analysts noted that organisations such as the ILO and ISO act nowadays more as symbolic reference points rather than as regulators: they no longer create norms but facilitate convergence and collaboration by legitimising outcomes and procedures (Bartley and Smith 2008; Djelic and Sahlin-Andersson 2006). The latest version of the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises makes reference to the ILO's core labour standards (OECD 2011), and the report on the evolution of the OECD Guidelines since 2000 is titled 'Corporate Responsibility: Reinforcing a unique instrument' (OECD 2010). At the same time a marked Sustainability discourse pervades the latest ILO agenda: the main focus of its 'Fair Globalisation 2010-2015' campaign centres on issues such as employment promotion, skills development, sustainable enterprises and social dialogue, with barely any reference to industrial relations (ILO 2010). On June 2011 the UN Human Rights Council endorsed the UN 'Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights' proposed by UN Special Representative John Ruggie (UN 2011). These principles – known also as the Ruggie Principles – concluded the failed attempt by the UNCTAD started in the 1970s, proclaiming a code of conduct for states and corporations based on three dimensions: the state's duty to 'protect' human rights, the corporate responsibility to 'respect' human rights, and a number of judicial remedies. These remedies no longer rely exclusively on domestic legislation, but include non-state grievance mechanisms based on multi-stakeholder and industrial initiatives (Ibid). Lastly, providing one of the latest example of the recognition of standards initiatives in global governance, the International Trade Centre (ITC), a Geneva-based joint organisation of the UN and the WTO, has launched a market analysis tool called 'Standards Map' – in addition to four other tools covering Trade, Market Access, Investment and Trade Competitiveness – covering around 100 standard-based sustainability standards and audit tools over social, economic, environment and quality themes across the globe. The project is funded by the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Swiss Secretariat for Economic Affairs, and the European Commission's General Trade Directorate, and counts with partner organisations such as UNCTAD, UNIDO, FAO, and ISEAL (ITC 2013).

These developments can be understood as part of the autonomisation of social standard-setting as a governance system, on the basis of a displacement of state-based considerations by more specialised notions (Börzel and Risse 2002; Risse 2006). In this process, the Sustainability programme has colonised other issue-areas previously outside its normative reach. This has assumed two discursive forms. The first is a retrospective interpretation of previous social regulatory programmes under the programme of Sustainability. A public statement by the

Consumers International, the world association of consumer organisations, on ISO 26000 provides an illustrative example. Stating the importance of this standard as a tool to increase accountability between consumers and business, the Consumers International stated that ' ... [ISO 26000] is intended to add value and not to replace, existing inter-governmental agreements with relevance to Social Responsibility, such as the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and those adopted by the ILO' (Consumers International 2010). A similar phenomenon is observed in a recent study about the state of IFAs by the European Trade Union Confederation ETUC and endorsed by the EU. This study concludes that from a general point of view '...sustainable development encompasses all IFAs contents [...] hence moving beyond basic labour rights towards an expanded framework for the recognition of social and environmental rights' (SustainLabor 2010: 35). In these two cases, Human Rights, ILO Conventions and international labour agreements have not only been embedded in the Sustainability discourse but emerge as components of it as a broader normative framework. From this perspective the Sustainability programme is but the contemporary systematisation of labour conventions, human rights and CSR principles.

A second expression is the extension of the Sustainability master frame over new governance domains. This is reflected in Figure 5 in relation to the three case initiatives in particular, and in Figure 2 in relation to different social standardisation cleavages in general. Recent literature has identified the entry of sustainability perspectives into such diverse themes as agriculture and food production (Daviron and Vagneron 2010; Schouten and Glasbergen 2011), biofuels (Ackrill and Kay 2011), IT outsourcing (Babin and Nicholson 2011), Mining (Mudd 2007), Tourism (Bramwell and Bernard 2011), and Transportation (Humphreys and Humphreys 2011), among many others. Each of these examples deserves a separate analysis, but rapidly revising the involvement of the case studies initiatives in financial governance is particularly illustrative and serves as a final example of the current global trajectory of social standardisation.

Projects of 'socially responsible investment' (SRI) proliferated in the 1990s albeit the first SRI mutual fund – the Pax World Fund, mentioned previously in connection with CERES and the origins of GRI – was launched in 1971 (Diller 1999). But only in the 1990s, in the context of the growing financialisation of the global economy, the notion of linking financial performance with social and environmental considerations acquired public salience (Cohen 1996). In the last decade the notion of sustainable finance started to diversify from SRI to proposals of shareholder activism, standardised accounting practices, and enhanced environmental and social reporting (Soederberg 2010; Botzem and Quack 2005). By 1999 the concept acquired further recognition with the launch of the Dow Jones Sustainable Development Index. The OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises as well now combine references to ILO's Core Labour Standards with recommendations by the International

Organisation of Securities Commission (IOSCO), the body which internationally regulates stock markets (OECD 2011, OECD 2008). Simultaneously, a number of specialists have called for the generation of standards of eco-accounting which integrate ecological and economic considerations in business strategies, as well as for developing more stringent requirements for financial reporting on carbon footprint management (Boyd and Banzhaf 2007; Schaltegger and Burrit 2000). These considerations are by definition targeted by the GRI, UN GC and ISO 26000 proposals. Moreover, in 2006 the UN GC and UNEP conceived the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) – appropriately launched at the New York Stock Exchange – to promote sustainable practices among institutional investors such as pension funds and asset managers, counting by 2010 with around 700 signatories representing USD 20 Trillion in managed assets (UNGC 2010). In 2009 the UN GC launched a series of 'Sustainable Stock Exchanges' Conferences with the participation of the World Federation of Exchanges (Ibid). In another example of systemic consolidation and co-regulation, the GRI now also refers to the PRI, and has studied forms to tag public environmental and social information to the Extensive Business Reporting Language (XBRL), the electronic language used in the financial sector to standardise the transmission and retrieval of digital financial information (GRI 2012a). Moreover, in 2010 a new standard-setting initiative was created under the name of International Integrated Reporting Council (IIRC), with GRI's CEO sitting on its Board. The objective of the IIRC is 'to create a globally accepted Integrated Reporting Framework which brings together financial, environmental, social and governance information in a clear, concise, consistent and comparable format '[...] to meet the needs of a more sustainable, global economy' (IIRC 2012). The advisory Council of IIRC is composed of representatives of the largest accounting firms and corporations, members of the WBCSD, CERES, UN GC, the WWF and the WEF, and representatives from the French government, the World Bank, and UNCTAD. The first integrated reporting framework is expected to be published at the end of 2013.

CONCLUSION

This chapter provides an historical response to the first set of research questions inquiring about the global trajectory of social standardisation and the social forces underpinning it. This chapter has proposed that the consolidation of the Sustainability programme represents the latest phase of the consolidation of a growingly autonomous logic which transitioned through different programmes through the twentieth century, attempting to distinguish the governance of social standards from definitions and institutions centred on the nation-state. Three of these programmes were identified integrating different cleavages of social standardisation and configuring different institutions, roles and legitimate patterns of collective coordination.

In this regard, the Welfarist programme was shown to rely on a master frame where the labour category is one of the main pillars of social order. However, it was argued that this labour-based grammar became destabilised from two directions: politically, pulled towards the national with the erosion of labour internationalism, and functionally, towards the economy, calling for its de-politicisation and commoditisation. Nonetheless, certain principles underlying labour as a standardisation cleavage avoided this polarisation by being subsumed under the more overarching frame provided by human rights, which enabled a humanist treatment of labour standards, separated from both an economic logic and national definitions. In the Business & Trade programme social standards responded to the global expansion of trade, markets and corporate activity. This programme articulated previous social standardising notions such as fair trade and business philanthropy ignored by the Welfarist programme, but that reverberated with a globalising capitalist rationality. Thus, initiatives oriented by this programme showed less attachment to state-based considerations, supporting a distinction between the economic and the political system on both the international and state level. These cleavages, while not exclusive, reverberated with economic neoliberalism since the 1970s, as ideas of self-regulation and corporate governance displaced state-centred regimes, domestic law and international conventions. The last and ongoing programme, the Sustainability one, appeared by the mid-1990s and articulated most of these themes through a frame linking economic globalisation with universal human rights. Its standardising logic conceptually rejects crude neoliberal governance but also the exclusivity of labour as a social category, relying on more civil and humanist conceptions.

As advanced in chapter 2, each of these programmes can be understood as a reaction of the political system to the growing functional specialisation of the world, addressing developments within the world economy, science and technology, and the mass media. According to the conceptual scheme by Jessop (2012), the Welfarist programme thus attempted to re-couple the pace of socio-economic development to the capacity of centralised political decision-making, the Business & Trade programme follows a *laissez-faire* logic relying on the short term self-regulation by firms and markets, while the Sustainability programme inclines towards the compression of decision-making cycles by relying on fast-policy instruments such as standards, labels, and de-centred multi-sectoral governance initiatives. Furthermore, the three case study initiatives – the GRI, the UN GC and ISO SR WG – evidence the emergence of expressions of meta-governance in social standardisation. From such a perspective the top part of Figure 1 devised by Nadvi and Wältring (2004) and presented at the end of chapter 2, appears by the 2010s to be occupied not by a regime-like body that centralises authority and legitimacy, but by a loosely coordinated meta-governance system integrated on the basis of minimal but semantically inclusive principles. This characteristic enables a reduction of framework fragmentation, both discursively and institutionally.

It is against this global context that the next three chapters engage with the second set of research questions, and inquires about the trajectory of social standardisation in the national cases of Argentina and Brazil.

CHAPTER 4. LOCAL TRAJECTORIES OF SOCIAL STANDARDISATION: ARGENTINA AND BRAZIL

The trajectory so far analysed has centred on developments occurring in a quite Northern world: a world of institutional developments in the US and Europe, of Geneva-based international organisations, and liberal civil society and networks, of media and academics from developed countries. It is from the perspective of this Northern world that social standardisation has progressively been framed under the Sustainability programme. In this global trajectory the South is tacit: what applies for the North applies for the South. Moreover, the global South appears as pure deficit: a deficit in participation in standard-setting, a deficit in the level of social standards and regulation, a deficit in the role of civil actors in governance. In this manner the South becomes a spectator of Northern developments. This exclusion does not alter the validity of previous conclusions. Nonetheless, it does prevent observing the broader operation of social standardisation as a global process, and the manner in which the governance programmes resonate at the national level.

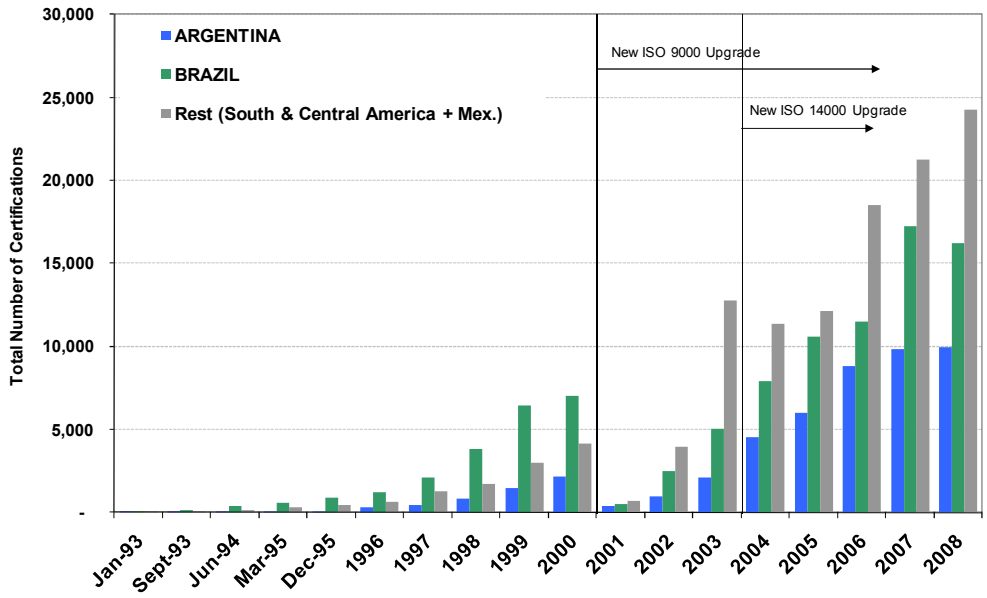
Therefore, the next three chapters focus on extending the global analysis developed until this point by scrutinising the involvement of actors from Argentina and Brazil in the three global case initiatives. Contrasting this involvement against the local political economic structures of these countries, the objective is to first understand how this global evolution is reflected in the context of (a part of) the global South. Following this it is possible to evaluate the local impact of the latest governance programme and initiatives not as a mere derivative of a top-down process but as the active result of the interaction of these global projects with the discourses and structures outlining the national context of each country. This chapter in particular provides the contemporary map of the local actors participating in the three case study initiatives, and performs a network analysis to outline the broader national patterns of participation. The chapter outlines a number of empirical findings and general conjectures that will be further substantiated in chapters 5 and 6. Fundamentally, this chapter demonstrates that by 2010 Argentine and Brazilian actors had assumed markedly different stances of participation in relation to the global case initiatives in particular, and the Sustainability programme in general. In the case of Brazil, the participation pattern is more consolidated, displaying an active involvement by relevant local civil society, corporate and political actors, and with numerous connections among them. In Argentina, the opposite is the case, with fragmented and dispersed engagement and the presence of peripheral and proxy actors in all instances of the participation network. These analyses serve as a framework for the following two chapters, where this

participation is unpacked in more historical and structural terms to consider the role of local political discourses, political economic structures, and models of state-society relations.

MAPPING LOCAL PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL STANDARD-SETTING

During the 2000s, the involvement of Argentina and Brazil in global initiatives of social standard-setting presents a number of similarities that cloud substantial differences. Among those similarities are that both countries have been among the most active subscribers to diverse global governance initiatives in the Latin American region. For example, both countries are among the top endorsers of ILO conventions and of the ten non-OECD countries that have signed the OECD Principles for Multinational Enterprises. By the end of the decade, they were also the leading countries in the region in terms of engagement with private standards: as revealed in Figure 8, both countries are currently the top holders of ISO 9000 and ISO 14001 certificates in Latin America and by 2012 Brazil had the highest number of SA 8000 certified facilities – and the sixth in the world – with almost a hundred (SAI 2011).

Figure 8: Number of Latin American certificates - ISO 9000 and ISO 14000 (1993-2008)

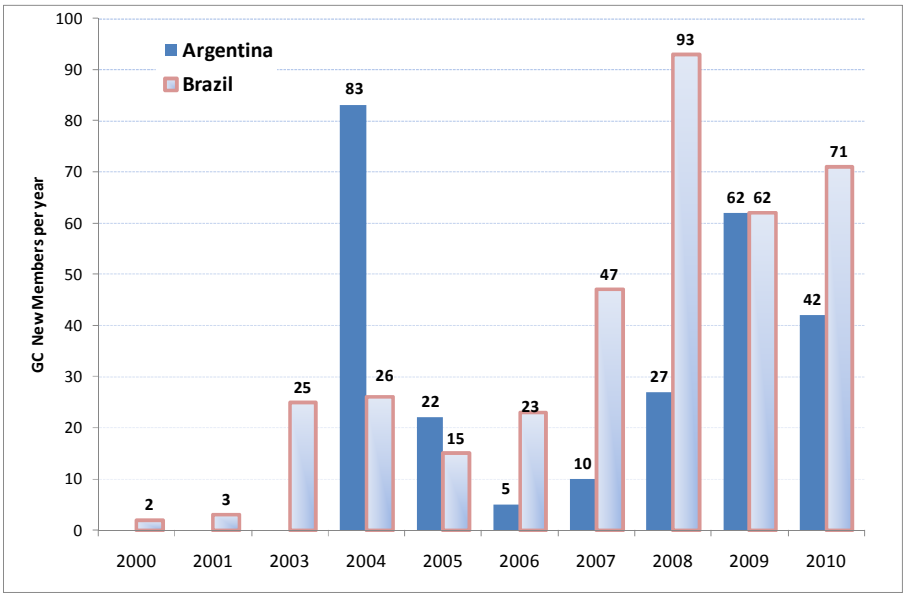


Source: ISO Annual Reports

At first glance, such behaviour is similar in relation to the case study initiatives, though with certain differences that cannot be explained at this point. The two countries were among the first to set up local networks after the UN Global Compact was launched in 1999: in December 2003 in Brazil and April 2004 in Argentina (UNGC 2011). By 2010 they were correspondingly the fourth and seventh countries in the world in terms of participants in the Compact, possessing the largest networks in Latin America: as can be seen in Figure 9 below,

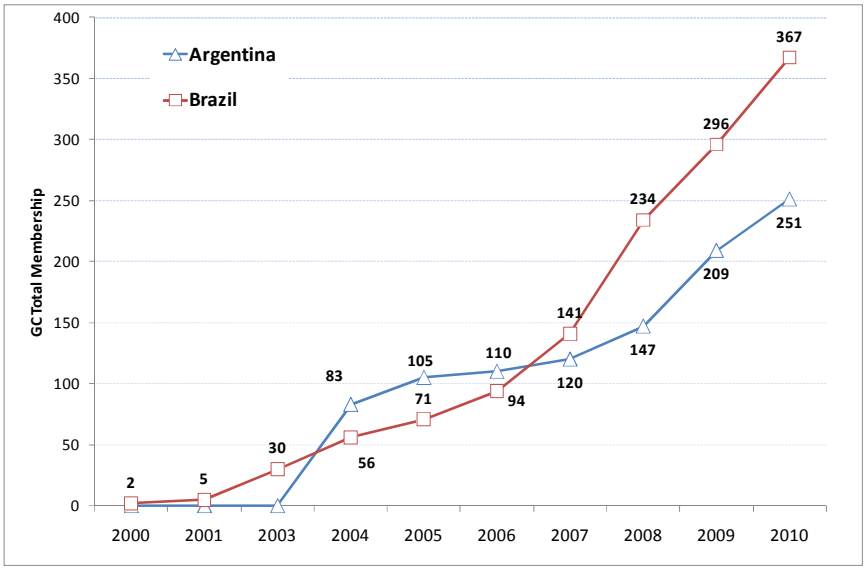
Brazil reached 367 subscribers following a constant rate of subscription against Argentina's 251, which followed a more discontinuous pattern. Nonetheless, as Figure 10 reveals, it was only in 2007 that the total number of Brazilian UN GC member organisations surpassed Argentine ones. This is relevant considering that Brazil's economy (and population) is approximately four times the size of Argentina's.[16]

Figure 9: UN GC number of subscribers per year - Argentina and Brazil (2000-2010)



Source: UN Global Compact

Figure 10: UN GC total Membership - Argentina and Brazil (2000-2010)

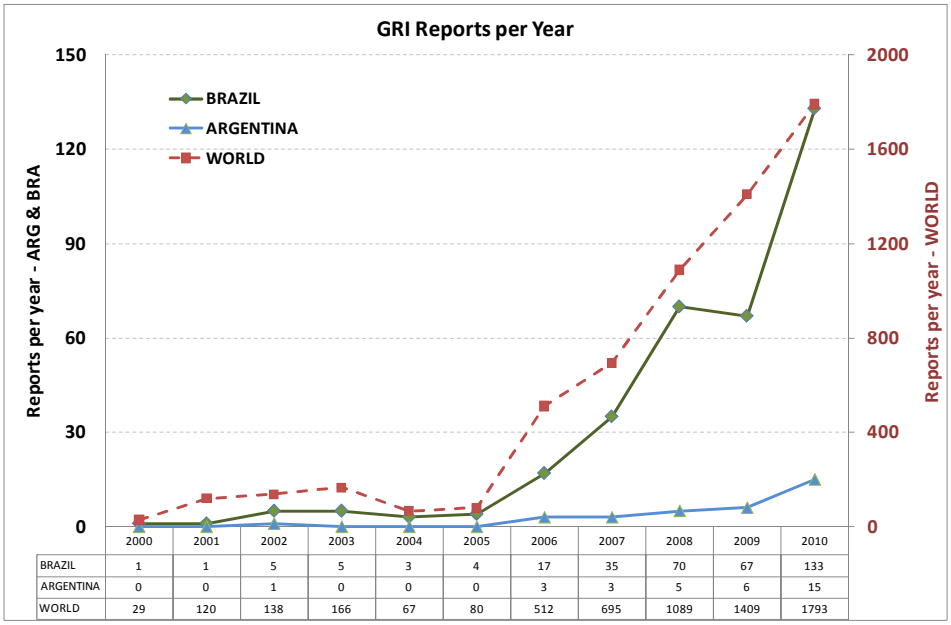


Source: UN Global Compact

[16] Brazil's income per capita surpassed Argentina's for the first time in 2008 in current terms, but remains 30% below when measured in PPP (Purchasing Power Parity). Source: UN Data / IMF Statistical Database.

Contrary to these positive trends in relation to the UN GC, the engagement with GRI guidelines differs substantially. As shown in Figure 11, until 2005 the overall number of worldwide users remained low, with a total of eighty firms using the guidelines, four in Brazil and none in Argentina. Following the launch of the G3 version in 2006 the number of companies using GRI guidelines rose sharply to reach around 1,800 firms worldwide by 2010. Figure 11 shows that Brazilian organisations mimicked this global trend, reaching 133 companies by that year. However, Argentina maintained an indifferent profile with barely any engagement at all with the initiative: a total of 6 firms in 2009, although this number doubled in 2010. The number of Brazilian users positioned Brazil as the third largest user country in the world by the end of the decade, behind the US and Spain but outperforming developed countries such as Sweden, Japan, Australia and the Netherlands. Argentina is second to Chile within Latin America (Ortas and Moneva 2011).

Figure 11: Number of GRI reports per year (2000-2010)



	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
BRAZIL	1	1	5	5	3	4	17	35	70	67	133
ARGENTINA	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	3	5	6	15
WORLD	29	120	138	166	67	80	512	695	1089	1409	1793

Source: GRI Report List

In relation to the most recent of the global case studies not much can be said at this point regarding local use, given that ISO 26000 is not a certifiable standard and no users' statistics are available. Nonetheless, some preliminary observations are possible regarding involvement in the ISO WG SR. For instance, Brazil and Argentina were among the 83 countries that participated in the Working Group in charge of developing the standard since the first meeting in 2005, sending representatives to all the Plenary Meetings. As was mentioned,

the Brazilian normalisation institute ABNT occupied the twinned chair directing the Working Group alongside its Swedish counterpart SIS. Two Brazilian nationals occupied two of the four highest positions in the standard-setting process as Chair and co-Secretary, while an Argentine academic was appointed co-Convenor of the Communication Task Group in charge of the overall communicational strategy for the ISO WG SR.

From the perspective of these general comments, the two countries appear to be the most active in the region in terms of engagement with this sort of initiatives, displaying a rather similar trajectory of engagement with recent global standard-setting projects. However, by applying a number of analytical techniques it becomes possible to show that their participation patterns in social standard-setting are quite different. These results are presented next.

MAPPING LOCAL ACTORS

The map of the Argentine and Brazilian actors participating in the three global standard-setting initiatives – in accordance with the definitions provided in chapter 1 – is presented in Figure 12 below. This chart classifies a total of 39 participants from Argentina and 95 from Brazil formally engaged with any of the three case study initiatives. According to the applied sectoral typology, in the case of Argentina 18 of the total 39 participants belong to the business sector (12 firms, 2 industry federations and 4 consultancies) and 15 are CSOs of diverse orientation (6 of which are civil business associations). In the case of Brazil, the business participation is even more pronounced in number, with 40 firms, 19 consultancies and 8 industry federations, and 19 CSOs, nine of which are business associations. Differences in the number and proportion of actors from labour, academia and government, and even among the orientation of CSOs, are marginal and relatively similar in terms of organisational profile.

Figure 12: Map of local participants in case study initiatives

ARGENTINA	Business[a]	Ind. Fed.	Consult.	Academ.	Unions	State	CSO							Total
							Bus. Assoc.	Civil Rights	Envirn.	Labour	Stand.	Consum.	Sustan.	
Global Compact	**11**	**2**	**1**	**2**			**3**	**1**					**1**	**21**
Board [b]														
Local Network [c]	11	2	1	2			3	1					1	21
GRI			**3**				**2**		**1**					**6**
Board									1					1
Org. Stakeholders			3				2							5
ISO 26000	**1**			**1**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**1**		**1**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**12**
Working Group				1										1
Experts [d]	1				1	1	1	1			1	1		7
Observers [d]						1				1	1		1	4
TOTAL	**12**	**2**	**4**	**3**	**1**	**2**	**6**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**2**	**39**

BRAZIL	Business[a]	Ind. Fed.	Consult.	Academ.	Unions	State	CSO							Total
							Bus. Assoc.	Civil Rights	Envirn.	Labour	Stand.	Consum.	Sustan.	
Global Compact	**22**	**6**	**1**	**2**			**3**							**34**
Board [b]	1						1							2
Local Network [c]	21	6	1	2			2							32
GRI	**15**	**2**	**16**		**1**	**2**	**5**	**1**	**1**				**2**	**45**
Governance Bodies	1					1								2
Org. Stakeholders	14	2	16		1	1	5	1	1				2	43
ISO 26000	**3**		**2**	**1**		**1**	**1**	**1**		**3**	**2**	**2**		**16**
Working Group	1										1			2
Experts [d]	1			1		1	1			1		2		7
Observers [d]	1		2					1		2	1			7
TOTAL	**40**	**8**	**19**	**3**	**1**	**3**	**9**	**2**	**1**	**3**	**2**	**2**	**2**	**95**

[a] Including state-owned firms

[b] Under this category are board members or members of technical and advisory committees

[c] Organisations participating in the direction of the local GC network

[d] Present either at Copenhagen 2010, Quebec 2009 or Santiago 2008 ISO 26000 Plenary Forums

Source: the analyses are the author's / Data extracted from publicly available information:

GC: Official Website (http://www.unglobalcompact.org/AboutTheGC/The_Global_Compact_B GRI: www.globalreporting.org

Argentina Local Network (http://www.pactoglobal.org.ar/) *ISO26000: Participants lists in http://www.iso.org/sr_archives*

Brazil Local Network (http://www.pactoglobal.org.br/)

A deeper analysis of this data provides some relevant indications that already contrast with the global trajectory outlined in chapter 3, in particular in relation to the Sustainability programme. First, it reveals that business actors are dominant in the local networks: when civil business associations are grouped with private firms, consultancies and industry federations, the corporate sector accounts for around 60% of total Argentine involvement, and 80% of Brazilian one. No local labour or governmental actor from neither the two countries is involved in the governance structure of the UN GC, which, excluding a few academic organisations, is populated entirely by business-related actors. The presence of firms is more prominent and diversified in the Brazilian case; with over a dozen companies engaged with the UN GC and GRI, and numerous representatives attending ISO WG SR. However, in Argentina 11 out of 12 firms participated only in the UN GC. The remaining one attended the ISO WG SR only once, in the form of an executive from the electricity supplier EDENOR.

Second, the chart reveals that 6 Brazilian and 2 Argentine representatives participated in the higher instances of the global standard-setting initiatives, including the previously mentioned individuals co-chairing the ISO WG SR. Nonetheless, while the Brazilian representatives occupied positions at Board level, the two Argentine individuals are in more secondary roles as technical advisors. Third, in accordance with what was shown in Figure 11, the most visible divergence is found in the case of GRI, where Argentina has only 6 participants against Brazil's 44. Fourth, the ISO WG SR presents the more homogenous profile between the two countries, a profile resulting from the pre-defined constituencies in term of sector and number established imposed by ISO. Such apparent homogeneity in the ISO WG SR case shadows a number of significant differences, which are revealed by analysing more closely the attendance pattern to the plenary meetings. When attendance to the last three plenary meetings is unpacked, as done in Figure 13 below, it is possible to observe that nearly half of the Brazilian participants attended the three ISO events[17] – five experts and one observer – while less than a third of the Argentine did so, and in smaller numbers. In this latter case the attendants were from two sectors, one belonging to the Argentine Institute of Normalisation and Certification (IRAM), a quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisation that represents Argentina within ISO, and two from business. The business representatives – attending only two of the three events – belonged to CEADS, the Argentine Business Council for Sustainable Development and local chapter of the WBCSD, and to the previously mentioned firm EDENOR. Instead, the more cohesive and diverse Brazilian delegation, which included representatives of civil society, labour, government and industry, had half of its members attending the three events, against only a quarter from Argentina. This suggests that the

[17] This number includes a representative of the Ethos Institute of CSR, which attended the ISO WG SR as a Liaison organisation, not as part of the Brazilian delegation. The relevance of this organisation is explained in Chapter 5. The Ethos Institute was present in all ISO meeting as representative of the Latin American CSR Network, a loose association of CSR-oriented institutes, think tanks and consultancies.

Argentine participation in ISO WG SR was a priori more fragmented and sporadic than Brazilian one.

Figure 13: Attendance to last three ISO WG SR

	Once	Twice	Thrice	TOTAL
Argentina	**5**	**3**	**3**	**11**
WG			1	**1**
Experts	2	3	2	**7**
Observers	3			**3**
Brazil	**7**	**1**	**8**	**16**
WG			2	**2**
Experts	1	1	5	**7**
Observers	6		1	**7**
TOTAL	**12**	**4**	**11**	**27**

Source: Analysis based on ISO26000 attendance sheets, available on http://www.iso.org/wgsr.

The broader map in Figure 12 also reveals a number of country-specific characteristics within certain sectors. In the case of Brazil, two business-related sectors – industry federations and consultancies – have ample involvement in the case study initiatives in contrast with the Argentine case, where the latter group has barely any presence at all. Regarding industry federations Brazil also counts with the involvement of some of the main federations in the country, such as the powerful Industry Federation of São Paulo (FIESP), but also those of the states of Minas Gerais and Paraná. In the case of Argentina the major industrial representative in the country, the Argentine Industrial Union (UIA), is not present, and only the Argentine Banking Association (ABA) – grouping the foreign banks operating in Argentina – is part of the local network of the UN GC.

As commented previously, CSOs, academic institutes, trade unions and governmental agencies have limited and relatively similar level of involvement across the two countries. At this point, this limited participation only allows some general observation. In both countries almost half of the civil society presence is composed by civil business associations. Of the remaining sectors, trade unions are absent from the UN GC even when the main international labour bodies – the ILO and ITUC – have endorsed the initiative, and only a handful of labour actors participate in the other case initiatives. Nonetheless, a representative of one of the largest trade union federations of Brazil, Força Sindical (FS), is an organisational stakeholder of the GRI, while Brazilian labour was represented in the ISO WG SR via two labour think tanks, the Inter-Union Department of Statistics and Socio-economic Studies (DIEESE) and the Social Observatory Institute (IOS), both partially run and funded by the main trade union federations in the country (in particular the CUT). Argentina's single trade union federation, the influential General Confederation of Labour (CGT), attended the ISO WG SR in only one occasion of the

three instances considered. There was also a single presence as observer of an Argentine labour think tank called 'Intersindical', but this organisation was found to be composed by one individual and cannot be considered to represent a sectoral position.

NETWORK ANALYSES

The mapping of the actors presented in Figure 12 facilitates a number of observations regarding local participation. These observations suggest that local participants from these two countries are mostly business or business-oriented organisations, and that Brazil has a slightly higher profile in the global case study initiatives than Argentina, even when the latter is proportionally more diversified. Nonetheless, other observations somehow indicate that participation patterns are not so straightforward. For example, Brazilian involvement in the ISO WG SR seems more constant and multi-sectoral, and counts with trade union and civil society representatives within GRI, while Argentine non-corporate actors are absent from this initiative.

To unpack these observations this dissertation performs a network analysis which explores the linkages existing among participating actors with other relevant organisations, according to the methodology outlined in chapter 1. The network analysis adds further dimensions to the flat universe presented in Figure 12, evidencing cross-sectoral linkages, connections with international private governance bodies and international CSOs, and with local political parties and social movement organisations. Moreover, the network analysis facilitates the detection of sectoral and multi-sectoral clusters and of different modes of participation according to the number of linkages. This analysis results in two diagrams generated through the Cytoscape application, presented in Figure 14 for the Brazilian case and in Figure 15 for the Argentine one.

Figure 14: Brazilian participation network

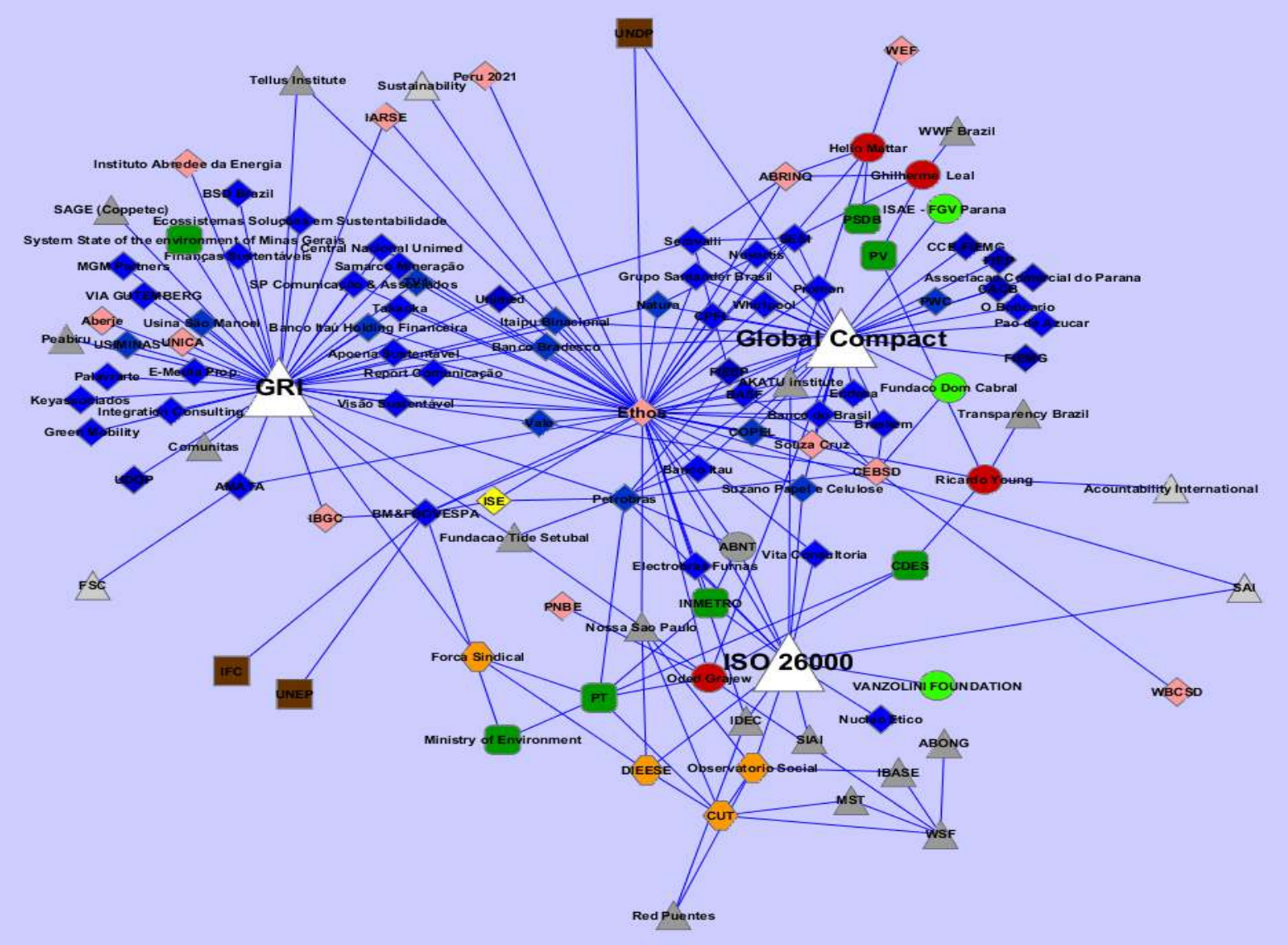
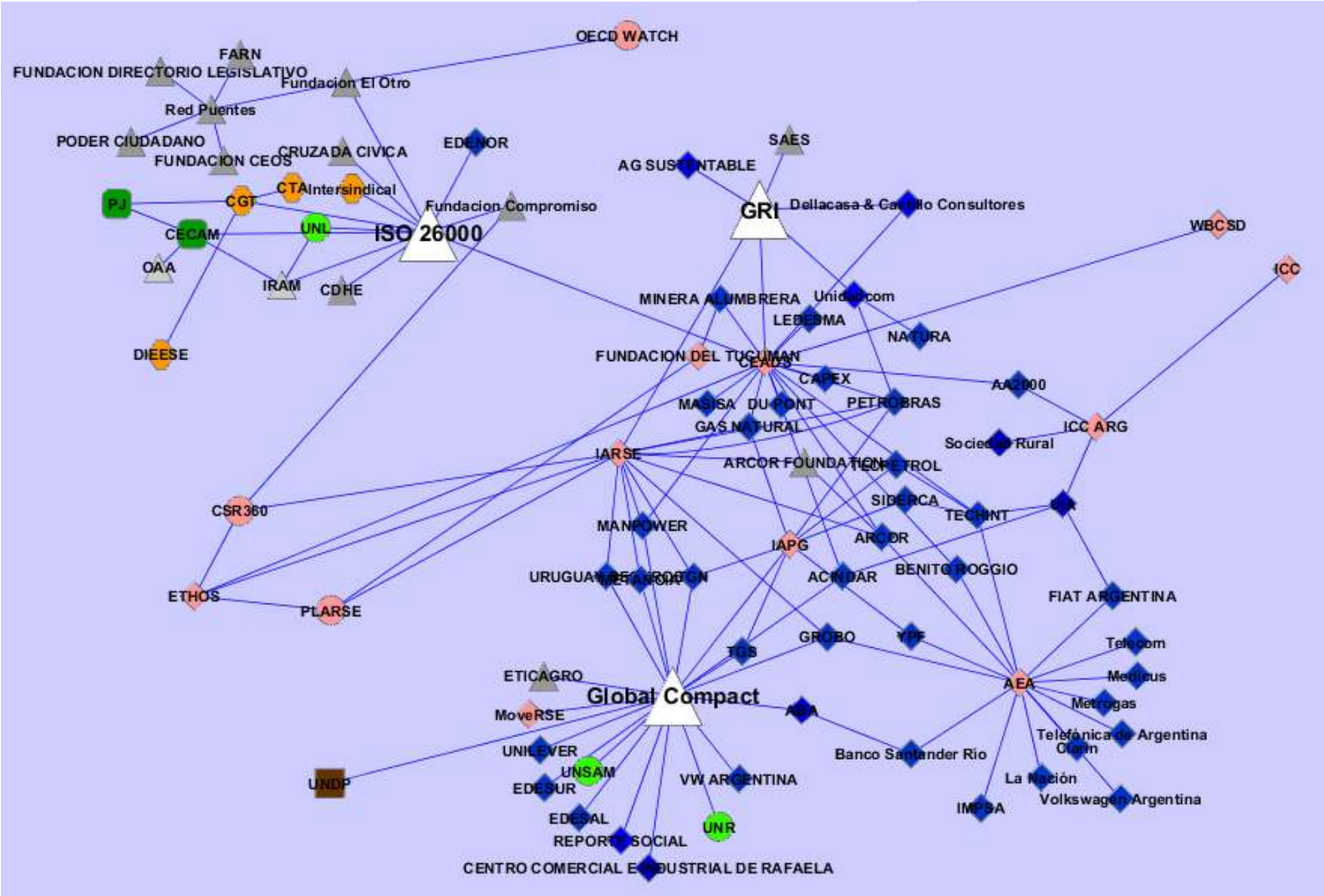


Figure 15: Argentine participation network



The two figures explicitly display quite different patterns of participation around the case study initiatives. The Brazilian network shows a more balanced and dense pattern, with connections across different sectors and the presence of a clear 'core' at its centre. The Argentine network presents substantially different features. Linkages are less numerous and the overall pattern is more fragmented: links are mostly among business-oriented actors (in blue), with a low level of inter-sectoral links. At the same time, there is no clear centre to the figure. The figure appears to be split between a UN GC/GRI axis, where the majority of network connections are found, and an ISO 26000 one, with fewer connections but more sectorally diversified. It is to be highlighted that there is a single link between the first axis and the latter one, with the rest of them being second level connections via a few foreign organisations.

Some more detailed features of the participation pattern of each country are provided next. These features highlight specific particularities that serve as a basis to develop the broader national trajectories of social standardisation in the next two chapters.

The Brazilian network

A detailed observation of the Brazilian network provides a number of preliminary premises regarding the Brazilian pattern of engagement. As anticipated, the main feature of the Brazilian network is its high degree of centralisation and density. Figure 14 clearly displays a network formed by different types of actors arranged in a concentric pattern where three layers are visible. The core is comprised by actors densely connected with each other as well as by those with direct connection with the three global case study initiatives. The second layer is composed by actors located in more secondary roles, which share second level connections with the core group and some first level involvement with one or two of the global initiatives. The third layer is formed by organisations which have only a single connection with the case initiatives and marginal or no other connection with any other actor.

The most striking element of the Brazilian figure is the position of the Ethos Institute of Corporate Social Responsibility (Ethos) at its core. Ethos is one of the two Brazilian organisations with repeated involvement in all three case initiatives alongside the partly state-owned oil giant Petrobras. This makes this position more outstanding given that while the latter is one of the largest companies in the world in terms of revenues and counts with over 80,000 employees, the former is a CSO with approximately 50 employees in a São Paulo office. More outstanding is that this organisation also concentrates most of the international connections with other standard-setting bodies such as SAI and Accountability International, as well as with the UNDP. This suggests a high level of recognition, while the amount of local linkages across

sectors and initiatives suggest an active liaising or coordinating role. It is also worth noticing that Ethos appears as one of the few foreign organisations visible in the Argentine network.

Around the Ethos Institute there is a secondary circle of mostly corporate actors. This circle is predominantly integrated by large Brazilian private and public corporations which have first level connections with the case study initiatives as well as connections with Ethos and among themselves. This circle includes some of the largest banks in the country, such as Itaú and Bradesco, the stock market BOVESPA, the personal care giant Natura, the paper pulp producer Suzano Paper, the mining firm Vale (the second largest in the world), the health provider Unimed, and mixed energy firms such as Petrobras, COPEL, Electrobras, and Itaipú Binational - the joint binational state company (Brazil and Paraguay) administering the Itaipú Dam, one of the largest hydroelectric plants in the world. Also in this group is FIESP, the main industry federation in the country.

The third more peripheral layer is located around the outer edge of the GRI and UN GC initiatives, composed by a myriad of companies, specialised consultancies, business associations, CSOs and academic centres. This layer can be separated into three groups. In the first group are firms with involvement in only one of the case study initiatives. Second, there are smaller organisations that generally provide support services to actors applying sustainability or CSR frameworks, but that do not directly participate in standard-setting, funding, or advocacy activities. This group represents the specialised 'service industry' in relation to social standards. The third group is formed by business associations and business-backed civil foundations, such as the Tide Setubal Foundation (linked with an influential industrial and banking family of Brazil), the children's rights ABRINQ Foundation, and the Brazilian Institute of Corporate Governance (IBGC), which associates the Board Directors of Brazilian firms.

There are two additional features of the Brazilian network that need highlighting. One is the presence of four individuals – Oded Grajew, Helio Mattar, Ricardo Young, and Ghilherme Leal – represented through red circles, providing inter-sectoral links among the business sector and civil society, but more importantly, with governmental and political party elements. As will be further explored, these individuals have direct connection with the Ethos Institute, the Brazilian Workers' Party (PT) and the Green Party (PV), as well as with corporations such as Natura, the WEF, and diverse international standard-setting organisations and civil society ones. The second is the sectoral diversity around ISO 26000. This diversity, attributed previously to ISO pre-defined constituencies, involves many high profile actors, in particular when contrasted with the members of the Argentine delegation. Among these actors are representatives of the Brazilian Ministry of Environment and the metrology institute INMETRO, of important NGOs such as IBASE, the Nossa São Paulo Network, and the consumer defence institute IDEC, organisations connected with the World Social Forum (WSF) and the Brazilian Association of

NGOs (ABONG), and a few labour actors mentioned before, such as DIEESE and IOS, linked with the trade confederations CUT and FS, the former the labour branch of the ruling party PT.

The Argentine network

The salient features of the Argentine network differ from those of Brazil. As advanced, the main character of the Argentine participation pattern is that the network does not display a clear centre, and is more fragmented and less dense than its Lusophone counterpart. The denser area is located between the GRI and the UN GC, where a group of large firms, including the local subsidiaries of Brazilian firms such as Petrobras and Natura, position themselves around five CSOs. Of these five, four are related with CSR and sustainability: the Argentine Institute of CSR (IARSE), the Tucumán Foundation, the Arcor Foundation, and CEADS. At the same time, the Argentine network does not involve any public-owned enterprises directly linked with the global case initiatives, and shows a greater component of foreign subsidiaries (albeit two TNCs of local capital have indirect involvement, the confectionary Arcor and the industrial holding Techint).

Two of the case initiatives – ISO 26000 and GRI – display less relevance in terms of participating actors. ISO 26000 has barely any connection with corporate actors of importance, only linked with the other two initiatives via the role of the business association CEADS. A similar situation is found in relation to GRI, connected to the corporate cluster indirectly via CEADS and the small CSR institute IARSE. This apparent indifference to two of the three case initiatives suggests a low level of involvement with the global programme as a whole. Second, it hints that this involvement is disarticulated, as the scarce institutional links reflect a low level of collaboration and institutionalisation. That different actors engage with different initiatives implies as well the absence of pre-defined sectoral positions or liaising organisations. The fact that no major industry federation occupies a relevant role somehow reinforces this assumption, in particular when contrasted with the case of Brazil where there are clear sectoral clusters. The absence of state-owned companies could be also suggesting poor interest from the government side.

At the same time, that the central area of the diagram is occupied by relatively peripheral organisations, both in size and institutional relevance, is indicative of an overall lack of interest by larger social actors regarding this type of governance projects. This observation is supported by the presence of non-business actors mostly around the ISO 26000 initiative, as shown in the upper-left quadrant of Figure 15. This could be for two reasons. First, it can be considered that their presence is only a product of the more inclusive ISO WG SR constituencies, and that only on this ground elements of Argentine organised labour, consumers

and CSOs gained access to this type of global initiative (or developed an interest in it). Secondly, it could also be indicating that the overall engagement of these non-corporate actors with the Sustainability programme is fairly recent, and logically, less organised. The low level of salience of the Sustainability programme in the country is suggested as well by the practical absence of links between the 'social reporting' cluster around the GRI and the ISO WG SR which chronologically preceded it, and by the fact that the few Argentine consultancies connected with GRI are not involved in ISO WG SR. Again, this differs from the case in Brazil where secondary actors and consultancies have multiple connections with both initiatives.

Finally, another relevant feature of the Argentine network is the scarce number of international connections, with the exception of a handful of CSR-oriented networks linking IARSE with the Ethos Institute and foreign CSR networks such as CSR360 and PLARSE, and El Otro Foundation – a very small CSR CSO – with OECD Watch. Moreover and further discussed in chapter 6, most international links are organisational in nature. This means that they respond to the local organisation being either a national chapter of a larger international body – such as the ICC, the WBCSD and the Argentine UNDP representative attending the local UN GC network – or a subsidiary of a foreign firm, such as Petrobras Argentina and Natura in the case of Brazil, and other firms such as Volkswagen, Santander Bank, Manpower, Dupont, and Unilever. This could indicate that contrary to Brazil, an important proportion of the connections shaping the Argentine participation pattern does not respond to endogenous interests of local actors for the Sustainability programme, but rather to imposed policy lines or organisational alignment. The causes behind this fragmentation are further developed in chapter 6.

CONCLUSION

This chapter analysed the general participation patterns of Brazilian and Argentine actors in the three global case study initiatives representing the Sustainability programme of social standardisation. The analyses mapped and classified the local actors with more active participation in the initiatives and based on this provided an initial characterisation of the situation in each country. The contrast of the network analyses with the descriptive statistics provided in Figure 12 and Figure 13 confirm that uni-dimensional descriptions are insufficient to analyse national particularities. Thus, what initially appeared as relatively similar participation patterns on the regional level was proven to actually comprise quite different arrangements and trajectories.

These particularities only begin to become evident when extra dimensions are considered, for example, inter-board roles by leaders, common membership in business

associations, and participation in governance networks. By including such variables, the participation pattern of Brazilian actors revealed the presence of a centralised core of organisations and a dense array of linkages among them, possessing diverse inter-sectoral contacts. This made it possible to identify outstanding organisations, in particular the Ethos Institute, but also the presence of several public-owned corporations, such as Petrobras. In the case of Argentina, the pattern proved fragmented, with few linkages among actors, no evident centrality and scarce inter-sectoral participation in two of the three initiatives. Both this centrality in the case of Brazil and the absence of it in Argentina provide valuable starting points to analyse the trajectory that led key actors to occupy (or avoid) such positions in their respective networks.

At the same time, the analyses of this chapter indicate a number of asymmetries between the global trajectory and that of the two national cases. Among the most visible is that global claim towards more inclusive and multi-sectoral standard-setting arrangements is only partially evidenced in the local networks, as the diversity of local CSOs in the global initiatives is quite low, much less when considering the involvement of trade unions. In both cases participation with social standard-setting appears to quite a corporate matter. At the same time, there are few indications suggesting direct involvement of local political actors, albeit in the Brazilian network a number of second level connections with political parties and government agencies are visible. However, these observations are relativised when unpacked in greater detail in the following chapters.

At this point the network diagrams are relevant because of what they suggest rather than because of what they explain. Even if more sophisticated numerical techniques to quantify network parameters were incorporated – measuring the level of centrality of the network or the density of linkages – this would have only confirmed what is evident in the plots but not added to what underlies them. Questions concerning the nature of the scattered Argentine pattern or the centralisation of the Brazilian one, the centrality of Brazilian public-owned companies, or the absence of certain sectoral representatives in Argentina, cannot be answered based on this sort of analytical methodology. Neither can the quality of the involvement of specific actors or the logic behind clusters of actors be further commented on, though some initial observations were proposed. This sort of questions calls for a broader qualitative examination of the trajectory of social standardisation in these two countries.

CHAPTER 5. BRAZIL'S PATH TO STANDARDISATION: FROM DEMOCRATISATION TO SOCIAL NEOLIBERALISM

This chapter demonstrates that the participation pattern displayed by Brazilian actors can be explained by the inclusivity of the Brazilian political system. This inclusivity facilitates the resonance of the Sustainability programme of social standardisation not only across governance-oriented and business actors but also with other sectors such as political parties and civil society. To explore the origins, development and latest expressions of this resonance the chapter follows a chronological narrative that examines the evolution of the political economic structures surrounding the actors that in time came to occupy the centre of the Brazilian participation network. The different phases of this joint co-evolution are summarised in the table below. This table contrasts the evolution of local and global political structures from the pre-1970s to the 2000s, and schematises the progressive convergence between national political structures, such as the role of state and type of state-society relations, and the local trajectory of social standardisation.

Figure 16: Brazil's comparative political chart

Period	Pre-1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s
Political Discourse	Development	Democratisation	Economic Liberalisation	Social Neoliberalism
State Role	Developmental Authoritarian	Developmental Authoritarian (weakening)	Neoliberal Supervision	Interventionist
State- Society Relations	Corporatist	Supervised / Exclusive	Pluralist / Complementary	Collaborative / Co-optational
Standardisation Programme	Civil Rights	Political Rights	CSR + Anti-neoliberalism	Sustainability + Public Policy

The origins of the central actors in the Brazilian network are found in the late 1970s. It was at this time that diverse individuals and organisations started to promote a political agenda advancing universal human and civil values as an alternative to the statist authoritarian model organising politics and society until then. However, the chart above shows that the trajectory of the social standardisation programme in Brazil followed a different path to the global one. Until the mid-1990s social standard-setting initiatives were framed from a locally-oriented perspective focused on the improvement of social and political rights. It was only at this point

that the local trajectory started to converge with the global one delineated in chapter 3, when CSR and Sustainability notions acquired greater salience in public opinion. However, its more political origins already makes the Brazilian trajectory differ from the global one, as its central promoters never fully embraced the Business & Trade programme. On the contrary, with the scaling down of the state's primacy and the transition to a more democratic and supervising role, the actors engaged with social standard-setting adopted a discourse that opposed market orthodoxy while accepting liberal civil society mechanisms and collaborative relations with the private sector. In the 2000s the formalisation of the global Sustainability programme resonated – in a counter-intuitive twist of events – with the social neoliberal political programme of the PT. On this evidence, the chapter argues that Brazilian participation reflects simultaneously the consolidation of the governance programme of social standardisation and the flexibility of national political institutions. As a result, the global/local divide around social standardisation became fluidly articulated rather than emerging as a barrier or a threat, supporting ample local participation and wide social engagement with the Sustainability programme.

THE PRE-1970S AND 1980S: DEMOCRATISATION AND POLITICAL RE-ORGANISATION

This first period reveals a central aspect of the trajectory of social standardisation in Brazil: the connections established during the democratic transition between the actors that originated the social responsibility movement, and those integrating the emergent popular political front around the PT. In order to understand these links, it is necessary to detail the political economic context previous to and during the democratic transition, which was officially completed in 1989. Since the mid-1970s Brazil underwent a period of increasing civil, economic and political openness as part of the controlled folding-back of the regime, after almost thirty years of uninterrupted military rule. With only eighteen years of pseudo-democratic government since the 1930s the Brazilian democratic transition is considered an exemplary case of 'transition from above', where the governing regime remains in control of the conditions of exit (Viola and Mainwaring 1984; O'Donnell 1988). The Brazilian military authorities had managed to subdue insurrectional guerrillas and achieved a solid control over the political system, enjoying even certain support from different sectors of society. At the same time, the regime profited from the period of economic prosperity started by the mid-1960s, having industrialised a country which until that time was practically an agrarian economy, with poor labour standards, limited civil society organisation, and possessing one of the highest inequalities in the world (Drake 1996; Bulmer-Thomas 2003). Even prior to this, the country was considered a model of state-led industrialisation. However, in the 1960s it also became a haven for foreign capital taking advantage of the immense reserve army of labour – Brazil had

at the time a population of approximately eighty million – abandoning rural society (Drake 1996; Bensusán and Von Bülow 1997; Skidmore 1999). Double-digit rates of economic growth between 1968 and 1973 – constituting 'the Brazilian Miracle' – rose the proportion of industrial workers from 9% of the active economic population to 16%, with union membership increasing five-fold (Drake 1996: 80). This also coincided with the peak of labour repression and human rights violations, though in levels of brutality much lower to those characterising the Argentine and Chilean dictatorships (Roniger and Sznajder 1999).

Given the major role the state had occupied in the social organisation of the country until that moment, Brazilian state-society relations were characterised by a wide acceptance of social asymmetries and a stratified citizenship based on personalistic relations among unequal actors (O'Donnell 1988). These traits were not only a consequence of authoritarian rule but of the long lasting effects of massive and late slavery during the imperial period (Brazil was the only monarchy among the Latin American republics, lasting from 1822 to 1888, the year when slavery was abolished), which interfered with the implantation of egalitarian and democratic ideals, an important difference with the Argentine republican tradition (Viola and Mainwaring 1984; Wirth 1970). The intersection between the authoritarian role of the state and subordinate social relations crystallised in the form of a far reaching corporatist system – 'the most full blown system of corporatism in Latin America" (Collier and Collier 2009: 186) – whereby the state organised and supervised the main societal groups and their relations, including the party system, industrial relations, and economic coordination. Both labour and corporate actors were separated into syndicates according to industrial sectors and anchored on different territorial levels, with the government holding the central ground (Skidmore 1999). The representative bodies of national industry such as the National Congress of Industry (CNI) and FIESP were creations of the state (as well as companies such as Petrobras, CSN and Embraer), and since their origins in the 1940s were supporters of the authoritarian corporatist model of state-led development (Ross Schneider 2004).

However, by the late 1970s the regime decided to gradually open the economic and political systems to address pressures existing within military ranks and other social sectors in a context of relative low risk. Added to this, the allied industrial sector had started pressuring to move away from a statist economy to a more liberal one in order to improve economic competitivity and enjoy the benefits of economies of scale and international markets (Viola and Mainwaring 1984). In this form, the Brazilian democratic transition was managed by actors that maintained elitist and traditionalist relations among themselves and only timidly supported popular involvement. This resulted in a coalition described by O'Donnell (1988: 299) as formed by 'everyone with almost everyone'. This 'almost' made punctual reference to the exclusion of the left-wing popular front, which had converged around the newly-created Workers' Party PT. At the same time, the democratic transition soon encountered the external pressures imposed by

economic liberalisation and the implementation of Washington Consensus policies – fiscal discipline, trade and financial liberalisation, fixed exchange rate, privatisation, and labour flexibilisation – to combat spiraling inflation and deteriorating socio-economic conditions (Williamson 1993). During the 1980s Brazil experienced a yearly average inflation rate of almost 780%, while Argentina enjoyed 680%. Through this decade Brazil will see its GDP per capita fall an average of 0,5% per year, while Argentina's would do so by 2% (Bulmer-Thomas 2003: 383). Consequently, the entry to democracy of both these countries was troublesome, as democratic political actors had to struggle to protect recently earned political and civil rights against the flexibilising demands of neoliberalism.

The political activation of social standardisation

This section analyses the emergence and consolidation of two domestic cleavages of social standardisation, linked with the agendas of two new social actors: the popular political front around the PT and a liberal group of young businessmen. These two cleavages and actors are central for understanding the evolution of the Brazilian trajectory until the 2000s and beyond. The popular front emerged in a context of relative absence of self-organised popular classes, as up to the 1960s the leading actor in social organisation has been the authoritarian developmental state (Keck 1992; Viola and Mainwaring 1984; O'Donnell 1988). Only with the relaxation of military authority did civil society sectors start to become independently organised, challenging the state corporatism embedded in Brazilian political institutions. Prior to this, the only actor allowed to call for the mobilisation of popular sectors was the Catholic Church, on the basis of its widely accepted moral authority and the activism of left-wing Catholic ideology under Latin American Liberation theology (Houtzager 2001; Viola and Mainwaring 1984). Represented in the country by the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops (CNBB) – an organisation that will reappear throughout the Brazilian trajectory of social standardisation – the Church had major influence in the formation of two social movements at the centre of the progressive democratic front: the rural movement and the new labour movement.

The connection among the rural movement, the urban labour movement, the Church and civil society became evident in mass civil campaigns for agrarian reform occurring in the early 1980s. The campaign was led by the CNBB accompanied by federations of agricultural workers, the Pastoral Land Commission, the Missionary Indigenous Council, the Brazilian Institute of Social and Economic Analyses (IBASE), and since 1984, the Movement of Landless Workers (MST). The creation of IBASE must be noted as this organisation will be also active in the local social standard-setting movement from the 1990s onwards. Considered one of the first

modern think tanks in Brazil, IBASE centred at the time on the promotion of democracy and agrarian questions, and on the training of new civil actors in political analyses, receiving support from Christian organisation such as Caritas and the CNBB (IBASE 2013). It was created in 1981 by Herbert José de Souza – locally known as 'Betinho' – a sociologist who returned to the country in 1979 after more than a decade in exile for opposing the 1964 military coup. Betinho was also a militant of the Catholic left and after his arrival contributed to the creation of other confessional civil organisations, such of the Institute for Religious Studies (ISER). For his role in the rural movement Betinho received in 1991 the UN Global 500 Award (UNEP 2011).

At the same time, labour had become increasingly contentious by the late 1970s, in particular in the ABC region of São Paulo where the abundance of highly-trained workers in strategic employment bred a new generation of trade union leaders.[18] Among these leaders were Lula da Silva, Olivio Dutra and others, whom started to confront the corporatist alliances of the labour bureaucracy and party politics, organising a series of massive strikes and sit-outs between 1978 and 1980. This new non-corporatist labour movement shaped what became known as the Brazilian '*novo sindicalismo*' (Collier and Collier 2009; Damico 1986). In 1980 these two sectors, including intellectuals from the organised left, clandestine Marxists, *Paulista* intelligentsia and politicians from the Brazilian Democratic Movement Party came together to create the PT (Ribeiro 2008; Keck 1992). The party posed at its central aim the representation of popular interests in the opening political debate – even though it was excluded from the first presidential elections of 1985 – the promotion of civil and labour liberties, the implementation of a plural and democratic system, and of a socialist economy with strong state intervention (PT 1979). In 1983 the PT stimulated the creation of the first non-corporatist labour federation, the Unified Workers Central (CUT). This labour federation became the labour backbone of the PT, which added to the rural movement, would earn the PT substantial popular support.[19] The CUT embodied a new form of social movement unionism which differed from the workerist and corporatist traditions present in European labour (Moody 1997), as it incorporated other civil society movements such as the MST, confessional groups, and liberal sectors such as middle class professionals, public workers and academics (Alves 2000; Scipes 1992). Nonetheless, the PT-CUT front will remain on the fringe of party politics through the 1980s, obtaining 3% of the votes in the 1986 legislative elections. In the coming years, the PT would adopt a stronger secular socialist discourse which would distance it from the liberal sectors and its confessional

[18] Named after the initial letter of its constituent cities - Santo André (A), São Bernardo do Campo (B) and São Caetano do Sul (C) - the ABC region is renowned for its concentration of foreign companies, mostly car-manufacturers, representing the core of Brazilian modern industry (Ribeiro 2008: 59).

[19] The CUT will become the largest trade union federation in the country, with over 60% of the affiliated workers, and the rural movement counted with 750,000 members by 1989 (Cardoso 2004; Houtzager 2001).

roots, in particular in light of the conservatism of the Catholic Church on the international level (Houtzager 2001).

Of less political relevance and public attention, was the emergence of a democratic corporate sector, which provides the second cleavage of social standardisation in Brazil. This corporate cleavage also proposed a detachment from the state-centred logic of corporativism on a vision where the role of business under democracy should extend beyond profit-making and interest representation. Such corporate cleavage had three main roots in Brazil. The first, and more traditional one, responds to the connection of business ethics with the Catholic creed, in particular given the widespread Catholicism among traditional elites. In this regard, the city of São Paulo was also the place where the Association of Christian Managers of Brazilian Companies (ADCE) was created in 1961, the local branch of the International Christian Union of Business Executives UNIAPAC mentioned in chapter 3 (Capellin and Giuliani 2004). By 1965 the ADCE had proclaimed a Charter of Principles establishing the social duties and responsibilities of Brazilian businessmen. In 1986 the ADCE created a foundation for business development, named FIDES, with the mission of 'humanising the firm and promoting its relationship with society' (Ibid: 3), but also with the intention of developing intellectual tools and links with organisations such as the CNBB and trade unions.

A second, less homogenous but increasingly relevant, component responded to the spread of North American managerial techniques and the enlarging presence of US and European firms in the country, and with this, the adoption of compatible academic formats and contents in business management education (Gantman 2010; Cardoso 1968). As part of this, the notion of 'corporate citizenship' started to be promoted by the American Chamber of Commerce AMCHAM – with offices in São Paulo since 1919 – granting since 1982 a 'Company in the Community' Award to private initiatives stimulating social action in health, education, ecology and community participation (Capellin and Giuliani 2004). This stream favoured a professionalised approach to business ethics which avoided engagement with political actors or issues.

The third and most important component of this corporate cleavage responded to a new position within a sector of Brazilian business challenging the conservative views maintained by Brazilian industrial syndicates. This democratic element within the local business sector has been largely overlooked in Brazilian democratisation literature, but is fundamental to understand the local trajectory of social standardisation. This is because it is directly connected with the origins of the Ethos Institute, singled out as the central actor in the Brazilian standard-setting network shown in chapter 4. The origins of this corporate group are also found in the industrialised environment of São Paulo, where the new labour movement and the PT came from. In this context, a group of young Brazilian businessmen and entrepreneurs voiced their opposition to the corporatist practices and undemocratic leadership of FIESP and the CNI, and

their intent to establish dialogue with the emerging civil society and popular sectors participating in the democratic transition. It must be noted that at the time FIESP considered that the first sit-outs organised by Lula da Silva's labour movement should have been repressed with force, though given the unforeseen level of social turmoil it later recommended moderation and bargaining (Bianchi 2001). In 1987 this new corporate group became organised under an alternative organisation called 'Pensamento Nacional das Bases Empresariais' (PNBE), which translates awkwardly as 'National Business Thought' (Ibid). The new organisation promoted a vision of business where the sector could not remain indifferent to the political and social issues affecting Brazilian society, and combined calls for the liberalisation of the economy with the enhancement of democratic practices, social bargaining, and a fairer distribution of rent. FIESP reacted strongly to this challenge to its authority expelling from its directorship all active members of the PNBE. This included Oded Grajew, one the founders of the organisation – who occupied the position of Adjunct Director of the Department of Social Expansion – and a number of others leaders of different business associations and corporations (PNBE 2013).

The relevance of the PNBE in the Brazilian trajectory of social standardisation has two aspects that require highlighting. First, it was the first business organisation to be created exclusively to represent a corporate stance in relation to the democratisation process: a stance that considered business a fundamental civil and a political actor with shared societal duties and responsibilities. The PNBE promoted a universalist vision on human rights and civil participation – its Charter of Principles refers to notions such as democracy, free market, citizenship, social bargaining, diversity, and the defence of human patrimony (Ibid) – and criticised previous authoritarian and corporatist traditions. It also extended this vision to the region: one of the founders of the group published an article in 1989 in the business journal *Gazeta Mercantil,* the most widely known business journal in the country, pointing to the lack of ethical values among the political and business elites of Latin America, the absence of democratic participation in political decision-making, the high levels of social exclusion and inequality, and the detrimental advance of financial capital (Bianchi 2001: 137).

Second, the PNBE promoted a liberal alternative to a state-led model of society: it considered that business needed to collaborate with other social sectors as well as promote the organisation of civil society in general, similarly to the pro-social movement vision advanced by the PT and CUT. The PNBE availed the establishment of relations with trade unions: Grajew claims to be the first businessman to have set foot in the premises of the CUT in São Pablo (Brum 2005) and among the first to approach Lula da Silva in the early 1980s (Grajew 2005). This was at a time when the position of the main industrial federations was of rejection and deep distrust for the PT, with the leader of FIESP affirming that 'if Lula wins [the 1989 presidential elections], 800,000 businessmen will leave the country' (Costa 2002). On the civil society side, Grajew rose to prominence as owner of Grow Jogos, one of the most successful Brazilian toy

factories, and for occupying the chairmanship of the Chamber of Toy Manufacturers ABRINQ. It was within ABRINQ that he developed the idea of extending corporate action beyond philanthropy to engage with the active promotion of political rights and social issues. ABRINQ was among the first corporate groups in Brazil to unilaterally ban child labour in their activities. In 1989, with the support of UNICEF and the Kellogg Foundation, Grajew created the ABRINQ Foundation, a business-backed NGO exclusively dedicated to promote the defence of children's rights (Raufflet and Gurgel do Amaral 2007). The business-backed model of civil society used in the ABRINQ Foundation will be promoted through the 1990s by diverse PNBE members.

In this sense the PNBE shared fundamental social premises with the popular sector, in particular regarding the promotion of political liberties and the improvement of civil rights and labour conditions. Moreover, though not necessarily agreeing with the socialist ideals of the PT and other radical groups, the PNBE also shared their opposition to economic neoliberalism. These common programmatic stances would facilitate communication between the progressive sectors of business, civil society and political groups in the following decade. It is in this next period that these communications evolved from informal linkages to more institutionalised arrangements. Some of these arrangements will remain oriented inwardly, to the local political system, while others will progressively connect with global discourses and programmes of social standardisation.

THE 1990S: LIBERALISATION AND CIVIL CONSOLIDATION

It was previously mentioned that the consolidation of democracy coincided with a period of economic instability, with growth levels in Latin America during the 1990s being half the ones of the 1960s (Stiglitz 2004). This forced the initial democratic administrations to face deteriorating social conditions, and incentivised them to implement reforms and stabilisation programmes based on neoliberal policies that deepened market de-regulation and eroded labour protections (Cook 2004; Cook 2002). This resulted in a paradoxical situation where Latin American nations – coming out of a period of repression – were simultaneously among the countries with the highest ratification rates of ILO conventions and responsible for 52% of the global number of complaints regarding freedom of association and collective bargaining (ILO 2002). In this period both Brazil and many countries in the region witnessed the metamorphosis of the state's role into a liberal supervising position, from where it coordinated the re-organisation of the economy and bargained with different social actors without subordinating them. This new role of the state altered the relation with and among societal actors, which started to accommodate to a liberalised political environment.

The neoliberalisation process was accompanied by massive privatisations; in the case of Brazil the largest in the world according to the revenues of the firms involved (Pinheiro 2002). However, the link between state and business proved robust. Neither the strong national character of the business sector nor the social acceptance for still significant state involvement in the economy was altered. Moreover, contrary to the Argentine case, privatisation in Brazil was gradual. It was regulated by the Brazilian Development Bank (BNDES) on the basis of a consensus across the political spectrum against the 'de-nationalisation' of the economy. This resulted in one of the few cases of privatisation where foreign capital played a minor role, as the protection of certain economic sectors was considered of strategic importance for the state (Pinheiro 2002; Iazzetta 1996). Thus, the Brazilian state not only retained control over certain industries, as was the case of energy, oil, banks, and airports, but large business groups remained in Brazilian hands, characterised by traditional family ownership structures.

At the same time, the abandonment of import-substituting industrialisation (ISI) policies led to the outward expansion of Brazilian corporations. With the signing of MERCOSUR in 1991 the presence of Brazilian firms in the region augmented dramatically. By 1996 Brazil had 900 companies operating in foreign markets, at the time the only developing country with such amount behind South Korea (Gouvea Neto 1998: 591). This expansion allowed organised business to raise its political profile. In May 1995 the main industry confederation CNI organised the first joint seminar between businessmen and politicians to discuss paths to augment the economic competitivity of the country (Mancuso 2007). It was also in this context that the PT started the moderation process that would eventually lead it to power in the following decade (Ribeiro 2008; Hunter 2007; Samuels 2004). As it gained more governmental experience – obtaining seats in the Congress and the governorships of key states (Gonçalves Couto 1994; Macaulay 1996) – the PT started to adopt a more 'pragmatic' stance to politics and shed its radical character. Gradually, the party came to acknowledge that a large proportion of Brazilian society favoured free market and considered foreign firms and investment as beneficial for development. At the same time, the need to stabilise the economy limited the applicability of strategies aiming for radical change (Hunter 2007). The moderation of the PT would accentuate after the electoral defeat of Da Silva in the 1998 presidential elections. From then onwards the party would focus on strategies aimed at the pursuit of office rather than the transformation of the political economic system (Rollemberg Mollo and Saad-Filho 2006; Samuels 2004), even when maintaining a socially-oriented political agenda based on poverty reduction, hunger eradication, and fostering equity and job creation (Bittar 2003; Souza 2001).

In addition to the programmatic moderation of the PT, the labour movement was weakened by the overarching context of economic crisis and rising unemployment, the gradual ideological change in its leadership – more willing to bargain with business – and the actions of competing labour federations. A new trade federation Força Sindical FS – indicated in chapter 4

to have a representative within GRI - was created in 1991 to oppose the statist and socialist orientation of the CUT. [20] Instead, the FS represented a pragmatic 'unionism of results' in a context of market competition, more similar to the approach of Anglo-American unions (Antunes 1991). In this context, the number of strikes decreased from around 800 in 1990 to below a 100 in 1997 (Alves 2000: 120). Opposition to neoliberalism generated certain collaborative instances between the national industrial sector and labour, as both groups opposed policies favouring low interest rates and low tariffs. The CNI and FIESP held a large national demonstration in Brasilia in 1996, and FIESP unanimously approved a general strike against unemployment organised by the CUT and FS (Boito 2007). This support did not imply any form of alliance – FIESP kept lobbying for the reduction of labour protections and wages – but facilitated the alignment of a disaffected sector of business and the middle classes behind the socially-oriented and protectionist project of the PT.

The 1990s was also the decade when CSOs mushroomed in Brazil, not only as a result of a more liberal political environment but due to the input of funds from international donors which saw them as honest and transparent brokers for channelling developmental and democratic-stabilisation programmes. Foreign contributions compensated the scarce resources provided by local agencies: during the nineties only 15% of the funds of civil society came from the Brazilian state (19% in Argentina), compared with a world average of 40% (Friedman and Hochstetler 2002). A clear statistic of the short life of organised civil society is that only 16% of the CSOs in operation by 2002 were active before 1980 (Koslinski and Reis 2009: 717). Nonetheless, the model of civil society that consolidated under democracy was different from the professionalised bureaucratic one common in developed countries. This model was described by Brazilian civil society activists as 'grassroots associativism' given the dominant presence of small and medium-sized local associations (ABONG, 2011, pers. comm., 21 September). This arrangement was promoted by the government, with the administration of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso (known in Latin America as 'FHC') actively supporting a collaborative liberal model where small CSOs operated as denouncers of the gaps left by the state in social matters and as proponents of potential solutions (Vergara and Ferreira 2010; Vernengo 2007). Because of this, and with some limited exceptions such as IBASE, large bureaucratic CSOs in Brazil remain relative rare and only in 1991 a representative body for civil society was founded, the Association of Brazilian NGOs (ABONG) (ABONG 2013).

[20] It is relevant to note that the Brazilian labour system consists of multiple trade union federations competing for power and membership. By 2007 Brazil was estimated to possess 11,000 labour unions, over 280 federations, and 19 national confederations (Cardoso and Gindin 2009). This is a consequence of the *'unicidade'* principle, set in the 1930s by the military regime to weaken labour organisation. According to this principle only one union can exist per industry or profession in a given territorial jurisdiction, which the municipal level at its basis. Furthermore, only in 2008 trade union federations were recognised by Brazilian law: previously only unions at municipal level were official, even though in practice federations already participated in collective bargaining.

Overall, the 1990s were characterised by a more independent positioning of different societal sectors in relation to the state, and the emergence of some collaborative relations moving away from the hierarchical corporativism prevailing until the 1980s. As part of this transition, social activism progressively gave way to more organised institutions which saw the state as a complement to their activities or as the setter of institutional rules, but not as an oppressive force. At the same time, market liberalisation forced social actors to operate in a more de-regulated normative environment, where economic rationality and pragmatism gained ground over political and ideological visions. It is in this context that actors promoting private standard-setting agendas started to consolidate organisationally, and to enter in contact with other sectors beyond business, thus providing the basis for the situation in the 2000s.

The rise of the social standard-setters

In this context the two cleavages of social standardisation previously analysed – the popular and the corporate – continued to intertwine on the basis of common opposition to neoliberalism and joint support for political and civil liberalism. However, the democratic consolidation of the 1990s also led to a sub-division between a moderate sector with a modernising and free market vision, and another embracing more left-wing and popular-oriented agendas. Interestingly, and another counter-intuitive aspect of the Brazilian trajectory of social standardisation, it would from within this latter sector, and not from the liberal one – expectedly more akin to the global Business & Trade programme – that the central actors of the Brazilian network will emerge. This becomes evident when tracing the evolution of the PNBE and some other organisations. The PNBE reached the end of the 1990s suffering from the previously mentioned polarisation. With the arrival of the social democratic party led by FHC to the presidency in 1995 many of the leaders of the PNBE entered public office or became advocates of the neoliberal agenda of the government, shifting the focus of the PNBE from establishing multi-sectoral contacts to collaborating with modernising reforms (Bianchi 2001). Within the corporate cleavage this resulted in two sub-cleavages: one private-oriented and specialised, reflective of an incipient Sustainability approach, and one oriented to party politics, along Welfarist lines.

Regarding the first sub-cleavage democratic consolidation and liberalisation supported the emergence of a number of business-oriented CSOs. These organisations shared a vision where the improvement of social standards should be complemented by private action. Thus, organisations such as PNBE, the ABRINQ Foundation and the Group of Institutes, Foundations

and Enterprises (GIFE),[21] promoted the abandonment of traditional approaches based on corporate charity and philanthropy for a more organised stance around modern business ethics, civil participation, lobby and social investment (Griesse 2007). This culminated with the foundation by Oded Grajew and other businessmen linked with the PNBE and ABRINQ of the Ethos Institute of CSR in 1998, focused exclusively in the promotion of CSR among Brazilian corporations.

In addition to these business initiatives, the importance of the private sector over social and environmental matters was noted by elements of civil society and labour. IBASE, which during the 1980s had focused on rural and democracy issues, started to pay attention to the relationship between corporations and social and environmental standards. In 1996 this organisation launched a public campaign demanding greater social commitment from Brazilian corporations (Griesse 2007). Moreover, before his death in 1997, IBASE's founder Herbert de Souza set the basis for a social reporting model – under the name of Social Balance, which included a certification process and an IBASE label – to encourage the voluntary publication of social audits by Brazilian firms. This project was supported by a number of industry chambers, the Christian business association FIDES, a number of universities, the journal Gazeta Mercantil, and the Association of Capital Markets and Investment Professionals. IBASE monitored this project until 2008 in partnership with diverse private and public companies and the Federation of Industry of Rio de Janeiro (FIRJAN) (Pandolfi and Heymann 2005).

The Brazilian trajectory of social reporting differs from the one described in the global chapter represented by GRI. A publication by IBASE reviewing 10 years of Social Balance places the origins of this agenda in a 1993 campaign against hunger, where IBASE, a number of firms, and organisations such as the ABRINQ Foundation and PNBE, agreed on the need for Brazilian companies to get involved in addressing urgent social matters. Moreover, it was IBASE that proposed that large state companies, such as Petrobras, Banco do Brasil, Furnas and Caixa, should be at the centre of the promotion of 'more effective social and environmental social action' (Torres and Mansur 2008: 18). On the same year that IBASE launched its social reporting guidelines, DIESSE – a prestigious labour think tank created in 1955 by the main trade union federations to generate statistics for the labour movement, with strong links with the PT and the CUT – created the Social Observatory Institute IOS, with the mission of generating research contributing 'to labour action, social dialogue and sustainable development' (IOS 2013). In both these cases there was a common view of the social role of business and of the civil legitimacy of mechanisms typical of the CSR movement. From the perspective of IBASE – a CSO which explicitly avoided private or political funding – social reporting was far from

[21] GIFE, officially founded in 1995 by 25 organisations, is a non-profit association run by corporate philanthropists and foundations, mostly founded by large companies or traditional entrepreneurial families, set to orient and promote private investment towards socially useful projects. By 2011 its membership expanded to 133 organisations investing around £700 Million a year (GIFE 2013).

being a corporate self-regulatory project: rather it was a manner to enhance civic control over firms and promote respect for human rights, the environment, and community aspects.

The second sub-cleavage of social standardisation established a bridge between the progressive sector of business and the political project of the PT. In this sense, Grajew and some of his associates played a double game: on the one side they promoted the CSR agenda and stimulated the creation of new corporate associations, on the other they were central players in the campaign to enhance corporate support for the PT, with Grajew himself leading Lula's presidential candidacy Business Committee in 1994 (Pomar 1995). Furthermore, in 1995 Grajew founded the Brazilian Business Association for Citizenship (CIVES), a CSO focused on democratic participation, labour rights and fiscal reform that grouped businessmen supporting the programme of the Workers' Party. In 1998 – the year when he co-created Ethos but signing as Coordinator-General of CIVES – Grajew published an article in one of the most widely read newspapers in the country suggestively titled 'The Candidate of Businessmen'. In this article he implicitly asked the business sector to support Lula's third presidential campaign, and to endorse the candidate committed to reducing social inequality, generating employment, lowering inflation, stimulating exports, and promoting partnerships between business and civil society (Grajew 1998). He wrote a similar piece in 2002, prior to Lula's final triumph, signing then as Director of the Ethos Institute (Grajew 2002).

CIVES provided a formal linkage between the progressive wing of business and the main progressive political party and its popular allies, a relation that is fundamental for explaining the centralisation and density of the Brazilian participation pattern in the 2000s. It is relevant to notice that there were not only ideological affinities among the civil actors involved in these initiatives, but personal connections. These connections were not always aligned but expressed the existence of common visions based on a shared past. For instance, in 1994 the founder of IBASE refused to endorse Lula's second candidacy to the presidency rejecting the PT's statist tendencies and preferring to stay committed to independent civil activism. The person who asked him personally for this endorsement was Oded Grajew, on the basis that given de Souza's history he should support Lula's project (Pandolfi and Heymann 2005: 215). In the 2000s, these personal relations will cement important political links between the government and diverse social sectors.

This section has provided fundamental insights regarding Brazil's trajectory of social standardisation and has shown that social standard-setting debates and organisations were present in Brazil previous to the expansion of the global initiatives reviewed in chapter 3. It also indicated that the logic behind these local initiatives differed from the one shaping the global programme of social standardisation, in particular in its Business & Trade variant. Thus, the Brazilian variant of social standardisation was shown to rely on ideological and institutional bridges between corporate, civil society and political actors. In this sense, the 1990s was the

period when one of the main particularities of the Brazilian trajectory of social standardisation became explicit: the sector of business promulgating ideas of CSR and private governance, a programme generally associated with de-regulation and neoliberalisation, was the same that formalised relations with the left-wing social movement project of the PT and other elements of civil society and labour. Expectedly, the vocabulary of social standard-setting in Brazil, including its CSR variant was from the start more politically loaded than its global counterpart. Ethos' Charter of principles establishes as its aim the construction of a just society, involving the inclusion of high ethical standards in corporate practices, the development of partnerships with community actors, and the active promotion of social development (Ethos 2013). This contrasts the liberal civic/ethical vision of North American notions of corporate citizenship, but also the loose environmentalism of the WBCSD, whose local branch in Brazil, the Brazilian Business Council for Sustainable Development (CEBDS), was established in 1997.[22]

However, through this decade these bridges were only partially institutionalised. New local standard-setting initiatives promoted mechanisms common to the CSR movement – civil monitoring, labelling, self-regulation, etc. – with limited coordination among each other and centred on corporate activities. It is only in the 2000s that they developed fluent linkages with both the global governance system and key local political actors.

THE 2000S: SOCIAL (NEO)LIBERALISM AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

The last decade under analysis comprises the central period in the institutionalisation of social standardisation in Brazil. This is the decade when the local actors in social standard-setting became progressively specialised and involved in many of the governance initiatives reviewed in chapter 3, and also when the link with local political institutions turned out more explicit. The consolidation of the global Sustainability programme coincided with a new domestic political environment in Brazil where the master frame of 'capitalism + human rights' reverberated with a governmental agenda that amalgamated economic neoliberalism, social standards and social movement orientation. This section develops the core argument posing that social standard-setting developed successfully in the country due to integrating two apparently antithetical elements: the liberal discourse of the Sustainability programme and the interventionist political discourse of a progressive PT administration. From a traditional perspective, the politicisation brought about by a more assertive government and its effect in state-society relations should have eroded pro-governance projects based on a liberal division of

[22] Showing a parallelism with the role of Grajew in the formation of the ABRINQ Foundation and the Ethos Institute, the businessman behind the WBCSD Stephan Schmidneiny also founded the AVINA Foundation, a CSO concerned with promoting developmental civil and business partnerships in Latin America (AVINA 2013).

roles among social actors. However, in Brazil this accentuated the pre-existing overlap in relation to social standard-setting, integrating the CSR cleavage with the political project of the Worker's Party.

To support this argument this last and extensive section separates the development of the Brazilian standard-setting network from that of the national political economic structures engulfing it. For clarity, this section inverts the narrative order followed until this point, where the domestic political environment was outlined first to be followed by the trajectory of standard-setting actors. Instead, this section examines the evolution of local actors and the connections supporting the network configuration shown in chapter 4, and then incorporates it as part of the wider evolution of national political circumstances. This inversion intends to emphasise the extent to which the Brazilian trajectory of social standardisation stretches further than what an enhanced analysis of the local network reveals.

Brazilian actors in social standard-setting

This first sub-section examines the 'successful' development of the Sustainability programme of social standardisation in Brazil. The inverted commas imply that this evaluation of success does not attach any value judgement, in particular when contrasted against a case where such development is not evidenced, as in Argentina. Rather it indicates a linkage between global and local trajectories of social standardisation which is not antagonistic or exclusive. The primary expression of this positive link is the rapid recognition by Brazilian social standard-setting actors of the global initiatives emerging in the 2000s. Rather than competing or contesting these initiatives, Brazilian actors established commonalities with the global frameworks and treated them as a global extension which legitimised their own agendas while promoting universal values. Simultaneously, the global initiatives engaged with Brazilian actors on the same synergic premise: legitimate local actors provided opportunities to ground their global projects in a country with major visibility.

The case of the Ethos Institute is the most emblematic example of this situation. Throughout the 2000s, its membership grew spectacularly: from 11 companies in 1998 to 1,391 by end of 2011, representing around a third of the country's GDP by 2004 and employing approximately 2 million people (Vieira 2009; Young 2004). The centrality of the Ethos Institute in the local participation network is also striking when quantified in higher detail: 18 out of the 22 Brazilian firms involved in the UN GC local network were members of Ethos, including two public companies, and 1 out of the 3 business associations. The situation among first level GRI participants is similar: 11 out of 15 firms, 5 out of 16 consultancies and 1 out of 2 trade federations. Furthermore, it will be shown that the Brazilian delegation attending the ISO WG

SR had also important first and second level connections with the Institute. The previous section also showed that the Ethos Institute preceded two of the three case study initiatives (the GRI was created but a year earlier), both institutionally and programmatically. Nonetheless, when the global initiatives acquired recognition they were rapidly understood as the globalisation of Ethos' objectives: making social and environmental standards a collaborative a matter between state(s), civil society and business (Ethos Institute, 2011, pers. comm., 11 November). Moreover, the Institute considered the framework of the UN GC as an opportunity for the social responsibility movement to contribute not only to local development but to global agendas framed by the UN Millennium goals; the universal progressive programme by definition (Veiga 2004).

Ethos played a central role in organising the first meetings to affiliate local corporations with the UN GC project in 2000 and 2001, and in launching the UN GC Brazilian network in 2003 in collaboration with USAID and local industry federations (PACTOGLOBAL 2013). When the local network was launched the first Brazilian companies and industry federations to subscribe were Ethos' members, in particular those organisations whose leaders had been directly involved in the PNBE, ABRINQ, CIVES and IBASE, such as Suzano Paper, Natura and the Itaú Bank, state-owned companies like Petrobras, Banco do Brasil and Caixa, and FIESP, the main representative of Brazilian industry. These organisations were shown to constitute the second ring orbiting Ethos in the Brazilian participation diagram in chapter 4. Moreover, Oded Grajew as co-founder and President of Ethos at the time was chosen to sit in the 22-person global Board of the UN GC as a civil society representative, along the CEO of Petrobras as representative of business.

Simultaneously, given Ethos' promotion of social reporting, even possessing its own set of indicators since 2000, it also developed institutional contacts with GRI. By 2005 over 600 companies reported using Ethos guidelines in Brazil, which had become the basis for other initiatives in the region (Louette 2007). Nonetheless, by this time Ethos acknowledged that its guidelines would benefit from integrating with global frameworks such as GRI, and identified commonalities with other international private standards such as SAI's SA 8000 and AccountAbility's AA 1000 (Ethos 2005). The same path was followed by IBASE, which already by 2001 was co-organising workshops with SAI and FIRJAN on the certification of working conditions, workers' rights and the use of the SA 8000 in Brazil (Cappellin and Giuliani 2008). This coincided with the moment GRI launched the G3 version of its guidelines, as mentioned in chapter 3, which Ethos and the prestigious FGV business school translated into Portuguese (Ethos 2006). By 2007 both Ethos and IBASE publicly recognised the rationality of global guidelines over national ones, having launched several compatibility documents. In 2008 IBASE discontinued its certification programme considering that other organisations were more capable of continuing this project more effectively (Torres and Mansur 2008). This

acknowledgment by the local social reporting organisations coincides with the jump in the number of Brazilian GRI users displayed in the corresponding graph in chapter 4.

A similar connection links the majority of the Brazilian delegation participating in ISO SR WG with the Ethos Institute, which attended as a Liaison organisation representing the Latin American CSR network (Ethos Institute, 2010, pers. comm., 18 May). However, previous to the launch of the ISO project, the Ethos Institute had lobbied alongside Petrobras both the national normalisation body ABNT and the metrology institute INMETRO for the development of a Brazilian social responsibility standard. This standard, called NBR 16001, was published in 2006 – four years before the ISO 26000 standard was finished – and it is the only of its kind in the region and one of the few worldwide (Ethos 2007). These two normalisation bodies participated in ISO SR WG: as was already mentioned the ABNT was selected to co-chair the entire enterprise and a representative of INMETRO attended as the government expert in the Brazilian delegation. Moreover, the President of the ISO SR WG, himself an expert in applying ISO standards in industry, is a manager of Suzano Pulp and Paper, whose Chairman sits in Ethos' Advisory Board. Suzano is the first Brazilian firm to have achieved ISO 14001 certification and the first cellulose manufacturer in the world to certify SA 8000 (Suzano Paper, 2011, pers. comm., 23 September). Furthermore, the business representation in ISO was occupied by executives of companies connected both with Ethos and the PNBE: one belonging to Natura until 2007, a company led until recently by one of the PNBE founding members (a point to be further expanded), and one from Petrobras until 2010. The same executive from Petrobras attending ISO WG SR also occupied a position within the GRI structure as an Organisational Stakeholder.

On the other side, the global recognition achieved by the Ethos Institute can be inferred from several pieces of evidence. For example, as president of Ethos Grajew claimed to have personally discussed with Kofi Anan the extension of the UN GC framework to UN suppliers and pension funds (Paget-Clarke 2004). In 2004 he criticised the position by the XI UNCTAD Conference on the basis that governments remained anchored in a vision where 'production and trade is the effective remedy to end with poverty and hunger' (proper of the Business & Trade programme of social standardisation), that did not consider issues of sustainable development (Cazzali 2004). Moreover, Ethos governing structure includes an International Advisory Group formed by influential personalities in the main international standard-setting organisations. Among them are Alice Tepper White, President of SAI; John Elkington, Director of the British-based SustainAbility; Allen White, from the Tellus Institute and founder of GRI; Ernst Ligteringen, Chairman of GRI; George Kell, Executive Director of the UN GC, and representatives of international organisations such as the UNDP and the World Bank. This Group also includes members from regional standard-setting and CSR networks such as the African Institute of Corporate Citizenship, the Latin American CSR network Forum Empresa,

and IARSE, as well as representatives from academic powerhouses such Harvard Business School (Ethos 2013a). Second, in 2007 the Ethos Institute was chosen to host the first national GRI office of the five in existence in the world. Such office coordinated the national working group drafting the pilot for the national annexes to be added to the GRI Guidelines (GRI 2013b). On December 2010 Ethos signed a MoU with GRI formalising its involvement in the revision of the new version of global guidelines to be published in 2013 (GRI 2010a). Furthermore, until 2010 within the 16-member Board of Directors of GRI there were two Brazilians linked with the Ethos Institute: Ricardo Young Silva, former Executive President of Ethos and PNBE member, and Roberto Waack, founder and CEO of AMATA, the Brazilian forestry company running one of the largest certified tropical forest management projects in the world. Waack is also an elected member of the International Board of the FSC, the most widely recognised timber and paper certification programme. Two directors of Ethos also sit in the Board of SAI, while another is co-Chairman of the WBCSD (Ethos 2013b).

Third, the Ethos Institute also took part in the joint creation of the Corporate Sustainability Index (ISE) of the São Paulo Stock Exchange BOVESPA in 2005, the first of its kind in Latin America. The index includes around three dozen companies considered to have high standards in relation to sustainability and social responsibility. ISE covers companies such as Natura, Suzano Paper, and Bradesco among others, most of them among the firms with repeated presence in the case study initiatives. ISE was developed and is monitored by a conglomerate of actors across the social spectrum, including international governance bodies. Among these actors are of course Ethos, the Brazilian Ministry of Environment, the IBCG, local financial and investment institutions, academic institutions such as FGV, and international organisations such as UNEP and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) (BOVESPA 2011). Again, ISE was created a year in advance to the UN GC Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI), however, once it was launched BOVESPA subscribed to the UN GC. Since then both indexes acknowledged their compatibility, and the ISE Committee rapidly stated its intention to align with the more general PRI (UNGC 2006).

While the standard-setting movement in Brazil converged around Ethos, the discourse of sustainability became increasingly adopted by other groups in society. Many non-corporate organisations were pointed to be part of the Brazilian network mapped in chapter 3. For example, participating in GRI's governing bodies there are two Brazilian governmental actors and four CSOs. The governmental actors are the Environmental Agency of the State of Minas Gerais, and Ricardo Henriques, an individual sitting in GRI's Governmental Advisory Group; the body advising national governments over GRI's standards.[23] Henriques is an economist linked with the Human Rights Secretary of the State of Rio de Janeiro, participating in the GRI

[23] This organ includes 13 members attached to the ministries of labour, trade, environment and foreign affairs, and organisations such as the UNDP, European Parliament and OECD (GRI 2013a).

on behalf of the Human Rights Minister of Brazil. This certainly indicates awareness by Brazilian authorities of the relevance of this initiative in relation to environmental and human rights issues. The civil society participants include the Peabiru Institute; an environmental NGO for the Amazonian region sponsored among others by Natura and Petrobras, the Tide Setubal Foundation; run by the founders of the Itaú Bank and one of the richest families of Brazil (member of Ethos and of GIFE), Comunitas; a NGO created by Dr. Ruth Cardoso (the wife of former President FHC), focusing on strengthening civil society, and SAGE-COPPETEC; a university-based institute oriented to the integration of technical, social and environmental solutions.

It was also mentioned that Brazilian labour had some participation in the global case study initiatives. This does not imply that Brazilian unionism embraced the Sustainability programme, but indicates the recognition of its master frame as covering labour issues. A major trade union federation takes part in GRI: since 2002 the National Secretary of Human Rights of Força Sindical is involved in GRI's Stakeholder council as a Latin American representative. At the same time, DIEESE and IOS were mentioned to have participated in ISO WG SR. In 2009 DIEESE coordinated a series of workshops at the regional level sponsored by the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (CSA-TUCA) and ITUC on the advances of the ISO 26000 project, trying to articulate a common labour position for the ISO 26000 Plenary Meetings. The minutes of these workshops confirm that Brazilian trade unions maintained a rather open and collaborative stance in relation to the ISO social standard – contrary to the scepticism or outright rejection shown by Argentine labour federations, to be explained in the next chapter – and an interest in debating the role labour could occupy in these governance initiatives. As part of this the CUT decided to create specific CSR departments (CSA 2011).

The participation of civil society representatives in the global case study initiatives indicates a high level of engagement with the agenda of social standard-setting. The civil society expert in the Brazilian ISO delegation actually did so as head of an Articulation Group of Brazilian NGOs (called GAO ISO 26000), a network purposely created in 2006 to coordinate a Brazil-wide civil society position in the ISO 26000 process. GAO documents enumerate seven essential points delineating the Brazilian civil society agenda in relation to ISO 26000: an ethical commitment with the environment and society, the promotion of global citizenship and democracy, the valorisation of social cooperation and solidarity, the valorisation of civil society autonomy, the involvement of affected parties, responsibility over the value chain, and the valorisation of transparency (GAO 2007). Interestingly, the person leading GAO also had a corporate background in standard-setting: he attended previous global meetings such as the Montreal Protocol Working Group and the Rio'92 Earth Summit as representative of the Brazilian Air Conditioning industry (Parlante 2006). Since 2003, he became a consultant

researcher for the Akatu Institute, a sustainable consumption CSO presided by Helio Mattar, co-founder of the PNBE and Ethos (Akatu 2011).

The same level of functional involvement is found in sectors of academia, in particular among business schools and corporate-oriented research institutes, such as FGV and the Dom Cabral Foundation. These organisations frequently collaborate with the Ethos Institute (FGV, 2011, pers. comm., 23 September), which claims to network over 400 institutions of higher education across the country and has its own academic centre, called UniEthos (Young 2004). As was mentioned in chapter 4, the presence of consultancies in the Brazilian network is also a strong indicator of the professionalisation achieved by the CSR and sustainability sector, as consultants provide support services to standard subscribers. In this sense, it is relevant to note that in the Brazilian case, 16 out of 19 consultancies participating in the case studies are clustered around the GRI, the only of the three case study initiatives that can be certified. This observation has to be contrasted with the opposite situation in Argentina, where there is a low use of GRI guidelines and correspondingly, low consultancy presence. The positive connection between the level of specialisation of standard-setting projects and consultancy was confirmed during interviews with social reporting agencies and companies implementing GRI (Report Social, 2011, pers. comm., 16 September; Manpower, 2011, pers. comm., 8 September; Los Grobo, 2011, pers. comm., 13 September).

Another supportive aspect for the Sustainability discourse is the spread of private-public instances of collaboration. Through the 2000s the businessmen around Ethos and PNBE continued promoting civil-corporate partnerships dealing with social questions through strategies typical of private standard-setting, such as conferences, training, platforms, guidelines social reporting, labelling, and public monitoring. Furthermore, they favoured the consolidation of a professionalised civil society over more political social movements, supporting a liberal perspective on the relationship between civil society and politics (Ethos Institute, 2011, pers. comm., 11 November). Ethos' governance committees include diverse civil society representatives belonging to organisations such as the Socio-Environmental Institute (ISA), the Avina Foundation, the University Network for Human Rights, the Afro-Brazilian Women Institute, the Brazilian Institute of Competition Ethics, and the Brazilian Institute of Employment and Labour Relations, alongside the President of FIESP, the Chairman of the Union of Brazilian Banks, and the attorney of the State of São Paulo (Ethos 2013b). Many any of the leaders of Ethos and the PNBE became also civil activists themselves. For instance Ricardo Young, in addition to occupying roles in GRI and the standard-setting organisation AccountAbility, co-founded the CSO Transparency Brazil. Eduardo Capobianco, another former PNBE member, is also a co-founder of this organisation and chairs a second CSO called the São Paulo Institute against Violence (Ibid). Two direct examples of the link between civil society and the Sustainability programme are found in CSOs that spin off from Ethos in the

2000s: the previously mentioned Akatu Institute for Sustainable Consumption, oriented to educate consumers in sustainable practices, and the Nossa São Paulo Network (NSP), an urban-based network. Both reproduce the model of the Ethos Institute, the PNBE and ABRINQ Foundation, funded and run by individuals connected with the recurrent group of private and state firms (NSP 2011). The NSP network was created in 2007 by Oded Grajew to enhance civil control over the public policies affecting this city on issues of sustainable development, participatory democracy, and civil ethics (NSP, 2011, pers. comm., 22 September). By 2011 the network had a membership of over 600 organisations belonging to all sectors of *Paulista* society, including firms such as Google and Nike, the trade federation FIESP, the range of Ethos-related organisations, the local branch of the CUT, and a myriad of foundations, community organisations and CSOs.

This evidence indicates that the Sustainability programme has become widely established in Brazil, not only among corporations, but also in civil society, labour and the government. Civil society representatives admitted that the group of progressive businessmen around Ethos had indeed contributed to open new areas of debate and introduce new themes, even when possessing a liberal and individualistic approach to the improvement of social standards (IDEC, 2011, pers. comm., 27 September; ISER, 2011, pers. comm., 19 September). For instance, the Director of the Institute for Defence of the Consumer (IDEC) synthesised their programmatic difference with the Akatu Institute as: '...while they [Akatu] aim to raise consciousness among individuals, to teach them to consume better, we try to use existing legal channels to enforce respect for existing rights, inform and support collective campaigns, and alter public policy' (IDEC, 2011, pers. comm., 27 September). Furthermore, the Ethos Institute presented at the two-day Conference commemorating the 20 years of ABONG, which this author attended in 2011. This civil society-wide conference confirmed an ample use of a Sustainability vocabulary within attendants, with the entire second day devoted to issues dealing with the (then) upcoming Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, potential paths to a more sustainable economy, and issues of social and environmental responsibility. As will be further examined, this recognition is possible because in Brazil the Sustainability master frame is susceptible of two different interpretations depending on the ideological position. The more liberal sector embodied by Ethos and its 'social businessmen' considers it part of the quest for a more human capitalism and inclusive collaboration to deal with social and environmental challenges. Instead, a more radical sector relies on the sustainability notion to highlight the contradictions of neoliberal capitalism, and/or capitalism at large, with ecological and social protections as well as with ideals of participatory democracy. Some additional implications of these two orientations are discussed in following sections.

This section has provided a substantial range of evidence supporting the argument that the dense and centralised participation of the Brazilian participation pattern responds both to the

high level of specialisation of the actors involved in the case study initiatives as well as to the public recognition enjoyed by the Sustainability programme. However, as previous sections have emphasised, social standardisation in Brazil co-evolved not only with global developments but with local political economic ones. The next section examines the specific local developments which facilitated the resonance of the Sustainability programme in the country during the 2000s and the rise of the Ethos and its affiliates. This final part comprises three sections. The first outlines the general political landscape of the 2000s, specifically the effects of the entry of PT to the presidency. The second explore the implications of this for the relations among state, civil society and business actors, regarding the Sustainability programme. The last section explores two situations not directly connected with the Brazilian network but illustrative of the extent to which Brazilian domestic political structures permeate the positioning of Brazilian actors in social standard-setting and governance.

The social neoliberalism of the PT

This section frames the previous expansion of social standardisation in Brazil against certain political economic developments, shaped to a large extent by the final triumph of the PT and Lula da Silva in the 2002 presidential elections. Moreover, it argues that the PT programme of government had major implications for the configuration assumed by the local standard-setting actors, and for the social acceptance of the Sustainability programme in Brazil. The agenda of the PT once in government has been the object of extensive studies. This dissertation focuses on the consequences of one general aspect: the successful combination of neoliberal economic policies with an inclusive social orientation. This political approach is considered to reflect the mutation of the PT from a programmatic party committed to labour, leftist and social-movements ideals, to a pragmatic party of government (Samuels 2006; Marques and Mendes 2006; Hunter 2007). Nonetheless, such approach led to both critics and supporters to recur to diverse denominations to capture this odd combination: from negative notions such as 'inverted hegemony' (De Oliveira 2006),[24] more moderate ones such as 'social liberal state' (Bianchi and Braga 2005) and 'left neoliberalism' (Morais and Saad-Filho 2005), to supportive views as a pragmatic 'third way' (Singer 2009). In any case this dual approach is recognised to have allowed the PT administration to harmonise sectors that traditionally had antagonised with each other: it was considered simultaneously a 'social movement' government and a 'business-friendly' one, a behaviour described during the ABONG Conference as 'schizophrenic' (ISER, 2011, pers. comm., 19 September). In was during this conference that a number of attendants

[24] Francisco de Oliveira is one of the co-founders of the PT, and one of the most resolute critics of its 'neoliberal' transformation. He and other three of the intellectual founders abandoned the PT and joined more left-wing parties.

characterised the PT governmental programme as 'social neoliberal', the term that this dissertation prefers.

The PT's social neoliberal approach responds to Lula's (two) administrations continuing orthodox economic policies – many of which were initiated during the Cardoso period and denounced by the PT when in opposition (Sola 2008; Paulani 2003) – to tranquilise investors and Western governments over the rise of a socialist trade union leader in Latin America's biggest economy (Rollemberg Mollo and Saad-Filho 2006). Lula's support for this economic approach was such that Sola (2008) claimed that he shielded neoliberal economists in the Finance Ministry and the Central Bank from the left-wing economists of his own party, while in 2010 De Oliveira, one of the co-founders of the PT, accused him of being more of a privateer than FHC, 'a privateer in a scale that Brazil never knew' (Machado 2010). On the other, the government enhanced social programmes of income distribution, poverty alleviation, job creation, and mass inclusion of the lower-classes through subsidised credit mechanisms, which obtained positive results and gained ample popular support. Only between 2003 and 2006 the gap between the richest and the poorest sector diminished by almost 10% in one of the most unequal countries in the world, while the number of people below the poverty line decreased by 20% (Cardoso and Gildin 2009; Lopez-Calva and Lustig 2009). These results cemented one of the most successful political careers of the decade: President Da Silva left after two presidencies with a record 84% of approval (Marinho 2010), with US President Obama referring to him as 'the most popular politician on Earth' (AP 2009).

The PT strengthened the participatory model of democracy it had promoted since the 1990s (Alvarez 1997; Friedman and Hochstetler 2002). This participatory orientation has significant importance in the Brazilian trajectory of social standardisation, in particular when contrasted with the Argentine case in chapter 6. The Brazilian political system is characterised by the existence of non-conventional, hybrid, spaces of communication between public and private actors, many of which had already been mentioned. This non-conventionality has been indicated by Avritzer (2006) to respond to the recent nature of republican institutions, and to the absence of previous mediating channels given the country's history of institutional development under military tutelage. The executive power actively promoted social participation in public forums, such as those around the Pluri-Annual Plans which establish public policy objectives for four-year periods. These forums gathered over 2,000 entities and 4,700 social actors throughout the country (Hochstetler 2008). Additionally, the Presidency sponsored dozens of national public policy conferences – 36 in its first term alone – which were made mandatory for policy-related ministries during Lula's second term (Avritzer 2010: 182). A director of a local NGO stated in this regard that: '...previously I could count with one hand the number of public meetings I was invited, but since 2003 I have lost track' (ISER, 2011, pers. comm., 19 September). This observation is backed by statistics: between 1941 and 2006 there a total of 141

National Conferences took place, more than half of them occurring since 2003 (Polis-Inesc 2011). Lula also created 11 permanent national consultation councils and reformed another nine. The most influential of them, and more scholarly scrutinised, is the Council of Economic and Social Development (CDES) where developmental policy is discussed between the office of the Presidency, eleven government representatives, and nine civil society ones; mostly from labour and business but also from indigenous or disabled associations (Hochstetler 2008; Doctor 2007; Mancuso 2007).

The inclusive character of the PT, combined with its bureaucratisation as a governing party, reinforced an already centralised model of state-society relations. A number of analysts casted a negative view of the spread of such model not only in Brazil but through the region, which they understood as the rebirth of populism (Panizza 2009; Hunter 2007; Castañeda 2006; Seligson 2007). In any case the close links between state, corporations, civil society, and labour became common in Brazilian politics in the 2000s, logically affecting the 'independence' of the actors involved in standard-setting. Thus, at the same time that the government promoted new institutional forms of participation, it co-opted the leaders of key social sectors, de-activating the most confronting cleavages within labour and civil society. At a given point the CUT confederation – the flagship of social movement unionism – had members leading nine ministries, 53 secretariats and thousands in second and third tier positions. The historical association between the CUT and the PT implied that the leadership of the labour and rural movements started to behave as governmental allies, and not so as a sectoral or popular representatives.[25] This affected a body like DIEESE, attendant to ISO WG SR as labour expert, which stopped being an independent labour organ to become the official source of policy-making data for the Brazilian Ministry of Labour. This ministry is responsible for nominating the body which evaluates participants for the national public councils (Acuña 2009). In 2005, following a series of corruption scandals affecting the PT, the CUT lost the control of the Ministry to a member of the more liberal federation FS, mentioned to have a representative within GRI. Other leaders of the labour movement, with a background of two decades of social and labour activism, received top positions in public-owned companies, pension funds, and state-run banks (De Oliveira 2006; Etchmendy and Collier 2007; Ribeiro 2008).[26]

The case of Petrobras is particularly archetypal of the entry of PT members into top administrative roles: given that the Brazilian state is the major stockholder in the firm, the government has the attribution of appointing the Chairman of the board and top executives.

[25] In 2011 a group of over 50 members and supporters left the MST claiming that it had become a hierarchical and bureaucratic organisation, completely subordinated to the federal government (VEJA 2011).

[26] Certain estimates counted 1,400 PT members in the federal government alone, over 200 in states', and nearly 900 in municipalities, with the opposition claiming figures of around 20.000 people in total (Ribeiro 2008: 277).

During the Lula administrations the two Chairmen of the Board were PT members: Guido Mantega, who is currently Finance Minister and former President of the BNDES, and between 2003 to 2005 Dilma Rousseff, former Minister of Energy and Chief of Staff (Reuters 2012). The same was the case with the last two CEOs: between 2003 and 2005 this position was occupied by José Eduardo Dutra, and from then until 2012, by Jose Gabrielli de Azevedo. Dutra was a union leader during the 1980s, and later president of the CUT. He was also state senator and between 2010 and 2012 president of the Workers' Party. Azevedo, until the election of Lula in 2003, was an academic economist and one of the co-founders of the Party (Moura 2007).

Co-optation also extended to social movement organisations and civil society. Marina Silva, a prominent rural and environmental activist of Catholic and indigenous extraction,[27] was appointed Minister of Environment, many long-term activists of the urban reform movement integrated the new Ministry of Cities, and the MST started to collaborate with the Ministry of Health and various governmental commissions, in particular during the first term (Alonso and Maciel 2010; Avritzer 2010; Carter 2010). Even the governmental representative attending the 2011 ABONG Conference, the Adviser to the Deputy Chief of Staff on state-civil Society relations, was Pedro Pontual, himself a former civil activist linked to educational reform and civil participation. In addition to this, another development brought civil society closer to the state and corporations: since the mid-2000s the sector has experienced a major financial crisis, a point emphatically noted during the ABONG Conference. This crisis was triggered by the withdrawal of international funds from the country due to the global financial crisis affecting donor countries and the de-prioritisation of Brazil as a destination for assistance, in light of its economic and political progress (Vergara and Ferreira 2010).

This situation contributed to blur the distinction between the liberal business-collaborative sector of civil society, embodied by the Ethos Institute and its associated organisations, and its opponents which reject contacts with corporations. However, the dependency of Brazilian CSOs on foreign donors had fostered a sector unprepared to generate its own resources (IDEC, 2011, pers. comm., 27 September). This financial crisis severely reduced the capacity of CSOs to operate, with an ABONG director stating that the majority of its members have been forced to cut staff or close doors (ISER, 2011, pers. comm., 19 September). In this situation Brazilian civil society had turned to the two remaining sources of funding available: the state and private business. The first option added financial dependence to political co-optation. The second implied the acceptance of corporate support, but with its expected restrictions. As a result there has been a growing professionalisation of the sector, and a moderation of radical agendas that were too controversial or conflicted with either public or

[27] Silva is a world-wide recognised activist, with a background associated with land and indigenous struggles, influenced by liberation theology of the Catholic Church, and the first rubber tapper to be elected to Brazil's Senate in 1994 (UN 2011b).

corporate interests. Interviews with business-backed CSOs like Ethos, Akatu and NSP have confirmed that these organisations have been unscathed by the crisis of the sector. Rather, given that their financial well-being depends on corporate performance - with higher revenues meaning higher private social investment– they consider the 2000s a prosperous decade, contrasting the concern of 'independent' CSOs (Ethos Institute, 2011, pers. comm., 11 November; NSP, 2011, pers. comm., 22 September). Other organisations, such as IBASE - which historically rejected state and corporate funds – decided to alter their funding policy. By 2011 IBASE's website not only mentioned as donors state-run firms such as Petrobras, Caixa Bank and the energy firm Furnas, but American Express (IBASE 2011). This situation has incentivised engagement with projects of CSR and private governance, as many CSOs started to adapt its repertoires to be able to compete for corporate funds. In turn, this raised the profile of certain themes, as companies not only prefer to deal with more professional organisations, but to finance issues with high visibility and low political risk (NSP, 2011, pers. comm., 22 September; GIFE, 2011, pers. comm., 28 September). Statistics generated by GIFE confirm that themes such as education, youth and culture constitute the preferred areas for corporate social investment, followed by environmental issues, traditionally more problematic (GIFE 2012). On the other end, themes like health, labour, and racial discrimination have a minimal presence. When inquiring about the Ethos Institute' participation in the mass mobilisations against corruption that flashed during 2011 (Arias 2011), a representative answered that they have purposely avoided doing so as these 'were not yet enough coordinated' (Ethos Institute, 2011, pers. comm., 11 November).

Lastly, a number of CSOs started lobbying the government for a permanent public funding system. This position crystallised in 2010 with the launch of a joint platform calling for a new regulatory model for civil society. The Central Committee behind the platform is integrated by civil organisations of different orientation, such as ABONG, the MST, the Latin American Church Council and Caritas Brazil, but also the Ethos Institute and GIFE. The goal is to create a transparent and competitive state system for the funding of civil society projects, one that replaces the centralising and client-based approach historically held by the Brazilian state towards civil society. As a counterpart, subscribing CSOs will commit to adopt good management and self-regulating practices (Plataformaosc 2011). Suggestively, such wording is strikingly similar to the vision of the corporate responsibility movement, and is hard to conceive their application by radical grassroots organisations.

The other main aspect shaping the Brazilian participation pattern is the enhanced links the PT established with the business sector, in particular with large economic groups. Contrary to what could have been expected from the ascent of a previous socialist labour party, Lula's administrations consolidated connections with the main industrial and financial groups, expanding to unimaginable lengths the corporate support once sought by CIVES and Grajew.

The relationship with the traditionally conservative industrial federations experienced by 2011 such a dramatic change that FIESP, the historical opponent of the PT, was hosting a permanent exposition around the figure of Lula in its headquarters in the famous Paulista Avenue.[28]

The involvement of business in Brazilian politics is not a recent phenomenon and extends beyond the Lula era (Ross Schneider 2009). The contact between business and political elites has been historically facilitated by the policy of ISI coupled with the family ownership structure still present in many of the largest Brazilian groups: for instance, firms such as the Itaú Bank, Natura, the engineering giant Odebrecht, the steel giant Gerdau, and Suzano Paper are all administered by families (INSPER, 2011, pers. comm., 21 September). But the inclusive approach adopted post-2003 cemented the PT's alliance with industrial and financial sectors. Similarly to labour and civil society, the PT included businessmen into the political machinery, appointing more to ministerial positions than the previous neoliberal Cardoso administration (Ross Schneider 2009). Lula's Vice-President during both terms was José Alencar, the owner of Coteminas, the biggest textile group in Brazil and an open supporter of neoliberal policies, the Ministry of Agriculture went to the president of the Agri-business association, and the Ministry of Development, Industry and Foreign Trade to the chairman of the large food processing group Sadia. As put by De Oliveira (2006: 12): 'notorious businessmen – in their capacity as "representatives of civil society" – were awarded ministries appropriate to their areas of interest and export ranking'. A CSO representative commented that the Parliament was increasingly populated by businessmen, adding that 'in the past Brazilian politicians became businessmen, today businessmen are becoming politicians' (ISER, 2011, pers. comm., 19 September). The last three heads of the CNI were also members of the Parliament, two of them during Lula's presidency and one during Cardoso's (Mancuso 2007: 141).

In the process, the political relevance of the corporate actors leading the local CSR movement was magnified, supported by the historical association between its leadership and the PT, as explained in earlier chapters. Not surprisingly, the rapid rise of the Ethos Institute coincided with the period when its leaders assumed influential positions within the government. Grajew himself was appointed in 2003 Special Advisor to the Presidency – positioned he occupied for less than a year – in charge of articulating the role of private business in public policy (Castanheira 2004). Several Ethos and PNBE leaders became involved in different public councils, both as business and civil representatives. For instance, of the 14 Board Directors of the Ethos Institute, four participated in the Presidential CDES council (including Grajew), two in the Presidential Council for Alimentary Security CONSEA, five had direct involvement in the leadership of the main industry and banking federations, while another is the former president of BOVESPA (Ethos 2013b). Furthermore, the staggering proportion of the Brazilian

[28] Observed by the author while visiting FIESP's premises during September 2011.

GDP represented by Ethos' membership is possible by the adhesion of the massive public companies, since 2003 controlled by the PT, and the largest industrial, extractive and retail groups. The network analysis in chapter 4 has shown that this group of firms constitutes the second ring around Ethos at the centre of the governance network: firms like Petrobras, Bank of Brazil, Bradesco and Itaú, the energy companies Furnas and Itaipú, Suzano, Natura, Pão de Açúcar, Bovespa and Vale, plus the industries federations of the São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, the two largest in the country. These firms are also the largest private social investors in Brazil financing most of the civil society sustainability initiatives (GIFE, 2011, pers. comm., 28 September; Suzano Paper, 2011, pers. comm., 23 September), organisations such as Ethos, Akatu and NSP, and a variety of non-corporate CSOs and academic centres, for example, the FGV Sustainability Studies Centre (GVCES 2012).

This dissertation argues that the centrality of Ethos and its agenda was catalysed by the alignment of the corporate responsibility discourse with the social neoliberal model brought about by the PT as a ruling party. In other words: the Sustainability discourse advanced by Brazilian actors such as Ethos coupled with the social neoliberal political economic model promoted by the state. Thus, on the one side, the developmentalism behind the PT approach considered local industry a fundamental element of national and social prosperity, and extended protectionist policies over domestic markets (Becker 2009). Lula continued with FHC's strong outward market orientation, embodied in the latter's phrase: 'export or die' (quoted in Mancuso 2007: 137). The government supported the consolidation and internationalisation of national 'champions', grating firms access to cheap financing by the BNDES, particularly to the larger and more competitive groups in infrastructure and extractive sectors (Sola 2008). Through the BNDES the government obtained minority participations in most of the major companies, positioning the state as the principal long-term financial provider, shaping what an analyst called a 'state-financial model' (INSPER, 2011, pers. comm., 21 September). These policies granted the government the favour of big capital, the major industrial federations, and foreign groups, which gained access to a vast and expanding domestic market.

On the other hand, the PT promoted a social discourse compatible with the 'third-way' Sustainability programme. Already by 2002 the PT's official programme of government did not mention the word 'socialist' or 'socialism' a single time, with Samuels (2004: 1004) observing that the term 'radical' was used for political rather than economic uses, such as 'radicalising Brazilian democracy' or the 'radical defence of public welfare'. In 2002 Guido Mantega – one Lula's principal aides, later appointed Minister of Planning and future head of the BNDES and Petrobras – expressed the PT's new political economic vision in the following terms: 'I would put it [the PT] on this list of parties that aspire to and long for a capitalist society because socialism is totally undefined today; it no longer exists. We do not seek a more efficient capitalism, rather one made more human' (quoted in Bianchi and Braga 2005: 1753). On the eve

of the 2003 elections Grajew wrote another article titled 'The Candidate of Businessmen' in *Folha de São Paulo*. In this article he made clear that Lula's programme was the only committed to economic growth, employment and income re-distribution, a re-distribution that would 'place more consumers, with greater income, in the market' (Grajew 2002). Interestingly, an interview with a member of a prestigious business school suggested that the human rights component of the Brazilian sustainability discourse served also as a protectionist excuse, pointing that in Brazil the more successful sectors in lobbying for protective measures have been the machinery sector, automobiles and toys, the sector represented by the chamber ABRINQ (INSPER, 2011, pers. comm., 21 September).

Hence, the social neoliberal vision whereby it was not capitalism that should be abandoned but its unsustainable practices, matched the moderate stance advocated by the Brazilian corporate social responsibility movement around Ethos in the 1990s, and the PNBE since the 1980s. Moreover, it also matched the vision promoted by the UN with initiatives such as the UN GC and its support for public-private partnerships to advance of universal human and environmental standards (Annan 1998). Lula himself gave the speech opening the Global Compact Leaders' Summit in 2004 (UNGC 2004).[29] The ambivalent nature of the PT's social neoliberal programme enabled Lula to be cheered by 100,000 people at the 2003 WSF (along with Hugo Chávez) and at the same time to become a protégé of big business, bankers, financial institutions and right-wing politicians, speaking at the WEF at Davos, promoting the compatibility between liberal economic policies and social welfare (Peña and Davies 2013; Petras and Veltmeyer 2005). In the same line, Kröger (2010) demonstrates that Brazilian state agencies were virtually partners of the agro-business sector while others remained allies of the popular groups opposing them, affirming that: '[Brazil is]...not only the stronghold of agribusiness, it is also the country where the rising transnational natural resource flow is vehemently criticised' (Ibid: 247).

The relationship between the Ethos Institute and Petrobras provides a concluding example of the extent of this overlap, reflecting the extent to which in Brazil the discourse of Sustainability has intertwined with domestic politics. Both these actors were shown to be at the centre of the Brazilian network and to share relevant connections. Moreover, Petrobras is not only considered a symbol of Brazilian industrial might but is the main single private social contributor in the country and of the Ethos Institute (Suzano Paper, 2011, pers. comm., 23 September). Responding to IBASE's call that state-companies should lead by example, the firm has shown an active engagement with global standard-setting initiatives: it was among the first five Brazilian companies to use GRI guidelines already by 2002 (the first of which was Natura), joined the UN GC in the year of its launch in Brazil in 2003, its CEO was mentioned to sit in

[29] This action by Lula was discouraged by the Director of IBASE in a press article where he argued that the UN GC linked the UN to global economic and financial conglomerates (Lettieri 2004).

the UN GC Board of Directors, it participates in the development of GRI guidelines, and represented the Brazilian business sector in the ISO WG SR. Furthermore, from 2006 it was included in Bovespa's ISE as well as in the NYSE sustainability index, and was ranked top Oil and Gas Company for sustainability in the world in 2008 (Caminiti 2009). In 2007, Petrobras and the federal government of Brazil, along the gas conglomerate Comgas, co-sponsored the first edition of a 'Sustainability Compendium' outlining the main social and environmental responsibility management tools and organisations in America and Europe (Louette 2007). This publication was supported by the Brazilian Ministry of Culture, the Ethos Institute, Akatu, the Dom Cabral Foundation and the FGV Centre for Sustainability Studies, and other organisations such as CEBDS, GIFE and FIDES.

However, in 2008 Petrobras decided to withdraw from Ethos. As reported, this action was in response to an accusation by Ethos, Akatu and members of the NSP network, including IDEC and Greenpeace Brazil, that Petrobras' diesel fuel violated a number of environmental standards (Ethos 2008). Due to this Petrobras was temporarily suspended from ISE. In March 2009, the CEO of Petrobras and PT co-founder Gabrielli de Azevedo wrote an article in the Harvard Business Review titled 'The Greening of Petrobras' (Azevedo 2009), which was soon responded by a Letter to the Editors by the leaders of Akatu and Ethos, arguing that Petrobras had not yet solved the situation of its fuel (Mattar and Young 2009). Since then, Petrobras stopped participating in Ethos and suspended its contributions.

At first hand, this situation suggests a rather technical discussion regarding the violation of an environmental standard. However, Petrobras not only denied the accusations but claimed that Ethos and a certain group of allies were part of a political smearing campaign against the government, given the company's direction by top PT members. Grajew thought that such claim was exclusively directed at him, responding that '[He] always gave full support to Lula, [he] that opened the doors of the business world for him' (Mercadoetico 2008). Suggestively, it was in 2008, the year of the accusation, that Petrobras replaced Natura as the business expert in the Brazilian delegation in ISO WG SR. When a top figure in the Brazilian standard-setting movement was inquired on the matter, his response – accompanied by a complicit smile – was that the whole situation responded to an internal struggle within PT factions. After all, he added, 'they are all PT' (Suzano Paper, 2011, pers. comm., 23 September). This view was shared by Brazil's Federal Attorney, who publicly stated that '[…] each day I grow convinced that this quarrel has not a single environmental component, it is just an internal party conflict' (quoted in AmbienteBrasil 2008).

The evidence provided throughout this section, as well as this last example, indicate that the involvement of Brazilian actors in the global standard-setting projects cannot be separated from the political structures shaping state-society relations, the historical trajectory of the actors involved, and the political economic policy line adopted by the government. Therefore, local

participation can hardly be considered to respond to a top-down process of diffusion of 'global' ideas, but rather as an active process of communication between multiple political languages. It was also shown that the social neoliberal approach of the PT positively coupled with the agenda of the Sustainability actors in the country, indicating that the politicisation of the governance discourse and its methods supported, not deterred, its local acceptance. The final two sections of this chapter expand two lines of development which, albeit not directly connected with the global case studies, further reveal how these local political circumstances condition other instances of Brazilian involvement in global governance as well as occurrences in local party politics. The first comprises the origins of the World Social Forum. The second highlights a policy turn in Brazilian social standard-setting.

The World Social Forum: Brazilian politics in global civil society

At a first glance, it could seem surprising to include a section on the World Social Forum – considered the forerunner of counter-hegemonic globalisation and global civil society (Hernandez 2010; Halliday 2010; Chesters 2004) – in a dissertation dealing with issues of social standard-setting, sustainability, and global governance. However, this surprise should rapidly subside considering that the main co-originator of the idea for the WSF was Oded Grajew himself, co-founder of Ethos and the PNBE (Leite 2003). This section demonstrates that the Brazilian origins of the WSF, and some notable aspect of its subsequent evolution, can be explained by the presence of the same cleavages shaping Brazilian participation in global social standard-setting initiatives (Peña and Davies 2013).

This is because, first, it can be affirmed that the initial conception held by the Brazilian founders of the WSF reflected a vision compatible with that of Brazilian corporate responsibility. Grajew stated that the idea of the Forum came to him after he 'tried for some time to introduce social responsibility in the World Economic Forum' (Paget-Clarke 2004). He actually had personal relations with the President of the WEF Klaus Schwabb: his company Grow Jogos was 25% owned by a German firm whose representative was Schwabb's brother (Grajew 2005). Second, the consolidation of the WSF in its origins rested substantially on the political connections Grajew had with the PT and other groups (Peña and Davies 2013; Von Bülow, In Press). This extended to the other co-originator of the WSF Francisco Whitaker. Whitaker is a social activist and PT member who was exiled during the military dictatorship. He is also a militant of the Catholic left – the same background of Betinho from IBASE and Marina Silva – and at the time the first WSF was launched he occupied the position of Executive Director of the Brazilian Commission of Justice and Peace (CBJP), an organ of the CNBB. Whitaker is also co-founder of the CSO Transparency Brazil, with Helio Mattar and Eduardo

Capobianco, former PNBE member and until 2011 vice-President of FIESP (Transparencia 2011).

In 2000, with the idea of the Forum in mind, Grajew and Whitaker engaged those organisations in the country that could be interested in such project. Grajew stated that it was from his office in the Ethos Institute that he contacted the leaders of ABONG and IBASE, as well as the MST and the CUT, thus including the major actors in the civil, rural and labour movements. These organisations provided the basis for the secretariat of the Brazilian Committee which became officially integrated by ABONG, CIVES, the CUT, IBASE, MST, the CBJP, and two international organisations; the Association for the Taxation of financial Transactions and Aid to Citizens (ATTAC), led by the Bernard Cassen of *Le Monde Diplomatique*, and the Centre for Global Justice.

At the same time, the selection of Porto Alegre to host the first WSF was also influenced by local political considerations. This city was recognised as a flagship of participatory budgeting and popular management policies promoted by the PT during the 1990s, which gained it worldwide recognition (Leite 2005; Teivainen 2002). However, it was also fundamental that both the major of the city and the governorship of state of Rio Grande do Sul, where Porto Alegre is located, were under PT control. In these two positions there were personal acquaintances of Grajew and Whitaker, such as Raul Pont and Olivio Dutra. The former is another co-founder of the PT, and the later a personal friend of Lula da Silva imprisoned during the dictatorship, who later assumed roles as Senator and Minister of Cities. These administrations provided fundamental support for the first two forums, something that FHC, the President at the time, considered inappropriate (França 2001). A report by IBASE – which along ABONG is the fund controller for the Forums in Brazil – calculated that the state and municipal government contributed around US$ 450,000 in 2001 and US$ 1,000,000 in 2002, around the same amount than all the official funds by international cooperation agencies combined (Lopez et al 2006: 11).

In addition to this, Grajew affirmed that it was through his experience and relations gained in the ABRINQ Foundation and Ethos that the Secretariat was able to obtain grants from international donors of diverse extraction, such as the Ford Foundation, NOVIB and ICCO (Grajew 2005). The accession of the PT to the Presidency altered the role of this party in the WSF, and that of large public companies such as Petrobras, Electrobras, the Post Office, and Bank of Brazil. These companies became the institutional channels to transfer funds to the Forum, and since 2005, its official sponsors (Diaz 2006). The first two companies responded to Brazil's Ministry of Energy, run then by Dilma Rousseff. Interestingly, between 1999 and 2002, when the first two WSF took place, Rousseff was Secretary of Energy of the state of Rio Grande do Sul, where Porto Alegre is located. Government support was of such importance that by

2009 Candido Grzybowski, IBASE's Director, admitted that '…no forum would exist in Brazil without help from the state' (Magalhães and Flor 2009).

The open involvement of public agencies and large state companies accentuated differences among the forum's participants, which considered that despite their partial public ownership, these companies deserved a similar treatment to other firms. Moreover, Petrobras had received virulent criticisms in Bolivia from environmental and indigenous organisations for different violations, while the Bank of Brazil was accused of participating in financial speculation (Diaz 2006). The involvement of the PT in the WSF reached a point such that the leader of CADTM (Committee for the Annulment of Third World Debt), a member organisation of the WSF International Committee, voiced his concern for seeing the 'Ten years Later' Seminar in the 2010 Porto Alegre WSF being sponsored by Petrobras, Caixa, Banco do Brasil, Itaipú Binational, and populated by a strong governmental presence. He considered that Brazil was using the Forum as part of a peripheral imperialist structure, raising and promoting the profile of its state corporations (Ojeda and Toussaint 2010).

Moreover, he expressed that a sector of the Brazilian committee intended to preserve the Forum as a neutral space of dialogue and open debate. This corresponds with the distinction of two competing factions within WSF's instances of decision-making: the 'horizontalists' and the 'movementalists' (Prestes Rabelo 2006). The horizontalists, comprising Grajew, Whitaker and organisations like CBJP, CIVES and international sectors linked with Oxfam, Public Citizen and other linkages with civil society and business, represented the ideal of the founding group of moving away from the vices of 'old' movements of the twentieth century, in particular the verticalism of the international communist movement (Whitaker 2004). The movementalists were a more heterogeneous group which instead conceived the forum as an instrument of action against neoliberalism, involving organisations such as the World Network of Social Movements (created by initiative of the CUT and MST), CLACSO, ATTAC, and radical gender and unemployment groups. In this line, some observers noted that elements among the WSF's leadership opposed granting greater visibility to radical alternatives to neoliberal globalisation, such as those put forward by the government of Venezuela towards funding the 2006 Caracas WSF, which met considerable resistance (Mestrum 2006).

It is quite evident at this point that the horizontalist position reflects the stance of the Brazilian social responsibility movement and the Sustainability programme of social standardisation, which privileges deliberation, cooperation and non-coercive approaches over mobilised and aggressive political tactics. It was this sector which was more comfortable with the participation of state elements. This paradoxical situation where the 'liberals' are those supportive of the state's involvement in the Forum, is resolved by understanding the affinities established between the PT leadership and the corporate sector behind the social responsibility movement, and the overlap between the PT's social neoliberalism and the programme of

Sustainability. It is such overlap that facilitates figures such as Lula, Grajew and Helio Mattar, and also organisations such as Ethos, IBASE or the PT itself, to play dual roles, metaphorically with one foot in Davos and another in Porto Alegre (Grün 2005). And the voiced opposition to this arrangement expresses the extent to which the Brazilian social neoliberal master frame clashes with alternative views found within civil society, both in Brazil and abroad (Peña and Davies 2013).

Sustainable politics?

The 2010 presidential elections provide the final example in this dissertation of the intertwinement of the Sustainability programme and Brazilian political structures. This last example serves to indicate that in the last decade the association between the Brazilian CSR actors and the PT's political framework appears to have weakened and given way to alternative political expressions. The origins of this transition are found in certain discontent within and around the PT in relation to accusations of corruption that came out in 2005 and its poor environmental record, including the lack of implementation of the agrarian reform and the close relationship of the government with agro-business (Sola 2008; Wolford 2006). This led to conflicts within the PT and with rural sectors – with a MST leader stating that 'Lula has now become friend of our enemies' (Carter 2010: 197) – and made the environmental movement assume a more independent and oppositional stance (Hochstetler 2008; Zibechi 2009). By 2006 Grajew also expressed its disappointment with certain developments inside the PT, considering that the Party had become a 'hostage of the main campaign funders' (Scinocca 2006). As a result of this situation the Minister of Environment Marina Silva quitted both her ministerial position and the party in 2009 (Hochstetler and Viola 2011). Silva's abandonment of the PT however did not imply a return to civil activism. Instead, she joined the Green Party as presidential candidate for the upcoming 2010 elections, a party to which the environmental sector had traditionally not subscribed (Alonso and Maciel 2010).

The significant event is that Marina Silva's entry to the Green Party was done in association with some of the businessmen linked with Ethos and the PNBE. In particular, she chose Ghilherme Leal to be her vice-President. Leal is one of the (former) owners of the personal care giant Natura, a company shown to occupy an active role in the Brazilian governance network. He is also one of the founding members of the PNBE and the Ethos Institute, close collaborator with WWF Brazil, and according to Forbes the 463rd richest person in the world (Forbes 2010). This decision by Silva was criticised by sectors of civil society during the ABONG Conference, which accused her of being 'naive' and possessing an ingenuous vision of capitalism, even if they acknowledged that her corporate partners were

‘charismatic’ and ‘dialogical’ (ABONG, 2011, pers. comm., 19 September). Nonetheless, her decision was politically quite effective considering the results in the 2010 elections: the Silva-Leal duo obtained the third position with 19% of the votes – an unprecedented result for the Green Party – and another of the ‘social businessmen’ that joined the Green Party, Ricardo Young, former President of Ethos, entered the Senate. The Green Party is considered to have captured a large sector of the middle-class electorate, based on its trajectory on anti-corruption and ethics, a reputation previously held by the PT (Zucco 2006), the role model Marina Silva provided for upward social mobility, and its focus on sustainable development; the latter in a country with one of the highest levels of civil awareness for environmental problems (Ibid). Furthermore, the campaign by the Green Party is considered to have been a major driver in raising the profile of sustainability issues and the carbon economy in the electoral agenda, and in shaping the Brazilian position in the 2009 Copenhagen Climate Change Summit (Hochstetler and Viola 2011).

This situation allows a number of considerations. First, it appears to indicate that the political connection of Brazilian standard-setting is not anymore reduced to the PT. Second, it suggests that that Brazilian trajectory of social standardisation could have become more sophisticated, distinguishing between cleavages that were previously engulfed under the PT’s social movement and anti-neoliberal discourse. In both cases, what is visible is a wider engagement with social standardisation across Brazilian political actors. This has allowed local standard-setting projects to reach beyond corporate themes, and engage more actively with party politics and public policy. Interviews with representatives of the Ethos Institute and NSP confirmed that this has been their organisational strategy since 2008. The new policy by Ethos involves rolling back CSR-centred activities – considering that the topic is properly implanted among large firms and well covered by diverse standards and instruments – to focus on the improvement of the institutional environment where all social actors operate (Ethos Institute, 2011, pers. comm., 11 September). Similarly, representatives of NSP commented that their current operational strategy is to commit relevant political actors to their agendas without necessarily endorsing a particular party (NSO, 2011, pers. comm., 22 September), a method previously used by the ABRINQ Foundation and IBASE (Raufflet and Gurgel do Amaral 2007).

A number of recent developments confirm such trend, both domestically and in relation to international forums. Two examples of the former are recent campaigns involving Ethos and other local actors aiming to improve public monitoring and governmental transparency. The first is the Clean Games (*Jogos Limpos*) Campaign. The project was launched by Ethos in order to enhance civil monitoring over the multi-million investment activities of the Brazilian state and private contractors for the upcoming 2014 World Cup and 2016 Olympic Games (Ethos 2013c). The project is funded by the Siemens Integrity Initiative, a fund resulting from this

company being found guilty of corruption practices and forced to established a social fund with US$ 100 million to be distributed over 15 years (Siemens 2013). Ethos accessed this money as part of a public bidding process. The National Committee of the Campaign is formed by local and international actors, such as CUT and IOS, the Office of the Controller General (*Controlaria Geral da União*),[30] the Avina Foundation, the UN GC Office, and the UN Anti-Drug Agency UNODC. A second example is Ethos' involvement in the Committee organising the 2012 1st National Conference on Transparency and Social Control. Again, the recurrent multi-sectoral constituency coordinates this initiative, including the CNBB, ABONG, IOS, and different business representatives. This conference centred on enhancing civil society's control over public management, the establishment of transparency mechanisms to fight corruption in corporate and public projects, and the strengthening of civil society-government relations (Consocial 2011).

Finally, as an example of the access to international forums and of the global projection the Brazilian standard-setting movement has achieved, the Ethos Institute coordinated a side-event prior to Rio+20 Conference of 2012 titled 'Platform for Inclusive, Green and Responsible Economy'. The resulting dossier was endorsed by over a hundred Brazilian firms and CSOs, and was sent to the Rio+20 Secretariat, becoming a component of the Brazilian position in the Conference (UN 2011a; Hochstetler and Viola 2011). The document outlined some general principles to which participating countries – not companies – should commit, considering that 'a responsible economy seeks to strengthen a set of humanistic and universal principles and values that sustain the democratic functioning of societies and markets […]' (UN 2011a). These principles include, among others, the adoption of a national accountability standard to measure development, the planning of sustainable cities, the establishment of minimum operating standards, and the linkage between public and private actions to develop and monitor national plans. Undoubtedly, an appropriate characterisation of the Sustainability programme of social standardisation, even if proposed by actors of the global South.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined the political structures and relations underpinning the Brazilian network presented in chapter 4. It has concluded that the local trajectory of social standardisation and the configuration of the participation network are heavily conditioned by specific political circumstances affecting state-society relations and political associations. This conclusion was reached by exploring the emergence of the central actors in the participation

[30] The federal agency reporting to the Presidency in relation to the defence of public assets and transparency management.

network alongside the co-evolution of national political economic structures since the 1970s, with specific attention to the situation in the 2000s.

The chapter revealed that the Brazilian origins of social standard-setting initiatives occurred as part of the search for political alternatives in the context of democratisation. A lasting characteristic resulting from such origins is a high degree of politicisation in corporate and civil approaches to social standard-setting. Due to this, the notion of CSR and mechanisms such as social reporting are understood not merely as elements of corporate self-regulation but as part of the enhancement of civil control over the corporate sector, in the 1990s, and over the state, in the late 2000s. During the last decade, the situation evolved both in the direction of integration with global initiatives and greater local politicisation. Thus, on the one side Brazilian standard-setting actors established significant relations with international standard-setting organisations and governance initiatives. On the other, the political agenda of the PT since 2003 enhanced the domestic relevance of these same actors, and officialised the Sustainability discourse at the domestic level. Additionally, the chapter provided numerous examples of joint local initiatives where political actors, public-owned corporations, large financial and industrial firms, industry federations, unions and local-standard setting actors engaged in multi-sectoral initiatives promoting social standard-setting projects. Furthermore, such instances of multi-sectoral collaboration, in particular with corporate and governmental actors, are found not only regarding conventional projects of corporate standardisation, social reporting and labelling, but had entered deeper into party politics, affecting the Brazilian position in international fora, and even revealing themselves in the origins of the WSF.

This compatibility between the social neoliberal political discourse structuring state, corporate, labour and civil society relations, and the liberal vision of the local CSR movement, is a result of the combination of particular cleavages of social standardisation in the country, which clearly differ from the global trajectory and with models coming from 'abroad'. Thus, elements such as the role of Catholic thought in the organisation of rural and labour movements, the recognition of business as a non-antagonistic part of society, the inclusive orientation of the PT, and the progressive vision of corporate groups such as the PNBE, ABRINQ and CIVES, are specific characteristics of the Brazilian trajectory in place before the 2000s. From this perspective, the social neoliberal discourse of the PT once in government can be said to have catalysed certain programmatic affinities with the CSR movement, making it more acceptable for previously indifferent actors to rally behind such discourses and initiatives.

In this sense it can be considered that the Sustainability vision around the Ethos Institute and its social businessmen, and the social neoliberal programme of the PT resulted in a win-win environment for social standardisation. It provided a compatible master frame for collaborative relations among civil society, business and the state, and supported a compatible view between market-oriented actors and social standards. This in turn allowed Brazilian actors to

simultaneously and without conflict adopt local political roles and participate in global governance initiatives. In other words, the PT discourse (and perhaps the Green Party's in the future) provided the social standardisation programme with local political resonance, while the agenda promoted by Ethos and other standard-setting actors provided political actors with a technical (and cosmopolitan) one.

Hence, the primary lesson of the Brazilian case from the governance perspective is that the semantic components of the global discourse have not been restricted by local political structures which even to this day privilege state-centred societal relations, but were rather extended by them. Hence, while the global Sustainability programme of social standardisation is particularly reflective of a liberal capitalist environment, where the normative weight of social standard-setting is treated generally as light or soft, in the Brazilian context it has assumed a more public and assertive political character. In this regard, this chapter demonstrates that one of the weaknesses of global standard-based arrangements – the loose coupling between domestic political projects and universal values and governance mechanisms – can actually have favourable consequences as it facilitates local integration and hybridisation. Nonetheless, the next chapter examines a case where the global/local incompatibility materialises, and where domestic political structures block the resonance of the Sustainability programme and participation in the global social standard-setting initiatives.

CHAPTER 6. ARGENTINA'S WINDING ROAD TO GOVERNANCE: THE PRIMACY OF THE LOCAL

This chapter examines the participation pattern of Argentine actors in the global initiatives and the local trajectory of social standardisation. The chapter complements the results of the Brazilian analysis as it explores the reasons why two neighbouring countries sharing similar political economic developments in the last three decades (democratisation in the 1980s, liberalisation in the 1990s and strengthening of the state in the 2000s) show markedly different patterns of engagement with the global governance initiatives. Whereas Brazil was proposed as a success case in relation to communication between national political structures and the Sustainability programme of social standardisation, Argentina presents a history of failure. As was previously clarified such failure is not to be considered as implying any form of value judgement nor as political or institutional backwardness. Rather, the chapter explores the specific political circumstances that prevent the global discourse of social standardisation to resonate with domestic actors and gain salience in local political communications. Whether such resonance would have been positive for the country in any other sense but this, is a different matter altogether.

Argentine political structures have had a different evolution to Brazilian ones. In Brazil social organisation was a product of the designs of an authoritarian-development state, while more contemporary features were re-configured with the transition to democracy. Instead, in Argentina the major social actors – political parties, labour unions, popular movements and business – had a longer history of political relations stretching to the first half of the twentieth century, surviving an intermittent cycle of military interventions. The robustness of political structures will be shown to interfere with contemporary attempts to advance social standard-setting discourses, in particular, by blocking the possibility of establishing cooperative relations across societal sectors and the political activism of business in social affairs. With opposite results to the Brazilian case, in the 2000s the political agenda stemming from the Argentine government strengthened these exclusive features, and promoted an environment that resisted social standard-setting as a salient project in domestic politics. In this situation, the few local actors oriented towards the global initiatives faced considerable challenges in communicating their agenda beyond the narrow borders of the corporate domain. Accordingly, a similar chart to the Brazilian case can be produced for the Argentine situation, outlining the co-evolution of the national political structures and the local trajectory of social standardisation.

Figure 17: Argentina's comparative political chart

Period	Pre-1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s
Political Discourse	Political Re-organisation	Democratisation	Economic Liberalisation	Market Nationalism
State Role	Neoliberal Authoritarian	Democratic Moderation	Neoliberal Supervision	Interventionist
State- Society Relations	Conflictive / Exclusive	Pluralist / Conflictive	Pluralist / Exclusive	Conflictive /Co-optational
Standardisation Programme	Welfarism	Industrial Quality	CSR	CSR

The chart emphasises a number of differences regarding the role of the state, the type of state-society relations, and the focus of the standardisation programme in Argentina and Brazil, albeit through the 2000s the government in both cases assumed an interventionist stance and promoted certain similar discourses. However, perhaps the most fundamental difference is found in the dominant model of state-society relations, which remained conflictive or exclusive through the four decades. This pattern was conflictive even before the last military dictatorship between 1976 and 1983. Actually, the last military regime justified its intervention on the need to suppress the radical polarisation of society and the insurgent activities of radical left-wing organisations; the reason why they denominated their regime as 'Process of National Reorganisation' (known in Argentina as '*El Proceso*') (Novaro and Palermo 2004). The return to democracy was accompanied by the weakening of republican institutions due to spiralling economic turmoil, and the resurgence of pre-dictatorship political lines in party politics and civil society. The 1990s further accentuated the erosion of state institutions that followed neoliberal reforms, undermining civil society and labour sectors as societal conditions deteriorated. In this context, those actors which promoted standard-setting initiatives, even if not explicitly focusing on social issues, remained almost exclusively linked to the corporate sector and with the 'foreign' evolution of the CSR agenda, on the margins of local state-labour relations and popular mobilisations. As a result, no central actor emerged in Argentina to bridge social standardisation programmes with domestic political cleavages, as occurred in Brazil through the PNBE or IBASE. Moreover, there was limited formation of non-centralised spaces of deliberation, such as national forums, multi-sectoral networks, or civil-corporate associations which might support social standardisation developments in the near future. Such absence remains in place by the end of the 2000s, at the conclusion of the period under study.

Because of this and contrary to the Brazilian chapter, where the analysis of the local political environment could accompany the evolution of the core actors promoting social standard-setting as a political project, in the Argentine case such narrative is not possible previous to the 2000s. Because of this the chapter is organised in only two parts. The first explores in detail the political discourses and state-society relations emerging as barriers to social standardisation until the milestone of the 2001 crisis. The second resumes from there, exploring the effect of the market nationalist discourse promoted by the Kirchner's administrations – since 2003 by Néstor Kirchner and from 2007 by his wife Cristina Fernández – over the political salience of programmes of social standardisation. This second part explains why and in spite of the similarities the Kirchnerist project displays with the social neoliberal agenda of '*Lulismo*', it did not significantly alter the conditions of indifference and exclusivity towards social standard-setting.

The chapter concludes that the explanation for this resides in that the Kirchnerist political discourse reinforced a number of cleavages found in the Argentine political tradition, which antagonised with the key cleavages articulating the Sustainability programme. A major feature among the latter – and central difference with the Brazilian case – is that the corporate cleavage of social standardisation never consolidated as a legitimate political discourse: in Argentina corporate projects have rarely coupled with the local political agenda, much less over issues of social inclination. Interestingly, as shown towards the end of the chapter, the 2001 economic crisis opened some limited spaces where certain sustainability projects appeared to prosper, even if briefly and still in an embryonic stage.

PERONISM, DEMOCRACY AND NEOLIBERALISM UNTIL THE 2000S

To understand the main features of the Argentine political system which have structured both the political discourse and state-society relations in the last decade it is necessary to revise their development through the twentieth century. As was already introduced a major difference with the political trajectory of Brazil – which went from colonial dependency, to monarchy, to authoritarian republic and to military regime before entering into full democracy in 1989 – Argentine political institutions were not shaped by, or emerged as a response to, a prolonged period of military tutelage.

The Argentine Republic entered the previous century as the most industrialised country in South America – with a domestic product per capita higher than France and eight times that of Brazil (Maddison 1983; Bulmer-Thomas 2003) in the first decades – and with a substantial level of political and social institutionalisation. By 1914, the population of Buenos Aires, around 1.5 million inhabitants, tripled the one of São Paulo. A decade later the share of

population living in urban centres was 37% in Argentina, with 8.3% of the Economically Active Population in factory employment (contrary to 13% and 3.7% correspondingly in Brazil) (Collier and Collier 2009). At the same time, the Republic counted with a modern party system: the Unión Cívica Radical (UCR), a middle-class party created in 1881, won the first mandatory presidential elections in 1912, and a Socialist party was in place since 1896 with a considerable electoral following (Romero 2002). Moreover, after WWI trade unions had become growingly organised and active, developing substantial experience in confronting and negotiating with early twentieth-century conservative governments. In particular, the General Labour Confederation (CGT) was formed in 1930 and a decade later already grouped 75% of the total unionised population (Cheresky 1984). Argentina also enjoyed a long history of corporate organisation. The two most iconic and influential industrial chambers, the Argentine Rural Society (SRA) – representing the interests of the large land-owning elite – and the Argentine Industrial Union (UIA) were founded in 1866 and 1887 respectively, and the country counted since the 1900s with a national ICC Committee (Keppel 1920). Expectedly, corporate groups maintained a conservative stance towards the mobilisation of labour and popular sectors, specially the aristocratic SRA, which supported the first military coup of 1930 opposing the increasing democratisation and accommodation of labour demands (Schvarzer 1996).

The liberal conservatism that dominated the first quarter of the twentieth century ceased in the 1940s, when the democratic government of Juan Domingo Perón (1945-1955) installed an unprecedented developmental and socially-inclusive project (Torre 1989). The Peronist experience had substantial impact in re-shaping state-society relations for the rest of the century, marking the Argentine political system as no other political development since. Contrary to the conservative developmentalism of the Brazilian military regimes, which had no interest or need to include popular sectors in the political system, the Peronist model – nationalist, populist and with authoritarian overtones – based its political legitimacy on the support of labour and popular classes (Romero 2002). Perón's administrations implemented a political agenda oriented to redistribute national income and the expansion of employment and economic autonomy, erecting trade barriers and supporting the nationalisation of the economy (Collier and Collier 2009). Emphasising notions of social justice and equity, the government promoted the creation of community and women organisations and neighbourhood associations through the country, which along the labour movement, came to constitute the backbone of the Peronist movement (Novaro 2006; Acha 2004; Romero 2002). Perón's governments are considered to represent the peak of the Argentine welfare state, initiating the lasting association of Peronism – at least discursively – with the protection of labour rights and civil inclusion. The other side of the Peronist agenda was its strong state corporatism and interventionism. This alienated conservative, progressive and liberal sectors alike, such as the military, the Catholic Church and powerful economic elites, and undermined (and repressed) non-aligned socialist, communist and

syndicalist groups, trade unions and political parties, de-activating programmes in the left-side of the political spectrum. At the basis of this was the alliance between the Peronist party – created officially in 1947 – and the labour movement led by the CGT, an alliance that, with its ups and downs, resisted until the 2000s.[31] By the mid-1950s over 70% of the workforce was covered by social security and the labour movement was almost entirely Peronist, counting 2.5 million members in a country with a population of approximately 16 million. In this context, the government maintained an antagonistic relationship with corporate groups: Perón nationalised foreign companies and stimulated the formation of state ones, but also syndicalised the industry and intervened independent representative bodies, with the UIA being intervened as early as 1946 (Schvarzer 1996).

The following twenty years after the fall of Perón saw a succession of civil and military governments – with the Peronist Party banned throughout – incapable of stabilising social order or curbing labour power. This resulted in a period of instability shaped by what O'Donnell (1971) called 'the impossible game'. The fundamentals of this game laid on the ban on the Peronist Party, which still enjoyed the loyalty of the majority of the available votes. This generated a necessary incentive for remaining parties to capture them: either through concessions, thus risking the veto of the military, or by forming anti-Peronist coalitions among competing groups, and thus suffering instability from popular and labour opposition, as unions remained faithful to Perón in exiled in Spain (Ibid). After his return and death in 1974, a new coup occurred in 1976 with the programme of the military Junta explicitly aimed at demolishing the entire socio-economic architecture of the previous three decades and the social relations underlying it, in particular the link among trade unions, popular sectors, and the Peronist Party. Hence the last authoritarian phase of Argentine politics, contrary to Brazil's, was of much shorter duration but considerably more aggressive on both the economic and political fronts. Rather than maintaining an inward developmentalist project, the Argentine Junta promoted the aggressive neoliberalisation of the economy and the exclusion of popular sectors from politics, specifically the Peronist Party and the labour movement. And though the political re-ordering sought by the Junta was cut short, the neoliberalising programme was implemented, initiating a spectacular rise of foreign obligations that would continue over the following decades (Novaro and Palermo 2004; Romero 2002).

A key aspect of this political interruption was that the Argentine transition to democracy was not a controlled process as in Brazil or Chile but a sudden 'collapse from below' (Vasconi 1986), whereby the regime was rapidly overridden by pre-dictatorship political actors and cleavages. Due to this, the democratic transition did not lead to the creation of new social fronts and political programmes, nor brought a radical change in societal roles and relations. It

[31] The party's official name is *Partido Justicialista*. In the 2000s, different political fronts considered themselves 'Peronist'. For clarity purposes this dissertation prefers to use the term 'Peronist Party'.

did manage to set the process of economic liberalisation in motion, which exposed the domestic economy and its actors to international competition, thus preceding the neoliberal reforms of the 1990s. The fragmentation of the forces of the Junta after the defeat in the Malvinas/Falkland Islands War, as well as the massive social discontent expressed by diverse social groups, including the Peronist movements and labour but also new human rights and students social movements, forced the regime to call elections in 1983, incapable of imposing any favourable exit conditions (Novaro and Palermo 2004). The two democratic contenders, the UCR and the Peronist Party, disputed the elections and civilian power returned when the UCR candidate Raúl Alfonsín assumed the Presidency.

The return of democracy in Argentina did not involve a re-alignment of labour, confessional groups and liberal sectors around a 'new' democratic agenda. Rather, it emphasised a strong constitutionalist discourse based on previous republican institutions, the resolution of the crimes committed during the dictatorship (a debate absent in the Brazilian transition), and the weakening of both military and labour corporatism (Novaro 2006). The Alfonsín government was relatively successful in dealing with the military situation. However, the labour case proved more troublesome as it was seen as a '...frontal assault against the Peronist trade union leadership' (Romero 2002: 265), resulting in the unification of the Peronist movement against the first democratic government. This in turn fuelled a new polarisation of democratic civil actors: on the one side liberal and republican groups, and on the other, Peronist organisations, labour and aligned popular movements. The arrival of the Menem administration in 1989, the first elected Peronist government since 1955, brought about a number of controversial and even paradoxical developments, as it combined the progressive Peronist discourse with extensive neoliberal reforms (Bonnet 2007). Thus, rather than democratisation and neoliberalisation serving to integrate social standard-setting cleavages and progressive civil alliances, in Argentina they functioned in the opposite way: popular and labour groups remained aligned with the Peronist leadership, while corporate groups enjoyed (and suffered) a previously yearned economic liberty. It was within this neoliberal freedom, and not in opposition to it as in Brazil, that some private standard-setting initiatives started to develop in order to stimulate competitivity and community relations, or aligning with the corporate policy line stemming from the overseas headquarters of newly privatised firms.

An aspect to be emphasised is that Argentine industrial relations differ substantially from Brazil's. Whereas in the former, industrial federations and chambers enjoyed considerable influence as part of the state corporatist structure, while labour organisations were young, weak, and fragmented, in Argentina the situation was exactly the reverse: a strong and unified trade union federation, the CGT, faced weak industrial bodies with troublesome relations with the state (Cook 2007). Thus, Argentine political actors traditionally did not invest much time in attending business demands, preferring to bypass institutional spaces and industrial chambers to

negotiate directly with management (Ross Schneider 2009). Moreover, the opening of the economy to external competition initiated during the dictatorship made Argentine industrial output to experience a steady decline since the mid-1970s, with the industrial product of 1994 similar to that of 1974 (Schvarzer 1996: 326). This resulted in a further erosion of the weight of industrial sectors in the economy, and subsequently of their political influence, in particular for national firms.

Simultaneously, the paradoxical state-labour alliance of the Menem years allowed the advance of neoliberal policies with significantly less resistance that in Brazil. Thus, while in the latter case key sectors of the economy remained in Brazilian hands, the Argentine privatisation brought about the massive entry of foreign capital, mostly from the US, France, Spain and Chile, and the rapid withdrawal of the state from most corporate activities (Iazzetta 1996; Gouvea Neto 1998). With the lowering of barriers, the peg of the Argentine Peso to the US Dollar – known as the Convertibility Plan – and high levels of foreign investment, the domestic business sector became exposed to greater competition and modern business practices. Local industry shrank, associated with low-quality high-price products, incapable of surviving without state protectionism and prone to selling itself to the highest bidder. This mantle was extended to the sector's representative organisations, such as the UIA, and consolidated a public opinion suspicious of corporate discourses and private interest in domestic affairs (IAE, 2011, pers. comm., 8 September; Schvarzer 1996). Prior to the end of the dictatorship a major local industrialist was quoted stating '…[local] industrial society was left as a headless puppet, as nobody, nor the classic Argentine establishment nor the military one, managed to identify themselves with the great economic revolution' (Ibid: 337). Since the 1950s no single government supported the project of creating national champions: even more, the Menem administration explicitly excluded local groups from taking a relevant role in the privatisations (Lopez 2006). In 2011 a high official of the UIA confirmed not only the absence of corporate leadership in the country, but also the lingering negative perception against big business in society, affirming that in Argentina 'being a businessman is almost a sin, a worst one if you are successful' (Techint, 2011, pers. comm., 8 September).

As a result, Argentina never developed the link between political and business elites characterising the Brazilian political economy. Moreover, because of its exclusion from political decision-making, industrial organisations such as the UIA never developed relevant technical-bureaucratic structures, nor positioned themselves as fully unified actors: they represented a minority of firms and their leaders rather than the business sector as a whole (Gaggero and Wainer 2004). Only towards the end of the nineties, as social and economic conditions deteriorated yet again, local business groups such as the UIA, the Argentina Construction Chamber, and the Argentine Rural Confederations, organised around a body called the 'Productive Group', which proposed an agenda favouring industrialisation rather than

neoliberalisation as the path for national development and the improvement of social conditions. This agenda aimed at constituting a local position different from the policies of the Menem administrations, foreign corporations and financial capital (Lissin 2008). Thus, though certain opposition to the neoliberal model was present in the local business environment it was mostly expressed as personal questionings by important businessmen to the government's economic line. This did not evolve into a wider political project, or into a corporate political agenda seeking to reinforce republican institutions or civil society. No alliance between business and other political parties ever materialised in the line of CIVES with the PT. In other words, no corporate cleavage of social standardisation stabilised in Argentina.

On the labour side, developments were not more propitious. The labour movement, as mentioned, maintained an acquiescent stance aligned with the Peronist government in spite of flexibilising labour reforms and rising unemployment. Cook (2007) concluded that this was a response to two political dynamics: a limited room for response given the poor economic context – with the CGT trading labour protections for the preservation of institutional resources – and the willingness of labour leaders to maintain access to the Peronist government. This behaviour allowed the government to pass reforms packages without facing labour mobilisations, and the CGT to preserve its central role in collective bargaining (Murillo and Schrank 2005). Nonetheless, it must be noted that this posture led to a fracture of the CGT leadership between collaborative and combative factions, and in 1992 a dissident group formed the CTA, which rejected the CGT's tolerance of neoliberalism. The CTA promoted a different type of unionism to the centralised corporatist model of Argentine industrial relations, a model more akin to the social movement unionism of the Brazilian CUT. For instance, it accepted labour groups of non-Peronist ideology among its ranks as well as social movements sidelined by the CGT workerism, such as unemployed associations (of growing political weight), CSOs and communal organisations. The CTA also showed more international awareness, supporting international protests and later participating in the WSF international committee (Cardoso 2004). As shown in the next section, this organisation will be the only relevant Argentine labour actor to demonstrate an interest in participating in the global case study initiatives. However, the Peronist labour connection resisted and successive governments have avoided granting it with formal recognition, leaving it as a CSO with no collective bargaining power.[32]

Civil society proliferated with the advent of democracy, a relevant dimension given that business-civil society contacts were shown to be of major relevance for social standardisation in Brazil. The modernising context of the 1990s promoted a liberal role for civil society and a preference for efficient and 'neutral' CSOs over politicised social movements, which could

[32] In the Argentine industrial relations system this recognition is called 'union personship' (Personería gremial), and is granted by the Ministry of Labour. Union personship allows labour bodies to be formally entitled to take part in collective bargaining. Lacking it, the CTA cannot negotiate collective agreements and its leadership does not enjoy of the same protections as its CGT counterparts.

serve to monitor, manage and implement focalised programmes run by the state, international organisations or the private sector. A number of analyses confirm that local CSOs became oriented towards issues of community assistance, labour training, and crime, following the deterioration of the socio-economic conditions and the withdrawal of the state (Campetella and Bombal 2000; Campetella and Bombal 2000a; Araya and Colombo 2009). Some organisations also focused on improving governmental accountability and transparency, mostly through legal channels and media denouncing, not by recurring to civil monitoring initiatives (Peruzzotti 2004). Another difference with the Brazilian case is that Argentine civil society's dependence from foreign donors was already quite limited in the 1990s, forcing them to develop earlier contacts with the state or to generate their own resources via the offering of services such as training, consulting, and memberships fees (Thompson 1995). This had a structural impact on its capacity to run independent programmes and on the size of CSOs in general, with one foreign donor noting that large Argentine CSOs were a 'rarity' (SOMO, 2011, pers. comm., 15 May). Lacking a central coordinating body, this situation deterred the emergence of collaborative spaces and discourses, lowering the political profile of civil society as a political actor. The other cleavage deterring developments in this direction is the exclusive link between the Peronist Party and popular sectors of society. This link has stabilised around a fundamental premise of the Peronist movement: the association of the notions of the 'popular' and the 'social' with that of the 'national' (Acha 2004).[33] This association will be shown to repeatedly interfere with liberal and cosmopolitan visions of civil society and business at the basis of the Sustainability programme.

Standardisation in adversity

The Argentine context for social standardisation differed from the Brazilian on a number of significant ways. On the general level, neither the transition to democracy or the neoliberalisation process were accompanied by the emergence of alternative political discourses challenging the bi-partisan party system and the position of the Peronist movement at the core of the labour-popular front. Furthermore, the latter subordinated to the neoliberal Peronist administration in power during the 1990s, albeit no other relevant political actor challenged this either. In both periods, the Argentine political system continued excluding business as a political actor (even when some businessmen participated in party politics), and rejected corporate political activism. The main organisations of civil society and labour, as well as the main political parties, also remained uninterested in developing links with the corporate sector,

[33] A line in the Peronist March, to this day sang in party and movement meetings, refers to Perón as 'the first worker'. At the same time Peronist followers consider themselves part of 'the national and popular' movement.

beyond social pacts and economic negotiations oriented to moderate labour demands. In this situation, projects of social standard-setting were, if any, framed under a weak Business & Trade programme, dependant on the actions of specific businessmen or the corporate policies of local TNCs' subsidiaries. By the end of the 1990s this agenda remained entirely disconnected from the political environment and from any political actor of weight. As was put by the director of an environmental CSO: 'there was no common language between civil society, companies and the state' (CEDHA, 2011, pers. comm., 14 September). This segmentation resulted in only sporadic and minor instances of inter-sectoral collaboration regarding social standardisation in any of its forms. Among them, in the late 1980s a group of local corporate executives working for large European firms in the country started to promote concepts of 'total quality' on the premise that a liberal democratic society was not sustainable without competitive firms promoting high social and environmental practices (FAM/CECAM, 2011, pers. comm., 16 September). After lobbying members of Congress this group managed to get a bill passed in 1992 – before the first ISO quality norm was launched – whereby the President of the Republic granted an annual award promoting the voluntary improvement of products, processes and service standards, mimicking a model initiated in the US. This award-based methodology was reproduced by other business associations, for instance, the local Christian Association of Business Managers (ACDE), which granted one to companies showing commitment to social values, the UIA, which since 1995 grants a prize for corporate community investment, and the American Chamber of Commerce of Argentina since 1998, with a Corporate Citizenship award to those companies whose activities transcend the economic horizon (Paladino and Mohan 2002). Apart from this, social standardisation remained as the realm of a handful of corporate programmes within large foreign firms. Given this low degree of specialisation, some of the same individuals involved in these first projects created the few available CSR consultancies existing in the 2000s, and one of them even attended the ISO SR WG as government expert of the Argentine delegation (FAM/CECAM, 2011, pers. comm., 16 September). Nonetheless, even among large firms, engagement with international standards was quite poor: by 1995 only 36 firms had certified ISO 9000, and a study on the matter concluded that adoption was guided exclusively on corporate-economic considerations: local subsidiaries aligning with foreign headquarters, large local manufacturers of exportable commodities interested in reaching international markets, and medium-sized required to so for supplying to foreign firms (Ramos 1995).

As a result, through the 1990s few local organisations emerged promoting Business & Trade initiatives of social standardisation. One of the few that did so, and that is found in the Argentine participation network, was the local charter of the WBCSD, created in 1992 under the name of Argentine Business Council for Sustainable Development (CEADS). Notwithstanding, CEADS will remain a minimal associational body linking the CEOs of the largest companies in

the country, never assuming a coordinating or think tank role such as the Ethos Institute. A second CSO emerging in the last decade of the millennium which displayed an orientation towards business-civil collaboration – albeit not an attendant to the global initiatives – is the Tucumán Foundation (*Fundación del Tucumán*), set in 1985 by academics and businessmen interested in proposing alternative developmental projects for the Northern region around Tucumán province (Tucuman 2012). Contrary to CEADS this foundation assumed a more political mission, counting among its objectives the promotion of public-private partnerships to deal with developmental issues, as well as incentivising republican institutions, in a manner resembling the PNBE. The Foundation also promoted social responsibility ideas but only from a corporate perspective, coordinating meetings among businessmen and academic sectors, the first one held in 2003. Nonetheless, this organisation remained entirely peripheral to the main political actors in Argentina as well as to the main corporate actors, oriented to training and research activities. Possibly a contributing factor to this is its remote location, in a poor province 1,300 Km away from the economic and political centre of Buenos Aires.

Only towards the last years of the 1990s it is possible to find some mention of civil society engaging with business on a more sectoral level over issues connected with social standardisation. Such mention is found as part of the Social Sector Forum (*Foro del Sector Social*), a body created in 1996 to provide certain civil society-wide representation in relation to the government and the private sector, and which included six large firms in its Advisory Council (FORO 2011). This Forum is the closest equivalent Argentina has to a coordinating civil society body such as ABONG. In that year over forty businessmen signed a collaboration agreement accepting a number of 'socially responsible principles' and a compromise to promote stronger relations between companies and civil society (Paladino and Mohan 2002). However, this collaboration agreement is not referenced in any relevant literature or publication, nor was the Forum mentioned during any of the interviews as having any institutional significance for social standardisation. On this basis it is evident that these Business & Trade expressions and minor initiatives by civil society actors did not, by any means, became organised under a social movement form or as a proto-political platform, as was the case in Brazil. Rather, issues of CSR and private governance remained sporadic and atomised, framed by a traditional corporate approach and dissociated from universalist projects regarding human rights, democratisation, civil participation, and/or corporate activism (Paladino and Mohan 2002; Campetella and Bombal 2000).

This first section has shown that the trajectory of social standardisation until this point was very embryonic, with few institutional expressions of a social standardisation being available. The Argentine situation is thus more interesting because of what it is missing than for what it includes, contrary to the situation in Brazil. Nonetheless, the section does indicate that domestic political divisions and an exclusive pattern of state-society relations proved resilient to

different shocks, even when facing contradictory conditions, such as the Peronist Party-CGT alliance under the neoliberal Menem's administration. New social demands after the democratic transition remained largely structured around the national-popular discourse of Peronism and its corporatist relationship with labour, while the domestic business sector was weakened and sidelined as a political actor. A few instances of standard-setting flashed as a consequence of economic liberalisation, but only as part of technical-corporate developments in line with the Business & Trade programme, decoupled from the country's political economic context. As different interviewees commented when inquired about CSR, sustainability and social and environmental standards in the 1990s, other things were of more pressing concern (IAE, 2011, pers. comm., 8 September; Avina, 2011, pers. comm., 5 September; IARSE, 2011, pers. comm., 13 September). The next section explores the reasons why the consolidation of a socially-oriented political discourse in the 2000s, with such positive implications for the Brazilian trajectory, did not significantly alter the overall trajectory of social standardisation in Argentina, blocking the emergence of domestic standard-setting initiatives and interest in participating in the global initiatives.

THE 2000S: THE RETURN OF THE STATE AND GOVERNANCE INDIFFERENCE

Almost in coincidence with the Brazilian case and with other countries in the region, the 2000s in Argentina were shaped by the abandonment of the neoliberal project and the return of an interventionist state with a marked social movement and welfarist orientation (Wylde 2012; Grugel and Riggirozzi 2012). Similarly as well, most of the decade was characterised by period of economic growth and the improvement of social indicators. However, in the case of Argentina this transition was dramatically marked by the impact of the economic meltdown the country experienced in December 2001 when it defaulted on its debt; the largest debt default in history at the time until Greece's (Feldstein 2002). The dramatic deterioration of social conditions that ensued – the national GDP fell 10.2% in 2002 and wages dropped 30%, resulting in a massive rise in poverty, which reached 53% of the population in the second half of 2002 (Becker 2010) – altered the political landscape in a number of significant forms. First, the crisis permanently undermined the legitimacy of neoliberal policies and discourses. Second, it altered the role of the state vis-à-vis society, reinvigorating calls for greater interventionism. Third, it sent the party system into disarray. Fourth, it politically activated a number of social actors previously excluded from political debates.

The social crisis generated by rising unemployment, fiscal pressure, and confiscation of bank deposits catalysed social protests, culminating in the collapse of the government in 2001 and the rooting in public opinion of a discontent towards the entire political class reflected in the

famous motto: '¡*Qué se vayan todos!*' (Everyone must go!) (Gómez 2006). The UCR – one of the oldest political parties and in government at the time – entered into crisis from which it has not yet recovered, leaving the Peronist Party (or better said, the Peronist parties) in an almost hegemonic position since. The political crisis was of such magnitude that between December 20th 2001 and the end of that year there were four different presidents, until a transition (Peronist) government stabilised in January 2002, attempting to govern a country which a year later still had half its urban inhabitants below poverty level (Rojas 2003).

In this context a new political discourse stabilised after the election of the left-wing Peronist candidate – pro-labour, pro-social movement and protectionist – Néstor Kirchner to the Presidency in 2003 (deceased in 2010), followed by the election of his wife Cristina Fernández in 2007 (and again in 2011). This dissertation denominates these governments as the Kirchnerist administrations. In particular the first administration by President Kirchner was successful in supervising the rapid recovery of the economy – with a substantial reduction of poverty and unemployment levels – on a model that relied on a competitive exchange rate and taxing the exportation of agricultural commodities. At the same time, the government implemented pro-labour policies and wage increases in the formal economy with targeted subsidies on wage-level products (Etchemendy and Collier 2007; Grugel and Riggirozzi 2007). By taxing its most competitive exports the Kirchnerist model could destine hard currency revenues to fund its social programmes. As Richardson (2009) explains, the administration managed to do this by incentivising the replacement of beef and wheat by soybeans as the country's leading export. Soybean is a booming agricultural commodity due to the increase in purchasing power by developing countries such as China, where it is used in livestock feeding and processed foods. As soybeans are not part of the domestic consumption of Argentineans – contrary to beef and wheat – this allowed the government to simultaneously promote their exports and tax them, generating large fiscal revenues while not hampering the food basket of the popular classes. The Kirchnerist political economic model received as well multiple denominations reflecting this dual character, such as 'market nationalism' (Riggirozzi 2009), the term used in the chart at the beginning of the chapter, 'protectionist neo-developmentalism' (O'Connor 2012), 'segmented neo-corporatism' (Etchemendy and Collier 2007), and 'export-oriented populism' (Robinson 2009).

On this basis, the first Kirchner administration managed to reverse the pattern of depressed salaries and fiscal austerity imposed by previous governments, stimulating public investment and extending social safeguards, allowing Néstor Kirchner, just as his more famous Northern neighbour, to leave office as the most popular president in modern Argentine history

(Levitsky and Murillo 2008).[34] This 'success' stabilised a different type of political discourse to the one promoted by Lula. While the latter combined economic neoliberalism with welfare policies, the Kirchnerist agenda rejected the neoliberal distinction between the political and the economic, favouring an active intervention in the economy, interference with monetary policy, and imposing restrictive conditions over foreign capitals (Moreira and Barbosa 2010). Furthermore, the Kirchnerist model of state-society relations was not inclusive as the PT's. Rather, it set to discriminate from politics those sectors that President Kirchner catalogued as the 'destroyers of the Nation': the military, the Church, and business (Barbosa 2010: 29). Second, it relied more on clientelist practices than on co-optation, excluding allied sectors of civil society and labour from the state bureaucracy.

In light of the erosion of traditional channels of representation, the post-crisis period witnessed new social actors taking part in the reconstruction of the public domain, and growing support for state interventionism gaining ground even in liberal sectors (Tobío 2010; Svampa 2006). This reinforced even further an already centralised presidential system. During the crisis, private companies had become exposed to an unforeseen social scenario, with violent expressions in the form of looting of supermarkets and stores and widespread vandalism against banks and private businesses. In this context, they also called for the government to moderate civil mobilisation and became more inclined to provide social contributions. The urgency of social demands also raised the profile of the municipal level (FAM/CECAM, 2011, pers. comm., 16 September). Municipalities became the primary intermediaries to manage pressing community problems, as well as key interlocutors between the national government and grassroots social movements. This made the relationship among civil society, the state and business to shift downwards; away from the national or provincial levels where more general policies were discussed. In this new context, organised civil society was the greater loser in terms of influence, as observed by a NGO director claiming that 'the ceiling of an NGO became the floor of the state' (Avina, 2011, pers. comm., 5 September). These aspects will be shown to be at play in the limited participation CSOs had in the Argentine standard-setting network. In this context, it should not surprise that the Worldwide Governance Indicators show Argentina to have lost significant ground in terms of corruption control and regulatory quality between 1998 and 2008, falling behind Chile, Uruguay and Brazil (Orlansky and Chuchco 2010).

The government was successful in deactivating and co-opting the more conflictive social cleavages, in particular the belligerent unemployed movements ('*Piqueteros*')[35] which had displaced labour unions as the central actor in social mobilisation (Iglesias and De Filippo

[34] Nonetheless, his wife was re-elected for a second term in 2011 with 54% of the votes, the highest number of votes achieved since the return of democracy.

[35] The 'piquetero' identity, which corresponds to a marginal social positioning, explicitly rejects the inaction of the unemployed category, instead seeking for empowerment against vulnerability (Rajland 2008; Cheresky 2006).

2011; Norden 2011; Zibechi 2009; Hochstetler and Friedman 2008). The government also strengthened alliances with labour and other civil society sectors, which have been weakened during the neoliberal years (Svampa 2007; Svampa 2007a; Etchemendy and Collier 2007; Palomino and Trajtemberg 2006). In relation to labour, in 2004 the government reversed the pro-market labour laws promulgated in the nineties and supported new collective negotiations (930 in 2006 alone, the highest number in 15 years), pre-agreeing wage increases with unions and favouring them during industrial conflicts (Ibid). It also supported the centralised leadership of the labour movement by the CGT to the expense of the more open CTA, which struggled unsuccessfully through the decade to obtain official recognition. However, differing from the approach by the PT, labour leaders were not made central members of the administration.

In relation to civil society, the governing party adopted a tolerant treatment towards social activism and popular movements in general (Massetti 2010; Levitsky and Murillo 2008). It promoted same-sex marriage legislation and laws to diversify the media, which contributed to the alignment of progressive sectors; including gender rights movements, intellectuals, and liberal civil organisations. The same occurred with social movements of diverse extraction, which by 2004 had constituted 'popular fronts' which claimed allegiance to the project of the Presidency (Perez and Natalucci 2010). These fronts include *piquetero* groups such as the FTV, the Evita Unemployed Workers Movement (MTD), the youth-oriented *Barrios de Pie* Movement (which eventually had a member elected for Congress), gender organisations such as *Red de Mujeres Solidarias*, left-wing Catholic groups such as *Padre Mujica* Social Organisation, Communist parties, teachers associations, and youth groups (Ibid: 101).

Of greater relevance for the trajectory of social standardisation, the administration, supported by left-of-centre political parties, repudiated unpopular pardon laws for crimes committed during the dictatorship immediately after taking office in 2003.[36] Moreover, President Kirchner created the Secretary of Human Rights of the Nation, a ministerial agency, and named formerly-exiled activist Eduardo Duhalde (no relation with former Argentine president of the same surname) and legal defendant of captured guerrilla members during the 1970s, as its director. This and other progressive measures – such as the Universal Child Subsidy, a conditional cash transfer programme, and the expansion of the pension system (Calvo and Murillo 2012) – gained the government the support of influential human rights groups, in particular of organisations of renown such as '*Madres de la Plaza de Mayo*' and prestigious human rights activists such as the Peace Nobel Prize winner Adolfo Pérez Esquivel.

The importance of these developments is that the Kirchnerist discourse incorporated into its narrative a framing of Human Rights based on the Argentine experience during its dirty

[36] Argentina is currently the country with the largest number of judicial processes for crimes against humanity, and is pursuing jurisdiction to investigate crimes committed in Spain under the Franco dictatorship (Montoya 2010).

war, which became shared by allied organisations. This association between human rights and the discourse of left-wing Peronism will be a major factor blocking globally-oriented developments of a central cleavage of social standardisation. The co-optation (and politicisation) of the human rights sector of civil society was such that during the 2000s the *Madres* group, which had been a fierce opponent of the government in the nineties – acted as a governmental spokesman, with one of its leaders claiming that 'the enemy is no longer in the government' (quoted in Hochstetler and Friedman 2008: 58). This alignment was not merely ideological: the government put the *Madres* Foundation in charge of multi-million public housing projects, turning the CSO into the second largest employer in the construction industry in the country by 2011 (and subject to serious legal accusations for corruption and public funds mismanagement) (Veneranda 2011).

Lastly, in spite of the anti-corporate stance of the official discourse, the relationship between state and business improved in the first half of the decade, as local industry benefited from the devaluation of the currency and the spread of protectionist trade measures. However, the exclusion of this sector from political decision-making accentuated as none of the Kirchnerist administrations had business appointees in their cabinet, another fundamental difference with Lula's approach (Ross Schneider 2009). Through the decade the government did stress a confrontational discourse against large foreign business, promoting a mild 'argentinisation' of the economy by re-nationalising industries in sectors such as energy and transport. By 2008 the state had acquired stock participation in around 30 companies, including trains, steel, the national airline, and water supplies, and appointed state directors to the boards of firms where it has minority participation (Belini and Rougier 2008).[37] Hence, the Argentine political economic project and discourse had a much more accentuated inward orientation than the Brazilian case, enhanced by the isolation the country experienced from global financial markets after the debt default and re-structuring. Due to this, Argentina lacked through the 2000s the financial cleavage of standardisation present in Brazil, shown to be at the basis of initiatives such as GRI and ISE. The country went from being the second receiver of FDI in Latin America in 1999, below Brazil and above Mexico, to occupy one of the last positions behind other countries such as Chile, Colombia and Peru (Morales 2011). By 2013, São Paulo's BOVESPA had become the eighth largest stock exchange in the world, with a volume of operations 1,700 bigger than that of its counterpart in Buenos Aires, the BCBA.

This analysis of Argentine political economic structures and state-society relations in the 2000s indicated a number of differences with the Brazilian case, mostly with negative implications for the social standardisation programme. The particularity of the Argentine case is that even when a socially-oriented governmental discourse did consolidate in this decade, it did

[37] In 2012, the Fernandez administration (re)nationalised the oil company YPF, the largest firm in the country, which had been privatised in the 1990s (Burke and Popper 2012).

not lead to greater engagement with the Sustainability programme. This section indicates that such a situation is linked with the interference of key cleavages of social standardisation produced by an exclusive national political discourse and polarised state-society relations. Thus, central premises of the Sustainability programme, such as the connection of labour rights with social standards and a liberal view of human rights, were directly blocked by the presence of neo-corporatist relations and nationalist political visions. Similarly, the exclusion of business from political activity made difficult the expansion of the CSR from its corporate matrix never materialised. Another pillar of the governance programme, such as collaborative multi-sectoral relations, found little resonance in the context of politicised civil society and industrial relations promoted by the nationalist discourse of the state. The following section analyses the impact of this exclusive context on the relations composing the Argentine participation network, as well as on those absent from it.

Politicisation and segmentation: Governance uncommunicated

The Argentine participation network described in chapter 4 revealed a fragmented and a scattered participation pattern in the global initiatives. The central area of the network was occupied by a disarticulated group of firms with limited international connections. Business actors provided the most recurrent participation in the initiatives and explained the greater amount of linkages: 25 out of the total 39 Argentine participants belonged to business-related organisations, with 18 of them taking part in the UN GC alone. It was mentioned as well that the business association CEADS was the only actor with presence in the three case studies, and was among the few Argentine actors that attended the last three ISO WG SR meetings.

However, this corporate primacy did not translate into a central coordinating role, as happened with the Ethos Institute and even Petrobras in Brazil. No representative from business was directly involved in either GRI or ISO WG SR. Moreover, the participation profile in the UN GC suggests this could be based on firm-specific decisions rather than a sectoral one, given that no organisation centralised a significant number of relations, and that the main industrial federations were mostly absent. Neither the UIA, the SRA or the looser Argentine Business Association (AEA), created in 2002, are present in any coordination instance of the case initiatives, and only the Argentine Banking Association (ABA) participates in the UN GC local network along with some small SMEs business chambers. Nor are other relevant actors suggested by comparison with the Brazilian case, such as the Buenos Aires Stock Exchange BCBA, or the Argentine Chamber of Commerce. This is quite significant as Paredes (2010) and Rameri et al (2009) indicate that the largest corporations in the country are significantly interconnected at Board level. Finally, neither participation data nor during the interviews was it suggested that any type of outstanding personality performed similar roles to the ones by the

Brazilian social entrepreneurs. At the same time, there is practically a total absence of SMEs. A study by a local think tank concluded that the even the more numerous involvement in the UN GC mentioned in chapter 4 responded to marketing and politically-incentivised purposes (Pfeiffer 2006). According to this report, the subscribing firms expressed surprise when this think tank approached them a year later with the intent of monitoring compliance with UN GC requirements, with only 18 out of the 188 companies contacted answering a survey on their progress.

A civil society representative working on sustainability and CSR issues explained that Argentine firms, when not following broader corporate guidelines, tend to avoid innovating in relation to social corporate programmes given the high distrust of corporate action in public opinion, shaping a vision where risking greater public exposure is 'just not worth it' (Avina, 2011, pers. comm., 5 September). More sophisticated programmes, such as social reporting based on GRI guidelines – local social reporting frameworks do not exist or are direct reproductions of other ones, such as Ethos – are still largely circumscribed to a small number of large firms, given the high cost and complexity of producing these reports, and the lack of incentives in the local business culture. Far from the perspective of IBASE, where social reporting and other CSR instruments are considered enhancing elements for public control over corporations, in Argentina these types of mechanisms are amply perceived as part of the construction of brands or foreign market-entry requirements (IAE, 2011, pers. comm., 8 September; Reporte Social, 2011, pers. comm., 16 September).

Accordingly, social standardisation remained treated from a minimal Business & Trade perspective, purged from any relevant social and political implication. As will be further explained, no social actor, including firms, has any incentive for this to change, and to elevate standard-setting to a more political status. Neither GRI nor the UN GC counted with participation by governmental or labour groups, and only three civil society actors are involved in these initiatives. Thus, the participation pattern reflects such lack of interest, and the global initiatives were of interest only for specialised departments within large firms or the proxy activities of minor business associations and CSOs with limited representational capacity, resources and visibility. Governmental actors have not expressed any position in relation to the global initiatives, and this author had difficulty in finding relevant official discussants to inquire on the matter. The government expert attending the ISO SR WG did not belong to a ministry or an official standardisation body, but was a private consultant in charge of the Quality and Modernisation Centre (CECAM), linked with the Argentine Federation of Municipalities (FAM), which is a public non-state body. Such centre is responsible for implementing quality standards within municipalities and monitoring their fulfilment (FAM 2012). A municipal-level contractor attending the ISO WG SR is hardly a positive indicator of active state interest.

The position of the Argentine government on social standard-setting can be better extrapolated from a Declaration by its Minister of Labour during the OECD High-Level Roundtable on Employment and Industrial Relations of 2008. This declaration reveals a stance regarding labour and corporate governance referencing to the ILO Decent Work Agenda and OECD principles, and an understanding of CSR from a critical welfarist perspective that rejects labour market flexibilisation and supports collective organisation, without particular reference to any other governance initiative (Tomada 2008). It must be noted that Argentina was also part of a small group of developing countries that asked for a ban on private labelling in the WTO (Espach 2006). Expectedly, state legislation or national norms on issues of social responsibility, or even discursive support for the agenda represented by the governance initiatives, are also unavailable. The only initiative in this direction by a relevant governmental actor was a legislative project proposed in the City of Buenos Aires for making social reporting mandatory for companies with over 200 employees, but the project was never approved. Inquiries on this matter revealed that it was lobbied against by organisations such as CEADS but also by CSOs like the Avina Foundation, on the basis that making social reporting mandatory would make it susceptible to a mercantile logic. Interestingly, it was commented that the proposal was actually championed by the National College of Accountants, an organisation with vested interests in certifying the reports (Avina, 2011, pers. comm., 5 September).

The proxy character of the business CSOs involved in the Argentine network is evidenced by an analysis of their evolution and organisational capacities. The most active of them, CEADS, appears at first hand to perform a similar role to the Ethos Institute, as it also promotes a global discourse of sustainability, environmental standards, and corporate responsibility. Its members organisation are also the firms most actively involved in the case study initiatives: of the thirteen members in CEADS' directorship, five are part of the governing body of the local UN GC network, including Petrobras Argentina, while three of them are among the dozen Argentine firms which use GRI guidelines by 2010. But both organisations differ significantly in their institutional features and activities performed. Mainly, CEADS remains a purely associational body. Thus, while Ethos' Board of Directors is integrated by industry leaders and members of organisations such as the PNBE, plus representatives of different public and civil society organisations – all of them Brazilian – CEADS's council is integrated exclusively by large corporations, with an ample presence of foreign TNCs (CEADS, 2011, pers. comm., 7 September). On the other hand, while Ethos membership represented over a 1,000 firms, CEADS' consists of around sixty of the largest holdings and firms in Argentina, including the Argentine subsidiaries of Petrobras and Natura, but also of TNCs such as Monsanto, Unilever, Novartis and Pepsico. Interestingly, as a reflection of the absence of political interest by industrial chambers in matters of social standard-setting, interviews confirmed that recognised local corporations prefer to delegate involvement in this sort of

projects on CEADS (CEADS, 2011, pers. comm., 7 September; Techint, 2011, pers. comm., 14 September). But the poor institutional capacities of CEADS are another indicator of its proxy role: organisationally is a very small body with less than five staff, limited resources, and minimal public recognition. An online search for 'CEADS' references in *La Nación*, a widely read newspaper of Argentina, resulted in only 22 mentions between 2000 to 2011, mostly related to tertiary activities (such as endorsing events, training courses, etc.), while an equivalent search for 'Instituto Ethos' in *O Globo* journal resulted in ten times this number, with a significant number of articles having Ethos as central protagonist (plus significant public presence by its personalities, in particular Oded Grajew). Interviews with CEADS' representatives confirm that the organisation also lacks the normative entrepreneurship of Ethos in terms of generating its own standards, guidelines or participating in international activities. Rather, its role circumscribes to systemise and communicate the experiences of member companies and report on some global trends. The last ten-year report by this organisation – covering the 1998-2007 period – did not include a single mention to any of the global standard-setting initiatives under review besides referencing to the 'sustainable development' position held by the WBCSD parent organisation (CEADS 2008).

The remaining business associations mapped in chapter 4 have are even more peripheral features when analysed in detail. The local representative of the Argentine UN GC network belongs to the Argentine Institute of Oil and Gas (IAPG), a lobby group formed by the oil producers of the country. An interview held with the executive holding such position confirmed that the engagement with the UN GC by this organisation is secondary: it is not to represent a sectoral interest nor there is agenda in place beyond compliance with the minimal guidelines demanded by the UN GC, and the IAPG plays no active role in promoting the Sustainability agenda in a particular direction (IAPG, 2011, pers. comm., 6 September). Another participant is IARSE, which was mentioned to be an Organisational stakeholder in GRI. The case of IARSE is slightly more relevant as this organisation is the one with closer programmatic resemblance to the Ethos Institute in Argentina. Founded in 2002, IARSE states as its mission the promotion of CSR and associated practices, 'strengthening the commitment of the business sector with the sustainable development of the country' (IARSE 2012). IARSE shares Ethos' operational model, as it is financially supported by contributions from corporate members. This membership consists of around a hundred foreign and domestic firms, including Petrobras (and one small catholic university); a number still small in relation to the almost 1,300 firms affiliated to Ethos. IARSE also displays a certain outward orientation, being the actor with the highest number of international connections in the Argentine participation network, linking with actors and networks involved in social standard-setting such as the British CSR 360 network and the Latin American Programme of CSR (PLARSE). PLARSE is a combined initiative by the Ethos institute, the Dutch Inter-church Organisation for Development Cooperation (ICCO), the

AVINA Foundation and Forum Empresa, the Latin American CSR network (PLARSE 2013). IARSE's Executive Director, Luis Ulla, is also a member of Ethos' International Board.

There are also some relevant historical parallels between the origins of IARSE and Ethos. Before its creation, IARSE's director was an executive in the Arcor Foundation: a non-profit organisation created in 1991 focused on improving the social situation of vulnerable groups and communities, in particular children (ARCOR 2011). Arcor is a large family-run Argentine TNC, one of the world's largest producers of confectionery with ample local and international presence, in particular in Latin America. Its headquarters are in Córdoba, the second largest city in the country but still 800 km from Buenos Aires, the place where IARSE is located. This trajectory has a remarkable similitude to the link between Oded Grajew, ABRINQ, the ABRINQ foundation, and the creation of the Ethos Institute: both have origins in industries connected children, followed by corporate foundations promoting children rights, and subsequent engagement with the CSR agenda and social standard-setting in general. But IARSE never achieved the centrality of Ethos or its level of influence. Its range of activities remains significantly narrower, consisting mostly in the organisation of training courses, seminars and conferences, and publishing documents and case studies. As mentioned, IARSE's own social reporting guidelines are only an adapted version of Ethos' (Louette 2007). Moreover, just as the case of CEADS, IARSE lacks relevant political connections linking its agenda with the other relevant actors in industry, civil society or party politics, as is the case of its Brazilian counterparts. In this manner, through the 2000s it remained focused on the promotion of Business & Trade activities and did not take part in the Argentine delegation to ISO WG SR (IARSE, 2011, pers. comm., 13 September).

The situation within civil society follows the general trend so far outlined, as expected by the limited participation of non-business CSOs. It also highlights the extent of the disconnection of the global programme of social standardisation from Argentine public attention, as well as from the intellectual concerns of local academics. In this regard, a civil society scholar bluntly stated that 'corporate responsibility is not an issue in the public eye' (San Andrés, 2011, pers. comm., 14 September). As was indicated, no major CSO – with the exception of the state-funded normalisation institute IRAM – engaged actively in the case study initiatives. Two other CSOs are part of the UN GC local network: the Institute of Ethics and Quality in Agriculture, and the Argentine Society for Equity in Health (SAES). The first is an organisation focused on 'responsible' rural practices run by former public officials, academics, producers and consultants connected with agro-industry, which only got involved in 2009. SAES is a small entity integrated by medical doctors concerned with health equity. This association, is worth noting, does not have an active website, albeit its head is mentioned as one the co-founders of the International Society for Equity in Health, a larger group with similar goals (ISEQH 2011). The low profile of civil society participants is also evident in the

attendance to the ISO SR WG, even when a civil society-labour platform was convened in 2004 by the Compromiso Foundation to discuss CSR issues, and some local workshops were held in relation to ISO 26000 (Gorostiaga 2008). Notwithstanding, while in Brazil the civil society expert attended representing a wider civil society network, the Argentine one belonged to very small organisation called El Otro Foundation. This organisation focuses on citizenship programmes and the diffusion, training, monitoring and research of CSR issues, providing discussion forums for business, state agencies and unions. It integrates a number of international networks, including OECD Watch, which monitors corporate behaviour based on the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and other international norms. However, when a civil society specialist was inquired about this organisation he dismissed it as 'being nobody', while hinting the possibility that their engagement with ISO WG SR was possibly an opportunistic strategy to gain corporate funding (San Andrés, 2011, pers. comm., 14 September). As a matter of fact the attendance of El Otro Foundation to ISO 26000 plenary meetings was funded by Red Puentes, a Latin American network financed by the Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations (SOMO) – linked with the Dutch development agency – focused on developing civil monitoring capacity on environmental and social issues (SOMO, 2011, pers. comm., 15 May).

Another revealing aspect is that Argentine public opinion does not acknowledge, at least not as a priority, that private activities should be monitored through civil instruments. None of the involved CSOs, excluding the business-backed ones, shows relevant connections with the main civil society and social movements in the country, with political parties or relevant corporations. Interviews with both civil society and corporate representatives outlined a significantly different environment from the Brazilian case, where private standards are seen as contributing to the enhancement of civil control over public affairs and as part of political debates. On the contrary, the interviews revealed that in Argentina the advance of private regulatory frameworks is seen as a backward step in political governance, a regrettable consequence of the erosion of the state's capacity to address social and environmental questions (Avina, 2011, pers. comm., 5 September; Techint, 2011, pers. comm., 14 September). Through these interviews it was possible to perceive a sense of nostalgia or frustration for a more institutionalised past, distinct from Brazil, where private and civil governance is somewhat perceived as an achievement of democracy and liberalisation. In 2013, an Argentine CSR consultant describing the difference between philanthropy and corporate responsibility was asked by the journalist whether the latter was not part of the 'responsibilities of the state' (Carrillo 2013).

Given such stance, it is not surprising that only one representative of an Argentine CSO occupies a relevant role in the highest spheres of the global initiatives. He is the co-founder of the Centre for Human Rights and Environment (CEDHA) – a community-oriented organisation

articulating environmental and civil concerns – part of the GRI's Technical Advisory Committee. However, the engagement by this person was confirmed to be on more on a personal than institutional level. This person commented that his organisation had abandoned the pursuit of social and environmental standard-setting in 2001, given their evaluation that there was no political space in Argentina for this kind of debates (CEDHA, 2011, pers. comm., 14 September). Instead, CEDHA chose to engage with social and environmental standards directly on the international level, in particular attempting to influence the conditions attached to loans by the IFC, the branch of the World Bank in charge of private sector development in developing countries. Such stance is also an indicator of the exclusive configuration of the Argentine political system on these matters: CEDHA did not attempt to transnationalise and connect with international organisations in order to influence the situation in the country, but rather to abandon the national level altogether. As the CEDHA interviewee commented, almost in despair, connecting human rights and corporate action in Argentina is 'an impossible task', and attributed this impossibility to the high level of politicisation of public debates over human rights in the country. This makes it very difficult to integrate them as part of any form of corporate-oriented agenda, and such association is even rejected in academic circles (CEDHA, 2011, pers. comm., 14 September). Interviews with academics confirmed this statement: one of the interviewees seriously doubted that topics of private governance, global standards or corporate social responsibility were worthy of higher studies, 'perhaps in a master', he reflected (San Andrés, 2011, pers. comm., 14 September).

Expectedly, there is low level of specialisation of social standard-setting actors, which translates also in few contacts with specialised international organisations and networks. By 2011 there were no higher education programmes covering these issues, with the exception of some modules in business curriculums and short courses, while chapter 5 showed that Brazil counts with relevant research centres. Moreover, the few academic analyses addressing standardisation in any of its forms used in this dissertation have been produced by business schools, and lack political, IR or sociological perspectives. The low level of specialisation is also indicated by the low presence of consultants around any of the case study initiatives. Only four consultancies are involved in both the UN GC and GRI – Reporte Social, UnidadCom, AG Sustentable and Dellacasa and Castillo Consultores – compared to 19 in the Brazilian network. Their websites reveal that they are small organisations created during the 2000s, with their staff displaying a similar background: corporate experience in TNCs with a trajectory in corporate self-regulation (such as 3M and Arcor) or in specialised international civil networks (such as Red Puentes or AVINA). One of the founders of Dellacasa and Castillo was a former member of CEADS's CSR committee; those of AG Sustentable shared an accounting background having worked in the local office of Deloitte, while Reporte Social was created by the former manager of one of the first companies to have had a CSR department in the country, apparently in the

year 2000 (Reporte Social, 2011, pers. comm., 16 September). The focus of these consultancies is set exclusively on corporate performance, typical of the Business & Trade programme, and make limited mentions to Sustainability themes involving broader social, environmental and public policy concerns.

At no point the Argentine civil environment shows the level of salience that the Sustainability programme displays in Brazil. This was evidenced in the most direct of forms: while in Brazil this author rarely needed to explain himself regarding its intellectual goals, in Argentina an appropriate introduction was frequently necessary outside corporate circles. The co-founder of CEDHA emphasised that from the perspective of Argentine civil society, questions of private standards and sustainability are not considered 'serious work' (CEDHA, 2011, pers. comm., 14 September). Civil-corporate projects are perceived sceptically as part of marketing and public affairs strategies, and there are still substantial prejudices within the civil society community, a point also mentioned in interviews with IARSE and AVINA (IARSE, 2011, pers. comm., 13 September; Avina, 2011, pers. comm., 5 September). A scholar from the most prestigious business school in the country IAE drew a colloquial comparison between the public treatment received by the private regulation and governance initiatives in Argentina and Brazil: 'In Brazil, when there is a conference on these matters you have in the same table the president of a NGO, the chairman of the affected company, and a government minister or high secretary. In Argentina with luck you would have the president of the NGO, a third rank state official if any, and a middle-rank *chick* from the CSR department' (IAE, 2011, pers. comm., 8 September). He admitted that even when there has been a notable rise in interest on CSR matters since the 2001 crisis, the dominant view in the corporate sector was that social responsibility and sustainability programmes were a task for 'upper-middle class thirty-year-old women who think they are saving the world' (Ibid). It must be admitted that most of the interviews with corporate representatives validated this appreciation. For example, in the consultancy Reporte Social, a representative of which this author interviewed, out of seven employees, six were women.

The previous section stressed a number of national political structures interfering with some of the main cleavages of social standardisation attributed to the Sustainability programme. This was pointed in relation to corporate cleavages, finance, labour, and human rights, in particular as the latter remains a very sensitive issue given its connection with the military dictatorship. It was also pointed out that the Kirchner's administrations promoted politicisation along these lines. An academic observer commented on the contradictory situation that despite the Kirchnerist administrations' promotion of a cooperative stance towards civil society, they did so from the popular orientation of the Peronist discourse. Thus, they favoured semi-organised social movements, nationalist and ideological akin, over professional and more liberal CSOs (San Andrés, 2011, pers. comm., 14 September). Moreover, the enhanced state

interventionism in society resulted in key areas of civil society action, such as education and social protection, becoming quite politicised along these lines. This further hampered the possibility of governance-oriented CSOs to develop alternative multi-sectoral programmes. A foreign donor observed that in Argentina the growth in size of CSOs implied broader exposure and visibility, and subsequently higher likelihood of becoming polarised along the cleavages of the national political discourse, concluding that 'Argentine CSOs seem to implode as they get bigger' (SOMO, 2011, pers. comm., 15 May).

At the same time, the state's political discourse also involves other contradictions which interfere with relevant cleavages of social standardisation, in particular the environmental one. Multiple CSO representatives confirmed that the environmental agenda in general has low salience in Argentine public opinion, including in the view of CEDHA, an organisation co-founded by former Secretary of Environment Romina Picolotti (Avina, 2011, pers. comm., 5 September; FARN, 2011, pers. comm., 12 September; CEDHA, 2011, pers. comm., 14 September). Argentina does not have a Green Party of any significant weight, nor counts with powerful grassroots rural movements advancing themes of environmental protection. Such evaluation is shared by Espach (2006) in his study of forestry governance frameworks in Argentina and Brazil, mentioning the evident 'societal indifference' towards environmental management in the former. This study also confirms the low interest of corporations in engaging in public-private collaboration, and a poor opinion of the environmental movement for global private standards, which are considered mostly expressions of powerful economic interests.

The Kirchner governments have further minimised the environmental cleavage, in particular given their promotion of the mining industry (FARN, 2011, pers. comm., 12 September). Argentina has not traditionally been a mining country, such as Chile, Bolivia and Peru, however the country possesses the sixth largest mineral reserves in the world (Svampa and Sola Alvarez 2010). Thus, and contradicting their anti-corporate nationalist discourse, the Presidency and provincial governments have actively promoted extractive activities by granting benefits to large foreign companies during the 2000s. Moreover, the Presidency has repeatedly blocked the promulgation of the 'Law of Glaciers', oriented to protect water reserves located in the Andes region, and imposing greater restrictions on mining activities (Veneranda 2011a). This had led to the appearance of a number of grassroots environmental fronts advocating against the environmental and social degradation produced by open-pit mining. However, Svampa and Sola Alvarez (2010: 119) indicates that these movements are mostly of a radical civil orientation, rejecting bureaucratisation and association with political parties, and opposing territorial rights to corporate and political interests. Hardly, this would reverberate with social standardisation cleavages in their Sustainability variant. Moreover, these authors link the advance of mining interests with CSR activities, as firms move to cultivate relationships with

universities and launch social community programmes in often marginal locations with poor social services.

The final cleavage of social standardisation that is blocked by national structures is labour. This cleavage was commented to be crossed by the traditional neo-corporatist relations the labour movement maintains with the state and political parties of Peronist extraction. The involvement of Argentine trade unions in the global case studies has been minimal, with no participation in either the UN GC or GRI. An examination of the ISO SR WG's attendance lists shows that a representative of the CGT was present on the first ISO 26000 Plenary meeting in Bahia, Brazil in 2005. This person was Julio Ledesma, of strong links with the ruling party having been presidential advisor between 2003 and 2007 and Congressman since then (Ledesma 2011). However, the CGT position in relation to global social standardisation is perfectly stated in the minutes of TUCA-ITUC ISO 26000 workshops organised in 2008, mentioned in chapter 5 to have been coordinated by Brazil's DIEESE. The minutes reveal that the CGT maintained a sceptical and antagonistic stance towards the development of a social responsibility standard, questioning the need for a global norm that was voluntary and set by a non-official body, pointing that it would contradict 'the spirit' of existing ILO Conventions (GTTN 2009). On these grounds, the CGT did not accept the mechanisms set by ISO to generate a global norm addressing labour issues. At the same time, the CGT stated that the labour movement had restricted access to the local discussion forums set by the normalisation body IRAM. This seems highly unlikely given the political clout the CGT has in the country, but the claim could not be validated.

This stance by the sole Argentine trade union confederation not only contrasted with the position of the Brazilian CUT and DIESSE revealed in the previous chapter, but also with that of the competing federation CTA. In the same workshops the CTA expressed that Argentine labour should participate in these global initiatives to set a labour position, as these global developments would impact on the future role of organised labour and could lead to new monitoring mechanisms over business (Ibid). However, the CGT not only abandoned its place in the Argentine ISO delegation, but prevented the participation of the CTA, which had shown interest in doing so, arguing that the latter had no legal recognition (Argentine ISO WG SR Delegation, 2010, pers. comm., 18 May). After the ISO 26000 Quebec Meeting of 2009 the CGT launched a press release openly rejecting the entire ISO 26000 process and any other initiative intended to privatise and 'soften' labour regulation (CGT 2009). In this text, the CGT called labour organisations and governments to boycott this type of global initiative, claiming that they weakened tripartism and local labour legislation. This position was slightly moderated in a joint note with the CTA released a month later. This note ironically referred to the 'triumph' of the business community in committing governments and workers to the ISO 26000 project, legitimising a '[...] new space for the interpretation, shaping, and even the generation, of

international social and labour norms' that would 'sterilise the ILO' in the near future (CGT-CTA 2009). At the same time, the note drew a difference across the North/South divide, as it did accept that this type of global norm could be of value in developed countries. However, both the CGT and the CTA agreed on that the relevance of this type of standard in Latin America was limited, considering that the business class had major 'cultural deficits' having supported in the past repressive regimes, lacking independence, and having a tendency to be co-opted by foreign interests or be subordinated to the state (reproducing the derogatory vision of the Argentine business class commented earlier in this chapter). Just as Brazilian multi-sectoral partnerships were shown to be embedded in a Sustainability vocabulary compatible with the social neoliberalism of the PT and the Ethos Institute, this statement is a synthesis of the Kirchnerist market nationalist discourse, synthesising the effects of the dictatorship, economic globalisation, and the parasitic nature of Argentine industry.

This section has explored the characteristics of the Argentine participation network against Argentine political structures and state society relations in the 2000s, drawing frequent comparisons with the Brazilian situation. It has shown that fundamental cleavages of social standardisation comprised by the Sustainability programme, such as the link between global standards and human rights, the involvement of business in public policy and governance, a civil approach to labour issues, environmentalism, and collaborative relations between business and civil society, are either rejected or ignored by the political discourse organising local societal relations. Such situation results in a minimal articulation between the few actors participating in social standard-setting and those involved in local political debates, and a marginal position of the Business & Trade and Sustainability programmes in society at large. Moreover, the connections behind participating actors were evidenced as fragmented and opportunistic, centred around a few corporate actors and small proxy organisations.

New developments? Crises, politics and governance

This last section provides two examples of social standardisation developments that advanced during the 2000s. These cases provide some final insights regarding the political circumstances that facilitate the local resonance of the standardisation discourse, albeit they do not alter the overall conclusion delineated through this chapter in relation to Argentina. These two examples are framed by situations of institutional crisis, where a sudden change in political economic conditions eased certain reconfigurations in political frames and societal relations. Both examples were inspired by comments noticed during the interviews conducted in Buenos Aires with representatives of civil society, academia, and business.

The first example connects with the 2001 economic crisis, which was identified in consensus by those interviewed as the event that contributed the most to the expansion of Sustainability notions in the last decade in Argentina. As was explained, the rapid deterioration of social conditions in the first years after the crisis was accompanied by a crisis in political leadership and the overflow of the state's capacity to attend social demands. This led to the fracture of the corporate and political consensus supporting neoliberal policies through most of the 1990s, and the emergence of sector of business calling for greater social awareness and inclusion. In light of the unprecedented social exposure manifested during the crisis, large companies in particular concluded they had to take a more active stance in social affairs if they wanted to retain their capacity to operate: either to prevent social discontent to spill in their direction or to forestall the deterioration of the communities where they operated. As one interviewee mentioned; 'they [companies] were forced to accept that if they didn't do something they would go down with all the rest' (FAM/CECAM, 2011, pers. comm., 16 September). It was also mentioned the activating effect the crisis had over new social movements, which in particular during the first years attempted to establish an independent position from the state and political parties. This was the moment when diverse expressions of a 'social economy' came to the fore based on reciprocal non-mercantile logics, in the form of barter associations, neighbourhood assemblies, cooperatives and worker-recovered enterprises, which received significant attention in both local and Northern academia (Palomino 2005; North and Huber 2004; Pearson 2003). In this context, those firms more attached to local communities, such as industrial and rural enterprises, became interested in corporate social responsibility concepts on the basis that it was a readily available body of knowledge providing a social corporate programme (FAM/CECAM, 2011, pers. comm., 16 September; IAE, 2011, pers. comm., 8 September). Business school academics confirmed a notable increase in the level of interest by companies on these issues through the last decade, and noted an incipient change in the social awareness displayed by executives attending MBA courses (IAE, 2011, pers. comm., 8 September).

The post-crisis context also facilitated the development of some endogenous expressions aligned more with the Sustainability programme than with the Business & Trade one. These expressions involve the emergence of new civil business associations adopting a pro-active stance towards social standardisation, extending the limited service-oriented activities of CSOs such as IARSE, CEADS, and the Tucumán Foundation. The new organisations appeared on the second part of the 2000s and have still limited visibility, but display some notable resemblances with the origins of the PNBE and Ethos, as they are attempting to establish an alternative position within the business sector in relation to ongoing political and social developments. One of these organisations is called *Nuevos Aires* (New airs), an open forum created in 2008 to promote an informal space where businessmen from the Buenos Aires

metropolitan area can discuss social questions and coordinate initiatives between the private sector, academia and civil society independently from the official position of industrial chambers and government (NuevosAires 2012).[38] The approximately dozen members of Nuevos Aires are mostly small and medium enterprises – with no presence of large firms of the type involved in CEADS – as well as some sustainability and CSR consultancies. The only exception to this is Natura, the Brazilian TNC linked with Ethos, the PNBE, the Brazilian Green Party and many of the global initiatives. Moreover, Nuevos Aires' website references to global initiatives such as the UN GC and GRI, and organisations like Ethos and the AVINA Foundation. The founder of this organisation is a young entrepreneur called Alan Gegenschatz, which displays a line of activism similar to that of the Brazilian social businessmen: he founded the first Sustainable Trust in Argentina and has been appointed President of the Board of FUNDES, a Christian-origin CSO supporting SMEs in Latin America, created by the founder of the WBCSD (Ecopreneurs 2011). He is also co-founder of the Nuestra Buenos Aires Network, whose inauguration was attended by Oded Grajew. Similarly to the PNBE in its early days, he has criticised the 'petty mentality' of the Argentine business class and the prevalence of clouded corporatist and clientelist linkages in society, instead promoting a project based on universalist notions such as environmental protection, sustainability and human development.

But differing from the position of Ethos and the PNBE, in particular during the 2000s, the institutional discourse of these new organisations is strongly opposed to the governmental project, rejecting the Kirchnerist populist programme and the high involvement of the state in the economy. This oppositional stance is also found in the second example. This is also framed by another situation of crisis: the 2008 conflict between the government and rural producers. This conflict was triggered by a proposal by the government of President Fernández to increase taxes on agricultural exports, in particular over soy crops. The response by the rural sector generated one of largest mobilisations since 2001, with two rallies with over 200,000 protesters and several weeks of lock-out over the City of Buenos Aires, blocking the entry of agricultural products to the capital. The conflict outlined two political factions: on the one side, the government and aligned social movements forming a 'popular front', which claimed that the measures envisioned a more egalitarian project of society. On the other, the four main agrarian federations supported by rural workers and upper and middle-class urban sectors (but also by the non-aligned radical left), which considered it an unjustified advance of the state over property rights, and an attack over the livelihood of rural communities (Richardson 2009; Fair Rzezak 2008).[39] Though the government's project was ultimately defeated in the Congress, this

[38] Other organisations include VALOS in Mendoza province, the Business Council of Entre Rios, and the Patagonian Business Forum.

[39] The conflict united a powerful rural sector historically divided into four groups with distinct membership base and ideology. One of the was the Sociedad Rural Argentina; the oldest trade association in the country grouping large landowners, politically conservative and economically liberal, with

only accentuated the antagonistic discourse of the administration towards concentrated economic sectors, distinguishing popular interests from those of the so called 'corporations', such as rural groups, foreign and domestic industrial conglomerates, and large media firms (De Luca and Malamud 2010).

Representatives from the industrial holding Techint and the multinational agri-business group of Argentine origin Los Grobo coincided in that the 2008 conflict and the aggressive response by the government exposed the business sector to a new round of public criticism from civil society, labour and political actors (Techint, 2011, pers. comm., 14 September; Los Grobo, 2011, pers. comm., 13 September). In view of this, large firms resorted to a defensive strategy based on enhancing associational and communicational activities vis-à-vis society, including active involvement in international governance initiatives. As an example of this, Los Grobo – an actor directly affected by the rural conflict – acquired a prominent role in a governance initiative oriented to soy producers. This initiative was created in Switzerland in 2006 under the name 'Round Table on Responsible Soy Association' (RTRS) (RTRS 2011). By 2011 Los Grobo provided the Secretariat for the organisation and its CSR manager occupied the RTRS' vice-Presidency. The model of the RTRS association shares the features of other global Sustainability initiatives as outlined in chapter 3, aiming to facilitate '[…] global dialogue on soy production that is economically viable, socially equitable and environmentally sound' and promote '[...] the use and growth of responsible production of soy, through the commitment of the main stakeholders of the soy value chain and through a global standard for responsible production' (Ibid). Similarly, the RTRS is organised on a multi-stakeholder structure involving producers, traders and CSOs such as the WWF, as well as members of governmental agencies, auditing firms and academia. In 2010 the RTRS launched its own labelling and certification programme according to its own global standard. Expectedly, this initiative is criticised by rural and small peasant organisations that consider it an attempt to green-wash agri-business, while silencing the rights of rural communities and debates about food sovereignty (García-López and Arizpe 2010). Similarly to the case of the WSF, this last example provides an illustrative case where the moderate pro-market and cosmopolitan orientation of Sustainability, linking human and environmental standards with the global market, clashes with territorial definitions and the right of a country to establish its own policies regarding its food and agriculture system (Rosset 2008).

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profound links with UIA and other industry associations. The other tree include Confederaciones Rurales Argentinas (Argentine Rural Confederations, CRA), close to the SRA but of a more confrontational stance, Federación Agraria Argentina (Argentine Agrarian Federation, FAA), more leftist and Peronist-leaning and representing provincial medium and small producers, and Confederación Intercooperativa Agropecuaria (Agricultural Inter-cooperative Confederation, CONINAGRO), composed by rural local cooperatives.

These two examples close this section confirming the Argentine antagonistic and exclusive relation between social standard-setting and governance initiatives and domestic political discourses and traditions. These examples also reflect the resilience of the Argentine political configuration, even after situations of serious political crisis. These last two embryonic cases indicate that a positive linkage with the Sustainability programme flashed during the brief suspension of the dominant political master frame generated during political crises. However, once the immediate turmoil was over, the political master frame stemming from the state was capable of re-stabilising the previous configuration, and this author considers it extremely difficult for initiatives around organisations like Nuevos Aires to consolidate in the coming years (as a matter of fact, when this author was checking web sources in 2013, Nuevos Aires' website appeared to be offline). Nonetheless, these final developments also suggest that the exclusivity of the Argentine configuration could incentivise certain actors to connect with global initiatives in a defensive form. However, while in Brazil local participation in global programmes appears to enhance local legitimacy by globalising a national project or vision, in Argentina the objective is to prevent local de-legitimation, and resist polarisation along national political cleavages. In other words, while in Brazil participation in the global initiatives simultaneously valorises the national political agenda, in Argentina it could function in the opposite way: incentivising institutional protection against public and governmental attacks.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined the political structures supporting the Argentine participation pattern analysed in chapter 4. This pattern was shown to display a very limited and fragmented engagement by local actors in the case governance initiatives, reduced to a number of large firms, proxy business organisations, and minor CSOs with no institutional weight and with no coordinated agenda among them. Furthermore, this chapter has analysed the local trajectory of social standardisation and identified structural and political variables affecting the low level of resonance of social standard-setting in the country. It was revealed that for the second part of the twentieth century, the Argentine political discourse has reproduced a robust state-society configuration where the main cleavages of social standardisation are interpreted from an exclusive nationalist matrix. This is particularly evident in the position of the state and trade unions, which approach social standardisation from a Welfarist perspective with a corporatist and nationalist understanding of labour relations. It was also indicated that such nationalist welfarism is supported by a set of conceptual pillars that have resisted military dictatorship, democratisation, neoliberalisation, and the economic crisis of 2001. These pillars rely on a master frame anchored in the Peronist tradition that associates popular mobilisation with

national identity. This traditional association has historically antagonised which programmes advancing either liberal or cosmopolitan visions of state-society relations.

Moreover, the neoliberal experience of the 1990s and the eventual collapse of the model in 2001 delegitimised already feeble projects linking private activity, economic liberalism, and social welfare. This marginalized even further notions of corporate social responsibility, corporate citizenship, socially-oriented business activism, and private global standards, as well as the establishment of collaborative relations between civil society and business. Even during the 2000s, projects following a Sustainability model remained not only outside public political debates but marginal within the corporate environment and civil society, reduced to the interests of a handful of specialists inside multinational corporations, consultancies and business schools.

As a result, in Argentina there is no coupling between the social liberal cleavages articulated by the Sustainability programme and the market nationalist discourse advanced by the Kirchnerist administrations. Thus, a preliminary conclusion is that whereas in Brazil a younger and more flexible institutional tradition allowed for social standard-setting not to be perceived as a competitor with local political institutions, the opposite happened in Argentina. There is a low development of corporate responsibility and sustainability actors, and marginal connections with political parties and elements of civil society: the Sustainability agenda of social standardisation is politically irrelevant. The prospects for a better communication between global and local discourses on these issues are quite limited. New expressions flashed only in contexts of social crisis and political turmoil. It was only in those instances when the dominant political frame temporarily struggled to discipline state-society relations that alternative political agendas managed to emerge. Nonetheless, these expressions remain quite marginal, and previous experiences have shown that the duration of such opening is rather brief before the political system stabilises.

The last two chapters have shown that strong state-intervention, social orientation and close state-society relations can actually reverberate with liberal programmes of social standardisation, as it happened in Brazil, or entirely block them, as in Argentina. In the last decade, the social neoliberalism of Lula in Brazil treated the Sustainability programme as an extension of its own, while the market nationalism of the Kirchners treated it as a competing alternative. Hence, what these two cases suggest is that for a governance programme to be accepted locally by more than a minority of actors, it has to be compatible with local political structures and discourses that enable it to resonate and acquire public salience. In Brazil this resonance was facilitated by common corporate-civil opposition to state corporatism and neoliberalism, and later on by the social neoliberal discourse of the Workers' Party, which tolerated liberal approaches to social standardisation and governance. In Argentina instead, this resonance never emerged, and supportive discourses were literally discriminated by local

political and civil actors: political actors kept rejecting engagement with business, and business refrained from interfering in social standard-setting. As a result, global initiatives lacked local grounding, being perceived as foreign discourses with limited validity.

CHAPTER 7. CONCLUSION

This dissertation contributes to debates and knowledge on standardisation and global governance by offering a novel analysis of the trajectory of social standards and the interface between global discourses and local political structures. It has done so by examining the global and local trajectories of programmes of social standardisation and their associated institutional expressions, relying on the cases of Brazil and Argentina to explore the specific circumstances enabling or preventing communications across the global/local divide. The dissertation contributes to address a major gap in governance and standardisation literatures in relation to the Southern dimension, providing a more sophisticated understanding of the extent to which domestic political structures – state-society relations, patterns of political development, political economic programmes, and other variables – condition the involvement of local actors in global governance initiatives and the local resonance of global governance discourses.

The dissertation has examined the conditions of the emergence of different programmes of social standardisation both on the global and local level, using three global case studies – the UN GC, the GRI and ISO WG SR – to characterise the latest phase of the social standardisation process and analyse Brazilian and Argentine participation. Applying different analytical techniques this thesis revealed that the participation patterns displayed by actors from these two countries present markedly different traits – inclusive and dense in the case of Brazil, and exclusive and fragmented in the case of Argentina – outlining two different modes of engagement with the latest programme of social standardisation. This chapter concludes this study by compiling a number of findings in three sections that discuss the multi-level trajectory of social standardisation, theoretical contributions of the selected approach, and the concluding response to the research questions posed at the outset of this thesis.

THE MULTIPLE LAYERS OF SOCIAL STANDARDISATION

The methodology adopted throughout this dissertation has allowed a three-sided comparative analysis of the trajectory of social standardisation and governance. The first comparison explores diverse cleavages of social standardisation through the twentieth century and the first decade of the 2000s. This resulted in a map of the evolution of these cleavages, detailing their combination, and the emergence of three global governance programmes: a Welfarist, a Business & Trade, and a Sustainability one. The second comparison is between this global trajectory and the ones in Brazil and Argentina. The third comparison is between the Brazilian and Argentine cases themselves, and the specific domestic political structures and

traditions that facilitate and prevent the local acceptance of governance-oriented discourses and roles.

Chapter 3 examined the progressive detachment of a number of cleavages of social standardisation from the Westphalian structures of the state system. Some of these cleavages were more successful than others in becoming institutionalised, such as the case of labour after WWI, human rights after WWII, and corporate responsibility since the 1980s. Nonetheless, until the 1980s and 1990s social standardisation was marked by the blocking effect of the Cold War over international organisations, and by the competition between two types of globalising rationalities: one based on an ethical-normative logic, and another oriented by technical-economic considerations. This dichotomy was shown to be present in most international attempts to regulate social and labour standards. Thus, the ethical dimension was found in early discussions over slave labour and fair trade, in social clause debates within the WTO, in Christian approaches to corporate philanthropy, and in 'fundamental rights' agendas launched by the UN and the ILO. The technical dimension is found in liberal arguments for free trade, in the link between science, standardisation and human progress supported by ISO and other technical bodies, in the business case for CSR, in the new global compact agenda promoted by the UN, and in the growing role of corporations in social and environmental standard-setting.

The competition between these rationalities was shown to stabilise with the emergence of the Sustainability programme in the decade following the end of the Cold War, when the increasingly universal legitimacy of human rights intertwined with the strengthened universality of capitalist rationality. This new programme of social standardisation altered the form in which social standard-setting and governance was pursued internationally, and the relevance and roles of organisations such as the UN, the ILO, the OECD, international labour federations, the ICC and other international organisations. In this context, the three global case studies were used to examine how transformations in the master frame underlying the different programmes of social standardisation led to changes in the normative aims of social standard-setting as a political project.

Thus, the rise of human rights as the main social master frame supported the expansion of the social cleavages involved in social standardisation. This in turn led to new pressures for institutional arrangements to enhance cross-sectoral and geographical participation reflecting these new cleavages, even if these arrangements remained largely composed by Northern organisations. This included new proposals for alternative methods for assuring consensus through non-bureaucratic policy-making procedures which avoided political deadlocks and North/South divide polarisations, going from the rough consensus method characteristic of the ISO to the network-based evolutionary logic followed by the UN GC. Furthermore, there was a turn towards normative minimalism in social standard-setting, implying the reliance on increasingly general (and globalisable) set of norms and principles intended to avoid national

polarisations. At the same time, such considerations were coupled with a renewed faith in market-based mechanisms as the best channel to transnationalise standards, to incentivise compliance in the absence of international coercive frameworks, and to avoid clashing with domestic legislation. As a result, the new governance initiatives embraced voluntary standard-based and fast-policy arrangements. However, this also resulted in the proliferation of social standard-setting frameworks articulating issues as diverse as labour and environmental standards, corporate and financial practices, corruption, the curricula of business schools, the demands of labour actors and NGOs, and civil claims for more inclusive policies.

Furthermore, the dissertation showed that in the last years of the 2000s the three global case study initiatives contributed to the development of meta-governance instances in social standard-setting, aiming to establish higher forms of coordination to order the proliferation of frameworks and norms both at global and local levels. Such developments can be understood as a superior level of institutional consolidation whereby the standard-setting system attempts to regulate itself. In this regard, the latter part of chapter 3 explored a number of situations where the case study initiatives, other standard-setting and civil society organisations, and traditional international organisations were shown to increasingly refer to each other in complementary rather than competing terms. Thus, Human Right principles by the UN, ILO Conventions and Core Labour Standards, OECD recommendations, the GRI reporting framework, ISO 26000 guidance standards and a myriad of other instruments are now treated as part of a common governance project, even when their methodologies and origins are quite different. This relativises the conventional hierarchy between norms produced by international organisations and those generated by private actors or multi-sectoral networks, making it more sensible to speak in terms of layers rather than in hierarchical terms when referring to the operation of the system of social standards. These instances of meta-governance also expand the trajectory of social standards outlined in Figure 1, where their dynamics were shown to be guided by decreasing complexity of network arrangements and of compliance requirements. The situation by the early 2010s appears then to be one of fragmented initiatives fluidly articulated by certain networks of meta-governance, which function as an overarching normative architecture covering an undefined but expanding array of social themes. Conceptually, this adds a third axis to Figure 1 which moves in the opposite direction to the previous two: while the complexity of network arrangements and compliance requirements decreases, the normative reach of global social standards as a whole increases.

The multi-sectoral and multi-national structures behind the global case studies were used to move from the examination of the international level to the national one. Chapters 4 to 6 explored the engagement of Brazilian and Argentine actors with programmes of social standardisation, in particular with the Sustainability one. In both cases, the capacity of local political systems to communicate with the global programmes was studied by analysing their

compatibility with the political economic agenda promoted by the Argentine and Brazilian governments in the 2000s, but also against the model of state-society relations present in each country, and their political economic evolution. Two different trajectories were revealed. In the case of Argentina it was demonstrated that labour and state actors approach the governance initiatives from a perspective reminiscent of the Welfarist programme, while large firms seem to be oriented by Business & Trade considerations. As a result, the latest Sustainability programme remains rather meaningless, polarised between the former group that considers it illegitimate and the latter that considers it unnecessary. In Brazil, the trajectory was shown to be quite different, with a much more fluent communication and active participation of local actors in global initiatives. Even so the Brazilian path is far from mimicking the global one, as it is characterised by the ideological and institutional proximity between key governmental and CSR actors. As a result the Sustainability programme can be said to have developed in Brazil as a quasi-governmental initiative and not as a mere extension of private authority.

The longer timeframe analysed throughout this dissertation – studying political developments since the 1950s and 1970s – facilitated a detailed exploration of what can be called the 'conditions of capture' of the governance agendas by local political systems. Paraphrasing Mattli and Woods (2009: 9), this involves the conditions that make the global agenda susceptible of being nationally politicised, as well as the variables shaping the direction of such politicisation. This dissertation made clear that the involvement of local actors in the global initiatives and the general salience of the governance discourses in domestic public opinion, in both positive and negative terms, is a result of the local political system casting a certain meaning over the global proposals, and not of the replacement or displacement of local discourses by global ones. These conditions of capture are synthesised in the inclusivity/exclusivity of the local political system, defined on the basis of the availability of compatible endogenous cleavages of social standardisation. From such definition the Brazilian system proved inclusive for social standardisation, while the Argentine resulted exclusive. In both cases, the dissertation identified the social forces shaping the conditions of capture of the global governance agenda. Moreover, it indicated the links between longer structural processes and recent political circumstances and governmental decisions, which might accentuate specific features.

In particular, the dissertation pointed to the relevance of Southern variables in shaping these conditions: those variables that are characteristics of (certain) developing countries, at least in South America. These variables differ from the political liberal democratic matrix assumed in the North, involving issues such as the central role of the state in society, late economic and social development, history of authoritarian rule, cycles of political and economic crises, populist political systems, patron-client and neo-corporatist state-society relations, imposed neoliberalisation, and ideological subordination. These variables reflect another

Southern aspect that makes these local trajectories of social standardisation different from the Northern global one: a recent and ongoing process of consolidation of political and social identities. Thus, in the case of Brazil, social standard-setting was not seen by social actors as an erosion of a previous taken-for-granted democratic institutions by markets forces: on the contrary it was an expression of new civil liberties; of civil society and other civil sectors (including business) acquiring greater independence and political voice. In Argentina, with a longer republican history, the antagonism with corporate-oriented initiatives and global programmes is more aligned with the traditional 'markets vs. politics' dyad, reinforced by a national political project that supports an inward statist vision that discriminates neoliberalism and standard-based governance as 'Northern'.

Thus, chapter 5 showed that the trajectory of the Brazilian actors involved in social standard-setting is deeply linked with specific political developments in Brazilian political history, including the effect of the Lula administrations since 2003. The inclusivity of the Brazilian political system prevented the antagonism between global governance discourses and participation with local state-society relations and roles. As a result, Brazilian actors readily accepted global social-standard setting initiatives as higher instances of their own, and did not antagonise with the global projects on the basis of being corporate or foreign. But the political salience enjoyed by the local CSR movement in the 2000s was shown to have earlier roots. These roots went back to personal and programmatic contacts established during the early origins of two groups: a group of liberal businessmen around the figure of Oded Grajew, and popular and civil society actors around Lula's PT. These contacts were initiated in the late 1970s and 1980s as part of the search for new political alternatives against state authoritarianism and corporatism during the democratic transition, and strengthened in the 1990s in opposition to neoliberal reforms, considered a threat to both social standards and national development. The possibility to intertwine such apparently distinct agendas – the socialist one of the early-era PT, the civil society activism of IBASE, and the progressive liberalism of the PNBE – can be associated with a humanist component present in all of them. This means that despite their different extraction – Socialism, Catholicism, Liberalism – the frames guiding these actors shared a functional orientation in terms of social standardisation which certainly challenged state-centred authoritarianism, and promoted greater political, civil and economic liberties. Linked with this is another key aspect of Brazilian inclusivity, in particular when comparing with the Argentine situation. This is a clear inclination within civil society to cooperate with business and government actors. A Brazilian interviewee considered that even earlier phenomena were at play on this issue, such as the patriarchal tradition of the plantation system existing prior to the 1930s and 1940s – where big landowners provided basic social services in areas where the state was absent – and the effects of late slavery (Suzano Paper, 2011, pers. comm., 23 September).

Another structural feature contributing to Brazilian inclusivity is the relative short history of social organisation. This dissertation showed that most of the social alliances supporting the local trajectory of social standardisation emerged mostly in the 1970s and 1980s: this is the case of organisations such as the CUT, the PT, IBASE, the PNBE and the MST. In this sense both the popular front around the PT and the neoliberal and modernising agenda of Fernando Henrique Cardoso are relatively new developments. This was mentioned to facilitate eclectic cross-sectoral contacts and overlapping boundaries within state-society relations, and augment the capacity of certain personalities to occupy multiple roles, as was the case of the social businessmen around Ethos. Another aspect emerging out of the comparison with the Argentine case is that new social alliances and political re-configurations originated in the absence of major crises: both the democratic transition, the liberalisation of the 1990s, and the rise of the PT followed a moderate transition pattern, and the same can be said of the separation of the environmental cleavage from the PT matrix evidenced towards the end of the 2010s.

All these factors facilitated a 'natural' encounter between the moderate social neoliberal discourse adopted by the PT once in power, and the mid-way agenda shared by both the local CSR movement and the global Sustainability programme, calling for a more human capitalism. This non-conflictive compatibility benefited actors such as the Ethos Institute and IBASE, which were able to enjoy domestic and international recognition not only as promoters of a business-oriented agenda but as part of a broader civil society and political project. Simultaneously, Lula's presidency and party relied on the Sustainability connection to project themselves as a modern socially-oriented political alternative. The most oustanding example of this programmatic malleability is undoubtedly found in the origins of the WSF, the flagship of global civil society, which was founded by the same actors leading the local social standard-setting agenda. In this regard, this dissertation demonstrated that in Brazil a political programme relating global social standards and capitalist practices, and supportive of collaborative relations across social sectors with an emphasis on corporate social responsibility, was far from a novel 'foreign' discourse and quite an endogenous development previous to the official launch of the UN GC. The agenda by the PT in the presidency undoubtedly contributed to promote this local programme as part of a government-endorsed discourse, facilitating the engagement of local actors from corporate and civil extraction, such as standard-setting CSOs, national industry federations, labour union representatives, and public-owned firms, with the global initiatives.

The situation is Argentina was revealed to be quite the opposite, with the global/local divide remaining solid in relation to social standardisation. This is attributed to the exclusive conditions of capture outlined by the national political structures and discourses. The analysis in chapter 6 explained that central pillars of the global Sustainability programme, in particular those based on human and labour rights, are considered sensitive political issues in Argentina outside the reach of global governance initiatives. In addition to this, other cleavages such as

Catholic activism, environmentalism and later on, international finance, which played a relevant role in Brazil, do not enjoy salience in public opinion or party politics. Moreover, Business & Trade cleavages such as CSR are also politicised in an exclusive manner, supported by an open distrust for the involvement of the corporate sector in social and political activities. The exclusivity of the Argentine political system was demonstrated to result from the combination of rooted political traditions, a conflictive pattern of state-society relations, and the political agenda promoted by the Kirchnerist administrations during the 2000s.

First, the Argentine model of state-society relations remains to this day less tolerant of cross-sectoral collaborations, a central element promoted by the Sustainability programme. Openness to new social configurations and political alliances, which was shown a dominant characteristic of the Brazilian system, is much more restrictive in Argentina and proved quite resilient to changes in political economic conditions over time. This is partly a consequence of longer roots of labour and political organisation than in the Brazilian case, which were not altered by the military dictatorship and the transition to democracy. Adding to this, since the 1940s there was also the unification of popular and labour cleavages in the programme of the Peronist party. The Peronist experience provided as a popular resistance master frame against authoritarian rule until 1983, but also confronted liberal and modernising elements within civil society, business and party politics since. A confrontational stance towards neoliberal programmes, privatisation and foreign capital in general became embedded in the Kirchnerist discourse in the 2000s, even when it was the Peronist Menem government which promoted the neoliberal reforms in the 1990s. This stance highlighted the nationalist-corporatist origins of Peronism but also a reaction against the aggressive and traumatic neoliberal project advanced by the Argentina military Junta, which differed from the developmentalist one defended by the Brazilian military regime.

As a result, political programmes proposing a model of societal relations bypassing the connection between labour movement, popular sectors and Peronist Party, or attempting to connect business and civil society without the supervision of the latter, were resisted and effectively blocked. The exclusive traits of this tradition were further exploited by the Kirchnerist governments, which were capable of framing human rights in opposition to market liberalism, corporate influence and governance programmes of Anglo-American origin, rallying the most influential sectors of civil society behind its nationalist discourse. Hence, just as the social neoliberalism of Lula legitimised the agenda of the CSR movement and the inclusive conditions of capture in Brazil, in Argentina the economic nationalism of the Kirchners enhanced the pre-existent hostility (or indifference) of the main social sectors against corporate and global standard-setting programmes.

A major aspect to be highlighted is that the resilience of these exclusive features appears to have been shaped by a pattern of institutional transition – either to democracy,

neoliberalism, and economic nationalism – marked by sudden crises: the collapse of the military Junta, the hyperinflation in late 1980s leading to the Washington Consensus recipes, and the economic meltdown in 2001 ending the neoliberal project. Thus, rather than crises opening opportunities for more flexible political projects and social alliances, in Argentina they served to cement pre-existent ones with an inward and defensive orientation. The latter in particular has proved decisive to deter any relevant political and civil society actor actively promoting the Sustainability programme. Even the social turmoil following the 2001 crisis, when private actors suddenly had to provide emergency social assistance, only provided a temporary relaxation of this exclusive political configuration.

Furthermore, the latest and marginal institutional developments aligned with the Sustainability agenda outlined at the end of chapter 6, such as greater corporate social involvement and the emergence of a number of endogenous social standard-setting initiatives, are disposed in opposition to the governmental agenda, accusing excessive statism and neo-corporatist relations. Thus, the chances for these developments to result in trajectories similar to that of Brazil are low, in light of the stability shown by the Kirchnerist political discourse at least until the 2010s. As a result, there is only a very weak resonance between the global Sustainability programme and the Argentine political system, leaving global social standards outside the local political domain, as a secondary and specialised question to be dealt by a few large corporations, business schools, and minor consultancies.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The empirical analyses enable a number of reflections on the conceptual premises framing the thesis. These analyses showed two types of discourses at tension throughout the text: a globalist one, supported on the increasing autonomy of programmes and discourses of global governance, and a localist one, pointing to the structuring power of the state. This dissertation understands this tension as a result of the unresolved process of establishing legitimate instances of political authority given both the functional differentiation of world society and the lasting relevance of state structures and discourses. This section develops a number of conceptual conclusions regarding the extent to which global social standards reflect a commitment between a rising logic of governance and the inevitability of national structures of meaning.

The first part of the dissertation approached social standard-setting as a programme of global governance in an increasingly globalised environment. The trajectory of social standardisation showed governance master frames moving away from territorial definitions in order to cast certain form of political authority over an increasing global landscape. This

trajectory displays an upward direction in terms of the locus of this authority: from the state to the international (the Welfarist programme), to the transnational with minimal state control (Business & Trade), to multi-sectoral meta-governance (Sustainability). In each of these instances the aspects covered by social standards moved to a higher level of generality, starting with a strong focus on labour and industrial relations, to subsume labour under markets and corporate activities, to them subsume markets and firms under human rights and rational ecological awareness. However, by 2010 governance through social standards emerges as more than a collection of regulatory instruments and actors with loose coordination with each other. It represents the consolidation of a functional logic crossing the political: a non-state-based normative horizon for all collective actors. In this sense it is possible to suggest that global social standards transcend the notion of private authority and 'governance without government' (Rosenau and Czempiel 1992), and point rather to the one of 'politics beyond territory'.

To trace the evolution of social standardisation this dissertation relied on the concept of 'cleavage of standardisation'. This concept highlighted standardisation first and foremost as a semantic process whereby certain semantic distinctions gained interpretative salience as political master frames. In this regard, the thesis started its investigations relativising the Westphalian premise of international order. Cleavages of social standardisation transcend, and precede, the state and modern institutional forms of standard-setting, as well as the analytical points of origin adopted by this text in late nineteenth century. From this perspective all cleavages of social standardisation carry in themselves the 'seed' of governance: notions of human nature, religion and universal morality, labour and class solidarity, market rationality and trade, science and progress, human rights, environmentalism, can all serve as the basis for a transnational regulatory project. The particularity of the twentieth century is the consolidation of politically coordinated attempts to establish transnational social standards. More so, the fact that labour was the first cleavage of social standardisation to be institutionalised in a governance model supports the premise of the political system reacting to the functional differentiation of world society, as the Westphalian state transformed into an industrial one. However, this labour casing for the social was soon overflown by structural socio-economic developments alongside the functionalisation of other dimensions of human activity, such as global communications, capitalist markets, organisational practices, and Western political principles. By the 2000s social standardisation had stabilised around two cleavages displaying the greatest global resonance and semantic flexibility: capitalism and liberal human rights. As a consequence of this, it was argued the Sustainability programme leaves potentially no area of collective social activity outside its master frame: cultural practices, financial markets, organisational behaviour, governmental policies, corporate services, industrial relations, consumption patterns, etc. The Sustainability programme resonates in all these areas, and thus the latest global social standards attribute

themselves competence over issues traditionally belonging to the private sphere of firms, or to the public one of states, trade unions and international organisations.

This thesis has shown that standardisation implies certain de-politicisation, at least from a perspective where the political refers to formal state-led deliberative processes. Standardisation increasingly recurs to other sources of legitimacy beyond the state, such as technocratic expertise, epistemic communities, global civil society or market rationality, and thus, to other legitimacy-seeking arrangements. The changing institutional configurations to define global social standards reflect the ongoing uncertainty over how much weight national cleavages should have against specialised functional ones: in other words, over how much politicisation is appropriate at the global level. This point raises interesting questions regarding the link between global governance, social standardisation, and liberalism. This dissertation accepts that the Sustainability programme of governance casts, in this sense, a Western shadow: the global trajectory of social standardisation remains significantly shaped by what are in effect liberal cosmopolitan cleavages. Not surprisingly the validity of global social standards breaks down when these conditions are not met: when there is too much market orthodoxy or state nationalism, or when master frames reject basic liberal principles. Nonetheless this dissertation considers that this link has become increasingly thin, pointing to an aspect overlooked in global governance debates. This aspect assumes that to gain global resonance, governance programmes of social standard-setting had to progressively sacrifice normative specificity in order not to clash with competing frames, in particular those present in the national level. Current global social standards have become increasingly general and politically neutral, abandoning any ambition (until now at least) to develop hard coercive mechanisms. In this sense, Western hegemony in global governance has been a somewhat Pyrrhic victory, augmenting the space for hypocrisy, indifference and re-politicisation.

The second more extensive part of the dissertation emphasises the fact that despite all the global developments and discourses, the state is still there. The state is there but is certainly not entirely up to governments to 'decide' the pattern of engagement with governance initiatives. Nonetheless, the state matters because local actors, including governments and political patterns, are still largely shaped by resilient territorially-oriented structures and master frames. Each state as a social relation has to reproduce its own legitimacy to subsist, not only economically but in political and social terms. However, this dissertation has shown that even in an apparently politically innocuous topic such as social standard-setting, explanations proposing that a global process of soft regulation rules over state institutions as they liberalise – economically and politically – are evidently inadequate, relativising single-issue models based on organisational isomorphism, ideological subordination, elite thinking, or market integration.

Approaching social standardisation as composed by semantic cleavages provides an understanding of standardisation and global governance as multi-directional communicational

processes where state-based and functional frames compete for political resonance. The dissertation highlighted that local political communications are rarely interrupted or substituted by foreign and global master frames. This means that global proposals are always hybridised, filtered, and re-signified against pre-existing semantic structures. Communication does not emerge from the void; it is an ever circulating fluid. But the state remains dominant in reproducing national structures of meaning, in the form of a specific history, societal roles, national institutions and political language. These national structures in turn shape the conditions of capture of global norms, initiatives and discourses, bridging the gap between increasingly general social standards and their local resonance: making them compatible with the agenda of this or that political party or group, or irrelevant and a mere Northern fad for rich countries and upper-middle class women. As a result, global social standards are interpreted differently, and with different salience from the perspective of different master frames. Thus, global initiatives such as UN GC, ISO 26000 and GRI can be considered novel developments in transnational governance for Northern academics, potential areas of authority and influence for governments and actors from certain countries, such as Brazil and Denmark, or marginal events for those of others, such as Argentina and the US. What matters then are not the geographical origins of a particular cleavage of standardisation, but the manner in which functional discourses are integrated into national political ones; after all North American corporate philanthropy is conceptually as global as Brazilian Catholic progressivism. This does not imply that certain local cleavages of social standardisation did not have a foreign origin – a claim that can be applied to US notions of corporate responsibility and managerial practices, European socialism, the Human Rights agenda, or Catholicism for that matter – but that this origin is relevant only if it is signified by a particular political master frame.

This communicational understanding relieves part of the tension between the governance system of social standards and the relevance of state political discourses and Southern political variables in shaping its resonance. The globalisation of social standardisation as a governance project ends up highlighting the relevance of the state level. Such counterintuitive proposition is possible because of the semantic function of social standardisation. As was demonstrated, the upward trajectory of social standards tends to normatively minimal principles and initiatives, which precisely because of this are more generalisable and flexible. The counterpart of this is that social standards necessarily externalise silenced specifications to be 'picked up' by other social systems. The openness of contemporary global social standards – in contrast for example with the level of detail of ILO Conventions – makes them more susceptible of political capture than their technical counterparts, such as standards regulating the internet, international trade or banking. The ambivalence generated by this openness is not only present at the local level or in the global South. It is expressed in academic and policy-making debates between technocratic, humanist and cosmopolitan world-

visions and nationalist, neo-colonial and developmentalist positions, in the unresolved challenge of negotiating global problems through state-centred forums, and in the difficulties of articulating applicable definitions for legitimacy, inclusiveness, accountability, responsibility, and democracy on the international level. As was shown, contemporary social standard-setting initiatives try to tackle this tension between global principles and local structures in different ways: for example, by promoting the formation of local networks (i.e. UN GC), by segmenting expert constituencies in geographical regions (i.e. GRI), or by combining national delegations with non-state specialised bodies (i.e. ISO WG SR). Furthermore, inter-governmental and international organisations readily accept corporate and civil society participation and public-private partnerships to achieve their mandates. In this way, the trajectory of social standardisation has not only moved upwards but also sideways and downwards, towards new sectors and wider geographies.

In this regard, an interesting observation enabled by the local analyses is that the governance/national tension is not found only on the global side of things. The inclusion of new sectoral and Southern actors in global standard-setting requires changes in local political master frames regarding the meaning of global norms and participation in governance. These changes, arguably quite consolidated for many Northern social actors and governments, could not be so straightforward for actors of the global South: the call for inclusivity in the international system is still quite a recent development. The dissertation showed that an inclusive national political system can couple with certain governance processes more readily than exclusive ones, as their political master frames do not interfere with the global programme. This is evident in the case of Brazil, where local actors participating in the global standard-setting initiatives can do so without violating local political conditions: moreover, they are more or less explicitly encouraged to do so by both the government and public opinion. In this situation, the global becomes an extension of the local. In Argentina the opposite is the case: the exclusivity of the political system supports a political environment that highlights the technical-economic dimension of social standard-setting, making local participation inversely proportional to domestic political relevance. The global then is a challenge to the local. It is not trivial to consider that in addition to institutional exclusion, Southern actors might be facing semantic barriers stemming from their own political frames being sceptical of global participation or 'accustomed' to such exclusion. This leads to a controversial notion where interest for participating in global governance could be an acquired trait, which certain Southern actors might still lack. This sort of consideration points to an interesting area of future research: the study of how actors from emerging economies understand their changing role in global governance, and how the entry of alternative political frames and traditions into global governance debates will impact on its overall trajectory.

Approaching standardisation and governance from its communicative dynamics has proved an insightful tool to understand the diffusion of global governance and social standards initiatives, as well as the circumstances shaping its local resonance in two cases of the global South. This dissertation argues that this framework is robust to be applied to other types of standards and other national settings. At the same time the dissertation signalled that these dynamics are not merely discursive: discourses can only operate with the boundaries of the systemically possible. In this regard, this approach calls for greater attention to the interface between semantic processes and systemic structures in the creation of transnational political order: an interface which has become increasingly complex and blurred. In this sense, this dissertation indicates a way to pursue Rosenau (2006)'s recommendation to develop systemic perspectives in IR theorising that move beyond linear models of cause-effect and input-output (society versus economics, micro versus macro, global versus local), and better engage with the implications of complexity, self-organisation and co-evolution in world politics.

CONCLUSION

The dissertation provides two main contributions to academic literature: 1) it emphasises the relevance of communicative dynamics in the diffusion of global governance, relativising economistic and power-led approaches, and 2) demonstrates the relevance of Southern political institutions, traditions, and discourses in structuring global/local communications.

The project has explored the emergence, trajectory and enactment of a system of global social standards, the primary research question of this dissertation. By tracing the global trajectory of social standardisation and examining in detail the operation of contemporary standard-setting initiatives, the dissertation argued that global social standards have become structured around three governance programmes. These programmes represent the consolidation of specific master frames of social standardisation, mainly: the primacy of labour as a social category, the economic efficiency associated with free market functioning, and the secular legitimacy of human rights. The latest programme of social standardisation, the Sustainability programme, was shown to synthesise the recognition of human rights as universal social principles and of capitalist institutions as the dominant economic paradigm. Such synthesis was embedded into a number of governance and frameworks emerging since the 1990s, operating through loose networks and fast-policy instruments.

This thesis has also answered the second set of research questions regarding the local enactment of this governance system and its relationship with national political structures in the global South. The dissertation has contributed to reducing the gap in the literature regarding the

Southern dimensions of global governance. It provided an empirically informed analysis of the trajectory of social standardisation in Argentina and Brazil and explained the different participation patterns followed by these two countries. Moreover, it demonstrated that local organisational capacity, the term used to refer to the national legacy affecting the 'demand-side' of standardisation (Espach 2006: 258), is not a tertiary variable aggregating what supply/demand models cannot explain. Rather it constitutes the central explanatory variable, demanding greater attention to complex local political and historical structures. By attributing an active role to these structures, the dissertation relativises top-down perspectives of the influence of global governance and norms over the local dimension, in particular when the local refers to developing countries. A greater awareness of the contingency of the accustomed overlap between the Northern and the Global in governance and international politics is more than appropriate in these current times, when conventional distinctions such as North and South, developed and emerging, and global and local, are proving insufficient.

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APPENDIX A

LIST OF INTERVIEWS

ARGENTINA

05/09/11. Carlos March, Executive Director, Avina Foundation Argentina.

06/09/11. Martín Kaindl, Director of Institutional Relations, IAPG.

07/09/11. Ana Muro, CSR Coordinator, CEADS.

08/09/11. Alberto Willi, Professor of Business, Society and Economy, IAE.

08/09/11. Representative of Amalia Videla, Director of Social Responsibility and Public Affairs, Manpower Argentina.

12/09/11. Bernardo Voloj, Climate Affairs Coordinator, FARN.

13/09/11. Jimena Mercado, Communications Manager, IARSE.

13/09/11. Alex Ehrenhaus, CSR Coordinator, Los Grobo Group.

14/09/11. Luis Betnaza, Vice-President of Institutional Relations, Techint Group.

14/09/11. Gabriel Berger, Professor of Civil Society Organisations, San Andres University.

14/09/11. Jorge Taillant, co-founder and Coordinator of Mining, Environment and Human Rights Programme, CEDHA.

16/09/11. Mario Font Guido, Chairman, CECAM-FAM.

16/09/11. María Irigoyen, Project Director, Reporte Social.

BRAZIL

19/09/11. Diverse interviews during 'ABONG 20 Years' Conference (2-days). Programme available from: http://www.abong.org.br/noticias.php?id=4267, 29 March 2013.

19/09/11. Ivo Lesbaupin, Executive Secretary, ISER.

21/09/11. Luiz Dalla Martha, Research and Content Manager, IBGC.

21/09/11. Sergio Lazzarini, Professor of Organisation and Strategy, INSPER.

22/09/11. Ariel Kogan, Project Manager, Rede Nossa São Paulo.

23/09/11. Beatriz Kiss, Project Coordinator, Centre for Sustainability Studies, FGV.

23/09/11. Jorge Cajazeira, Vice-President of Institutional Relations, Suzano Pulp & Paper (and Chairman of the ISO WG SR).

27/09/11. Lisa Gunn, Executive Director, IDEC.

28/09/11. Andre Degeszajn, General Secretary, GIFE.

OTHERS

14/05/10. ISO 26000 Plenary Meeting, Copenhagen, Denmark (5 days)

Additional events attended:

- ISO 26000 Open Government Conference
- Developing Countries Open Workshop
- Spanish Translation Task Force Meeting
- Official Opening Ceremony

18/05/10. Argentine Delegation for ISO WG SR (including representatives of IRAM, CEADS and El Otro Foundation).

18/05/10. Gustavo Ferroni, Working Group ISO 26000 Coordinator, Instituto Ethos.

15/05/11. Bart Slob, Senior Programme Manager, Red Puentes/SOMO.

11/11/11. Felipe Saboza, Jogos Limpos Project Coordinator, Instituto Ethos.

APPENDIX B

This section provides an extensive list of cross-sectoral and sectoral social standard-setting initiatives, as found in the Annex A of the draft version of ISO 26000 Guidance on Social Responsibility (ISO 2010: 85). Both classification and additional information belong to ISO.

EXAMPLES OF CROSS-SECTORAL INITIATIVES

Organization/Initiative	Organizational Governance	Labour Issues	Human Rights	Environment	Fair Operating Practices	Consumer Issues	Community Involvement & Development	Additional Information
INTERGOVERNMENTAL INITATIVES								
OECD Risk Awareness Tool for MNEs in Weak Governance Zones	X	X	X		X		X	Provides a checklist for companies to use when examining risks and ethical dilemmas concerning their potential activities in countries where there is weak governance. www.oecd.org
UNCTAD Intergovernmental Working Groups of Experts of International Standards of Accounting and Reporting (ISAR)	X		X	X	X		X	Working group devoted to corporate transparency and accounting issues at the corporate level. Issues addressed in corporate accounting and reporting including: International Financial Reporting Standards IFRS implementation, accounting by SMEs, corporate governance disclosure, corporate responsibility reporting, and environmental reporting. Stakeholder groups meet annually to discuss and agree upon approaches to the issues the group deals with. Open to all organizations. No fees required. www.unctad.org/isar
UNEP Climate Neutral Network				X				Initiative affiliated to UNEP open to all organizations. Facilitates the exchange of information on how organizations can achieve cuts in greenhouse gas emissions. A Board of Directors of appointed stakeholders oversees the program. www.climateneutral.unep.org
UNEP Life Cycle Initiative			X	X		X	X	Initiative open to experts from organizations active in the field of life cycle management. Annual membership fee required. Task forces composed of UN Secretariats and stakeholder participants seek to develop capability and training in life cycle approaches. An affiliate of the United Nations Environment Programme. http://lcinitiative.unep.fr/
United Nations Global Compact		X	X	X	X			Initiative of the United Nations directed at business organizations. Open to any organization, participants commit to align their strategies and operations with ten principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption, and to take action in support of broader UN goals. A voluntary platform, organizations are required to report annually on efforts to implement the principles through policies and practices. The United Nations Global Compact has developed tools and guidance materials across all principle areas in order to assist participating organizations. No fees required. www.unglobalcompact.org/
UNGC, UNDP, UNITAR UN Partnership Assessment Tool							X	Self-assessment planning tool to enhance the development impact and contribution to sustainable development of public-private partnerships. Available free of charge to all organizations. UNIDO trains consultants to disseminate the CSR management approaches and techniques to organizations across the world. www.unglobalcompact.org/Issues/partnerships/pat.html
UNIDO **Responsible Entrepreneurs Achievement Programme**		X	X	X	X			Initiative supported by UNIDO aimed at small and medium-sized enterprises. Membership and fees are not required. Provides a structured framework and analytical software to assist SMEs with CSR. www.unido.org/reap

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER INITATIVES

AccountAbility The AA1000 Series	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Membership-based organization open to all organizations and individuals. Membership fees. Focus is on assurance of sustainability and social responsibility reports and on stakeholder engagement. Has developed three standards intended for use by any organization: • AA 1000APS - provides general principles of accountability • AA 1000AS - provides requirements for conducting sustainability assurance • AA 1000SES - provides a framework for stakeholder engagement www.accountability21net
Amnesty International Human Rights Principles for Companies		X						Membership organization open to individuals that seek to promote respect for human rights. A source for information on respect for human rights in specific countries. Publication " Human Rights Principles for Companies" includes a checklist. www.amnesty.org
Business Social **Compliance Initiative (BSCI)**		X	X	X	X		X	Industry initiative that focuses on labour practices in the supply chains of mainly large retail companies. Most members are retailers and marketing companies who pay membership fees and agree to audit suppliers against a code of conduct. The initiative certifies the auditors. www.bsci-eu.org
Centre for Business Ethics (ZfW) Values Management System	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Organization that seeks to promote business ethics in Germany and Europe. It provides training and management tools, including a " governance framework" on legal, economic, ecological and social issues. www.dnwe.de/wertemanagement.php (German)
Ceres Ceres Principles				X				Membership-based organization of mainly environmental organizations together with investors who seek to use capital markets in order to engage companies on environmental and governance issues. Companies are invited to endorse the Ceres principles. Implementation of these principles involves audits and public reporting. Fee charged for membership. Member companies have access to technical assistance on environmental issues and their management. www.ceres.org
CSR360 Global Partner Network	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Promotes the international exchange of information on CSR. A contribution and approval is required to become a " partner organization" . Network is convened by UK-Based Business in the Community (BITC). www.csr360.org
EFQM Framework for CSR and Excellence Model	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	A " self-assessment" tool designed to be used in the management of CSR. Formerly the European Foundation for Quality Management EFQM is a membership organization open to business, government and non profit organizations. Fees required. The organization facilitates the exchange of information and provides services to members. www.efqm.org
Ethical Trading Initiative		X	X					Membership organization open to companies, NGOs and specific trade union organizations. The purpose is for sourcing companies to work with NGOs and trade unions to learn about the best ways to implement supply chain codes of labour practice. Companies pay membership fees, agree to apply code of labour practices to their suppliers, report on activities and observe other requirements. www.ethicaltrade.org/
European Business Ethics Network (EBEN)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Membership-based organization with an annual fee, dedicated to the promotion of business ethics. Organizes conferences and issues publication. Also organizes national networks and networks on specific topics for corporate ethics officers and other practitioners. www.eben-net.org
Fair Labour Association (FLA)	X	X	X					Multi-stakeholder initiative established to address supply chain labour practices. Participants include sourcing companies, colleges and universities and NGOs. Participating companies must support the monitoring and verification of working conditions of their suppliers. The FLA issues public reports. www.fairlabor.org/

FORÉTICA SGE 21 Ethical and CSR Management System	X		X	X	X	X	X	Initiative that sets criteria about establishment, implementation and evaluation of management system on ethics and social responsibility. www.foretica.es (Spanish)
Global Reporting Initiative Sustainability Reporting Guidelines	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Initiative developed by UNEP and CERES (also included in this Annex) that provides model indicators, guidelines and supporting tools on sustainability reporting. Global organizational stakeholders provide guidance and governance. Its guidelines, supplements and annexes are offered free on its website. A nominal charge is made for associated training materials. Its tools include: - The Sustainability Reporting Guidelines (indicators and principles) - Various sector-specific supplements (construction, telecommunications, public agencies, etc.) -Boundary Protocol (sphere of influence and impacts analysis)
Danish Institute for Human Rights Human Rights Compliance Assessment		X	X		X		X	This national human rights organization has a Human Rights and Business project that provides information on the human rights situation in various countries. It also offers management tools and guides, sometimes for a charge. The Human Rights Compliance Assessment is an elaborate tool available through a web interface for a charge. A less elaborate " HRCA Quick Check" is available for free. www.humanrightsbusiness.org
International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Membership organization for international social and environmental standard-setting organizations. It promotes voluntary standards and conformity assessment related to social and environmental issues. Provides tools for standard setting and evaluation. Fee required for membership www.isealalliance.org
Joint Article Management Promotion Consortium			X	X	X	X		Fee-based membership Information exchange program to help organizations comply with legal requirements on chemical substances in products. Provides datasheet formats to describe and transfer information on chemical substances contained in products as well as an IT infrastructure to exchange datasheets. It conducts education and training sessions to disseminate its schemes.
International Framework Agreements		X	X	X			X	Agreements negotiated between transnational enterprises (TNEs) and Global Union Federations (GUFs) designed to provide a means of addressing problems mainly related to the labour practices in the operations of a specific multinational company at the international level. http://www.global-unions.org/spip.php?rubrique70
Rainforest Alliance		X	X	X			X	Membership-based organization established to set social and environmental standards and issue certification to producers in forestry, agriculture and tourism Provides training and other technical assistance in industries covered by their certification activities www.rainforest-alliance.org
R-bec Ethical/Legal Compiance Management System Standard								Free management system standard for any organization that wishes to develop an ethical and legal compliance management system. http://r-bec.reitaku-u.ac.jp/ (Japanese)
Project Sigma Sigma guidelines		X	X	X			X	Guideline document providing advice to organizations on how contribute to sustainable development. Free. http://www.projectsigma.co.uk/Guidelines/default.asp
Responsabilidad **Social Empresarial** Caja de Herramientas para America Latina		X	X				X	A collection of analysis and training tools that provides support to SMEs in Latin America to help with improving their social responsibility initiatives and practices. www.produccionmaslimpia-la.net/herramientas/index.htm (Spanish)
Social Accountability International (SAI)		X	X		X			Multi-stakeholder initiative addressing labor practices. Sets auditable SA8000 standard for workplaces. Produces the Handbook for Implementing a Socially Responsible Supply Chain management system and other tools. Partners to provide training and technical assistance to auditors, workers, suppliers and customers. Independent organization, Social Accountability Accreditation Services (SAAS), accredits providers of certification to SA8000. www.sa-intl.org
The Natural Step International	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	An international not-for-profit organization dedicated to sustainable development. TNS provides a model for planning of complex systems as well as freely available tools to enable individuals and organizations to learn about and contribute to sustainable development. *www.thenaturalstep.org*
Transparency International **Varios Tools**	X				X			Global membership NGO that seeks to counter corruption. Provides tools and data for organizations, specific economic sectors and government agencies. Examples of tools include: - Business Principles for Countering Bribery, a multi-stakeholder developed voluntary code - Global Corruption Report o Corruption Perceptions Index o Bribe Payers Index - Global Corruption Barometer -The Integrity Pact www.transparency.org

SINGLE STAKEHOLDER INITATIVES

Caux Round Table Principles for Business		X	X	X	X	X	X	A network of business people, with national chapters, that seeks to promote ethical principles, collaboration and dialogue among managers, public officials and citizens. The Principles for Business provide a statement of principles to follow to conduct business ethically. www.cauxroundtable.org
Consumers International Charter for Global Business				X	X	X		Global federation of consumer groups. The Charter sets out best business practices and consumer rights in areas of interest to consumers. A fee is involved for membership and voting rights on codes and charters. www.consumersinternational.org
CSR Europe Toolbox	X	X	X	X	X	X		Membership, fee-based initiative for European companies and national CSR organizations. Conducts projects, organizes meetings and issues publications. Toolbox is a web-based collection of guides and other material produced through projects with members and their stakeholders that is organized by theme. www.csreurope.org/
Ethos Institute Ethos indicators of CSR	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Brazilian organization that focuses on promoting social responsibility in the business sector. It provides several CSR tools free of charge, including a set of indicators on CSR. www.ethos.org.br
The Global Sullivan Principles of Social Responsibility		X	X		X		X	Global voluntary code of conduct on social, economic and environmental performance. Organizations commit to follow the principles in internal policymaking, training and reporting. No fee or membership required to use code. No stakeholder engagement in shaping code. www.thesullivanfoundation.org/gsp/default.asp
International Business Leaders Forum A Guide to Human Rights Impact Assessment		X	X	X	X			The IBLF is a non profit foundation supported by large business organizations that promotes the business contribution to sustainable development. It produces various publications and tools such as Human Rights Translated: A Business Reference Guide. In 2007 IBLF together with the World Bank's International Finance Corporation issued a Guide to Human Rights Impact Assessment and Management Road Testing Draft. www.iblf.org/resources/general.jsp?id=123946
International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Various tools and initiatives	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Membership and fee-based global business organization established to represent business interests. It has produced numerous initiatives and tools relating to different aspects of social responsibility, including: • The Consolidated ICC Code of Advertising and Marketing Communication Practice • The ICC Nine Steps to Responsible Business Conduct • The ICC Guidance on Supply Chain Responsibility • The ICC Guide to Responsible Sourcing • The ICC Business Charter for Sustainable Development www.iccwbo.org
Partnering Against Corruption Initiative (PACI) Business Principles for Countering Bribery					X			A voluntary code of conduct for anti-bribery practice that requires a commitment to zero toleration of bribery by companies that are signatories. Membership based, with no fees charged. Governed by stakeholders via three working groups and a board of governors. http://www.weforum.org/en/initiatives/paci/index.htm
World Business Council for Sustainable Development Various initiatives and tools	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Membership-based organization oriented mainly to large companies. Annual membership fee. It has developed numerous initiatives and tools that are publicly available, including: • The Global Water Tool • Improving Stakeholder Engagement: Measuring Impact • Organizational Governance: Issue Management Tool • Sustainable Development: A Learning Tool • Numerous other guidance documents, initiatives and tools on specific social and environmental issues. www.wbcsd.org
WBCSD and World Resources Institute (WRI) The Greenhouse Gas Protocol				X				Freely available accounting and reporting standard for companies to report on emissions of the six greenhouse gases covered by the Kyoto Protocol of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Provides various tools to assist companies in calculating their emissions. www.ghgprotocol.org

EXAMPLES OF SECTORAL INITIATIVES

Organization/Initiative	*Organizational Governance*	*Labour Issues*	*Human Rights*	*Environment*	*Fair Operating Practices*	*Consumer Issues*	*Community Involvement & Development*	Additional Information
AGRICULTURE								
Better Sugarcane Initiative (BSI)			X	X			X	An organization of sugar retailers, investors, traders, producers and NGOs that established principles and criteria intended to address various social and environmental issues in the production of sugar. Fees charged to be member of the steering committee, special advisor to a working group or a working group member. www.bettersugarcane.org
Common Code for the Coffee Community Association (Code of Conduct)								Membership-based organization of coffee producers, " trade and industry" organizations (retailers, brand marketers and manufacturers) and civil society (NGOs and trade unions) established to promote better social, environmental and economic conditions in coffee production. Programme includes a Common Code for the Coffee Community (4C), a " verification system" and technical support for producers. Members participate in governance and verification initiatives. www.4c-coffeeassociation.org/
Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International (FLO)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Umbrella organization for labelling initiatives in 20 countries through a network of certification organizations and producers. Provides certification according to fair trade standards either general or sector-specific. Certified members can use the certification mark and participate in general assembly and a board of governors. www.fairtrade.net
GLOBALG.A.P.			X	X		X		GAP refers to Good Agricultural Practices. A non-profit association established to set voluntary standards for the certification of agricultural products and practices. Members pay a fee to participate in the development of these standards. www.globalgap.org
International Cocoa Initiative		X	X	X				Organization created to combat child labour and other abusive labour practices in the growing of coca. Participating organizations include the major chocolate brands, cocoa processors as well as NGOS and trade union organizations www.cocoainitiative.org
Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Network Standards	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Membership-based organization comprising farms and producer groups that cultivate tropical export crops. Seeks to foster best management practice across agricultural value chains by encouraging farmers to comply with SAN standards and motivating traders and consumers to support sustainability. www.rainforest-alliance.org/agriculture.cfm?id=standards
UTZ CERTIFIED	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Certification initiative based on a Code of Conduct that sets social and environmental criteria for responsible agricultural practices and efficient farm management. Uses third party auditors. Currently focused on coffee, cocoa, tea and palm oil production. Services include a track and trace system that follows the certified product through the chain from producer to processor to provide buyers with an insight into where their product comes from. www.utzcertified.org
World Cocoa Foundation		X	X	X	X	X	X	Fee-based membership organization of chocolate companies, cocoa processors and traders and industry associations. Supports programs promoting sustainable and environmentally sound farming, community development, labor standards and improved and equitable returns. www.worldcocoafoundation.org
APPAREL								
Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC)		X	X		X	X		International association of national organizations in 12 European countries dedicated to improving working conditions in the garment industry and to defending workers in the industry seeking change. CCC campaigns on specific cases and engages with companies and authorities to resolve them. The CCC also provides information about the working conditions and labour practices in the industry and has a benchmark code. www.cleanclothes.org
Fair Wear Foundation (FWF)		X	X					A multi-stakeholder organization established to address supply chain labour practices in the clothing and footwear sector. Sourcing companies become members of FWF by making an annual contribution, adopting a Code of Labour Practices and observing other requirements. Companies are evaluated annually for compliance with code. www.fairwear.nl (Dutch)
Fur Free Retailer Program				X		X		Initiative that aims to provide consumers with information about a retailer's fur policy. The initiative aims to end the sale of fur products throughout retail establishments by offering support to those retailers that have committed in writing to a no-fur policy. www.infurmation.com/ffr.php

BIOFUELS

Roundtable on Sustainable Biofuels		X	X	X		X	X	Fee and membership based organization. Facilitates discussions involving stakeholders to develop principles and criteria for biofuels production. http://cgse.epfl.ch/page65660.html

CONSTRUCTION

UNEP Sustainable Buildings and Construction Initiative				X				Open to any organization in the building and construction industry. Annual membership fee. Involves a common work programme to promote sustainable building and construction with a life cycle perspective. Members participate in work programme to develop tools and initiatives to support work programme. In partnership with the United Nations Environment Program. www.unepsbci.org

CHEMICAL

International Council of Chemical Associations Responsible Care	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Fee-based membership organization for chemical companies. The focus is on health, safety and environmental impact of products and processes. Product stewardship program covers production and use of chemicals and the supply chain. www.responsiblecare.org

CONSUMER GOODS

Business Social **Compliance Initiative (BSCI)**	X	X	X	X				An industry organization established to address supply chain labour practices. Membership consists of retailers and other companies that import or market goods. Member companies are expected to audit their suppliers against the BSCI code of conduct. The BSCI certifies the auditors. www.bsci-eu.org

ELECTRONICS

Electronic Industry Citizenship Coalition The Electronic Industry Code of Conduct		X	X	X	X	X	X	Membership-based organization with annual fees based on company revenue and membership status. Full members required to implement a code of conduct. A board of governance comprised of industry stakeholders provides guidance and overview of the organization. www.eicc.info/index.html
Zentralverband der Deutschen Elektro- und Elektronikindustrie Code of Conduct on CSR	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Membership-based organization. Code of conduct provides a guideline to improve social and environmental performance in the electronics industry. www.zvei.de (German)

ENERGY

IHA IHA Sustainability Guidelines		X		X			X	Industry organization for hydropower generation. Produces various tools and publications that are available to the public. The IHA Sustainability Guidelines has recommendations of actions regarding economic, social, and environmental issues. www.hydropower.org

EXTRACTIVE

Extractive Industries **Transparency Initiative (EITI)**					X		X	Multi-stakeholder initiative comprised of governments, companies, civil society organizations and investors that supports disclosure and verification of company payments and government revenues in the oil, gas and mining sectors. Participating companies agree to report payments to governments and implementing governments agree to report payments received from companies. Civil society organizations participate in developing and monitoring specific plans. www.eitransparency.org
International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association Various tools and initiatives		X	X	X	X		X	Industry organization for oil and gas producing companies. Produces various publications and tools that are publicly available such as: • Human Rights Training Toolkit for the Oil and Gas Industry • Oil and Gas Industry Guidance on Voluntary Sustainability Reporting • Petroleum Industry Guidelines for Reporting Greenhouse Gas Emissions • Guide to Operating in Areas of Conflict for the Oil & Gas • Industry www.ipieca.org
International Council on Mining and Metals **(ICMM)** Sustainable Development Framework	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Industry organization for mining and metal companies and related industry associations. Members commit to adopt a Sustainable Development Framework comprised of a set of 10 Principles http://www.icmm.com/our-work/sustainable-developmentframework
The Voluntary **Principles on Security and Human Rights**		X	X	X				Initiated by the governments of the UK and USA, the Principles provide guidance for companies and NGOs on identifying human rights and security risks. Further guidance is available on engaging and collaborating with state and private security forces. A contribution is required for using these principles. www.voluntaryprinciples.org

FINANCE

Equator Principles								Financial industry benchmark for determining, assessing and managing social and environmental risk in project financing. www.equator-principles.com
Guideline for ESG Reporting and Integration into Financial Analysis	X	X	X	X	X	X		Reporting guideline for environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues and a benchmark for financial analysts on how to integrate ESG in their analyses.
Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI)	X			X			X	Provides a framework for investors to fulfil their fiduciary (or equivalent) duties giving appropriate consideration to environmental, social and corporate governance issues. Framework is developed by an appointed stakeholder group
The Carbon Disclosure Project				X				Not-for profit membership organization. Provide companies and other organisations with freely available methodology to calculate and disclose the carbon emissions of their operations and assess their exposure to climate risk. Companies can use this methodology and provide information which will be available on CDP website which can be used by financial institutions in determining the carbon output attributed to the financial institution's financing and investments. www.cdproject.net
UNEP Finance Initiative (UNEP FI)	X			X				Membership and fee-based initiative open to all organizations in the finance sector. Works closely with participant organizations to develop and promote linkages between the environment, sustainability and financial performance. Stakeholders provide project proposals and participation on project development. www.unepfi.org/
Wolfsberg Group Wolfsberg Anti-money Laundering Principles	X	X			X	X	X	Membership organization of global banks to develop financial services industry standards and principles to combat corruption and money laundering. Stakeholder representatives develop standards and principles, which are made available to the public. http://www.wolfsberg-principles.com/index.html

FISHERIES

Marine Stewardship Council				X	X	X		Certification and eco-labelling initiative for sustainable fishery practices. It includes: • a Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing, • a Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards, and • Guidelines for the Eco-labelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries. A fee is involved for certification and use of the label. www.msc.org

FORESTRY

Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)		X	X	X			X	Fee-based membership group open to individuals and organizations. Members assist in governance and policy development. FSC is a certification system that provides international standard-setting, trademark assurance and accreditation services to companies, organizations, and communities interested in responsible forestry. http://www.fsc.org/
Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC)								PEFC is an umbrella organization for mutual recognition of certification schemes on sustainable management of forests. National organizations provide governance and recognition of member groups. http://www.pefc.org

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

UNEP and ITU **Global e-Sustainability Initiative (GeSI)**				X			X	Fee-based membership organization open to any company and related organization involved in the information and communications technology industry. Provides guidance and an assessment tool to improve the sustainable performance of its members. www.gesi.org

TRANSPORT

International Road **Transport Union** Charter for Sustainable Development				X		X		International representative body for the road transport industry. The Charter is an aimed at promoting social responsibility in that sector. www.iru.org/index/en_iru_com_cas

TOURISM

Coalition of tourism related organizations Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism		X						Voluntary code of conduct that commits organizations to implement six criteria aimed at protecting children from sexual exploitation in the travel and tourism sector. Provides a free training kit on implementing these criteria. ECPAT USA provides the Secretariat www.ecpat.net www.thecode.org
Rainforest Alliance and other partners Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria Partnership				X			X	An initiative of the Rainforest Alliance, the UN Environmental Programme, UN Foundation and the UN World Tourism Organization, it involves various industry associations and NGOs. The Sustainable Tourism Criteria are intended to be the basis for a common understanding of what sustainable tourism means. www.sustainabletourismcriteria.org