

Geography and Climate

Mexico has an area of 1 973 000 km² (equivalent to Canada's three prairie provinces). Most of the country is a highland plateau bordered by mountains. Mexico City lies at 2 240 m above sea level.

With various altitudes and latitudes and because Mexico is situated between two oceans, the climate differs considerably, ranging from tropical in the coastal lowlands to subtropical in the foothills and cooler but mild temperatures on the central plateau. A few mountain peaks such as the Popocatepetl volcano near Mexico City are perpetually snow-capped.

About 40 percent of Mexico's land receives adequate rainfall; 17 percent of the total area is arable; 48 percent is suitable for livestock; and 29 percent is forested.

Population



Population	86.6 million
Mexico City	21 million
Guadalajara	3 million
Monterrey	2.6 million
Annual growth rate	1.9%
Urban population	71%
Percent of population under 12	71%
Literacy rate	88%
Language	Spanish
Main religion	Roman Catholic

Mexico is now the largest of all Spanish-speaking countries. However, more than one hundred Indian dialects are still spoken in remote areas.