

## 2021–22 AT A GLANCE

The Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies (USMEX), based at the UC San Diego School of Global Policy and Strategy (GPS), was founded in 1980 to study Mexico and the full range of issues affecting economic, social and political relations between Mexico and the U.S.

### MISSION

We contribute to the ongoing integration process between the U.S. and Mexico by providing a forum for thought leaders to engage in public dialogue, training and supporting a vibrant community of innovative scholars and practitioners, and undertaking cutting-edge research to guide policy decisions.

### VISION

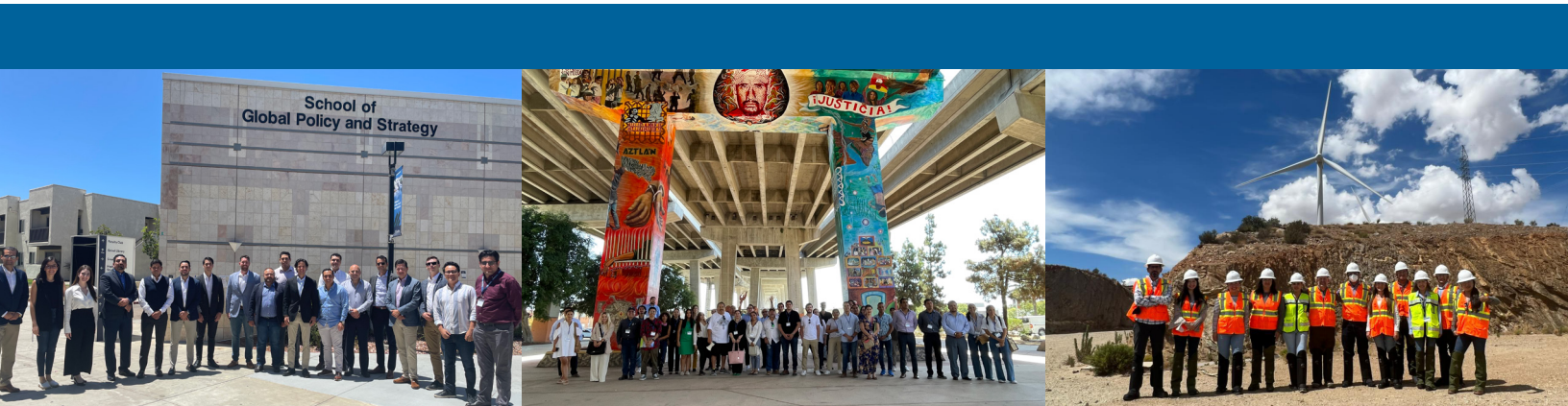
Our intellectual leadership improves the quality of life for Mexicans and Mexican Americans, deepens the economic integration between the two countries, and supports the development of a dynamic cadre of leaders dedicated to the consolidation of the U.S.-Mexico relationship.

### PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

1. Research and Publications
2. Policy Forums and Academic Working Groups
3. Conferences, Seminars and Webinars
4. Capacity Building and Community Outreach

### POLICY FORUMS AND ACADEMIC WORKING GROUPS

1. U.S.-Mexico Forum 2025
2. CaliBaja Working Group
3. U.S.-Mexico Climate Change Agenda Working Group
4. North and Central American Task Force on Migration
5. Energy and Sustainability Summer Boot Camp
6. U.S. Tax Law Course
7. Financial Inclusion of Mexican Migrants Working Group



## U.S.-MEXICO CLIMATE CHANGE AGENDA WORKING GROUP

In light of the COP27 Sharm El-Sheikh meeting, USMEX, Institute of the Americas, The Brookings Institution and Tecnológico de Monterrey drafted a proposed agenda for the U.S.-Mexico Climate Change discussions and potential collaboration. The goal is to help both countries advance their climate mitigation and adaption agendas, including Paris Agreement commitments.

The group explored five key areas for climate cooperation:

1. Reduction of Short-Lived Climate Pollutants
2. Energy Efficiency
3. Adaptation to Climate Change
4. International Climate Finance
5. Renewable Energy



The group developed a briefing paper and an analysis of the current situation for each topic, including a proposed list of items to be discussed in future meetings. The full agenda can be found [here](#).

## NORTH AND CENTRAL AMERICAN TASK FORCE ON MIGRATION

In concert with the World Refugee and Migration Council, the Migration Policy Institute (MPI) and El Colegio de México, USMEX launched the Task Force on Migration with the intent to elaborate on a regional response to the migration and displacement crises in the Americas.

The Task Force has issued five interim reports. In 2022 it issued these high-level recommendations that can be found [here](#):

1. A comprehensive, strategic, regional approach is needed to address migration from Northern Central America.
2. Governments in Northern Central America must address the political, economic and institutional drivers of migration.
3. The region's countries must increase legal channels for Central Americans to migrate.
4. All regional actors must find ways to support the active engagement of civil society.

### Task Force Co-chairs:

- » Hon. Madeleine Albright, former Secretary of State, U.S.<sup>1</sup>
- » Hon. Lloyd Axworthy, former Foreign Minister of Canada
- » Hon. Laura Chinchilla, former President, Costa Rica
- » Dr. Silvia Giorguli, former President of El Colegio de Mexico
- » Cardinal Alvaro Ramazzini, Bishop in Guatemala

<sup>1</sup> The Hon. Madeleine Albright sadly passed away on March 23, 2022.

## WEBINARS AND CONFERENCES

During 2022, the center hosted 19 webinars, which accrued over 3,450 attendees and over 5,300 views on our YouTube channel. For 2022, we organized several conversations on U.S.-Mexico relations. Here are our highlights:

- » Every Wednesday, the center hosted seminars at GPS to showcase its fellows' respective research.
- » The center also hosted the series "A New Chapter Under Biden," which sought to discuss the changes in the U.S.-Mexico bilateral relationship with Joe Biden and Andrés Manuel López Obrador at the helm of their respective countries.
- » This year's webinars have focused on Mexico's diplomatic relations, the Mexican energy sector and the current USMCA disputes.





## U.S.-MEXICO FORUM 2025

The election of Joseph Biden and the COVID-19 crisis created a prime opportunity to rethink and redesign the relationship between Mexico and the U.S. With this objective, we created the U.S.-Mexico Forum 2025, a group of 100 Mexican and U.S. scholars, practitioners and experts who undertook the task of proposing a course for the bilateral relationship for the next four years (2021-2025).



The forum consists of five working groups: migration, security and public health, trade and economy, energy and sustainable development, and strategic diplomacy.

On June 1-2, 2022, USMEX organized the first in-person meeting of the U.S.-Mexico Forum 2025. Nearly 150 people convened to evaluate the progress in each issue area over the first year of Biden's presidency.

There were a total of seven discussion panels, and below are the most important points from each one:

1. Recent geopolitical shifts are causing a New World Order. Russia's invasion of Ukraine, China's growing global

influence, and the U.S.'s recent democratic issues have begun to impact the status quo and suggest a new era of world order may be upon us.

2. The current state of U.S. democracy represents a huge risk for Mexico. The decline of democracy and rise of risk factors related to civil war have been accelerated in the last few years. Such issues have a great chance of spreading into Mexico and other Latin countries.
3. Recently, the High-Level Economic Dialogue between the U.S. and Mexico was relaunched. The agreement establishes a way for both countries to collaborate in the semiconductor and information and communication technology (ICT) sectors.
4. The current state of Mexican democracy has a direct impact on U.S.-Mexico relations, due to the president's populist agenda and his national security shortcomings.
5. California's policy to only sell electric vehicles by 2035 presents an opportunity for the strengthening of U.S.-Mexico relations. Mexico has the industrial capacity to help California fulfil such goals, while also having economic growth thanks to trade.
6. Consular diplomacy between California and Mexico is of vital importance for the CaliBaja region. Innovation and research, academic exchanges, labor laws and joint industrial planning are some areas of improvement for the local consulates that the panels found.
7. There is still a lot of work to do regarding women's inclusion in the labor force on both sides of the border. Chapter 23 of the USMCA established cooperation mechanisms to address labor issues related to gender, which need to be given more importance.

The report is available [here](#).

## U.S. TAX LAW COURSE

In 2022, USMEX offered a course for understanding the U.S. tax law system. The course offered an introduction to the most important taxes that apply in the U.S. jurisdiction for foreign investors.

The program offered a practical perspective on the main issues faced by companies seeking to establish a presence in the U.S., as well as the considerations that tax advisers must have when structuring investments. The course also covered topics that must be considered when

carrying out estate planning that involves investments or family members in the U.S.

The course took place remotely for its first sessions and concluded with in-person learning and workshops, for a total of 25 course hours.

Topics covered included:

- » Legislative process to implement tax laws
- » Income tax
- » Application of tax treaties in the U.S.

## CALIBAJA INTEGRATION WORKING GROUP



USMEX, the Mexican Consulate in San Diego and the International Community Foundation launched a series of conversations to discuss key cross-border issues. During 2022, the working group has hosted several discussions that intend to highlight the ways the CaliBaja region can collaborate.

The group has worked together and hosted discussions to address issues such as:

- » Migration
- » Economic impact of border closure
- » Energy outlook in the CaliBaja region
- » Impact of border closure on binational students
- » Expanding opportunities in CaliBaja's biotech ecosystem
- » Title 42 impact on the region
- » Medical tourism: challenges and opportunities

## ENERGY & SUSTAINABILITY SUMMER BOOTCAMP

USMEX seeks to establish a bilateral dialogue between Mexican and American professionals in the energy sector on current trends in the energy sector and the importance of renewable energy. In 2022, the center, with the support of Semptra, launched the first edition of the summer seminar, Energy and Sustainability in Mexico and the U.S.

This program was designed for decision makers in both public and private energy and electricity sectors from both countries.

The program consisted of a hybrid schedule. The first part consisted of on-site visits to the UC San Diego campus,

guided with the support of Semptra and the Institute of the Americas. The second part allowed participants to hold weekly virtual seminars with experts from top institutions including, the International Atomic Energy Agency, Brookings Institution and Columbia University among others.

The boot camp included the following topics:

- » Current status of the energy sector in Mexico and the U.S.
- » Future of energy sustainability
- » Challenges and opportunities for the energy sector in the border region
- » Geopolitics of the transition to clean energy



## FELLOWS PROGRAM

Each year, the center invites scholars and practitioners to campus from a wide range of disciplines as part of its residential Fellows Program. Thanks to the return of in-person learning, this year's cohort includes 24 fellows that will gather in person for its weekly activities and seminars.

The former fellows, now numbering over 750, are the core of the center's intellectual community and hold prominent positions in academia, government, civil society and the private sector.

This year's cohort includes a group of researchers from all over the world. They cover topics such as migration, violence, democracy, climate change, social welfare and more.

## ENCUESTA SOBRE LA CALIDAD DE LA DEMOCRACIA EN MÉXICO (ENCADE)

The survey "Perceptions on Democratic Institutions in Mexico" is designed to measure public opinion about topics of security, corruption, trust in institutions, political efficacy, accountability and respect for basic human rights.

Unlike other surveys about democracy, this project followed a dual strategy – realizing an open public count and a diverse sample of experts in all the territory including academics, journalists, analysts and public officials. This project seeks to become a biannual tool that evaluates the perceptions about the Mexican democracy's status in a safe, robust and unbiased manner.

This survey is a co-joint initiative of the center, the Institute of Legal Research at the National Autonomous University of Mexico, the departments of Political Science at UC Santa Barbara and UC Merced and SIMO Consulting. The project is financed by the University of California Institute for Mexico and the United States (UCMEXUS) and the National Council of Science and Technology (CONACYT). Visit [mexicandemocracy.org](https://mexicandemocracy.org) to view the survey.

## MEXICO AND ISRAEL: LESSONS ON OUR RESPECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE U.S.

Israel and Mexico have much to learn from each other as some of the major U.S. international partners. On Sept. 21, 2022, the center and Reichman University organized the conference "Mexico and Israel: Lessons on Our Respective Relationship with the U.S." to bring together some of these countries' academic and public leaders to discuss consular diplomacy, diaspora lobbying, public opinion and the economy.

Some of the topics analyzed were: consular diplomacy in the U.S.; how Mexican and Jewish diasporas lobby in the U.S.; perceptions of U.S.-Israel-Mexico relations; and the perspectives on the Israel economy.

## ILLICIT ECONOMIES AND EXTRA-LEGAL ACTORS CONFERENCE

With support from the UC Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation, the center hosted and co-organized a conference that brought together a diverse set of scholars working on topics related to the politics of illicit economies, organized crime and extra-legal armed actors.

Over the course of two days, participants grappled with a series of interrelated questions: how and why do criminal and extra-legal actors use violence? How do they provide goods and services to local communities? How have states attempted to combat crime and violence, and what are the effects of those actions?

## UC SAN DIEGO CHANCELLOR'S VISIT TO MEXICO CITY

During his visit to Mexico City, UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep Khosla met with former students of the different summer seminars organized by USMEX. He also visited the Mexican Congress and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Mexican government and private academic institutions to set a framework to form an educational partnership establishing research collaborations, student exchanges, faculty mobility, fellowships, virtual courses, and seminars or academic programs. As the highest institutional figure of UC San Diego, the chancellor's visit was key in reaffirming the importance of the university's relationship with Mexico, as well as the center's work.





## BILATERAL SECURITY COOPERATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

In September 2020, USMEX launched the Mexico Violence Resource Project (MVRP), an online platform that provides information, analysis, research and resources for understanding violence and organized crime in Mexico.

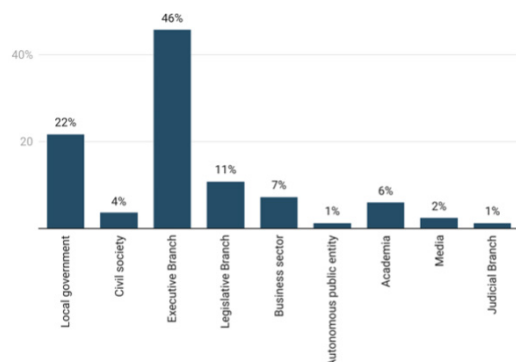
Read by policymakers in Washington, D.C., and Mexico City, as well as academics, MVRP has provided insights to The New York Times, The Economist, The Financial Times, the U.S. Department of Labor, the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Embassy in Mexico among others.

Visit: [mexicoviolence.org](https://mexicoviolence.org)



## U.S. POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND U.S.-MEXICO RELATIONS SUMMER SEMINAR

Since 2019, USMEX has hosted a summer program designed for early-career Mexican policymakers and young professionals. The program focuses on U.S. institutions and decision-making processes, the political system, border dynamics and U.S.-Mexico relations. The course consists of five weeks of classes and a site visit to the UC San Diego campus. The cohort included people from 10 different Mexican states and six U.S. cities.



The USPI program fosters stronger overall institutional relationships and encourages bilateral exchanges. This has resulted in the collaboration of UC San Diego and Mexico's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the signing a Memorandum of Understanding that improves recruitment of members of SRE to UC San Diego.



The 2022 cohort was composed of 83 members of different work sectors (above is the graph of this year's Alumni distribution per work sector).

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies | School of Global Policy and Strategy  
University of California San Diego  
9500 Gilman Drive # 0519 | La Jolla, CA 92093-0519  
[usmex.ucsd.edu](https://usmex.ucsd.edu) | (858) 534-0194

UC San Diego  
SCHOOL OF GLOBAL POLICY AND STRATEGY  
Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies