

# Condições de trabalho docente: a contratação de professores via designação temporária no Espírito Santo<sup>1</sup>

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## Resumo

O intuito deste trabalho é discutir as possíveis implicações da contratação usual de professores via designação temporária (DT), no Espírito Santo. Utilizou-se para a produção de dados a consulta documental e entrevista semiestruturada. As análises foram realizadas à luz do materialismo histórico e dialético. Como resultados se apontam que da designação temporária decorre a impossibilidade de construção de carreira, a dificuldade no planejamento profissional e pessoal, no médio e longo prazo, e a dificuldade de organização política dos professores, como classe trabalhadora. Nas conclusões se apresentam a necessidade urgente da realização de concursos públicos para provimento de cargos efetivos que atendam as reais demandas por docentes no Espírito Santo e a necessidade do fortalecimento das organizações políticas, que defendam os interesses dos professores, de modo a valorizar e consolidar a docência como profissão.

**Palavras-chave:** Contrato docente. Plano de carreira docente. Neoliberalismo e educação.

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## **Teacher working conditions: hiring teachers via temporary job contracts in Espírito Santo**

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### **Abstract**

This study aims to discuss the possible implications of the usual hiring of teachers via temporary job contracts (Portuguese acronym, “DT”) in Espírito Santo, Brazil. Documentary research and semi-structured interviews were used to produce data. The analyzes were carried out in the light of historical and dialectical materialism. The results indicate that DT leads to the impossibility of building a career, the difficulty in professional and personal planning in the medium and long term and the difficulty in political organization of teachers as a working class. The conclusions present the urgent need to hold civil service examinations to fill permanent positions that meet the real demands for teachers in the State of Espírito Santo and the need to strengthen political organizations that defend the interests of teachers, in order to value and consolidate teaching as a profession.

**Keywords:** Teaching contract. Teaching career plan. Neoliberalism and education.

## **Condiciones de trabajo docente: contratación de docentes por asignación temporal en Espírito Santo**

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### **Resumen**

Este trabajo tiene como objetivo discutir las posibles implicaciones de la contratación habitual de docentes mediante contrato temporal (“DT” en portugués) en el estado de Espírito Santo, Brasil. Se utilizó la consulta documental y entrevistas semiestructuradas para la recopilación de datos. Los análisis se realizaron a la luz del materialismo histórico y dialéctico. Entre los resultados se señala que la contratación temporal resulta en la imposibilidad de construir una carrera, la dificultad en la planificación profesional y personal a mediano y largo plazo y la dificultad en la organización política de los docentes como clase trabajadora. Las conclusiones presentan la urgente necesidad de llevar a cabo concursos públicos para la provisión de puestos permanentes que satisfagan las verdaderas demandas de docentes en el estado de Espírito Santo, así como la necesidad de fortalecer las organizaciones políticas que defiendan los intereses de los profesores, con el fin de valorizar y consolidar la docencia como profesión.

**Palabras clave:** Contrato docente. Plan de carrera docente. Neoliberalismo y educación.

## **Introduction**

This article is the product of a master's research that aimed to investigate the working conditions of educators in a full-time school in Espírito Santo (ES). The research results indicated a significant presence of teachers working under temporary designation contracts (DT) at that institution.

Understanding that employment relationships are one of the factors that shape the working conditions of educators, and analyzing the possible implications of DT—used by a considerable number of teachers, with 25 out of 30 teachers at the school working under temporary contracts—it became necessary to bring a more specific discussion on this topic. This is particularly relevant considering the reality of the state of Espírito Santo, where, as noted during the research, there is a scarcity of scientific publications on this matter.

To contextualize the topic, it is important to note that, according to Jedlicki and Yancovic (2010), the teaching profession in Brazil has undergone a process of deprofessionalization since the period of Military Dictatorships in Latin America, specifically starting in 1973. This process is characterized by

- 1) decline in the quality of initial and ongoing training; 2) loss of rights and precarious working conditions (such as reduced salaries, flexibility and instability, deterioration of work environments, etc.); 3) standardization of work (an evaluative logic that prioritizes performance, neglecting learning), leading to the subjugation of practices to routine; and 4) exclusion of teachers from the processes of constructing educational policies (JEDLICKI; YANCOVIC, 2010, p.1).

This process intensified starting in the 1990s when international organizations, such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (VASCONCELLOS; MAGALHÃES; MARTINELLI, 2021), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (COSTA; SILVA, 2019), intensified their involvement in the political actions of countries in Latin America, bringing the idea of the flexible worker, characteristic of Human Capital Theory.

Thus, it is understood that the mass hiring of basic education teachers through temporary contracts is related to the precariousness of working conditions for educators, situated within a broad context that extends beyond Brazil and, concurrently, involves the denial of rights to these workers.

Therefore, the question arises: what are the possible implications of hiring through temporary contracts for the teacher as a worker? In light of this, the aim is to discuss these possible implications, specifically focusing on identifying data regarding the hiring of temporary teachers in Espírito Santo (ES) and analyzing this data in relation to the statements of the interviewees from the research conducted, as well as examining potential implications of temporary hiring on the working conditions of educators.

This research is characterized as a case study (PRODANOV; FREITAS, 2013), as it seeks to explore a specific reality in greater depth, that of ES, while considering that the state is not isolated from a broader social and historical context. For the collection and production of data, documentary research was conducted, focusing on materials produced by the state of Espírito Santo, along with interviews conducted with research participants. These interviews followed a semi-structured guide model with open-ended questions (BONI; QUARESMA, 2005). Their execution was approved by the Ethics Committee for Research with Human Beings at the Federal University of Espírito Santo (UFES), under approval number 5.705.596.

Two educators from the language area participated in the interview, teaching high school classes at CEEMTI “Monsenhor Miguel de Sanctis,” a full-time school located in the municipality of Guaçuí, in the southern region of Espírito Santo. Guaçuí has an estimated population of 31,372 inhabitants, with a territory of approximately 468.185 km<sup>2</sup> (IBGE, 2022), and is also the headquarters of one of the Regional Superintendencies of Education in the state (ESPÍRITO SANTO, n.d.). According to data provided on the Control Panel of the Court of Accounts of the State of Espírito Santo, in 2022, there were 610 students enrolled in the high school at the school (ESPÍRITO SANTO, 2023a).

Once the data were produced, they were analyzed in light of historical and dialectical materialism (HDM), benefiting from the contributions of critical authors such as Frigotto (2015) and Oliveira (2020).

HDM is understood as a theoretical and methodological framework due to its intrinsic characteristics, such as the centrality of the categories of work, historicity, contradiction, movement, and the use of dialectics. Through these, reality is investigated and understood as a historically and socially constructed entity in constant motion, in which complex and contradictory relationships are established. The essence and appearance of social events blur and invert through ideological interpretations of this same reality, causing what is artificial to be taken as natural and

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resulting consequences to be perceived as causes (MARX; ENGELS, 1998, MASSON; FLACH, 2018, MASSON, 2007).

Regarding the dialectical character, Masson (2007) notes that it is Engels who provides the greatest contribution by writing about the laws of dialectics: I) the law of the transition from quantity to quality; II) the law of the interpenetration of opposites; and III) the law of the negation of the negation (MASSON, 2007).

In the first case, there is an understanding that significant changes occurring in society are built upon various smaller, more or less discreet, prior changes. In this conception, major social transformations do not occur out of nothing. They are the result of historical processes.

In the second case, it discusses the different and contradictory aspects of reality that are interconnected. The dialectical movement seeks to understand how these opposites coexist and relate to one another.

In the third case, it explains the thesis-antithesis-synthesis framework: what is established (a social model) encounters what seeks to be established. In this conflict between being (thesis) and becoming (antithesis), something new emerges that bears the imprint of both, synthesizing them. Once this new entity is established, it becomes the new thesis, which will generate a new antithesis, and in their conflict, will produce a new synthesis. This movement will continue until the capitalist mode of production is transcended, and in its place, a socialist order is established (RODRIGUES, 2011).

Thus, having briefly presented the context that originates and encompasses the research, along with the theory and methodological procedures that guided the execution of this article, we now move on to a deeper contextualization and the presentation of the data and analyses of the work, addressing the influences of neoliberal policies and Human Capital Theory, considering the state education network of Espírito Santo.

## **Neoliberal Policies and Human Capital Theory in Basic Education in Espírito Santo**

To address the neoliberal policies of the state of Espírito Santo, it is first necessary to present what neoliberalism is:

[...] It is, first and foremost, a theory of political and economic practices [that emerged in the 1970s in response to the crisis of capitalism during that period] which proposes that human well-being can be best promoted by unleashing individual entrepreneurial freedoms and capacities within a framework

characterized by strong rights to private property, free markets, and free trade. The role of the state is to create and maintain an appropriate institutional framework for these practices: the state must ensure, for example, the quality and integrity of money [...]. State interventions in the markets (once established) should be kept to a minimum [...]. (HARVEY, 2011, p. 12 *apud* FREITAS; FIGUEIRA, 2020, p. 3).

Thus, it is understood that the role of the state is to act in the protection of the prevailing economic system, whether by safeguarding individual rights and freedom of trade, the private ownership of the means of production, or by taking responsibility for public safety as a way to ensure the integrity of those rights, or by distancing itself from the provision of public and welfare services.

Regarding neoliberalism in the educational field, Freitas and Figueira (2020) state that:

Neoliberalism can be understood as a contradictory doctrine, as its proponents' advocate for non-intervention of the state in education, arguing that such action infringes on individual freedom. Therefore, the state should not provide a standard public education for all citizens. Yet, paradoxically, public education serves to perpetuate the neoliberal ideology, functioning as a key tool by instilling principles of competitiveness, individuality, creativity, and productivity among others in the state's educational proposals (FREITAS; FIGUEIRA, 2020, p. 4).

According to Frigotto (2015), starting in the 1990s, conservatives and the Right took control of the newly redemocratized state and "effectuated the sale of public assets and adopted the tenets of neoliberalism in the economy, politics, culture, and education" (FRIGOTTO, 2015, p. 234). The author continues by stating that the Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education (LDB) itself was approved to serve conservative interests and did not confront previous measures or heed the demands proposed and discussed within the educational community (FRIGOTTO, 2015).

With the existing gap in the LDB, which allowed for the alignment of educational processes with the interests of capital, one can observe the presence of neoliberal premises in other documents addressing education, such as the "Espírito Santo 2025" Development Plan (ESPÍRITO SANTO, 2006) and Complementary Law No. 928/2019, which establishes guidelines for offering Full-Time Education in State Public Schools and provides other provisions (ESPÍRITO SANTO, 2019), among others. These documents also align with the existing proposals in Human Capital Theory (HCT), which positions education not as a means of emancipation, but as an action subjected to the maintenance of the capitalist mode of production. But what is Human Capital Theory?

Theodore Schultz, a renowned professor at the University of Chicago (1902-1998), coined the term [human capital] and presented his theory in the 1960s. The new concept of capital would encompass personal skills and abilities, which could be

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either intrinsic natural characteristics of the individual or acquired over time. This would enable the individual to gain advantages and become more productive. [...] The term human capital asserted that improving the well-being of the less fortunate did not depend on land, machinery, or energy, but primarily on knowledge. This theory suggests that all skills are either innate or acquired and should be enhanced through specific actions that lead to the enrichment of intellectual capital. Thus, each person would be capable of increasing their knowledge through investments aimed at the educational and professional development of each individual. Therefore, the increase in human capital could represent the productivity rates of workers, favoring the development of a country (CABRAL NETO; SILVA; SILVA, 2016, p. 36).

Aligning neoliberalism and Human Capital Theory, the "Espírito Santo 2025" plan discusses that the state would enter its third cycle of development, with one of the characteristics of this process being the development of human capital. This term is mentioned 30 times throughout the document, being understood as the necessary means to maintain Espírito Santo as a national reference state, especially in the educational field (ESPÍRITO SANTO, 2006).

After 20 years of massive investment in building a high-quality human capital formation system, Espírito Santo is a national reference in education!

[...] Espírito Santo is entering its third cycle of development, bringing together human capital, business innovation, and an efficient public sector as central components of the process. As a consequence, poverty is eradicated and social inequalities are significantly reduced.

[...]

In this new cycle, the competitive integration of the Espírito Santo economy into the world has the development of human capital, the efficiency of the public sector, and the dynamism and innovation of businesses as its central pillars. From these, it becomes increasingly possible to integrate Espírito Santo residents into the strong economic growth that the state will experience in the coming years, with positive impacts on levels of poverty and income distribution (emphasis added) (ESPÍRITO SANTO, 2006, p. 12 e 40 e 45).

The language used in the document is notably focused on economic issues (OLIVEIRA, 2020): all actions are planned to promote economic growth through education, entrepreneurship, and an efficient state. Furthermore, according to Oliveira (2020), the proposals to make the state efficient have contributed to the deterioration of the teaching career, considering that "the flexibilization of labor legislation grants greater freedom for the temporary hiring of teachers and allows for greater salary diversification [...]" (OLIVEIRA, 2020, p. 34).

Thus, regarding educators, "Espírito Santo 2025" makes it explicit that one of the proposals for developing human capital is the training and appreciation of teachers (ESPÍRITO SANTO, 2006). Comprising Project 2 of the group of projects, "Espírito Santo 2025" addresses this topic:

Project 2 – Training and Appreciation of Teachers.

**Objective**

Increase the qualification and motivation of basic education teachers and strengthen and value the teaching career.

**Scope**

Robust investment in teacher training, focusing on preparation for teaching work. Professional certification. Adoption of a more stimulating salary regime to attract talent and the implementation of an incentive system linked to students' academic performance. Provide scholarships for specialization in Brazil and abroad (emphasis added by the authors) (ESPÍRITO SANTO, 2006, p. 91).

Among all the problematizable and vague statements, the one that stands out the most is the clarity with which the linkage of the incentive system to students' academic performance is presented; Oliveira (2010) also points out that the practice of incentives, in the form of rewards and bonuses, induces more competitive behaviors among schools and teachers, rather than fostering collaboration. This also affects the struggle for improvements in the teaching career, as these practices are focused on isolated or individual actions rather than collective efforts.

It is essential to emphasize the centrality of teaching work for the implementation and effectiveness of the general projects outlined in the document, as this appreciation proposal aims to encompass teachers at all levels of basic education (ESPÍRITO SANTO, 2006).

It should also be noted that, in terms of teaching work, it can be generically defined as:

[...] all acts of realization in the educational process. Starting from the definition that work consists of the act of transforming nature by humans for their own survival, which simultaneously results in the transformation of humans through work, it is possible to consider that work has an educational character. Education and work are fundamental elements of the human condition, essential for socialization and determinants of our experiences (OLIVEIRA, 2010, p. 1).

Although it is not an exclusive task of the teacher, according to Oliveira (2010), it is this worker who most expressively embodies the educational act.

Thus, having a state development plan aligned with Human Capital Theory, which in turn aligns with neoliberal ideals, "brings with it the market perspective that education should work in favor of a qualified workforce for the capitalist mode of production" (CABRAL NETO; SILVA; SILVA, 2016, p. 39).

Thus, one observes a scenario in which,

[...] Human Capital Theory does not emerge as a proposal to collaborate with social development in the sense of fostering changes in structures and contributing to a more equal and just society; it merely aims to address the economic appeal of alleviating poverty and, to that end, emphasizes individual development as a means for economic development to occur. Implicit in this concept, teacher training is

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strongly influenced by neoliberal ideology, which commodifies education and turns the teacher into a collaborator of the prevailing capitalist domain (CABRAL NETO; SILVA; SILVA, 2016, p. 40).

The issues related to education in the state of Espírito Santo are not disconnected from a broader social and historical context, both nationally and internationally; they are not immune to the contradictions inherent in the capitalist system.

In this scenario, teachers must be trained to shape a new society that embraces the idea that schooling is an investment in itself for achieving social ascent (CABRAL NETO; SILVA; SILVA, 2016). In this way, "teachers assume a central role as 'fundamental pieces' to mold, configure, and adjust students to but under what conditions is this teacher's work carried out? It is understood, in fact, that teaching working conditions encompass a range of factors, such as:

the physical structure of educational units, the norms that organize the dynamics of interactions within the institution, the material resources available for carrying out activities, employment conditions- position, role, type of contract, work hours, remuneration, career plan, continuing education - as well as the relational experience between educators and students, and the perceptions and objective and subjective effects of this entire set of factors and processes [...] working conditions in education encompass everything necessary for educators to successfully and well perform the work that is required of them (PEREIRA JÚNIOR; VIEIRA 2018, p. 248-249).

Among these conditions, there are factors that are more challenging to extrapolate from micro to macro analyses. However, there is one factor for which, considering the state education network, it is possible to establish this relationship and make broader inferences from more specific contexts: employment conditions, as there is standardization regarding hiring practices, remuneration, career plans, etc.

It is from this possibility, related to the data obtained through interviews conducted with teachers from CEEMTI "Monsenhor Miguel de Sanctis" in Guaçuí-ES, that an analysis of the reality of teachers in the state education network of Espírito Santo will follow, focusing on the regime of temporary hiring.

### **Teachers in Espírito Santo: The Possible Implications of Usual Temporary Hiring**

According to data released on the Control Panel of the Court of Accounts of the State of Espírito Santo (TCEES), in January 2022, the state had 37,699 teachers occupying 46,691 positions.

Of these positions, 69% (32,625) were held by permanent teachers and 28% (13,296) by temporarily contracted professionals. By December of the same year, these numbers had risen to 53,048 teachers occupying 68,199 positions, with 49% (33,610) held by permanent teachers and 48% (32,610) by teachers in temporary designation (ESPÍRITO SANTO, 2023b). In absolute numbers, there was an increase of 3,985 permanent teachers and 19,314 temporary teachers.

Examining the data regarding payments in January and December 2022, it shows that in the first month, the amount was R\$ 187.18 million (gross amount of R\$ 187,178,592.77), with 75% used for the payment of permanent teachers and 23% for temporary hires. In the last month, the amount increased to R\$ 641.21 million (gross amount of R\$ 641,210,542.99). Of this amount, 51% was used for the payment of permanent teachers and 46% for those contracted temporarily.

Regarding the possibility and percentage of temporary hiring envisioned by the state, according to Complementary Law No. 809/2015, which "Provides for the hiring for a fixed term by the State of Espírito Santo to meet the temporary needs of exceptional public interest, under the terms of item IX of Article 37 of the Federal Constitution and item IX of Article 32 of the State Constitution, and provides other provisions" (ESPÍRITO SANTO, 2015), the number of teachers hired to cover the absence of professionals due to:

- a) resignation, dismissal, death, retirement, training, leave, or absence;
  - b) exercising a commissioned position, a gratified function, or being part of a work team in activities within the State Department of Education (SEDU), the State Department of Science and Technology, and the Faculty of Music of Espírito Santo;
  - c) the expansion of state educational institutions;
- [...]
- § 1º [...] It may not exceed 30% (thirty percent) of the total number of permanent teachers with a standard workload of 25 (twenty-five) hours per week actively working in the state's staff (ESPÍRITO SANTO, 2015).

By examining the text of the legislation and the reality of the data presented in the TCEES Control Panel, it can be noted that there is a well-founded possibility that the number of contracted teachers easily exceeds the established 30%, since, by the end of the year, and considering that 25 hours per week is the standard workload, there are only 1,000 more permanent professionals than those contracted.

Through the execution of the research from which this article is one of the products, it can be confirmed and even noted that the number of teachers on temporary contracts in relation to permanent teachers is significant. In the school, which was the locus of the research, out of a total

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of 30 teachers, 25 were working under temporary contracts. In other words, only one-sixth of the teaching staff consisted of permanent state teachers.

Thus, some excerpts from the interviews are presented, which provided information and motivated the decision to discuss the issues related to temporary contracts, followed by an analysis of some of the possible implications of this hiring regime for the teachers employed under this arrangement

First, we have the statement of one of the research participants with the following observation:

[...] I'm a temporary hire, so this really affects our emotions, right? Every year-end is this [...] torture, let's say, this despair. We're always... no matter how long we've been doing this, [...] the anxiety comes, and some of the changes that have been happening, [...]. So, I had [...] issues with... my immune system dropping and... a lot of anxiety, especially during this pandemic period (Participant A).

Participant A recognizes temporary hiring as one of the factors affecting their own health, influencing their quality of life. However, in addition to this aspect, the temporary hiring of teachers has many other repercussions, among which we highlight: the impossibility of career development, the lack of medium- and long-term planning, and the difficulty of organizing teachers as a working class. The impossibility of building a career occurs because, according to Law No. 5,580/1998 of the state of Espírito Santo, it states that:

**Art. 4** – The teaching career is characterized by continuous activities in the exercise of teaching functions and is aimed at realizing the principles, ideals, and objectives of Brazilian education.  
**Sole Paragraph** – The teaching career begins with the appointment to a permanent teaching position through a public competition, based on exams and qualifications, in accordance with the provisions of this Law or regulations arising from it.  
**Art. 5** – The teaching career consists of the permanent position of education professional divided into classes, according to the nature and complexity of the duties and professional qualifications required for its occupants (emphasis added by the authors) (ESPÍRITO SANTO, 1998).

In other words, only the permanent teachers of the state, who achieved their positions through participation and ranking in a public competition, benefit from the existing rights associated with the teaching career. These rights particularly refer to job stability, progression, and career advancement, which in turn affect the teacher's remuneration, as also mentioned by one of the research participants:

We know that teachers work a lot and don't earn what they truly deserve. But given the workload I have according to my paycheck, it's enough. It could be more, but it's that situation, it's a contract. The permanent staff goes through years there, the rights increase, salary, it's the time of permanence... DT (teacher contracted on a temporary designation) not. The DT starts with that salary [...] you lose if you miss class, you earn if you increase class and the permanent's is fixed (Participant B).

To illustrate the salary issue, temporary hiring is done with the initial salary from the wage table established in Law No. 982/2021 of Espírito Santo. Thus, a teacher graduated with a full degree at level IV is hired with a salary of R\$ 2,700.00 for 25 hours per week. This teacher, being hired and dismissed at the end of the contract year after year, until completing the 30 years required for retirement, is always re-hired at the same starting salary<sup>4</sup>. On the other hand, a teacher with the same qualifications but permanent has a salary increase related to their career progression, which occurs every two years; that is, every two years, fulfilling the requirements of the law, they receive a salary increase that, currently, could reach R\$ 3,562.59<sup>5</sup> for 25 hours per week after 30 years of service (ESPÍRITO SANTO, 2021).

In the case of a teacher with a doctorate, in a similar situation to the one described, hired temporarily for a workload of 25 hours per week, the starting salary is R\$ 4,975.43. Each time they are dismissed and re-hired, they start again at the same base salary, while a permanent Doctorate teacher, with the right to progression, can have their remuneration reaching R\$ 6,564.97 (ESPÍRITO SANTO, 2021).

Considering, then, that one of the implications of temporary designation is the absence of a career path, the data from the latest public competition for the provision of permanent teaching positions in Espírito Santo will be presented below.

The last competition held in Espírito Santo was announced through Notice SEGER/SEDU No. 01/2022, dated January 24, 2022 (ESPÍRITO SANTO, 2022a). For MaPP (Pedagogue) and MaPB (elementary and high school) teachers, Notice No. 01/2022 offered 960 vacancies out of a total of 1,500.

According to the provisions of Notice No. 01/2022, the selection of candidates took place through “a) an examination of skills and knowledge, by means of objective tests and a written test, with eliminatory and classificatory character; b) evaluation of qualifications, exclusively classificatory, for the positions of Professor P (Pedagogue) and Professor B;” (ESPÍRITO SANTO,

<sup>4</sup> Even if the table changes, meaning the amount received, it will always be the starting salary.

<sup>5</sup> Which represents the highest remuneration that can be received considering the updated salary table.

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2022a). The objective and written tests were conducted in March 2022, and the final results were announced in June 2022 (ESPÍRITO SANTO, 2022b). In December of that year, there was a request to extend the validity of the competition for an additional six months, as provided for in Notice SEGER/SEDU No. 01/2022 (ESPÍRITO SANTO, 2022b). The last call for appointment was made in June of the current year, 2023 (ESPÍRITO SANTO, 2023c).

However, despite the recent competition, it is evident that the number of vacancies offered is not sufficient to consolidate the occupation of at least 70% of the teaching positions in the state network with permanent staff. At the beginning of the year, the number approached this desired figure but decreased throughout the year.

It was previously noted that, throughout 2022, there was an increase of 3,985 in the number of permanent teachers and 19,314 in temporary hires. Considering the data for 2023, ES started the year with a total of 41,092 teachers occupying 63,135 positions, with 63% (39,466) being permanent and 36% (22,695) contracted temporarily. By June of this year, these numbers had changed to 50% (35,533) and 47% (33,190), respectively. In absolute numbers, there was a reduction of 3,933 in the number of positions occupied by permanent teachers and an increase of 10,495 occupied by temporary teachers (ESPÍRITO SANTO, 2023b).

Although the current governor of the state, Renato Casagrande, re-elected in 2022 for a new term (2023-2026), stated in an interview with reporter Vinícius Zagoto published in the newspaper A Gazeta of Espírito Santo that he intended to hold new public competitions, specifically for teachers and in the area of public safety, and to do so more frequently, the numbers presented regarding state teachers, in the ratio of permanent to temporary, indicate that competitions like that of 2023, with around 1,000 vacancies offered, will not be sufficient to meet the demand for professionals.

It is also important to highlight the impact of this temporary hiring model on the state's finances. By terminating a large number of contracts in December, payments to teachers were reduced from R\$ 557.78 million in December 2021 to R\$ 187.18 million in January 2022, which is approximately R\$ 370.59 million less. Similarly, the change in payments from December 2022 to January 2023 went from R\$ 641.21 million to R\$ 240.64 million, a decrease of about R\$ 400.57 million. This reduction is a consequence of this predetermined temporary contract model and would not be possible if the

state government were committed to maintaining the necessary number of teachers to meet the educational demand in Espírito Santo<sup>6</sup>.

Thus, the habitual use of temporary contracts is related to, and influenced by, not only the state's educational policies but also the economic policies (FRIGOTTO, 2015; OLIVEIRA, 2020). It is noteworthy that Espírito Santo has been marked by increasingly pronounced neoliberal policies, particularly evident in the educational sector through the implementation of full-time school models, initially popularly known as "Escola Viva," and results-based management, a hallmark of Paulo Hartung's government (2015-2018) (GONÇALVES, 2019).

Another implication of hiring on a temporary basis is the difficulty teachers face in planning both professionally and personally, considering timelines longer than the current contract. Without job stability, a teacher whose contract ends at the year's close must consider multiple possibilities for the following year: they could work with sixth-grade classes in elementary school or with third-year classes in high school; they might work in the same school or a different one; in the same municipality or another; in an urban or rural school; in the city center or in the periphery. There's even the possibility that they might not secure a position in the network again and risk being out of work for months or even the entire year (SEKI et al., 2017).

This reality of constant changes in employment can be seen in the words of Participant B, who, when asked whether they thought the high school students they worked with valued the teaching profession and attributed importance to the teacher's role with them:

Yes, these are students who are more mature; they understand the importance of our role and know that we are here to support them, not to hinder anyone. In high school, I didn't follow the entire group because my case is temporary; each period, I work with a different group. In 2020 and 2021, I worked with pre-K and 1st and 2nd grade students. In 2021, I moved to EJA (Youth and Adult Education), and in 2022, I took on full-time teaching. So, it really depends a lot on the clientele we have. And the high school students have more maturity, understanding that it is necessary for them" (Participant B) (emphasis added).

Seki et al. expressed, considering the numbers from 2017 but providing an analysis that extends to the overall picture of temporary hiring, that:

Nearly a million teachers in Brazil work each year without certainty about the continuation of their activities, deprived of the possibility to plan their didactic-

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<sup>6</sup> It can be observed that, in percentage terms, the state began the year 2022 with 70% of teachers being permanent, as recommended by Law No. 809/2015, and maintained this number above 60% in January 2023. However, given the number of professionals hired throughout the year, it is evident that maintaining this percentage does not reflect the actual numbers needed to meet the effective demand for professionals in the state.

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pedagogical relationships in the long term, detached from the choice of resources and materials, or even from planning itself. Above all, these are teachers who need to figure out, at the end of each contract, how they will continue to earn a living (SEKI *et al.*, p.954, 2017).

Thus, the uncertainty about future work, considering the issue of planning, can even influence the ongoing education of teachers. Referring back to the previous comments of Participant B, one might ask what would be more appropriate: to delve into teaching methodologies for four-year-old children or for adolescents aged 16 or 17? The fundamentals of Education for Youth and Adults or of Full-Time Education? Studying the curriculum of Espírito Santo or the municipality of Guaçuí (or even that of a nearby state or municipality, since Guaçuí borders Rio de Janeiro and cities in Minas Gerais, such as Carangola and Espera Feliz, less than 100 km away)<sup>7</sup>. The answer is that there's no way to know.

This also aligns with the process of formative generalization, rather than specialization, which has affected everything from basic education to higher education: there is an increasing need to prepare, more or less adequately, for various possibilities, rather than to deepen knowledge in more specific and particular areas (KUENZER, 2017).

One final implication to be highlighted here is that given this aspect of instability and uncertainty that characterizes temporary contracts, there are two issues that may contribute to the precariousness of teaching conditions: the difficulty of creating bonds with the school community and the difficulty of organizing teachers as a working class (SEKI *et al.*).

In the first case, the usual discontinuities typical of temporary hiring hinder teachers from establishing deeper connections with the school environments where they work, both the internal spaces (the school itself) and the spaces occupied by the school community in general (the social, political, economic, and historical realities of the neighborhood or city). This refers to both emotional bonds and political ties that would contribute to building a sense of belonging to that community, as well as engagement in political struggles aimed at improving educational conditions for students and working conditions for teachers in that specific school (SEKI *et al.*, 2017).

In the second case, there is the difficulty of organizing as a working class, which, when recognizing themselves as such, fights for broad improvements for the teaching profession,

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<sup>7</sup>The information can be verified, among other methods, using political maps through Google Maps, available at: <https://www.google.com.br/maps/@-20.7765846,-41.6969942,6657m/data=!3m1!1e3!5m1!1e4?entry=ttu>, ou Google Earth, disponível em: <https://earth.google.com/web/search/Gua%3a7u%3ad,+ES/@-20.73023586,-41.75477886,937.21955202a,27977.75806391d,35y,0h,0t,0r/data=CigiJgokCcS5EpajwjRAEcG5EpajwjTAGW5E0nU nskBAIZXJI5pBSVHA>

understanding it as an occupation that requires "specialized knowledge, a certain level of educational qualification, control over the content of work, self-organization, self-regulation, and ethical standards" (PINI, 2010, p. 1).

In Espírito Santo, the main political organization for public school teachers is the Union of Workers in Public Education of Espírito Santo (SINDIUPES), which had about 20,000 members in 2018, according to information from the National Confederation of Education Workers (CNTE). It is evident from its name that SINDIUPES broadly serves various education workers, including: "Active and retired teachers, pedagogues, and school staff (librarians, caregivers, administrative assistants, school secretaries, among others)" (SINDIUPES, 2022, p. 1), without specifying any possible restrictions on union membership. The union's most recent agenda, disclosed in a bulletin, is the restructuring of the career plan (SINDIUPES, 2023a).

The SINDIUPES website does not provide information on members by area: the number of effective and temporary contract teachers affiliated, active and retired teachers. There is also no information on the number of annual memberships and cancellations. In other words, there is no publicly available data on the overall composition of the union, which prevents a more detailed analysis of the participation of state network teachers in the union's activities. Regarding the dissemination of SINDIUPES actions by region, the latest news released was in March 2023, concerning the unanimous approval of the Statute and the Career and Remuneration Plan for the Teaching Staff of the Iconha Network (SINDUPES, 2023b). In terms of the union's activities in the municipality of Guaçuí specifically, there is only news from November 2021, when "SINDIUPES directors Heloisa Vaillant, João Paulo Cardozo, and Maria Perpétua met in Guaçuí/ES with the regional education superintendent, Darcila Castro. The discussion focused on the workload of professionals in the Full-Time Education model" (SINDIUPES, 2021). It is noticeable that in the southern region of Espírito Santo, of which the municipality of Guaçuí is part, the presence of SINDIUPES actions is minimal, regarding the information disseminated by the union itself.

Revisiting Seki et al. (2017), the authors assert that given the significant number of teachers in Brazil, around 2.2 million in basic education alone (BRASIL, 2022), the difficulty of organizing teachers as a working class, related to temporary hiring, is no coincidence. This hiring model is used as a way to neutralize, tame, or ultimately break teachers in their union organization or even physically destroy them (SEKI et al., 2017).

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What can be affirmed, however, is that the action of unions, alongside social movements and the school community, is essential for the ongoing mobilization in defense of public education (FRIGOTTO; MOLINA, 2010), which includes the defense of teachers' work and profession.

### **Final considerations**

The article was proposed with the aim of fostering discussions about the usual and extensive use of temporary hiring of teachers in Espírito Santo. It aimed to present data on this type of hiring and found that, despite the legal intention to use temporary hiring for exceptional cases of temporary gaps among effective teachers due to various reasons such as retirements, medical leave, resignations, or expansion of the network (ESPÍRITO SANTO, 2015), there is a near equivalence between the number of effective teachers and those hired temporarily, with 50% (35,533) and 47% (33,190), respectively (ESPÍRITO SANTO, 2023c).

It was also shown that the issue of temporary hiring is related to the educational and economic policies of the state of ES, and may be used as a means to neutralize the political organization of teachers as a working class. Among the implications of temporary hiring, aspects regarding the impossibility of building a career were highlighted, affecting the possibilities for functional advancement and, consequently, teacher remuneration. Additionally, it was pointed out that these factors, in conjunction, influence teachers' ability to plan professionally and personally in the medium and long term, as well as have the potential to interfere with teachers' continuing education, creating a tendency towards generalist training instead of specialized training.

Lastly, and also correlated to the previous factors, it is evident that temporary hiring also affects the construction of emotional and political ties between teachers and the school community, which is another aspect that can influence how teaching work is carried out in institutions.

What has been presented shows that teaching work has undergone a historical process of precarization and has increasingly been reduced to the condition of mere employment, a transaction of labor power (FRIGOTTO, 2015). According to Marxist conception, work is the means through which humans express themselves (MARX; ENGELS, 1998), utilizing their capabilities to act and modify their material and social reality.

Therefore, it is also necessary to rethink issues related to educational standardization, the neoliberal and managerialist conception of education, which emphasizes the need for an efficient state and the curtailment of teachers' autonomy, particularly in relation to the new educational

management model in Espírito Santo. When we bring to light the fact that Espírito Santo currently has 33,190 teachers working under temporary contracts, it is crucial to understand that this signifies over 30,000 teachers working under precarious conditions, due to limited rights and instability characteristic of temporary hiring.

As practical and immediate actions, one urgent way to contribute to overcoming the continuous precarization of teaching conditions is the implementation of public competitions for the provision of permanent positions in the state. These competitions should aim to consolidate the cadre of effective teachers that the state truly needs and envisions in its legislation, as sporadic competitions offering approximately 1,000 vacancies are insufficient to meet the actual demand. Moreover, the rights secured for tenured teachers can promote greater political participation among this group of workers, leading to demands for better working conditions.

Although there are real difficulties in organizing teachers politically, this organization and the strengthening of unions are essential factors for defending and consolidating teaching as a socially valued profession.

Regarding the possibilities for continued research and discussion on this topic, one promising avenue is to analyze the implications of temporary hiring on the physical and mental health of teachers. Analyses aligned with the Sociology of Work and Social Psychology can contribute to enriching the debate.

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