



Mexico Country Information



Located in North-America, Mexico is the perfect bridge between the USA/Canada and the Latin American continent. The whole country is home to over 125 million people, with a fifth of its population living in the capital, Mexico City. Although national GDP is high, there is a large inequality in the country, with 40% of the population living in poverty.

Built upon the ruins of the Aztec capital Tenochtitlan, Mexico City, or 'CDMX' as it is called nowadays, is the industrial, economical, political, cultural and academic heart of the country. Other important cities include Guadalajara, Monterrey, Puebla and Querétaro, which are also home to the most-renowned universities in the country. Mexico City's UNAM university (ranked #100 in QS 2021) is the largest university in Latin America with over 350,000 students enrolled.

The service level in Mexico is very high, you will be able to find both renowned hotel chains as boutique hotels with top accommodation.

Although the safety reputation of Mexico is not very positive, generally you will find Mexico City to be a safe city to travel around. Incidents mainly happen in parts of the town/country where there is no need to visit as a foreigner.

Business etiquette

Spanish is the official language in Mexico. In most higher positions, people also speak English, but it is not uncommon

to find people in high profile jobs who do not have sufficient command to conduct a business meeting in Spanish. In that case a translator may be useful. People appreciate it if you try to speak a couple of words in Spanish.

The culture is quite opposite to Dutch culture, judging by the 6 dimensions of Geert Hofstede:

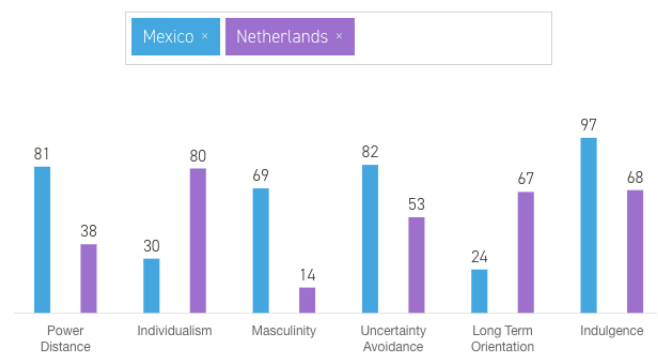


Figure 1 <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/product/compare-countries/>

Mexicans generally are social people and personal relations are very important. This means that business meetings are usually not 'to the point', instead a meeting starts with relatively long small talk (it is always appreciated if you express your appreciation about food, climate, the city, etc.). This is the best way to create lasting professional relationships with people.

Although Mexicans can treat each other quite informal, there is a strong sense of hierarchy and academic titles are commonly used. Make sure to bring sufficient business cards and, during the introduction, exchange cards and leave them on the table during the conversation.

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Time is experienced in a more flexible manner than in western Europe. However, during business meetings most people are punctual, but there is tolerance for a delay without notification because of external factors (traffic, weather, etc.).

Mexican culture is generally considered high-context in comparison with western Europe. People prefer to avoid saying 'no', which can cause some uncertainty. During business meetings people tend to agree to many points, but follow-up mail may be slow or non-existent. This is a sign that probably some points were not possible (at that moment at least).

Education system

For a full overview of education in Mexico, please refer to the [Nuffic website country profile](#). Academic degrees are comparable to European titles:

- Licenciatura – Bachelor
- Maestría – Master
- Doctorado – PhD

However, the education system is more traditional. During the Bachelor degree, research is not always part of the programme. Master programmes do include a certain level of research. PhD's are usually a continuation of Master degrees: established study/research programmes (that include classes as well) instead of individual research projects.

There is a strict separation between public and private institutions. Most academic research is conducted at public universities, while private institutions are more focused on applied research. The best-known public institutions in Mexico City are UNAM, IPN, Colmex and UAM and the top private institutions are Tec de Monterrey (ITESM), Iberoamericana, ITAM, LaSalle and Panamericana.

Funding

Prospective PhD candidates can apply for scholarships at the National Council for Science and Technology, CONACyT. They publish one call per year for candidates from the entire country, specifically for doctoral studies abroad. The call is usually published in February/March and runs until May/June, with the results being published in July/August. This allows candidates to start from September until March. The scholarships cover

tuition fee (if applicable) of up to MXN 300,000 per year, health insurance of USD \$715 per year and living expenses of € 1,090 per month. Usually, the maximum duration is 3 years, but in case no tuition fee applies it may be extended to 4 years.

Additional funding can be found through FIDERH, a public trust fund that offers educational loans for postgraduate studies abroad of up to MXN 200,000 per year for a maximum of 36 months.

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