

# Embodying Flexibility: Experiencing Labour Flexibility through Urban Daily Mobility in Santiago de Chile

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**ABSTRACT** *This paper's objective is to contribute towards understanding the relationship between mobility practices and labour flexibility. Focusing on the case of Santiago de Chile, it argues that an extremely flexible labour market, as in the Chilean case, affects the everyday lives of inhabitants which are compelled to 'weave' dispersed workplaces, articulate multiple-employments within a workday or use mobility time-space for tele-working. From an ethnographic perspective, we show how labour flexibility in Santiago de Chile is experienced and embodied through daily mobility practices. The article presents ethnographies in which flexibility changes mobility practices, giving rise to a specific time-space that becomes an intrinsic, yet seldom recognised dimension of the economic production process.*

**KEY WORDS:** Daily mobility, Experience, Flexible employment, Labour precarity, Everyday life

## Introduction

The neoliberal path that Chile has undertaken in the past 30 years has produced significant transformations in the country's economic, social and spatial structures. These reforms, as experienced by many other countries with similar processes, resulted in reductions in public spending, increase in goods and services taxes, privatisation of state companies, pension reforms, subsidiarisation, promotion of private health and education provisions, commercial liberalisation and infrastructure concessions. This path has also involved an important participation in the globalisation process and incorporation of international trends including increased employment in the retail and service sectors, technical specialisation of labour force,

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