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Old publication, but relevant.....

World Directory of Minorities

Americas MRG Directory -> Mexico -> Indigenous peoples

Mexico has one of the largest and most diverse indigenous populations in Latin America. Although the country had recognized the existence of and contributions made by indigenous peoples in the construction of the country, it was only with the 1992 Constitution that the nation was deemed pluricultural. Mexico's indigenous population numbers 12.7 million people representing 13 per cent of the national population, speaking 62 languages between them. Official statistics had traditionally defined the indigenous population using criteria based on language, which many have argued largely underestimated this increasingly urban population. However, indigenous peoples' organizations were successful in pressuring the government to include a question based on self-identification in the 2000 Census. In that year, only half of those who identified as indigenous actually spoke an indigenous language and of those who did, 84 per cent also spoke Spanish. Data from 2005 show that a small fraction of indigenous peoples remains monolingual.

The majority of the indigenous population is concentrated in the southern and south-central region of Mexico. Almost 80 per cent of those who speak an indigenous language live in eight of Mexico's 31



states; in rank order these are Oaxaca, Chiapas, Veracruz, Puebla, Yucatán, Guerrero, Hidalgo and Mexico City. The five predominant languages spoken by indigenous people are Náhuatl, followed by Maya, Zapotec, Mixtec and Otomí (Mexican Statistics Bureau).

Historical context

Indigenous culture is considered to be at the heart of Mexican society. Mexico is proud of its ancient Maya and Aztec monuments, and its indigenous dances, crafts and markets, which contribute significantly to the country's appeal to tourists. Since the revolution of 1910–20, successive governments have professed a desire to integrate indigenous people into Mexican society. The Independent Department of Native Affairs, set up in 1946 under the Ministry of Education, began a programme of teaching Spanish to indigenous children. However, the negative result of such programmes has been a promotion of an assimilatory model for indigenous peoples, which has devalued indigenous languages, cultures and autonomy.

Officially, Mexico's indigenous communities are protected by human rights legislation. The government's National Indigenous Institute has offices throughout the country to facilitate consultation with indigenous communities, and government statements are careful to recognize the principle of cultural diversity. However, there have been complaints that the institute is patronizing in its attitude to indigenous people and simply a token effort of the government, although its personnel have at times been energetic defenders of indigenous communities and have even been persecuted as a result.

In an effort to protect citizens against human rights abuses, in 1990 the Mexican government established the National Commission of Human Rights, which receives complaints of abuses at the federal and state levels. However, this agency has been criticized for failing to take on cases of grievous rights violations, leading many indigenous leaders and rights activists to question its credibility. Nevertheless, the Commission produces reports and publications drawing attention to Mexico's human rights record. The government has also ratified International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 169 of 1989 on the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples, although it is argued that constitutional reforms have undermined land rights guaranteed under the Convention.

Many indigenous organizations, ranging from small community-based groups to national bodies, have arisen to fight for better living conditions for this population. They have campaigned for access to education, health services, potable water, credits, fair wages, political representation, consultation, the protection of local environments, and official recognition of their languages and traditional skills as healers. Some of these groups work in collaboration with other local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and human rights bodies and others have partnered with local governments.

The situation of Mexico's indigenous communities gained worldwide attention in January 1994 when indigenous peasants representing a number of different ethnic groups, taking the name of Emiliano Zapata, a popular leader murdered by the military in 1919, launched an armed uprising on the day that the North American Free Trade Agreement came into effect. Occupying four towns in Chiapas – where the situation of indigenous people has long been worse than in other states – the National Zapatista Liberation Army (EZLN) stated its opposition to indignities faced by indigenous people and others in Mexico. They called for better conditions for indigenous peoples, protection of communal land and an end to government corruption and human rights abuses. After the initial fighting, the government declared a ceasefire, promised to address rebel concerns and released prisoners. Negotiations were started between a government-appointed mediator and the rebels but broke down when the government proved unwilling to accept most of the rebel demands.



Obsessions

As the government budget threatens the population of wild horses, one woman is fighting to keep them free.

At the height of the uprising government forces shot, execution-style, eight suspected members of the EZLN; and, according to human rights observers, dozens of critics of the regime have been killed or have ‘disappeared’, reportedly at the hands of death squads organized by government forces working in collusion with private interests. The brutal torture and rape of indigenous

women in Chiapas is also documented; perpetrators are rarely brought to trial.

In the elections of August 1994 the PRI candidate, Eduardo Robledo Rincón, officially won the governor’s race in Chiapas, but the EZLN and opposition leaders insisted that progressive candidate Amado Avendado was the rightful winner. They created a parallel government, seized government offices, took over radio stations, mounted roadblocks and the EZLN eventually took over 38 towns in the state. The parallel authority permitted peasants to expropriate large estates, liquidated existing state structures and instituted new laws favouring indigenous people and the poor. Large demonstrations were held in cities across Mexico in support of the rebels.

The Mexican government was forced to devalue the peso by 50 per cent in the last two weeks of December 1994, precipitating a loss of business confidence in the new administration of President Ernesto Zedillo. In an attempt to regain investors’ support, Zedillo implemented harsh austerity measures designed to control government spending and inflation. In February 1995 he also ordered a military offensive against the EZLN bases, forcing the rebels to retreat into the mountains.

The EZLN and indigenous organizations represented by the National Plural Indigenous Assembly for Autonomy had been demanding constitutional reforms to allow for the creation of pluri-ethnic autonomous regions in areas of significant indigenous population. In effect, this would have established a fourth level of government at a regional level, which would coexist with the existing municipal, state and federal government authorities. Regional autonomy would also have allowed indigenous peoples greater control over their land and resources in accordance with ILO Convention No. 169. In 1996 the EZLN and Mexican government officials negotiated and signed the San Andres Accords, which guarantee land rights, regional autonomy and cultural rights for indigenous peoples. The Mexican government later refused to implement these agreements.

Current issues

Generally, indigenous peoples have retained local forms of organization to defend their culture and livelihoods. Others have witnessed the collapse of their traditions under the burden of poverty, and believe that they must reject their ethnic identity and integrate into mestizo society if they are to improve their living conditions.

Despite legislative reforms and the signing of treaties and accords, the indigenous people in Mexico experience a double form of discrimination – both because of their low economic standing and poor

levels of formal education, and also on grounds of language, dress and other cultural manifestations. What little land they own is generally insufficient to support them, so many seek waged work from

mestizo employers, who generally treat them disrespectfully.

Although the EZLN by no means represents Mexico's diverse indigenous population, this pan-indigenous movement has been considered the voice of indigenous peoples since the uprisings of 1994. The tenth anniversary of the Zapatista uprising highlighted some of the gains of the movement, including the effective governing of a number of autonomous indigenous communities. Throughout the late 1990s the EZLN mobilized large numbers of indigenous peoples and sympathizers in a series of marches and other actions that were met by hostility and sometimes violent repression by Mexican authorities. In an attack in Chiapas by the Peace and Justice paramilitary group, 45 people were killed. Although the Zedillo administration denied the existence of such paramilitary groups, these massacres led to an increase in the number of foreign human rights observers in Chiapas. Many of these observers were later expelled by the Zedillo government.

In 1990, an estimated two-thirds of the indigenous population lived in small peasant communities where they were the majority population, mostly located in the poorest, least developed parts of the country. Although conditions vary considerably, about half of indigenous people lack electricity and running water. Housing is often substandard and overcrowded. Many indigenous communities regularly experience shortages of medicines and food. Child malnutrition is rife in many communities; child mortality is as high as 20 per cent, and illiteracy is considerably higher than the Mexican average. After the 2000 election, the dismantling the 71-year reign of the PRI presented a political opportunity in which EZLN leaders demanded that the new Fox administration implement the San Andres Accords and withdraw troops from Chiapas. On 11 March 2000, over 250,000 people gathered in Mexico City in what was the largest ever march of indigenous people in Mexico, to pressure the Fox administration to comply with the San Andres Accords. Although Fox did dismantle a number of military encampments in Chiapas, the government's 2001 constitutional reforms fell short of what the EZLN and other indigenous groups wanted. The demands for autonomy, the right to territory, access to natural resources and the election of municipal authorities were all ignored, leading the EZLN and other important indigenous groups to refuse to recognize the new constitution.

Indigenous farmers have been harassed or attacked by paramilitary groups as they work their land. Police brutality and mistreatment by the justice system are commonly reported. Some indigenous communities have been prevented from electing their customary representatives. Attempts by communities to defend their lands against illegal loggers or to campaign for their rights have met with violence on the part of armed groups who appear to operate with impunity. Leaders who speak out for political change are singled out for persecution by powerful landowners who wield inordinate influence over the local police, political and judicial systems. The repression can range from incarceration and expulsion from communities to torture and murder. 'Disappearances' and massacres of unarmed peasants have been reported.

Indigenous people are also over-represented in the country's prison system, languishing in jail as proceedings stagnate and often spending more time behind bars than a sentence would require were they actually convicted and sentenced. In many cases, they are not provided with interpreters, even though a considerable percentage of indigenous people do not speak Spanish and despite guarantees of such basic protection under the law. Courts often accept confessions extracted under duress as the main evidence for sentencing.

Indigenous women are particularly marginalized in many communities. About one-third of people who speak an indigenous language are illiterate, which is three times the national average. Still, the illiteracy rates for women are 20 per cent higher than for their male counterparts. This pattern can be seen across a broad range of socio-economic indicators, including education, employment, earnings and income. In

addition to persistent poverty and lack of access to health services, which more markedly affects indigenous women, they also suffer domestic violence. Although indigenous women are increasingly migrating themselves, males who migrate to cities in search of work sometimes leave women abandoned and with increased economic hardship. Alcoholism, child abuse and incest are also reported as significant problems affecting indigenous families. Women are also more vulnerable to exploitation by their employers, government officials and the judicial system. According to the 2005 National Household Survey, indigenous women had about half as much education and were less likely to speak Spanish than indigenous men.

Conditions have been exacerbated by a structural economic crisis that has left indigenous people, who had traditionally sustained themselves mainly in the agricultural sector, subject to increasing privation. The government has moved to erode the rights of indigenous peoples to communal lands, which was further exacerbated by the implementation of NAFTA. This has also contributed to increased migration by indigenous peoples to Mexico's urban centres.

In light of these new challenges, there are signs that indigenous people are reorganizing themselves. Possible fraud in the 2006 presidential election may be causing a resurgence of the Zapatistas as well as other indigenous and rural movements in Mexico. Despite immense support by the indigenous population, leftist candidate Andrés López Obrador lost to conservative candidate Felipe Calderón by less than 1 per cent of the vote. The day after the election, Sub-Commandant Marcos, leader of the EZLN, gave an interview on a community-based radio station denouncing the election results as fraudulent; however, the interview was censored by the Mexican government. Following the election, the Popular Assembly of Oaxacan Communities invited Obrador and Sub-Commandant Marcos to join an alternative government symbolized by the creation of the Popular Assembly of Mexican Communities (APPOM). Since the controversial election of Calderón, the EZLN has issued public statements asserting that the government is on the offensive and that paramilitary groups have been encroaching on Zapatista territory.

Suit Filed After Water Official Blocks Coyote Springs Construction

Nevada's top water regulator is blocking construction of the master-planned community at Coyote Springs because he says there isn't enough water to support the project.

<http://erj.reviewjournal.com/ct/uz3688753Biz37501938>



200K Signatures Submitted for Nevada Energy Ballot Measure

A group that wants at least 50 percent of Nevada's energy to come from renewable energy sources said Monday that it has more than twice the needed signatures to get its initiative on the November ballot.

<http://erj.reviewjournal.com/ct/uz3688753Biz37501940>

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Posted By [Marty Two Bulls](#) July 1st, 2018 Blog



Another couple days at the office. Finished this up for the awesome [Amber Torres](#)! Thank you for thinking enough of my work to have me do something for you. I really appreciate it. Not too experienced putting color in my drawings but these & the feathers I did were my first attempts so I'm learning as I go. I got some more color works to do so we shall see how it goes.

**Darren "Bear" Hicks persists**

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[Dr. Chip Thomas](#) – Navajo Nation, AZ

The question I'm asked most frequently is how a black doctor in his 50s working on the Navajo reservation started doing street art on said reservation. In retrospect, it was only natural for this evolution to occur.

I started working in a small community between the Grand Canyon and Monument Valley called Inscription House in 1987. I'd always been drawn to photography and built a darkroom shortly after my arrival on the Navajo Nation. My passion photographically is shooting black and white in a documentary style inspired by people like Eugene Smith, Eugene Richards, Joseph Koudelka and others. By going out and spending time with people in their homes and family camps, I have come to know them as friends. Interestingly, these home visits enhance my doctor/patient relationship by helping me be a more empathetic health care practitioner.

I've always been drawn to street art, graffiti and old-school hip-hop. I was attracted to the energy of the culture in the 80s and though I was miles away from the epicenter, I thought of myself as a charter member of the Zulu Nation. I would travel to New York City to see graffiti on trains, on buildings, and in galleries. I did some tagging in the 80s before coming to the Navajo Nation and participated with a major billboard "correction" on the reservation shortly after my arrival.

**[Chip Thomas: The Incredible Navajo Reservation Art of Jetsonorama](#)**

For more mural art popping up in Reno: <http://artspotreno.com/reno-mural-expo-2017/>

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**It All Started With a Few Trout. Now Yellowstone’s Iconic Birds Face ‘Collapse.’**

National Geographic

An invasive fish set off a biological domino effect that has already affected bears and elk. Now it threatens trumpeter swans and other birds. [Read the full story](#)

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**Women Might Save America Yet**

**By MICHELLE GOLDBERG**

Under Trump, politics is being reborn in the neighborhoods.

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**Forest Service Skips Environmental Review, Issues Nestlé New Water Permit in California, Center for Biological Diversity Says**

**By Sierra Sun Times, 7/2/18**

The U.S. Forest Service last week issued a new permit to Nestlé Corp., allowing the massive water-bottling company to keep siphoning water from San Bernardino National Forest despite evidence that its operations are draining a spring-fed creek.



**Water Lens**

Power lines swept outward from Hoover Dam, the largest hydropower facility in the U.S. Southwest. Because water levels in Lake Mead have plummeted, power customers have invested in equipment upgrades that will keep the dam operating in low-water conditions. Photo © J. Carl Ganter / Circle of Blue

*In context: [Lake Mead drops but Hoover Dam powers on.](#)*

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**On July 9 in 1955** California Governor Goodwin Knight signed legislation to create a California/ Nevada Interstate Compact Commission to work on distribution of water in Lake Tahoe and the Carson, Truckee, and Walker rivers. (dennism)

See the innovative chemical sensor technology that NevadaNano is developing up close. This homegrown company develops and manufactures micro-electro-mechanical systems-based sensor modules and subsystems for an array of commercial and government applications.

Its products are used by system integrator partners and by system manufacturers who benefit from the unique characteristics of its sensors — namely small size, low cost, unattended operation, and the ability to detect a broad range of threats with a flexible sensor platform.

NevadaNano was founded in 2004 to commercialize a unique sensor technology developed at the University of Nevada, Reno. The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security supported the company's early research and development. Now, NevadaNano has turned its focus to commercial applications, specifically, the Internet of Things.

The core element of NevadaNano's sensor modules and systems is manufactured on silicon-based solid-state MEMS technology, offering small size, low cost, and high reliability. The sensing element is an array of MEMS structures that are self-activating, self-sensing, self-cleaning and self-calibrating. Using proprietary materials as well as unique sensing methods and analysis techniques, NevadaNano's current sensors can detect explosive gases or dangerous household gases cost-effectively.

- Children over 12 welcome!
- Open-toed shoes required.

NevadaNano 1395 Greg St #102 Sparks, NV 89431 [www.nevadanano.com](http://www.nevadanano.com) ( [map](#) )

**July 11, 2018 > 5:30 - 7:30 pm**

- \$15 - NCET members
- \$25 - General Admission
- \$10 - Children between 12 under 18 accompanied by parent or adult guardian

The fine print:

- We encourage you to pay in advance as there's a \$10 service charge if you pay at the door.
- No-shows will be charged the full amount of the reservation unless cancelled at least 48 hours before the event.

NCET members receive substantial discounts on NCET events and your membership pays for itself quickly. [Join NCET now and save!](#)

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Did you know the NCET Expo is only a few months away? And we're kicking it off in the best possible way: with an NCET Biz Café that will help you rock your next trade show!

Join Peter Fishburn for "Tricks of the Trade(show)," a Biz Café devoted to helping you discover your max ROI at your next trade show. Fishburn has made a career in the promotional products industry, assisting clients with the creative and effective use of promotional items.

This Biz Café is ideal if you'd like to see why and how a trade show can be an efficient and effective tool for your business. Fishburn will provide insights, steps, ideas, and suggestions for why an organization should create a trade show program that will attract and intrigue your audience.

He will answer questions like:

- What makes a good booth?
- What should you do before, during and after the show?
- What do attendees expect at a show?
- What outcomes can you, the exhibitor, expect at the end of the show experience?

And we have an announcement: **Due to popular demand, Biz Café will now be at a new and improved (and more convenient) time: 3-5 p.m.**

So please join us at **Rounds Bakery** from 3 to 5 p.m. on **Wednesday, July 18**; the program starts at 4 p.m. It's free to attend, no RSVPs are needed, and everyone is welcome! We'll see you there!

Agency hires new team to drive tourism to rural Nevada TravelNevada.com(screengrab)
By [Richard N. Velotta](#) / Las Vegas Review-Journal

Continuity will be the key to the Nevada Commission on Tourism's new marketing strategy for rural Nevada.

Three companies, two from out of state, will collaborate to market the state's rural destinations under new four-year contracts finalized Wednesday by the commission.

Columbus, Ohio-based Fahlgren Martine will head media buying, public relations and external communications; Milwaukee, Wisconsin-based BVK will direct creative development; and Noble Studios of Reno will lead web and digital development services, including customer relationship management.

"Not only have we got national expertise and presence, but we've got a high-level local company working on this," Lt. Gov. Mark Hutchison, who chairs the commission, said in an interview after Wednesday's meeting. "These are high-level professionals that are going to provide media, PR and digital expertise that will result in more visitors to Nevada. It's going to be a more sophisticated approach to a more targeted market."

The state will spend more than \$40.3 million over the four years under the contract that begins July 1.

Company executives working on the Nevada account were introduced to the 11-member commission after their contracts were formally approved by the state's Board of Examiners Tuesday.

The collaboration is expected to continue the state's TravelNevada brand strategy built around its "Don't Fence Me In" theme, built around a classic Western cowboy song that celebrates expansive wide-open space and freedom to explore. The song was spiced up in a more upbeat version by the Las Vegas band The Killers.

Under the approved contracts, Fahlgren Martine, which helped develop the “Don’t Fence Me In” theme, will get \$34.4 million in two contracts. BVK has a \$3 million contract while Noble will receive \$2.9 million.

Digital media platforms will be used in the state’s efforts which focus on encouraging travelers to Nevada to collect and retell stories about their travels and adventures in the state with colorful local characters.

Details of the collaboration’s efforts are expected to be detailed in a marketing committee meeting in August.

The commission also is working with Brand USA, the national destination marketing organization that was modeled after the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority’s structure.

Brand USA, funded in part by travelers from 38 countries participating in a visa waiver program with the United States, markets the U.S. in foreign countries to boost tourism.

Nevada is expected to benefit from Brand USA programs that will be active next year in Australia, Canada, Germany, Mexico, India, Japan, South Korea, China and the United Kingdom.

Contact Richard N. Velotta at rvelotta@reviewjournal.com or 702-477-3893. Follow [@RickVelotta](https://twitter.com/RickVelotta) on Twitter.

[100 Years of Migratory Bird Protections at Risk, Groups Warn](#)
[July 6, 2018 - Katherine Davis-Young, Public News Service \(NV\)](#) [Play Audio in Browser](#)
[Window](#)

Nevada is home to millions of acres of important bird habitat. (Lip Kee/ Flickr)
CARSON CITY, Nev. – This week marks 100 years since the signing of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act – or MBTA – and conservation groups want the Trump administration to respect and enforce the law.

Signed in 1918, the law made it illegal to pursue, hunt, take or capture migratory birds. Last December, [the Interior Department](#) rescinded Obama-era guidelines on prosecution of companies when their operations cause bird deaths – and issued new ones, that don't prosecute companies unless they "intentionally put birds under human control."

Bob Dreher, senior vice president for conservation programs with Defenders of Wildlife, says that leaves industries without any liability for the bird deaths they cause.

"They don't have to do anything in order to avoid the killing of migratory birds, even though they know that it will occur from what they're doing, and even though there might be reasonable and cost-effective things they could do to avoid killing birds," says Dreher.

Nevada is home to more than six million acres of important areas for birds, according to the

Audubon Society. But the fear is that migratory birds are at risk if the MBTA is not enforced. The government used the law to prosecute BP for the Deepwater Horizon oil rig explosion in 2010, and the Exxon Valdez spill in 1989.

It has also been used to force oil companies to cover their oil waste ponds, after it was discovered an estimated two million birds a year were dying in open waste pits. But a Trump administration spokesman said the guidelines "criminalized all actions that killed migratory birds, whether purposeful or not," and called the new rules a "victory over the regulatory state."

Dreher says the MBTA is one of the oldest federal conservation laws, and without enforcement, birds will die.

"It's been in place doing its job for 100 years, and what this administration does is to cut the heart out from it," says Dreher.

Defenders of Wildlife, the National Audubon Society, and several other environmental groups have filed a lawsuit to challenge the rule changes.



THE SMOG

Need-to-know basis

And just as the old smog burned off, a new cloud moved in. Let us (reluctantly) introduce you to the new head of the EPA, [Andrew Wheeler](#), a coal lobbyist and former legislative aid/best buddy to Oklahoma Republican Senator Jim Inhofe. (Yes, THE Jim Inhofe — the one known for his wild anti-climate change rhetoric and for [bringing snowballs](#) to the Senate floor.)

As an energy lobbyist, Wheeler's biggest clients included Murray Energy Corporation, which touts itself as the No. 1 coal-mining company in the country. Murray Energy also happens to be the company that handed the Trump administration [a three-page list of environmental regulations](#) it wanted rolled back. Officials have already made it more than a third of the way through — and it's hard to imagine that Wheeler doesn't have a plan to complete the checklist.

In his downtime, Wheeler works for the Washington Coal Club. I kid you not. He's the vice president of a small group of 300 coal groupies (producers, lawmakers, business leaders, policy experts, etc.) whose goal is to save the dirty future of dirty coal. Wheeler loves coal so much that he recently had to [recuse himself from government deliberations](#) over the industry's future.

There isn't much ideological difference between Pruitt and Wheeler. They both want to limit the EPA's regulations over oil. But unlike Pruitt, Wheeler knows how to play the game. He won't get caught buying expensive pens and lotion. He'll work the system from within and leave us feeling bamboozled as he quietly walks back every environmental protection in place. [grist.org](#)
