

UC San Diego

SCHOOL OF GLOBAL POLICY AND STRATEGY
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Democratic Integrity: Mexico 2024

ELECTORAL COALITIONS

Summary

**"The right to freedom of association involves the right of individuals to interact and organize among themselves to collectively express, promote, pursue and defend common interests. Freedom of peaceful assembly and of association serve as a vehicle of many other rights, including the rights to freedom of expression and to take part in public affairs."
United Nations Human Rights Office**

This fifth edition of "Democratic Integrity: Mexico 2024," provides an overview of the electoral coalitions that will participate in the current federal electoral process (president, Chamber of Deputies and Senate). In addition, there is an explanation of the rules for the formation of electoral coalitions and common candidates in the 32 local elections that will be held in Mexico on June 2, 2024.

In the "Last Glance" section, the newsletter provides an overview of the affirmative actions that political parties and electoral coalitions must fulfill in order to nominate indigenous people, Afro-Mexicans, people of sexual diversity, people with disabilities, as well as migrants and those residing abroad to the Mexican Congress.

In Mexico, political parties are allowed to form electoral coalitions in federal elections for the presidency, the Senate, and the Chamber of Deputies. The same is true in local elections for governorships, local deputies, and City Councils.

Electoral coalitions consist of two or more parties signing an agreement in which they commit themselves to jointly nominating certain candidates on the same political platform. This does not necessarily mean that a coalition government or parliamentary coalition will be formed after the elections. Thus, the purpose of electoral coalitions is to increase the chances of winning elections. Only the electoral process is involved in the commitments and obligations that the coalition parties make among themselves.

Coalition parties must determine the amount of funding that each will contribute to the campaigns of their candidates, the criteria for the distribution of the final balances of income and expenses, as well as the distribution of radio and television airtime and the procedure that each party must follow for the selection of candidates.

Electoral Coalitions

In Mexico, the possibility for political parties to associate is based on the right to freedom of association in political matters. Articles 9 and 35 of the Constitution recognize the right of citizens to assemble peacefully in political matters. Likewise, Article 16 of the American Convention on Human Rights and Article 22 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights identify the political dimension of the right of association.

The possibility of forming electoral coalitions and presenting common candidates is recognized in Mexican legislation as a right of political parties (Article 23, paragraph 1, of the General Law of Political Parties).

ELECTORAL COALITIONS

Articles 87 and 89 of the General Law of Political Parties Law

- 1 NATIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES MAY FORM COALITIONS FOR THE FIRST-PAST-THE-POST FEDERAL ELECTIONS (PRESIDENCY, SENATE, AND CONGRESSIONAL SEATS).
- 2 NATIONAL AND LOCAL POLITICAL PARTIES MAY FORM COALITIONS FOR THE FIRST-PAST-THE-POST LOCAL ELECTIVE SEATS (GOVERNORSHIPS, LOCAL DEPUTIES AND CITY COUNCILS).
- 3 THE COALITION AGREEMENT CAN BE FORMED BY TWO OR MORE PARTIES. POLITICAL PARTIES CANNOT FORM MULTIPLE COALITIONS IN THE SAME FEDERAL OR LOCAL ELECTORAL PROCESS.
- 4 POLITICAL PARTIES CAN FORM ELECTORAL COALITIONS, WHICH WILL TERMINATE AFTER THE ELECTIONS, OR A COALITION GOVERNMENT.

Source: Compiled by author based on The General Law of Political Parties.

What Kind of Candidacies Can Be Nominated by Electoral Coalitions?

The only candidacies eligible for nomination by electoral coalitions in Mexico are the first-past-the-post elected offices, including the presidency and seats in the Senate and Chamber of Deputies. This means that the coalitions exclude candidates standing for congress through the proportional list system, where each party maintains its own list.

The Senate is composed of 128 members. Three-quarters of those seats (96) are determined by relative majority elections in the 32 states: it is these candidacies that can be part of a coalition. In each state, the party or coalition with the most votes gets two senatorial seats and the second place party or coalition receives a single seat. In addition, there are 32 senatorial seats elected nationally based on proportional representation; each of the seven national political parties selects its own list for these seats.

Of the 500 seats in the Chamber of Deputies, 300 are elected by relative majority in 300 electoral districts and are eligible for nomination by coalitions. The other 200 deputies are elected by proportional representation on the lists of each of the seven national political parties.

Types of Electoral Coalitions

As shown in the infographic below, there are three different types of electoral coalitions in Mexico, which vary based on the percentage of candidacies established in the coalition agreement.

TYPES OF ELECTORAL COALITIONS

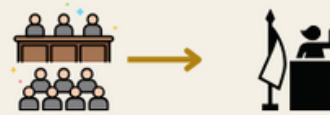
Total



Political parties must run **100% of their candidates** on the **same political platform** (and **government program** if they are running together for presidency).

If political parties form a **Total** coalition for Senate or Federal Deputies, they must form a coalition for the presidency.

In local elections, if they form a **Total** coalition for Local Deputies, they must also form a coalition for the Governorship.



Regarding **access to radio and television**, of the 41 minutes of daily radio and television airtime, 30% is divided equally among parties and coalitions (the entire coalition counts as one party). Remaining 70% will be allocated to parties according to their last vote (coalition parties are considered individually). The coalition agreement shall specify the distribution of airtime for the candidates of the coalition.



Partial



Political parties must jointly nominate **at least 50% of the candidates** on the same political platform.

Flexible



Political parties must jointly nominate **at least 25% of the candidates** on the same political platform.



In **Flexible and Partial coalitions**, every party will have **separate access to their allotted airtime** on both radio and television (30% equal to each party and 70% according to their last vote). The coalition agreement shall specify the distribution of airtime for the candidates of the coalition.



Coalition Distribution of Votes, Money, and Radio/Television Airtime

Mexico's electoral laws allow political parties to join forces in order to win seats in government. However, votes are allocated to individual parties rather than collectively to the coalition. Each party therefore appears on the ballot with its own logo, and the name of the coalition candidate. Voters may select one or more of the coalition parties on the ballot. Thus, it is possible to know exactly how many votes each political party received individually.

This is crucial because it determines whether a party remains registered (parties must receive at least three percent of the valid votes cast—total votes minus invalid votes and votes for unregistered candidates) and because the percentage of votes for seats in the Chamber of Deputies determines the amount of public funding parties receive for the following three years, as well as the allocation of radio and television airtime.

Importantly, coalitions do not allow for the transfer of votes from one party to another. In 2008, the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation (Action of Unconstitutionality 61/2008 and accumulated) ruled that the transfer of votes from one party to another by agreement—as provided for in the legislation—violated the express will of the voter: "It is not reasonable that a party that has not obtained the votes by itself should receive a transfusion of votes to keep it alive."

HOW ARE VOTES DISTRIBUTED IN ELECTORAL COALITIONS?



COALITION AGREEMENTS MUST BE FILED:

FEDERAL ELECTIONS: WITH THE INE

LOCAL ELECTIONS: WITH THE ELECTORAL LOCAL INSTITUTE

They should include a joint political platform (and government program, if they are running together for the presidency).

Political Parties must determine each candidate's party affiliation.



PARTIES CANNOT AGREE TO TRANSFER VOTES IN THEIR COALITION AGREEMENT.

EACH PARTY APPEARS ON THE BALLOT WITH ITS OWN LOGO. (THERE IS NO COALITION LOGO).



One or more logos may be chosen as long as the selected parties are part of the coalition.

The votes chosen in each party logo are added up for the coalition candidate.

In addition, votes are registered separately to know each party's real support (3% required to keep registration), as well as their rights regarding radio and television access, as well as funding.



As soon as the elections are over, the coalition will be automatically dissolved.



Candidates elected to Congress shall belong to the parliamentary group specified in the coalition agreement.

Each political party retains its representation before the INE Councils and at the polling stations



Differences Between Electoral Coalitions and Common Candidates

Despite their similarities, it is important to distinguish electoral coalitions from common candidates, as they are not synonymous. In federal elections, coalitions are allowed, but not common candidates. On the other hand, several states have legislation permitting common candidacies on the local level.

As can be seen in the infographic, a coalition implies a higher degree of commitment between constituent parties than a common candidate. A coalition requires a shared political platform and a minimum number of candidates to be nominated.



Source: Compiled by author based on The General Law of Political Parties

With a common candidate, parties are not required to share the same platform, and have no obligations regarding nominations elsewhere on the ballot. A common candidate is thus a more pragmatic arrangement than a coalition.

2024 Federal Elections: two electoral coalitions and a single party

For the 2023-2024 federal elections, the electoral coalitions that will run for presidency and congressional seats have already been established.

The Partido Acción Nacional (PAN), Partido de la Revolución Institucional (PRI) and Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD) registered the Partial coalition “Fuerza y Corazón por México” (Strength and Heart for Mexico) with the National Electoral Institute on November 20, 2023. They committed themselves to running for the presidency; for the Senate in 30 of the 32 states (in Guanajuato and Oaxaca, each party will have its own candidates); and for 253 of the 300 seats in the Chamber of Deputies.

Morena, Partido del Trabajo (PT) and Partido Verde Ecologista de México (PVEM) registered the Partial coalition “Sigamos Haciendo Historia” (Let's Continue Making History) to contest the presidency; 24 states

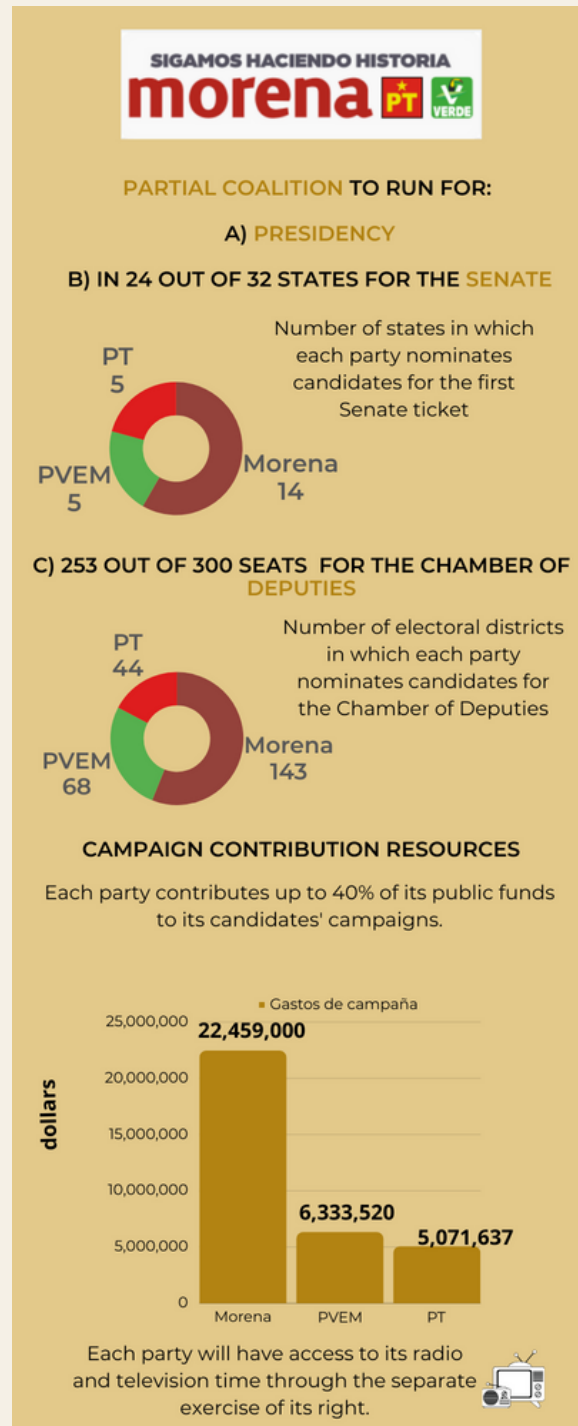
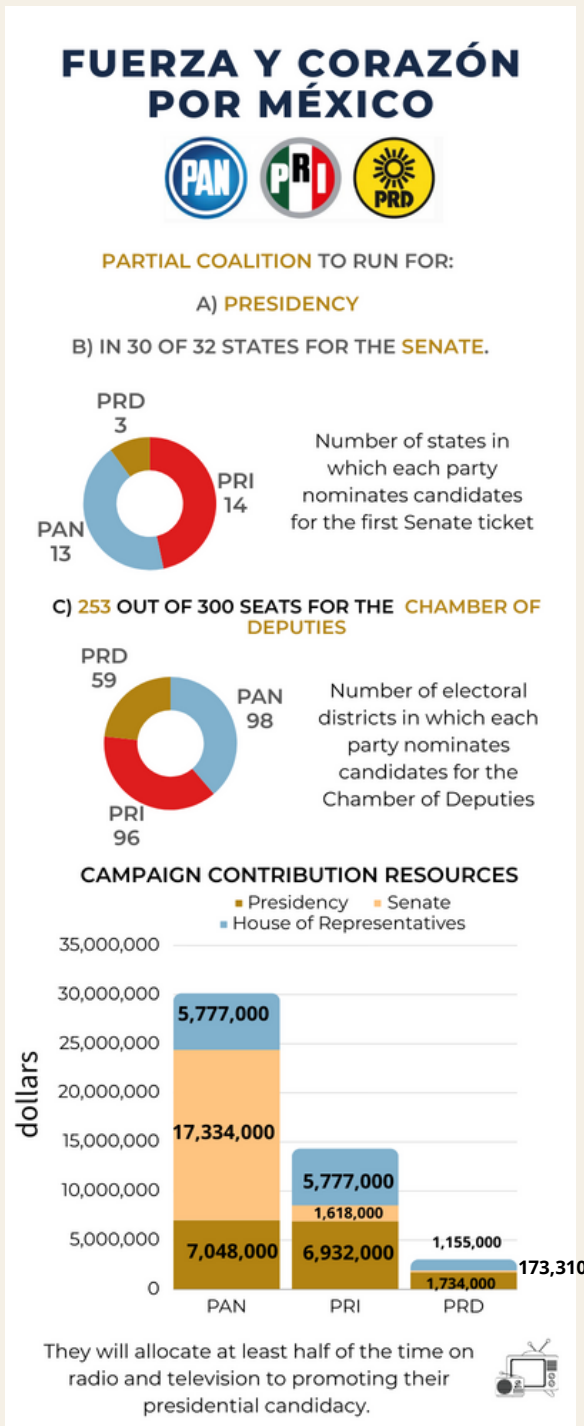
To learn more about the requirements to be met by coalitions, see the [Instructions to be Followed by Political Parties Requesting the Coalition Registration in the Agreement INE/CG553/2023](https://repositoriodocumental.ine.mx/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/153331/CGex202309-28-ap-13-a.pdf) at: <https://repositoriodocumental.ine.mx/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/153331/CGex202309-28-ap-13-a.pdf>

for the Senate (in Baja California, Campeche, Chiapas, Guanajuato, Hidalgo, Oaxaca, Tabasco and Tlaxcala each party will have its own candidates); and 255 seats in the Chamber of Deputies.

Importantly, the INE must certify the coalition agreements registered in the coming days.

The Movimiento Ciudadano (MC) party has announced that it will not participate in any coalition at the federal level and would present its own candidacies for the presidency, the Senate, and the Chamber of Deputies.

In the 32 local elections to be held in 2024—which will renew eight governorships, the Head of Government of Mexico City, as well as 31 local congresses, and city councils in 30 states—national and local political parties may form different combinations of coalitions and common candidates.

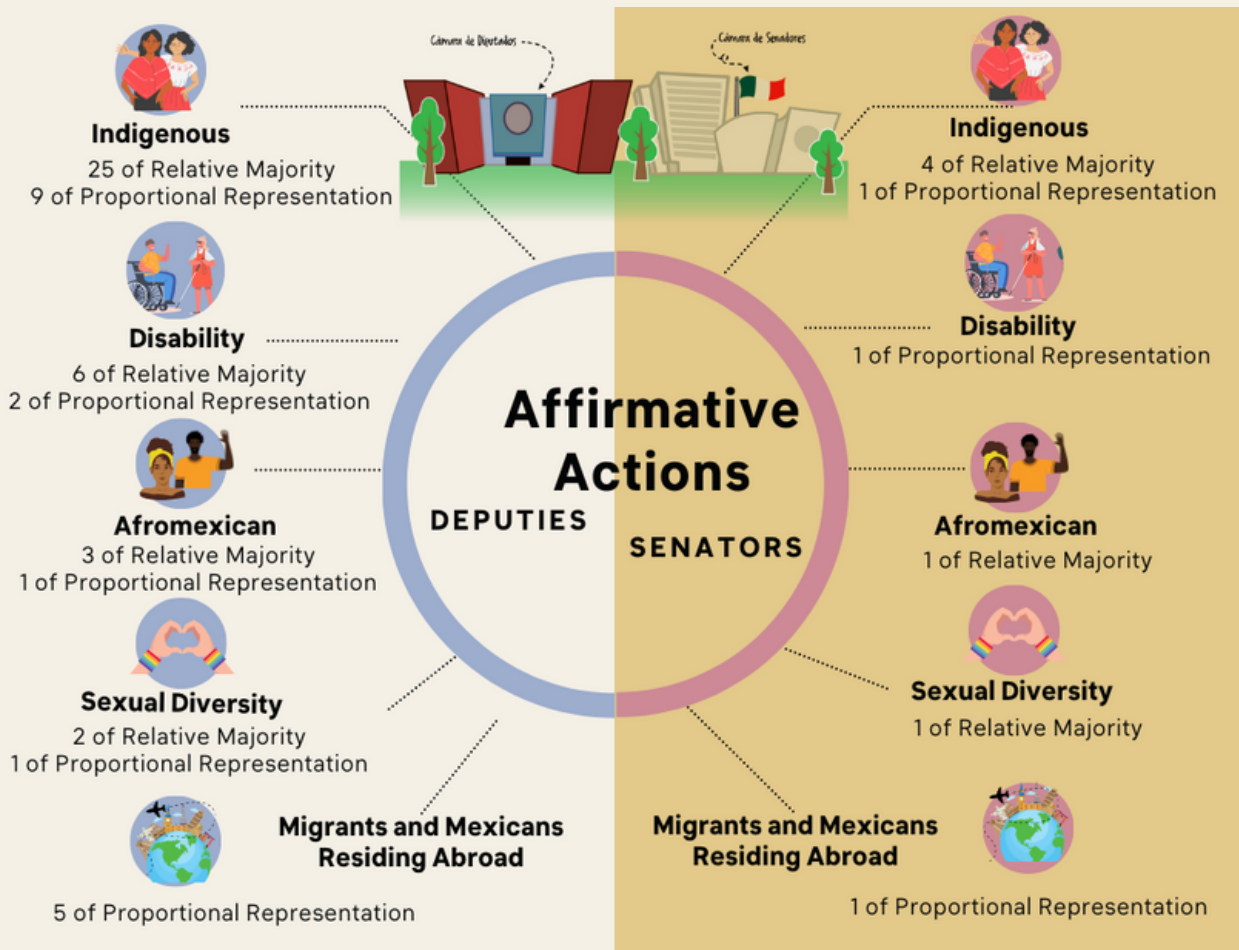


Last Glance

Affirmative Action Rules for Candidacies

On November 25, the General Council of the National Electoral Institute approved guidelines for affirmative actions to be taken by political parties and coalitions at the federal level, in compliance with the decision of the Federal Electoral Tribunal SUP-JDC-338/2023.

For the Chamber of Deputies, a minimum of 63 affirmative action candidacies were established, 42 running under relative majority and 21 under proportional representation. In the Senate, there will be at least nine affirmative action candidacies: 6 of relative majority and 3 of proportional representation. Proportional representation candidacies must be registered in the first 15 places of the lists.



A comprehensive analysis of affirmative action in the current federal elections will be presented in a future edition of "Democratic Integrity: Mexico 2024."

To learn more about the requirements to be met by coalitions, see the agreement by which the applicable criteria for the registration of candidacies for the different political parties and coalitions (INE/CG625/2023) at:

<https://repositoriodocumental.ine.mx/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/156945/CGex202311-25-ap-1.pdf>

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