

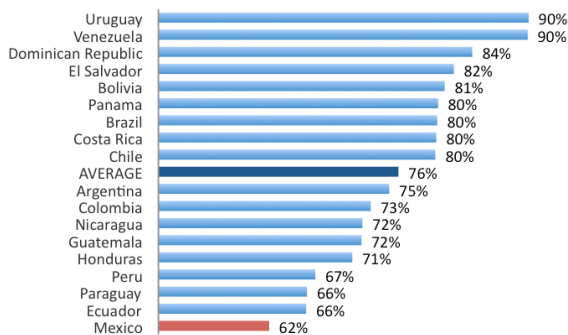
Alan Stoga, President
Daniel Wilson, Managing Director and Editor

Polls

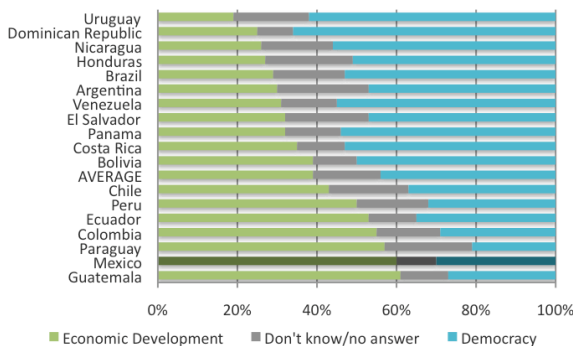
Weak support for democracy in Mexico

The annual [Latinbarómetro](#) survey of attitudes toward democracy in 18 Latin American countries showed that Mexico had the lowest level of support for democracy of any of the countries surveyed. Only 62% of Mexicans agreed that "democracy was the best form of government," compared to an average of 76% across the region. Across the region, support for democracy rose an average of 2% from last year, but in Mexico it fell 7%. When asked whether they would choose democracy or economic development without democracy, Mexicans had the fourth lowest preference for democracy (30%), compared to a regional average of 44%. (Reforma 12/12)

Do you agree with the statement: "Democracy may have its problems, but it is the best form of government."



If you had to choose between democracy and economic development without democracy, which would you say is most important?



Key Dates

- 12/15:** Likely end of congressional session
- 12/31:** Term ends for Governor of Banco de México
- 2/1/10:** Start of new congressional session
- 5/16:** Yucatán elections
- 7/4:** Elections in 9 states
- 10/3:** Chiapas elections

Carstens to Banco de México; Cordero to Ministry of Finance

With time running out on the congressional session, President **Felipe Calderón** finally made known his decision on economic policy management. He nominated Finance Secretary **Agustín Carstens** to be the next Governor of Banco de México, replacing **Guillermo Ortiz** who has led the central bank for the last 12 years. He also named **Ernesto Cordero**, who has been the Secretary of Social Development since 2008, as the new Secretary of Finance. Cordero, who has an MA in economics from the University of Pennsylvania, has been one of Calderón's closest associates over the past decade. In his remarks, President Calderón said the personnel changes "will allow for a better harmonization of the relation between the federal Government and the Central Bank, in order to reach the twin goals of keeping low rates of inflation and ... promoting the changes and transformations that will enable the acceleration of the rate of growth of our economy." The Senate must ratify Carstens' nomination. After expressing their 'severe alienation' with the Executive for not making the central bank nomination in a timely manner, the Senate leadership scheduled commission hearings for today and a vote by the full Senate at its last scheduled session on the 15th. Despite the rhetoric, confirmation appears assured. ([Presidencia 12/9](#), [Universal 12/10](#))

Cordero draws mixed reviews

The naming of **Ernesto Cordero**, 41, as Minister of Finance drew mixed reviews. Business Coordinating Council president **Armando Paredes** endorsed the choice and said the private sector looked forward to working together with him on the needed economic reforms. Echoing many others, former Foreign Minister **Jorge Castañeda** wrote that, "For the first time since [Luis Echeverría named José López Portillo as Minister of Finance in 1973] the leadership of Hacienda is in the hands of someone nominated for exclusively political motives and without the best evident technical qualifications." ([Reforma 12/10](#), [12/10](#))

Cabinet reshuffle also shakes up list for PAN 2012 contenders

The naming of **Heriberto Félix Guerra** as the new Secretary of Social Development succeeding Cordero also raises the profile of both men as potential contenders for the PAN 2012 presidential nomination. Félix is a senator from the Sinaloa (on leave of absence), and has been the undersecretary for small and medium business at the Ministry of Economy. He is also—perhaps more importantly—the son in law of legendary PAN leader **Manuel Clouthier**, who died in a mysterious car wreck in 1989.

Lights go out for the SME electrical workers union

The final hopes for the SME electrical workers union to block the decree liquidating **Luz y Fuerza** were extinguished with two adverse court rulings. The Supreme Court turned down a request from the Federal District legislature to block the liquidation, and federal judge **Guillermina Coutiño Mata**—who had made a provisional ruling favoring the union last month—reversed herself and rejected the union's request for a permanent injunction. She ruled that "employees do not have a right to keep a state entity subsisting, when its operation no longer benefits the population and damages public finances, just in order to keep their jobs." ([Excelsior 12/12](#))

Final curtain for 'Juanito'

After occupying the Iztapalapa borough offices for nine days, Rafael Acosta, aka 'Juanito,' submitted his resignation as borough president. The turnaround occurred after Mexico City mayor **Marcelo Ebrard** threatened to prosecute him for electoral law violations. (Juanito falsified his birth certificate and voter identification card when he registered as a candidate for the July elections.) Ebrard quickly nominated AMLO-favorite **Clara Brugada**, who was borough president during Juanito's first temporary leave of absence, and she was ratified by the D.F. assembly.