

# *Unemployment Drops Again in Ecuador*

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Quito, April 22 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Ecuadorean unemployment has continued to fall over the last year, according to the latest figures, and now stands at 3.48 percent. Unemployment has reportedly fallen one percent since March last year.

Ecuador has one of the lowest unemployment rates in Latin America, which is just under 4 percent. The government of the Citizen's Revolution has focused on job creation and training for workers by putting humans over capital.

Minister of Labor Carlos Marx Carrasco said that state has been "designing public policies...to generate businesses, and quality work," as well as "permanent work on training" to create a better skilled workforce. The Ministry of Labor has also prioritized the training of workers to further stimulate national production. It has also worked to create jobs through agreements with national companies and investment in the private sector. In one such example, 8,000 workers of 13 provinces have received their certificates for the training they have undergone to install induction cook tops throughout the country.

Sponsored by the Ministry of Work, the national Electric Company and the Ecuadorean Service of Professional Training, these workers will now have steady jobs. Having recently been recognized as a certified technician of induction cook tops, Jose Urbano told teleSUR English: "Today the government is creating jobs through these efforts. They are teaching us how to perform this work to benefit the population and citizens. The Electric Company is valuing us by giving us steady jobs. We do not have to go out to find employment. The only thing we need is to have all our documents complete, validated by the government, and then we can begin working with the Electric Company."

Agriculture remains largest employer in Ecuador, with 28 percent of all workers employed in this sector. In rural areas, unemployment has dropped in the past year from 3.4 percent to about 1.9 percent.

Jose Agualsaca, the President of the Confederation of Indigenous-Campesino Organizations and Peoples of Ecuador told teleSUR that by providing support to agricultural workers and investing in the sector, the state is increasing production and enabling certain products for export. "There are important programs, for example to (support the production of) *quinoa* in the Ecuadorean highlands. This allows the state to really strengthen the sector, construct production centers, buy *quinoa*, and also facilitate production so that this product can be exported."

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