

Changes to the Railway Act introduced in early 1995 will now allow for private-sector participation in: 1) the marketing of cargo and passenger services; 2) intermodal terminal services and operation; 3) locomotive leasing and ownership of cargo equipment; 4) maintenance of rolling stock; 5) track maintenance; and 6) equipment supply and technical consulting for traffic control and telecommunications.

The Mexican port system is comprised of 22 ports of major commercial importance, as well as many small fishing ports, oil facilities and marinas. In 1992, the total volume of cargo handled in national ports reached 175 million tons, 70 percent of which were oil and oil products. Approximately 33 percent of total foreign trade and 4 percent of domestic merchandise transportation are handled by Mexico's port network.

Additionally, two million passengers are transported annually through Mexican ports, making this country the second largest market for cruises. Mexico's main eastern ports are Veracruz and Altamira on the Gulf of Mexico, while the Pacific coast is served by Lázaro Cárdenas and Manzanillo. Minor ports complete the service along Mexico's extensive coastline. Mexico's port authority, Puertos Mexicanos, has launched a major program of privatization and modernization to increase productivity of the port network. The initial focus is on the integration of different transportation modes to increase cargo movement through the use of containers.

Mexico's airport infrastructure consists of 58 airports and four state-owned airports; of these, 38 maintain facilities for international flights. Although the airports are widely dispersed throughout the country, they are mostly concentrated in central Mexico, in the triangular zone between Monterrey, Puerto Vallarta and Acapulco, an area which includes Guadalajara and Mexico City. Considerable investment in airport facilities will be needed throughout the country. Based on rapid growth in passenger demand over the last five years, serious congestion is predicted for the airport terminals in Mexico City, Cancún, Guadalajara, Tijuana, Puerto Vallarta, Monterrey and Acapulco. A second international airport for Mexico City is currently being planned.

The two Mexican airlines with international routes, Mexicana and Aeromexico, were owned by the government until 1989, when they were privatized. Aeromexico now owns 44 percent of Mexicana.