

Panel 25: Regulating the informal sector in South Asia: normativity and representation in social, legal and policy processes

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Abstract: This panel aims to advance our understanding of contemporary state and non-state regulatory processes regarding the informal economy in South Asia. It interrogates the social, legal and political processes that create and reproduce norms regulating economic activity in this burgeoning sector. For instance, in India, state and central government legislation and policy promote self-regulation, but also regulate welfare in more or less defined sectors such as biri-rolling and street vending.

The organiser thus invites papers assessing the way in which regulatory norms are defined and negotiated in bureaucratic, legislative and judicial arenas, and how these reflect, challenge and reshape social norms and moral economies guiding everyday interactions. Considering that the informal sector is often deemed unorganised, the panel further seeks to explore the modalities of representation by, and representation of informal sector actors and interests in the construction of such new policy and socio-legal orders.

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