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Mexico

A mixed success for the President in Mexico

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On 1 June 2025, judges at all levels of the judiciary were elected by direct suffrage throughout Mexico. From local judges to members of the Federal Supreme Court, all positions were subject to a popular vote.

An unprecedented reform, led by the governing party MORENA, which is profoundly reshaping the institutional landscape. But criticism of the transparency of the process and the growing control of power by the presidential party temper this historic turning point.

A reform promising a rupture

This fundamental reform, backed by former president Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO), taken up by his successor Claudia Sheinbaum and voted for by their party, MORENA (National Regeneration Movement), has profoundly changed the country's judicial architecture.

For decades, Mexico's judiciary has been largely corrupt, dominated by right-wing forces and economic powers, and sometimes even infiltrated by drug traffickers. Reforming this system was one of AMLO's key commitments when he was elected in 2018. However, it was only at the end of his term that he launched the process, which was taken up and implemented by Sheinbaum.

A supported but contested project

The reform has been met with fierce opposition from right-wing parties, which are closely linked to the old judicial system. But it has also met with resistance from many justice workers and officials, who denounce a reform imposed without consultation, with questionable social effects. On the other hand, it enjoyed broad popular support, so deep was the rejection of the judicial system.

Politically, the measure is defensible, especially in view of recent experiences in Brazil and Argentina, where the judiciary has been used against progressive governments. But its shortcomings are notable: opaque criteria for selecting candidates, unclear campaign conditions, the possibility of manipulation and so on. All these elements reinforce the suspicions of a concentration of power. MORENA now controls the presidency, Congress and a significant part of the judiciary.

A modest but symbolic turnout

The right and the mainstream media had called for a boycott, banking on the complexity of the election and the massive abstention that characterises the country. They were hoping for a turnout of less than 10%. In the end, nearly 13 million Mexicans, or 13% of those registered, turned out. This result remains limited, but it still marks a historic turning point.

A mixed success for the President in Mexico

This shift is embodied by the election of Hugo Aguilar Ortiz, an indigenous Mixtec and former close associate of the Zapatistas, as president of the Supreme Court. But in a context where Claudia Sheinbaum enjoys record popularity (more than 70%), the concentration of power does not guarantee that this will serve the interests of workers. This is evidenced recently by the government's refusal to repeal an ultra-neoliberal reform of the civil service, a repeal promised at the end of a long teachers' strike.

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Translated by **International Viewpoint** from [l'Anticapitaliste](#).

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