

MEXICO

Date of Elections: July 1, 1973

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all members of the Chamber of Deputies on the normal expiry of their term of office.

Characteristics of Parliament

The bicameral Parliament of Mexico, the Congress, comprises the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate.

The Chamber of Deputies is composed of members elected for a 3-year term on the basis of population (one Deputy for every 250,000 inhabitants, or for a fraction exceeding 125,000), no State having fewer than 2 Deputies and no Territory fewer than one, plus such Deputies as may be assigned on the basis of proportional representation to minority parties polling at least 1.5 % of the nationwide vote. Of the current total membership of the Chamber of 231, 195 are accordingly elected via majority vote and 36 are " Party Deputies".

The Senate consists of 60 members elected for 6 years. Two members represent each of the country's 29 States and the Federal District.

Electoral System

Mexican citizens, of either sex, who are at least 18 years of age and in full possession of their political rights are entitled to vote. Excluded from this right are the mentally insane, interned drug addicts, persons convicted of a crime involving liability to imprisonment, persons serving a prison sentence and persons deprived of this right by judicial order.

A further condition for voting is registration as elector. Voting is not compulsory.

All citizens by birth at least 21 years of age and in full possession of their political rights may stand for election to the Chamber of Deputies from their constituency of origin, where they have resided at least 6 months; the age requirement is 30 for Senators. Ministers of religion, members of the federal army on active duty, police officers of a commanding rank within the district concerned, Secretaries or Under-Secretaries of State, justices of the Supreme Court and Governors of the States are not eligible for the Congress; apart from religious ministers, such disqualification can be overridden if the officials con-

cerned resign from their positions 90 days before the election. Governors cannot be elected in the districts of their jurisdiction during their term of office even after resigning their position.

Neither Deputies nor Senators may be re-elected for the immediately following term of Congress. While alternate Deputies and Senators — elected at the same time as titular parliamentarians to fill any vacancy which might arise between general elections — may for their part be elected for the immediately following term as titular members (provided they have not been filling a vacancy), the latter cannot be elected for the immediately following term as alternates.

In accordance with the Constitution, Deputies in the 1973 elections were chosen in the following manner:

1. 195 Deputies were elected in single-member constituencies by simple majority vote, pursuant to representing a certain population;
2. 36 seats (" Party Deputies ") were then distributed, proportionally to the votes obtained at the national scale (5 Deputies for each party obtaining 1.5 % of the national vote, plus one Deputy for every additional 0.5 %), among the political parties which had been registered as such for one year and which had gained less than 25 majority seats. In accordance with the Constitution, however, no one party could receive more than 25 such seats;
3. The designation of " Party Deputies " was not left to the discretion of political groups. Instead, the required number of candidates of each party having obtained the most votes were declared elected.

The 60 Senators are all elected in single-member constituencies by simple majority vote.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

In accordance with constitutional provisions concerning representation, seats within the Chamber of Deputies based on majority vote increased from 178 to 195 as compared with the previous elections.

As in the past, the ruling *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI) — which has dominated the Mexican political scene and won the great majority of Deputies' seats contested in 1970 — presented a vast field of candidates. Led by President of the Republic Luis Echeverria Alvarez, PRI engaged in an intensive campaign to compel the population to register as electors and, once registered, to vote — this in an effort to stem the heavy (55 %) tide of abstentions which had characterized the last elections. PRI hoped that such improved participation would be interpreted as widespread popular support for its President's reformist policies.

Confronting PRI, as before, were the *Partido de Accion Nacional* (PAN), a moderate right-wing group; the *Partido Autentico de la Revolution Mejicana* (PARM), conservative wing of the PRI; and the *Partido Popular Socialista* (PPS), a supporter of the Government. For the first time, these Opposition parties were granted speaking rights on radio and television during the campaign.

Based on a heavy turnout of voters, PRI reaffirmed its overwhelming position in the popular Chamber. After the results had been proclaimed, however, PAN declared that it would contest the reported outcome in 30 electoral districts.

Statistics

1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats in the Chamber of Deputies

Number of registered voters	24,508,778
Voters	15,013,124 (61.25 %)
Blank or void ballot papers	679,008
Valid votes	14,334,116

Political Group	Votes obtained	/o	Deputies elected by majority vote	" Party Deputies	Total Number of Deputies
<i>Partido Revolucionario Institucional</i> (PRI)	10,429,712	72.96	189	—	189
<i>Partido de Accion Nacional</i> (PAN)	2,222,489	15.54	4	21	25
<i>Partido Popular Socialista</i> (PPS)	520,765	3.64	—	10	10
<i>Partido Autentico de la Revolution Mejicana</i> (PARM)	226,420	1.58	2	5	7
Others	894,730	6.25	—	—	—
			195	36	231

2. Distribution of Deputies according to Sex

Men	213
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	231