



Opinion: Women's perspectives are being incorporated into public policy in Mexico

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The Cali-Baja region, particularly San Diego and Tijuana, represents a tangible example of binational integration. This border area has a total population of approximately 7.1 million people in both countries with San Diego County alone comprising 40 percent of this U.S. border population.

The Latino community in San Diego County, estimated at over [1 million](#) people (87 percent of whom are of Mexican origin), constitutes one-third of the county's total population.

The so-called binational megaregion benefits from daily economic, social and cultural exchanges through the movement of people and goods between the two countries, with a gross domestic product of \$266 billion. It is also the most integrated area along the Mexico-U.S. border and hosts Tijuana and Mexicali, two nearshoring destinations where 100 multinational companies have already established themselves to outsource manufacturing services.

Additionally, the San Ysidro-El Chaparral Port of Entry is the busiest in the Western Hemisphere, with nearly [16 million vehicles and 7 million pedestrians](#) crossing from Mexico last year. The Otay Mesa Port of Entry is the second most important commercial port in the U.S., with over [1 million trucks](#) crossing annually in both directions.

On the one hand, about [7,000 cross-border students](#) attend educational institutions in San Diego, from kindergarten to high school. On the other hand, 41,800 American students are currently enrolled in the Baja California education system. This constant flow highlights the educational integration on both sides of this border, which strengthens cultural diversity and binational ties.

To facilitate the crossing of people and vehicles and boost trade, the Mexican government is investing \$353 million (6 billion Mexican pesos) in the construction of a new port of entry, known as Otay Mesa East. The Mexican side of the project will be completed by the end of this year. Migration is also a significant factor in this region. Mexicans living in San Diego create jobs, support businesses, contribute taxes, pay into Social Security and represent a community that builds prosperity.

When we think of migration, we often associate it with men moving to other countries to better provide for their families. However, it is women who comprise its majority, representing [51](#)



[percent of immigrants](#), and becoming a key factor in migration, driven by their economic, political and social aspirations in the United States.

In 2016, when I had the honor of serving as consul of Mexico in Kansas City, Missouri, I launched the Comprehensive Women's Assistance Window (VAIM by its acronym in Spanish) to provide specialized support to migrant women, giving them a voice and visibility while promoting their empowerment. The success of this initiative led to its expansion to all 53 Mexican consulates in the United States and several Mexican embassies worldwide, strengthening the goals of our country's feminist foreign policy.

Under Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador's administration, the importance of placing a gender perspective at the center of foreign policy has been recognized, embracing vital international agreements that highlight the urgency of integrating women's perspectives into the design of public policy. The goal is to direct the Mexican federal government's efforts abroad to reduce and eliminate gender disparities, gaps, inequalities and violence, and to create safe spaces for women.

On July 3, Mexico presented the [Declaration on Women's Rights](#) at the Third Ministerial Conference on Feminist Foreign Policy, where it was endorsed by 19 countries. This agreement establishes a commitment to women's human rights mechanisms such as the United Nations' 2030 Agenda.

Mexico's secretary of foreign affairs, Alicia Barcena, has reinforced this feminist foreign policy through concrete actions, representing a substantial transformation in Mexican diplomatic and consular service, decisively incorporating women and other previously marginalized groups, such as the LGBTQ+ community.

In this context, the Mexican Consulate in San Diego plays a continuous role of interconnection in promoting a comprehensive agenda firmly based on the long history of consular policy that Mexico has developed in the United States since the 19th century. The solid professional and academic foundation of a career diplomatic staff ensures its continuity and strength.

Kerber Palma, Ph.D., has been a member of the Mexican Foreign Service since 1991 and the consul general of Mexico in San Diego since Feb. 26.

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