

Workshop

“Precarity and Precarization – European and Latin American Perspectives on Changes in the Regulation of Labor and Labor Markets”

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Program:

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| 09:00 | Welcome and Introduction (Prof. Dr. Barbara Fritz and Dr. Martina Sproll) |
| 09:30-11:00 | Concepts under debate: heterogeneity and/vs. precarization in a Latin American perspective

Prof. Dr. Marcia de Paula Leite, Unicamp, Brazil; Prof. Dr. Graça Druck, Universidade Federal da Bahia, Brazil |
| 11:00 | Coffee break |
| 11:30-13:00 | Concepts and debates about precarization in a German/ European perspective

Prof. Dr. Klaus Dörre, Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena, Germany; Prof. Dr. Ursula Huws, University of Hertfordshire, UK |
| 13:00-14:00 | Lunch break |

- 14:00-15:00 **Transforming employment relations: empirical findings I**
- Ingo Singe (Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena): “Precarity and informality – work and employment in the German parcel delivery industry”
 - Dr. Alexandra Manske – “Working- and every-day life between precariousness and self-autonomy. Findings from the creative industries”
- 15:00 Coffee break
- 15:15- 16:30 **Transforming employment relations: empirical findings II**
- Prof. Dr. Marcia de Paula Leite – Precarity in the Brazilian labour market – changes in gender, race and income aspects
 - Dr. Martina Sproll – Outsourcing: the case of call centers in the Brazilian banking sector
 - Prof. Dr. Graça Druck– Outsourcing and precarization in the Brazilian chemicals industry
- 16:45 -17:30 **Conclusions, discussion of an agenda for further research**
(Moderation Dr. Ingrid Wehr, ABI Freiburg)
- How far can concepts of precarity/precarization/heterogeneity be applied in different social contexts? Do we need further differentiation, new terms and concepts? What is the effect of similar or different social, economic and political contexts for labor regulation and what is its transnational dimension?
- What kind of future research is needed?
- Comments: Prof. Dr. Marcia Leite and Prof. Dr. Ursula Huws

In this workshop, we aim to discuss different theoretical approaches and debates about precarity/precarization as well as empirical cases from both European and Latin American perspectives.

The terms “precarity” and “precarization” in the German context generally refer to the profound labor market reforms since the 1980/90s which led to a marked increase of atypical forms of employment, such as temporary, part time, subcontracted, own-account work etc. These changes point to the end of the dominance of a Fordist mode of regulation of labor, and the Fordist standard employment relationship. Some scholars have criticized this reference point itself as being overly normative and limited for an adequate understanding of processes of precarization, as debates with this starting point have often focused on white, male skilled workers and therefore excluded the longstanding reality of unskilled workers, women, migrants or young/elderly workers. Concepts of precarity and precarization and what exactly they are referring to are therefore still disputed. Furthermore, it is unclear whether German debates and definitions of precarization can be transferred to a Latin American context and vice versa.

In Latin America, heterogeneity has always been a structural characteristic of labor markets. Even in Brazil, the majority of the labor force has been historically excluded from so-called “regular” and/or stable employment conditions. On the other hand some researchers point to the profound restructuring of labor markets since the 1980s which has given rise to an increase and new forms of precarization.

This discussion has been fueled by the growing transnationalization of production and value chains which in Europe as well as in Latin America has caused changes in the organization of work and production and has led to a weakening of sector boundaries. At the same time, a global trend to deregulation of labor rights can be observed. This implies a debilitation of traditional frameworks of labor market regulation (i.e. collective bargaining and actors like trade unions) especially, but not only in Europe, and goes along with a massive deregulation in traditional sectors such as the automotive, chemical, banking and/or public sector. On a large scale, qualified and highly regulated employment is being substituted by temporary or subcontracted work. The same is true for less regulated sectors like agriculture.

Nevertheless, it is still to be discussed whether and how far concepts like “heterogeneity”, “precarization”, “precarity”, and “formal vs. informal work” are valuable as analytical tools, transferable, and applicable in diverse societies, and how far the wide spread use of the term “precarization” should be viewed as an adoption of hegemonic Eurocentric discourses. Different historical, economic, political, social and cultural contexts have shaped specific arrangements of welfare states and of labor market regulation. These arrangements include corresponding forms of social inclusion and exclusion such as rights, social protection, citizenship, and so on. In the course of a profound and transnationally entangled restructuring of such arrangements new forms of social inclusion and exclusion respectively, social inequality (in relation to categories like class, race, gender, age, qualification etc.) may also vary according to their national/regional conditions and historical embeddedness.

The Brazilian case, for instance, shows that the partial inclusion of formerly excluded social groups (i.e. as temporary workers) in the formal labor market engenders contradictory processes. The experience of upward (even restricted) mobility gave room to the official discourse on the emergence of a “middle class society” which exemplifies a new narrative on this process. Nevertheless, it goes along with a tendency to an increasing social segmentation of access to rights and the emergence of new forms of inequality in the context of further erosion of labor rights of established workers and decreasing mobilization capacities of trade unions.

The workshop aims to trace these new contradictions and new lines of social inequality.

Due to limited space please confirm your participation with Martina Sproll (martina.sproll@fu-berlin.de). For further information, please consult www.desigualdades.net