



News, Research and Events

June 16, 2021



## Strengthening Mexico's asylum system

In the coming year, Mexico is likely to receive greater numbers of asylum seekers, especially as people from Central and South America leave home to seek refuge from poverty and violence. In a new policy brief, the Baker Institute's [Kelsey Norman](#) and [Ana Martín Gil](#) partnered with [Kevin Cole](#) and [Zaid Hydari](#) of the [Refugee Solidarity Network](#) to explore the challenges brought by this continuing northbound migration. They write that a strong and well-functioning Mexican asylum system is in the best interest of Mexico and the United States, as the immigration policies implemented in either country will undoubtedly affect the other.

To determine how best to support Mexico's asylum system, which is not currently meeting the needs of asylum seekers, the authors conducted a survey of approximately 30 civil society organizations in Mexico that provide a range of services to those seeking asylum, including advocacy and legal assistance. The survey revealed that the vast majority (approximately 90%) of those polled believe better cross-border collaboration with similar U.S. organizations and expanded access to U.S. policymakers would be critical steps toward meeting the needs of refugees and migrants.

For more of their policy recommendations, read the full brief [here](#).

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## New on the Baker Institute Blog



### Takeaways from Mexico's midterm elections

Mexico's pivotal elections brought critical losses last week to President Andrés Manuel López Obrador and his MORENA party. What do they mean for the Mexican people and the U.S.-Mexico relationship? [Tony Payan](#), the director of the Center for the United States and Mexico, explains [here](#).



### Uncharted territory: Taxing nonfungible tokens

Nonfungible tokens (NFTs) have introduced an extremely lucrative way to sell digital work, like art. [Read here](#) for public finance fellow [Joyce Beebe's](#) explanation of the NFT market and how the sometimes-extraordinary sale proceeds are taxed.

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***“Even if it weren’t for the competition with China, the American people deserve the benefits that come from these kinds of investments of taxpayer money.”***

[Neal Lane](#), Senior Fellow in Science and Technology Policy, to [Nature](#), on the budget boost slated for the National Science Foundation

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## Beyond the Headlines



**The CLEAN Future Act and oilfield-produced water regulation.** [Gabriel Collins](#), the Baker Botts Fellow in Energy and Environmental Regulatory Affairs, discusses why a section of the CLEAN Future Act that aims to classify oilfield-produced water as a hazardous waste could prevent the bill from achieving its climate, energy, environmental and social objectives.



**Unproven stem cell interventions: A global public health problem.** Science and technology policy fellow [Kirstin Matthews](#) and her co-authors lay out how the World Health Organization can help curb the rise of unsafe and unproven stem cell treatments in [Stem Cell Reports](#).



**Why are children in Brazil dying from COVID-19?** A variant of COVID-19, which may be to blame for the high death rate among Brazil's COVID-positive children, is spreading in the U.S. "Pediatric and newborn cases could soon become more prevalent," write [Peter Hotez](#), the Baker Institute fellow in disease and poverty, and his co-author Albert I. Ko in an op-ed for the [New York Times](#).

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## Membership and Development News

### **Center for Energy Studies receives funding to improve Texans' quality of life.**

Congratulations to the [Center for Energy Studies](#), one of four finalists for the [Lone Star Prize](#) that will receive a \$1 million dollar matching challenge grant from [Lyda Hill Philanthropies](#) and [Lever for Change](#). The grant will be used to develop a soil carbon storage market, one of the proposals in the [MacArthur Foundation's Bold Solutions Network](#), and will create new economic opportunities and ecosystem restoration benefits for Texans. Learn more about the initiative [here](#), and contact [Christene Kimmel](#) at [ckimmel@rice.edu](mailto:ckimmel@rice.edu) or 713-348-2136 for more information.



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## Upcoming Events

**Webinar — Is oil demand doomed with or without climate policy?** New climate policies are predicted to drive global oil demand significantly lower in the near future. But what if long-term, structural forces are already threatening future oil demand? [Mark Finley](#), the fellow in energy and global oil, explores this question with a panel of experts. **June 18 | 10 a.m. CDT**

**Roundtable dialogue — The Biden tax and expenditure plan.** [John W. Diamond](#), the Edward A. and Hermena Hancock Kelly Fellow in Public Finance and director of the [Center for Public Finance](#), considers the macroeconomic effects of President Biden's proposed fiscal plan. Join the [Roundtable](#) to attend this and other member-exclusive events! **June 22 | Noon CDT**

**Webinar — One company's solution to improving capital access for entrepreneurs.** [McNair Center](#) Director [Jennifer Rabb](#) talks with [Eric Griego](#), co-founder and CEO of Betterfin, about his company's innovative approach to the financial needs of entrepreneurs and the public policy challenges that the company and its customers face. **June 23 | 2 p.m. CDT**

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