

WOW- WORK IN THE WORLD!

Newsletter of the RC30

Sociology of work | Sociología del trabajo | Sociologie du travail

Editorial

Dear colleagues,

We are delighted to share with you the 12th issue of "Work in the World," the RC30 newsletter! Inside, you will find the program and information on the upcoming International Sociological Association V Forum of Sociology taking place next month, in July 2025. Moreover, we send you a recap of the international and interdisciplinary workshop "The Worlds of Work: Crossed Perspectives from France and England," the audiovisual project "Circulation of Latin American and French approaches in the social sciences of work: cross-conversations on central and emerging concepts," as well as the presentation of recent publications and insights on work around the world. We hope that this newsletter will serve as a platform for exchanging publications, news, projects, reports, and memories within our scientific community. We invite you to actively participate in shaping the content of the newsletter, expanding our net, and mutually enriching our ideas. In particular, in this issue, we look forward to seeing you soon in Rabat!

Estimados y estimadas colegas,

Nos complace compartirles el 12º número de «Work in the World», el boletín informativo del RC30. En esta edición, encontrarán el programa y la información sobre el próximo V Foro de Sociología de la Asociación Internacional de Sociología que tendrá lugar el próximo mes, en julio de 2025. Además, les enviamos un resumen del Taller internacional e interdisciplinario "Los Mundos del Trabajo: Perspectivas Cruzadas desde Francia e Inglaterra", el proyecto audiovisual "Circulación de enfoques latinoamericanos y franceses en las ciencias sociales del trabajo: conversaciones cruzadas sobre conceptos centrales y emergentes", así como la presentación de publicaciones recientes y de perspectivas sobre el trabajo en diferentes regiones del mundo. Esperamos que este boletín sirva como plataforma para el intercambio de publicaciones, noticias, proyectos, informes y recuerdos dentro de nuestra comunidad científica. Los invitamos a participar activamente en la producción del contenido del boletín, ampliando nuestra red y enriqueciendo mutuamente nuestras ideas. En particular, en este número, ¡esperamos verlos pronto en Rabat!

Chers et chères collègues,

Nous sommes ravies de vous partager le 12e numéro de Work in the World, le bulletin d'information du RC30! Vous y trouverez le programme et autres informations concernant le prochain V Forum de sociologie de l'Association Internationale de Sociologie, qui se tiendra le mois prochain, en juillet 2025. De plus, nous vous proposons un compte rendu de l'atelier international et interdisciplinaire « Les mondes du travail : regards croisés entre la France et l'Angleterre », et du projet audiovisuel « Circulation des approches latino-américaines et françaises en sciences sociales du travail : dialogues croisés sur les concepts centraux et émergents », ainsi que la présentation de publications récentes et une section d'aperçus sur le travail dans diverses régions du monde. Nous espérons que ce bulletin servira de plateforme d'échange de publications, nouvelles, projets, rapports et souvenirs au sein de notre communauté scientifique. Nous vous invitons à participer activement à la construction du contenu du bulletin, à l'élargissement de notre réseau et l'enrichissement mutuel de nos idées. En particulier dans ce numéro, nous nous réjouissons à l'idée de vous retrouver prochainement à Rabat!

María Eugenia Longo (President), **Guzel Baimurzina** (Secretary), **Ndeshi Namupala** (Online Communication Manager)
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ISA V FORUM OF SOCIOLOGY

July 6 - 11, 2025 in Rabat, Morocco

Knowing justice in the anthropocene

General information: <https://isaconf.confex.com/isaconf/forum2025/meetingapp.cgi/Home/0>

General Program Calendar:
<https://isaconf.confex.com/isaconf/forum2025/meetingapp.cgi/ModuleProgramBook/0>

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Program of the RC30 Sociology of Work

<https://isaconf.confex.com/isaconf/forum2025/meetingapp.cgi/Symposium/825>

MONDAY, JULY 7, 2025

- ◊ Entrepreneurship and Enterprises from the Lens of Justice (*RC02 with RC30*)
- ◊ Transforming Work in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities
- ◊ Interpellations to Precarious Work in North and Global South: Expressions, Articulations, Accelerations and Social Resistance (Part I and Part II)

TUESDAY, JULY 8, 2025

- ◊ More Than Great Resignation. about Work in the Age of Polycrisis (Part I and Part II)
- ◊ Emotions at Work: Stress, Self-Management and Digital Dynamics (*WG08 with RC30*)
- ◊ Metrics for the Future of Work (*RC55 with RC30*)
- ◊ Work & Employment - Authors Meet Critics Session
- ◊ Emerging Professionalism in Dirty Jobs/Works: A Focus on the Margins and the Borders of Professions and Work (*RC52 with RC30*)

WEDNESDAY, JULY 9, 2025

- ◊ Justice in the Modern World of Work: From Classical Concepts to New Ideas
- ◊ Older Workers in Shrinking Societies
- ◊ The Dead Ends (routes, zones, concessions, ports) of Migration and Labour Market Segmentations. When Inequalities Come into Play. These Spaces and Labour Markets at the Limits of Capitalism (*RC30 with RC31*)
- ◊ News Tendencies in the Global Work. Comparative Scales of Informality, Precarity and Unemployment (*WG01 with RC20, RC30*)
- ◊ Critical Social and Labour Policies in the Anthropocene
- ◊ RC30 Business Meeting

THURSDAY, JULY 10, 2025

- ◊ Labour and Environmental Crisis: Any Space for Transition? (Part I and Part II)
- ◊ Issues and Changes in Legal Work in the Age of the Anthropocene and AI (*RC30 with RC12*)
- ◊ New Forms of Employment and Sustainable Development: Contradictions, Challenges and Opportunities

FRIDAY, JULY 11, 2025

- ◊ Digital Labor in the Modern Age: Work Conditions, Well-Being, and Market Challenges (Part I and Part II)
- ◊ The State of the Urban Informal Sector
- ◊ Artificial Intelligence (AI) Challenging Work: Job Displacement and Re-Skilling

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

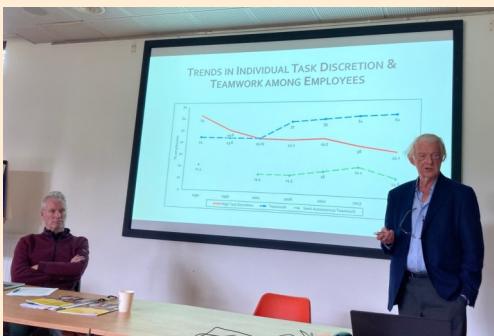
International and interdisciplinary workshop

The worlds of work: Crossed perspectives from France and England

Oxford, June 22-23

Organized by RC30 member Delphine Mercier, the workshop "The Worlds of Work: Crossed Perspectives from France and England" was an international and interdisciplinary event that brought together researchers to explore the evolving dynamics of work in both countries. Through engaging discussions and insightful presentations, participants examined key topics such as labour market transformations, disruptions and continuities, the digital era and the future of work. Comparative analyses and debates highlighted similarities and differences in workplace structures, economic trends, and cultural and digital influences shaping labour practices in France and England. The exchanges fostered rich debates, encouraging deeper reflection on the future of work in a globalized economy. Overall, the seminar provided a valuable opportunity for networking and knowledge sharing across disciplines and national contexts.

The workshop began with a welcome opening led by **Juliet Carpenter**, **Sandrine Maljean-Dubois**, and **Pascal Marty**, setting the stage for insightful discussions on the future of work.



The first session, "Work: Transformations, Disruptions, and Continuities" featured stimulating exchanges chaired by **Jens Thoemmes**. The session began with an introductory presentation by **Delphine Mercier**, "Worlds of Work: An Introduction," followed by two compelling talks: **Thierry Berthet**, who explored "Young People's Relationship with Work," and **Duncan Gallie**, who analyzed, "Participation at Work in Britain – Trends and Implications." **Damian Grimshaw**, under the chairmanship of **Jérôme Gautié**, then presented "Emergent Skill Changes Associated with Digital Technologies: Clarifying Boundary Conditions and Opening Up New Approaches," offering insights into how technological advancements are reshaping workforce requirements.

The second session, "Work and Time: Navigating the Digital Era," examined the evolving relationship between work and digital transformation. **Antoine Destemberg** chaired the first discussion, featuring **Judith Rainhorn**, who presented "Health and Safety at Work: The Recent Contribution of Historical Research," followed by **Odile Join-Lambert**, who compared "Working in the Public Sector and the Private Sector." The session continued with a panel chaired by **Michel Lallement**, where **Jacqueline O'Reilly** discussed, "Varieties of Digital Ecosystems in Transition: Governance, Connectivity, and Inclusion." A subsequent panel chaired by **Valérie Boussard** introduced **Chris Warhurst**, who presented "The Many Futures of Work: The Example of Digital Transformation."



The final session, "The Future of Work: Insights from Social Science," chaired by **Maria Eugenia Longo**, **Delphine Mercier** and **Thierry Berthet** brought together diverse perspectives on the evolving nature of work. **Eve Saint-Germes** presented "'Work' in French Management Research: From Denial to Renewal," examining how management studies have evolved in their approach to work as an academic discipline. **Enrico Donaggio** explored philosophical perspectives in "Work, Freedom, and Utopia," reflecting on how work intersects with broader notions of liberty and ideal work structures. **Isabelle Berrebi-Hoffmann** concluded with "Social

Sciences and the Future of Work," offering an interdisciplinary analysis of the transformations shaping contemporary labour markets.

The closing session fostered deep reflection on the role of social sciences in anticipating and responding to future challenges in the world of work.



The workshop also offered a rich blend of intellectual discussions and cultural experiences.

The inclusion of

"La Ferme des Bertrand", a César Award-winning documentary, followed by a discussion with the directors, **Gilles Perret** and **Marion Richoux**, must have provided a thought-provoking and engaging moment for participants.

The **Organizing Committee** for the workshop included the **Maison Française à Oxford** (MFO) team, with illustration provided by **Mélanie Forné**. The event was hosted at the Maison Française d'Oxford, located in Oxford, and led and managed by Pascal Marty.





Participants

Isabelle Berrebi-Hoffmann, Researcher Director, Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS), Conservatoire national des arts et métiers (CNAM), Laboratoire interdisciplinaire pour la sociologie économique (LISE)

Thierry Berthet, Researcher, Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS), Laboratoire d'Économie et de Sociologie du Travail (LEST), Aix-Marseille University

Valérie Boussard, Professor, Université Paris Nanterre, Laboratoire Institutions et Dynamiques Historiques de l'Économie et de la Société (IDHE.S)

Juliet Carpenter, Director of Research, Kellogg College

Antoine Destemberg, Associate Professor, University of Artois, Maison Française d'Oxford

Enrico Donaggio, Professor, Aix-Marseille University

Duncan Gallie, Professor, Nuffield College

Jérôme Gautié, Professor, Université Paris1 Panthéon-Sorbonne

Damian Grimshaw, Professor, King's College London

Odile Join-Lambert, Professor, Paris Saclay University, Université de Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines (UVSQ), Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS), Laboratoire Printemps

Michel Lallement, Professor, Conservatoire national des arts et métiers (CNAM)

María Eugenia Longo, Professor, Institut national de la recherche scientifique (INRS), President RC30 Sociology of Work, International Sociological Association

Sandrine Maljean-Dubois, Researcher, Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS)

Pascal Marty, Professor, Maison Française d'Oxford

Delphine Mercier, Researcher, Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS), Maison Française d'Oxford, Kellogg College, University of Oxford

Gilles Perret, Film director, Documentary filmmaker and Scriptwriter

Jacqueline O'Reilly, Professor, University of Sussex

Judith Rainhorn, Professor, Université Paris1 Panthéon-Sorbonne

Marion Richoux, Screenwriter

Eve Saint-Germes, Associate Professor, Université Côte d'Azur

Jens Thoemmes, Research Professor, Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS), Centre d'Étude et de Recherche Travail Organisation Pouvoir (CERTOP)

Chris Warhurst, Professor, University of Warwick

Audiovisual project

Circulation of Latin American and French approaches in the social sciences of work: Cross-conversations on central and emerging concepts

[for accessing to French and Spanish versions: <https://trabatraba.hypotheses.org/>]

RC30 is delighted to launch the French-Spanish Project “Circulation of Latin American and French approaches in the social sciences of work: cross-conversations on central and emerging concepts.”

This audiovisual project led by RC30 member Flora Bajard dress several questions by discussion between colleagues from different regions: How do our categories of analysis relate to the social realities they seek to capture? How do the notions we use in academic circles convey historical and cultural legacies woven by relations of power? What alternative voices/ways do they transmit, if we manage to make them travel? Finally, what common approaches can we develop, even though we don't use the same words?



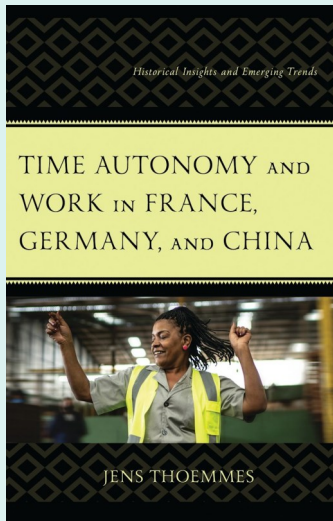
This project was born of these questions, and is based on a dual ambition: to offer a reflective pause and stop for a moment to think together about some notions used in the social sciences of work; to participate in the international circulation of approaches. Thanks to the original system of simultaneous interpretation, the site offers cross-interviews in two languages - French and Spanish - between two specialists in labour studies in Latin America and France.

The first four cross-interviews with the words “migration,” “nature/environment,” “precariousness” and “forced labour” are yet online!: <https://trabatraba.hypotheses.org/>

This project of encounter, dialogue and epistemic translation between researchers in France and Latin America was made possible thanks to the support of the RC30 Sociology of Work of the International Sociological Association, and the Laboratoire d'Economie et de Sociologie du Travail in France (UMR 7317).

RC30 MEMBER'S LATEST PUBLICATIONS

Books



Thoemmes, Jens (2024). *Time Autonomy And Work In France, Germany, And China: Historical Insights And Emerging Trends*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Placing work environments from France, Germany, and China in comparative perspective, this book explores the way time autonomy varies in different workplaces and socioeconomic contexts as well as the conditions, opportunities, and risks involved. Jens Thoemmes details how time autonomy transitioned from early efforts to reduce working hours to today's complex debates about managing work time. Initially focused on reclaiming time from employers during the nineteenth century, time autonomy has broadened to encompass how work integrates into overall social time.

<https://www.bloomsbury.com/ca/time-autonomy-and-work-in-france-germany-and-china-9781666969085/>

Galière, Sophia and Hussenot, Anthony (2025). *Un autre monde du travail est possible*. Éditions EMS.

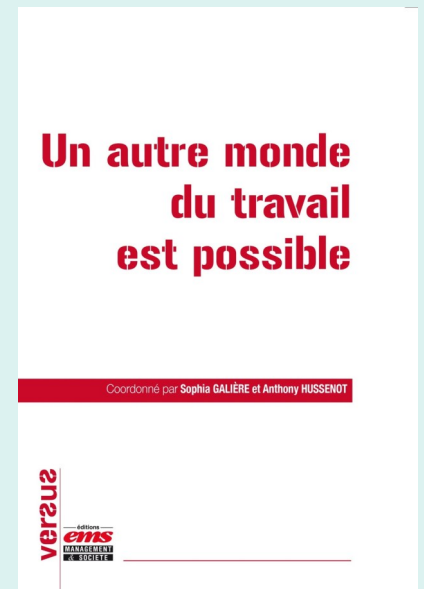
The world of work is undergoing an unprecedented period of transformation. Technological advancements, the climate change, geopolitical instability, and rising social and economic inequalities are reshaping the landscape in profound ways.

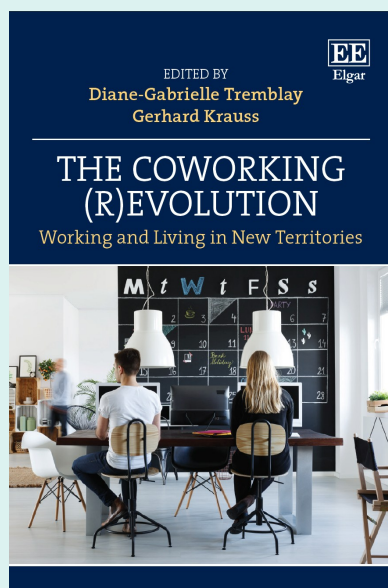
In this shifting context, a crucial question arises: how can we reinvent our relationship with work? What roles can organizations—public or private, large or small—play in redefining the nature of work? What changes are needed in how we think about working time, hierarchical structures, and health and well-being in the workplace?

« Another World of Work is Possible » (Un autre monde du travail est possible) brings together contributions from 26 researchers who analyze these changes and offer pathways for reimagining the future of work. Through concise, accessible, and thought-provoking chapters, the book addresses key topics such as working hours, management, health, hierarchy, skills, meaning, and more.

Written in an engaging and accessible style, this book is intended for anyone who seeks to understand, anticipate, and act. Whether you are a student, employee, manager, HR manager, or policymaker, you will find in these pages a resource for reflection, a guide for informed decision-making, and a catalyst for action.

<https://editions-ems.fr/boutique/un-autre-monde-du-travail-est-possible/>





Tremblay, Diane-Gabrielle and Krauss, Gerhard (2024). *The Coworking (R)evolution: Working and living in new territories*. Edward Elgar.

The digitalization of work processes and the generalization of IT are creating unprecedented opportunities. An increasing part of the workforce is experimenting with new forms of work, as freelancers, self-employed or highly skilled employees with greater autonomy. International in scope, this book comprehensively explores these new models of work, mobility and life trajectories, and the increasing role of non-metropolitan coworking spaces.

This interdisciplinary book investigates new trends in relationships between work, life plans, work–life balance, and mobility in the context of ongoing societal digitalization. An expert group of contributors adopts a comparative approach in assessing the coworking phenomenon. They examine the social embeddedness of collaborative workspaces and consider topics such as social exchange, cooperation, and collaboration, critically assessing the question of individual and collective mobilities, and exploring the historical roots of coworking and its developing meanings and uses in practice.

Gathering a wide variety of studies which investigate the diversity of social trajectories, institutional context, social transition, cooperation, policy measures, and mobility patterns, this book will be an interesting read for academics and students in the fields of organizational behavior, human geography, sociology of work, cities, and regional studies. Politicians interested in territorial development, elected officials, workers of municipalities and regions, and journalists who cover work issues, will similarly find this to be a beneficial read.

<https://www.e-elgar.com/shop/usd/the-coworking-r-evolution-9781802209174.html>

Hamel-Roy, Laurence, Fauvel, Mylène, Noiseux, Yannick, Yoon, Cheolki, Cardona, Manuel Salamanca and Jamil, Rabih (2024). *La recherche engagée sur le terrain du travail précaire: Réflexions méthodologiques, épistémologiques et éthiques*. Presses de l'Université du Québec.

How can we produce and disseminate knowledge that brings about social transformation? How does the desire to contribute concretely to organizational or collective action efforts influence the methodological and ethical choices of research?

As a necessary approach to answer these questions, the research undertaken aims to produce relevant knowledge that is a vector of social transformation.

Some fifteen perspectives, from both academic and practical backgrounds, are thus crossed in this book in order to take a reflective look at the research conducted with a vision of social change around the issues of precarious and low-paid work in Quebec.

All of these reflections are intended for the university community as well as research teams working in practice settings and who wish to take a reflective look at their praxis.

<https://puq.ca/catalogue/livres/recherche-engagee-sur-terrain-travail-precaire-4401.html>

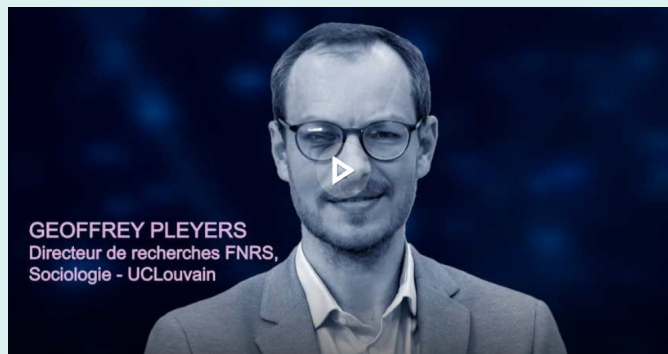


Interviews

Pleyers, Geoffrey (2025, March 6). Les visages de la recherche : pour une sociologie globale [interview]. In *Les visages de la recherche*. LN24.

At a time when science is facing unprecedented threats, he underscores the importance of relying on scientific facts to safeguard democracy. He explains why the social sciences are essential to understanding the crises we are experiencing. He advocates for a global approach to sociology, one that incorporates analyses from diverse global actors.

<https://www.ln24.be/videos/2025/03/06/les-visages-de-la-recherche-pour-une-sociologie-globale-xmrrv3r/>



Articles and book chapters

Alberio, M. and Tremblay, D.-G. (2024). Ages, parcours de vie et vieillissement. *Interventions économiques*, 71. <https://journals.openedition.org/interventionseconomiques/24980>

du Toit, D. and Casanova, E. M. (2025). Polishing the Pearl of the Pacific and the City of Gold: Paid domestic work in Guayaquil, Ecuador and Johannesburg, South Africa. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 109. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2025.103055>

Baiocchi, M. L., Coe, C., Fleischer, F., Hunter-Pazzara, B., Casanova, E. M. and Valles, D. (2024). Roundtable discussion: Domestic worker organizing in Latin America and beyond. *Anthropology of Work Review*, 45(2), 130-138. <https://doi.org/10.1111/awr.12277>

Hof, H. (2025). 'White Innovation': Conceptualizing Changing Racial Hierarchies Through Migrant Entrepreneurship in Singapore and Japan. In Lan, S. and Debnár, M. (eds.), *Migration, Transnational Flows, and the Contested Meanings of Race in Asia* (pp. 121-140). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-81545-4_7

Hof, H., Muranaka, A. and Park, J. J. (2024). Employment as an anchor: The prospects of emerging East Asian skilled migration regimes through the lens of migrants' access to the labor market. *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*, 33(3), 554-576. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01171968241292376>

Hof, H. (2024). Foreign entrepreneurship in the Japanese startup ecosystem: Can deviance fuel innovation? *Contemporary Japan*, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1080/18692729.2024.2423969>

Tanaka, Y. and Cranford, C. J. (2024). Navigating Cumulative Disadvantages of Migration, Care, and Employment Regimes: Dependent Immigrants in Canada. *Social Politics*, 1-26, <https://doi.org/10.1093/sp/jxae024>

The war on informality: The new resource of securitization in Latin-America

By Dasten Julian (Chile)

[En Español abajo]

As a person dedicated to researching the world of work, I have observed with great concern and some astonishment the news in recent months in Latin America (Diario Universidad de Chile, 2025; Hidalgo Bustamante, 2024). A series of reports and studies that have focused on the persecution of informal work, its stigmatization, and police security have led me to write these brief warnings to the global sociological community. Given the relevance of communication today to the health of societies and its vitality for strengthening global strategies in sociology, it is important to understand the risks of viewing informality as a "threat" and a crime.

Informal work is a historical issue in Latin American society and in countries of the Global South (Alfers, Chen & Plageron, 2022; Veras de Oliveira, 2023). It has varied and moved in cycles dependent on crises, economic growth, and unemployment. Currently, informal work is a growing phenomenon globally and regionally (International Labour Organization, 2025), which is associated with factors such as the loss of quality in formal jobs, a process of layoffs and expulsion of workers from the formal labor market, the fragility of social security systems, the cultural demand for autonomy, among others. This has proliferated a debate regarding new instruments of formalization, decent work, safe and sustainable productive initiatives, and models of formality. But it has also meant an advance of punitive discourses, linked to persecution, punishment, and criminalization.

In the last week of 2024, Christmas week, media outlets in various countries across the region have unleashed a campaign seeking to generate and promote greater public discontent and unrest with informal employment (Angulo, 2024). To this end, they have portrayed informal employment as illegal, associated with crime and drug trafficking, or as simply aesthetically or functionally disrupting traffic in public spaces. Added to this has been a crackdown on tax evasion, unfair competition, a sense of unregulated chaos (Angulo, 2024), an image of a jungle (Hidalgo Bustamante, 2024), and a lack of control that defies laws, regulations, and institutions. The supposed "foundation of the republic" is under threat, returning to conservative and punitive discourses that portray informality as a threat to order, development, and democratic coexistence.

This approach, centered on hatred, the dehumanization of informal workers, and their criminalization, once again constructs a flawed, populist, irresponsible, and dangerous understanding of informality. The rise of the far right in these groups of workers is also important to consider, since it is the same far right that is responsible for their persecution and then promises a constellation of values linked to effort, merit, and entrepreneurship, which resonate with the sentiments of informal labor. This conundrum proposes seeing the formal worker as an enemy, a privileged individual, while waging war on informality to end it. This duality is fundamental to understand in labor politics, especially when women, irregular migrants, and poor workers are targeted by police on the streets.

However, a clarification is necessary. The media has promoted punishment for informal street workers, those linked to commerce and sales. They look after the interests of the chambers of commerce, which see these

practices as unfair, and which they attempt to associate with crime, delinquency, and a security crisis in the region. However, they do not have the same discourse for digital platform workers who respond to the interests of large global technology corporations (Uber, Didi, Cabify, etc.). Digital platforms have profoundly influenced the increase in informality in the region (Stecher & Morales, 2024), but they have not been subject to scrutiny by the media or even some governments.

Therefore, I believe it is important not to forget the heterogeneity of this segment of workers, as it has a structural dimension in the societies of the Global South, but also new expressions in the current context. The lack of policies in this area turns informality into a breeding ground for new generations marked by inequality and structural violence. It is clear that multiple markers and hierarchies intersect in this segment, which must be considered when designing and developing fundamentalist agendas that promote economic alternatives to unemployment, informality, and its precariousness. The call is to recognize the importance of these jobs, with their many faces, and to deepen a debate that challenges well-being, care, and the promotion of rights, over the securitizing and criminalizing polarization that seeks to govern this brave new world.

La guerra a la informalidad: el nuevo recurso de la securitización en América Latina

Como una persona dedicada a la investigación del mundo del trabajo, he observado con mucha preocupación y un tanto de asombro las noticias durante los últimos meses en América Latina (Diario Universidad de Chile, 2025; Hidalgo Bustamante, 2024). Una cadena de reportajes y estudios que han puesto su acento en la persecución del trabajo informal, en su estigmatización y en la seguridad policial me han hecho escribir estas breves letras de alerta para la comunidad sociológica global. Debido a la relevancia que tiene la comunicación hoy para la salud de las sociedades y su vitalidad para el fortalecimiento de estrategias globales en la sociología, es que es importante comprender los riesgos de entender la informalidad como una “amenaza” y un crimen.

El trabajo informal es una cuestión histórica en la sociedad latinoamericana y en los países del sur global (Alfers, Chen & Plagerson, 2022; Veras de Oliveira, 2023). Ha variado y se ha movido en ciclos dependientes de crisis, crecimiento económico y desempleo. Actualmente, el trabajo informal es un fenómeno en incremento a nivel global y regional (Organización Internacional del Trabajo, 2025), lo cual se asocia a factores como la pérdida de calidad de los empleos formales, un proceso de despidos y expulsión de trabajadores/as del mercado laboral formal, la fragilidad de los sistemas de seguridad social, la demanda cultural de autonomía, entre otros. Esto ha hecho proliferar un debate respecto a nuevos instrumentos de formalización, trabajo decente, iniciativas productivas seguras y sustentables, o modelos de formalidad. Pero también ha significado una avanzada de discursos punitivistas, ligados a la persecución, el castigo y la criminalización.

En la última semana del año 2024, la semana navideña, los medios de comunicación en diversos países de la región, han detonado una campaña que ha buscado generar y promover mayor descontento y malestar público con el trabajo informal (Angulo, 2024). Para ello, se ha dicho que este último es un trabajo ilegal, que está asociado al crimen y el narcotráfico, o que simplemente molesta estética o funcionalmente el tránsito en los espacios públicos. Se ha sumado a ello, una persecución a la evasión de impuestos, la competencia desleal, la sensación de un caos desregulado (Angulo, 2024), la imagen de una selva (Hidalgo Bustamante, 2024) y un descontrol que desafía las leyes, la normativa y sus instituciones. La supuesta “base de la república” se ve bajo amenaza, retornando a discursos conservadores y punitivos que ponen a la informalidad como una amenaza al orden, el desarrollo y a la convivencia democrática.

Este abordaje centrado en el odio, en la deshumanización del trabajador informal y en su criminalización vuelve a construir una manera de comprender la informalidad de manera deficiente, populista, irresponsable y peligrosa. La avanzada de la ultraderecha en estos núcleos de trabajadores también es importante de considerar, ya que, es la misma ultraderecha la que se encarga de su persecución y luego promete una constelación de valores ligadas al esfuerzo, al mérito y al enprendedurismo, los cuales resuenan en los sentidos del trabajo informal. Este sintagma propone ver en el trabajador formal a un enemigo, a un privilegiado, mientras le hace la guerra a la informalidad

para acabar con ella. Esta dualidad es fundamental de comprender en la política del trabajo, especialmente cuando se persigue policialmente a mujeres, migrantes irregulares y trabajadores pobres en las calles.

Sin embargo, hay que hacer una precisión. Los medios han promovido un castigo a los trabajadores informales callejeros, los ligados al comercio y la venta. Cuidan de los intereses de las cámaras de comercio que ven en estas prácticas conductas desleales, y que intentan asociar al delito, la delincuencia y una crisis de seguridad en la región. Sin embargo, no tienen el mismo discurso para los trabajadores de plataformas digitales que responden a los intereses grandes corporaciones tecnológicas a nivel global (Uber, Didi, Cabify, etc.). Las plataformas digitales han incidido profundamente en el incremento de la informalidad en la región (Stecher & Morales, 2024), pero no han sido sujetos de escrutinio por parte de los medios de comunicación e incluso de algunos gobiernos.

Por ello, creo que es importante no olvidar la heterogeneidad de este segmento de trabajadores, ya que cuenta con una dimensión estructural en las sociedades del sur global, pero también con nuevas expresiones en el actual contexto. El déficit de políticas en esta materia convierte a la informalidad en un caldo de cultivo para nuevas generaciones marcadas por la desigualdad y la violencia estructural. Es claro que se cruzan múltiples marcas y jerarquías en este segmento, lo cual debe ser considerado para el diseño y elaboración de agendas integristas y promotoras de alternativas económicas al desempleo, la informalidad y su precariedad. El llamado es a reconocer la importancia de estos trabajos, con sus múltiples rostros, y a profundizar en un debate que dispute el bienestar, el cuidado y la promoción de derechos, sobre la polarización securitista y criminalizadora que pretende gobernar este nuevo mundo feliz.

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