



GLOBAL VIEWS 2004

Comparing Mexican and American Public Opinion and Foreign Policy



CENTRO DE INVESTIGACIÓN Y DOCENCIA ECONÓMICAS
CONSEJO MEXICANO DE ASUNTOS INTERNACIONALES
THE CHICAGO COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

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COMEXI is a pluralistic, multidisciplinary forum for debate and analysis on the role of Mexico in the world. The Council is an independent, nonprofit forum with no government or institutional ties and is financed exclusively by membership dues and corporate support.

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INTRODUCTION

Relations at a Crossroads

Mexico and the United States are facing a critical moment in their relationship. Despite a storied history of conflict and mutual suspicion, the establishment of NAFTA in 1994 and the arrival of electoral democracy in Mexico in 2000 brought hope and expectations on both sides of a deeper, more cooperative and balanced relationship that would help the countries address critical common problems, such as border security and migration, as well as deal with the new global challenges of an increasingly interconnected, uncertain, and unipolar world.

Unfortunately, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, altered this new course in U.S.-Mexico relations. Just prior to the attacks, optimism had been building in anticipation of an historic agreement on migration between the newly arrived administrations in Mexico and in the United States. That highly publicized agreement was to usher in a new era of expanded cooperation. In just a few weeks, however, that optimism turned to strain as priorities and policies suddenly shifted and reactions on both sides to the attacks and their aftermath created renewed disagreements and distrust.

The United States was disappointed in Mexico's initially timid response to the attacks and, later, open reluctance to support the United States in taking military action against Iraq. In Mexico, disappointment came from the Bush administration's decision to postpone further bilateral negotiations for a comprehensive

migration accord that suddenly looked remote. Since then, the bilateral relationship has been in a state of flux, moving between the underlying forces of economic and social integration on one hand and the new imperatives of U.S. security and Mexico's new democratic uncertainties on the other.

The diplomatic ups and downs have stirred a public debate on the true nature of the bilateral relationship and the capacity of the two countries to meet the pressing common challenges posed by the new international environment. According to some analysts, as long as the United States remains fully engrossed in a war against terrorism and Mexico is unable to address its domestic shortcomings in democratic governance, economic growth, and social development, it is unlikely that the two governments will have the political incentives to continue the move toward sustained cooperation that began during the post-NAFTA and the pre-September 11 years.

Other analysts are even more pessimistic, based on cultural and historical factors. Culturalists argue that Mexicans and Americans dislike each other, hold opposite views about the world, and share a deeply rooted attitude of mutual distrust as a result of the different social values and political traditions inherited from their distinct ethnic, colonial, and national historical experiences. According to this view, cultural differences between Mexicans and Americans inevitably lead to

recurrent cycles of disagreement and distrust. Some predict that high security concerns in the United States, combined with political gridlock and economic stagnation in Mexico, will revive the deeply rooted cultural differences between the two countries and lead to increased unilateralist, protectionist, nationalistic, and xenophobic pressures on both sides of the border.

On the opposite side of the debate, some observers argue that the inherent dynamism of markets, technology, and social networks will fuel a continued intensification of social, economic, and political interactions between Mexico and the United States, leading to a greater convergence of interests, values, and worldviews. Diplomatic and political turbulence is seen as normal, having no major or sustained impact on the dense web of cooperative efforts between bureaucracies, state governments, private interests, and social actors. These more sanguine analysts also note that bilateral cooperation on security, migration, and drug trafficking matters, particularly along the border, has been closer than ever despite differences on foreign policy and other issues.

The key questions raised by this debate are the following: Do Mexicans and Americans hold completely different worldviews despite the growing economic, social, political, and cultural connections between their two countries? Does the gap between real bilateral interdependence and national perceptions diminish their capacity to effectively address common challenges?

These common challenges have only intensified in the post-September 11 environment. The U.S.-Mexican border is currently under great pressure due to inevitable tensions between increased security controls and larger flows of people, goods, and services that cross the border legally and illegally every day. Dealing with current problems will take extraordinary will and commitment. It requires both sides to redefine traditional diplomatic approaches (unilateralism in the United States and defensive nationalism in Mexico) and to undertake major domestic policy reforms (migration policies in the United States and national security policies in Mexico). How Americans and Mexicans view the world and their relationship with each other will shape

these policies and approaches and ultimately determine whether they will succeed or fail.

Do Mexicans and Americans share similar views about international threats? Are they isolationists, or do they favor an active participation in world affairs? Do they share similar foreign policy objectives? How strong are multilateralist versus unilateralist orientations among the American and Mexican publics? Do they share a common view of the international rules and norms or do they view the role of multilateral institutions, the use of military force, and the primacy of international law differently? What is their view of each other? Is there evidence of strong anti-American sentiment in Mexico? How strong are anti-Mexican and anti-immigrant attitudes in the United States? Are ordinary Mexicans and Americans in favor of deepening the economic partnership initiated by NAFTA and extending their relationship into other more sensitive arenas such as migration and security? What kinds of bilateral agreements concerning sensitive issues such as border security, migration, and energy are mutually acceptable to the Mexican and American publics?

This report offers new evidence to answer some of these important questions. It is the result of a new binational partnership between the Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas (CIDE) and the Consejo Mexicano de Asuntos Internacionales (COMEXI) in Mexico and The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations (CCFR) in the United States. The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations has conducted one of the preeminent surveys of American public opinion on U.S. foreign policy periodically for nearly three decades. This year the CIDE, COMEXI, and CCFR have joined forces to undertake an ambitious study that, for the first time, includes parallel surveys in the United States and Mexico.

The CIDE/COMEXI/CCFR study seeks to contribute to the current debate on U.S.-Mexican relations by providing new data and analyses. In an attempt to capture and compare American and Mexican public opinion in the new international setting after the world-shaking events of September 11, the surveys posed many of the same questions in both countries on a

broad range of international and bilateral issues. The result is the most in-depth and comprehensive picture ever presented of the foreign policy attitudes of these two different but closely linked economic partners and neighbors.

The data from this survey will be placed on deposit placed with the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, the Roper Center for Public Opinion in Storrs, Connecticut, and NORC (National Opinion Research Center) at the University of Chicago. It will also be deposited in the CIDE library's Public Opinion Survey Databank in order to be available for consultation by scholars, professionals, students and any interested person in Mexico. The report will also be available on the Internet at www.cide.edu, www.consejomexicano.org, and www.ccfcr.org.

CIDE/COMEXI Acknowledgments

This report reflects the combined efforts of three institutions, the Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas (CIDE), the Consejo Mexicano de Asuntos Internacionales (COMEXI), and The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations (CCFR), supported by a network of social scientists in Mexico and in the United States. We are largely indebted to Guadalupe González, professor of international studies at CIDE, Andrés Rozental, president of COMEXI and Marshall Bouton, president of the CCFR, whose vision and ideas launched this joint project. We would like to thank Enrique Cabrero, director general of CIDE, for embracing and supporting this initiative with enthusiasm.

The project would not have been possible without the encouragement and generosity of its many sponsors. We are deeply grateful to the Ford Foundation for its generous and invaluable support. The Ford Foundation was the principal financial sponsor of the CIDE/COMEXI study. This support was possible thanks to the leadership and commitment of Mario Bronfman, representative of the Ford Foundation in Mexico, and Cristina Eguizábal, program officer for Security and Cooperation in the Western Hemisphere at

the Ford Foundation in Mexico. CIDE and COMEXI are particularly appreciative of the early funding provided by the U.S. Embassy in Mexico. This funding made possible the project's first working session, which brought together members of the CIDE, COMEXI, and CCFR project teams as well as representatives of all major polling firms in Mexico City.

The survey design and data analysis presented in this report reflect the joint efforts of the CIDE, COMEXI, and CCFR teams. Susan Minushkin, professor of international studies at CIDE, led the CIDE/COMEXI team and served as project director. Team members include Guadalupe González; Antonio Ortiz Mena, director of the International Studies Division at CIDE; Aurora Adame, director of COMEXI; and Ana González, research assistant in the International Studies Division at CIDE. Laura Cedillo, Ph.D. student at Northwestern University, joined our team late in the project, but her contribution to report writing, editing, and graphics was essential to its success.

The CIDE/COMEXI team counted on the invaluable substantive contribution of the following remarkable individuals who served as advisors to the project: Robert Shapiro, professor of political science at Columbia University, whose expertise and active role as co-editor of the Mexican and the U.S.-Mexico comparative reports was key in designing the survey, analyzing the data, and writing the reports; Ulises Beltrán, professor of political studies at CIDE and director of the Mexican polling firm BGC, whose commitment, generosity and technical advice was invaluable in all stages of the project, particularly in the coordination and funding of the field work in Mexico. His advice and support permitted us to overcome with great success some technical and financial difficulties under a tight schedule.

The CIDE/COMEXI team would like to express its great appreciation to all the members of the CCFR team that under the leadership of Marshall Bouton, patiently and enthusiastically worked with us to undertake this collaborative effort. We especially thank Christopher Whitney, director for studies at the CCFR,

who shared his impressive logistical and organizational skills and guided us in all stages of the project, Jennie Taylor, Benjamin Page, Steven Kull, and Catherine Hug.

We would like to acknowledge the support and input of many individuals in the conceptualization of this first-of-its-kind study in Mexico. First, we are grateful to the members of COMEXI who offered their time and insight on Mexican foreign policy in several meetings and conference calls. Miguel Basáñez, political scientist and president of Global Quality Research Corporation, was COMEXI's advisor to the project. His insight and experience was very important for the general design of the study. We would like to express our appreciation to Jorge Montaña, Gustavo Mohar, and Pilar Álvarez, all members of COMEXI, whose extensive comments immeasurably improved the Mexico questionnaire. Luis Herrera-Lasso, director of Grupo Coppan and member of COMEXI, graciously provided extensive comments on numerous drafts of our questionnaire and opened his offices to the project team for weekend meetings.

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CCFR Acknowledgments

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The continued success of the CCFR public opinion study is due to the remarkable collaboration of its team. This year's CCFR team was led by Marshall Bouton, president of The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, and included Robert Shapiro, professor in the Department of Political Science at Columbia University, who took a lead role as advisor to the joint U.S.–Mexico study; Steven Kull, director of the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) at the University of Maryland; Benjamin I. Page, Gordon Scott Fulcher Professor of Decision Making in the Department of Political Science at Northwestern University; and Catherine Hug, president of Hug Communications. Special recognition is due to Christopher Whitney, director of studies at The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, for his superb role in developing and implementing the 2004 study. We also want to thank Jennie Taylor, project coordinator for the CCFR study team, for her invaluable contributions to making this project a success.

In addition, The Chicago Council would like to thank Susan Minushkin, Guadalupe González González, and Antonio Ortiz Mena López Negrete of CIDE for all the time and effort they contributed to conceptualizing and implementing this project. We also want to extend thanks to Ana González of CIDE for her tremendous work in coordinating the joint study team's efforts. Laura E. Cedillo Espín of Northwestern

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Shared Continent, Shared Perspectives

Despite significant geopolitical, economic, and social differences separating the United States and Mexico, publics in both countries agree on many fundamental issues. Both Americans and Mexicans want their countries be active in the world, pay attention to international news, believe public opinion should be influential in shaping foreign policy, share similar feelings toward various countries, and perceive many threats and goals in similar manners.

- Majorities in both countries endorse taking an active role in world affairs. Both also favor the United States, as the world's leading power, working with other nations to solve international problems rather than taking a unilateral or isolationist approach. Mexicans prefer that Mexico only participate in resolving international problems that directly affect their country.
- International terrorism and chemical and biological weapons are seen by both Americans and Mexicans as very critical threats, but Mexicans show even greater concern about the threats of drug trafficking and world economic crises (two items not asked in the United States). Mexicans also display greater concern about economic competition from the United States than Americans do regarding economic competition from low-wage countries (such as Mexico).
- While Americans and Mexicans both rate combating international terrorism and preventing the spread of nuclear weapons as very important foreign policy goals, goals related to economic and personal well-being rate higher in each country. Protecting the jobs of American workers tops the U.S. list, while protecting the interests of Mexicans in other countries and promoting the sale of Mexican products in other countries lead the Mexico list. Helping to bring democracy to other countries ranks at the bottom of the list of foreign policy goals for both countries.
- Mexicans and Americans hold generally favorable opinions of each other and also look favorably on Canada and European friends. Surprisingly, Mexicans join Americans in having cool feelings towards Cuba. The publics differ in attitudes towards France, China, and Israel, with Mexicans more positive towards France and China.

The Structure of Global Relations

Americans and Mexicans agree that the United States should not play the role of world policeman and that the United Nations needs to be strengthened. Both publics also support measures to strengthen international economic organizations and trade agreements. Both also have doubts about the fairness of trade and see the other as benefiting more from NAFTA.

- Mexicans do not see U.S. influence in the world as generally positive and agree with Americans that the United States should not play the role of world policeman.
- Contrary to the image of Americans as unilateralists, majorities of Americans as well as Mexicans think that strengthening the United Nations is an important foreign policy goal and support the UN having a standing peacekeeping force. Pluralities or majorities in both countries also favor giving the UN the power to regulate the international arms trade and impose a small tax on arms sales and oil to fund its activities. A strong majority of Americans are willing to go along with UN decisions it does not prefer, while a plurality of Mexicans are willing to do so.
- Majorities in both countries support giving the United Nations Security Council the right to authorize the use of force to respond to a variety of security, political, and humanitarian crises. Contrary to the image of Mexicans as unwilling to send their troops outside of the country, a plurality of Mexicans and a strong majority of Americans support participating in UN peacekeeping missions.
- A majority of Americans and a plurality of Mexicans support complying with WTO rulings that go against each country. Overwhelming majorities of Americans and smaller majorities of Mexicans support including environmental and worker protection in international trade agreements.
- Both Americans and Mexicans are concerned about the fairness of trade relations. Only half of Americans believe Mexico practices fair trade with the United States. Majorities in both countries strongly or somewhat disagree that rich countries are playing fair in trade negotiations with poor countries, with Mexicans more likely to strongly disagree. More people in each country believe NAFTA is good for the other country than believe it is good for their own.

Dealing with Common Problems

The United States and Mexico face several daunting common problems such as drug and gun trafficking and illegal immigration into the United States. Finding effective, cooperative solutions is complicated by the unbalanced power structure between the two countries. While Mexicans are sensitive to this and seek to preserve a degree of independence, they recognize as well the need for bilateral cooperation and are willing to work with the United States on measures to combat terrorism and illegal immigration. Americans, in turn, favor joint decision making and bilateral measures to decrease illegal immigration.

- Americans and Mexicans differ on whether there should be more joint decision making and whether Mexico should have an independent foreign policy. Americans favor greater joint decisions between the United States and Mexico, but are split on whether Mexico should follow the U.S. lead in its foreign policy. An overwhelming majority of Mexicans believe Mexico should have an independent foreign policy from the United States and a smaller majority oppose greater joint decision making. However, strong majorities of Mexicans support a number of cooperative security measures to combat international terrorism such as allowing American agents to work in Mexico guarding airports, seaports, and border with the United States.
- Both Americans and Mexicans see the country of origin as more responsible for solving key cross-border problems such as drug and gun trafficking and migration. A majority of Americans and a plurality of Mexicans agree that Mexico should be more responsible for dealing with drug trafficking from Mexico to the United States and that the United States should more responsible for dealing with trafficking of guns from the United States to Mexico. Both agree that Mexico should be more responsible for dealing with undocumented Mexican immigrants entering the United States.
- Americans and Mexicans have opposite impressions on the integration of Mexican immigrants to the

United States, with Americans believing that these immigrants integrate but do not learn English and Mexicans thinking they learn English but do not integrate. Interestingly, despite the fact that many Mexican immigrants are undocumented, both publics believe they respect the law.

- Americans oppose increasing legal immigration levels to the United States and unilateral reform meas-

ures such as President Bush's recent temporary worker proposal. Mexicans overwhelmingly favor this proposal. Both Americans and Mexicans are willing to go along with a bilateral agreement that would provide greater opportunities for Mexicans to work and live legally in the United States in return for Mexico making greater efforts to reduce illegal immigration and drug trafficking.

CHAPTER ONE

Shared Continent, Shared Perspectives

The U.S.-Mexico relationship is unique among nations. As neighbors on a vast American continent, the United States and Mexico share one of the world's longest and most active borders between a developed and a developing country. Increasing flows of trade, investment, and people between the two countries reinforce high levels of economic interdependence and social interconnectedness. Yet long-standing historical antagonisms have made it particularly difficult for the United States and Mexico to build and sustain cooperation. In addition, large asymmetries between the two countries in terms of military power and socioeconomic development further strain efforts to cooperate. The unending interplay between the forces of conflict and cooperation inform the attitudes of Americans and Mexicans on a wide range of issues. To understand these attitudes, it is important to first look more closely at those forces affecting the relationship.

Disparate nations

Mexico is a developing country in a relatively stable region, implicitly protected by the umbrella of U.S. military power. It has traditionally maintained a low profile, been relatively inactive in international affairs, and as an initiator of the 1967 Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America, lives in a nuclear weapon-free zone. Although Mexico is the world's tenth

largest economy and eighth largest trader, it has not sought or succeeded in leveraging its economic position into a greater involvement in world affairs.

Mexico's history is shaped by its relations with the United States. Mexico lost roughly half its territory to the United States in 1848, and during the Mexican Revolution (1910-20) and its aftermath (1920-30) the United States mounted two major and one minor armed incursions into Mexican territory, denied diplomatic recognition to various Mexican administrations, and imposed economic sanctions in order to collect debts. Mexicans have a keen sense of this history. School books in Mexico have extensive sections devoted to U.S. intervention in Mexico and national discourse often continues to highlight it. Mexico's resulting suspicion about U.S. power has generally led it to pursue an independent foreign policy based on the principles of nonintervention and self-determination. In addition, economic instability and other problems have long kept Mexico's gaze fixed regionally, especially toward their powerful northern neighbor.

The United States, on the other hand, is the world's preeminent military and economic power and is actively engaged in regions across the globe. With a history shaped by economic might and large power politics, Americans have found their attention much less occupied by relations with Mexico than by relations with other strategic allies and the world's major powers.

The U.S. economy is seventeen times larger than the Mexican economy. The United States ranks fifth in terms of gross national income per capita (US\$37,610). Mexico ranks sixty-eighth (US\$6,230). The United States ranks seventh of 175 countries on the Human Development Index that measures achievements in terms of life expectancy, education, and adjusted real income. Mexico ranks fifty-fifth. Seventy-seven percent of the U.S. population aged 15 and over had completed high school and some college in 2002. Only 19% of Mexicans in the same age bracket had completed middle school and only 11% had some college (see Figure 1-1).

Growing interdependence

Despite the profound geopolitical, economic, and social differences separating the United States and Mexico, the futures of the two countries are inextricably linked. With a common border stretching 2,000 miles, interactions continue to intensify between the two countries.

Trade and investment issues became central to the bilateral relationship after Mexico joined the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1986 and then became part of the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1994. Since NAFTA, Mexico-U.S. trade more than doubled from 1994 to 2003. Today, the United States and Mexico are among each other's largest

MEXICO AND THE UNITED STATES: BASIC PROFILE 2003		
	MEXICO	UNITED STATES
Population	102 MILLION	291 MILLION
Gross National Income per Capita	\$6,230	\$37,610
Gross Domestic Product	\$626 BILLION	\$10.9 TRILLION
% of Exports to the United States/Mexico	90.4	13.5
% of Imports to the United States/Mexico	64.3	11
% of Labor Force Employed		
Agriculture	21	3
Industry	25	23
Services	54	74
% of World Oil Production	5.1	9.2
% of World Oil Consumption	2.3	25.1
Total Armed Forces (Active)	192,770	1,427,000
Military Expenditures	\$5.2 BILLION	\$358.2 BILLION
% of Population Below the Poverty Line	40	12
Telephone lines per 100 pop.	13.5	66.5
Sources: World Development Indicators, World Bank, July 2004. http://worldbank.org ; Banco de México Informe Anual 2003; U.S. Census Bureau's Foreign Trade Statistics 2003. www.census.gov/foreigntrade/statistics ; UNCTAD. World Investment Report 2003. FDI Policies for Development: National and International Perspectives. http://www.unctad.org/fdistatistics ; Pocket World in Figures. The Economist 2003 Edition; BP Statistical Review of the World Economy. http://www.bp.com ; The Military Balance. The International Institute for Strategic Studies 2003-2004, Oxford University Press; CIA—The World Fact Book: United States Report May 2004 and Mexico Report May 2004 http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook ; Office of Management and Budget http://whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2004/defense.html .		

Figure 1-1

trading partners. Mexico is the United States' second largest trading partner after Canada and China, and the United States is Mexico's largest partner by far. The United States is also Mexico's largest foreign investor by a wide margin, representing 55% of Mexico's foreign direct investment in 2003. Additionally, Mexico is the third largest supplier of crude oil to the United States. An economic downturn in either country would have dramatic effects on the other.

Security linkages now also bind the two countries more closely together because of the cooperation required to address security concerns at the border while still allowing a free and efficient flow of people and goods between the two countries. The cross-border movement of people and goods is enormous. Around 300 million legal crossings occur annually through the twenty-five ports of entry along the U.S.-Mexico border. As mentioned, the total volume of legitimate cross-border trade has doubled in a decade. The intensity of bilateral interactions is not only a border phenomenon. In 2003 Mexico surpassed Canada as the first destination for U.S. travelers. That year 15.8 million Americans visited Mexico, and nearly 10 million Mexicans traveled to the United States. Mexico is the leading source country for legal immigrants to the United States, with 219,380 admissions in 2002, representing 21% of the total number of legal immigrants. If the large cross-border migration of undocumented workers and the flow of illegal drugs into the United States from Mexico are taken into account, the importance of the security dimension in U.S.-Mexican relations is even greater.

On an individual level, direct and indirect personal connections are strong. Sixty-one percent of Mexicans in this survey say they have relatives living outside of Mexico. The vast majority of these live in the United States. In addition, 33% of Mexicans in this survey say they would live in the United States if given the opportunity. Roughly 9.9 million Mexicans live in the United States and approximately 25 million Americans are of Mexican origin. Twenty-one percent of Mexicans in this survey say they receive remittances from family members working in the United States.

The need for Mexicans and Americans to understand one another has never been greater. The future health of both countries depends on joint, constructive efforts to solve common, looming problems. Despite the current atmosphere of disillusionment and the conflicting forces at work in the U.S.-Mexico relationship, our survey finds a remarkable and encouraging convergence of views between Mexicans and Americans on many crucial issues.

Global interest and engagement

One of the traditional measures of internationalism is the question of whether it is best for the future of one's country to take an active part in world affairs. A majority of Americans have long endorsed taking an active part, and our survey reveals that along with the 67% of Americans who say this today, a majority of Mexicans (57%) agree that their country should also take an active part (see Figure 1-2).

A majority of Mexicans and Americans also support a multilateral rather than a dominant role for the United States in world affairs. Seventy-eight percent of Americans and 55% of Mexicans believe that the United States should do its share in efforts to solve international problems together with other countries as opposed to being the preeminent leader in solving international problems (8% of Americans and 10% of Mexicans) or staying out altogether (10% and 28%,

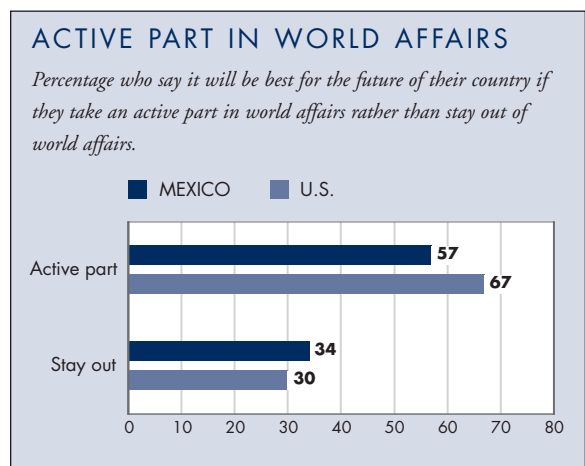


Figure 1-2

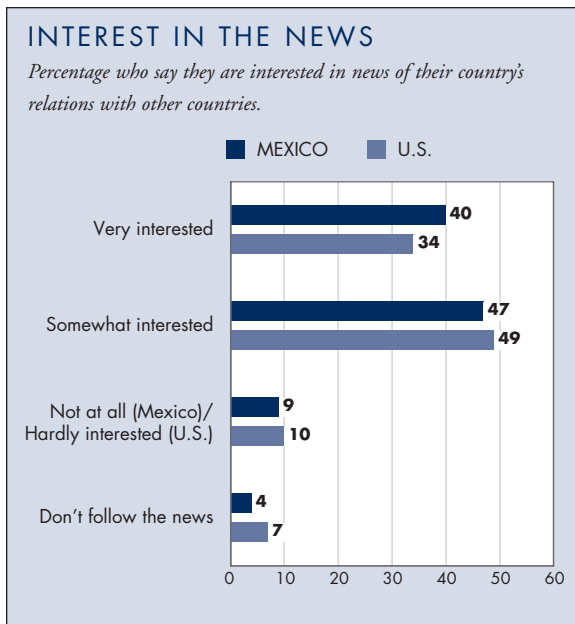


Figure 1-3

respectively). Further, 76% of Americans and 72% of Mexicans do not think the United States has the responsibility to play the role of world policeman. These findings on the U.S. role are discussed further in Chapter 2.

For their own part, 58% of Mexicans believe that Mexico should participate in solving only those world problems that directly affect Mexico, with 31% of Mexicans believing that Mexico should participate in resolving the world's critical problems more generally, and only 9% taking the isolationist position that Mexico should not participate in solving the world's problems.

This internationalist view is also evident in the significant numbers of Mexicans and Americans who are very or somewhat interested in the news of their country's relations with other countries (see Figure 1-3). Eighty-seven percent of Mexicans and 83% of Americans say they are interested in news of their country's relations with other countries, with 40% of Mexicans and 34% of Americans "very" interested.

Many people in both countries believe that their opinions should be influential in shaping foreign policy. In Mexico, a country in which foreign policy was, until recently, determined solely by the president and a compliant Congress, 41% of Mexicans believe that public

opinion should be extremely influential (10 out of 10 on a scale of influence), with another 27% giving it an 8 or 9. In the United States, 48% give public opinion an 8 or higher on the 10-point scale of preferred influence on foreign policy, with 22% of Americans giving it a 10.

Threats to vital interests

Despite their vastly different world positions, Mexican and American perceptions of critical threats to their countries' vital interests are more similar than might be expected (see Figure 1-4). For Americans, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, continue to be a defining national event. International terrorism is viewed by more people (75% of the public) as a critical threat to the vital interests of the United States than any other threat asked about, though the percentage has declined since 2002. The threat of chemical and biological weapons and the threat of unfriendly countries becoming nuclear powers are next on the list of critical threats, with 66% and 64% of Americans, respectively, viewing them as critical threats.

In Mexico, two items that were not asked in the United States but have directly affected the lives of many Mexicans came out on top: drug trafficking (89% of Mexicans identify it as a critical threat) and world economic crises (86% believe it to be a critical threat). Nevertheless, Mexicans are just as concerned about the threat of chemical and biological weapons (86% critical threat) as they are about world economic crises, and concern about international terrorism is not far behind, with 81% of Mexicans saying it is a critical threat. While Mexico is not typically seen as a target for international terror or chemical and biological attacks, its long, active border with the United States increases its vulnerability to attacks directed at the United States and creates the possibility that such attacks could have a direct affect on the lives of Mexicans.

World environmental problems (global warming in the U.S. survey) also ranks relatively high as a perceived threat to Mexicans, with 79% of Mexicans identifying this as a critical threat to the country's vital interests. Many fewer Americans consider global warming a

CRITICAL THREATS			
<i>Percentage who view each of the following as a “critical threat” to their country’s vital interests.</i>			
	MEXICO		U.S.
Drug trafficking	89	International terrorism •	75
World economic crises	86	Chemical and biological weapons	66
Chemical and biological weapons •	86	Unfriendly countries becoming nuclear powers	64
International terrorism •	81	AIDS, the Ebola virus, and other potential epidemics	58
World environmental problems •	79	Large numbers of immigrants and refugees coming into the U.S.	52
Violent conflicts due to religious and ethnic differences	60	Conflict between Israel and its Arab neighbors	39
Economic competition from the United States •	55	Islamic fundamentalism	38
The development of China as a world power •	48	Global warming •	37
		Economic competition from low-wage countries •	35
		The development of China as a world power •	33

Figure 1-4

• Asked in both Mexico and the United States

threat, with 37% seeing this as critical. Mexico’s greater reliance on agriculture, lower income levels, and high levels of environmental degradation that expose its population more to the effects of environmental problems may explain the sharp divergence on this issue. It is also notable that Mexican concern about the global warming is not dampened even though efforts to address it have the potential for creating hardship for the oil industry, one of Mexico’s most critical economic sectors.

On the issue of economic competition, Mexicans appear to be more concerned about competition from the United States than Americans are about competition from low-wage countries (such as Mexico). Fifty-five percent of Mexicans believe economic competition from the United States to be a critical threat, while only 35% of Americans identify economic competition from low-wage countries as a critical threat.

Neither Americans nor Mexicans view the rise of China as a world power as unduly alarming. China’s rise is the lowest ranked threat for Mexicans (48% see it as critical) and only 33% of Americans identify this as a critical threat.

The goals of foreign policy

American and Mexican opinion on the goals for their country’s foreign policy follow a similar pattern (see Figure 1-5). While the list of goals asked about were not exactly the same in both countries, some comparable priorities emerge. Not surprisingly, items most directly affecting people’s lives top the priority list. In Mexico, protecting the interests of Mexicans in other countries, promoting the sale of Mexican products in other countries, and stopping the flow of illegal drugs

into the United States are very important for the most people, with 88%, 85%, and 83%, respectively, calling them very important goals. These are followed closely by combating international terrorism and preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, which are also of high importance in the United States. Seventy-eight percent and 77% of Mexicans, respectively, call these goals very important. Again, just as Mexicans perceive terrorism and nuclear proliferation as threats despite not being directly targeted, they see combating these

threats as important goals for their country just as Americans do.

In the United States, the high concern about terrorism and nuclear proliferation found in threat perceptions extends logically to goals, given that the United States has already suffered a direct and devastating terrorist attack on its soil and remains a prime target. Preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and combating international terrorism are rated very important by 73% and 71% of Americans, respectively. However,

FOREIGN POLICY GOALS			
<i>Percentage who say the following should be a "very important" goal of their country's foreign policy.</i>			
	MEXICO		U.S.
Protecting interests of Mexicans in other countries	88	Protecting the jobs of American workers	78
Promoting sale of Mexican products in other countries	85	Preventing the spread of nuclear weapons •	73
Stopping the flow of illegal drugs into the United States •	83	Combating international terrorism •	71
Combating international terrorism •	78	Securing adequate supplies of energy	69
Preventing the spread of nuclear weapons •	77	Stopping the flow of illegal drugs into the United States •	63
Promoting and defending human rights in other countries	71	Controlling and reducing illegal immigration	59
Helping to improve the standard of living of less developed countries •	66	Maintaining superior military power worldwide	50
Strengthening the United Nations •	60	Improving the global environment	47
Bringing Mexico's disputes with other countries to international tribunals	60	Combating world hunger	43
Helping bring democracy to other countries •	55	Strengthening the United Nations •	38
		Protecting the interests of American business abroad	32
		Protecting weaker nations against foreign aggression	18
		Helping to improve the standard of living of less developed nations •	18
		Helping to bring a democratic form of government to other nations •	14

Figure 1-5

• Asked in both Mexico and the United States

more Americans are presently concerned about jobs. Protecting the jobs of American workers is considered a very important goal by 78% of Americans, putting it at the top of the list of foreign policy goals considered very important. Protecting jobs has traditionally been a top foreign policy goal among the American public, appearing in first place or close behind in all Chicago Council's surveys since 1975, though it had not been first in the past three surveys done in the 1990s and early in this decade. Job losses from the recent economic slowdown in the United States, continued weak job creation figures, and the current controversy about the outsourcing of jobs by American companies have propelled this concern back to the top.

Securing adequate supplies of energy is also a very important goal for many Americans (69% very important). Next on the list and among the top five goals for Americans is a goal of high importance to many Mexicans: stopping the flow of illegal drugs into the United States, with 63% considering this a very important foreign policy goal.

Mexicans are much more likely than Americans to see helping improve the standard of living of less developed countries as a very important goal. Sixty-six percent of Mexicans say it is a very important foreign policy goal and 7% say it is not important. Only 18% of Americans say it is a very important goal for the United States, and 21% say it is not important. Few Americans have considered this goal very important compared to other goals in any of the Chicago Council surveys over the past three decades, although Americans show more support for this idea on separate questions. Seventy percent of Americans favor foreign aid that helps needy countries develop their economies. This formulation puts the help in more humanitarian terms, which Americans are more likely to support. Mexicans, on the other hand, themselves living in a developing and economically vulnerable country, are sympathetic to the goal of helping less developed countries improve their standard of living.

At the bottom of the list of foreign policy goals for both Mexicans and Americans is helping to bring democracy to other countries. Despite its ranking

below all other goals, a majority of Mexicans (55%) still see this as a very important goal (15% say it is not important). By contrast, only 14% of Americans identify this as a very important goal, and 27% say it is not important. The disparity on this item may be attributed to the focus on democracy in Mexico due to its own recent democratization. Americans, on the other hand, have long been unenthusiastic about this goal, and perhaps especially now in light of the United States's unfinished and uncertain effort to install a democratic government in Iraq after the removal of Saddam Hussein's regime.

Feelings toward other countries

Americans and Mexicans share similar feelings toward various countries around the world (see Figure 1-6). Although many of the countries asked about were different in the two surveys, in general, North American neighbors and European friends rate most warmly for both Mexicans and Americans. On a thermometer scale of 0 to 100, with zero meaning very cold, 100 meaning very warm, and 50 meaning neither warm nor cold, Britain, Germany, and Mexico receive a mean 70, 58, and 54 degrees, respectively, from Americans, while the United States, Canada, France, and Spain receive 68, 65, 62, and 62 degrees, respectively, from Mexicans. Mexicans rate Japan high on their list (not asked in United States), giving it a mean 68 degrees, equal to feelings for the United States. Notably, Mexicans display warmer feelings toward the United States than Americans do toward Mexico. The more neutral feelings among Americans likely stem from issues surrounding trade and immigration, discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. Both Mexicans and Americans feel relatively neutral toward South Korea, which receives a mean 52 degrees from Mexicans and 49 degrees from Americans.

Mexicans and Americans both have cool feelings toward Cuba (46 degrees from Mexicans and 40 degrees from Americans). This is perhaps surprising on the Mexican side, since Mexico has long maintained very close diplomatic and cultural relations with Cuba, whereas the U.S. government does not have diplomatic

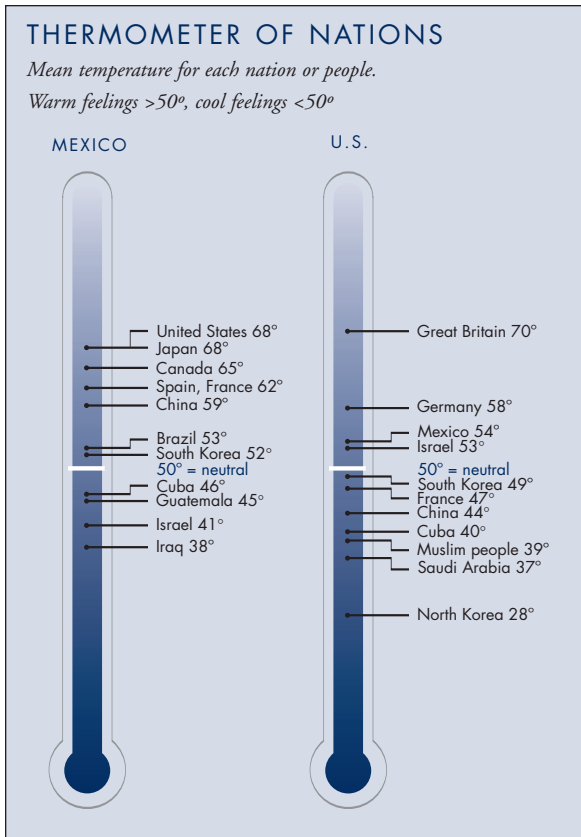


Figure 1-6

relations with Cuba and has had a relatively hostile posture toward it.

The American neighbors differ, however, on attitudes toward France, China, and Israel. Mexicans are much more positive toward France and China, giving them a warm 62 and 59 degrees, respectively, while Americans give them a somewhat cool 47 and 44 degrees, respectively. By contrast, Mexicans rate Israel much cooler than Americans do, giving it a cool 41 degrees to Americans' slightly warm 53 degrees.

CHAPTER TWO

The Structure of Global Relations

Mexicans and Americans favor taking an active part in world affairs, share many of the same concerns about threats, support a number of the same goals for their country's foreign policy, and favor countries working together to solve problems. In this chapter we will look at the form this international activity and cooperation should take, including the role of the United States and international institutions such as the United Nations and the World Trade Organization (WTO), as well as the structures for dealing with the use of force and for managing economic and trade relations.

A restrained U.S. role

As a major actor on the world stage, the United States is the subject of much debate about the role it plays internationally. From the Mexican perspective, the United States plays an important role in the world, but not always a good one.

Mexicans do not believe that the United States is having a generally positive influence in the world. Fifty-five percent disagree (38% strongly, 17% somewhat) that U.S. influence is generally positive. Thirty-nine percent of Mexicans believe that U.S. influence is generally positive, with only 16% agreeing strongly. A notable 28% of Mexicans (10% of Americans) think the United States should stay out or withdraw from efforts to solve world problems. Only 20% of Mexicans trust

the United States, while a plurality of 43% distrust it. Only 20% feel fraternity or empathy towards the United States, with 26% resenting the United States and 46% feeling indifference (neither empathy nor resentment). The same percentage (46%) feel neither admiration nor disdain for the United States, although more Mexicans admire it (29%) than disdain it (20%).

Given this level of distrust, it is perhaps not surprising that a majority of Mexicans agree, as discussed in Chapter 1, that the United States should not play the role of world policeman (72%) and that the United States should not be the preeminent leader in solving international problems, but should do its share in efforts to solve international problems together with other countries (55%) (see Figure 2-1).

Whether or not these findings reflect an historical or current suspicion about U.S. power or a more general multilateralist value (or both), the preference among Mexicans for the United States to take a multilateral approach to solving world problems is clear and echoed strongly by Americans. Again, as noted in Chapter 1, 78% of Americans think the U.S. should solve problems together with other countries, and 76% do not think the United States should play the role of world policeman. Fully 80% of Americans believe the United States is playing the role of world policeman more than it should be.

U.S. ROLE IN THE WORLD

Percentage who say the following comes closest to their position.

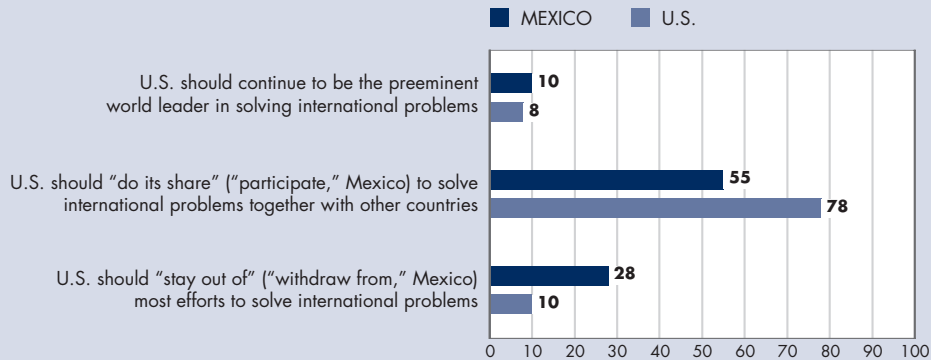


Figure 2-1

A stronger United Nations

Mexicans and Americans generally favor the United Nations taking a stronger role in dealing with world problems. Both Mexicans and Americans have warm feelings toward this institution, with Mexicans feeling more favorable. Mexicans give the United Nations a mean 75 degrees and Americans give it a mean 57 degrees on the feeling thermometer. Americans and Mexicans also think that strengthening the United Nations is an important foreign policy goal. Fully 81% of Americans and 84% of Mexicans think that it is a very important or somewhat important goal. Again, more Mexicans than Americans feel strongly about this,

with 60% of Mexicans versus 38% of Americans saying it is *very* important. High Mexican support for strengthening the UN may be related to the strong emphasis in Mexican schools and in national discourse on the importance of the United Nations as the central international institution that promotes peace and international cooperation.

Mexicans and Americans also support taking specific steps that would give the United Nations unprecedented authority and power (see Figure 2-2). Pluralities or majorities in both countries favor having a standing UN peacekeeping force trained and commanded by the United Nations (74% of Americans and 64% of Mexicans) and giving the UN the power to regulate the

STEPS TO STRENGTHEN THE UNITED NATIONS

Percentage who favor the following specific steps to strengthen the UN.

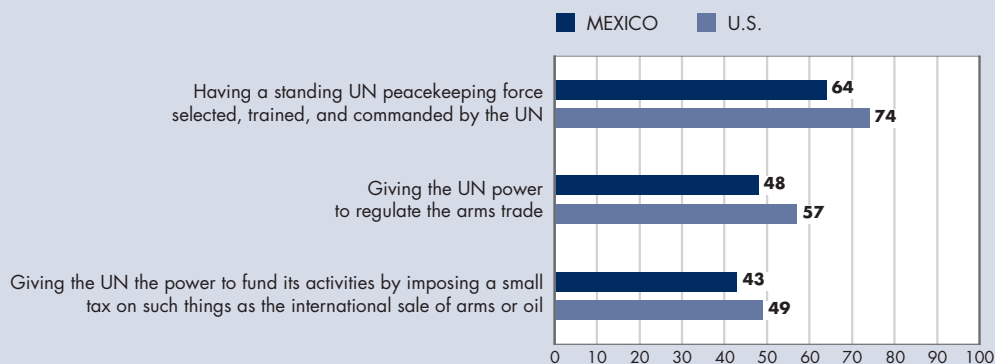


Figure 2-2

international arms trade (57% of Americans and 48% of Mexicans). In the case of giving the UN the power to fund its activities by imposing a small tax on arms sales and oil, opinion is more closely divided in both countries, with 49% of Americans and 43% of Mexicans in favor, and 45% of Americans and 44% of Mexicans opposed.

In all three cases, more Americans than Mexicans support these specific steps to strengthen the UN. This may be because Americans see these measures as a way to share burdens they might otherwise bear of dealing with international problems. The disparity may also reflect a more general wariness among Mexicans about the impact of such measures on Mexico's interests. A reluctance among Mexicans to give up its decision-making power shows up on a number of other questions.

For example, when asked whether their countries should be more willing to make decisions within the United Nations even if it means they will sometimes have to go along with a policy that is not their first choice, a majority of Americans (66%) favor making this commitment (29% do not), while only a plurality of Mexicans (44%) favor it (38% do not, and 11% say it depends). It is striking that despite the majority support among many Mexicans for strengthening the UN in general, less than half are willing to go along with decisions it doesn't prefer. And despite U.S. superpower status and unilateral prerogative, a solid majority of Americans are willing to go along with UN decisions it does not prefer. Playing into this is likely a confidence among Americans about its global power and influence and a greater sensitivity among many Mexicans about having its interests overrun by superior powers like the United States.

The use of force

Both Mexicans and Americans support giving the United Nations Security Council the power to mandate the use of force. Both Mexicans and Americans strongly agree that the United Nations Security Council should have the right to authorize the use of force in five different circumstances: to prevent severe human rights viola-

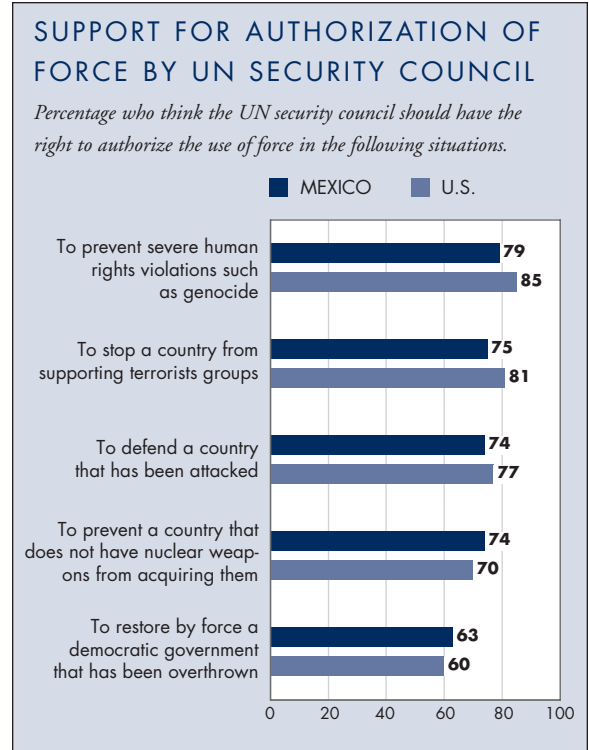


Figure 2-3

tions such as genocide (79% of Mexicans and 85% of Americans), to stop a country from supporting terrorist groups (75% and 81%), to defend a country that has been attacked (74% and 77%), to prevent a country that does not have nuclear weapons from acquiring them (74% and 70%), and to restore by force a democratic government that has been overthrown (63% and 60%) (see Figure 2-3).

In terms of peacekeeping, when asked if their countries should participate in a military or policy peacekeeping force being sent to some part of the world if the United Nations requests it,¹ 78% of Americans say the United States should take part rather than leave this job to other countries, with 19% saying it should not. A plurality of Mexicans (48%) also support their country's participation, with 36% saying Mexico should not participate (see Figure 2-4). The 30-point difference on this issue between Mexicans and Americans is likely

¹Wording in the U.S. survey was: "In general, when the United States is asked to be part of a United Nations international peacekeeping force in a troubled part of the world, do you think we should take part, or should we leave this job to other countries?"

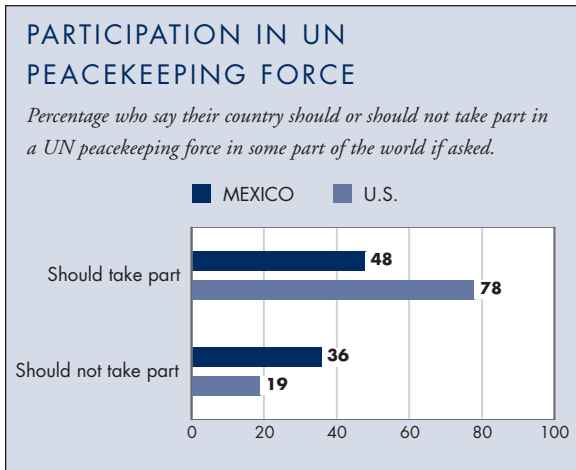


Figure 2-4

related to their vastly different historical experiences regarding the use of force in general and peacekeeping in particular. Mexico has not been involved in a major international military conflict since its war with the United States in 1846-48, although during the early years of the twentieth century there were militarized clashes with the United States in the border region and the Mexican port city of Veracruz. In addition, Mexico has joined a peacekeeping mission only once, sending a small contingent of police as part of the UN mission to El Salvador in 1992-95. The plurality support among Mexicans for participating in UN peacekeeping operations is therefore a highly significant finding.

Perhaps most significant, however, in terms of its impact, is the finding mentioned previously that clear majorities of both Mexicans (64%) and Americans (74%) support the dramatic step of creating of a standing UN peacekeeping force selected, trained, and commanded by the United Nations.

Economic structures

INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

Nearly 10 years after the creation of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995, questions have arisen about its power to police international commerce among member states, resolve international trade dis-

putes, and serve as the principal forum for market opening initiatives in light of the failure of talks at the Cancun Ministerial Conference in September 2003. On the question measuring support for empowering the WTO to make binding decisions in trade disputes, findings are similar to those on UN decision making. A majority of Americans (69%) believe that the United States should comply with WTO rulings that go against it as a result of trade disputes, while a plurality of Mexicans (48%) are willing to comply with WTO decisions that go against it (see Figure 2-5).

The lower level of support among Mexicans may be because Mexico does not believe that WTO rulings are fair to developing countries, which was the main reason talks collapsed in Cancun. Less developed coun-

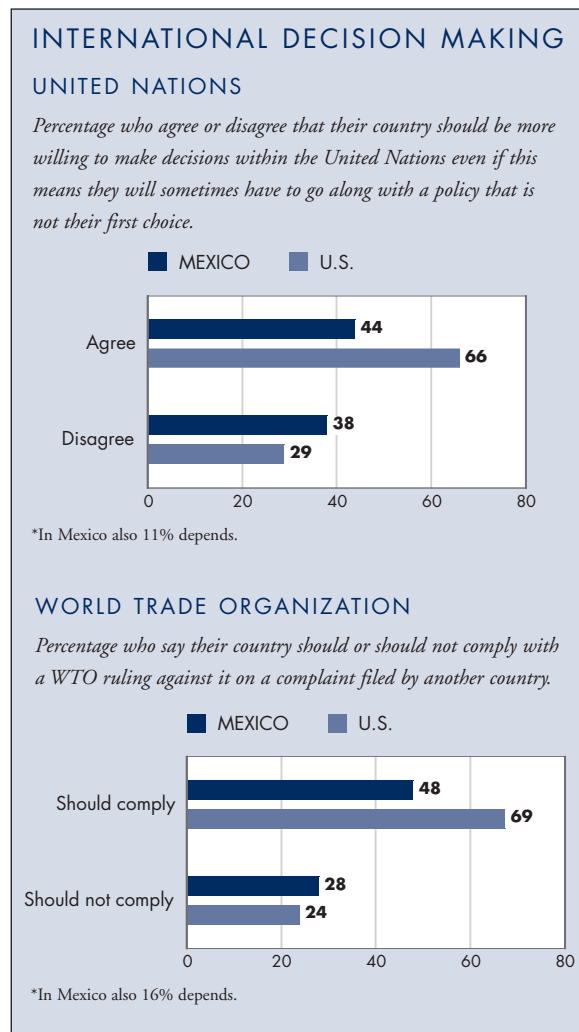


Figure 2-5

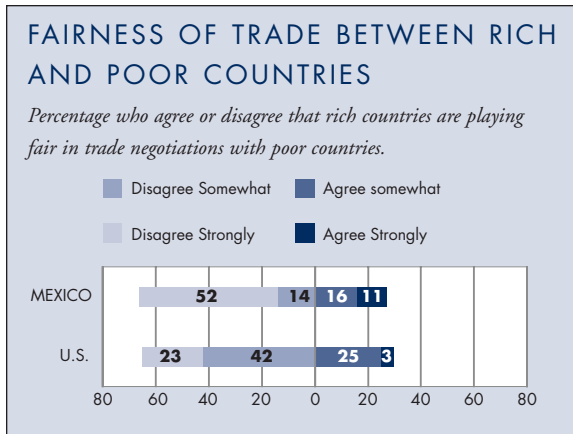


Figure 2-6

tries have been particularly vocal on this issue throughout the recent Doha Round of the WTO talks. They argue that trade negotiations favor rich countries, from agenda setting in the negotiations to implementation after negotiations are completed. While majorities in both countries (65% of Americans and 66% of Mexicans) strongly or somewhat disagree that rich countries are playing fair in trade negotiations with poor countries, 52% of Mexicans disagree strongly, compared to only 23% of Americans (see Figure 2-6).

One example of this concern about playing fair in trade is the question of environmental and worker protections in international trade agreements. While there is majority support in both countries for these protections, Americans support them much more overwhelmingly than Mexicans. Ninety-three percent of Americans and 67% of Mexicans support requiring the maintenance of minimum standards for working conditions, and 91% of Americans, compared to 76% of Mexicans, support the maintenance of minimum standards for the environment. The difference may be due to the concern among some Mexicans that such standards put their country at a disadvantage compared to developing nations.

Another important trade concern is farm subsidies, especially the agricultural export subsidies that rich countries provide their farmers and agro industries. At the Fifth Ministerial Meeting of the World Trade Organization held in Cancun, Mexico, in September 2003, Mexico participated as a member of the G-20

group that was established in August of that year to press for the elimination of export subsidies and domestic support for agriculture in rich countries. While the United States continues to provide these subsidies, there has been a recent breakthrough in WTO negotiations to significantly reduce them.

The American public shows a differentiated view of subsidies. While a majority (71%) of Americans favor giving subsidies to farmers who work farms less than 500 acres, a majority also opposes the U.S. government giving subsidies to large farming businesses (69%). And even though a majority supports subsidies to small farmers, only 31% of Americans favor giving subsidies on a regular, annual basis, compared to 41% who favor such subsidies only in bad years.

GLOBALIZATION

Mexico's concern about fairness in the international economic system is also reflected in its attitude toward globalization. Whereas 64% of Americans believe globalization is mostly good for the United States, only 34% of Mexicans believe it is mostly good for Mexico. Thirty-one percent in both countries believe that globalization is mostly bad for their countries (17% of Mexicans volunteered that it is neither good nor bad and 4% volunteered that it depends) (see Figure 2-7).

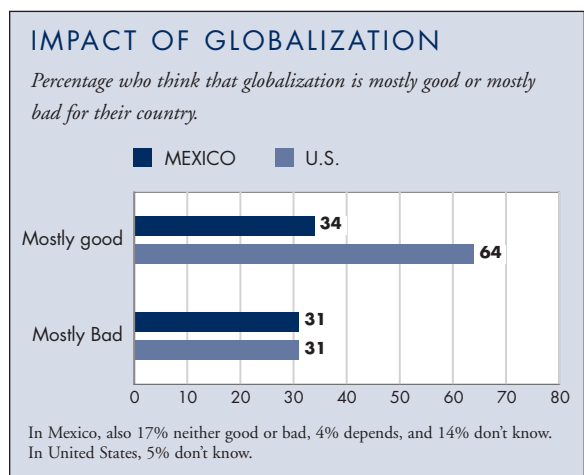


Figure 2-7

IMPACT OF NAFTA				
<i>Percentage who think the North American Free Trade Agreement is good or bad for each of the following.</i>				
	GOOD		BAD	
	MEXICO	U.S.	MEXICO	U.S.
The U.S. economy	78	42	10	43
The Mexican economy	44	69	39	16
Mexican businesses (Mexico)/American businesses (U.S.)	50	50	35	36
Creating jobs in the U.S.	N/A	31	N/A	56
Job creation in Mexico	49	69	36	17
The standard of living of people like you (Mexico)/Your own standard of living (U.S.)	41	51	35	33
The environment	39	34	39	48

Figure 2-8

REGIONAL TRADE AND COMPETITION

On a regional level, attitudes about fairness in trade relations between Mexico and United States are mixed. Despite more than a decade of free trade between Mexico and the United States, the public in both countries is still ambivalent about its fairness and the impact of NAFTA.

While 76% of Americans favor engaging in trade with Mexico, only half of Americans (50%) believe Mexico practices fair trade with the United States, with 38% believing it practices unfair trade. Sixty-seven percent of Americans believe that the U.S practices fair trade with Mexico. This contrasts on the U.S. side with views of trade with the other NAFTA partner, Canada: 74% of Americans think Canada practices fair trade with the United States and 81% believe the United States practices fair trade with Canada.

Further, while most Americans do not appear concerned about overall economic competition from low-wage countries as a critical threat (35%), there is high

concern about jobs, which can be related to trade with Mexico. More Americans say the goal of protecting American jobs is very important than say that for any other foreign policy goal. Concern about the outsourcing of jobs is very high, with 72% of Americans believing that outsourcing is a mostly bad thing because American workers lose their jobs to people in other countries. As explained below, NAFTA is seen by 60% of Americans as bad for job security in the United States. On the Mexican side, 55% of Mexicans believe that economic competition from the United States is a critical threat.

Turning specifically to NAFTA, more people in each country say the agreement is good for the other country than say it is good for their own. Seventy-eight percent of Mexicans say that NAFTA is good for the U.S. economy, while 44% say it is good for the Mexican economy. Sixty-nine percent of Americans say NAFTA is good for the Mexican economy, while 42% say it is good for the U.S. economy. Another 69% of Americans say it is good for creating jobs in Mexico, while only

31% say it is good for creating jobs in the United States. On a separate question asked only in Mexico, 70% of Mexicans think that NAFTA has benefited the United States the most of all three NAFTA partners, with only 8% believing Mexico has benefited the most (see Figure 2-8).

While fewer people in both countries think NAFTA's impact is good for their own country than for the other, more people in both countries still generally say its impact is good rather than bad. Fifty percent of Mexicans say NAFTA is good for Mexican businesses (35% bad), 49% believe NAFTA is good for job creation in Mexico (36% bad), 41% say it is good for the standard of living of people like themselves (35% bad); 39% say that NAFTA is good for the environment (39% bad). A plurality of 49%, however, believes that NAFTA is bad for the Mexican agrarian sector (38% good).

On the U.S. side, 55% of Americans believe that NAFTA is good for consumers like themselves (30% bad), 51% say it is good for their own standard of living (33% bad), and 50% say it is good for American companies (36% bad). However, 60% say it is bad for the job security of American workers (25% good), just as 56% say it is bad for creating jobs in the United States (31% good), and 48% say it is bad for the environment (34% good).

Despite these mixed perceptions on the part of both Americans and Mexicans about NAFTA, there is still support for extending free trade agreements. Sixty-two percent of Mexicans and 59% of Americans support each country entering into a Free Trade Agreement of the Americas that would include most of the countries in North, Central, and South America. Thirty percent of Americans oppose it, while only 19% of Mexicans do.

FOREIGN INVESTMENT

It is important to note that despite Mexico's participation in NAFTA, general openness to trade, and successful liberalization of foreign investment in many sectors of the economy since 1989, many Mexicans are still

very protective of key industries. Overall, 54% say that Mexico benefits a lot or some from foreign investment, but 42% say it benefits only a little or not at all. While a plurality of 48% of Mexicans favor foreign investment in telecommunications companies such as those providing local and long distance consumer services and in media companies such as television networks or newspapers (45% oppose foreign investment in both areas), majorities oppose foreign investment in the key sectors of energy (68% oppose it in oil production and distribution and 60% oppose it in electricity and gas) and local currency government bonds (57% opposed).

These findings confirm that Mexicans continue to support the Mexican law that prohibits foreign and local private investment in the energy sector through constitutional amendments made after Mexico nationalized its oil from foreign investors in 1937. Concern about the bond sector may stem from the 1994-95 financial crisis in Mexico, which was touched off when foreign and domestic holders of government bonds refused to roll over their investments, provoking the devaluation of the Mexican peso, a dramatic increase in domestic interest rates, a systemic banking crisis, and the bankruptcy of many Mexicans who were unable to meet payments on their home, personal, small business and agricultural loans.

CHAPTER THREE

Dealing with Common Problems

Lorenzo Meyer, a well-known Mexican analyst, characterizes the U.S.-Mexico relationship as an intense relationship that exists within an unbalanced power structure. This imbalance adds complexity to already difficult problems faced by the two countries. As the world's pre-eminent economic and military power, the United States wields a level of influence that is both a benefit and a burden. While it can muster tremendous resources to address problems it chooses to solve, it can all too easily trump the interests of others, intentionally or not, in pursuit of its goals.

Mexicans, from a weaker strategic and economic position, are sensitive to this inherent feature of the power imbalance with the United States. History has made them distrustful, and with strong values, proud traditions, and valuable resources that they seek to preserve, Mexicans guard their interests carefully. This is the backdrop against which Mexicans and Americans view specific measures and proposals for cooperation and the solving of common problems.

Mexicans are even less willing to go along with joint U.S.-Mexico decisions than they are with UN and WTO decisions (see Figure 2-5). When asked whether Mexico and the United States should be more willing to make decisions jointly when dealing with common problems even if this means that the United States and Mexico will sometimes have to go along with a policy that is not its first choice, only 30% of Mexicans agree,

while 54% disagree. Americans, by contrast, are in favor of more joint decision making, with 67% agreeing to accept joint decisions and 28% disagreeing (see Figure 3-1).

This desire for independence vis-à-vis the United States is also evident in the dramatic 89% of Mexicans who say that Mexico should generally have an independent foreign policy rather than follow the U.S. lead (5%) (see Figure 3-2). On the same question, Americans are divided: 45% say that Mexico should follow the U.S. lead, and 48% say it should have an independent foreign policy.

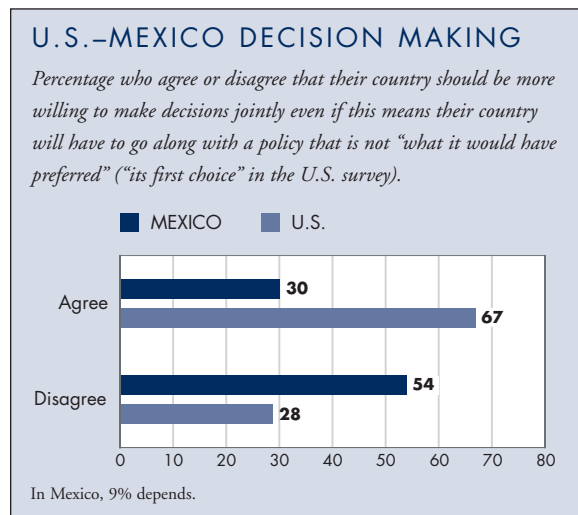


Figure 3-1



Figure 3-2

Combating terrorism

Despite their hesitation to make more joint decisions, Mexicans are willing to take a number of measures to cooperate with the United States in combating international terrorism (see Figure 3-3). Sixty-three percent of Mexicans support permitting American agents to work with Mexican agents in guarding Mexico's airports, seaports, and border with the United States. Eight-four percent of Mexicans favor increasing the entry and exit requirements on visitors to Mexico from other countries to combat international terrorism, and 87% of Mexicans favor increasing controls on the movement of goods through Mexico's airports, seaports, and borders. These findings show that Mexicans are quite willing to do their share and cooperate with the United States in combating terror, a high concern in both countries.

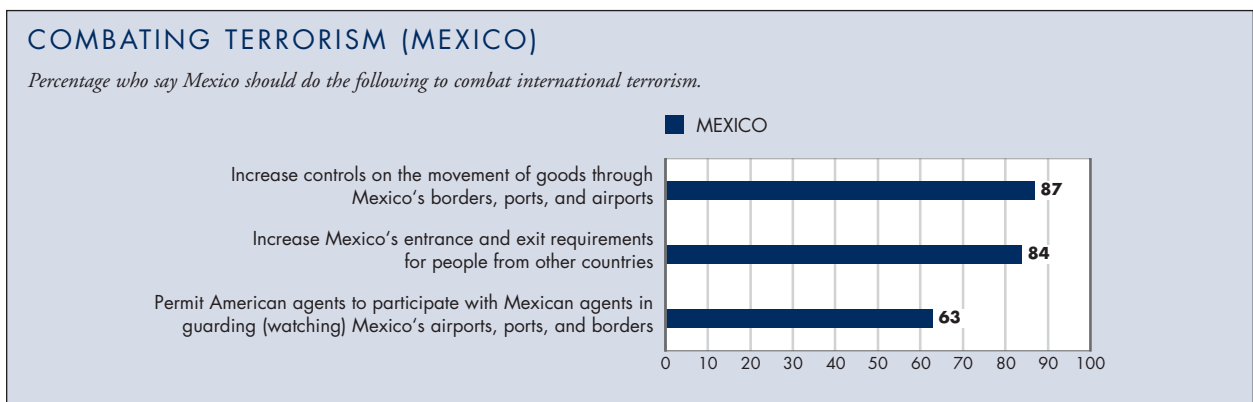


Figure 3-3

Illegal drug and arms trafficking

Another big problem between the two countries is the drug trade across the U.S.-Mexico border. As mentioned in Chapter 1, drug trafficking is considered a critical threat by 89% of Mexicans, topping the list of threats for Mexicans. Stopping the flow of illegal drugs into the United States is also considered a very important foreign policy goal on both sides of the border, with 83% of Mexicans and 63% of Americans saying so.

The drug trafficking problem has long been a contentious one. Each side has blamed the other for not taking more responsibility to solve the problem—to stop the trade on the Mexican side and to stop the demand on the U.S. side. Our survey asked both Americans and Mexicans who should be more responsible for dealing with drug trafficking from Mexico to the United States. A majority of Americans and a plurality of Mexicans agree that Mexico should be more responsible, with 55% of Americans and 38% of Mexicans saying this. It should be noted that 32% of Mexicans volunteered the response that “both” should be responsible. Twenty-seven percent of Mexicans say the United States should be more responsible, as do 40% of Americans (see Figure 3-4). These findings suggest that Mexicans and Americans see the country of origin as more responsible for solving the problem.

The same pattern emerges on who is more responsible for dealing with the trafficking of guns and assault weapons from the United States, where they are legal, to

RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMON PROBLEMS

Percentage who say Mexico or the United States should be more responsible for dealing with each of the following problems.

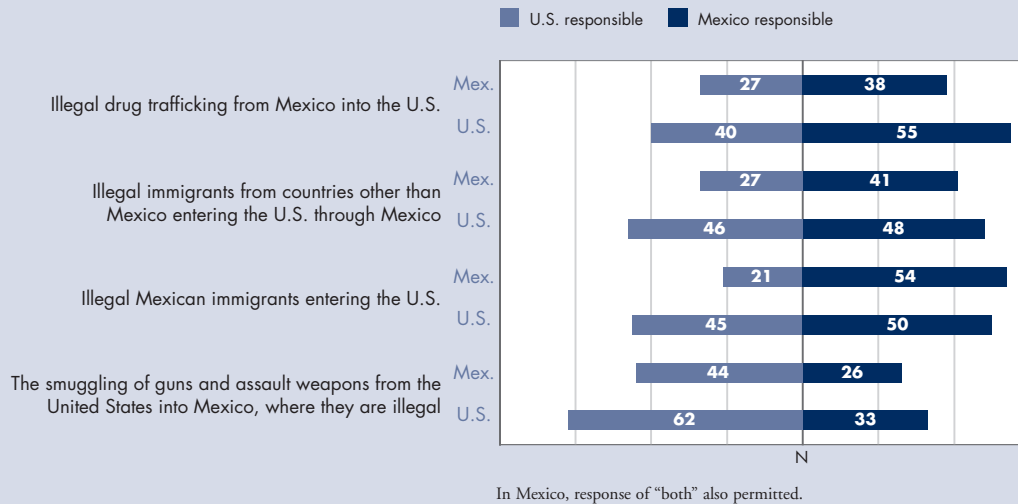


Figure 3-4

Mexico, where they are illegal. A majority of Americans (62%) and a plurality of Mexicans (44%) believe that the United States, the country of origin, is more responsible for dealing with the problem. Thirty-three percent of Americans and 26% of Mexicans say that Mexico should be more responsible, with 27% of Mexicans volunteering "both."

Migration

The most explosive problem between the United States and Mexico is the issue of migration, especially the large numbers of undocumented Mexicans migrating to the United States. Fifty-two percent of Americans consider large numbers of immigrants coming into the United States a critical threat to the United States. With more than half of all undocumented immigrants in the United States of Mexican origin (5.3 of 9.9 million total) and 61% of Mexicans having relatives living outside of Mexico, mostly in the United States (many of whom, presumably, are undocumented), the problem is of enormous impact in both countries. As mentioned in Chapter 1, 88% of Mexicans say that protecting the interests of Mexicans in other countries is a very important foreign policy goal for Mexico, and 59% of

Americans say that controlling and reducing illegal immigration is a very important goal for the United States (see Figure 1-5).

THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

Migration raises different issues on each side of the border. In Mexico, migration of the unemployed and underemployed, on the one hand, removes a source of discontent from the domestic political arena. Remittances by Mexican workers in the United States (US\$13.4 billion in 2003) are Mexico's third largest source of foreign exchange after crude oil exports (US\$16.8 billion in 2003), and foreign investment (US\$14.7 billion). This money helps to support 21% of Mexican households. On the other hand, migration has depopulated much of the Mexican countryside, creating towns and villages of the elderly and women with small children.

On the American side, Mexican migrants fill important economic needs, including providing much needed labor in many sectors of the U.S. economy, and are a source of vitality in a country built and sustained by the energy and ideas of immigrants. On the other hand, many Americans feel threatened by illegal immi-

grants, fearing downward pressure on wage levels and greater competition for jobs. Illegal immigrants also place an extra burden on U.S. social systems, especially health care, in which costs are spiraling upward. The problem of integrating such large numbers of immigrants, legal and illegal, into American communities is also daunting. Some even argue that large numbers of Mexican immigrants cannot be integrated and undermine the American way of life. Perhaps most problematically, illegal entrance into the United States represents a security threat, along with a more general undermining of the American legal system.

Migration for both sides is also a humanitarian problem. In 2003 about 400 Mexicans died in their attempts to cross the border. The current border climate also creates opportunities for organized crime, which puts migrants at risk. Human trafficking, illegal in both the United States and Mexico, is estimated to generate revenues in excess of drug trafficking.

PERCEPTIONS OF IMMIGRANTS

Despite the many problems associated with Mexican migration, American and Mexican attitudes toward

Mexican immigrants in the United States are generally favorable. Large majorities of Americans (82%) and Mexicans (94%) believe that Mexican immigrants in the United States work hard (see Figure 3-5). Fifty-one percent of Americans and 65% of Mexicans believe they respect the law, despite the fact of their illegal entry.

On questions of integration, Mexicans and Americans overall hold opposite impressions. Sixty-three percent of Mexicans believe that Mexican immigrants in the United States learn English, while 55% of Americans believe they do not. Fifty-two percent of Americans say that Mexican immigrants integrate into American life, while 57% of Mexicans believe they do not.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PROBLEM

More people on both sides of the border (50% of Americans and 54% of Mexicans) believe that Mexico has more responsibility for dealing with undocumented Mexican migrants entering the United States from Mexico than say the United States has more responsibility (45% of Americans and 21% of Mexicans). Twenty-three percent of Mexicans volunteer “both” (see Figure 3-4).

A related problem is that of migrants from countries other than Mexico using Mexican territory to enter the United States. As noted above, 84% of Mexicans favor increasing entry and exit requirements on visitors from other countries as a means to combat international terrorism. A plurality of 41% believe the Mexico should be more responsible for dealing with this problem than should the United States, with 27% saying the United States should be more responsible, and 26% volunteering “both” (see Figure 3-4). Americans are divided, with 48% saying Mexico should be more responsible and 46% saying the United States should be more responsible.

REFORM PROPOSALS

Questions about immigration reform proposals or agreements being debated in the United States and Mexico elicit different responses from Americans and Mexicans.

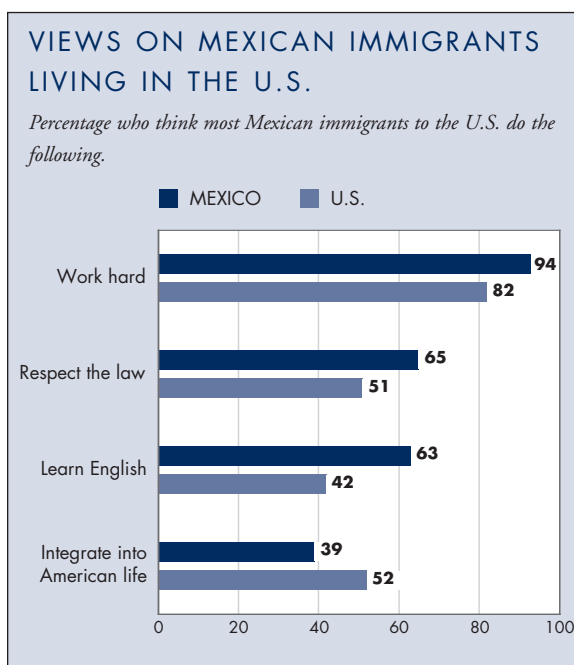
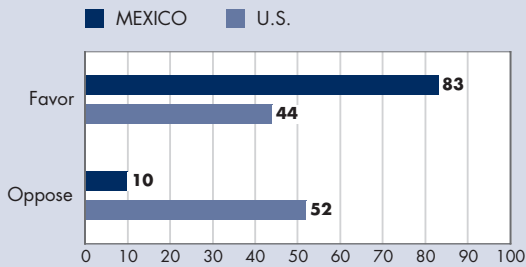


Figure 3-5

SUPPORT FOR IMMIGRATION PROPOSALS

TEMPORARY WORKER STATUS IN THE U.S.

Percentage who favor or oppose a proposed plan that would allow undocumented workers in the United States to apply for legal, temporary worker status.



TRADING FAVORS

Percentage who favor or oppose an agreement in which the U.S. would provide greater opportunities for Mexicans to work and live legally in the United States in exchange for Mexico making greater efforts to reduce illegal immigration and drug trafficking into the United States.

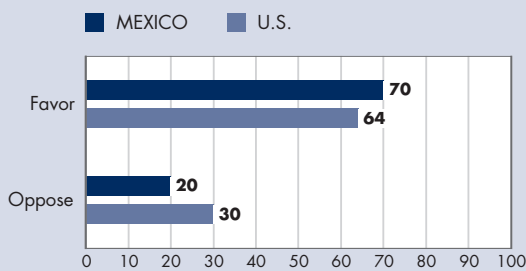


Figure 3-6

Americans are not receptive to the idea of increasing the level of legal immigration into the United States, which would give more Mexicans the opportunity to enter legally rather than illegally. Only 11% of Americans say legal immigration into the United States should be increased, while 54% say it should be decreased, and 31% say it should be kept at present levels. Mexicans were not asked this question in the 2004 survey, but it can be somewhat safely assumed that they would overwhelmingly favor increasing legal migration to the United States. Mexicans overwhelmingly favor (83%) the recent proposal by President Bush that would permit undocumented workers in the United States to apply for legal, temporary worker status. Fifty-two percent of Americans oppose it (see Figure 3-6).

While a majority of Americans are not willing to unilaterally increase legal immigration levels, a solid majority is willing to work together with Mexico on a compromise to resolve the problem of the undocumented. Sixty-four percent of Americans and 70% of Mexicans favor an agreement between the United States and Mexico that would provide greater opportunities for Mexicans to work and live legally in the United States in exchange for Mexico making greater efforts to reduce illegal immigration and drug trafficking to the United States (see Figure 3-6).

TRADE-OFFS

As important as the migration issue is to the Mexican government and the lives of ordinary Mexicans, Mexicans do not support trade-offs on migration when it comes to sensitive areas of national sovereignty. Mexicans strongly oppose (71%) an agreement between the United States and Mexico that would give the United States greater access to Mexico's oil, gas, and electricity in exchange for the United States giving Mexicans greater opportunities to live and work legally in the United States (only 18% favor it). Mexicans also strongly oppose a migration agreement with the United States in exchange for Mexico participating as

MEXICO-U.S. AGREEMENT CONCERNING ENERGY AND DEVELOPMENT

Percentage who favor or oppose an agreement in which the U.S. would provide greater financing for Mexico's economic development in exchange for greater access to oil, gas, and electricity.

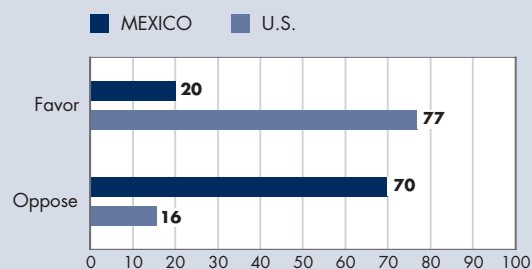


Figure 3-7

an ally with the United States in a military conflict (73% oppose such an agreement, and only 17% favor it).

Energy and economic development

One of Mexico's greatest current and future needs is financing for economic development. Much of this financing need must be met by international investors, of which the United States is an excellent source. One of the United States' greatest needs is securing adequate supplies of energy, as evidenced in the 69% of Americans who say it is a very important U.S. foreign

policy goal. Mexico has very large, unexploited energy reserves that could help the United States reduce its dependence on oil from other regions of the world. Mexico is already one of the United States' largest suppliers of oil. The opportunity for an agreement between the two countries to help meet the other's needs might seem extremely appealing. Nevertheless, Mexicans are not tempted. A large majority of Mexicans (70%) oppose an agreement between Mexico and the United States in which the United States would provide greater financing for Mexico's economic development in exchange for Mexico giving the United States greater access to its oil, gas, and electricity (see Figure 3-7).

NOTES ON METHODOLOGY

Mexico survey

For this first-time survey of Mexican public opinion on foreign policy issues, CIDE and COMEXI worked with a consortium of Mexican survey organizations who joined to conduct the general public survey from July 9 to July 19, 2004. The group, led by Ulises Beltrán, included Consulta, Ipsos-Bimsa, and Parametría. The survey was conducted by in-person (face-to-face) interviews based on a sample of the adult Mexican population aged 18 and older. In-person interviews were necessary because of the low rate of telephone and Internet penetration in Mexico.

The general public survey consists of 1,500 interviews based on a probabilistic sample design. Given the nature and objectives of the study to compare Mexicans' opinions across regions of the country, it was necessary to oversample the populations of the states in the north that border the United States and the relatively sparsely populated regions of the southeast. The resulting sample included 600 respondents in the six states of the north, 300 respondents in the seven states of the south and southeast, and 600 respondents in the remaining nineteen states constituting the country's center region.

The sample design was based on a list of 63,594 electoral sections defined by the Federal Election Institute for the 2003 Mexican federal elections. This design provides for an exhaustive and exclusive division

of the population. The selection process used was multi-stage sampling, in which the first stage is the grouping or "conglomeration" of sections in the same state and township. This was done to reduce costs by reducing the geographic dispersion of the survey. The number of conglomerates per township increases with the population size of the electoral list. This combining of sections produced 6,080 section conglomerates. The selection of 75 conglomerates was then done through random sampling with probabilities proportional to the size of the electoral list. The second stage consisted of choosing two electoral sections inside a conglomerate, selected through random sampling with probabilities proportional to the size of the sections. In the next stages, blocks and then residences were selected randomly with equal probabilities. Inside the residences respondents were chosen using quotas for age and sex based on known demographic characteristics, according to the 2000 Mexican Census. The overall survey response rate was 60%. The survey took from 25 minutes to 40 minutes to complete.

Because of the general public survey design, regional oversampling, and sample deviations from the distributions of age and sex, the data were weighted for the national and regional analyses based on the known demographic characteristics. There were, however, generally small differences between the weighted and unweighted results.

For the results based on the total national sample of 1,500 respondents, the sampling error for a 95% confidence interval is plus or minus 4 percentage points. Each regional sample has a larger sampling error. For the north it is plus or minus 6 points, for the south/southeast it is plus or minus 8 points, and for the rest of country (center) it is plus or minus 6 points. This margin of error does not include any additional error that can occur due to question wordings and other characteristics of the survey and interview process.

U.S. survey

In 2004, for the first time, The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations has conducted its opinion survey of the general public through the Internet. Knowledge Networks, Inc. (KN) administered the survey between July 6 and July 12 to 1,195 American adults who had been randomly selected from KN's respondent panel and answered questions on screens in their own homes. The margin of sampling error is approximately 3 percentage points.

The KN panel is carefully constructed to ensure that it is representative of the noninstitutionalized adult population of the United States. In contrast to some early Internet surveys, the sample is not self-selected (which can lead to over-representation of computer owners and the affluent, while neglecting technophobes and lower-income people). Instead, a random sample of Americans is selected independently of computer ownership and is given free hardware and Internet access in return for participation in the KN panel.

The evidence indicates that KN samples are equal or superior in representativeness to most survey samples interviewed face-to-face (which is extremely expensive) or by telephone (which faces increasing problems due to refusals, call screening technology, and cell phone use) and that the quality of data produced is also equal or superior. Indeed, there are indications that Internet respondents, who can see all response alternatives at once on their screens and can take as much time as they want to answer questions, may tend to answer more deliberately and thoughtfully than is typical of face-to-face or (especially) telephone interviews.

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