

Besides the large tourist trade between the two countries, personal contacts are fostered by various arrangements. An exchange agreement permits up to 20 young specialists and technicians from Canada and Mexico to spend a year working or studying in the other country and a scholarship system allows a small number of university students to do the same. Roughly 500 Mexican agricultural workers come to Canada each year to help in harvests. Under a Transfer of Offenders Treaty, Canadians and Mexicans may elect to finish a prison sentence in their own country.

### History and Politics

Mexico is the third largest country in Latin America, after Brazil and Argentina and the most populous Spanish-speaking country in the world. The population of 68 million is made up of Spanish-Indian (Mestizo), American Indian and Caucasian ethnic groups, the heritage of its more modern history which began when Hernan Cortes overthrew the Aztec Empire between 1519 and 1521 and founded a Spanish colony which lasted nearly 300 years. Father Miguel Hidalgo proclaimed Mexico's independence in 1810 and the Republic was established in 1822. In 1836 Texas declared itself independent from Mexico and in 1846, war broke out with the United States. Severe social and economic problems and the repressive political régime led to the revolution of 1910 and since then the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) has been the dominant political force in the country.

The election on July 4, 1982 of Miguel de la Madrid, who will become Mexico's president-elect on December 1, will ensure a good degree of continuity in the bilateral relationship. Mr. de la Madrid, a protégé of President Lopez Portillo, has a similar economic background.