

A Just Minimum Wage in Mexico

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Every person deserves a just wage for his or her honest work. This wage must be sufficient to cover the basic necessities of every worker and his/her family and allow them to live with dignity. Unfortunately, Mexico has the lowest minimum wage in all of America, where almost half of its population lives in poverty and, therefore, it is necessary to establish a just minimum wage for all Mexicans.

Mexico is a very great and rich country but with enormous socio-economic inequalities. “Mexico has the lowest minimum wage of North America and Latin America,”¹ even though it is the country of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) where more hours are worked (“an average of 2,246 hours per year, almost 500 hours more than the rest of the countries belonging to the OECD, where people work 1,776 hours per year approximately”²). The current minimum wage in Mexico is just \$88.36 pesos or \$4.55 dollars per day (\$2,650.80 pesos per month); a misery that is not even enough to cover the cost of the basic basket that is \$2,985.48/month per person (\$1,482 of the basic food basket and \$1,502 of the non-food basic basket). Just 10% of this income (an average of \$8.13 pesos / day) is spent on transportation. According to the National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy (Coneval), 41% of the population, more than 50 million Mexicans, do not earn enough money to cover the cost of the basic food basket.³ While corrupt politicians live a life of luxury, extravagance and waste with the money of Mexicans, millions of Mexicans live in misery.

Mexico is a country of fascinating culture and history where, unfortunately, almost half of the population lives in poverty. According to Coneval, in 2016 there were 53.4 million Mexicans living in poverty, of which 9.4 million people lived in extreme poverty. According to the International Poverty Line, people are considered to be in 'extreme poverty' if they live on less than \$1.90 [dollars] per day. This is the definition used by the World Bank and many other international institutions [...] Today, about 10% of the world population lives in extreme poverty [...] People living on \$3, \$5, or \$10 [dollars] per day also face substantial hardships, and are still living in poverty”.⁴ How can it be possible that in a country with so much wealth, there is so much misery.

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- 1 Margarita Rodríguez. Trans. Luis Angel López Salazar “¿Cuánto debería ser el ingreso promedio de una familia mexicana al mes?” El Sol de México. Last Modified January 11, 2018. <https://www.elsoldemexico.com.mx/finanzas/cuanto-deberia-ser-el-ingreso-promedio-de-una-familia-mexicana-al-mes-559531.html>
 - 2 Tania Casasola. Trans. Luis Angel López Salazar “¿Para qué alcanza con el salario mínimo? Una persona requiere 99.51 pesos diarios para cubrir sus necesidades.” Animal Político. Last Modified April 12, 2018. <https://www.animalpolitico.com/2018/04/para-que-alcanza-salario-minimo-canasta-basica/>
 - 3 Trans. Luis Angel López Salazar “A más de 50 millones de mexicanos el salario no les alcanza para comprar una canasta alimentaria” Animal Político. Last Modified February 14, 2018. <https://www.animalpolitico.com/2018/02/millones-mexicanos-sin-acceso-canasta-alimentaria/>
 - 4 Diana Beltekian, Esteban Ortiz-Ospina. “Extreme poverty is falling: How is poverty changing for higher poverty lines?” Our World in Data. Last Modified March 5, 2018. <https://ourworldindata.org/poverty-at-higher-poverty-lines>

Mexico must become a prosperous and strong country, and assume its rightful role in history –a destiny that its corrupt politicians have denied it so many times who, instead of serving the Mexican people, serve their own interests. To achieve this objective it is necessary to increase the minimum wage of all Mexicans. A just minimum wage should be calculated as follows.

Just Minimum Wage in Mexico:
\$1.90 dollars (maximum amount of money with which people in extreme poverty live each day)
* 8 (hours per day) =
\$15.20 dollars or \$295.5 pesos daily

This would be equivalent to around three times the cost of the basic basket (\$8,865 pesos/month); an amount that would allow Mexican families not only to get out of poverty, but to prosper and live with dignity.

Poverty generates more poverty. The current minimum wage in Mexico is not even enough to cover the basic basket and condemns future generations to misery and slavery. Poor children can not receive a basic education because they have to work to help their parents. This lack of education results in a lack of opportunities in life that often leads to vices, crime and perdition. Thus, while the rich get richer, the poor become poorer. It is necessary to break this vicious cycle of poverty with a just minimum wage for all Mexicans.