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## The Importance of Prison Labor in the Brazilian Prison System

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### Summary

The Brazilian prison system faces serious structural challenges, such as overcrowding, institutional violence, criminal recidivism, and the difficulty of resocializing inmates. In this context, prison labor emerges as a fundamental instrument for the effective fulfillment of the social function of punishment, as foreseen in the Brazilian legal system. This article aims to analyze the importance of prison labor in the Brazilian prison system, highlighting its legal foundations, its contribution to human dignity, its role in the resocialization of the convicted person, and its social impacts. The research uses a qualitative method, of a bibliographic and documentary nature, based on the 1988 Federal Constitution, the Penal Execution Law, and specialized doctrine.

It is concluded that prison labor, when effectively implemented, constitutes an essential mechanism for the humanization of punishment and for the reduction of criminal recidivism, benefiting not only the inmate but also society as a whole.

**Keywords:** Prison labor. Rehabilitation. Prison system. Human dignity. Criminal recidivism.

### Abstract

The Brazilian prison system faces serious structural challenges, such as overcrowding, institutional violence, criminal recidivism, and the difficulty of resocializing inmates. In this context, prison labor emerges as a fundamental instrument for the effective implementation of the social function of punishment, as foreseen in the Brazilian legal system. This article aims to analyze the importance of prison labor in the Brazilian prison system, highlighting its legal foundations, its contribution to human dignity, its role in the resocialization of the convicted person, and its social impacts. The research uses a qualitative method, of a bibliographic and documentary nature, based on the 1988 Federal Constitution, the Penal Execution Law, and specialized doctrine. It concludes that prison labor, when effectively implemented, constitutes an essential mechanism for the humanization of punishment and for the reduction of criminal recidivism, benefiting not only the inmate but also society as a whole.

**Keywords:** Prison labor. Resocialization. Prison system. Human dignity. Criminal recidivism.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Brazilian prison system is in a critical state, marked by overcrowding.

Poor prison conditions and high rates of recidivism. According to data

Officially, Brazil has one of the largest prison populations in the world, which highlights the ineffectiveness of the exclusively punitive policies historically adopted by the State.

In this scenario, it becomes essential to adopt measures that go beyond simply...

Deprivation of liberty, promoting the resocialization of the convicted individual. Prison labor.



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It stands out as one of these measures, being recognized by Brazilian legislation as a duty.

social and a condition of human dignity.

Imprisonment should not be merely retributive in nature, but also educational and preventative. Thus, prison labor represents an important instrument of social transformation, by enabling the inmate to develop professional skills, the Strengthening social values and preparing for the return to social life.

Given this, the present article seeks to analyze the importance of prison labor in the system. Brazilian prison system, addressing its legal foundations and its relationship with the principle of dignity. of the person, its benefits for the offender and for society, as well as the challenges faced for its effective implementation.

## **2. Legal foundations of prison labor in Brazil**

Prison labor has legal backing in both the 1988 Federal Constitution and the... Penal Execution Law (Law No. 7.210/1984). The Constitution establishes, in its article 1, item III, the The dignity of the person as the foundation of the Democratic Rule of Law, a principle that should guide... The entire penal and penitentiary system.

The Penal Execution Law dedicates several provisions to prison labor, especially in Articles 28 to 37. Article 28 states that work for convicts is a social duty and a condition of dignity. human, with an educational and productive purpose. This provision rules out any exploitative character, reaffirming the resocializing aspect of work activity.

Furthermore, the law guarantees the prisoner the right to remuneration for the work performed. even if the amount is less than the minimum wage, as well as the right to sentence reduction. Under the terms of Article 126 of the Penal Execution Law states that for every three days of work, the inmate is entitled to a reduction of... one day of his sentence.

Therefore, prison labor is not a favor from the State, but a right of the prisoner and a It is the duty of the prison administration, and should be encouraged and expanded as a public policy. essential.

## **3. Prison labor and the principle of human dignity.**

The dignity of the person constitutes one of the pillars of the Brazilian legal system and must be Respected even in the face of deprivation of liberty. Incarceration cannot imply the annulment of neither the human condition of the condemned nor their definitive exclusion from society. In this context, Prison labor acts as a mechanism for preserving the dignity of the inmate, by allowing that He perceives himself as an active and productive subject. The exercise of a work activity contributes to the

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self-esteem, for a sense of social usefulness and for the construction of an identity detached from criminal practice.

Idleness, common in the Brazilian prison system, intensifies feelings of uselessness. Revolt and despair favor the strengthening of criminal factions and an increase in violence. Internal. Work, on the other hand, promotes discipline, time management, and internalization of positive social values.

Therefore, guaranteeing access to prison labor means realizing the principle of The dignity of the person within the context of penal execution.

#### **4. The role of prison labor in the rehabilitation of inmates.**

Rehabilitation is one of the main objectives of punishment, as stipulated in the Law. Criminal Enforcement. Prison labor plays a central role in this process, as it enables... condemned to acquire professional and social skills essential for life in freedom.

By participating in work activities, the inmate develops habits such as punctuality, Responsibility, cooperation, and respect for hierarchy are essential elements for social coexistence. and for entry into the formal job market.

Furthermore, prison labor can be linked to educational and other programs. Professional qualification, expanding opportunities for social reintegration. Prisoners who leave the Those with some professional training have a greater chance of obtaining legitimate employment. significantly reducing the likelihood of criminal recidivism.

Thus, prison labor should not be seen merely as a way to occupy time, but as A strategic tool for social transformation and crime prevention.

#### **5. Benefits of prison labor for the prison system and for society.**



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The benefits of prison labor are not limited to the inmate, but also extend to the prison system, prisons and society in general. Reducing idleness contributes to a decrease in conflicts, internal [security], improving the safety and management of prison units.

From an economic standpoint, prison labor can generate the production of goods and services, useful to public administration, reducing state costs. Furthermore, part of the prisoner's remuneration. It can be used to support the family, compensate the victim, or create a reserve fund. financial support for the post-prison period.

For society, the main benefit is the reduction in criminal recidivism. Individuals who Those leaving the prison system with professional qualifications and job prospects have lower risk. A propensity to return to crime, contributing to public safety and social peace.

## **6. Sentence reduction as an incentive for prison labor.**

Sentence reduction through work is an important mechanism for incentivizing participation of prisoners in labor activities. By allowing the reduction of incarceration time through Through personal effort, the State reinforces the idea of responsibility and merit.

This institution also contributes to internal discipline and good behavior. prison system, since the inmate begins to perceive concrete advantages in adhering to the rules of prison system.

Therefore, sentence reduction strengthens the resocializing character of prison labor and encourages... The voluntary participation of prisoners in the activities offered.

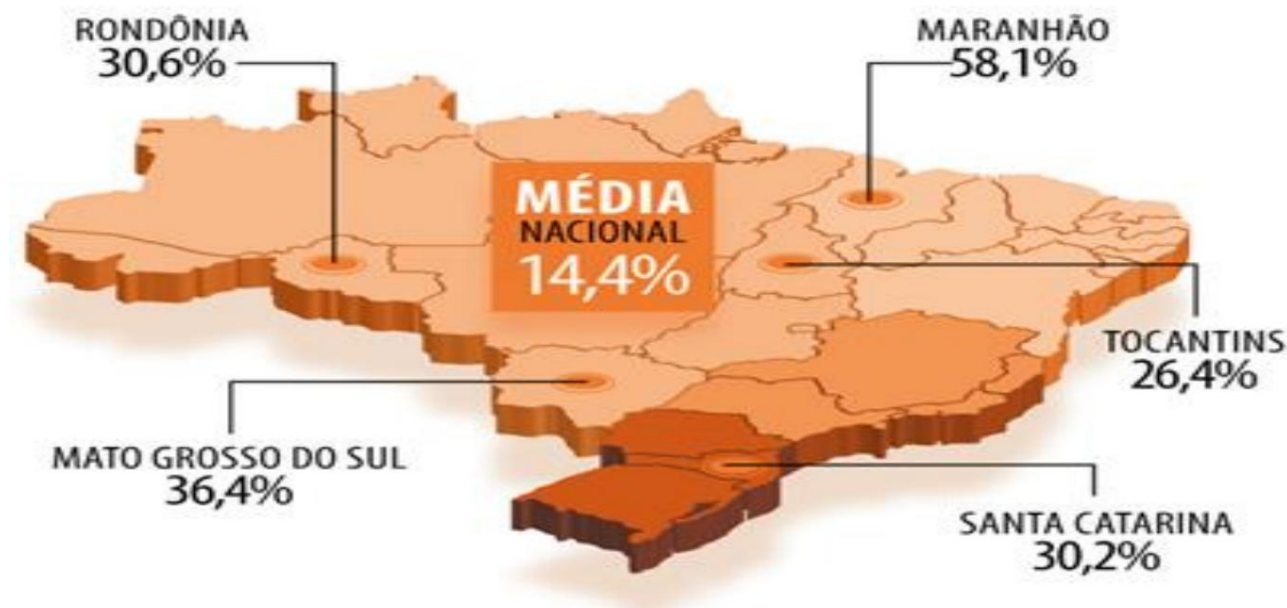
## **7. Challenges and limitations of prison labor in Brazil**

Despite its recognized importance, prison labor faces numerous challenges in Brazil. The scarcity of job opportunities, the lack of adequate infrastructure, the resistance of the initiative. Private ownership and the absence of effective public policies compromise the universalization of the institution.

Furthermore, there is inequality in access to prison work, benefiting only a portion of the population. prison population. This reality demands greater state investment, public-private partnerships and Inspections to ensure decent working conditions.

Overcoming these obstacles is essential for prison labor to fully fulfill its purpose. social and rehabilitative function.

Below we provide some data regarding prison labor in Brazil:



### Proporção de Presos Condenados Trabalhando em Minas Gerais





## 8. CONCLUSION

Prison labor is one of the most important instruments for the humanization of punishment and for the effective implementation of resocialization within the Brazilian prison system. Supported by Based on legal and constitutional principles, it promotes human dignity and reduces recidivism. criminal and benefits the whole of society.

We must also emphasize that prison labor must be continuous and must reach the... The maximum number of people deprived of their liberty that can be achieved should not be limited to just a few. because it is necessary for everyone to work, because it dignifies, it allows the person who is in prison to... feel useful, occupied, and thus produce something that can benefit some segment of society or even for the prison system in which he is currently placed, and it can also be stated, that the results are rewarding, considering that these citizens who are there, one One day they will return to social life, and this requires planning so that one can avoid or To minimize criminal recidivism as much as possible, a factor that is extremely worrying, and therefore it is our duty. It is up to everyone to contribute to having a fair prison system that ensures due compliance with the law. Punishment and punishment for what he did in a dignified manner, but also the possibility of reintegration into society. In the future, we will be better prepared so that this return to social life can happen in a more positive way. in a more dignified and planned way, so that one can be received into the job market with some profession or even a more complete educational background.

However, for its effects to be fully achieved, strengthening is essential. Public policies aimed at expanding job opportunities in prisons. Investing in Prison labor does not mean benefiting crime, but rather promoting social justice and security. public safety and respect for human rights.

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