REVIEW ARTICLE

The Importance of the "Social Agenda" in the G20 Decision-Making: Increasing or Decreasing

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ABSTRACT

This study examines social agenda coverage, place, and role in the decision-making process in the G20. The purpose of this study is to provide an in-depth exploration of the extent of ways and means by which social policy issues find a place in the G20, which is called the premier forum for international economic cooperation. This research will discuss the extent to which the G20 includes social issues, especially labour, social dialogue and social governance issues. The study's central question is whether the G20 is placing an increasing or decreasing role in the social agenda. The study employs a methodology that analyzes the G20 documents and final declarations and examines the data on the G20 commitments and observations made at the G20. The study concludes that although the primary focus is on economic and financial issues, the G20 makes serious efforts to address social issues. It underlines that the G20 is an organisation that focuses on more social dimensions than previously thought and emphasises the importance of continuous cooperation between member states and participation groups to tackle the world's most fundamental social problems.

Keywords: G20, L20, Engagement Groups, Social Mechanisms in the G20, Social Policies in the G20

Introduction

This study of "the Importance of 'Social Agenda' in The G20 Decision-Making: Increasing or Decreasing" attempts to examine the G20 (Group of 20) from the perspective of place, role, and coverage of social agenda in terms of the extent of their importance in the G20 decision-making. It is important because the G20 today continues to be one of the most significant global formations at the intergovernmental level. It has various connotations such as "the premier forum for international economic cooperation", "global formation for economic and financial stability", "an unofficial platform", "an informal platform", "an informal mechanism for dialogue in the framework of the Bretton Woods system". Then, a basic question arises about how such an intense economic establishment requires inclusion of social issues in its economic and financial agenda and decision-making.

An overview of the reason d'etre of the establishment of the G20 becomes helpful to better understand the development of the domain and its policies. The G20 foundations were laid down 25 years ago in response to the devastating financial crises of the 90s. The G20 was created as the premier forum for international economic cooperation in the Cologne Economic Summit of G7/G8 Finance Ministers in 1999, aiming "to establish an informal mechanism for dialogue among systematically important countries within the framework of the Bretton Woods institutional system".

Its foundation has thus created an informal environment for discussion and exchange of views, which has been instrumental in ensuring and promoting global economic and financial stability. Although it is called an "informal and/or unofficial platform", the G20 plays a vital role in world politics due to its power derived from the place of its member countries in the world economy, trade and financial system, the size of its population and the inclusion and governance in its structure and working system. The G20 representing each continent has expanded its scope to include social issues due to its demographic representation, which is around 80%. Therefore, such a status of the G20 significantly has great impacts on the world for its position and policies determined.

The G20 represents a significant milestone in the history of advanced industrialised and emerging market economies. By bringing nations together from both spheres of economic development, it has allowed emerging market economies to gain greater representation in the global economic system. Hence, the topics and issues of economic and social issues are interlinked. The G20, too, combines economic and social topics in its aims and targets even through its early declarations, such as those of Cologne,

Washington, London and Pittsburgh. The Pittsburgh Summit further emphasises social issues and turns out to make the declaration a social manifesto.

Reflecting the tendency of the G20 to encompass more social issues in its mechanisms, it has been steadily expanding to include more civil actors as well as member states. During the early years of the G20, it held annual meetings with only finance ministers and central bank governors. However, since the emergence of the global crisis in 2008, the G20 has been holding summits and organising events at the leaders' level throughout the year. These events now include the participation of civil society organisations, international organisations, and guest countries. In this connection, the perspective of global governance matters to the G20 to respond to it in real terms.

The G20 has no constitution or treaty, no permanent secretariat or budget, and therefore no ability to act independently of member states. The informal structure of the G20 causes its outputs to remain broadly discursive, developing common understandings rather than developing binding commitments or international law. A growing number of activities and forms of institutionalisation support the G20 Summits. The Engagement Groups of experts and advocates provide the G20 leaders with ideas and recommendations to evaluate, review, and publicise the its policy activities. That is why the G20 is now much more than a free-form meeting of world leaders and is increasingly referred to as a "hub" for member states' governments and global governance networks (Slaughter, 2019, p. 9). Hence, the G20's informality is an essential feature of its purpose and functioning.

This study will discuss the extent to which the G20 includes social issues, especially labour, social dialogue and social governance issues. The study's main question is whether the G20 is placing increasing importance on the social agenda. The study aims to answer this question by addressing the following sub-questions: What is the position of the G20 in the world in terms of economic and social indicators? What are the social aims of the G20? What are the social mechanisms in the G20 structure? What are these mechanisms' roles and importance? Is the G20 strengthening its legitimacy with its engagement groups? Does the G20, which includes critical social problems, have any discourse, policies, and actions against social problems? Does it provide opportunities to strengthen social dialogue through the G20 Engagement Groups, especially between the L20 and B20? Is the G20 preparing the ground for a dialogue between the L20 and international financial institutions? The study will analyse the documents and Final Declarations signed at the G20 Leaders Summit and evaluate the explanation and policy papers developed by the L20. This helps to analyse the G20's goals from a social perspective. This requires an examination of the representation status of the G20, social policy issues within the G20, the role of social mechanisms in the G20, industrial relations, engagement groups, and governance.

This study of ''the importance of the 'social agenda' in the G20 decision-making: increasing or decreasing" has an outline to examine the subject in three main sections such as the current state of social issues in the G20 agenda, social mechanisms and social actors in the G20, and ensuring the future of social issues in the G20.

In this connection, after the introduction, the first section will analyse "the current state of social issues in the G20 in three subheadings like the goals to cover concerns of social issues: any or many enough?", "the impact of the G20's demographic, economic, and social representation on ıts social agenda", and "from the global governance perspective: the extent of the G20 agenda to social policy clauses". The second section will explore "social mechanisms and social actors in the G20" in three subheadings: "the role of the social mechanisms in the G20 decision making", "the role of the social actors in the G20 decision making", "the importance of the contacts between the L20 and the G20". The third and final section will evaluate the "ensuring the future of social issues in the G20". The study will conclude with a summary of the findings.

The Current State of Social Issues in the G20 Agenda

This section examines the current state of social issues on the G20 agenda by examining three subheadings: the goals of the G20, the effect of the G20's representation status and global governance issues.

Goals of the G20 to Cover Concerns of Social Issues: Any or Many Enough?

Regarding the G20, an important question to consider is the extent to which social issues are covered in its agenda. In other words, it is necessary to ask if the G20's coverage of social issues is increasing, decreasing, or at a sufficient, reasonable, and acceptable level. Hence, organisations like the G20 should support and complement their basic global economic and financial policies with social policies to successfully implement them.

The economy deals with growth, development, welfare, and wealth. Social policy requires them immensely. The G20 confirmed this requirement by saying that "stable and sustainable work economic growth will benefit all people". Therefore, the issues of the economic field and the issues of the social field coincide from different angles. In general, social policy is concerned with how societies successfully fulfil human needs for security, education, employment, health, and overall well-being. Social policy examines the different roles played by national governments, families, civil society, markets, and international organisations in providing necessary services and support throughout a person's life, from childhood to old age. The social policy agenda includes a

wide range of issues, such as support for children and families, education and schooling, housing, income maintenance and poverty reduction, unemployment support and training, pensions, healthcare, and social care (Platt, n.d.). The definition and discussion of social policy prove that the topics and issues of economic and social issues are interlinked. The G20, too, combines economic and social topics in its aims and targets through its early declarations such as those of Cologne, Washington, London, and Pittsburgh. The Pittsburgh Summit further emphasises social issues to make the declaration a social manifesto.

It is possible to make global economic decisions with wider participation, preventing criticism that the views of developing countries were not considered in key decisions. This will help to leverage the G20, which serves as a crucial platform for global collaboration on the most pressing issues in the international financial and economic fields, facilitating the development of solutions to global challenges.

An overview of the establishment of the G20 becomes helpful to better understand the coverage and development of the main domain of its policies. It was created as the premier forum for international economic cooperation in response to the devastating financial crises of the 90s, such as in Mexico, Asia, and Russia. In 1999, a decision taken at the G7/G8 meeting officially established the G20. The aim of the G20 was outlined in the report prepared by G7/G8 finance ministers at the Cologne Economic Summit: "We will work together to establish an informal mechanism for dialogue among systematically important countries within the framework of the Bretton Woods institutional system". (Report of G7 Finance Ministers to the Köln Economic Summit, 1999)

In justifying the creation of the G20, this Summit drew attention to the informal structure of the Group, dialogue between members, and, above all, financial and economic-based Bretton Woods institutions. The G20, an unofficial platform, represents a significant milestone in the history of advanced industrialised and emerging market economies. By bringing together nations from both spheres of economic development, the G20 has allowed emerging market economies to gain greater representation in the global economic system.

In this section, the agenda for the G20 Summits will be analysed from the perspective of the inclusion of social issues. Additionally, a quantitative analysis of the social issues in the G20 agenda and documents will follow.

Analysis of the G20 Agenda in the Summits From the Perspective of Inclusion of the Social Issues

Analysing the G20 agenda from a social perspective offers insight into its consideration of social issues. From the outset, the G20's objectives were set out in the first G20 Declaration of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors in 1999, supporting the objectives of the G7/G8 Cologne Finance Ministers' Economic Summit focusing on the importance of social dimensions by the Ministers and Central Bank Governors themselves to achieve stable and sustainable world economic growth that benefits all:

. . . to provide a new mechanism for informal dialogue in the framework of the Bretton Woods institutional system, to broaden the discussions on key economic and financial policy issues among systemically significant economies and promote co-operation to achieve stable and sustainable world economic growth that benefits all. (G20 Meeting of G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors, 1999)

As stated in the first G20 Declaration of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors in 1999, the purpose of the G20 is to seek solutions for crucial economic and financial problems as an informal dialogue mechanism in the framework of the Bretton Woods institutional system. In parallel with these aims, the Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors continued to hold annual meetings until the Leaders Summit in 2008.

Despite the strict economic and financial focus of the G20 since the inaugural Leaders' Summit in 2008, it has progressively broadened its agenda to incorporate not only economic and financial targets but also social considerations by referring to "employment" and "poverty reduction': "... Our work will be guided by a shared belief that market principles, open trade and investment regimes, and effectively regulated financial markets foster the dynamism, innovation, and entrepreneurship essential for economic growth, employment, and poverty reduction." (Washington Summit, 2008)

The 2008 Washington Leaders' Declaration in its Article 2 indicates that their main objectives included addressing social policy concerns such as poverty reduction and employment opportunities. Similarly, Article 3 of the Leaders' Declaration at the London Summit in 2009 included a decision in which many social characteristics of welfare were expressed in the following social characteristics of sharing welfare and prosperity through growth and recovery:

We start from the belief that prosperity is indivisible; that growth, to be sustained, has to be shared; and that our global plan for recovery must have at its heart the needs and jobs of hard-working families, not just in developed countries but in emerging markets and the poorest countries of the world too. (London Summit Leaders' Declaration, 2009)

The London Summit highlights the social perspective by underlying the importance of sharing prosperity for sustainable growth. The global recovery plan must prioritise people from developed, emerging, and the poorest countries and provide employment

opportunities. In this regard, the Summit has expressed continued interest in the G20 social issues to gain further clarity on the matter.

The Pittsburgh Summit in 2009 marked a significant shift in the G20's focus towards social policies. It not only defined the G20 as one of the premier forums for international economic cooperation but also highlighted the organisation's crucial role in social policy. The Pittsburgh Declaration, in essence, became the G20's sort of unnamed "social manifesto" and outlined some of the most pressing and challenging social responsibilities that the G20 should address as its commitment to invest in people in various main social issues:

> Today, we designated the G20 as the premier forum for our international economic cooperation. We have a responsibility to invest in people by providing education, job training, decent work conditions, health care, and social safety net support, and to fight poverty, discrimination, and all forms of social exclusion. . . . We also have a responsibility to achieve the internationally agreed development goals... We note with concern the adverse impact of the global crisis on low-income countries' (LICs) capacity to protect critical core spending in areas such as health, education, safety nets, and infrastructure.

It can be seen that although the G20 designates itself as the premier forum for international economic cooperation, it attains a crucial responsibility for social issues aiming at "investing in people". The declaration went further to underline the issues of both the fight against poverty and the poor saying that: "The MDBs play a key role in the fight against poverty. . . We commit to improving access to financial services for the poor."

The Declaration clarified the G20's commitment to implementing recovery plans by listing almost all social issues varying from decent work to international labour standards as underlying that:

> We commit to implementing recovery plans that support decent work, help preserve employment, and prioritise job growth. In addition, we will continue to provide income, social protection, and training support for the unemployed and those most at risk of unemployment. We agree that the current challenges do not provide an excuse to disregard or weaken internationally recognised labour standards. To assure that global growth is broadly beneficial, we should implement policies consistent with the ILO's fundamental principles and rights at work.

The G20 expressed that it has a new framework to uncover its plan of action for structural reforms to create more inclusive labour markets, saying that

> Our new Framework for Strong, Sustainable, and Balanced Growth requires structural reforms to create more inclusive labour markets, active labour market policies, and quality education and training programmes...We recognise successful employment and training programmes are often designed together with employers and workers, and we call on the ILO, in partnership with other organisations, to convene its constituents and NGOs to develop a training strategy for our consideration. (The Pittsburgh Summit, 2009)

Therefore, the Leaders' Statement of the Pittsburgh Summit represents a comprehensive focus on significantly strengthening the G20's social basis and dimension, defining it as a premier forum of international economic cooperation. As highlighted in the Pittsburgh Summit, the G20 recognises the importance of addressing critical social policy issues. These include many social issues, such as investing in people to ensure social rights, supporting vulnerable populations, fighting poverty, combating discrimination and social exclusion, providing job training, maintaining social protection, achieving sustainable development, and promoting decent work in an inclusive labour market. Thus, the G20 leaders acknowledged the importance of social dimensions and integrated them into the G20 agenda. The Leaders Summit attempted to address these social issues by being firmly committed to achieving social goals. This commitment has become even more important as the impact of the global financial crisis has waned.

After the Pittsburgh Summit, the G20 began to insist on using the slogan "the leading forum for international economic cooperation" as its motto. Nevertheless, this expression is discussed in terms of its meaning. For example, Kaul (2019, p. 570) notes that the G20 refers to itself as the "premier forum for international economic cooperation," but it is not clear what exactly international economic cooperation means. He argues that today, it has become increasingly clear that global growth and development are closely linked to economic, social, and environmental dimensions and should be promoted in a balanced way to ensure global sustainability. Therefore, he underlines that it would be appropriate for the G20 to now call itself a forum that promotes international cooperation that supports economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable global growth and development. This proves that 'socially' becomes one of the three pillars of the G20 agenda.

Quantitative Analysis of the Social Issues Existing in the G20 Agenda

From the perspective of social policy, analysis of the Leaders' Statements and Policy Documents of the G20 will help to understand the approach of the G20 towards social policies. After examining Table I, it becomes evident that the Summits discuss almost every major global issue. While the initial stages of the Leaders' Summit heavily focused on measures to be taken against the crisis coupled with some references to social issues, over time, the focus shifted from financial regulations and macroeconomic

policy issues to social issues. Social agenda items like poverty alleviation, social regulations, food security, environmental problems, climate change, energy security, and the fight against corruption are included in almost all Summit decisions. However, these issues were initially addressed as headings in the early Summit years, and then they began to be elaborated in detail. These items constitute most of the fundamental global social issues.

During the 18 different G20 Summits, 3439 commitments were made, with 1693 of these commitments about social policy issues. This means that social policy commitments accounted for almost half of all commitments that the G20 made. This highlights the importance of social policy issues in the G20's priorities. Many economic topics are closely linked to social issues, emphasising the interconnectivity between these two areas.

The 18 different Summits included over 100 commitments being made on multiple social policy issues, including development, crime and corruption, employment and labour, health, climate change, food-agriculture-nutrition, environment, and gender. It is worth mentioning that development was the most crucial issue of all, accounting for 11.4% of the total commitments out of a total of 393 commitments, and 23.2% of the commitments in the field of social policy. It is noteworthy that development was addressed at every summit, indicating its paramount importance. Hence, development was the area where the second-highest number of commitments was made, after macroeconomics.

The commitment to labour and employment issues may not have been the centre of discussion in three of the summits, but the remaining 15 summits have seen 190 commitments made in this regard. These commitments make up 5.5% of the total commitments and 11.2% of the commitments in the field of social policy. As for health, commitments were made in response to the Ebola epidemic in 2014, and many more were made during the COVID-19 pandemic. It has been noted that in 2021, most commitments made were in the health sector. It is important to recognise the significance of these commitments and their impact on the well-being of people worldwide.

In 2014, at the Brisban Summit, the G20 made commitments to improve employment and labour. This included setting concrete targets, such as reducing gender inequality in the labour force by 25% by 2025. Achieving this goal would mean adding over 100 million women to the workforce. At the 2015 Antalya Summit, G20 leaders reaffirmed their commitment to improving employment plans and reducing gender participation gaps in labour markets. They also emphasised the importance of developing digital skills and education in areas like science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to increase female participation in these fields (G20 Leaders' Communiqué, 2014 and 2015).

The repeated commitments made by the G20 on social issues affirm their strong dedication and unwavering support towards addressing this important matter. It is crucial to thoroughly evaluate the implementation and progress of the social policy commitments made by the G20 member countries.

As the G20 expands its agenda towards social issues, it is vital to recognise the significance of its multi-actor structure and the inclusion of engagement groups. According to Luckhurst (2019, p. 6), the G20's expanding policy agenda since 2010 is both a result and a cause of the decentralisation of authority. In this regard, the growth of G20 stakeholders has further broadened the agenda, with broader policy issues engaging more actors.

Table 1. Number of G20 Commitments According to the Issues (2008-2023)

Issue	Total	Washington 2008	London 2009	Pittsburgh 2009	Toronto 2010	Seoul 2010	Cannes 2011	Los Cabos 2012	St. Petersburg 2013	Brisbane 2014	Antalya 2015	Hanghzou 2016	Hamburg 2017	Buonos Aires 2018	Osaka 2019	Riyadh 2020	Rome 2021	Bali 2022	New Delhi 2023
Accountability	79	4	3	15	3	4	5	13	9	17	2	4							
Climate Change	152		3	3	3	8	8	5	11	7	3	2	22	3	13	3	21	18	19
Crime and Corruption	183	3		3	3	9	5	7	33	4	4	7	32	5	12	14	23	12	7
Culture	5																	5	
Development	393	4	15	9	8	22	17	10	50	20	24	18	75	3	24	7	18	22	47
Digital Economy /Digitalization	70												4	11	6	3	26	8	12
Education	21			3			1						1				4	8	4
Employment and Labour	190		4	3		4	8	18	29	16	10	9	25	18	9	6	5	16	10
Energy	194			17	1	14	18	10	19	16	3	8	42	8	2	4	8	11	13
Environment	139					1	3		1				57		7	6	21	24	19
Financial Regulation	380	59	45	23	12	24	38	18	20	7	8	25	39	22	10	6	7	8	9
Food, Agriculture, and Nutrition	140			3	2	2	36	4	11		3	3	22	5	4	3	8	20	14
G8/G20 Governance	34			3		2	12	3	12			2							

Table 1. Continued

Issue	Total	2008	2009	2009	2010	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Gender	116							2		4		30	7	12	8		17	11	25
Health	166									33	2	3	19	4	14	14	35	17	25
Human Rights	16													4	5	4		2	1
Information and Communication	75										2	50	23						
Infrastructure	56									28		8	6	1	1		3	4	5
Institutional Reform	5																		5
International Cooperation	16										5	9					1		1
International Taxation	3																3		
Macroeconomic Policy	503	6	15	28	14	29	91	71	66	34	21	31	40	21	9	9	7		11
Microeconomics	29							2	6			3						18	
Migration/Refugees	29											3	16	1		1	2	3	3
Non-proliferation	1																	1	
Regional Security	1																		1
Reform of International Financial Institutions	153	14	29	11	4	16	22	8	5	4	2	4	14	7	4	2	2	2	
Social Policy	19		1	1	2	1	3	1			3	1	2				4		
Taxation	7																	1	3
Terrorism	49								1			12	3	24	3	5		1	
Tourism and Culture	2																		
Trade	213	5	14	6	9	17	15	10	12	9	14	24	29	5	6	10	12	8	
Total Commitments	3439	95	129	128	61	153	282	180	281	205	113	213	531	128	143	107	225	223	242

Resource: G20 Information Centre (2023); G20 Information Centre (2022); G20 Information Centre (2021); G20 Information Centre (2020); G20 Information Centre (2019); G20 Information Centre (2018); G20 Information Centre (2016); G20 Information Centre (2015).

Table 2. Number of G20 Social Commitments According to Issues (2008-2023)

Issue	Total	Washington 2008	London 2009	St. Pittsburgh 2009	Toronto 2010	Seoul 2010	Cannes 2011	Los Cabos 2012	St. Petersburg 2013	Brisbane 2014	Antalya 2015	Hangzhou 2016	Hamburg 2017	Buenos Aires 2018	Osaka 2019	Riyadh 2020	Rome 2021	Bali 2022	New Delhi 2023	Relevant Commitment/Total Social Commitments(%)	Relevant Commitment/Total Social Commitments(%)
Development	393	4	15	9	8	22	17	10	50	20	24	18	75	3	24	7	18	22	47	23.2	11.4
Employment and Labour	190		4	3		4	8	18	29	16	10	9	25	18	9	6	5	16	10	11.2	5.5
Crime and Corruption	183	3		3	3	9	5	7	33	4	4	7	32	5	12	14	23	12	7	10.8	5.3
Health	166									33	2	3	19	4	14	14	35	17	25	9.8	4.8
Climate Change	152		3	3	3	8	8	5	11	7	3	2	22	3	13	3	21	18	19	8.9	4.4
Food, Agriculture, and Nutrition	140			3	2	2	36	4	11		3		22	5	4	3	8	20	14	8.2	4
Environment	139					1	3		1				57		7	6	21	24	19	8.2	4
Gender	116							2		4		30	7	12	8		17	11	25	6.8	3.3
Accountability	79	4	3	15	3	4	5	13	9	17	2	4								4.6	2.2
G8/G20 Governance	34			3		2	12	3	12		2									2	0.9
Migration/Refugees	29											3	16	1		1	2	3	3	1.7	0.8
Education	21			3			1						1				4	8	4	1.1	0.6
Social Policy	19		1	1	2	1	3	1			3	1	2				4			1.1	0.5
Human Rights	16													4	5	4		2	1	0.9	0.4
International Cooperation	16										5	9					1		1	0.9	0.4
Total Social Policy Commitments/Total G20 Commitments (%)	1693/3439 (49.2)	11/95 (11.5)	26/129 (20.1)	43/128 (33.5)	21/61 (34.4)	53/153 (34.6)	98/282 (34.7)	63/180 (35)	156/281 (55.5)	101/205 (49.2)	51/113 (45.1)	57/213 (26.7)	310/531 (58.3)	50/128 (39)	100/143 (69.9)	67/107 (62.6)	58/225 (70.2)	53/223 (68.6)	175/242 (72.3)		

Resource: G20 Information Centre (2023); G20 Information Centre (2022); G20 Information Centre (2021); G20 Information Centre (2020); G20 Information Centre (2019); G20 Information Centre (2018); G20 Information Centre (2016); G20 Information Centre (2015).

The Impact of the G20's Demographics, Economic, and Social Representation on Its Social Agenda

The G20's representation status in terms of population, Gros Domestic Product (GDP), merchandise trade, International Monetary Fund (IMF) quotas share, trade union density, collective bargaining coverage, poverty rate, and sustainable development goals worldwide forces it to indulge more in social issues and accommodate them into its social agenda. In this regard, a high

percentage of the world population, a high percentage of the world GDP and world trade, and a high percentage of both the poorest and richest population are at stake in this so-called 'premier forum for international economic cooperation'.

The G20, which includes at least one country from each continent, has expanded its scope to include social issues due to its demographic representation. This representation status of the G20, from the economic to the social side, has a significant impact on the world for its position and policies determined. Developed and emerging economies meet in the same forum, making it a crucial platform for global discussions and decision-making to cover social and economic issues.

Table III shows that the G20 nations account for over 60% of the world's population. After the African Union joined the G20, this percentage rose to almost 80% of the world population. The G20 consists of the largest economies in the world, with 17 of 19 countries being in the top 20. The only exceptions to be out of the top 20 economies are Argentina, ranked 22nd, and South Africa, ranked 40th (World Bank, 2024).

Table 3. Economic and Social Representation of the G20 Countries

G20 Members	Main Economic Indicators of the G20 Countries						Main Social Indicators of the G20 Countries						
	Population, 2024, Total Million	GDP, 2023, Current Prices, Billion US$	GDP Per Capita, 2023 current US$	Merchandise Exports-2022 - Billion US$	Merchandise Imports-2022 - Billion US$	IMF Quatos Share (%)	Trade Union Density (%)	Collective Bargaining Coverage (%)	Poverty Headcount Ratio at $2.15 a Day–2023 (2017 PPP) (% of the population) (2023)	Poverty Headcount Ratio at $3.65 a Day–2023 (2017 PPP) (% of the population) (2023)	Population in Multinational Poverty (Thousand)	Population Covered by at Least One Social Protection Benefit % (2020)	Ranking in the SDG Index – (2023)
Argentine	45,6	640,0	12,520	88	76	0.67	27.7 (2014)	49.4 (2018)	1.07	2.51	196 (2020)	58.4 (2021)	51
Australia	26,7	1.723	63,140	402	290	1.38	13.7 (2018)	61.2 (2018)	0.34	0.43		100	40
Brazil	211,9	2.173	9,070	334	272	2.32	13 (2019)	64.8 (2020)	2.2	5.34	8.234 (2015)	72.7 (2021)	50
Canada	39,7	2.140	53,930	597	567	2.31	29.4 (2020)	31.3 (2020)	0.2	0.27		99.8	26
China	1.419,3	17.797	13,400	3.593	2.715	6.40	44.2 (2017)	45 (2017)	0.77	1.46	55.396 (2014)	70.8	63
France	68,4	3.030	45,070	606	811	4.23	8.9 (2018)	98 (2018)	0.14	0.18		100	6
Germany	83,4	4.456	53,970	1.658	1,571	5.59	16.3 (2019)	51.8 (2019)	0.26	0.72		99.5	4
India	1.450,9	3.549	2,540	452	732	2.75	19.8 (2017)		3.34	11.81	230.739 (2021)	24.4	112
Indonesia	283,4	1.371	4,870	291	237	0.98	13 (2019)	10 (2008)	2.88	12.32	9.907 (2017)	27.8	75
Italy	58,9	2.254	38,200	700	743	3.16	32.5 (2019)	99 (2019)	1.13	0.47		82	24
Japan	123,7	4.212	39,030	752	905	6.47	16.8 (2019)	16.8 (2019)	0.36	0.47		98	21
Korea, Rep.	51,7	1.712	35,490	683	731	1.80	12.4 (2020)	15.6 (2019)	0.25	0.36		82.9 (2018)	31
Mexico	130,8	1.788	12,100	578	604	1,87	13.2 (2020)	10.4 (2019)	5.76	10.06	5.156 (2021)	65.7 (2021)	80
Russia	144,8	2.021	14,250	565	194	2.71	27.5 (2017)	28.5 (2019)	0.51	0.83		90.1	49
Saudi Arabia	33,9	1.067	28,690	378	140	2.10	No right to organise	-				77.8	94
South Africa	64,0	377,0	6,750	123	111	0.64	29.1 (2019)	30.1 (2019)	21.59	34.43	3.716 (2016)	49.3	110
Türkiye	85,3	1.108	11,650	254	363	0.98	15.2 (2024)	8.5 (2020)	0.76	1.39		79.8	72
United Kingdom	69,1	3.340	47,800	530	816	4.23	23.4 (2019)	26.9 (2019)	0.5	0.72		93.5	11
United States	345,4	27.360	80,300	2.062	3.375	17,43	10.3 (2020)	12.1 (2020)	0.55	0.78		76.1	39
European Union	449,2	17.100	37,149	6.965	7,299	26,18							
African Union	1.532,8	2.870	1,868	661	693	5.19							
G20 Total	4.975,4	89.478		18.647	19.427	81.22					313.244		
G20 +African Union	6.508,2	92.348		19.185	20,0	85.77							
WORLD	8.161,9	105.435	13,212	24.486	25.049	100					1.100,0	46.9(2020)	
G20/World (%)	60.9	84.8		76,1	77.5	81.22					28.4		
G20+ African Union/World (%)	79.7	87.6		78,3	80	85.77							

Resource: Wordometer (2023); https://data.worldbank.org; EUROSTAT (2024); UNECE, (n.d.); OECD (n.d.); OPHI-UNDP, 2023; ILOb, (n.d.); ILOc (n.d.); https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/rankings; ILO (2021); Sachs, Lafortune, Fuller, Drumm, 2023; World Bank (2024a); World Bank (2024ab); World Bank1 (n.d.); World Bank2 (n.d); World Bank3 (n.d); ÇSGB (2024)

The G20 consists of countries that account for over 85% of global GDP and 75% of global trade. The G20 includes both high-middle and low-income countries based on per capita income. According to the World Bank's updated figures as of July 2023, low-income countries are those with an annual income below $1,135, while low-middle-income countries have an annual income between $1,136 and $4,465, high-middle-income countries have an annual income between $4,466 and $13,845, and

high-income countries have an annual income of $13,845 or above (Hamadeh, Rompaey and Metreau, 2023). Of the G20 members and the EU, which represent the majority of the group, 11 countries are upper-income, seven countries are upper-middle-income, and only one country is low-middle-income. The G20 countries play a dominant role in the global financial system and are the primary decision-makers in shaping global financial policies in the IMF, with over 80% of all quotas.

Concerning the issue of poverty, it should be underlined that poverty is a significant issue even within the G20 countries. Despite the African Union's exclusion, nearly 90 million individuals in the G20 countries, which constitute 15% of the total number of individuals living in extreme poverty around the world, are struggling with poverty. However, after the African Union's inclusion in the G20, the group has become responsible for more than half a billion of the world's extremely impoverished individuals. In contrast, one-third of the world's multidimensional poverty is concentrated in seven G20 countries. Multidimensional poverty is defined as the lack of access to basic necessities such as healthcare, education, and safe living conditions, as well as disempowerment, poor job opportunities, and violence. According to the 2023 Global Multidimensional Poverty Index, 1.1 billion people worldwide are enduring multidimensional poverty, and half of them, or 533 million people, are living in Sub-Saharan African countries. When considering African Union members and G20 nations, the G20 accounts for nearly 80% of all individuals experiencing multidimensional poverty.

Regarding the issue of social protection, one of the major social issues in many countries of the G20 is the lack of access to social protection programmes. The G20 indicator shows that the percentage of the population benefiting from at least one social protection programme ranges from 24% to 100%. Among the G20 countries, 12 have a rate of over 75%, which is higher than the global average of 47%. However, the social protection program does not cover 25% of the population in any way in 7 countries. For instance, in India, 3/4 of the population, which is approximately 1.2 billion people, do not have any access to social protection benefits.

Trade union density and the coverage rate of collective agreements are important social issues. The rate of trade union density varies between 10% and 45%, while the coverage rate of collective agreements varies between 8% and 99%. In many countries, the coverage rate of collective agreements is higher than the unionisation rate. These figures reveal the strength of trade union organisations and their power level. It is worth noting that Saudi Arabia does not have any trade union organisations or a collective bargaining system in place.

Another social issue is the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), which consist of 17 targets that are planned to be achieved by 2030. These targets range from fighting poverty to eliminating hunger, providing quality jobs, and ensuring gender equality. However, the G20 countries have varying performances in achieving these goals. Some are ranked as high as 4th, while others fall as low as 112th. To ensure sustainable development, G20 countries should take several steps.

As a powerful organisation, the G20 wields immense influence over the global society and the global economy and finance. However, the socio-economic positioning of its member countries also presents a significant challenge, particularly in the form of dire poverty. This is why the G20 must not only prioritise economic and fiscal policies but also actively engage in dialogues and collaborations with social partners to develop effective social policies. By doing so, the G20 can address social problems, overcome challenges, strengthen its position and become a decisive force in the world.

From The Global Governance Perspective: The Necessity of Extending the G20 Agenda to Social Policy Clauses

From a global governance perspective, the G20 also becomes responsible for extending the G20 Agenda to cover social policy issues and clauses. Hence, the term "global governance" entails resolving political, economic, and social issues via dialogue and negotiation among nation-states, subnational, and supranational organisations (Keyman, 2022, p. 460). By expanding the scope of activities in which they are involved, global governance actors are also changing their models of interaction and cooperation in tackling current problems at the global level. Current global governance arrangements favour flexibility over rigidity, favour voluntary measures over binding rules and partnerships over individual actions and give rise to new initiatives and ideas (Jang, McSparren and Rashchupkina, 2016).

In this regard, numerous studies (Kaasch and Martens, 2015, Luckhurst, 2019; Chodor, 2020; Slaughter, 2020) have been conducted on the connection between the G20 and global governance. These studies analyse the relationship between the G20 and non-governmental organisations as engagement groups in the context of global social governance issues. Kassch and Martens define global social governance follows:

Global social governance is understood as a multi-actored process of shaping global and national social policies. It involves different categories of actors that interact and exert influence over policies using collaborative and individual agencies. The mandates and spheres of influence may overlap, and specific actors may function in different and multiple roles. The relationships between actors can be characterised by consensual and contestation modes. (Kassch and Martens, 2015, p. 157).

Similar to the definition of social governance of Kassch and Martens, according to Luckhurst (2019, p.3, 7), the G20, in addition to its official meetings and official membership, has become a global governance hub thanks to its capacity to integrate various organisations, actors, and policy issues. Non-state actors have enabled the forum to create a significant impact through their inclusiveness practises. The G20's inclusion of engagement groups in its structure shows that it accepts the political importance and impact of increasingly heterogeneous global governance networks.

Chodor is focusing on issues of democratic deficit to understand the G20's engagement groups. From the point of view of Chodor (2020, p. 903), one of the most critical shortcomings of global governance is the emergence of a democratic deficit due to an increasing number of decisions being made far from the reach of ordinary citizens and in unaccountable environments. This has led to calls for global institutions to play a more significant role in NGOs to increase their legitimacy, accountability, and effectiveness. In this context, the G20 established an engagement process to include NGOs in policy-making. It began to move its focus beyond finance to issues in global governance, from infrastructure to women's participation in the workforce. Chodor also states NGOs' gains in the G20. According to Chodor (2020, s. 904), through engagement groups, NGOs gain access to the G20 to include a broader range of ideas in the G20 agenda and have the opportunity to hold the G20 accountable for implementing G20 commitments.

Slaughter discusses the establishment of participation groups in the G20 from the public participation perspective in global governance. According to Slaughter (2020, p. 7), establishing engagement groups within the G20 shows that the G20 has become a more detailed and institutionalised global summit process. At the same time, the G20 Summits have moved significantly away from leaders having secret and informal discussions. Slaughter, thus, states that the G20 offers more opportunities for public participation in global governance and shows that more transparency and accountability are possible than in the past.

Social Mechanisms and Social Actors in the G20

This section discusses the social mechanisms and social actors in the G20, such as their role in G20 decision-making and the importance of the contacts between the L20 and the G20.

The Role of Social Mechanisms in G20 Decision Making

The place and role of the social mechanisms within the G20's decision-making structure is an important concern in fostering the social dimension. The G20 is a global forum comprising various actors and structures. At the top is the Leaders Summit, which is supported by Sherpas, Ministerial Meetings, Working Groups, Engagement Groups, and Initiatives that address different issues. In addition, guest countries and international organisations participate in the G20.

In conjunction with the G20 structure, there are social mechanisms such as the Labour and Employment Ministers' Meetings, Employment Working Groups, and initiatives like G20 Empower. International organisations, including international trade unions and business organisations, and Engagement Groups are also part of this framework. Since the Washington Summit, the G20 Labour and Employment Ministers' Meetings have been advising G20 Leaders on the most pressing labour challenges faced by workers, as part of the Ministerial Meetings.

The G20 Employment Working Group (EWG), under the direction of the G20 Labour and Employment Ministers, meets several times before the Ministerial meeting to discuss current labour issues and challenges and to negotiate the G20 Labour and Employment Ministers' Declaration. EWG produces many reports and documents on social policy, especially under the leadership of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Some papers called 'Strengthening Social Protection for The Future of Work' prepared by the ILO in 2017, 'The Concept Paper: Future of Work' prepared by the OECD in 2017, and 'Promoting Adequate Social Protection and Social Security Coverage for All Workers, including those in non-standard forms of employment" prepared by the ILO and OECD submitted to the Employment Working Group meetings (ILO, OECD, 2018 p.2).

The IMF and the World Bank (WB), as Intergovernmental Bretton Woods Institutions, have been represented in the G20 since the foundational years. Since the 2009 Pittsburgh Summit, the ILO, and the OECD and some international organisations, has been invited to the G20 summits. In addition to these, employee and employer organisations like the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), OECD Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC), The International Organisation of Employers (IOE), and Business at OECD (BIAC) are also represented at the meetings as social partners at a high level. In addition to the ILO, the G20 has gained a more social appearance with the participation of the ITUC and the TUAC as international labour organisations and IOE and BIAC as employer organisations.

Given this fact, the G20 has been interacting with non-governmental organisations through Engagement Groups, which have been created under its organisation since 2010. In this context, Business 20 (B20), Youth 20 (Y20) in 2010, Labour 20 (L20) in 2011, Think 20 (T20) in 2012, Civil 20 (C20) in 2013, Woman 20 (W20) in 2015, Science (S20) in 2017, Urban 20 (U20) in 2020,

Supreme Audit Institutions (SAI20) in 2022 and Start Up 20 in 2023 started their activities. According to Berger, Cooper, and Grimm (2020, p. 497), who evaluate this structure, today, the G20 is more than two days of Summits of state and governmental heads. The role of engagement groups as a social mechanism will be discussed in the next part, particularly from the viewpoint of L20.

The Role of Social Partners in G20 Decision Making

Social partners under the "Engagement Groups" play an important role in the G20 process. The G20 has created engagement groups by civil society stakeholders to increase inclusiveness and effectiveness. Engagement Groups discuss essential issues in their fields of interest and to submit policy recommendations to the G20 Forum. Although these recommendations are not binding, they are mostly considered effective during the G20 discussions and negotiations (Bilotta and Botti 2021, p. 31,32). Thus, the Engagement Groups seek to influence policy-making and decision-making in the G20 in line with their priorities.

The Engagement Groups work like the G20 does. The host country of the G20 takes charge of the leadership of the engagement groups. Each Engagement Group arranges multiple events and summits throughout the year. Through these meetings, the Engagement Groups produce papers, make proposals, and initiatives to contribute to and influence the agendas and outcomes of the Leaders' summits. Furthermore, each Engagement Group interacts with other Engagement Groups, bolstering the channels of dialogue and becoming more effective than a group. On the one hand, positive evaluations were made regarding the effects of engagement groups on the G20. Engagement groups contribute to the G20's participatory structure, legitimacy, socialisation, diplomatic relations, cooperation, global governance networks, and social dialogue.

According to many scholars (Luckhurst (2019, p. 6), Chodor (2020, p. 903), and Berger, Cooper, and Grimm (2020, p. 498)), the establishment and subsequent expansion of Engagement Groups in the G20 were beneficial for the G20 as it contributed to an increased sense of legitimacy by increasing inclusiveness practises. Berger, Cooper, and Grimm (2020, p. 498) also state that the aims of Engagement Groups range from lobbying the policy process and criticising the G20's decision to providing analytical input.

Furthermore, according to Luckhurst (2019, p.13,14, 19), the G20's engagement forums are vital structures that seek to shape the global policy agenda. They help analyse the organisation, actors, policy objectives, and participation practises of G20 governance networks. These forums create opportunities for reciprocal, horizontal, and hierarchical relationships, mainly due to the agenda-setting influence of the host G20 government. He argues that relations amongst G20 summits, ministerial and sherpa meetings, working groups, and engagement groups lead to mutual socialisation, foster interpersonal and diplomatic relations, create inclusivity practises, and discursively endow them with legitimacy. Engagement groups increasingly emphasise compliance with the G20's commitments and contribute to socialisation processes through constructive struggle and monitoring of policy implementation. Cooperation between engagement forums and other interlocutors particularly points to a potential multiplier effect resulting in cooperation on specific G20 agenda issues. Engagement Groups increase their lobbying potential by focusing on coordination among G20-related global governance networks. These networks have a vital impact on the political norms and policy practises of the G20 and on global economic governance.

On the other hand, negative evaluations are put forward regarding the effects of the engagement groups on the G20. Kaul is concerned that the G20 includes Engagement Groups without adequate preparation. Kaul (2019, p.567) argues that G20 leaders began to enable engagement groups to engage in advocacy and lobbying by trying to increase the legitimacy of the G20 after 2010 without clearly revealing its role and purpose of the G20. Therefore, he notes that various groups view the G20 as a platform to address their concerns rather than supporting the G20 mission.

Chodor highlights that engagement groups' participation in the G20 curtails their ability to object to it. Chodor (2020, p. 904) argues that there is a significant gap between discourse and practise regarding the G20's interaction with civil society. In this context, he underlines that although the G20 has facilitated the participation of NGOs in the G20, the opportunities for NGOs to object to the G20 agenda are generally limited. At this point, he underlines that the participation of NGOs in the G20 is within the framework of partnering with the G20 priorities rather than a negotiation. In this framework, he gives the C20 as an example among the Engagement groups and emphasises that the C20 aims to eliminate the challenge to the G20 from civil society. He argues that while civil society's participation in setting the G20 agenda is facilitated, the C20 is designed to restrict civil society's ability to object.

There are also evaluations in the literature regarding the activation of these groups. Benson and Zern (2019, p. 558) recommends making engagement groups more effective. They pointed out the necessity of an institutionalised consultation process in the G20. For this purpose, they recommend that non-governmental organisations gather under a secretariat and contribute to official policy discussions. With such a structure, the G20 can direct transnational policy and ensure that many global voices are heard. Benson

and Zern claim that making decisions transparently and equitably at the G20 will reinforce global governance and strengthen the G20's relations with the people and communities it serves.

Trade unions and employers' organisations act as social partners within the G20 and work together to strengthen the framework for social dialogue. Since 2011, the L20 and the B20 engagement groups have been interacting with each other, contributing to the improvement of the industrial relations system. Workers' representatives, including trade unions and employer unions, are an integral part of the social dialogue. Every year, the L20 and the B20 leaders come together under the G20 umbrella to develop solutions to common problems in the workplace and to prioritise their goals. This facilitates the development of the G20 industrial relations system and bilateral social dialog. The L20 and the B20 have agreed to promote employment, develop youth employment and internships, address unemployment and youth unemployment, increase social protection, formalise the economy, increase investments, and recognise the importance of labour and business in shaping economic and social policies and reducing the gender gap in the labour market. The L20 and B20 come together at the international level to foster an environment of reconciliation, dialogue, information exchange, and cooperation, develop principles on issues relevant to both parties, and issue joint declarations on agreed-upon issues.

While performing their activities in the G20, trade unions also have the opportunity to contact and collaborate with employers participating in the B20. Greater coordination between engagement groups on goals creates a multiplier effect in increasing their influence, sometimes through pressure on the G20 to act on policy recommendations (Luckhurst, 2019, p.7).

The Importance of the Contacts Between the L20 and the G20

Regular contacts have been established between the L20 and G20, which is a very important means for including social clauses in the G20 agenda and documents. The L20 Group and union leaders attach importance to having direct contact with G20 leaders before/during/after the Summits and between the Summits in an attempt to influence the G20 decisions in the declarations. Trade unions have been fighting for the right to representation in international economic organisations for a long time, even before the L20 gained institutional recognition in the G20. Since the onset of the global economic crisis in 2008, trade unions have focused on the G7/G8 summits and international financial institutions. During this time, the ITUC and the TUAC organised many meetings and actions.

The trade unions held a labour summit on the eve of the G20 2008 Washington Summit. At the summit, the trade unions organised bilateral contacts with 14 heads of state from 20 countries and the Presidents of the IMF and the World Bank. During the summit period, trade unions put forward the Washington Declaration. At other G20 meetings, trade union leaders from the leading G20 countries attended and put forward the plan in a series of bilateral meetings with heads of government from the G20 countries and then IMF and World Bank Leaders (Evans, 2018).

Trade unions have finally succeeded in gaining representation and opportunity in the G20 after a long and hard-fought struggle. This victory allows them to communicate their demands to the G20, which they hope to see included in the final declaration. Communication between the L20 and G20 can occur in two ways: by transmitting L20 priorities and declarations to G20 leaders, or through direct one-to-one contact between L20 and G20 leaders. The interaction of trade unions with the G20 Summit and G20 Leaders, which put forward significant demands for solving problems in working life as an essential part of social dialogue, is significant. The ITUC and TUAC organise L20 meetings to ensure social dialogue with the G20 Leaders. However, in their reports, publications, and on their website, they do not share sufficient information about their interactions with the G20 Leaders. The L20 should publish monitoring reports in addition to the existing ones. The L20 has previously published monitoring reports during the Australian, Turkish, and Chinese presidency periods. These reports offer guidance to trade unions on complying with G20 commitments, and they also provide recommendations on what should be included in the G20 agenda for the following year. Unfortunately, there has been a lack of continuity in these reports.

They also do not display a transparent attitude about which G20 Leader the ITUC and TUAC management and union leaders met with, and it is difficult to understand why. These contacts are crucial, and the lack of transparency is concerning. The ITUC and TUAC should ensure that their contacts with the IMF and the World Bank in the G20 are also sufficiently shared.

The G20 facilitates interaction between the L20-B20 or international organisations and the L20, creating opportunities for global governance. The G20 also pioneered initiatives to address social issues within global governance. In this context, in response to the mission of the G20 Development Working Group, the Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board (SPIAC-B) was established in 2012 under the leadership of the World Bank and ILO to provide social protection, financing, and technical consultancy services to developing countries for supporting and coordinating social protection measures. SPIAC-B includes the United Nations institutions and organisations, multilateral and bilateral development agencies, non-governmental organisations such as the ITUC, and a total of 20 countries, both G20 and non-members. The SPIAC-B developed tools, such as the Interagency Social Protection Assessment (ISPA) and the Global Partnership for Universal Social Protection Initiative, to provide valuable

analysis to inform social protection policymaking. So far, there have been 63 applications of different ISPA tools in 53 countries, providing valuable analysis to inform social protection policymaking (ILO, (n.d.)).

Furthermore, during the G20 process, the L20 trade unions organise joint meetings and had the opportunity to engage in dialogue with employers and international financial institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank, which they had previously protested and criticised on many issues. This platform gives them a chance to directly influence and persuade these organisations to consider social sensitivities in their decision-making processes. To put it simply, the G20 provides a global social dialogue platform for international financial organisations and trade unions to come together and communicate.

Ensuring the Future of Social Issues in G20 Decision Making

This study leads us to the important question of ensuring the place of social issues in future G20 decision-making. The research highlights the fact that social policy issues play a critical role in the G20 agenda and are given significant attention by its leaders. The G20's multi-actor and participatory structure, along with engagement groups, enables the inclusion of social policy issues in the leaders' agendas. The effectiveness of the G20 on social policy matters is usually evaluated in conjunction with its overall effectiveness.

Stating that the G20 is not adequate, Kaul (2019, s. 567, 568) states that while many scientists try to determine why the G20 is not effective, they emphasise the problems arising from its current structure, functioning, and global policy content. While assessing the activities and achievements of the G20, Kaul noted that from 2010 onwards, the G20 generally eschewed an active operational role, limiting itself to a forum with plenty of rhetoric rather than action, and the summit outcome documents lacked a strategic vision.

Although the number and content of the commitments on social policies made in the G20 are essential and very high, there are also criticisms regarding the content and effectiveness of the commitments. According to Bilotta and Botti (2021, p. 28) and Kaul (2019, p. 565,566), most G20 commitments are a repetition of previous commitments made at other G20 Summits or other international forums. Moreover, these commitments have a vague structure and cannot be transformed into concrete actions, institutional arrangements, or concrete policy measures. Kaul states that this process has led to the extension of the G20 agenda with new topics for each Presidency country to leave its mark on the annual agenda. Thus, he states that leaders' summit statements are mere listings of issues.

It is often discussed that there is a discrepancy between the G20's rhetoric and actions. Chodor (2020, p. 903, 906) argues that there is a gap between the G20 discourses and practises and that the participation of engagement groups in the G2 increases the legitimacy of the G20. However, the main contribution of this situation to the effectiveness and transparency of the G20 needs to be clarified.

There are discussions on whether the G20 should be modified. From the viewpoint of Benson and Zürn (2019, p. 558), the G20 can be modified and provide access to policymakers by providing civil society with a more meaningful lobbying platform. Since 2013, the C20 engagement group has taken significant steps towards engagement, with the aim of 'creating spaces to discuss and create high-level policy documents through transparent and inclusive processes'.

Some recommendations have been put forward to encourage greater involvement and participation in the G20. According to Benson and Zürn (2019, p. 559), a more active and participatory G20 has the potential to improve global governance by providing much-needed guidance and coordination in uncertain times, as well as mitigating the backlash of social movements and states with less power in the international system.

There is criticism that not all engagement groups in the G20 are equal in terms of being effective and influential. Chodor (2020, p. 904) states that not all participation groups are equal in the G20, especially the B20; that is, the business world has more access and influence than other NGOs.

Conclusion

This study, "The Importance of 'Social Agenda' in The G20 Decision-Making: Increasing or Decreasing", examined the G20 from the perspective of place, role, and coverage of social agenda in terms of their importance in the G20 decision-making. In this framework, this study scrutinised the basic economic and social indicators in the G20 countries, analysed the social mechanisms embedded in the G20's structure, and evaluated the G20's approach towards social policy issues. The study also highlighted the G20's role in regulating employee and employer relationships through the L20 engagement group.

In this context, many questions about the position of the G20 in the world economy and social indicators, the social mechanisms included in the G20 structure, the role and importance of these mechanisms, the position of the G20 strengthening its legitimacy with Engagement Groups, having any discourse, policies, and actions developed against social problems, providing opportunities

to strengthen social dialogue, primarily through the G20 Engagement Groups and with the L20 and B20, as well as preparing the ground for a dialogue between the L20 and international financial institutions have been attempted to be answered.

As a method of the study, the documents and final declarations published by the G20 were analysed, the data of the G20 commitments were examined, and analyses were made in the light of the observations made at the G20 in terms of social policies and social partners, especially the L20.

Since the global economic crisis of 2008, the G20 has become an important platform for economic cooperation on the international level. The public now follows the G20 summits more closely. Initially, the agenda of the G20 was focused on financial issues due to the global financial crisis. The first Summits focused mainly on financial and economic issues. However, over time, social policy issues such as poverty reduction, employment, quality working conditions, and social protection have become important objectives of the G20 Summits.

The G20, despite its image as a rich club, widely represents the poor of the world, as indicated by official poverty statistics. The G20 is a group of countries that accounts for 80% of the world's national income in trade and 80% of the global financial system in the IMF. However, despite their economic power, many people living in the G20 countries are struggling with poverty. In fact, out of the over one billion people worldwide living in multidimensional poverty, almost 30% live in the current G20 member countries. This number jumps to nearly 80% with the inclusion of the African Union in the G20. Additionally, of the 600 million people living in poverty globally, 90 million reside in G20 countries, including over 500 million who are members of the African Union.

Regarding the attainment of UN SDG performances, member countries are ranked between 4th and 112th. This means that there are considerable differences in development across member countries. From a social perspective, these indicators reveal that the G20 countries need to intensify their efforts and pay more attention to social issues.

The G20 countries have varying indicators towards trade union organisation and the extent of collective agreements. While trade union organising is banned in one G20 country, the percentages vary between 9% and 45%. The scope of the collective agreement also varies from 8% to 99%. Trade unions, which gain their power from organising and collective bargaining, play a significant role in setting social standards in the workplace and successfully raising awareness of social issues.

As a crucial part of the G20, the L20 works to bring issues related to working life to the attention of the G20 leaders during the summits it organises and in its published documents. Before the establishment of the L20, trade unions used to present their demands to the G20 in public squares and through declarations they prepared before the meetings. The L20 has published monitoring reports during the Australian, Turkish, and Chinese Presidency periods. These reports provide advice to trade unions on compliance with G20 commitments and recommendations on what should be on the G20 agenda for the next year. With the establishment of the L20, trade unions can now meet with other engagement groups, such as the B20, global financial institutions like the IMF and the WB, and sometimes even the G20 leaders, and communicate directly around the same table.

However, at this point, it is understood that the ITUC and the TUAC, which constitute the locomotive of L20, have reservations and are hesitant about sharing their mentioned contacts with the public. The close attitude on this issue can be interpreted as arising from being perceived as "concession," "submission," "weakness," and "vulnerability." On this issue, it would be beneficial for the L20 to move away from this attitude and, on the contrary, to express and adopt its involvement in the negotiation process more transparently and boldly.

The L20 holds numerous meetings during the G20 process and generates reports with its task forces. However, it is often difficult to access the content of these reports. This may be because the G20 is an unofficial body without a secretariat, and the process is shaped by the country that chairs each term. Despite this, the ITUC and TUAC, which are the main components of L20, should act as secretariats and evaluate all stages of the L20 process. Access to the documents produced and their contents should be transparently provided. Additionally, the L20 regularly publishes a report outlining its expectations from the G20. However, another report is needed that reveals to what extent the demands of the L20 have been met after the G20 Summit. This will allow trade unions to participate more actively in the process and voice their demands more strongly, contributing significantly to the evaluation of the G20's performance, particularly on social issues. Regularly publishing these reports is significant in revealing the union's perspective.

As the effects of the global financial crisis started to fade away, the G20 began to focus on a broader range of issues on the global agenda, including social concerns. As a result, social policy issues in various areas, such as migration, employment, gender, food, environment, and health, were discussed at the G20 meetings. Social issues account for approximately 50% of all commitments made at the Summits, indicating that the G20 agenda is closely connected to social issues.

The G20 Platform has been successfully bringing together countries for 25 years to discuss global problems, including social issues by developing a common discourse. Together, member countries identify common basic problems and create shared

strategies and action plans. If these strategies and plans are implemented effectively, and civil society and the public provide decisive contributions and supervision, the G20 can continue to play a vital role in solving global social problems.

The research indicates that social challenges persist worldwide, including in the G20 countries. However, the G20 has enhanced its credibility by including social mechanisms and has become a significant player in global governance. Moreover, the G20, which encompasses crucial social problems, is gradually becoming more sensitive to social issues. The study claims that it has succeeded in establishing a regular discourse in this area, improving cooperation between employers and employees, who are vital participants in social dialogue, and creating opportunities for dialogue between global financial institutions and especially the L20.

This study emphasises the importance of social issues in the G20 agenda and the significant role they play in its institutional structure and development of social discourses. It is noteworthy that half of the topics discussed at the G20 are centred around social problems, which demonstrates the G20's commitment to addressing these issues despite being primarily an economic organisation. In conclusion, this research claims that the G20 has a more significant social organisational structure than previously thought or perceived, which furthers its ability to make a positive impact on social issues worldwide.

Although primarily established to tackle economic and financial problems, the G20 acknowledges the significance of social issues and has been incorporating them into its agenda.

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