

# Joyce Sadka

Law Department  
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## Education

2001 Juris Doctor, George Mason University School of Law  
1998 Ph.D. in Economics, Rice University

## Work Experience

**Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México (ITAM)**  
2021– Head of the Law Department  
2018–2019 Interim Head of the Law Department  
2009– Professor, Law Department  
2007–2017 Director of the Master in Economic Theory and Doctorate in Economics programs  
1998– Professor and Researcher, Centro de Investigación Económica (CIE)

**Monash University, Melbourne**  
2017 Visiting Professor  
2008–2009 Visiting Professor

**Activities as Head of the Law Department:** course planning and programming, assignments and teaching loads of full-time and adjunct professors, processing and communicating teaching evaluations, conducting tenure-track and post-tenure full time faculty evaluations, budget management and approval of academic events, faculty trips, and seminar visitors. Management of the Department's membership in various national, regional, and international associations. Creating and updating agreements with other universities, including double degree programs. Direction and supervision of the Center for Access to Justice. Attention to students and resolution of student cases in relation to academic and disciplinary matters. Support for undergraduate and graduate program directors, including curriculum review activities.

## Courses Taught

Intermediate Microeconomic Theory	BA in Economics
Seminar of Public Law	BA in Economics
Economic Analysis of Law	BA in Economics
Principles of Microeconomics	Bachelor of Commerce
Economic Analysis of Regulatory Law	BA in Economics
Research Seminar	BA in Economics
Game Theory	MA in Economics

## Distinctions

2008, 2019 Víctor L. Urquidí Prize, First Place  
2008 Microsoft Research Award for Scholarship in Law and Economics  
1996–2001 Levy Fellowship in Law and Liberty

## Research

### Publications and working papers

1. **Sadka, Joyce** and Kei-Mu Yi. "Consumer Durables, Permanent Terms of Trade Shocks, and the Recent U.S. Trade Deficits", *Journal of International Money and Finance*, 15(5): 797-811, October 1996. [www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/0261560696000265](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/0261560696000265)
2. **Sadka, Joyce** and Tapen Sinha. "Is NAFTA the Trojan Horse of the US Insurance Industry?" *International Insurance Law Journal*, pp. 285-319, Summer 2001.
3. Condon, Bradly, **Joyce Sadka**, and Tapen Sinha. *Insurance Regulation in North America: Integrating American, Canadian and Mexican Markets*, Global Trade and Finance Series, Vol. 5, Kluwer Law International, 2003, ISBN 90-411-2226-5.
4. Kaplan, David, **Joyce Sadka**, and Jorge Luis Silva-Méndez. "Litigation and Settlement: New Evidence from Labor Courts in Mexico", *Journal of Empirical Legal Studies*, 5(2): 309-350, May 2008. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1740-1461.2008.00126.x>
5. Kaplan, David S. and **Joyce Sadka**. "Enforceability of Labor Law: Evidence from a Labor Court in Mexico", *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper No. 4483*, 2008. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/413761468049752151/>
6. Gotthard, Alex, David S. Kaplan, and **Joyce Sadka**. "The Effects of Exaggeration in Labor Lawsuits in Mexico", en *Teoría de Juegos y Derecho Contemporáneo*, David Enriquez, editor, Porrúa, Mexico, 2009, pp. 315-337.
7. Kaplan, David S. and **Joyce Sadka**. "The Plaintiff's Role in Enforcing a Court Ruling: Evidence from a Labor Court in Mexico", *Inter-American Development Bank Working Paper Series*, December 2010. <https://ideas.repec.org/p/idb/brikps/3193.html>
8. **Sadka, Joyce** and Jorge Luis Silva Méndez. "How Much Is It Worth? Evidence on Back Pay in Unfair Dismissal Cases in Mexico." *Comparative Labor Law and Policy Journal*, 36:411-422, May 2015.
9. **Sadka, Joyce**, Enrique Seira, and Christopher Woodruff. "Information and Lawyer Quality: Evidence from a Field Experiment in a Mexican Labor Court", *Economic Development and Institutions Working Paper Series*, December 2019. [https://edi.opml.co.uk/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Pilot-3\\_191219-1.pdf](https://edi.opml.co.uk/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Pilot-3_191219-1.pdf)
10. **Sadka, Joyce**, Enrique Seira, and Christopher Woodruff. "Information and Bargaining through Agents: Experimental Evidence from Mexico's Labor Courts", *Review of Economic Studies*, February 2024, <https://academic.oup.com/restud/advance-article/doi/10.1093/restud/rdae003/7596323>

### Selected working papers

1. **Sadka, Joyce**. "Contratos Colectivos a Nivel Federal en México: Determinación del Porcentaje de Contratos de Protección Patronal a través de la Metodología de Análisis de Componentes Principales", Septiembre 2016. [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FNYLU-iU6D\\_FCrWGnOw59P4P8lq\\_tUoX/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FNYLU-iU6D_FCrWGnOw59P4P8lq_tUoX/view?usp=sharing)
2. Caplin, Andrew, Andrei Gomborg, and **Joyce Sadka**. "Judging the Judges: Indexing Complex Information Reduces Injustice," June 2024. <https://www.nber.org/papers/w32587>

3. McIntosh, Craig, Isaac Meza, **Joyce Sadka**, Enrique Seira, and Francis DiTraglia, "Structured Payment in Pawnshop Borrowing: Mandates vs. Choice," R&R Review of Economic Studies, October 2024. <https://ditraglia.com/pdf/pawn-paper.pdf>

### Selected Presentations

1. World Congress of the Econometric Society, Shanghai, August 2010: "The Plaintiff's Role in Enforcing a Court Ruling: Evidence from a Labor Court in Mexico."
2. 6th IZA-World Bank Conference on Development and Employment, Mexico City, Mexico, May 2011: "Empirical Legal Research in Mexico."
3. American Law and Economics Association Meetings, Vanderbilt, May 2013: "Monitoring and Notification: Evidence from a Field Experiment in a Mexican Labor Court".
4. Behavioral and Experimental Theory Workshop series, Monash University, October 2013: "The impact of frequency of payments on micro-loan performance: Evidence from a field experiment in pawn shops."
5. 1st Latin American Workshop in Law and Economics, PUC-Chile, November 2014: "Improving Courts' Initial Decisions: An Experiment in a Mexican Labor Court".
6. Australasian Meeting of the Econometric Society, Sydney, July 2016: "Judgment and Equal Treatment: a Revealed Preference Approach".
7. American Law and Economics Association Meetings, Yale University, May 2017: "Overconfidence and Settlement: Evidence from Mexican Labor Courts".
8. World Bank DE JURE Justice Seminar, Washington, June 2017: "Litigation, Settlement, and Enforcement in Mexican Labor Court".
9. 12th Australia – New Zealand Workshop on Experimental Economics. University of Melbourne, Melbourne, September 2017: "Statistical Information and Lawsuit Settlement".
10. Tel Aviv University. April 2018. "Judgment and Equal Treatment: a Revealed Preference Approach."
11. Colloquium on Law, Economics, and Politics, New York University, October 2018, "Judgment and Equal Treatment: a Revealed Preference Approach."
12. Law and Economics Seminar, UT Austin, March 2020, "Information and Lawyer Quality: Evidence from a Field Experiment in a Mexican Labor Court".
13. World Congress of the Econometric Society, August 2020, "Information and Lawyer Quality: Evidence from a Field Experiment in a Mexican Labor Court".
14. Colloquium on Law and Economics, UT Austin, February 2023, "Cognitive Constraints and Injustice."
15. Law Schools Global League, Cartagena, July 2024, Panel on Curricular reforms and innovation in legal education in Latin America.
16. 10th Latin American Workshop in Law and Economics, Santiago, "Information and Lawyer Quality."

## Data, RCTs, and digital solutions for labor justice

Since 2005, I have collected data from labor lawsuits in Mexico, in accordance with transparency and personal data protection laws. The databases contain detailed information from more than 40,000 case files, from 4 major Conciliation and Arbitration Boards (CABs), the Federal CAB, the Federal Employee Tribunal, the Mexico State CAB and the Mexico City CAB. Starting in 2012, I designed and implemented more than 10 randomized controlled trials in labor justice, collecting data from ongoing and concluded case files, administrative systems, and surveys. These field experiments tested quality control, incentives, monitoring, and informational interventions aimed at improving efficiency, quality, and access to labor justice. Finally, since 2019 I have developed six digital systems for labor justice, that provide case management, notifications, and interinstitutional communication tools to the CABs and to new Conciliation Centers and Labor Courts created by the 2019 reform of the Federal Labor Law. In addition to digitizing labor justice, these systems provide a wealth of data and the infrastructure for automated interventions and randomized controlled trials. I have carried out these projects with external funding including academic grants and technical assistance funds, as detailed below.

## Grants and Technical Assistance

2023–2027	FOA-ILAB-22-25 Supporting the Local Labor Justice System in Mexico, International Bureau of Labor Affairs, United States Department of Labor, implementing partner The Ergo Group (ITAM budget 2,270,000 USD), <i>terminated 27 March 2025</i> .
2022–2026	FOA-ILAB-21-09 Strengthening Conciliation to Enhance Resolution of Labor Disputes in Mexico, International Bureau of Labor Affairs, United States Department of Labor, implementing partner American Institutes for Research (ITAM budget 1,180,000 USD), <i>terminated 27 March 2025</i> .
2021–2024	Development Innovation Ventures, USAID, "Digital Solutions for Access to Labor Justice", 715,000 USD, <i>terminated 26 February 2025</i> .
2021–2024	Fund for Innovation in Development, Gobierno de Francia, "Fair Access to Justice and Economic Opportunity", 852,380 Euros
2021–2022	Jobs and Opportunity Initiative, Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
2019–2021	Interamerican Development Bank Technical Cooperation, Case Management Systems for Labor Law Reform in Mexico
2019–2021	Governance Initiative, Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
2018–2020	Economic Development and Institutions full RCT grant, University of Oxford
2017	Economic Development and Institutions pilot grant, University of Oxford
2016–2017	Government Partnership Initiative, Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
2015–2016	Government Partnership Initiative, Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
2015–2016	Government Partnership Initiative, Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
2012–2014	International Development Research Centre, Canada
2012–2013	Fundación Dondé, Mexico

## Labor Reform and Implementation

1. Between 2015 and 2017 I participated in more than 8 meetings with advisors of the Secretary of Labor, to help specify and improve the Secretary's proposals for Constitutional Amendment of Labor Law, passed in 2017.
2. In 2016 I carried out a study of collective bargaining agreements (CBAs). Using a data set which I extracted from scanned case files of 1500 CBAs at the federal level in Mexico, I developed a methodology based on principal component analysis to classify the contracts as employer protection contracts or genuine collective agreements. The results showed that 76% of the sample was comprised of sham employer protection contracts. This study has been cited frequently in the debate about union democracy and representation that led to the mechanisms adopted in the new labor law.
3. Between March and November of 2018, I participated actively in a working group of union and industry representatives, local and federal functionaries, members of international organizations, and members of the judiciary, that wrote large sections of the new Federal Labor Law passed in 2019.
4. The scientific evidence obtained in randomized controlled trials that I conducted influenced key aspects of the new labor law. This evidence can be consulted from several sources, such as: [Economic and Development Institutions \(UK, 2020\)](#), [Voxdev](#), [Economic and Development Institutions \(UK\)](#), [J-PAL](#), [El Pulso Laboral](#) y [Reforma](#).

Aspects of the law that were influenced by the evidence I presented include the compulsory prejudicial conciliation procedure, notifications procedures and electronic mailboxes, compulsory certificates of representation for unions, and protocols for legitimizing existing collective bargaining agreements.

5. During 2018 and 2019 I had several meetings with delegations and representatives of the US Senate and House of Representatives, functionaries of the Office of the US Trade Representative, and officers of the State Department, in relation to the labor reform and the challenges of its implementation. These contacts led to an invitation to testify before the trade subcommittee of the US House Ways and Means Committee. My written and oral testimony can be found at [the US House of Representatives website](#), or in [YouTube](#).
6. In 2019, I formed a team of open software developers to design and implement management systems for the compulsory conciliation stage of the new Federal Labor Law. In November 2020, two management systems were deployed: The Sistema Nacional de Conciliación Laboral (SINACOL) and the Sistema de Gestión de Notificaciones (SIGNO). Currently, both systems are used by Conciliation Centers in all 32 states for federal disputes, and in 30 states for local disputes. Two subawards of technical assistance projects provided by the US Department of Labor funded improvements to both systems, as well as two systems that facilitate inter-institutional communication between Labor Tribunals and Conciliation Centers and automate requests for Labor Authorities to carry out notifications originating in cases filed in a different geographic jurisdiction. During this same period, using grants from Development Innovation Ventures (USAID) and the Fund for Innovation in Development (Government of France), I have developed other technological tools such as an online suing system, a case tracking system, and a lawyer bureau to facilitate matching workers and labor lawyers.