



## UGT asks for Mobilization to lower interest rates

It is time to breath and mobilize in order to lower interest rates with the Selic tax at 8,75%

Maintaining the Selic tax at 8,75% was a certain relief to Brazilian workers and it also left aside the hope that reason in favor of Brazil and the Brazilian people come, earlier than we thought, and prevail at the Monetary Policy Committee (Copom).

Maintaining the Selic tax at the current level still isn't enough to create more jobs. **UGT** defends lowering the interest rate in order to lack public money to invest in education, instead of rewarding bankers and speculators that lend money to the government.

"We need low interest rates to stimulate investments in industrial production and creation of new business in the service and commerce sectors", **Ricardo Patah, National President** of the institution stated.

And, while requesting a general mobilization for lower interest rates, he added: "With a decent interest rate and with the reduction of the bank spread, which is also another plague that damages the economy, Brazil will show an enviable growth."



"We need decent and civilized interest rates to get Brazil out of the first place in the ranking as the higher interest rate in the world".  
**Ricardo Patah, president of UGT**

## UGT issues note against maintaining Selic tax at 8,5%

To UGT, measure blocks economic growth of the country

UGT issued a note, on March 17, in protest against maintaining the Selic tax at 8,75%. According to the organ, the measure blocks the economic growth of the country.

"Copom (Monetary Policies Committee) lost the opportunity to accelerate our economic growth and move Brazil away from the world record title of higher interest rates. With the current 8,75% Selic rate, the real Brazilian interest rate will still be at 4% per year, against 2,6% in Indonesia and 2,5% in China", the note says.

"The Brazilian economy needs low interest rates to stimulate investments in industrial and service sectors in order to achieve a consistent creation of quality jobs", the memo ends, signed by **Ricardo Patah, national president of UGT**.

### UGT debates new readjustment for retirements

Parliamentarians and unionists from UGT and other trade union centrals started debating with the minister **Luiz Dulci**, general secretary of the president, the supposition of raising the readjustment index of retirements at a value that should be higher than the minimum wage.

The government created, in early 2010, a Provisory Measure readjusting the benefit in 6,14%.



Trade union centrals propose raising the readjustment index to 7,92%, modifying the Provisory Measure that will be voted under a plenary session at the Chamber on April, 6. The new index includes a variation of the INPC plus 80% of the GDP growth index. Cândido Vaccarezza, leader of the government at the chamber, stipulates the approval of the readjustment raise if they come to an agreement.

**Canindé Pegado**, general secretary of UGT and **Roberto Santiago**, Federal Deputy and vice-president of UGT, represented the institution in the meeting. (*Brasília Confidencial*, 26.03.2010)

### Lupi points out the creation of more than 205 thousand job positions in February

Carlos Lupi, minister of Labour and Employment, states, that data from the General Database of Employes and Unemployed (Caged) of February will reach a record, pointing out to the creation of more than 205 thousand formal jobs. In January, according to the last report released, Caged showed the creation of 181.419 formal job positions in Brazil, which is a record for this month.

"We are currently closing the numbers of February and we can consider this month to be the best February in 22 years since Caged was created" Lupi said to journalists after the event took place in Rio de Janeiro. "This years tends to be the best one as far as creating jobs concerns, in the History of Brazil"

The minister also said that the average unemployment rate this year, measured by IBGE (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics), should be around 7,4% and 7,5%, against 8,1% in 2009.

### UGT at the Youth National Committee

Representative from UGT is elected vice-president of the National Youth Committee



**João Vidal**, national adjunct secretary of UGT's Youth Department, was elected to represent the civil society along with the board of directors of Conjuve - National Youth Committee.

**Danilo Moreira**, from the Chief of Staff's Office, will be the president of the committee. The president is nominated by the government.

Vidal won the election, which was held on March 10, unanimously - an important fact because Conjuve is composed of 20 seats from the public power and 40 from the civil society, and those seats represent the most diverse Brazilian institutes that work with the juvenile topic, among them, the following ones can be emphasized: trade union centrals, student movement, political parties, NGOs, etc...

"The main challenge under our management will be inserting into the electoral agenda the guidelines of public policies towards youth, adjusting proposals that answer specific demands from nearly 51 million young people from 15 to 29 years old along with candidates", Vidal said.

## Reduction of working hours in Brazil would benefit more than 18 million workers

Em livro sobre a jornada de trabalho, OIT diz que mais de 600 milhões de pessoas em todo o mundo trabalham mais de 48 horas semanais

All over the world, nearly 22% of the workforce, or 614,2 million workers, work more than 48 weekly hours.

This is one of the main facts publicized in the book "Working time around the world: Trends in working hours, laws and policies in a global comparative perspective", which version in Portuguese will be released by the **International Labour Organization (ILO)**.



According to the book, written by **Sangheon Lee, Deirdre McCann and Jon Messenger**, ILO's specialists, during the last five decades, despite substantial regional differences and the unequal process to reduce the working hours for a legal week of work, there was a global change to a 40 hour limit. Jon Messenger came to Brazil to release the book.

Another conclusion: gender and age seem to be important factors to determine the length of work. Despite an increase in the participation of women in remunerated work, there is a clear "gender gap" regarding working shifts all over the world. Men tend to work longer shifts, while the shorter shifts are performed by women. The time women dedicate to their families and domestic responsibilities retrain their availability to a remunerated work.

In all regions of the developing world, informal work is responsible for at least half the occupation, out of which 60% are freelancer workers. While in industrialized countries a large amount of freelancer workers go through extremely extended shifts, in developing countries, shifts are shorter (less than 35 weekly hours).

ILO proposes that agreements on decent working shifts should satisfy inter-related criteria: they should favor health and safety at work, they should be compatible with the family life, promote gender equality, reinforce productivity, and ease the choice and influence of the worker in the total amount of working hours.

[Read the publication in full](#)

[Read data on Brazil](#)

## Development Aid Conference

**Spanish Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero** will open a high-level ITUC conference "The Global Crisis and Aid Effectiveness" on 16 March in Madrid, which aims to put development assistance at the centre of the response to the global economic crisis. Columbia University Professor José Antonio Ocampo, a former UN Under-Secretary-General, will also address the conference, along with Togo Labour Minister Octave Broohm and senior officials of the ILO, the European Union and the OECD, as well as representatives from the European Parliament.

"The economic crisis has had a devastating impact on the world's poorest, wiping out much of the progress which had been made on reducing global poverty. Banks have been rescued, but people are being left behind. There is a growing risk that the plight of hundreds of millions of people will slip to the very bottom of the international agenda. We need to keep up the pressure for action on jobs and meeting the UN Millennium Development Goals," said ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder.

*The ITUC and its Global Unions partners have been pushing hard with governments, at the G20 and international finance and economics bodies, to keep development at the forefront of action to end the crisis and redesign the global economy. With trade unions emerging as major players in development assistance, both as advocates and as in implementing projects, the Madrid Conference will focus in particular on the effectiveness of aid programmes, their long-term impacts sustainable economic growth, and the contribution to providing decent employment. (ITUC Online, 15.03.2010)*

### Seminar of employees from Banco do Brasil and Nossa Caixa

UGT, through its **Department of Finances, Credit and Insurance Issues**, presided by **Edson Roberto dos Santos**, president of the **Union of Bank Workers of Franca and Surroundings**, will promote, at the rural head office of that union on March 27, the Seminar of Employees from Banco do Brasil and Nossa Caixa.

The event is supported by **CONTEC (National Confederation of Workers in Credit Companies)** and the **Federation of Bank Workers of the states of Sao Paulo and Mato Grosso do Sul**.

Representatives from both banks and also David Zaia, State Deputy and also an employee of the bank, **Laurenço do Prado**, president of CONTEC and **Ricardo Patah**, president of UGT, participated in the meeting.

"The goal of the seminar is clearing out doubts and enlarging the knowledge of employees regarding the bank and promoting an integration of the staff, since the incorporation process is extremely complex, because it involves the absorption of 15 thousand new employees", Edson Santos, president of the union stated.

### Sindicargas of Guarulhos visits UGT's national head office

On March 17, members from the board of directors of Sindicargas of Guarulhos and region, visited UGT's head office, where they were received by **Ricardo Patah**, president of the institution and **Canindé Pegado**, general secretary.

Irapuan Siqueira Sousa, president of Sindicargas, showed support towards the actions that UGT has been developing. The directors Edson Moreira Neri, Natalino Roberto Delafina, Aparecido Cordeiro de Novaes and Expedito da Silva Alexandre participated in the visit.



### Equality and Diversity



UGT participated in the Union Capacitation Workshop to promote Equality in Para, an event organized by INSPIR - **Inter-American Union Institute for Racial Equality**, which is composed of Brazilian trade union centrals, **AFL-CIO**, the **Solidary Center**, from the United States and **TUCA - Trade Union Confederation of the Americas**.

The journalist Cristina Nascimento, from UGT's State Branch of Para, who represents the National Department of Human Diversity, emphasizes the importance of trade union centrals investing in fights for equality, respecting human differences.

### Commerce workers from Bahia debate merger

The merger of the companies Pão de Açúcar, Casas Bahia and Ponto Frio was the main topic of the union debate promoted by Fecombase (Federation of Commerce Employees of the States of Bahia and Sergipe), affiliated with UGT. On the opportunity, the federation received the visit of **Ricardo Patah**, president of **SECS** (Commerce Workers Union of Sao Paulo), and also president of UGT and an employee of Grupo Pao. Patah was accompanied by **John Fernandes**, secretary of Economic Policies of UGT.



"The General Union of Workers (GUW) reaffirms its historic commitments to the working class, while seeking to expand its methods of action, with ethics, courage and the certainty that Brazil can be better and more just." Ricardo Patah – UGT's President

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