



# LABOR OBSERVATORY OF THE AMERICAS



## Country Profile Brasil

2021



### Total Area

8,510,295 Km<sup>2</sup>



### Population (2010 Census):

194,891,000 people<sup>1</sup>



### Population estimated in 2021

213,846,152 people



### Economically active population:

(Third Quarter, June - August 2021):

103,844,000 people



### Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2020:

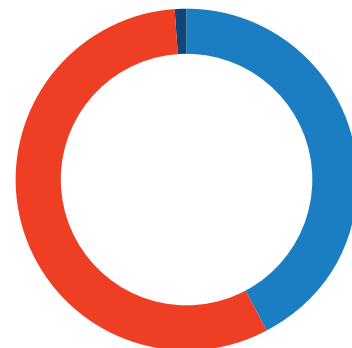
1,442 trillion US dollars, at current prices<sup>2</sup>



### GDP in 2021:

The Central Bank projects the GDP will grow by 4.7% in 2021

### Population composition:



**56.2% Black**

**42.7% White**

**1% Indigenous and of Asian descent**

<sup>1</sup> The statistical data presented here and the socioeconomic situation are primarily drawn from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE for its acronym in Portuguese)

<sup>2</sup> <https://statistics.cepal.org/portal/cepalstat/national-profile.html?theme=2&country=bra&lang=en>





# Analysis of the socio-economic situation

## Employment.

The number of people employed in the June – August 2021 period was approximately 90,188,000.

## Unemployment.

The unemployment rate in the June – August 2021 period was 13.2%, equivalent to 13,656,000 people; this reflected an increase of 1.4 percentage points with respect to the second quarter of the year.

Inactive population: 73,371,000 people (the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics – IBGE for its acronym in Portuguese – categorized them as being outside the labor force).

## Poverty.

12.8% of the Brazilian population, equivalent to 27 million people, now live in extreme poverty, with a monthly income of less than 246 Brazilian reais (approximately 43 US dollars). In September 2021, Brazil recorded its worst inflation rate during the last 27 years, with inflation reaching 10.25%. Some 117 million people, equivalent to 55% of the country's population, face food insecurity with uncertain access to nutrition.

## Informal employment:

The rate of underemployment rose to 29.7% in the second quarter.



# Context Highlights 2021

The year 2021 was marked, among other things, by the grave crisis of deaths resulting from the Bolsonaro government's management of the COVID-19 pandemic. In March, Brazil ranked second in the world in the number of deaths caused by the coronavirus. As of 6 December, the death toll in Brazil reached 615,744.

Not only did the management of the pandemic – based on Bolsonaro's denialism – leave the country in one of the worst situations in its history, the president's office directly intervened in Petrobras by replacing its president, Roberto Castello Branco, with retired Army General Joaquim Silva e Luna. As a consequence of this nefarious politically motivated economic intervention by the executive branch, the value of Petrobras shares plummeted in February by around 21%, resulting in a stock market loss of 18 billion US dollars.

The growing militarization of state institutions is another risk factor for Brazilian democracy. As of the first half of 2021, nine ministries were headed by military commanders, who also hold around 2,500 institutional positions.

Another aspect of great importance is the uprising of Brazil's Indigenous Peoples. In August, thousands of people, mainly from Indigenous Peoples in Amazonia, mobilized against presidential measures that seek to impose a "Milestone Thesis" (Marco Temporal in Portuguese) to recognize as ancestral lands only those occupied by indigenous communities before 1988. The imposition of this arbitrary interpretation opens the door for large corporations to expand dispossession efforts and convert indigenous lands into spaces for logging, cattle ranching, and agrofuels production.

Even the United Nations (UN) expressed its concern about the likely consequences of the Milestone Thesis –that it would legitimize violence against Indigenous Peoples. Environmental organizations around the world have also condemned the intentions of Bolsonaro's right-wing government regarding one of the most ecologically important regions in the world, where Indigenous Peoples are in charge of conserving and caring for nature.





# Actions and Denunciations (national and international) by Trade Unions and other social sectors

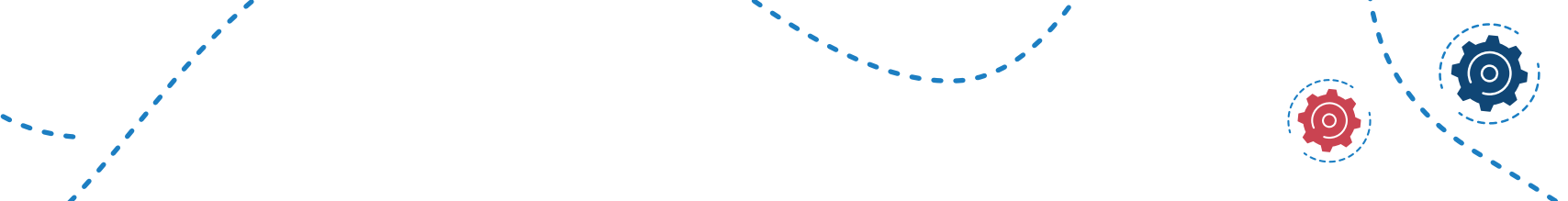
The labor unions denounce the prevalence of informal work in the country (29.7%) as a situation that creates difficulties for the population, due to the government's logic that favors transnational corporations and furthers the processes of public sector privatization and labor precariousness.

Specifically with regard to precariousness, given the current national and international context, the Brazilian trade union movement is profoundly critical of Provisional Measure 1045, which is understood as labor reforms and is currently being debated as a proposed law. The Provisional Measure focuses on using civil law instead of labor law to regulate the employment of young people between 18 and 24 years of age.

Under pressure from the business community, the government seeks to impose a new trade union reform that would allow company owners to become union presidents.

The trade union movement also denounces the creation and use of fake-news by the government and its propaganda agencies to manipulate the population. This strategy has negatively affected workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, and has had a corresponding impact of misinforming on the reality of the region, mainly on political matters in Cuba and Venezuela.





The government continues to attack the trade union movement in general and women in particular, in an attempt to slow down or weaken the processes of organizing and strengthening trade unions.

Trade unions also denounce issues in relation to the platform economy. Accidents involving delivery workers have increased; these are people who work in precarious conditions, with minimal pay, and using their own work equipment in order to access the economy.

The Brazilian trade union movement has denounced the situation of Indigenous Peoples, in a scenario of brutal attacks by the Bolsonaro government and intensified attempts to dispossess them of their lands. This issue is inextricably linked to the violation of territorial rights and the exploitation of the commons.

Finally, trade unions denounce the attempts of conservative and fascist forces to join forces – making agreements across interests that are counter to those of the majority of the population – and seek once again to prevent Lula Da Silva’s candidacy in the 2022 presidential elections, restricting and attacking democracy.



# Collective Bargaining and the Freedom to Form Unions

Brazil is one of the 10 worst countries in the world for union activity and for the fulfillment of working class rights, as ranked by the ITUC's Global Rights Index. "The lack of good-faith bargaining by employers illustrates the broken social contract. Instead, collective bargaining agreements are being torn up, with mass layoffs in Brazil."

During this period, Brazil saw the violation of collective agreements and union consultations; with the excuse of pandemic-related difficulties, companies have massively laid off workers. The September 2020 experience at aerospace company Embraer is emblematic, with the dismissal of more than 2,500 workers without any negotiation with the union.

Trade unionists murdered. João Inácio da Silva, president of the Montes Belos Workers' Cooperative, was murdered on 6 November 2020. His murder remains in impunity.





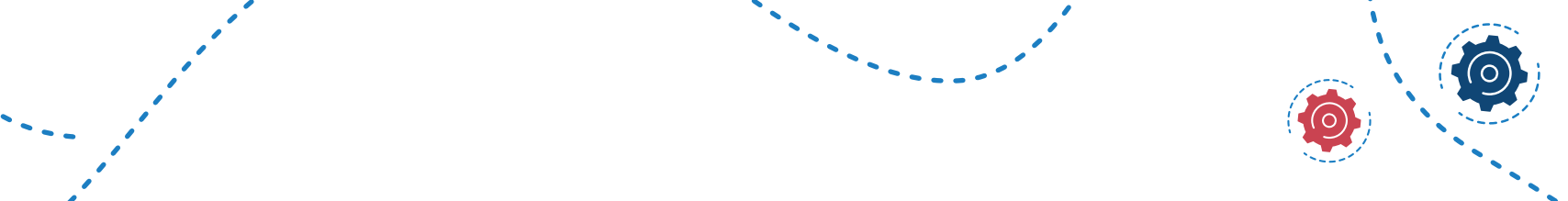
# Trade union proposals and initiatives

A central proposal is to advance in the process of union organization and transformation, taking into account the transformations of capitalism, the new forms of accumulation in the platform economy, and the intention to systematically expand and impose precariousness. The trade union movement values political formation as an important element in organizing – linked to the development of its own alternative communications and the exploration of alliances with the cultural sector in order to expand the proposals and benefits to society as a whole.

One challenge identified by affiliated unions is the expansion of membership, which must be addressed in order to strengthen the capacity to confront the current political situation that is marked by attacks on democracy and systematic rights violations. On this matter, the trade union movement proposes to deepen relationships with social move-

ments, as well as to advance the regional process of joint coordination and convergence with movements and organizations that fight for social, environmental, economic, and gender justice.

To counteract media manipulation, the trade union movement proposes to conduct formation on trade union communications, and to use the resources currently available in an appropriate manner to dispute the political narrative. The trade union movement sees formation in communications actions as an element that contributes to better internal and external communications.



In coordination with TUCA, the Brazilian unions propose to influence all matters related to the environment and international negotiation spaces, disseminating the outcomes and proposals from the last Regional Conference on Energy, Environment, and Work (CREAT for its acronym in Spanish), and strengthening relationships with environmental and feminist social movements.

Coordination and convergence among trade unions is proposed, in order to continue supporting the struggles of Indigenous Peoples in Brazil, and to focus efforts on supporting Indigenous and Black women who suffer the brutal consequences of discrimination, inequality, and violence.

A high-priority trade union initiative is the convergence to defeat Bolsonaro's neoliberalism in the next presidential elections, with an overarching strategy of coordinated planning across trade unions in the areas of organizing, formation, and communications. In this sense, there is a proposal for all trade unions to carry out a national activity, with representation and broad participation of all social movements.

The trade union movement understands the construction of unity as ideal in order to dispute politics and thus achieve the guarantee of rights.







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