

MEXICAN AMERICAN YOUTH

DEMOGRAPHICS

- ☒ **Total population:** 111,211,789 (Ranked 11th in the world by the US Census Bureau).
- **Population density:** 142 per square mile.
- **Children 0-14:** 29.1% (male 16,544,223/female 15,861,141)
- **15-64 years:** 64.6% (male 34,734,571/female 37,129,793)
- **65 years and over:** 6.2% (male 3,130,518/female 3,811,543) (2009 est.)
- **Male to female ratio:** 96 males per 100 females.
- **Birth rate:** 19.71 per 1,000 population.
- **Life expectancy at birth:** 73.25 for males and 79 for females.
- **Infant mortality rate:** 18.42 per 1,000 live births.
- **Religious affiliations:** 95.85% Christians (106,050,000) and 2.6 % Non-religious (2,900,000).
The following groups represent less than one percent of the total: Muslims, Jews, Atheists and Ethno-religionists.
- **Education:** Free and compulsory from ages 6-12.
- **Literacy rate:** 91%.

EDUCATION LANDSCAPE

Pre- primary	Beginning age, 4	Duration, 2 years
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Primary	Beginning age, 6	Duration, 6 years
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Secondary	Beginning age, 12	Duration, 6 years
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Education is free and compulsory from ages 6-12. The literacy rate for those over 15 is over 90%. In the 1998-1999 school year, there were 207,676 schools, with an enrollment of 27.8 million students, and 1.4 million teachers (144 students per school, 19.85 students per teacher). The Secretary of Public Education is responsible for administration of education across Mexico. Each Mexican state has its own division of the SEP.

ETHNIC LANDSCAPE

The main ethnic groups are as follows:

Mestizo (Amerindian-Spanish)	60%
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Amerindian or predominantly Amerindian	30%
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White 9%

Other 1%

The official language is Spanish, but various Mayan, Nahuatl and other regional indigenous languages are spoken as well.

SOCIAL LANDSCAPE

The right of suffrage is guaranteed to all over 18 by the Mexican constitution. It is also compulsory, but that is not enforced. Elections are becoming much more fair, and are considered to be free of large-scale fraud and manipulation. The judicial system, however, is highly politicized, and riddled with corruption. Official agencies often disregard the law, and bribery is rampant.

In the northern and central parts of Mexico, constitutional guarantees about political and civic organizations are respected. There is government repression of some organizations in the south, though, particularly those connected with the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), the major opponent to the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). Though Mexicans in general are more free than they have been, there is still systemic intimidation for those opposed to the ruling party. An official human rights organization was created in 1990, but is not allowed to investigate political and labor rights violations, nor is it allowed to enforce any of its recommendations.

ISSUES

Many of the social issues relevant in Mexico are tightly

connected to the political system. The corruption of the judicial system is a major issue, as is civic freedom. Torture and police brutality is still present, and Mexico's crime rate continues to rise rapidly. It is thought that law enforcement is ineffective at best, and, at its worst, repressive, corrupt, and prone to violence. Ten percent of all extortive kidnappings in Mexico are thought to have been carried out by police officers.

Human rights violations occur everyday, often at the hands of the military. There are efforts underway to place the military court system under general law enforcement because the military has a very poor record of rights prosecutions. And, contrary to official government information, it is suspected that the military still has strong ties to the drug trade in Mexico.

The drug trade in Mexico is a big issue, with Mexico producing a high quantity of the drugs sold in the United States. There are government efforts to help eradicate the drug trade, but with corruption in the judicial system and the military, this has proven difficult.

The press is private, but the government is the main source of advertising revenue. The press is also considered corrupt, and strongly supportive of the ruling party. Journalists who expose corruption, police issues, and drug trafficking are often subject to violent attacks.

Domestic violence is also an issue, as is equality for women. Legislation to protect women against sexual abuse and domestic violence exists in only 7 of Mexico's 31 states.

RELIGION AND FAITH LANDSCAPE

Roughly 96% of the Mexican population is Christian, with

90% of the population claiming to be Roman Catholic, and 4% claiming to be Protestant. The remaining five percent is thought to hold other religions, many of them indigenous. The Roman Catholic religion was forced upon Mexicans though, so the numbers must be considered a bit skewed.

ISSUES

Religious freedom is guaranteed by the Mexican constitution, with voting rights given even to priests and nuns. However, those church leaders who are voices for the rights and protection of the Indian population, and the poor, are subjected to some persecution. Generally, the expression of religion is considered free from governmental influence.