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The Baker Institute Center for the United States and Mexico seeks to have a meaningful impact on the U.S.-Mexico relationship through original research, relevant solutions to binational policy issues, and the advancement of mutual understanding by convening leaders who can bridge the world of ideas and the world of action. Please find below our quarterly newsletter, which provides the latest information on the center's activities.



The Economic Effect of Remittances: Powering Economic Prosperity and Inclusion

At this event, Hikmet Ersek, president and CEO of Western Union, explored recent trends on remittances, their importance as a development force, relevant technological improvements and how they could level the world's economic playing field. [Click here for video of the event.](#)

Accolades



Tony Payan, center director, has been appointed to the Houston committee of Mexico's Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior (IME) Becas (Institute for Mexicans Abroad Scholarships). IME Becas is a program implemented by the government of Mexico to support low-income Hispanic students living in the United States who are completing their education.



Rodrigo Montes de Oca, center research scholar, is serving on the editorial board of Reforma, a leading Mexican newspaper. The editorial board is made up of readers, public opinion leaders, and experts. Montes de Oca previously served on the editorial board from 2009-2011.



Stephen Mumme, center nonresident scholar, was recognized by the Association of Borderland Studies with its Lifetime Achievement Award at its 2021 Annual Meeting.

Past Events

Webinar — Hanging in the Balance: Mexico's Midterm Elections and the Future of its Democracy

At this half-day webinar on May 27, experts presented and discussed the findings of a year-long research project on the state of Mexico's political parties in light of the 2021 midterm elections. The event featured a keynote address by Mauricio Merino Huerta — director of the Instituto de Investigación en Rendición de Cuentas y Combate a la Corrupción at the Universidad de Guadalajara — and three expert panels that addressed democratic governance, electoral dynamics, and the state of political parties in Mexico. [Click here for video of the event.](#)

Meeting — Moving the U.S.-Mexico Relationship Forward: A Conversation with the Honorable Roberto Velasco

At this April 28 event, open to members of the [U.S.-Mexico Forum](#) and special guests, the Honorable Roberto Velasco, acting undersecretary for North America

in Mexico's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, discussed the opportunities and challenges that both nations will face in the next four years and how they can move toward a more cooperative future. [Click here](#) for more information on the meeting. [Click here](#) for information on becoming a member of the U.S.-Mexico Forum.

Webinar — Power Games: Examining Mexico's New Electricity Industry Law

At this March 30 webinar, a panel of experts explored a new law passed by Mexico's congress, which restricts private sector participation in power generation and effectively restores monopoly status to the state-owned electric utility. [Click here for video of the event.](#)

Webinar — The Impact of the China Trade War on the USMCA

At this February 24 webinar, experts in international trade addressed impending developments in the U.S.-China trade war and the opportunities and challenges they may bring for government, enterprises and consumers in North America. [Click here for video of the event.](#)

Webinar — A New Chapter in the U.S.-Mexico Relationship: What to Expect in 2021-2025

At this January 21 webinar, a panel of experts discussed the challenges in the binational relationship that the Biden administration and the administration of Andrés Manuel López Obrador will face. [Click here for video of the event.](#)

Recent Publications

Mexico's Midterm Elections: Winners and Losers and Their Impact on U.S.-Mexico Relations

Mexico's pivotal June 6 elections brought critical losses to President López Obrador and his MORENA party. What do they mean for the Mexican people and the U.S.-Mexico relationship? [Tony Payan](#) analyzes the election outcome in the [Baker Institute Blog](#).

Manufacturing, Remittances, Tourism and Oil: Key Factors for Mexico's Economy in 2020 and Beyond

In this [brief](#), [Tony Payan](#) and [Jose Ivan Rodriguez-Sanchez](#), center research scholar, examine the four economic pillars that are often credited with bolstering Mexico's economy in 2019 and 2020 to determine how quickly the nation's economy will bounce back from the COVID-19 pandemic.

La Guerra Improvisada: Los Años de Calderón y sus Consecuencias

Through interviews with key actors that designed, implemented, evaluated and recalibrated Mexico's "war on drugs," [Tony Payan](#) and [Guadalupe Correa-Cabrera](#), center nonresident scholar, authored a recent [book](#) that analyzed the campaign's strategy and its impact.

Mexico City's Subway Tragedy: An Example of Institutional Weakness and Corruption

The May 3 subway collapse in Mexico City highlights the ongoing institutional weakness and corruption of the current administration, with deadly results for the country's citizens, writes [Rodrigo Montes de Oca](#) at the [Baker Institute Blog](#).

A New Opportunity to Build a 21st-Century Immigration Court System

This [paper](#) examines the current state of the U.S. immigration court system and presents recommendations for its modernization under the Biden administration.

Resurrecting the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) Program

This [paper](#) argues that President Biden has an opportunity to resurrect the DAPA program and provide a pathway to legal status for millions of undocumented parents of U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents.

The Quest for Elusive Reform: Undocumented Immigrants in a Polarized Nation

This [paper](#) examines past attempts at immigration reform in the United States. Analyzing these early reform efforts could be deeply instructive for the prospects of President Biden's U.S. Citizenship Act and reveals durable patterns and new developments that could shape the chances for legislative breakthroughs.

Mexico's Pemex Doubles Down on Crude Oil Refining

Why did Mexico's state-owned Pemex buy a Houston-area oil refinery, when many other oil companies are moving away from fossil fuels? [Adrian Duhalt](#), postdoctoral fellow in Mexico energy studies, explains in the [Baker Institute Blog](#).

Why Changes to Mexico's Hydrocarbon Law Call Back to 1938 and "1984"

The 2021 changes to Mexico's Hydrocarbon Law are expressions of state power through legal reforms, and are exceptionally alarming. Nonresident scholar [Miriam Grunstein](#) explains in the [Baker Institute Blog](#).

The Value of Ethane Supply in Mexico

In this [brief](#), [Adrian Duhalt](#) argues that in light of Mexico's economic slowdown in 2019, the economic collapse of 2020, and the much-needed recovery in 2021 and beyond, ethane production could generate positive spillovers across a broader economic landscape.

Dealing with Distress from the COVID-19 Pandemic: Mental Health Stressors and Coping Strategies in Vulnerable Latinx Communities

In this [article](#) in the "Health and Social Care" journal, [Luz Maria Garcini](#), center nonresident scholar, and co-authors identify mental health stressors and strategies for coping with distress in underserved Latino communities.

The Judy Ley Allen Mexico Centered Podcast

To listen to all of the episodes, please [click here](#). The podcast is also available for

streaming on [Apple Podcasts](#), [Google Podcasts](#), [Stitcher](#), [Spotify](#), [Amazon Music](#) and [Radio Public](#).

Recent Episodes

- **The Aftermath of Mexico's 2021 Midterm Elections**
Tony Payan discusses the implications of the 2021 midterm elections for Mexico's president, the president's party, the opposition, and electoral institutions.
- **Mexico's 2021 Midterm Elections**
Javier Martin Reyes, professor at CIDE, discusses Mexico's June 6 midterm elections, the largest single-day election in the country's history.
- **Data for U.S.-Mexico Border Studies: Challenges in Data Collection and Distribution**
James Gerber, professor emeritus at San Diego State University, and Eduardo Mendoza, professor at El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, discuss the challenges in making comparisons between sub-national units across the U.S.-Mexico border with existing data. They offer recommendations for future data collection efforts to help answer questions about economic and social integration in the border region.
- **The Path to Permanent Residency for DREAMERS**
Catherine Glazer, a U.S. immigration attorney, discusses the current path to permanent U.S. residency, the obstacles for DACA recipients, and potential government avenues that could lead to permanent legal status for Dreamers.

In the News — Highlights

For the most recent media appearances, opinions and interviews of our experts and scholars follow us on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

- "Those who were waiting in Mexico are being let in, the flow is less, and the deportees are being processed more efficiently," Tony Payan told [Newsweek](#).
- "Organized crime is fully engaged in this election," Tony Payan told [Aljazeera](#), "they are killing and kidnapping candidates and extorting money from candidates, because they understand who can be their ally and who can be controlled once they get into local government."
- Gary Hale, nonresident fellow, told the [Texas Standard](#) that a terrorist designation for Mexican drug cartels is a "knee-jerk" reaction by the Texas governor, and a bad idea. "It's a tenuous relationship with regard to law enforcement cooperation."
- "Absolutely [Facebook] is a tool that [smugglers] utilize but at the same time, these kinds of networks operate through trust," [Guadalupe Correa-Cabrera](#) told [CNN](#).
- As an emissions-free alternative to conventional ammonia, green

- ammonia presents a key opportunity for Mexico in the global energy transition, writes [Adrian Duhalt](#) in an op-ed for [Expansión \(Spanish\)](#).

Join the U.S.-Mexico Forum

U.S.-Mexico Forum members provide general support to the policy research activities and programs of the Center for the United States and Mexico at Rice University's Baker Institute. Members have access to center experts and guests and to policy briefs on developments regarding the U.S.-Mexico relationship. To learn more about the U.S.-Mexico Forum and to become a member, please visit the [U.S.-Mexico Forum page](#).

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