

**Poor workers and millionaire employers!**

Mexico, with a population of just over 130 million (plus 38 million within the USA), **is the second largest economy in Latin America**, after Brazil. It is a semi-colonial country with a capitalist government that presents itself as ‘left-wing’ but does not touch the interests of big capital, whether national or foreign.

What's more, in Claudia Sheinbaum's first year as president, Mexico's richest employers saw their fortunes grow by 30%.

The country is committed to various trade agreements. But its main **treaty** is with Canada and the United States (TMEC, acronym in Spanish, USMCA acronym in English). Before that, it was NAFTA, a treaty that, for more than 30 years, **only benefited the US and gave Mexico only poverty and migration**.

Mexico has an economically active population of 56 million. They work in the following sectors: Services 22 million (43.1%), Commerce 9 million (18.7%), Manufacturing 8 million (17.8%), Construction 4 million (8.4%), Agriculture 6 million (12.9%). According to data from INEGI.

In Mexico, **one in five people (20%) who work full-time do not earn enough to meet their basic needs**, and 11% of professionals live in poverty.

The working week is **48 hours**, the highest of any OECD country.

The unionisation rate is only **12.7%**, and most unions are controlled by pro-employer bureaucratic leaders called ‘charros’.

**Just over 8 million** workers are employed in the manufacturing industry. Most of their production (80%) is **exported** to the United States.

**The most productive plants in North America belonging to large transnational corporations are located in Mexico, including General Motors, Ford, and Stellantis.** There are also plants owned by Korean, Japanese, and European capital, such as **Nissan, Kia, Volkswagen, and Mazda**, among others.



As workers **we are forced to work for precarious wages** and with constant stoppages (technical stoppages, layoffs) during which we are paid only a portion (65%) of our wages, condemning workers to live in **precarious conditions**. For this reason, many colleagues are forced **to seek overtime work**, working up to 12 hours a day **and 72 hours a week**. This has serious consequences for their health and quality of life!

Long working hours are not enough for the companies. They seek to squeeze the most out of their workers. There are constant 'performance' or 'rebalancing' assessments, with the aim of increasing the intensity of work. No care is taken with regard to actions or operations that **lead to injuries or occupational illnesses**.

It is also common to **not have enough** workers to cover basic human needs such as going to the toilet, or to cover sick leave and holidays.

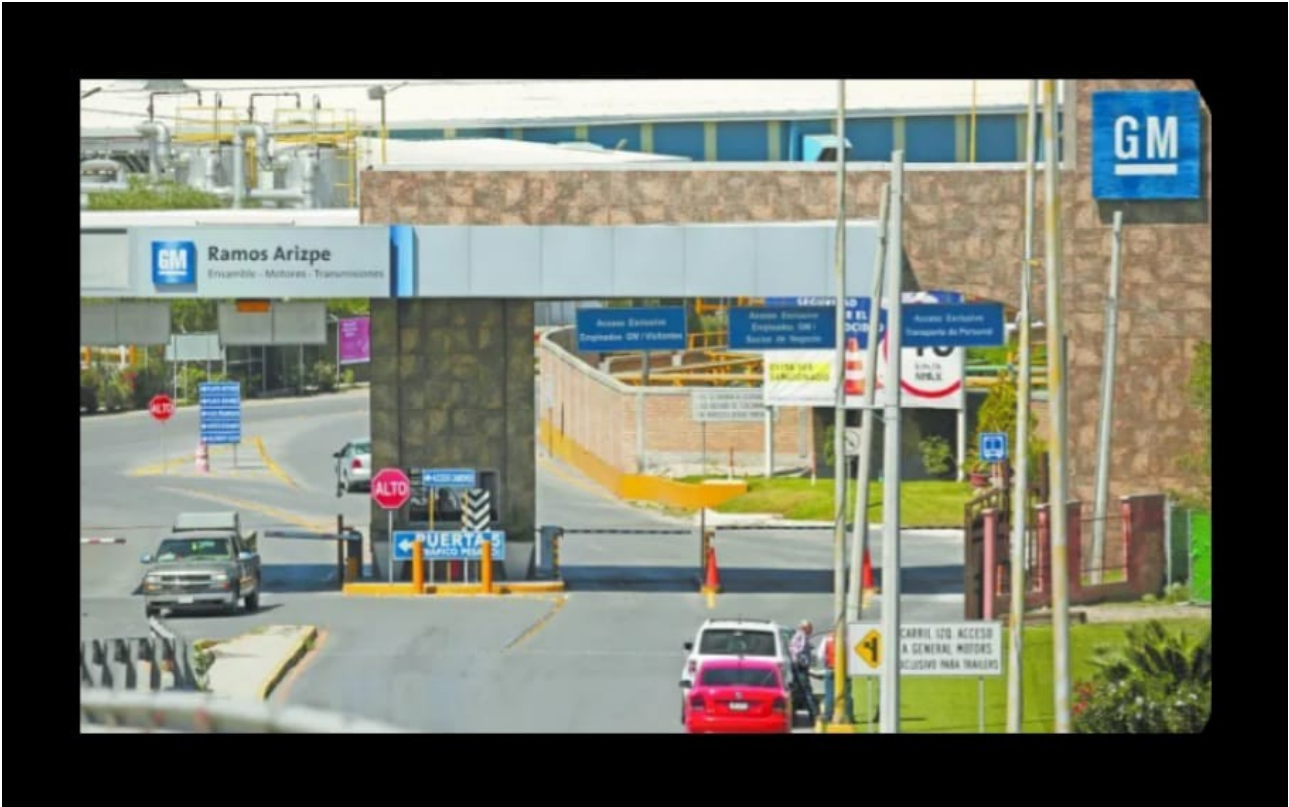


Here is an example from **General Motors, Silao plant**. The worker's health was not taken care of and she ended up with an **irreversible injury with the risk of losing mobility for life**. Instead of receiving support and empathy, she is the victim of bullying and harassment:

A colleague who spent **a year at a single workstation** without rotating to another station, making repetitive neck movements to perform an inspection, had an accident at her workstation where she pulled a muscle. She **was not examined or diagnosed correctly by the medical service** or Social Security, even though the worker repeatedly told them that she was in pain in her arm and neck. Faced with evidence of increasing pain and other serious symptoms that appeared, she continued to insist at her Social Security Clinic. And only **after 1 year and 7 months** was she referred to a specialist who ordered several tests and diagnosed **four damaged vertebrae in her spine, one of which was putting pressure on her nerves**. This is why the pain is so intense; **the damage is already irreversible**. It was aggravated by not receiving prompt attention and **not having a CT scan** that would have revealed the problem. The specialist scheduled her for an operation and the

insertion of a prosthesis that will not eliminate her pain, but rather aims to prevent her from becoming paralysed.

It is very common that when a worker becomes ill or injured, **the company seeks to dismiss them without acknowledging any responsibility** for the injury or illness. Unfortunately, all of this is **endorsed or permitted** by union representatives who are conciliatory with employers and by government labour “authorities.”



In short, despite being the most productive and hardest-working workers in the manufacturing industry, living in a country with considerable resources, **one in five of us cannot** meet our basic needs due to low wages, exacerbated by pay cuts due to constant technical stoppages. And the gruelling working hours are compounded by the **failure of many union ‘representatives’ to prevent accidents and injuries** to workers on the production lines due to the constant **pressure to increase the workload** at the workstations. We workers are condemned to occupational illnesses and injuries.