

Chapter 16: Mexico



THE BASICS

Mexico

Size	1,972,550 sq. km (roughly three times the size of Texas)
Population	108.7 million
GNP per capita	\$10,700
Out migration	2.77 people per 100,000 per year
Currency	9.7 peso = US\$1
Religion	89% Catholic, 6% Protestant, 5% Other or None
Capital	Mexico City, Federal District
President	Felipe Calderón (2006–)

Can Two Presidents be Better Than One?

- Razor thin election outcome of 2006 demonstrates political balance
- Lack of majority or coalition demonstrates political gridlock

2012 Election Results

- Enrique Peña Nieto 39.19%
- Andrés Manuel López Obrador 32.42%
- Josefina Vázquez Mota 26.05
- Nieto is a member of PRI
(Institutional Revolutionary Party)
- Obrador is a member of PRD
(Party of the Democratic Revolution)
- Mota is a member of PAN
(National Action Party)

TABLE 16.1 2006 Presidential Election

CANDIDATE	VOTE (%)
Felipe Calderón (PAN)	36.69
Andres Manuel López Obrador (PRD)	36.11
Roberto Madrazo (PRI)	22.72
Others and nullified votes	4.48

TABLE 16.2 Chamber of Deputies Election: 2006

PARTY	VOTE (%)	SEATS
PAN	33.4	206
PRD and allies	28.9	157
PRI and allies	28.1	123
Others	6.6	13
Invalid ballots	3.0	–

The Congress of the Union

- Two chambers
- Chamber of Deputies with 500 seats
3 year terms
- Chamber of Senates with 128 seats
6 year terms

There are 31 states with governors who serve 6 year terms

Thinking about Mexico

- The Basics
 - Poverty
 - Slow economic growth
 - High unemployment
 - Massive national debt
 - Northward emigration – remittances

Thinking about Mexico

- The Basics
 - Diversity
 - Geographic and climatic variations
 - Variety of ethnic heritages
 - Linguistic and cultural diversity

Thinking about Mexico

- The Basics
 - Big Brother is Watching
 - U.S. – Mexican relationship
 - Economic interdependence
 - Mexican immigration to the U.S.
 - Cross border drug traffic

Thinking about Mexico

- Key Questions
 - Why did the PRI win so consistently and stay in power for so long?
 - What undermined that success and led to PAN victories?
 - Why did 3 successive presidents embrace structural adjustment?
 - How have those economic reforms addressed Mexico's poverty and other needs?
 - How have events of the past two decades affected the Mexico-US relationship?

The Evolution of Mexican Politics

- The colonial era
 - Mayan and Aztec civilizations preceded colonial rule
 - Spanish incorporated native class system into their own
 - Catholicism brought new beliefs to Mexico and reinforced the class and governance systems
 - No self-government allowed by Spanish rulers

TABLE 16.3 Key Events in Mexican History

YEAR	EVENT
1519	Arrival of Cortés
1810	Declaration of Independence
1836	Loss of Texas
1848	Mexican-American War
1864	Emperor Maximilian installed
1876	Beginning of Porfirio Díaz's reign
1910	Revolution
1929	Formation of PNR, which renames itself PRI in 1946
1934	Election of Cárdenas

The Evolution of Mexican Politics

- Independence
 - Independence battles began in 1810
 - A century of civil war, invasion, and chaos followed
 - Stable, military dictatorship under Porfirio Diaz (1876 – 1911)

The Evolution of Mexican Politics

- The revolution
 - Populist rebels, labor unions, and upper class liberals led 1911 revolution
 - Post-revolutionary fighting and invasions led to new government in 1916
- Institutionalizing the revolution
 - Constitution of 1917 has survived
 - Political turmoil led to establishment of what would become the PRI and the PRI system in 1929

The Evolution of Mexican Politics

- Cárdenas and his legacy
 - Land reform
 - Nationalization of oil industry
 - Organization of Confederation of Mexican Workers within the PRI
 - Retirement of outgoing president

The Evolution of Mexican Politics

- An institutional revolutionary party
 - Stability and continuity resulted from PRI's hold on power
 - Social reform became less important
 - Elitist governance
 - Corruption and rigged elections
 - State-run economy faltered as globalization grew

TABLE 16.4 Presidents of Mexico

NAME	START OF TERM
Venustiano Carranza	1917
Adolfo de la Huerta	1920
Alvaro Obregón	1920
Plutarco Elías Calles	1924
Emilio Portes Gil	1928
Pascual Ortiz Rubio	1930
Abelardo Rodríguez	1932
Lázaro Cárdenas	1934
Manuel Avila Camacho	1940
Miguel Alemán	1946
Adolfo Ruiz Cortines	1952
Adolfo López Mateos	1958
Gustavo Díaz Ordaz	1964
Luis Echeverría	1970
Jose López Portillo	1976
Miguel de la Madrid	1982
Carlos Salinas de Gortari	1988
Ernesto Zedillo	1994
Vicente Fox	2000
Felipe Calderón	2006

Political Culture

- National identity a powerful force
- Widespread legitimacy
- Positive connotations of “revolution”
- Authoritarianism and charismatic leadership
- Male-dominated political system
- Patron-client relations; camarillas as PRI base

TABLE 16.5 Satisfaction with Democracy and Respect for Human Rights (percentage saying they were very or somewhat satisfied with democracy, and human rights matters a lot or some)

COUNTRY/REGION	SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY	RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
Mexico	37	43
Advanced Democracies	63	74
Latin America and Caribbean	53	41
Africa	50	54
East Asia	45	59
Post-Communist Societies	35	45

Source: Adapted from Alejandro Moreno and Patricia Mendez, "Attitudes toward Democracy: Mexico in Comparative Perspective." *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 29 (December 2002), 350–369.

Political Culture

- Political sub-cultures (using Almond and Verba's typology)
 - Parochials: Indians not well integrated into Mexican system
 - Subjects: majority who tolerate the system (elderly, poor, women, peasant farmers)
 - PRI participants: beneficiaries of the party and its dominance
 - Anti-PRI participants: opposition based on policy differences

Political Participation

- The PRI and its hold on power
 - Rigged elections when necessary
 - Organized around a network of camarillas (patron-client networks)
 - Control of Federal Electoral Commission
 - Electoral victories legitimized PRI rule
 - Corporatism was mutually beneficial to party and members
 - Provided tangible benefits to group members
 - Tied peasants and workers to regime to control protest
 - Groups were recruiting ground for leadership

TABLE 16.6 Mexican Chamber of Deputies Election Results, 1976–2003 (percentage of valid votes)

YEAR	PRI	PAN	PRD AND ITS PREDECESSORS	OTHERS
1976	85.2	8.9	–	5.9
1979	74.2	11.4	5.3	9.0
1982	69.3	17.5	4.4	8.6
1985	68.2	16.3	3.4	12.2
1988	50.4	18.0	4.5	27.3
1991	61.4	17.7	8.3	12.6
1994	50.3	26.8	16.7	6.2
1997	38.0	25.8	25.0	11.2
2000	36.9	36.9	18.7	6.1
2003	48.0	23.1	17.6	11.3

TABLE 16.7 The 2000 Mexican Election

CANDIDATE/PARTY	PERCENTAGE VOTE FOR PRESIDENT
Vicente Fox/PAN	42.5
Francisco Labastida/PRI	36.1
Cuautémoc Cárdenas/PRD	16.6
Other/spoiled ballots	4.8

Political Participation

- The other parties
 - PAN
 - Formed in 1939 to oppose Cárdenas's reforms
 - Backed by business and Catholic interests
 - Strongest in north and wealthy urban areas
 - First success in Baja California's 1983 local elections
 - Fox's leadership galvanized party energies
 - Electoral reforms paved the way for successes

Political Participation

- The other parties
 - PRD
 - Left-wing of PRI broke away to form party in 1986
 - Leadership of Cuautémoc Cárdenas was key attraction
 - Electoral history is one of victories and fraudulent defeats
 - PRD holds balance of power in legislature
 - Obrador a viable candidate for next presidential election

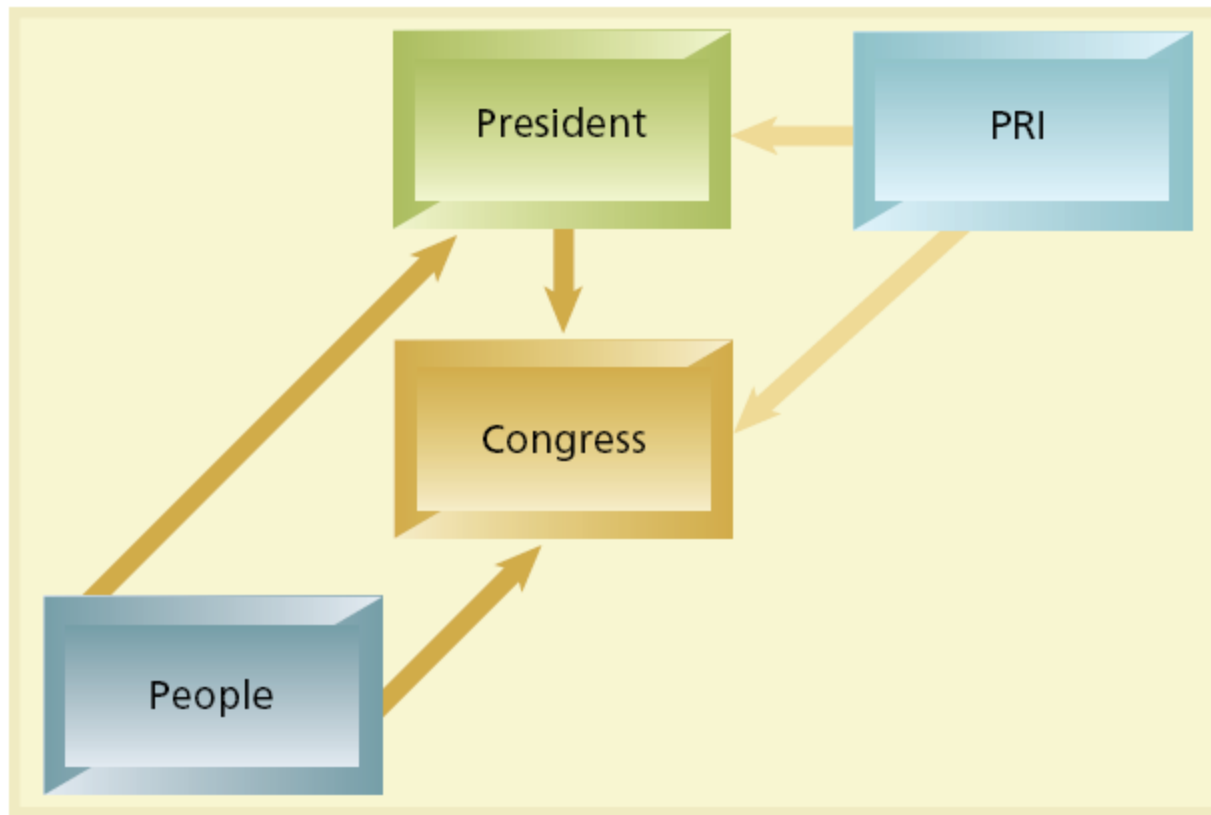
Political Participation

- Civil Society in Mexico
 - Civil society groups outside the camarilla system have multiplied in the past 30 years
 - Women's movement is prime example

The Mexican State

- Nonreelection and presidential domination key features of PRI state
 - Policies and selection of successor were heritages of president
 - Widespread appointment powers facilitated policy making
 - Post-1999 primary elections to choose presidential candidates have changed process, but not power of office
 - PAN presidents have struggled with legislature for power

FIGURE 16.1 Traditional Decision Making in Mexico



The Mexican State

- The cabinet, the bureaucracy and the judiciary
 - Massive appointment powers meant nearly everyone in government owed jobs to someone above them (Camarilla networks)
 - Bureaucracy manned by political appointees from top to bottom
 - Without the PRI organization, Fox had difficulty filling positions; many bureaucrats remained in place
 - Supreme court has unused power of judicial review
 - More court independence since 1990s

The Mexican State

- Congress and the legislative process
 - Rubber stamp for PRI policies
 - Non-reelection guaranteed policy
inexpertise
 - Gridlock since '97 because of a lack
of majority

The Mexican State

- The federal system
 - Most state and local governments still dominated by PRI
 - PAN and PRD have won more and more elections in last decade
- The military
 - Non-political military for past 60 years
 - Corruption and drug trade threaten military's reputation and effectiveness

The Mexican State

- Corporatism and corruption
 - Corporatism of PRI system nurtured corruption
 - Mismanagement of public enterprises
 - Presidents since De la Madrid have made news with anti-corruption actions

The Mexican State

- The Fox Presidency: An Assessment
 - First real change in political dynamics
 - Fox and his team were not good at negotiating and bargaining
 - Fox government demonstrated that gridlock was not fatal to the system

Public Policy

- Debt and Development
 - Early success of state-sponsored industrialization
 - National Development Bank (NAFINSA)
 - Taxes low; tariffs high
 - Economic growth of 6% a year 1940-80
 - Social justice issues ignored
 - The crisis of 1980's oil price collapse
 - Mismanagement of state industries
 - Debt load grew to 80% of GNP by 1970
 - Rising oil prices of 1970s matched rising inflation
 - Oil price collapse of early '80s meant economic collapse

Public Policy

- Reform
 - Debt reduction
 - U.S. and international repayment plans “imposed” on Mexico
 - Past borrowing made recovery more difficult
 - Sharp cuts in government spending
 - Mediocre social service programs compromised
 - Taxes raised
 - Deficit lowered dramatically
 - Privatization
 - Over 1,100 parastatals in '85; 100 in 2007
 - Privatization of banking system enriched PRI insiders

Public Policy

- Reform
 - Opening up the economy
 - Economics rescue plans required opening Mexico to foreign investment
 - NAFTA sped up the process
 - Inflation down; growth rates respectable
 - Real wages down; unemployment up; income distribution more unequal
 - No significant policy changes under PAN
 - Greater outside control of economy

Public Policy

- US-Mexican relations
 - Economic dependence on U.S.
 - Foreign policy differences cause some friction
 - Mexico must always keep U.S. interests in mind when making policy

Public Policy

- Immigration
 - Illegal immigration is a hot button topic in U.S. politics
 - Frequent crackdowns on illegals
 - Immigration continues
 - Remittances are important in Mexico

Public Policy

- Drugs
 - Purchases in U.S. fuel market
 - Producers in Mexico meet demand
 - Arguments about whether to attack supply or demand
 - Cooperation strained by corruption and lack of Mexican resources

Feedback

- PRI got a virtual free ride from Mexico's free press
- Number of independent outlets is growing
- New technology gives elite access to more sources

Mexico and the Third World

- Erosion of national sovereignty
- Globalization and proximity to the U.S. are main causes

Learning Objectives

After mastering the concepts presented in this chapter, you will be able to:

- Understand the key moments of the historical formation and evolution of Mexico.
- Discuss the evolution of Mexican political system and define the role of the following political leaders: Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, Porfirio Diaz, Lazaro Cardenas, Vicente Fox, Miguel de la Madrid
- Recognize the importance of Mexican social diversity, economic challenges and the specification of the political system.
- Comprehend the role of **political parties** in Mexico and understand the ideological differences among the following: PRD, PRI, PAN
- Understand the factors which contributed to the **patron-client** relationships in Mexican political system.
- Define the specifications of the **political culture** in Mexico.

Learning Objectives

After mastering the concepts presented in this chapter, you will be able to:

- Recognize challenges of **political participation** under the PRI dominance in Mexico.
- Understand the functions of the key institutions of the Mexican **state**.
- Discuss the role of presidential domination, judicial weakness and legislative ineffectiveness in Mexican state.
- Comprehend the challenges of Mexican **federal** system.
- Define Mexican corporatism and corruption.
- Understand Mexico's key public policy developments. Recognize the role of **Miguel de la Madrid** in implementing public policy reforms thus repairing the debt crisis in Mexico in 1980s.
- Discuss the challenges of the US-Mexican relations, including the immigration reform.