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## **Voting is the most important political instrument citizens have in a democracy: Blog post**

Guadalupe Sanchez Salazar

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## Voting is the most important political instrument citizens have in a democracy

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### Voting is the most important political instrument citizens have in a democracy

March 28, 2018

Honorable Consul Guadalupe Sanchez Salazar

Consulado de México en Omaha



On July 1, 2018, Mexicans, both in Mexico and living abroad, will have the opportunity to participate in our nation's general election. This will be the third time, after 2006 and 2012, that Mexicans living abroad will be able to exercise their civic and political right. Mexico, the country with the second largest diaspora in the world-after India-reformed its laws in 2005 to allow all its citizens to vote, regardless of the place they live in.

This coming election in 2018 will be a historic one. Not only for the extraordinary number of public appointments that will be in dispute—more than 3,600. More importantly because for the first time in history, Mexicans living around the globe will be able to vote for all of the seats in the Senators' Chamber and six Governorships: Chiapas, Guanajuato, Jalisco, Morelos, Puebla, Yucatán and Mexico City. Citizens whose hometown belongs to these states will be able to vote to choose their candidate for Governor. State laws in Yucatán and Tabasco still do not allow out of country voting.

### Out of country voting

The last reform to the electoral law in 2014 converted the former Electoral Federal Institute (IFE, for its acronym in Spanish) into the Electoral National Institute (INE, for its acronym in Spanish), which is the institution in charge of federal elections at the national level in Mexico.

A national law, the General Law on Electoral Institutions and Procedures, establishes the rules and means for the national system of elections. Other organs of the system are the National Electoral

Institute or INE, which is the governing body; and the state authorities responsible for electoral management in the 32 Mexican states, known as public local electoral bodies or OPLEs. A very important part of the system is the Electoral Court of the Federal Judicial Branch, which is the maximum authority in charge of the resolution of controversies in the electoral field.

## National Political Parties

Nine national political parties will participate in this coming election. These are the *Partido Acción Nacional (PAN)*, *Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI)*, *Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD)*, *Partido del Trabajo (PT)*, *Partido Verde Ecologista de México (PVE)*, *Movimiento Ciudadano (MC)*, *Nueva Alianza (NA)*, *Morena* y *Partido Encuentro Social (PES)*.

It is important to underline that three coalitions have been officially formed to launch the common candidatures for President of the Republic of Mexico, as follows:

- ***Coalición Por México al Frente***, formed by PAN, PRD and MC, with **Ricardo Anaya** as candidate.
- ***Coalición Juntos Haremos Historia*** formed by Morena, PT and PES, with **Andrés Manuel López Obrador** as candidate.
- ***Coalición Todos por México***, formed by PRI, PVEM and NA, with **José Antonio Meade** as candidate.

## Independent Candidacies

An additional reform to the General Constitution in 2012 acknowledged the figure of independent candidacies for elective posts in all levels of government. The only independent candidate for the 2018 Presidential Elections who fulfilled all the requirements for registration was **Mrs. Margarita Zavala**.

## Process for the Mexicans living abroad to obtain their INE card to be able to vote:

After the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the INE reached an agreement, the network of Mexico's Embassies and Consulates became part of the program to facilitate the issuance or renovation of the voting ID card around the world.

Mexicans living in the states of Nebraska and Iowa that desire to process their INE card for the first time or to renew it must go personally to our offices at the Consulate of Mexico in Omaha. Our Consulate is located in 7444 Farnam Street, 68114, to request it. The deadline to process voting ID cards for the 2018 election is March 31, 2018. The interested party should present the following documentation:

- Proof of Mexican identity (birth certificate)
- Official ID with photograph
- Original proof of address (it is not necessary for the name of the applicant be on it)

Once the applicant receives the photo-voting card he/she must call INETEL (1 866 986 8306) to activate it and automatically become part of the List of Voters Living Abroad. The deadline to activate the ID card is April 30<sup>th</sup>.

For those that already have their INE, they must express their voting intentions by registering on the List of Voters Living Abroad, starting on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 until March 31, 2018, by accessing [www.votoextranjero.mx](http://www.votoextranjero.mx) or by downloading the *VotoExtranjero* App available on Google Play and the Apple App Store.

### **Casting Vote from abroad**

Beginning May 21, INE will start sending the electoral packages to people registered in the List of Voters Living Abroad to the addresses provided by the applicants. Voters must send back their envelopes with their votes through the postal service before June 30, 2018, which is one day before Election Day, in order for their vote to be counted. It is important to note that the acquisition of the INE card is at no cost for the voters.

### **Trust in our Electoral Institutions**

It is a legitimate demand of the citizens of Mexico to expect honesty, impartiality, transparency, and integrity throughout the electoral processes. To enforce this, INE's authorities have assured a permanent updating and filtering of the three instruments that make up the electoral registry: electoral roll, voting ID card, and voter's list. It is very important to underline that enrolment into the electoral registry is personal, permanent, and based on biometrical elements. The voting ID card includes sophisticated security features that guarantee its impregnability; and the voter's lists are printed out on security paper fabricated specifically to prevent it from being falsified.

The Consulate of Mexico invites all Mexican citizens living in the area to set up an appointment at MEXITEL (1 877 4635) and to come to the Consulate of Mexico in Omaha this coming Saturday, March 31, to process their voting ID card. This will allow you to participate in this historic election for Mexico.

It is your right and your duty.

*Ven y Acércate a tu Consulado.*

More information in Spanish: [Voto de los Mexicanos Residentes en el Extranjero](#) and [Mexican Consulate in Omaha](#).

**Tramita en el Consulado tu credencial para votar**



**Haz tu cita en MEXITEL**

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### Contact Us

OLLAS Office ASH 102  
6001 Dodge Street  
Omaha, NE 68182-0479

Phone: [402.554.3835](tel:402.554.3835)

Fax: [402.554.3557](tel:402.554.3557)

Email: [unollas@unomaha.edu](mailto:unollas@unomaha.edu)

### Office Hours

M-F 8:30 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.

## College of Arts and Sciences

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