

## **V.I.P. ARTICLE SUBMITTED BY:**

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## **Mexico's Electoral Process**

Mexico's official name is the Federal Republic of Mexico. As the name states, we are a federal republic with a Presidential system. The President is elected every six years, with no option of reelection.

The election is divided into four stages:

- 1) Election Preparation
- 2) Election
- 3) Publication of the results
- 4) Declaration of the validity of the election and of the elected President.

The first stage involves political campaigning by all of the candidates and the training of individual citizens to run the voting stations. It begins officially on the first week of October of the year before the year in which the election is to be held. There are currently eight registered political parties in Mexico: the National Action Party (PAN), the Revolutionary Institutional Party (PRI), the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), the Labour Party (PT), the Green Ecologist Party (PVEM), the Convergence Party (Convergencia), the New Alliance Party (Nueva Alianza), and the Social Democratic Party (PSD). Write-in candidates are also allowed. The voting booths are run by Mexican citizens who are registered to vote and are picked randomly from voting records (usually by their last names and/or birthdates). These citizens attend training sessions run by the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE), an independent body founded in 1990 to monitor the transparency and validity of elections in Mexico.

The second stage includes the actual voting process. This stage begins at 8:00 AM on the first Sunday in July of the election year. Elections in Mexico are held in July. In Mexico, all people vote at voting station. The voting station one is assigned to depends on one's address. In order to vote, all Mexican citizens must have registered before the election and have obtained a voter's ID that includes one's photograph, name, address, fingerprint and age. The vote is free and secret and is conducted through paper ballots. As of 2006, absentee voting from foreign countries has been allowed.

The third stage involves the counting of the ballots by the volunteer election workers. The election workers then write up the totals, seal up the ballot boxes and return the results to the IFE. The Electoral Tribunal then reports the results and declares the validity of the election. This stage must be completed by the last week in August.

In the fourth stage the Electoral Tribunal addresses any complaints on the validity of the election and, once they have been resolved, approves the election of the new President. According to the law, this last stage must be concluded during the month of September.