In general, information available as of 1 January 2003 was used in the preparation of The World Factbook 2003.

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The site of advanced Amerindian civilizations, Mexico came under Spanish rule for three centuries before achieving independence early in the 19th century. A devaluation of the peso in late 1994 threw Mexico into economic turmoil, triggering the worst recession in over half a century. The nation continues to make an impressive recovery. Ongoing economic and social concerns include low real wages, underemployment for a large segment of the population, inequitable income distribution, and few advancement opportunities for the largely Amerindian population in the impoverished southern states. Elections held in July 2000 marked the first time since the 1910 Mexican Revolution that the opposition defeated the party in government, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). Vicente FOX of the National Action Party (PAN) was sworn in on 1 December 2000 as the first chief executive elected in free and fair elections.

### Geography

**Mexico**

**Location:** Middle America, bordering the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico, between Belize and the US and bordering the North Pacific Ocean, between Guatemala and the US

**Geographic coordinates:** 23 00 N, 102 00 W

**Map references:** North America

**Area:**
- **total:** 1,972,550 sq km
- **land:** 1,923,040 sq km
- **water:** 49,510 sq km

**Area - comparative:** slightly less than three times the size of Texas

**Land boundaries:**
- **total:** 4,353 km
- **border countries:** Belize 250 km, Guatemala 962 km, US 3,141 km

**Coastline:** 9,330 km

**Maritime claims:**
- **contiguous zone:** 24 NM
- **territorial sea:** 12 NM
- **exclusive economic zone:** 200 NM
- **continental shelf:** 200 NM or to the edge of the continental margin

**Climate:** varies from tropical to desert

**Terrain:** high, rugged mountains; low coastal plains; high plateaus; desert

**Elevation extremes:**
- **lowest point:** Laguna Salada -10 m
- **highest point:** Volcan Pico de Orizaba 5,700 m

**Natural resources:** petroleum, silver, copper, gold, lead, zinc, natural gas, timber
Land use:  
- arable land: 13.2%  
- permanent crops: 1.1%  
- other: 85.7% (1998 est.)

Irrigated land:  
- 65,000 sq km (1998 est.)

Natural hazards:  
- tsunamis along the Pacific coast, volcanoes and destructive earthquakes in the center and south, and hurricanes on the Pacific, Gulf of Mexico, and Caribbean coasts

Environment - current issues:  
- scarcity of hazardous waste disposal facilities; rural to urban migration; natural fresh water resources scarce and polluted in north, inaccessible and poor quality in center and extreme southeast; raw sewage and industrial effluents polluting rivers in urban areas; deforestation; widespread erosion; desertification; deteriorating agricultural lands; serious air and water pollution in the national capital and urban centers along US-Mexico border; land subsidence in Valley of Mexico caused by groundwater depletion  
  *note*: the government considers the lack of clean water and deforestation national security issues

Environment - international agreements:  
- signed, but not ratified: none of the selected agreements

Geography - note:  
- strategic location on southern border of US; corn (maize), one of the world's major grain crops, is thought to have originated in Mexico

People - Mexico  

Population:  
- 104,907,991 (July 2003 est.)

Age structure:  
- 0-14 years: 32.3% (male 17,298,964; female 16,617,728)  
- 15-64 years: 63.1% (male 32,217,513; female 33,932,603)  
- 65 years and over: 4.6% (male 2,145,252; female 2,695,931) (2003 est.)

Median age:  
- total: 23.8 years  
- male: 22.9 years  
- female: 24.6 years (2002)

Population growth rate:  
- 1.43% (2003 est.)

Birth rate:  
- 21.92 births/1,000 population (2003 est.)

Death rate:  
- 4.97 deaths/1,000 population (2003 est.)
Net migration rate: -2.65 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2003 est.)

Sex ratio:
- at birth: 1.05 male(s)/female
- under 15 years: 1.04 male(s)/female
- 15-64 years: 0.95 male(s)/female
- 65 years and over: 0.8 male(s)/female
- total population: 0.97 male(s)/female (2003 est.)

Infant mortality rate:
- total: 23.68 deaths/1,000 live births
- female: 20.43 deaths/1,000 live births (2003 est.)
- male: 26.78 deaths/1,000 live births

Life expectancy at birth:
- total population: 72.3 years
- male: 69.26 years
- female: 75.49 years (2003 est.)

Total fertility rate: 2.53 children born/woman (2003 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate: 0.3% (2001 est.)

HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS: 150,000 (2001 est.)

HIV/AIDS - deaths: 4,200 (2001 est.)

Nationality:
- noun: Mexican(s)
- adjective: Mexican

Ethnic groups: mestizo (Amerindian-Spanish) 60%, Amerindian or predominantly Amerindian 30%, white 9%, other 1%

Religions: nominally Roman Catholic 89%, Protestant 6%, other 5%

Languages: Spanish, various Mayan, Nahuatl, and other regional indigenous languages

Literacy:
- definition: age 15 and over can read and write
- total population: 92.2%
- male: 94%
- female: 90.5% (2003 est.)

Government: Mexico

Country name:
- conventional long form: United Mexican States
- conventional short form: Mexico
- local short form: Mexico
local long form: Estados Unidos Mexicanos

Government type: federal republic

Capital: Mexico (Distrito Federal)

Administrative divisions: 31 states (estados, singular - estado) and 1 federal district* (distrito federal); Aguascalientes, Baja California, Baja California Sur, Campeche, Chiapas, Chihuahua, Coahuila de Zaragoza, Colima, Distrito Federal*, Durango, Guanajuato, Guerrero, Hidalgo, Jalisco, Mexico, Michoacan de Ocampo, Morelos, Nayarit, Nuevo Leon, Oaxaca, Puebla, Queretaro de Arteaga, Quintana Roo, San Luis Potosi, Sinaloa, Sonora, Tabasco, Tamaulipas, Tlaxcala, Veracruz-Llave, Yucatan, Zacatecas

Independence: 16 September 1810 (from Spain)

National holiday: Independence Day, 16 September (1810)

Constitution: 5 February 1917

Legal system: mixture of US constitutional theory and civil law system; judicial review of legislative acts; accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction, with reservations

Suffrage: 18 years of age; universal and compulsory (but not enforced)

Executive branch: President Vicente FOX Quesada (since 1 December 2000); note - the president is both the chief of state and head of government

election results: Vicente FOX Quesada elected president; percent of vote - Vicente FOX Quesada (PAN) 42.52%, Francisco LABASTIDA Ochoa (PRI) 36.1%, Cuauhtemoc CARDENAS Solorzano (PRD) 16.64%, other 4.74%

elections: president elected by popular vote for a six-year term; election last held 2 July 2000 (next to be held NA July 2006)

cabinet: Cabinet appointed by the president; note - appointment of attorney general requires consent of the Senate

head of government: President Vicente FOX Quesada (since 1 December 2000); note - the president is both the chief of state and head of government

Legislative branch: bicameral National Congress or Congreso de la Union consists of the Senate or Camara de Senadores (128 seats; 96 are elected by popular vote to serve six-year terms, and 32 are allocated on the basis of each party's popular vote) and the Federal Chamber of Deputies or Camara Federal de Diputados (500 seats; 300 members are directly elected by popular vote to serve three-year terms; remaining 200 members are allocated on the basis of each party's popular vote, also for three-year terms)

election results: Senate - percent of vote by party - NA%; seats by party - PRI 60, PAN 46, PRD 15, PVEM 5, PT 1, CD 1; Chamber of Deputies - percent of vote by party - NA%; seats by party - PRI 224, PAN 153, PRD 95, other 28

elections: Senate - last held 2 July 2000 for all of the seats (next to be held NA 2006); Chamber of Deputies - last held 6 July 2003 (next to be held NA 2006)
Judicial branch:
Supreme Court of Justice or Corte Suprema de Justicia (judges are appointed by the president with consent of the Senate)

Political parties and leaders:
Convergence for Democracy or CD [Dante DELGADO Ranauro]; Institutional Revolutionary Party or PRI [Dulce Maria SAURI Riancho]; Mexican Green Ecological Party or PVEM [Jorge Emilio GONZALEZ Martinez]; National Action Party or PAN [Luis Felipe BRAVO Mena]; Party of the Democratic Revolution or PRD [Amalia GARCIA Medina]; Party of the Nationalist Society or PSN [Gustavo RIOJAS Santana]; Social Alliance Party or PAS [Guillermo CALDERON Dominguez]; Workers Party or PT [Alberto ANAYA Gutierrez]

Political pressure groups and leaders:
Confederation of Employers of the Mexican Republic or COPARMEX; Confederation of Industrial Chambers or CONCAMIN; Confederation of Mexican Workers or CTM; Confederation of National Chambers of Commerce or CONCANACO; Coordinator for Foreign Trade Business Organizations or COECE; Federation of Unions Providing Goods and Services or FESEBES; National Chamber of Transformation Industries or CANACINTRA; National Peasant Confederation or CNC; National Union of Workers or UNT; Regional Confederation of Mexican Workers or CROM; Revolutionary Confederation of Workers and Peasants or CROC; Roman Catholic Church

International organization participation:
APEC, BCIE, BIS, Caricom (observer), CDB, CE (observer), EBRD, ECLAC, FAO, G-3, G-6, G-15, G-19, G-24, IADB, IAEO, IBRD, ICAO, ICC, ICCt (signatory), ICFTU, ICRM, IDA, IEA (observer), IFAD, IFC, IFRCS, ILO, IMF, IMO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, ISO, ITU, LAES, LAIA, NAM (observer), NEA, OAS, OECD, OPANAL, OPCW, PCA, RG, UN, UN Security Council (temporary), UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNITAR, UNMOVIC, UNU, UPU, WCL, WCO, WFTU, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO, WToO, WTrO

Diplomatic representation in the US:
*chief of mission:* Ambassador Juan Jose BREMER Martino
FAX: [1] (202) 728-1698
*consulate(s):* Albuquerque, Brownsville (Texas), Calexico (California), Corpus Christi, Del Rio (Texas), Detroit, Douglas (Arizona), Eagle Pass (Texas), Fresno (California), Indianapolis (Indiana), Las Vegas, McAllen (Texas), Midland (Texas), Omaha, Orlando, Oxnard (California), Philadelphia, Portland (Oregon), Presidio (Texas), Raleigh, Saint Louis, Salt Lake City, San Bernardino, Santa Ana (California), Seattle, Tucson, Yuma (Arizona)
*consulate(s) general:* Atlanta, Austin, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, El Paso, Houston, Laredo (Texas), Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, New York, Nogales (Arizona), Phoenix, Sacramento, San Antonio, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, San Juan (Puerto Rico)
*chancery:* 1911 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20006
*telephone:* [1] (202) 728-1600

Diplomatic representation from the US:
*chief of mission:* Ambassador Antonio O. GARZA
*embassy:* Paseo de la Reforma 305, Colonia Cuauhtemoc, 06500 Mexico, Distrito Federal
*mailing address:* P. O. Box 9000, Brownsville, TX 78520-0900
*telephone:* [52] (55) 5080-2000
Flag description: three equal vertical bands of green (hoist side), white, and red; the coat of arms (an eagle perched on a cactus with a snake in its beak) is centered in the white band

Economy - Mexico

Economy - overview: Mexico has a free market economy with a mixture of modern and outmoded industry and agriculture, increasingly dominated by the private sector. Recent administrations have expanded competition in seaports, railroads, telecommunications, electricity, natural gas distribution, and airports. Income distribution remains highly unequal. Trade with the US and Canada has tripled since the implementation of NAFTA in 1994. Following 6.9% growth in 2000, real GDP fell 0.3% in 2001, recovering to only a plus 1% in 2002, with the US slowdown the principal cause. Mexico implemented free trade agreements with Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and the European Free Trade Area in 2001, putting more than 90% of trade under free trade agreements. Foreign direct investment reached $25 billion in 2001, of which $12.5 billion came from the purchase of Mexico's second-largest bank, Banamex, by Citigroup.

GDP: purchasing power parity - $924.4 billion (2002 est.)

GDP - real growth rate: 0.7% (2002 est.)

GDP - per capita: purchasing power parity - $8,900 (2002 est.)

GDP - composition by sector:
- agriculture: 5%
- industry: 26%
- services: 69% (2001 est.)

Population below poverty line: 40% (2001 est.)

Household income or consumption by percentage share:
- lowest 10%: 1.6%
- highest 10%: 41.1% (2001)


Inflation rate (consumer prices): 6.4% (2002 est.)


Labor force - by occupation: agriculture 20%, industry 24%, services 56% (1998)

Unemployment
rate: urban - 3% plus considerable underemployment (2002)

Budget:

revenues: $136 billion
expenditures: $140 billion, including capital expenditures of $NA (2001 est.)

Industries: food and beverages, tobacco, chemicals, iron and steel, petroleum, mining, textiles, clothing, motor vehicles, consumer durables, tourism

Industrial production growth rate: 4.9% (2002 est.)

Electricity - production: 198.6 billion kWh (2001)

Electricity - production by source:
fossil fuel: 78.7%
hydro: 14.2%
other: 2.9% (2001)
nuclear: 4.2%

Electricity - consumption: 186.7 billion kWh (2001)

Electricity - exports: 77 million kWh (2001)

Electricity - imports: 2.068 billion kWh (2001)

Oil - production: 3.59 million bbl/day (2001 est.)

Oil - consumption: 1.507 million bbl/day (2001 est.)

Oil - exports: 1.881 million bbl/day (2001)

Oil - imports: 374,700 bbl/day (2001)

Oil - proved reserves: 25.03 billion bbl (37257)

Natural gas - production: 36.87 billion cu m (2001 est.)

Natural gas - consumption: 38.84 billion cu m (2001 est.)

Natural gas - exports: 254 million cu m (2001 est.)

Natural gas - imports: 2.967 billion cu m (2001 est.)

Natural gas - proved reserves: 969.2 billion cu m (37257)
Agriculture - products: corn, wheat, soybeans, rice, beans, cotton, coffee, fruit, tomatoes; beef, poultry, dairy products; wood products

Exports: $158.4 billion f.o.b. (2002 est.)

Exports - commodities: manufactured goods, oil and oil products, silver, fruits, vegetables, coffee, cotton

Exports - partners: US 82.7%, Canada 5.4%, Japan 1.1% (2002)

Imports: $168.4 billion f.o.b. (2002)

Imports - commodities: metalworking machines, steel mill products, agricultural machinery, electrical equipment, car parts for assembly, repair parts for motor vehicles, aircraft, and aircraft parts

Imports - partners: US 70.6%, Germany 3.5%, Japan 2.7% (2002)

Debt - external: $150 billion (2000 est.)


Currency: Mexican peso (MXN)

Currency code: MXN


Fiscal year: calendar year

Communications

Telephones - main lines in use: 12.332 million (2000)

Telephones - mobile cellular: 2.02 million (1998)

Telephone system: general assessment: low telephone density with about 12 main lines per 100 persons; privatized in December 1990; the opening to competition in January 1997 improved prospects for development
domestic: adequate telephone service for business and government, but the population is poorly served; domestic satellite system with 120 earth stations; extensive microwave radio relay network; considerable use of fiber-optic cable, coaxial cable, and mobile cellular service
international: satellite earth stations - 32 Intelsat, 2 Solidaridad (giving Mexico improved access to South America, Central America, and much of the US as well as
enhancing domestic communications), numerous Inmarsat mobile earth stations; linked
to Central American Microwave System of trunk connections; high capacity
Columbus-2 fiber-optic submarine cable with access to the US, Virgin Islands, Canary
Islands, Morocco, Spain, and Italy (1997)

Radio broadcast
stations: AM 851, FM 598, shortwave 16 (2000)

Television
broadcast
stations: 236 (plus repeaters) (1997)

Internet country
code: .mx

Internet Service
Providers (ISPs): 51 (2000)

Internet users: 3.5 million (2002)

Transportation Mexico

Railways:

\[ \text{total: 19,510 km} \]
\[ \text{standard gauge: 19,510 km 1.435-m gauge (2002)} \]

Highways:

\[ \text{total: 329,532 km} \]
\[ \text{paved: 108,087 km (including 6,429 km of expressways)} \]
\[ \text{unpaved: 221,445 km (1999 est.)} \]

Waterways: 2,900 km

\[ \text{note: navigable rivers and coastal canals} \]

Pipelines:

\[ \text{crude oil 28,200 km; petroleum products 10,150 km; natural gas 13,254 km; petrochemical 1,400 km} \]

Ports and harbors: Acapulco, Altamira, Coatzacoalcos, Ensenada, Guaymas, La Paz, Lazaro Cardenas,
Manzanillo, Mazatlan, Progreso, Salina Cruz, Tampico, Topolobampo, Tuxpan, Veracruz

Merchant marine:

\[ \text{total: 47 ships (1,000 GRT or over) 636,271 GRT/933,686 DWT} \]
\[ \text{ships by type: bulk 1, cargo 1, chemical tanker 4, combination ore/oil 1, liquefied gas 3, petroleum tanker 26, roll on/roll off 8, short-sea passenger 3} \]
\[ \text{note: includes some foreign-owned ships registered here as a flag of convenience: Canada 2, Denmark 1 (2002 est.)} \]

Airports: 1,823 (2002)

Airports - with paved runways:

\[ \text{total: 231} \]
\[ \text{over 3,047 m: 11} \]
\[ \text{2,438 to 3,047 m: 28} \]
914 to 1,523 m: 82
under 914 m: 27 (2002)
1,524 to 2,437 m: 83

Airports - with unpaved runways:

total: 1,592
under 914 m: 1,067 (2002)
over 3,047 m: 1
2,438 to 3,047 m: 1
914 to 1,523 m: 454
1,524 to 2,437 m: 69

Heliports: 2 (2002)

Military

Military branches:
National Defense Secretariat (SEDENA) (including Army and Air Force), Navy Secretariat (including Naval Air and Marines)

Military manpower - military age:
18 years of age
note: starting in 2000, females were allowed to volunteer for military service (2003 est.)

Military manpower - availability:
males age 15-49: 27,751,539 (2003 est.)

Military manpower - fit for military service:
males age 15-49: 20,123,970 (2003 est.)

Military manpower - reaching military age annually:
males: 1,093,752 (2003 est.)

Military expenditures - dollar figure:
$4 billion (FY99)

Military expenditures - percent of GDP:
1% (FY99)

Transnational Issues

Disputes - international:
prolonged regional drought in the border region with the US has strained water-sharing arrangements

Illicit drugs:
illicit cultivation of opium poppy (cultivation in 2001 - 4,400 hectares; potential heroin production - 7 metric tons) and of cannabis (in 2001 - 4,100 hectares); government eradication efforts have been key in keeping illicit crop levels low; major supplier of heroin and largest foreign supplier of marijuana and methamphetamine to the US market; continues as the primary transshipment country for US-bound cocaine from
South America; major drug syndicates control majority of drug trafficking throughout the country; growing producer and distributor of ecstasy; significant money-laundering center

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