

IRSA - CONGRESSO MUNDIAL DE SOCIOLOGIA RURAL (01/10/2025 A
20/01/2026) - IRSA 29 - WORK, MIGRATION, AND VIOLENCE IN THE
CONTEMPORARY RURAL WORLD

**SEASONAL WORKERS IN SERRA GAÚCHA: AN ANALYSIS OF LABOR
ISSUES FROM 2023 ONWARDS**

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This study aims to highlight the scenario of possible changes regarding the hiring of seasonal workers, especially during the grape harvest period, in the Serra Gaúcha region of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, starting in 2023. The analysis period is justified by the fact that, in the year and region, labor inspectors from the Public Prosecutor's Office found outsourced workers in conditions analogous to slavery in viticultural activities. The formalization, or lack thereof, of the hiring of labor does not characterize the analogy to slavery; however, it is understood as one of its formative elements. Therefore, the study was structured using a methodological combination of bibliographic research and multiple case studies. The bibliographic research defined the concept of seasonal work and its legal specificities, while the case studies involved farming families who hire this labor

during the grape harvest, as well as a specialist on the subject. The research included 16 participating families selected based on ease of access and availability to answer a completely anonymous online questionnaire. This format was adopted precisely to guarantee the protection of the participants' identity as an ethical principle, as well as to facilitate participation according to their availability. The research found that, in four municipalities of the region, before 2023, 81% of producers hired seasonal labor without formal employment contracts. However, following the repercussions of the situation of workers in conditions analogous to slavery, this reality has been changing, given that currently only 6% still maintain informal labor. The research also detected the importance of the State's presence in inspection actions to effectively reduce labor analogous to slavery and formalize labor relations with seasonal workers.

Palavras-chave: workforce; seasonal workers; work analogous to slavery.