

iff - lectures

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The Work and Spend Cycle

Moderation: Univ.-Prof. Dr. Marina Fischer-Kowalski

Abstract: Many countries of the global North are caught in a cycle of „work and spend“ in which productivity growth is translated into more income and production, rather than being used to create leisure time for the workforce. This is a structural bias of many labor markets, as employers resist shorter hours of work. This talk will explain the nature of the work and spend cycle, and its ecologically disastrous consequences. It will then argue that in the global North a successful path to sustainability will entail a stabilization of consumption through reductions in hours of work, a solution that neither ecologists nor economists have addressed seriously. The talk will address trends shows that hours are no longer falling in many OECD countries, as well as the potential popularity of hours reductions with consumers. It will argue that technological changes will be insufficient to achieve sustainable consumption patterns, and that averting continued increases in the scale of consumption through trading income for time is imperative.

Zeit: Montag, 12. Juni 2006, 18.00 Uhr

Ort: IFF, Schottenfeldgasse 29, 3. Stock, A-1070 Wien