



Diaspora engagement mapping MEXICO

Facts & figures

Terminology: In many official documents and press releases, the government refers to the diaspora as “paisanos”, “connacionales” and “mexicanos en el exterior”.¹

Political rights



Dual citizenship²



Right to vote in national elections for citizens residing abroad³



Remittances



Remittances as a share of GDP: 3.7%
Remittances inflow (USD million): 66,237

Voting from abroad:^{4,5}

By post or electronic vote



Data disclaimer

As diaspora definitions vary widely, we have chosen to use comparable data on emigration as a proxy. This does not include all who consider themselves diaspora and is not necessarily aligned with national definitions of diaspora. Emigration data comes from UNDESA (2024) and remittances from the World Bank (2023).

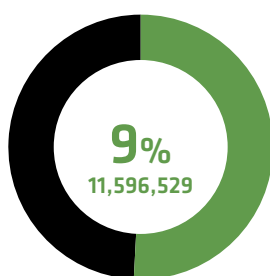
Emigration



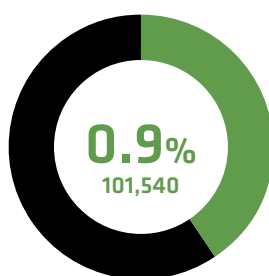
% of emigrants in total population



% of which in the EU



♂ 51.1%
♀ 48.9%



♂ 40.6%
♀ 59.4%

Top countries of destination



United States of America	11,279,561
Canada	103,620
Spain	77,724
Guatemala	20,758
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	11,841

¹ Programa Paisano and Centro de Información y Asistencia a Mexicanos en Estados Unidos.

² “Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos”, 1917; “Ley de Nacionalidad”, 1998.

³ “Ley General de Instituciones y Procedimientos Electorales”, 2014. Article 329 provides that Mexicans abroad exercise their right to vote to elect both President and Senators. However, in the case of state and municipal elections, the right to vote will depend on state constitution or the Federal District Government’s Statute. For further information about voting of Mexicans abroad, see “Voto de las Mexicanas y los Mexicanos Residentes en el Extranjero. Estrategia Integral de Promoción 2019-2021” (Vote of Mexicans Living Abroad. Comprehensive Strategy for Promotion 2019-2021) and “Voto de los Mexicanos Residentes en el Extranjero” (Vote of Mexicans Living Abroad). All accessed August 2020.

⁴ as provided by the General Council of the National Electoral Institute (in Spanish “Instituto Nacional Electoral (INE)”). Articles 341-344 of the Ley General de Instituciones y Procedimientos Electorales. Specific procedures on voting of Mexicans abroad are included here. Accessed August 2020.

⁵ Personal delivery of the ballot in the modules installed in embassies or consulates and by electronic mail will be possible in 2021. “Voting of Mexicans Abroad.” How to vote abroad.

Mexico does not have a diaspora engagement policy.

Instead of a policy, Mexico has a diaspora framework, which is found in a collection of different official efforts, including laws, norms and institutions. The new migration policy includes aspects of relationship with Mexicans abroad, but is not a diaspora policy per se.

Overview of the policy and legislative framework



- 1974 ● **Ley General de Población** provides that the Secretariat of Interior (ES: “Secretaría de Gobernación”) oversees the necessary actions for the attention and reintegration of Mexican returnees, especially regarding essential utilities such as water and electricity and employment opportunities.
- 1998 ● **Ley de Nacionalidad** recognizes Mexican citizenship for those born abroad regardless of time, as long as they are children of a Mexican father or mother. It also provides there is no cause for Mexican citizenship lost.
- 2018
▼ ● **Nueva Política Migratoria del Gobierno de México 2018-2024** (EN: New Migration Policy of the Government of Mexico) refers to strengthening the presence and protection of Mexicans abroad, as well as referring to the integration and reintegration of migrants and the sustainable development of migrant communities.
- 2024
▼ ● **Action Plan 2022-2024 for Mexican Communities Residing Abroad.** It contains 37 substantive actions, including: the publication of guidelines for the provision of consular services that provide certainty and clarity on the criteria applied by consulates for the issuance of documents, the publication of a manual on inclusive consular services, and improved access to Civil Registry services. The plan also seeks to strengthen existing programmes offered by the Mexican government

>> Trends

Currently, Mexico is one of the most advanced countries in diaspora engagement. It gradually shifted from seeing its diaspora negatively to a new, positive perspective, during its democratic transition when then President Vicente Fox (2000-2006) referred to the diaspora as VIP, ‘Very Important Paisanos’. The creation of a special institute to formally engage Mexicans abroad, the Institute of Mexicans Abroad (ES: “Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior (IME)”) is a worth mentioned milestone.

The Mexican government has a very comprehensive approach to its diaspora, both at federal and state level, as well as putting forward legislation to address return migration and transit migrants.⁶ It also has a few programmes to encourage the diaspora to return - permanently or not - such as the Paisano Guide (“Guía Paisano”), Housing for Mexicans Living Abroad (“Viviendas para Mexicanos en el Exterior”), and Build in your homeland (“Construye en tu Tierra”).

Offices at the sub-ministerial level have diversified their portfolios by adopting initiatives that facilitate their diasporas’ integration into host-country societies and participation in development activities at home. The Institute of Mexicans Abroad (“Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior”), IME, concentrates its efforts on the contributions made by Mexicans abroad - both in their localities and in their communities of origin - through activities regarding both remittances and community development. It encourages diaspora organisations to join the consultative framework established by IME. The IME has formalised a long-standing Mexican government policy to gain the trust and support of an increasingly influential expatriate population who live mainly in the United States. IME’s website also provides information about remittances to Mexico.

⁶ Many individual states have adopted laws on migration, considering the importance of their local migrants. States such as Sonora, Durango, and Hidalgo and the City of Mexico, have laws to protect and attend to migrants and their families.

The Mexican consular network plays an important role in strengthening the development and progress of the Mexican communities in which the community itself participates through its leaders, clubs and federations, Mexican migrant organizations, as well as local institutions and organizations.

It is important to note that 29 of the 32 states and the Mexico City have established state-level offices or ministries that address migrant or expatriate affairs and have a national coordinating secretariat. Moreover, in addition to federal legislation, most states in the Mexican federation have established their own legislation over the past 15 years.



Achievements

Matricula Consular (MC): In the early 2000s, the Mexican Government promoted the issuing of their 'matricula consular' among its diaspora. The MC is an identification card issued by the government through consular offices to confirm that the carrier is a Mexican national. The consular identification card has become an important vehicle for Mexican migrants to obtain drivers licenses and open bank accounts, for example.

Vote abroad campaigns: Through the National Electoral Institute ("Instituto Nacional Electoral"), Mexico promotes and encourages the diaspora to vote and has developed some campaigns in order to facilitate the registration and voting of Mexicans abroad; even a website has been enabled for this purposes.

Access to health services access: Through the IME and in close collaboration with the Ministry of Health and the support of the Mexican consular network, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has implemented several health initiatives to facilitate the access of Mexican migrants to primary and preventive health services, in addition to providing information, education and advice on health issues.⁷

Engagement through sports organizations: Mexican-American sports clubs and associations have been a great support element for the activities organised by consulates, offering a recreation space for the Mexican community of all ages, where they can develop skills, motivate themselves to participate actively in tournaments and competitions and improve family life and links with the local community.⁸

For the first time, **Mexico's National Electoral Institute (INE)** implemented an online voting system that allowed eligible voters to cast their ballots remotely using a web application. Additionally, electronic voting kiosks were available at 23 embassies and consulates across the United States, Canada, and Europe.

Obstacles



- **Measuring impact:** It remains challenging to effectively measure the impact of the State's diaspora engagement, through its many, varied, initiatives over the past 20 years. There is a lack of suitable monitoring and evaluation data and tools.

⁷ "Developing a Road Map for Engaging Diasporas in Development A Handbook for Policymakers and Practitioners in Home and Host Countries" (2011). IOM. See Ch.4.

⁸ Loc. Cit.



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SPOTLIGHT: effective practices

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT,
REMITTANCES

[Tres por Uno \(3x1\) investment matching program 2002](#)

3x1 is a public programmes in which every \$1 contributed by diaspora associations, is matched by the federal and state governments. This money is gathered in a fund that is then used to invest in local development, with investment decisions made by local residents and contributing emigrants. From the government perspective, this allows them to provide public goods with partial funding from privates residing abroad, whilst the local communities play an active role in the investment decisions.⁹

HUMAN CAPITAL

[Red Global MX 2005](#)

Previously known as Red de Talentos Mexicanos, Red Global MX is an independent network with strong ties to the Mexican government and non-government institutions, which attempts to leverage the resources of its highly qualified diaspora to help Mexico develop a knowledge-driven economy. One of its achievements is the “SínLímites” initiative, coordinated by the Math2Me and the Red Global MX, which promotes the recreational use of mathematics and their mass distribution by virtual channels.

INFRASTRUCTURE

[Vivienda para Mexicanos en el Exterior 2016](#)

The “Your Housing in Mexico” (“Tu Vivienda en México”) program is the result of a collaborative effort between the Mexican government through the National Housing Commission (CONAVI) and the Institute of Mexicans Abroad (IME), and with private mortgages and housing developers, to encourage and promote the acquisition of housing in Mexico among the Mexicans abroad. The program allows the purchase of a new or used home through mortgage credit, making credit payments from the place of residence of the client. The IME has supported this program through a dissemination campaign in the Consulates of Mexico in the United States and Canada. “Built in your Homeland” (“Construye en tu Tierra”) is also a programme developed by the IME along with the CONAVI, to encourage and promote the building of housing in Mexico, through credit and providing a grant for the construction of houses.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT,
REMITTANCES

[Financial Education Week ongoing \(2020 was the 12th edition\)](#)

This campaign promoted by the Mexican government offers Mexicans in the US information and services to strengthen their financial literacy and enhance financial inclusion, through strategic alliances with actors in Mexico and the United States. In 2017, it engaged over 70,000 people. It offers orientation workshops on access to financial services, business development and basic skills for personal and family finance management.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT,
REMITTANCES

[Programa de Educación Financiera para Migrantes Mexicanos 2019](#)

The Institute of Mexicans Abroad has developed financial education programs aimed at the Mexican community; it is promoted through the Consular Network with the collaboration of various financial actors. They promote financial education of Mexican migrants through courses, workshops and distribution of information in Spanish. They also promote programs and resources offered by other organizations in the United States and Mexico, including an annual event.

⁹ Loc Cit.

Ventanilla de Salud 2002

The Mexican consulates offer information health services through 51 outlets based at the consular offices to provide information and education related health services.

HEALTH

Consular Entrepreneurship Programme for Mexican Women Abroad 2021-2024

The Consular Entrepreneurship Programme for Mexican Women Abroad (PCEME) is an initiative supported by the Government of Mexico, through the IME. Its purpose is to train and provide tools to women entrepreneurs of Mexican origin living abroad. It consists of four stages, including DreamBuilder, a mentoring programme, business plan development and financial analysis, with the aim of fostering financial autonomy and business empowerment. Since its inception, it has benefited more than 1,100 women, highlighting its significant impact on business development and recognition of their capabilities. Currently, it is implementing its fourth edition with the participation of 39 Representations.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP -
GENDER

Mexican Diaspora Literature Contest 2022

The Literature Contest for the Mexican Diaspora, “Tradiciones Mexicanas”, was created in 2022 as an initiative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (SRE) with the aim of promoting literary creation among Mexican migrants abroad. This contest, which includes categories of Narrative, Poetry and Children’s Stories, aims for participants to express in their unpublished works their feelings and values about Mexican traditions, reflecting the foreign identity of the diaspora. In addition, the contest seeks to showcase the works of writers from the Mexican diaspora, to connect the community through literature, to reflect on traditions and bicultural identity, and to raise awareness through the literary expression of the migrant community. Its second edition was organised in 2023.

CULTURE

Remesa Paisano 2023

The “Remesa Paisano” programme is an initiative of the Financiera del Bienestar, promoted by the Mexican Ministry of Finance. The main objective of the programme is to facilitate access to financial services to the diaspora in the United States, especially those located in towns with less than 50,000 inhabitants. Through a debit card and a network of more than 1,700 branches in more than 50 per cent of the country’s municipalities, beneficiaries can collect their remittances in cash, without commission, even in municipalities with no banking presence and considered to be highly marginalised.

REMITTANCES

Cultural Immersion and Volunteering Programme 2023

The Cultural Immersion and Volunteer Programme (CIVP) is an initiative that offers young students of Mexican descent (second, third or fourth generation) living in the United States the opportunity to immerse themselves in the cultural richness of Mexico over a period of three weeks. During this time, participants not only explore the most emblematic regions of different Mexican states, but also become actively involved in volunteer work in communities with an emphasis on migrant origins. The programme seeks to strengthen students’ cultural ties with Mexico, allowing them to live authentic experiences, share with local communities and contribute positively through volunteer activities.

CULTURE -
HERITAGE TOURISM



Sin Fronteras 2023

REMITTANCES - FINANCE

This programme of the Instituto del Fondo Nacional de la Vivienda para los Trabajadores (Infonavit) allows the Mexican diaspora in the United States to pay their mortgage loans from abroad by sending remittances through remittance companies with which Infonavit has established agreements. The initiative seeks to secure the patrimony of migrants' families, offering the possibility of paying both their own loans and those of relatives or acquaintances, without the need for additional procedures. In addition, Infonavit is responsible for covering the commissions that remittance companies demand for the transfer of funds, thus facilitating the process and strengthening economic ties between Mexico and the United States.

Annex:

List of Actors

Explore the institutionalisation of diaspora engagement worldwide via the [typology of 430+ institutions](#)

Diaspora related institutions

- **At regional level**
- **National institutions**

Consejo Nacional para las Comunidades Mexicanas en el Exterior 2002

Permanent inter-ministerial commission with the objective of proposing and executing policies for the benefit of Mexican communities abroad.

- At ministerial level

Secretaría de Gobernación (SEGOB)

Entity in charge of coordinating the necessary actions for the attention and reintegration of Mexican returnees.

Secretaria del Trabajo

This entity is in charge of coordinating Mexican labor migration, particularly the agricultural guest worker programs with the United States and Canada.

Instituto Nacional de Migración (INM) 1993¹⁰

INM falls under SEGOB; it is in charge of applying the current immigration legislation. Its mission is to strengthen the protection of the rights and security of national and foreign migrants, to grant all foreigners the necessary facilities to carry out legal, orderly and safe immigration procedures that affect their entry and stay in national territory with strict attachment to protect human rights, implementing the regulations established in the Migration Law and its regulations.

Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores (SRE)

SRE conducts Mexico's foreign policy through dialogue, cooperation, promotion of the country and attends to Mexicans abroad, as well as coordinating the international action of the Government of the Republic.

Secretaria de Educación Pública (SEP)

One of its internal units, the General Directorate of International Relations, administers the platform of Mexicans Abroad, which has the purpose of disseminating relevant information in educational matters for all those Mexicans who are abroad and/or who wish to re-join the National Educational System.

¹⁰ INSM's Paisano Program, which began in 1989, operates permanently but reinforces its actions during the periods of greatest affluence of Mexicans in the national territory, establishing, through special operations (Easter, summer and winter). It guarantees that the entry, transit and exit of its nationals through Mexican territory is with absolute guarantee of their rights, the security of their goods and full knowledge of their obligations. Accessed August 2020.

Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior (IME) 2005

IME's mission is to address initiatives and needs of Mexicans living and working abroad, as well as to promote strategies, integrate programs, collect proposals and recommendations from communities.

Consejo Ciudadano del Instituto Nacional de Migración

The council belongs to the National Institute of Migration. It strives to:

- 1) Comment on the execution of migration policy;
- 2) Formulate proposals for specific actions for the promotion, protection and defence of the human rights of migrants, so that they may be presented to the Advisory Council on Migration Policy;
- 3) Propose actions of cooperation, consultation and monitoring of civil society to the activities of the National Migration Institute;
- 4) Propose coordination agreements with federative entities and agreements with civil society organisations, academia and other relevant actors, in accordance with the provisions of the Migration Law.

Consejo Consultivo del IME (CCIME) 2003

CCIME's main task is to maintain a dialogue between Mexican communities abroad and the government, making specific recommendations on how to improve their quality of life, on topics such as health, education, legal issues, borders, economy, business, and politics.

Banco del Bienestar, Sociedad Nacional de Crédito, Institución de Banca de Desarrollo 2019

The Welfare Bank, National Credit Corporation, Development Bank Institution is the main disperser of social programme resources of the federal government. It promotes and facilitates savings among Mexicans, inside and outside the country, and is present in the most remote locations, directly through a wide network of branches, and indirectly through institutional and commercial agreements or alliances with correspondents and private companies, as well as with cooperatives and savings banks. For this entity, remittances are an important opportunity to improve the financial inclusion of Mexicans, both for those living in the United States and for their families in Mexico.

Procuraduría Federal del Consumidor (PROFECO) 1976

PROFECO provides a calculator to send remittances from the US to Mexico and to know the commission costs that different companies offer. By simply entering the amount and selecting a city of origin, users can know the money in pesos they will receive in Mexico, once the commission for the service is discounted, at the exchange rate at that time. Data from the Bank of Mexico indicates that of the three thousand 375 million dollars in remittances sent to the country in 2018, 98.3 percent were made via electronic transfer, with more than 9.8 million operations.

Comisión Nacional para la Protección y Defensa de los Usuarios de Servicios Financieros (CONDUSEF) 1999

CONDUSEF promotes and disseminates information on education and financial transparency so that users make informed decisions about the benefits, costs and risks of the products and services offered in the Mexican financial system; as well as protect their interests through supervision and regulation of financial institutions. It provides customers with advice and supports them in the defence of their rights. It also acts as a transfer cost watchdog.

- At sub-ministerial level

Unidad de Política Migratoria, Registro e Identidad de Personas

The unit belongs to the Secretaría de Gobernación and its mission is to propose the policy on migration of the country, considering the legal and human rights framework and national development.

- At local level

Secretaría del Migrante y Enlace Internacional, Guanajuato 2012

The Secretariat facilitates the processing and sending of documentation related to birth, marriage, divorce and death ; apostille management in the USA and official translation of documents. It also arranges transfers of the sick and human remains, Certificates of Studies, Dual Nationality Procedures, the Migrant Will (a testament at affordable prices for the community). It deals with locating missing persons in the US, guidance and support to invest in the infrastructure of a municipality, and investment modalities to collaborate in the improvement of the communities of origin.

Secretaría del Migrante, Michoacán 2008

The Secretariat provides information in case of detention in the United States, actions that could be taken to consolidate a permanent collaboration in the communities of origin and advice in International Return of Minors, to Request Compensation, Application for Legal Pardon (Waiver), Dual Nationality, Mexican Passport, Tourist Visa for the United States of America, Nullity of Birth Certificate and Seasonal Agricultural Workers Mexico - Canada.

Secretaría de los Migrantes y Asuntos Internacionales Guerrero 2011

This entity supports the communities of Guerrero living in other parts of the country and abroad, by promoting the economic and social development of their communities of origin and protecting the human rights of migrants; as well as fostering inter-institutional relations with governmental and non-governmental organizations for purposes of international cooperation.

Coordinación de Asuntos Internacionales-Migrante Mexiquense Estado de México 2006

The coordination body for the state of Mexico provides assistance, support and guidance to migrants, including free services as processing and sending of documentation, transfers of the sick and human remains, location of missing persons, support for deportees and advice for special visas.

Diaspora organizations in Europe

Read more about diaspora organisations in “Starting guide: What is a diaspora organisation”



Asociación Cuauhtémoc 2002 Spain

☑ Integration activities

The association works to promote and spread Mexican culture through artistic and gastronomic activities. Its members also participate in events with other groups through organisations dedicated to the theme of migration, to promote interculturalism and social integration.


Asociación Cultural Mexicano-Catalana 2008 Spain

☑ Integration activities

The main goal of this organization is to spread Mexican culture in Catalonia and Catalanian culture in Mexico, seeking for their integration through culture, gastronomy, and music. Its members also support projects of immigration and solidarity.

Asociación Cultural Mexicana de Sevilla Spain

☑ Integration activities

The association aims to promote cultural ties between Mexico and Seville. []

Asociación de Abogados Alemanes-Mexicanos 1988 Germany


☑ Integration activities

☑ Development activities

The association develops comparative law studies on Mexican and German civil and commercial law and annual conferences with practical cases on such matters, to motivate business operations between the countries.

Colonia Mexicana en Madrid 1996 Spain

☑ Integration activities

Its mission is to promote coexistence among Mexicans, to share their roots and customs and to support entrepreneurial projects. []

Mexico Amigo UK

☑ Integration activities

☑ Development activities

This charitable organization aims to preserve and promote the Mexican culture, as well as to increase awareness in British society. It develops fundraising activities to support charitable projects in Mexico.


Mexicanos en Alemania 2010 Germany

Integration activities

The organization collects and provides information about sites, groups, services, and blogs of Mexicans in Germany. They share information related to culture, commerce, society, history, as well as information about procedures for residence visits to Germany.

Mexicanos en Madrid, Madrid 2013 Spain

Integration activities

The organization supports Mexicans who want to move to Spain and gives advice on procedures either to study or to work. It also promotes meetings to celebrate Mexican festivities. []

Red Global MX-UK

Development activities

Red Global MX-UK is a diaspora organisation founded in the United Kingdom in 2010 by diaspora with close links to academia. RGMX-UK is a national chapter of Red Global MX, a network founded in 2005 by the government-led Institute of Mexicans Abroad (IME) with the intention of connecting and engaging with highly qualified members from the Mexican diaspora.

Red de Talentos Mexicanos en Países Bajos (RdTM-NL)

Development activities

Red de Talentos Mexicanos en Países Bajos (RdTM-NL) is a civil society organisation seeking to enhance collaboration between Mexico and the Netherlands. Since 2013, RdTM-NL is a national chapter of Red Global MX (RGMX), a network founded in 2005 by the government-led Institute of Mexicans Abroad (IME) with the intention of connecting and engaging with highly qualified members from the Mexican diaspora.

Society of Mexican Students in the UK 2002 UK

Integration activities

This organization represents Mexican students in the United Kingdom, sharing their academic, cultural and social achievements.

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