

APRIL, 2024

**BILATERAL
X-RAY
MEXICO-UNITED STATES**



**Migration and Labor
Mobility
DEMOCRACY AND
INSTITUTIONS
ECONOMY AND
COMMERCE
Security and Rule of Law**

RELEVANT EVENTS

- **TWO OF THE THREE PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES IN MEXICO HAVE ALREADY BEEN HELD.**

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Invited Author

By the time the next edition of the Bilateral X-ray comes out, Mexican voters will have chosen their future president. All but a handful of U.S. states will have held their primaries. And, of course, by then the Mexican candidates will also have participated in their third and final presidential debate—one in which U.S.-Mexico ties should feature prominently, given that the forum will cover security, migration, and foreign policy. But already, whether in debates or during campaign events, whether the topic is the green energy transition or preparing for the 2026 USMCA review, candidates are pitching proposals on challenges that don't just benefit from but require bilateral solutions.

As readers of this newsletter know, U.S. and Mexican presidential elections coincide once every 12 years. Consider the profound changes affecting North America and the world since the last time this occurred. Tackling what faces us in the next 12 years and beyond requires the kind of analysis collected and analyzed here by the Mexican Institute for Competitiveness and the U.S. Mexico Foundation. Read in and get ready for what comes next.

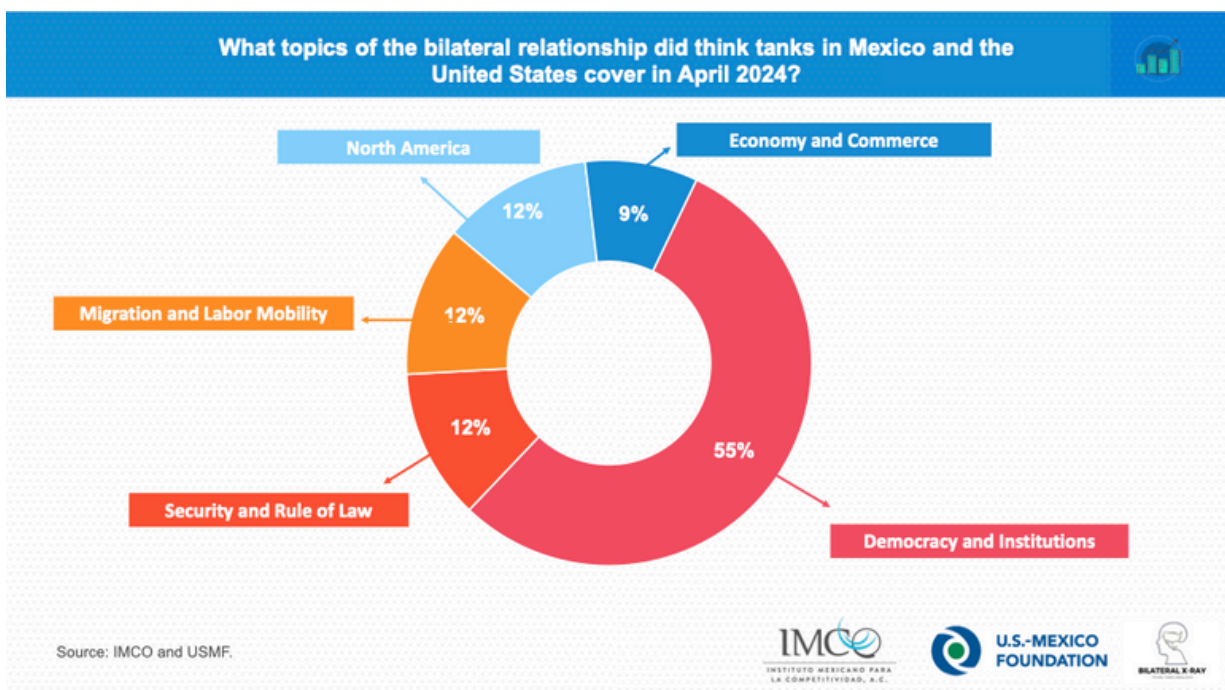
—[Carin Zissis](#), Editor-in-Chief, AS/COA Online, Americas Society/Council of the Americas.

Coverage Report

April 1st to April 30th

In April, think tanks generated 33 publications on the bilateral relationship between Mexico and the United States. Of these, 87% came from centers in the United States, while the remaining 13% were published in Mexico. For the fourth consecutive month, the topic "Democracy and Institutions" was the most addressed, with 18 mentions. The topics "North America," "Migration and Labor Mobility," and "Security and Rule of Law" were also highlighted in the report, with four publications each. The Mexico Institute led content generation in April with 15 publications, followed by AS/COA and the Baker Institute, each with three publications.

Topics Covered



Democracy and Institutions

In April, **Democracy and Institutions** was the topic with the most related content. Consistent with the first months of the year, the publications mainly focused on the Mexican presidential elections, addressing aspects such as presidential debates and publishing preference polls. However, in April, the focus of the publications began to diversify, also covering topics such as the security of the candidates, the presidential succession process, the impact of organized crime on the campaign period, as well as the opportunities and challenges in building the bilateral agenda of the candidates. Additionally, the think tanks addressed the situation that arose at the Mexican Embassy in Ecuador and the Mexican Pension Reform, which was approved in the last week of April.

Key publications regarding Democracy and Institutions this month:

- [AS/COA, Mexico Elects: Ongoing Coverage of the 2024 Vote by Carin Zissis and Chase Harrison](#)
- [Mexico Institute, AMLO's End: A New Presidency? No Easy Exit by Gerardo Penchyna](#)

DEMOCRACY AND INSTITUTIONS RECENT DATA

- More than 12 million Mexicans live outside the country, 97% of them in the US, according to the **Institute of Mexicans Abroad. There will be 20 voting reception modules in consulates across the country:** Atlanta; Chicago; Dallas; Fresno, California; Houston; Los Angeles; New Brunswick, New Jersey; New York; Oklahoma City; Orlando, Florida; Phoenix; Raleigh, North Carolina; Sacramento; San Bernardino, California; San Diego; San Francisco; San Jose, California; Santa Ana, California; Seattle; and Washington. (NY Times)

Migration and Labor Mobility

Publications addressing **Migration and Labour Mobility** have delved into the multifaceted effects of migration on both the United States and Mexico, navigating through the evolving landscape of the topic. Public Policy think tanks, such as the Baker Institute have shed light on the labor shortage issue and the potential solution foreign workers offer. They've also examined initiatives such as TN visas aimed at attracting more migrants. Conversely, stricter immigration policies have strained Mexican border cities like El Paso and Juarez, which have absorbed immigrants denied entry. Additionally, there's emerging concern about Chinese immigrants entering the United States via Mexico, posing a fresh challenge due to the trafficking of fentanyl.

Key publications regarding Migration and Labor Mobility this month:

- [Baker Institute Addressing the 'Crisis' at the US-Mexico Border: Insights From El Paso and Ciudad Juárez by Kelsey Norman, Ana Martín Gil](#)
- [The Heritage Foundation Threat From China Is Growing at Our Southern Border by Matthew Tragesser](#)

MIGRATION AND LABOR MOBILITY RECENT DATA

- **Ciudad Juárez has approximately 40 shelters for migrants**, most of which are private operations run by religious organizations, and two public shelters managed by federal and local government authorities. (Baker Institute)
- **In the first five months of 2024 alone, approximately 22,000 Chinese nationals have been encountered at the southern border**, surpassing typical annual figures (on average 100-2,500 in the last couple of years). (Heritage Foundation)

North America

Publications concerning **North America** have predominantly centered on the intricate relationship between Mexico and the United States, particularly emphasizing the economic advantages. Political think tanks have explored the mutual benefits of free trade while also acknowledging the challenges faced in implementing the USMCA during the Trump administration. Some think tanks have highlighted the imperative of fostering unity between these nations, given their deeply interconnected nature. The collaborative effort of **México, ¿cómo vamos?** along with the Social Progress Imperative and INCAE, resulted in the publication of an index aimed at analyzing the quality of life in both countries. This marks a significant shift from previous publications, which primarily focused on integration, to now measuring the tangible benefits of this integration in real-time.

Key publications regarding North America this month:

- [Mexico, cómo vamos? Mapa de Prosperidad Compartida by Staff](#)
- [American Enterprise Institute Lawfare Daily: Ambassador Robert Lighthizer on Trade Policy by Jack Landman Goldsmith, Robert Lighthizer, and Jen Patja](#)

NORTH AMERICA RECENT DATA

- **New Hampshire (87.4)** has the **highest social progress score** among **US states**. Mississippi has the lowest score with 73.3 points. **Mexico City (76.1)** has the **highest social progress score in Mexico**. Guerrero has the lowest score with 53.6 points. (México, ¿cómo vamos?)

Other topics

In other topics, April's publications covered a variety of issues related to the **Economy, Security and Rule of Law**, and **Migration and Labor Mobility**. These topics accounted for one-third of all materials published in April. In the economic field, the opportunity for Mexico arising from nearshoring and the conflict between the United States and China was highlighted. Regarding **Security and Rule of Law**, the fentanyl crisis and the importance of addressing the effects of its illicit trafficking were discussed.

Key publications regarding Energy and Security and Rule of Law this month:

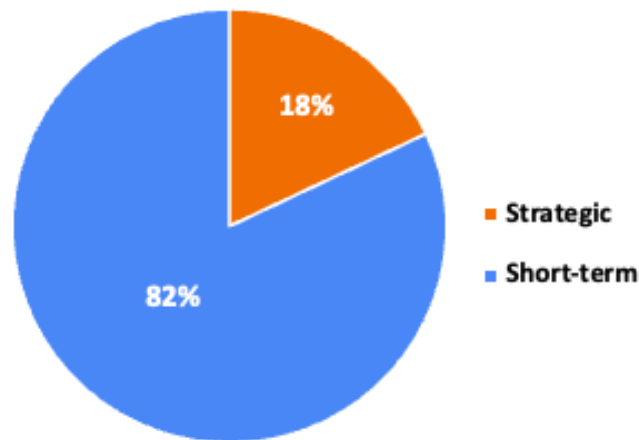
- [Baker Institute, How the US-China Trade War and the Inflation Reduction Act Could Shape Mexico's Nearshoring Future by Adrian Duhalt](#)
- [Hudson Institute, The Strategic Importance of Stopping the Fentanyl Slaughter by John P. Walters](#)

ECONOMY AND SECURITY AND RULE OF LAW RECENT DATA

- From January 1 to April 15, 2024, **93 announcements were identified with an investment expectation in Mexico of 36,153 million dollars**. (Mexican Ministry of Economy)
- Fentanyl and other synthetic opioids are the most common drugs involved in overdose deaths. Even in small doses, it can be deadly. **Over 150 people die every day from overdoses related to synthetic opioids like fentanyl**. (CDC)

Relevant short-term events for the bilateral relationship

- In April, there was a nearly 20% increase in publications under the short-term classification. This is largely due to an increase in content in blog formats or brief editorial positions.
- In contrast, strategic materials were identified, such as the **Social Progress Report**, from **México, cómo vamos?** a technically robust study is presented along with specific proposals to promote a positive impact on the public policy design in Mexico.



Highlight of Strategic Document

Shared Prosperity Map

by México, ¿cómo vamos?, in collaboration with the Social Progress Imperative and INCAE

- The Shared Prosperity Map represents the interconnected well-being of states in the United States and Mexico. Using Social Progress Index data for 2022, this map provides a subnational perspective on quality of life beyond economic indicators.
- The document analyzes the region in three dimensions: basic human needs, foundations of well-being, and opportunities.
- As part of the analysis, it develops what is needed to improve well-being and competitiveness between Mexico and the United States, highlighting the following:
 - The interconnections between the United States and Mexico extend beyond their commercial interactions, indicating a deeper socio-economic confluence shaped by agreements like NAFTA and its successor, the USMCA.
 - This integration is notably evident in the southern United States and northern Mexico, where pivotal aspects of societal well-being, including healthcare and education, thrive. This observation portrays a multifaceted picture of collective prosperity and regional unity.

PUBLICATIONS

MEXICO THINK TANKS

- [Mexico, cómo vamos? Mapa de Prosperidad Compartida Staff](#)
- [Colmex International Summer Program at Colmex Staff](#)
- [COMEXI International Summer Program at Colmex Sergio Alcocer](#)
- [COMEXI Mexican elections: challenges and opportunities for a new government Ryan Berg](#)

UNITED STATES THINK TANKS

- [American Enterprise Institute Lawfare Daily: Ambassador Robert Lighthizer on Trade Policy Jack Landman Goldsmith | Robert Lighthizer | Jen Patja](#)
- [American Enterprise Institute Postcars from the Hispanic Working Class Ruy Teixeira](#)
- [Atlantic Council Mexico's next president must address violence against women in rural areas Charlene Aguilera and Isabel Chiriboga](#)
- [Baker Institute How the US-China Trade War and the Inflation Reduction Act Could Shape Mexico's Nearshoring Future Adrian Duhalt](#)
- [Baker Institute Addressing the 'Crisis' at the US-Mexico Border: Insights From El Paso and Ciudad Juárez Kelsey Norman, Ana Martín Gil](#)
- [Baker Institute Migrant Workers' Vital Role in Agriculture: A Conversation with Alejandro Gutiérrez-Li Tony Payan, Jose Ivan Rodriguez-Sanchez](#)
- [Hudson Institute China Must Pay for Its Mass Murder by Fueling America's Fentanyl Overdose Epidemic William P. Barr](#)
- [Hudson Institute The Strategic Importance of Stopping the Fentanyl Slaughter John P. Walters](#)
- [AS/COA Mexico Elects: Ongoing Coverage of the 2024 Vote Carin Zissis](#)
- [AS/COA Mexico Elects: Tracking the 2024 Presidential Debates Carin Zissis](#)
- [AS/COA Poll Tracker: Mexico's 2024 Presidential Vote Carin Zissis](#)
- [Council on Foreign Relations Organized crime fuels Mexico's election violence, plus Europe's Southern Cone cocaine pipeline Shannon K. O'Neil and Will Freeman](#)
- [The Heritage Foundation Threat From China Is Growing at Our Southern Border Matthew Tragesser](#)
- [The Dialogue México: Informes de Progreso de Políticas de Primera Infancia Mexicanos Primero, Diálogo Interamericano, Pacto por la Primera Infancia](#)
- [Mexico Institute Mayoral candidate assassinated, Mexican ambassador to Ecuador named "persona non grata," Sheinbaum still leads polls, economic deceleration predicted Lauren TerMaat](#)
- [Mexico Institute Election Series | Discussing Mexico's First Presidential Debate Lila Abed](#)
- [Mexico Institute AMLO's End: A New Presidency? No Easy Exit Gerardo Penchyna](#)
- [Mexico Institute Mexico-Ecuador crisis, first presidential debate, PEMEX reduces crude oil exports Lauren TerMaat](#)
- [Mexico Institute Trade and Competitiveness Sailing Blind: Can Mexico Find its Lighthouse in Time? Alcira Gómez](#)
- [Mexico Institute Nearshoring, An Opportunity that is Mexico's to Lose Amy Glover](#)
- [Mexico Institute Latin American Leaders Criticize Ecuador's Raid on Mexican Embassy Bri Saenz](#)
- [Mexico Institute Zaldívar under investigation, legal reforms approved, voter registrations from abroad rejected, IMF lowers 2024 growth forecast Lauren TerMaat](#)
- [Mexico Institute Robbing Peter to Pay Paul? AMLO's Proposed Reform to Mexico's Pension System Alexandra Helfgott](#)
- [Mexico Institute Mexico Election Series | Challenges and Opportunities in the Implementation of Health Policies 2024-2030 Lila Abed](#)
- [Mexico Institute Which Way Morena Youth? Levi Vonk](#)
- [Mexico Institute Mexico Election Series | Foreign Policy for the Future: Opportunities and Challenges Lila Abed](#)
- [Mexico Institute USMCA review preparations underway, "champion of fentanyl", Sheinbaum stopped in Chiapas, pension reform approved Lauren TerMaat](#)
- [Mexico Institute Election Series | Discussing Mexico's Second Presidential Debate Staff](#)
- [Mexico Institute Back to Basics on Mexico's Public Security Vidal Romer](#)

The Mexican Institute for Competitiveness (IMCO) and the U.S.-Mexico Foundation's initiative, The Center for Bilateral Institutions, monitor publications of the leading think tanks and research centers in Mexico and the United States, analyze the topics discussed, and the actors pushing the narrative.

For the making of this report, thirty-seven think tanks are monitored every month, twenty-four think tanks are from the US, while thirteen are from Mexico. The think tanks included in this report are: Instituto Mexicano para la Competitividad (IMCO), México Evalúa, Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económica (CIDE), El Colegio de México (COLMEX), Consejo Mexicano de Asuntos Internacionales (COMEXI), Fundar, Centro de Estudios Espinosa Yglesias (CEEY), Fundación Idea, Aspen Institute México, The Coppel-Intuit Center for Binational Institutions (CBI), Brookings, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Hudson Institute, Peterson, Milken Institute, Bush Center, USC Schwarzenegger Institute, Bay Area Council Economic Institute, Meridian, New America, México ¿cómo vamos?, The Dialogue, American Enterprise Institute, Atlantic Council (AALAC), Baker Institute, Center for American Progress, Council on Foreign Relations, Heritage Foundation, Mexico Institute, Pew Research Center, USMEX UCSD, Americas Society/Council of the Americas (AS/COA), Centro de Competitividad de México (CCMX), Ethos Laboratorio de Pol. Públicas, Harvard Growth Lab, International Republican Institute (IRI), y Observatorio Nacional Ciudadano.

The history of the Mexico-United States relationship is also written by the Think Tanks since they help to build the long-term government agenda. Their active participation is crucial, particularly for in-depth analysis of political, economic, and social issues.



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