



Mexico

United States of Mexico



Key Facts



World Freedom Press Global Index Ranking (Overall): 144 (46.78)

Head of State / Head of Government: President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador

Capital city: Mexico City

Population: 125,959,205 (July 2018 est.)

Official Language(s): Spanish

Ethnic Groups: mestizo (Amerindian-Spanish) 62%, predominantly Amerindian 21%, Amerindian 7%, other 10% (mostly European) (2012 est.)

Currency: Mexican Peso

Gross domestic product (PPP): \$2.463 trillion USD (2017 est.)

Internet penetration: 65.8% (2018)

Most trusted medium of information: N/A

Legal System: Civil law system with US constitutional law influence; judicial review of legislative acts

Political system: Federal Presidential Republic

Journalists Jailed/Killed 2019: 10

Media Environment: Mexico possesses a mix of state-operated as well as privately owned news agencies. The television sector is dominated by the two rival corporations, both of which have multiple affiliates and stations in several regions of the country. The radio market is incredibly large, boasting approximately 1,400 local and regional stations and several major station-owning groups. Some stations on the northern border often beam into lucrative US markets. While Mexico's internet penetration is relatively low, Mexico remains one of Latin America's biggest internet markets. There were 85 million internet users (65% of the population) by 2017. In recent years, 90% of news sources have been accessed online, with 74% of the devices used for said access being smartphones; computers comprising 43%, and 20% of access was used via tablets. 71% of news sources are accessed via social media, 62% via TV, and 45% via print. 17% of Mexico's population pays for online news. Trust in news overall is 49%, with the majority of trust being in search engines, television, and social media provided news.

Media Issues: Mexico has become one of the most dangerous countries for journalists (excluding war coverage). Most of this revolves around political corruption and organized crime coming into conflict with the press, often resulting in journalists' executions, and attacks on news corporations, many of which go unpunished. Many NGOs and observers suggest that along with cartels, local politicians and even the police have been considered suspects behind most of the anti-press violence. A nationally representative survey of 377 journalists conducted as part of the Worlds of Journalism Study in Mexico showed that four in ten surveyed journalists had been threatened, and three quarters of those have been threatened more than once. Of those who have been threatened, nearly 43 percent attribute the source of the threat to a story related to organized crime and around 35 percent to a political story. Bots and trolls spreading false stories through social media is another hazard, in a country which has one of the highest uses of WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube. During the recent election, a number of journalistic organizations including *AJ+*, *Animal Político* and Pop Up Newsroom got together to counter the threat of misinformation with a project called *Verificado* which involved fact-checking and debunking of hundreds of false stories and memes. Media companies have also faced brand identity theft, leading to confusion amongst the public. As a result, nearly two-thirds (63%) of the online population say they are either 'very' or 'extremely' concerned about what is real and what is fake on the internet when it comes to news.

Popular Forms of Media Consumption

Social Media: Online and social media remain the most popular sources of news in Mexico with our predominantly urban sample. TV and radio remain important to reach the millions of people who are not online. The majority of internet news access is now via smartphones (81%) rather than computers or tablets. *Facebook* has become the most trusted social network in Mexico, with 67% of it using being news consumption and 83% for miscellaneous purposes. *YouTube* follows with 42% of its usage for news coverage, and 86% for miscellaneous purposes.

Television: *TV Azteca* and *Televisa* continue to be the leading commercial TV companies, with their news programs having the highest audiences; generally considered to be the brands with the highest level of political, economic, and social influence in the country. Though public broadcasting did not develop in the same way as in much of Europe, Channel 22, a university television station operated by the National Polytechnic Institute (Instituto Politécnico Nacional) is also one of the most used offline news brands.