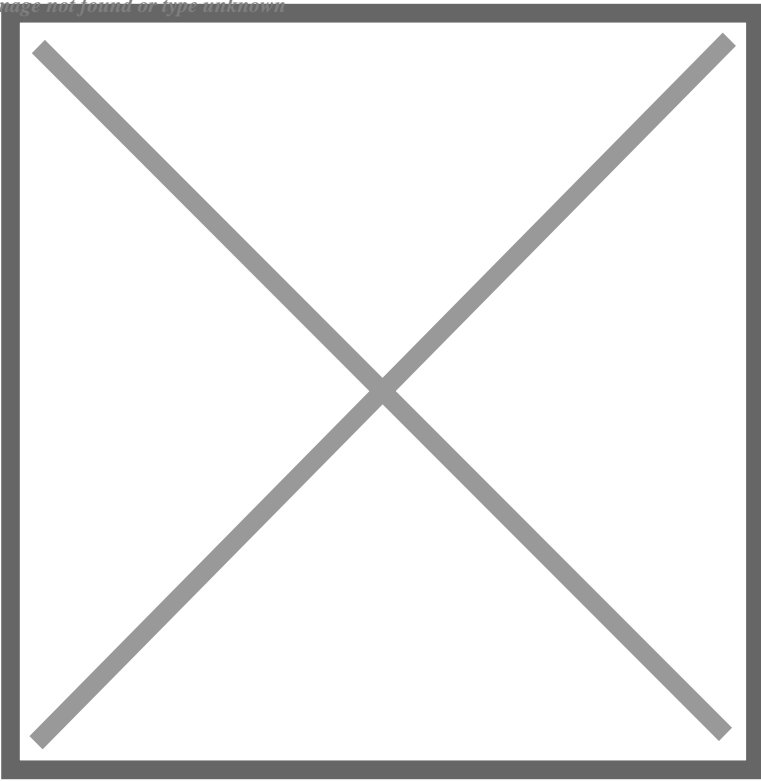


Colombia is moving towards a fairer and more inclusive labor model

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Colombia is moving towards a fairer and more inclusive labor model. Image: Instagram

By María Josefina Arce

The Colombian Congress finally approved the labor reform promoted by President Gustavo Petro's government. Once it comes into force, it will benefit millions of Colombians in precarious working conditions.

The process of profoundly transforming this area has been long and difficult, involving 27 months of political tension. The legislation underwent four debates and required conciliation between the Senate and the House of Representatives.

The new law restores benefits that were lost with the reform approved during Álvaro Uribe's first term from 2002 to 2006. Experts described this reform as favoring employers at the expense of laborers.

Benefits such as compensation for working on Sundays and holidays, overtime, and contracts for students of the National Apprenticeship Service are now reinstated. The National Apprenticeship Service is a public institution that offers free technical, technological, and complementary training programs.

A significant accomplishment of the approved reform is that approximately 60,000 community and substitute mothers affiliated with the Colombian Institute of Family Welfare will have formal employment contracts.

They will also enjoy health and pension benefits, as well as other social benefits. They will also be entitled to additional pay, vacation time, and leave of absence.

Progress has also been made in favor of domestic workers, who have historically been exploited. According to studies, approximately 800,000 people work as domestic workers in the South American nation, and most of them live in poverty and are vulnerable.

Seventy percent have no access to social security, and 40 percent report incomes below the minimum monthly wage.

The law introduces changes that will give domestic workers an 8-hour workday, like other workers.

Experts say that the approval of the labor reform promoted by President Petro is a victory for Colombian workers and will allow the country to move forward towards a more inclusive, fair, and dignified labor model.

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