

Abstract

This paper is part of the research activities of the Program of Budget and Public Expenditure at CIDE, under the auspices of the Ford Foundation. It presents an assessment of the decentralization of health services in Mexico, emphasizing its regional allocation criteria and mechanisms. Its principal findings are: 1) for the 1990-2000 period, federal expenditure in health services for the uninsured has grown in real terms; 2) even though states have improved their control over these financial resources since 1998, there are still shortages that might jeopardize its rationality and transparency; 3) the distribution of federal grants is influenced by regional socioeconomic conditions, such as infant mortality and deprivation, but the installed capacity for health services remains as the most influential variable; 4) the capacity of the central government to reallocate resources has not been completely eliminated by inertial factors.