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Inequality in working time: An international trend

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This article will discuss the flexibilization of working time and compare recent working time trends in different countries including the USA, Canada, France, the UK and Brazil. It is argued that inequalities in the labor market cannot be grasped in its entirety if income inequality is the only variable considered. Working time distribution is also a key variable to be considered. Flexibilization of working time has been implemented in the last 30 years as a capital-driven phenomena and is deepening the inequality of working time distribution: between employed and unemployed, among employed and considering the division of reproductive labour, which we analyze with a gender perspective.

The article shows that there are many dimensions to working time inequality. The following inequalities in working time are considered: i) The difference in working time between the employed and the unemployed; ii) Distribution of working hours, even among employed workers; iii) While men devote more time to productive work, women fulfill the role of reproductive workers (not socially or economically valued) and have double / triple shifts.

The article will be structured as follows: i) introduction; ii) flexible capitalism, flexible working time, iii) new trends of working time flexibilization; iv) inequality of working time and its consequences to the working class v) final considerations.