

# How's Life in Mexico?



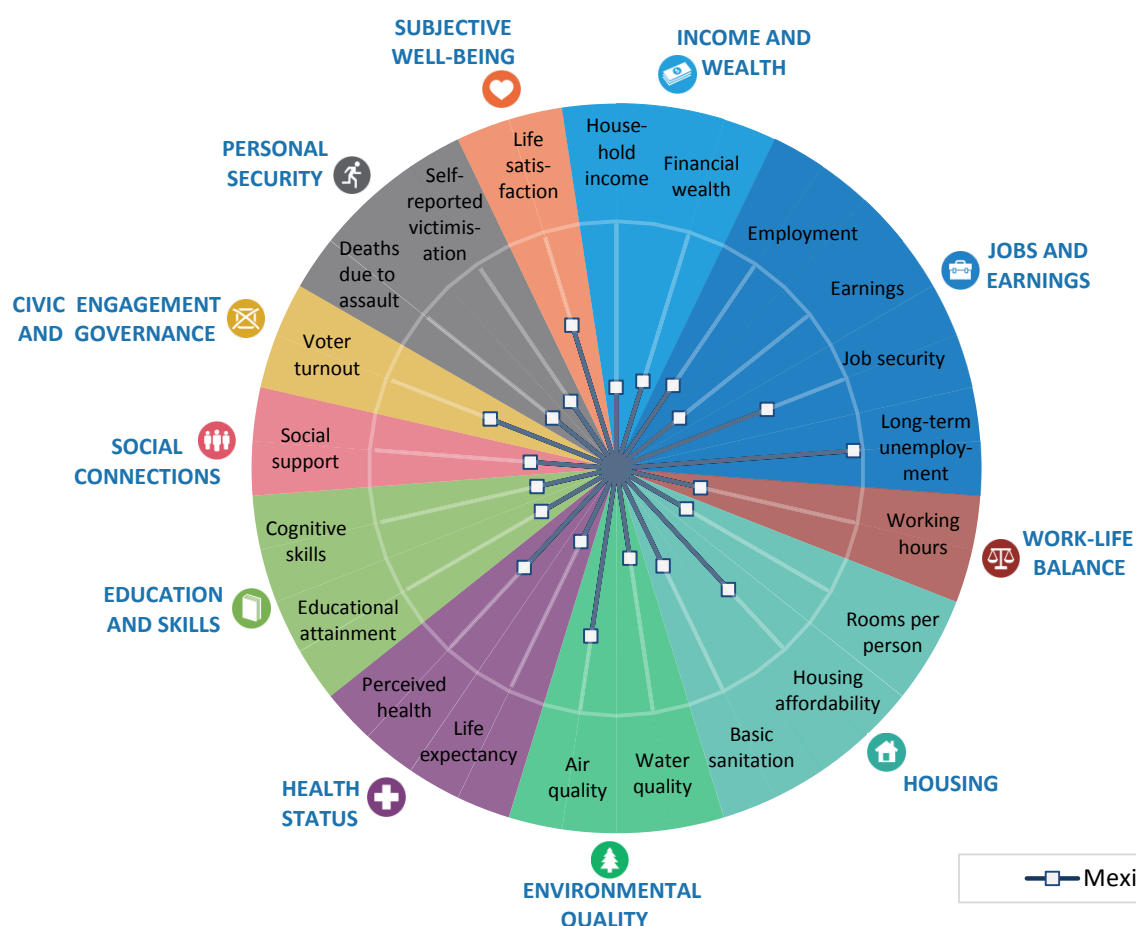
Additional information, including the data used in this country note, can be found here:  
[www.oecd.org/statistics/Hows-Life-2015-country-notes-data.xlsx](http://www.oecd.org/statistics/Hows-Life-2015-country-notes-data.xlsx)

## HOW'S LIFE IN MEXICO IN 2015?

**Average household disposable income** per capita in Mexico is lower than the OECD average. On the other hand, the **long-term unemployment rate** and the risk of workers losing their jobs (the indicator used to assess **job security**) are relatively low compared to other OECD countries but 28.8% of Mexican employees usually **work long hours** compared to the OECD average of only 12.5%.

Since 2009, Mexico has seen improvements in housing conditions with the share of people living in dwellings with **basic sanitation** increasing. Mexico has one of the lowest **life expectancy** (74.8 years) in the OECD. However, self-reported health status is close to the OECD average. Regarding **social network support**, 76.7% of Mexicans report having friends or relatives that they can count on in times of trouble. Mexico ranks low in terms of **personal security**. However, the **life satisfaction** of Mexicans is similar to the OECD average.

### Current well-being in Mexico



This chart shows areas of well-being strengths and weaknesses in Mexico, based on a ranking of all OECD countries. Longer lines show areas of relative strength, while shorter lines show areas of relative weakness. For more details, see: [www.oecd.org/statistics/How's-Life-2015-country-notes-data.xlsx](http://www.oecd.org/statistics/How's-Life-2015-country-notes-data.xlsx).

### Resources for future well-being in Mexico

Beyond measuring well-being today, *How's Life? 2015* looks at some of the resources (or “capital stocks”) that will shape people’s well-being in the future. These include aspects of **natural capital**, **human capital**, **social capital** and **economic capital**.

For example, **human capital** refers to the skills, competencies and health status of individuals. The **educational attainment of young adults** is an important indicator for the skills that are carried forward to the future. In this regard, the share of Mexicans aged 25-34 attaining at least upper secondary education increased from 37.1% in 2000 to 47.7% in 2013.

## HOW'S LIFE FOR CHILDREN IN MEXICO?

Giving children a good start in life is important both for well-being today, and in the future.

Compared to children in other OECD countries, the average Mexican child experiences rather **low material living conditions**, with the **child income poverty** rate at 25.8%.

Nevertheless, since 2007, Mexico has seen improvements in the rate of **infant mortality** and **low birth weights**, as well as in **teenage birth rates**. Furthermore the rate of low birth weight in Mexico is lower than the OECD average.

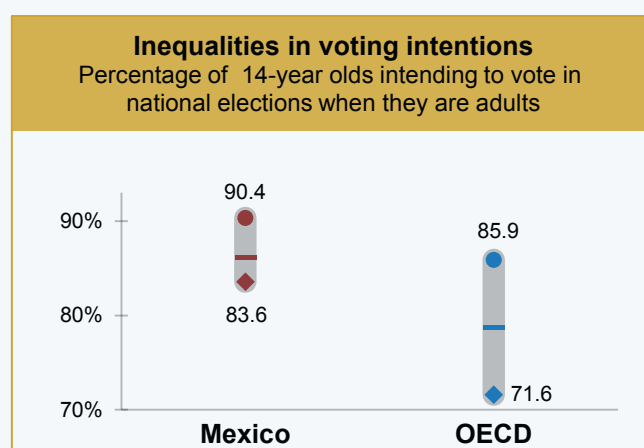
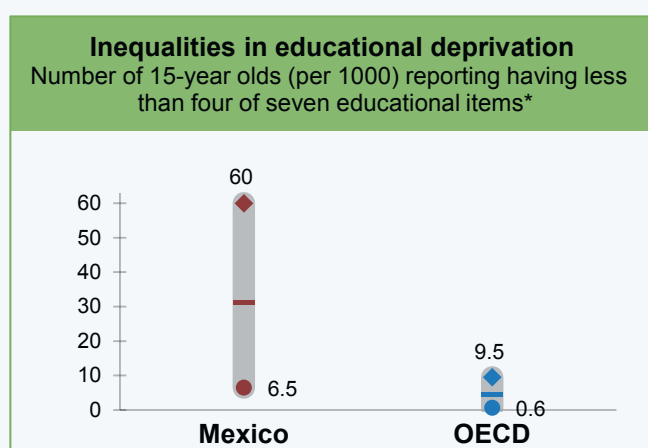
Mexico ranks rather low in terms of **reading skills** among 15 year olds, and 15.5% of Mexicans aged 15 to 19 are **neither in employment nor in education or training**.

Child well-being in Mexico			
Ranking of Mexico compared to other OECD countries			
	● top third	● middle third	● bottom third
Income and Wealth	Disposable income of households with children		●
	Child income poverty		●
Housing conditions	Average rooms per child		●
Health status	Infant mortality		●
	Low birth weight	●	
	Adolescent suicide rate	●	
	Teenage birth rate		●
Education and Skills	Reading skills among 15 year olds (PISA)		●
	Youth neither in employment nor education/training		●
	Educational deprivation		●
Civic engagement	Intention to vote	●	
	Civic participation	●	
Social and family environment	Sense of belonging in school at 15 years old (PISA)	●	
Personal security	Child homicide rate		●

However, in terms of **civic engagement**, Mexico performs well: 86.2% of Mexican 14-year olds intend to vote in elections when they are adults, and 50.2% report having participated in organisations, groups or clubs in the last 12 months. Additionally, the **sense of school belonging index** in Mexico lies above the OECD average.

### Inequalities in child well-being

Across all OECD countries there are **large inequalities in child well-being**. Children from wealthier households enjoy much better material living conditions and have a higher **quality of life**, on average. In Mexico, there are wide differences in educational deprivation between children from high and low socio-economic backgrounds. By contrast, there is a relatively narrow difference in intentions to vote among 14 year olds.



● High socio-economic status    ◆ Low socio-economic status    — National average

\* For more information (including definitions) see: [www.oecd.org/statistics/Hows-Life-2015-country-notes-data.xlsx](http://www.oecd.org/statistics/Hows-Life-2015-country-notes-data.xlsx).

## THE VALUE OF GIVING: VOLUNTEERING AND WELL-BEING

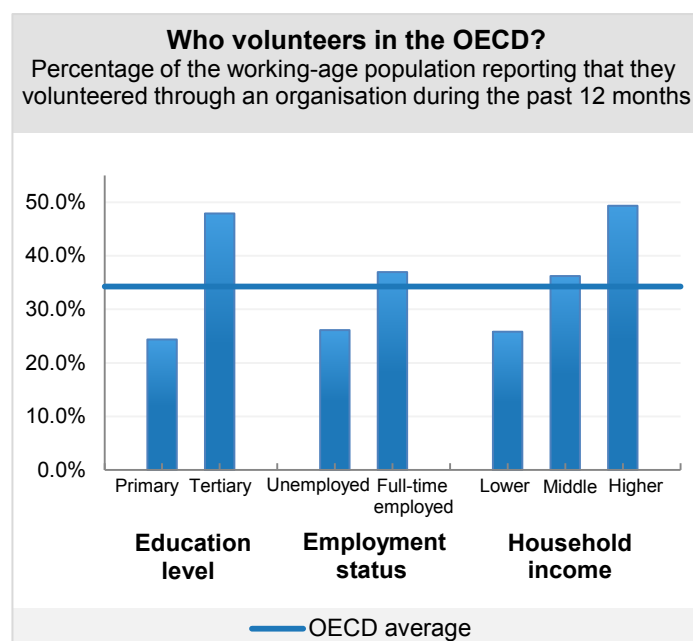
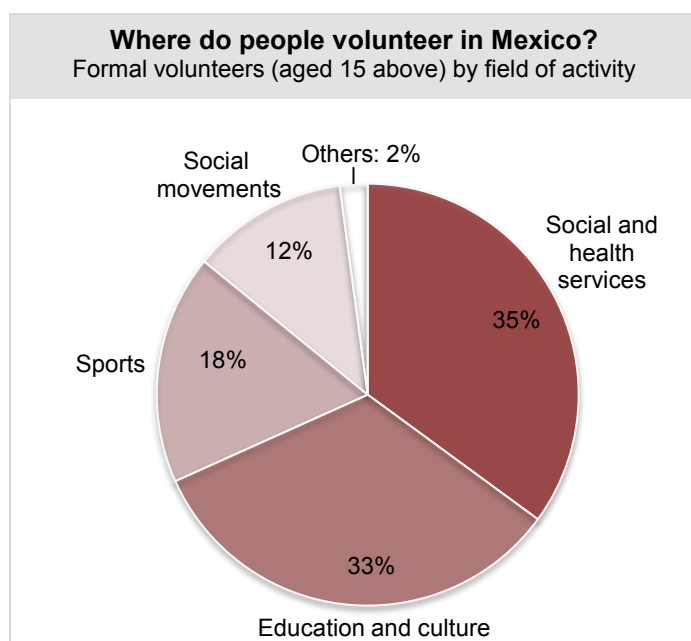
Volunteering makes an important “hidden contribution” to well-being, producing goods and services that are not captured by conventional economic statistics. When you add up the value of the time people spend on volunteering in OECD countries, it amounts to roughly 2% of GDP per year.

### Volunteering in Mexico and the OECD

The two main **sectors for volunteer activities** in Mexico are social and health services, followed by education and culture. Compared to other OECD countries, the Mexican working-age population spends relatively little time on volunteering through an organisation (termed “**formal volunteering**”). The average Mexican aged 15-64 spends only 1 minute per day on formal volunteering which is less than the OECD average of 5 minutes per day, although differences in how data are collected across countries make international comparisons difficult in this area.

Mexican students are much more likely to engage in organisation-based volunteering than the average student in the OECD: 40.4% of Mexican students aged around 14 volunteered at least once in the 12 preceding months compared to the OECD average of 29.7%.

**Who volunteers?** Across the OECD area, people with a university degree are more likely to volunteer formally than those with lower levels of education. Similarly, people who are in employment are more likely to volunteer than those who are unemployed. Participation in formal volunteering also increases with people’s level of household income.

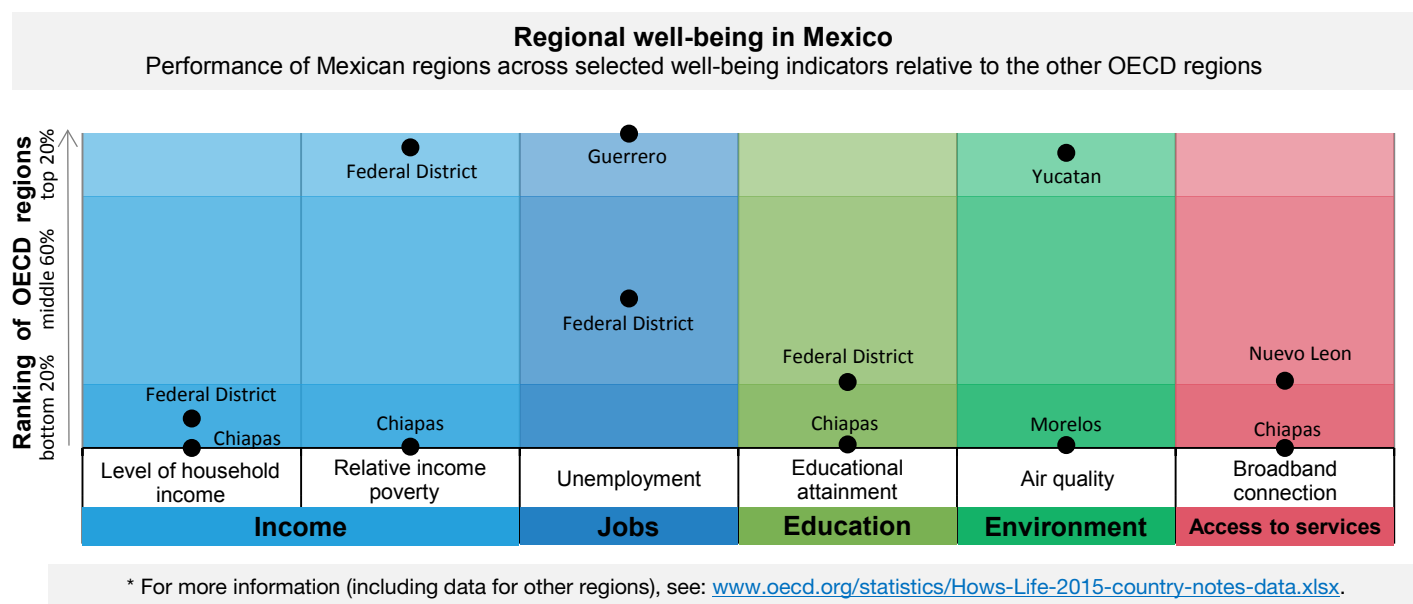


Volunteering brings benefits for volunteers themselves, as well as for the people and communities they help. For example, people who engage in volunteering are more likely to have higher literacy, numeracy and problem-solving **skills** and receive **higher wages**, on average, relative to non-volunteers.

In OECD countries, older people who volunteer formally are more likely to report a better **health status** than non-volunteers. Furthermore, formal volunteers in the OECD, on average, also report higher **life satisfaction** than non-volunteers.

## GOING LOCAL: MEASURING WELL-BEING IN REGIONS

Where people live has an important impact on their opportunities to live well. There can be large differences in average levels of well-being in different regions within the same country. **How's Life in your Region?** and the **OECD regional well-being web-tool** assess performance across 9 dimensions of well-being in the 362 OECD large regions – 32 of which are in Mexico. Drawing on this work, *How's Life? 2015* includes a special focus on measuring well-being in regions.



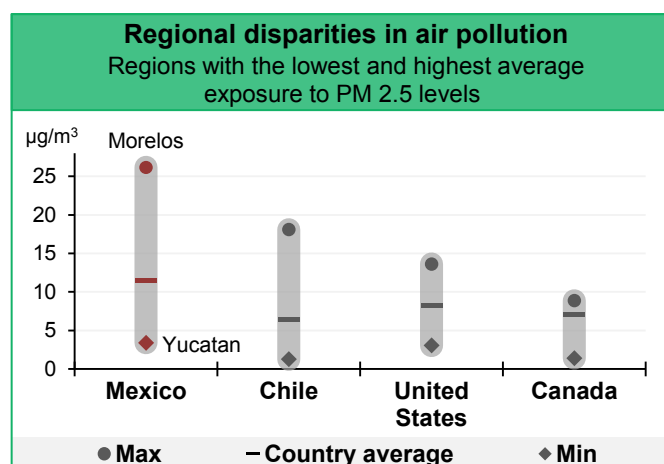
### Regional gaps in material living conditions

In Mexico, regional inequalities in income and jobs are higher than those observed in other OECD countries. **Household adjusted disposable income** is nearly three times higher in the Federal District than in Chiapas. Regarding **relative income poverty**\*, while 5.4% of people in the Federal District have an income of less than half of the Mexican median income, the share is 48.9% in Chiapas. **Unemployment rates** range from 1.5% in Guerrero to 6.8% in the Federal District.

### Regional differences in people's quality of life

Regarding **educational attainment**, 57.6% of the labour force have at least a secondary education in the Federal District, while this share is only 26.9% in Chiapas.

Regional variation in **air quality** is also large in Mexico. The share of households with a **broadband connection** ranges from 55.1% in Nuevo Leon to only 9.5% in Chiapas.



\* Relative income poverty shown here uses a poverty line defined at 50% of the national median income. It differs from the national definition of relative poverty in Mexico computed by CONEVAL, which takes into account both monetary and non-monetary poverty.

## BETTER LIFE INDEX

The **Better Life Index** is an interactive web application that invites citizens to compare well-being across OECD countries and beyond on the basis of the set of well-being indicators explored in *How's Life?*. Users chose what weight to give to each of the eleven dimensions shown below and then see how countries' perform, based on their own personal priorities in life.

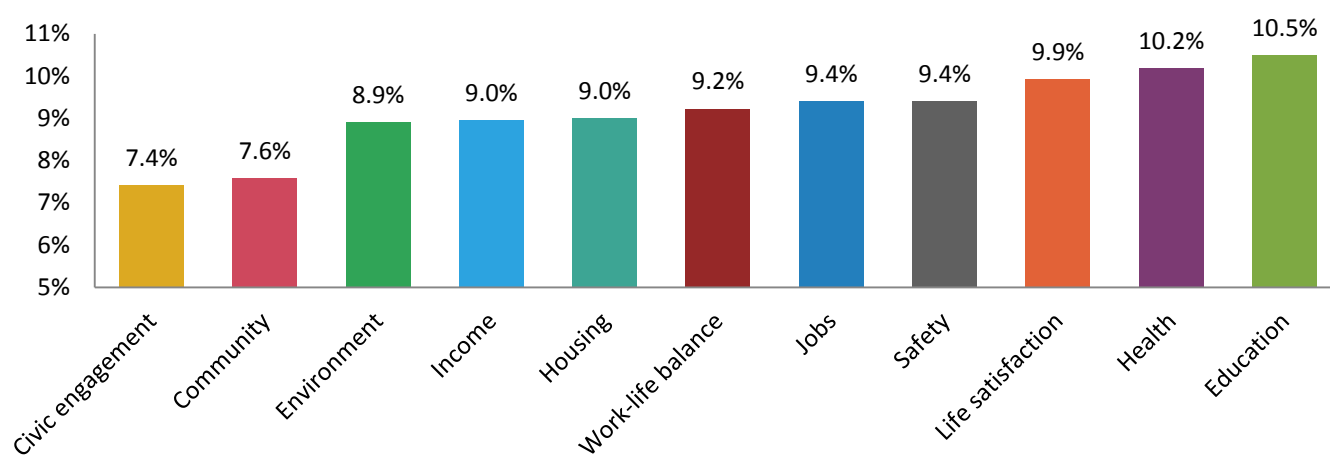


Users can also share their index with other people in their networks, as well as with the OECD. This allows the OECD to gather valuable information on the importance that users attach to various life dimensions, on how these preferences differ across countries, and on the demographic characteristics of users.

## WHAT MATTERS MOST TO PEOPLE IN MEXICO?

Since its launch in May 2011, the Better Life Index has attracted **over seven million visits from just about every country on the planet** and has received over **15 million page views**. To date, over 442,000 people in Mexico have visited the website making Mexico the 2nd country overall in traffic to the website. The top cities are Mexico City (29% of visits), Guadalajara, Monterrey, Puebla and Santiago de Queretaro.

The following country findings reflect the ratings voluntarily shared by 4,800 website visitors in Mexico. Findings are only indicative and are not representative of the population at large. **For Mexican users of the Better Life Index, education, health and life satisfaction are the three most important topics** (shown below).<sup>1</sup> Up to date information, including a breakdown of participation in each country by gender and age can be found here: [www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/responses/#MEX](http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/responses/#MEX).



<sup>1</sup> User information for Mexico is based on shared indexes submitted between May 2011 and April 2015.



The **OECD Better Life Initiative**, launched in 2011, focuses on the aspects of life that matter to people and that shape their quality of life. The Initiative comprises a set of regularly updated well-being indicators and an analysis, published in the **How's Life?** report as well as an interactive web application, the **Better Life Index**. It also includes a number of methodological and research projects to improve the information base towards a better understanding of well-being trends and their drivers.

The OECD Better Life Initiative:

- Helps to inform policy making to improve quality of life.
- Connects policies to people's lives.
- Generates support for needed policy measures.
- Improves civic engagement by encouraging the public to create their own *Better Life Index* and share their preferences about what matters most for well-being
- Empowers the public by improving their understanding of policy-making.

This brochure presents **selected findings for Mexico from the *How's Life?* report** (pages 2-5) and shows what **Mexican users of the Better Life Index** are telling us about their **well-being priorities** (page 6). A supporting Excel file with the data underlying the graphs shown in this note and further information is available here: [www.oecd.org/statistics/How's-Life-2015-country-notes-data.xlsx](http://www.oecd.org/statistics/How's-Life-2015-country-notes-data.xlsx).

## HOW'S LIFE?



**How's Life?**, published every two years, provides a comprehensive picture of well-being in OECD countries and other major economies by bringing together an internationally comparable set of well-being indicators that the OECD considers as essential to a good life. It looks at people's material conditions and quality of life across the population in eleven dimensions including: income and wealth; jobs and earnings; housing; health status; work-life balance; education and skills; social connections; civic engagement and governance; environmental quality; personal security; and subjective well-being.

The *How's Life? 2015* report includes for the first time a set of indicators to measure the stocks of resources that help to support **well-being over time**. The report also contains three special chapters focusing on **child well-being**, **volunteering** and **regional well-being**.





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