

Mexico

Mexico has undertaken two Voluntary National Reviews, in 2016 and 2018. While it is not under review this year, it is still subject to the commitment to work towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. With a focus this year on development accelerators and transformative action, it is a key moment to consider activities and tools which can unlock progress, for all, across the board.

Access to information – understood as the physical possibility and right for all to seek and find information, and the skills to use it – can make just such a contribution. This access can help at all levels. It supports individuals to take better decisions about how to farm, where to look for work or how to look after their own and their families' health. It gives governments the possibility to define better policies. It allows researchers to understand the world around us, establish new insights and innovate. Libraries are a key part of the infrastructure for ensuring that this is the case.

But where does Mexico stand today as concerns its libraries and access to information? This data sheet provides background based on data from the Development and Access to Information report produced by IFLA in partnership with the Technology and Social Change Group at the University of Washington, as well as IFLA's own Library Map of the World.

KEY CONCLUSIONS

- *Mexico has a relatively strong library field, with more public libraries and library workers per 100 000 than the global and regional averages. While Mexico has more academic libraries than these averages, these tend to be less well staffed. Around 30% of public libraries offer internet access, a figure that could be improved.*
- *Mexico scores around the regional and global averages on most dimensions of the development and access to information framework, with strong performance on freedom of discussion, and worse indicators on poverty. By connecting more libraries, and ensuring they are able to help those who lack resources build skills and find new possibilities, it may be possible to help tackle this challenge, and so improve performance across the board.*

LIBRARIES IN MEXICO

Mexico has 15 189 libraries in total, according to data available on the IFLA Library Map of the World. This includes 1857 academic libraries, 7427 public libraries, and 5904 school libraries, as well as the national library.

Concerning public libraries, this represents 5.9 libraries per 100 000 people, compared to a global average of 6.8, but well above the average for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) of 3.4. Public libraries are also relatively well-staffed, with 12.6 public or community librarians per 100 000 people, compared to 11.8 globally, and 10.1 in the LAC region. Almost half of Mexico's public libraries offer internet access, compared to an average of around 2/3 globally, and almost 30% of the population are registered library users.

As for academic libraries, Mexico has 1.5 libraries per 100 000 people, a little above the regional average (1.4), and the global average (1.3). However, with 8.9 academic librarians per 100 000 people, the country sits just below the regional (9.1) and global (10.6) figures.

These figures suggest that Mexico's library field is relatively well set up to support development, although further strengthening could be welcome. Greater numbers of public and academic librarians tend to correlate with fewer low-skilled adults, greater equality, and better performance on measures of innovation such as patenting and publishing,

DEVELOPMENT AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION IN MEXICO

The Development and Access to Information report draws on a range of indicators highlighting where countries stand on four key pillars of access to information: connectivity, equality, skills and rights. For meaningful access to information to be a reality for all, performance needs to be strong across all of these categories.

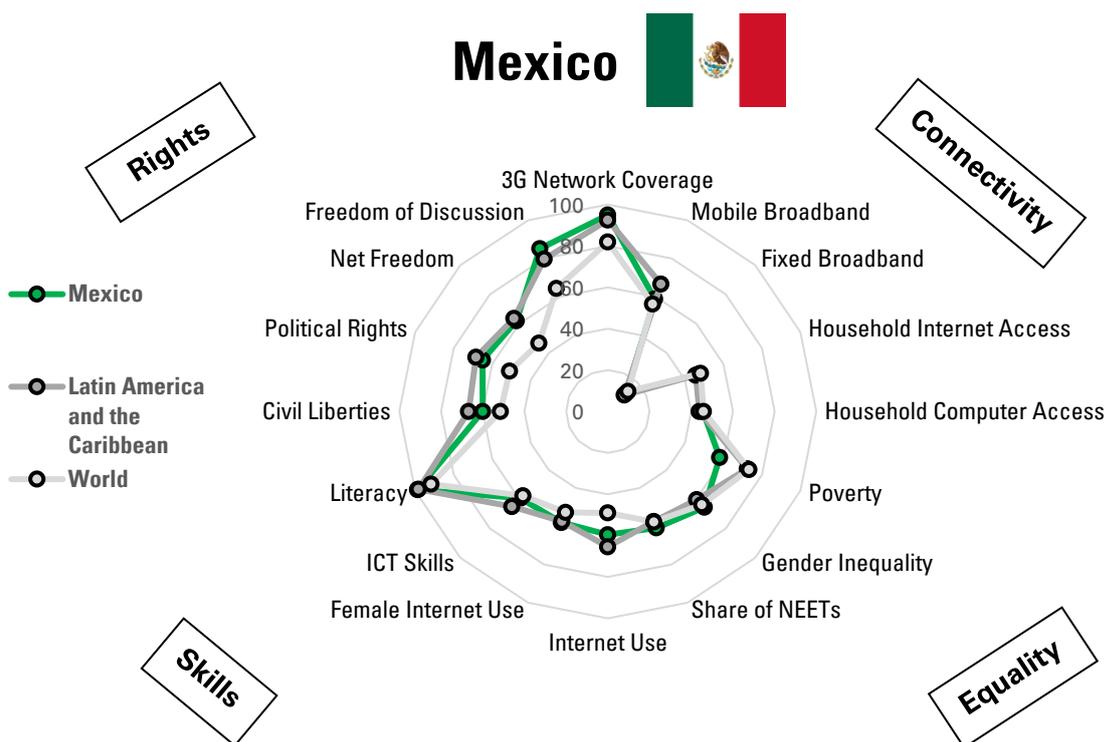
On **connectivity**, Mexico matches regional averages on 3G network coverage, fixed broadband, and household internet and computer access, although scores less well on the number of mobile broadband connections per 100 people. Nonetheless, this does leave extensive room for improvement, especially considering that over half of the population cannot make full use of the potential that the internet brings to access information.

Concerning **equality**, Mexico scores slightly better than the global and regional average on gender equality, and at the average on the share of young people

not in employment, education or training, although once again, this leaves work to do. There is a small gender digital divide in favour of men. Most worrying is a high poverty rate by both regional and global standards, suggesting that a large share of the population struggles to access the basics.

On **skills**, Mexico again scores around regional and global averages, with a strong literacy rate (almost 99%), but more work to do on ensuring that everyone can enjoy a full basic education. As for **rights**, Mexico performs at the average for LAC on political rights and net freedom, but below on civil liberties and higher on freedom of discussion.

With scores across the board mainly in line with regional averages, the most immediate priority for Mexico will be to tackle poverty. Libraries can help by ensuring free access to connectivity and culture, as well as opening up pathways to learning and skills. In doing do, they should also help improve scores on connectivity, equality and skills in general.



How to read the graph: this graph displays a range of indicators used within the DA2I framework, adjusted to fit on a scale of 0-100, where 100 is the most positive outcome in terms of access to information.

TABLE OF DATA

See below for explanations. * = or latest available year. To note, averages are calculated on the basis of available data.

PILLAR	INDICATOR	MEXICO	Year	LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN	Year	WORLD	Year
CONNECTIVITY	3G Network Coverage	95.00%	2016	92.52%	2016	81.92%	2016
	Mobile Broadband (Subscriptions per 100 People)	58.86	2016	66.64	2016	56.22	2016
	Fixed Broadband (Subscriptions per 100 People)	12.58	2016	11.21	2016	13.71	2016
	Household Internet Access	47.02%	2018	45.67%	2016	48.16%	2016
	Household Computer Access	45.59%	2018	43.88%	2016	45.88%	2016
EQUALITY	Poverty (Share of pop'n below national poverty line)	41.90%	2018	27.58%	2015*	26.69%	2015*
	Gender Inequality (0 = More equal, 1 = Less equal)	0.35	2016	0.40	2015	0.36*	2015*
	Share of NEETs	19.55%	2015	21.23%	2015*	21.12%	2015*
	Internet Use	59.54%	2016	65.40%	2016*	49%	2016*
	Female Internet Use	58.10%	2017	57.48%	2016*	52.79%	2016*
SKILLS	ICT Skills	5.93	2016	6.50	2017	5.76	2017
	Literacy	98.74%	2015	98.28%	2015	91.75	2015
RIGHTS	Civil Liberties (0 = least free, 60 = most free)	36.00	2014	40.04	2018	30.9	2018
	Political Rights (0 = least free, 40 = most free)	26.00	2016	27.38	2018	20.37	2018
	Net Freedom (0 = most free, 100 = least free)	38.00	2016	36.36	2016	53.29	2016
	Freedom of Discussion	0.85	2016	0.80	2016	0.64	2016

EXPLANATION OF INDICATORS

3G Network Coverage: this provides a measure of whether one part of the basic infrastructure for connectivity exists, although in itself is not enough to guarantee access (users need a device and a relevant subscription to be able to get online). Source: ITU

Mobile Broadband (Mobile Broadband Subscriptions per 100 people): this provides an idea of how many people can use mobile internet, opening up many – if not all – of the possibilities that internet access brings. One person may have more than one subscription. Source: ITU

Fixed Broadband (Fixed Broadband Subscriptions per 100 people): this provides an idea of how widespread home or business internet access is. Fixed access is often associated with the possibility to connect computers to make more advanced uses of the internet. Source: ITU

Household Internet Access (Share of Households with Internet Access): access to the internet at home allows for access to information at any time without having to go outside, but may be controlled by some members of the family. Source: ITU

Household Computer Access (Share of Households with a Computer): this focuses on access to computers. This is crucial for people to be able to carry out more advanced activities on the internet that might be impossible on a phone, such as writing resumes or analysing data. Source: ITU

Poverty: this indicator measures the number of people living below the national poverty line, which varies from country to country. It is a measure of economic inequality in a country. The indicator is inversed in the chart (i.e. the share of people not under the poverty line). Source: World Bank

Gender Inequality: this is calculated using the Gender Inequality Index. This index uses a basket of indicators in different areas of social development including: reproductive health, proportion of women in parliament, relative shares of men and women with at least some secondary education, and labour market participation in order to provide a broad idea of the extent of gender inequality in a country. The indicator runs from 0 (most equal) to 1 (least equal) and is inversed and adapted in the chart above. Source: UNDP



Share of NEETS (People aged 15-24 Not in Education, Employment or Training): this measures the share of young people cut off from education or the job market. Being 'NEET' can bring long-term scarring effects, and so reducing numbers is a key priority. The indicator is inversed and adapted in the chart (i.e. the share of young people who are not NEET). Source: ILO.

Internet Use (Share of People Using the Internet): looking beyond household access data (which will be affected by the structure of households in general), this gives a figure for the number of people using the internet. Source: ITU

Female Internet Use: this measure, in conjunction with the share of the overall population using the internet, allows us to understand to what extent there is a gender digital divide. Source: ITU

ICT Skills: there are relatively few global metrics of ICT skills, with those that exist only focusing on certain regions. The Skills Sub-Index of the ICT Development Index created by the ITU aims to work in this direction using levels of secondary and tertiary education enrolment, plus mean years of schooling, as proxies. Source: ITU

Literacy: this measures literacy among 15-24 year olds – i.e. people who have finished formal education. While there are online resources available for people with low literacy, being able to read, type, and understand information remains a fundamental skill. Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

Civil Liberties: this provides an indication of the degree to which citizens of a country enjoy fundamental civic rights, including freedom of expression and association, as well as the strength of the rule of law, based on expert judgements. Scores run from 0 (least free) to 60 (most free) and have been adapted to fit the graphic above. Source: Freedom House.

Political Rights: this provides a measure of the rights people have to participate in the political process, including fair and free elections, political pluralism, and the functioning of government in general. Scores run from 0 (least free) to 40 (most free) and have been adapted to fit the graphic above. Source: Freedom House.

Net Freedom: this metric assesses the level of restrictions on rights online by both public and private actors. It draws on assessments of obstacles to access (legal, economic and practical), limits on content, and violations of rights. Scores run from 100 (least free) to 0 (most free) and so are inverted in the graphic above. Source: Freedom House.



Freedom of Discussion: this indicator looks at whether people are able to hold private discussions without fear of repercussions either from the authorities or society in general due to cultural restrictions or norms. Scores run from 0 (least free) to 1 (most free), and so are adapted to fit into the graphic above. Source: V-Dem dataset codebook.