

Democratic Confidence From Abroad: Evidence From the Mexican Diaspora in the United States

Xavier Medina Vidal ^{1,2}  and Antonio Ugues Jr. ³ 

¹ Department of Political Science, University of Texas at Arlington, USA

² Center for Mexican American Studies, University of Texas at Arlington, USA

³ Department of Political Science and Public Policy Studies, St. Mary's College of Maryland, USA

Correspondence: Xavier Medina Vidal (medinavidal@uta.edu)

Submitted: 21 November 2025 **Accepted:** 23 March 2026 **Published:** 6 May 2026

Issue: This article is part of the issue “Causes and Consequences of Confidence in Democratic Elections” edited by Shaun Bowler (University of California – Riverside) and Todd Donovan (Western Washington University), fully open access at <https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.i478>

Abstract

This study examines the relationship between Mexican diasporic citizens' perceptions of electoral integrity and their participation in elections from abroad, as well as their levels of political efficacy, contributing to scholarship on transnational political behavior among diaspora communities. Utilizing data from two pre-election surveys of Mexican citizens residing in the United States, we find that respondents with high levels of confidence in the electoral process are more likely to vote from abroad and believe that their extraterritorial vote matters to national elections. This research provides new insight into the political attitudes and orientations of diasporic citizens' views toward democratic institutions and our understanding of transnational democratic participation.

Keywords

diaspora voting; electoral integrity; external vote; Mexico; voter efficacy

1. Introduction

Given the essential role of elections in democratic regimes, the proliferation of external voting rights is a significant development for the political rights of citizens across the world (Bauböck, 2007; Lafleur, 2013). External voting provides citizens with the opportunity to participate in democratic processes and remain politically engaged while residing outside of one's home country. Moreover, by increasing citizen participation, external voting can also serve to increase the accountability and legitimacy of democratic governments (Ellis et al., 2007). Worldwide, nearly 60 percent of all countries provide opportunities for

external voting in legislative elections, nearly 42 percent allow for external voting in presidential contests, and about 35 percent allow for external voting in referendums (International IDEA, 2025).

The provision of external voting rights is also important for regions with substantial diaspora communities such as Latin America. With the exceptions of Cuba, Haiti, and Uruguay, every country in Latin America provides some form of external voting (International IDEA, 2019), yet there is significant variation in the depth and scope of emigrant incorporation in the region (Erlingsson & Tuman, 2017; Escobar, 2007; Margheritis, 2017; Navarro Fierro, 2016). While some countries only allow external voting for presidential elections, nations like Colombia, Peru, and Mexico grant their expatriates the right to vote in presidential, federal legislative, and some subnational-level elections (International IDEA, 2025).

Building on this understanding of the proliferation of external voting mechanisms, we seek to understand which factors shape voting behavior among diaspora populations and whether these groups view their electoral participation as meaningful for their home country. While there are several factors that may influence these outcomes, the current study posits that perceptions of electoral integrity are key.

Recent scholarship suggests that perceptions of electoral integrity are important predictors of voter turnout (Martínez i Coma & Trinh, 2017) and efficacy in cases around the world (Norris, 2014). The scholarly evidence also suggests that inclusive and credible external voting arrangements can enhance external political efficacy by signaling state responsiveness to citizens abroad (Lafleur, 2013). External voting systems that are perceived as trustworthy and transparent, then, are more likely to be used extensively by diasporas, enhancing overall democratic participation and legitimacy. In this way, we argue that when citizens living abroad perceive their home elections as credible, they are more likely to engage in political participation, as they believe their vote truly matters (Umpierrez de Reguero & Dandoy, 2026).

To evaluate these claims, we explore the case of the Mexican diaspora living in the United States (US). This group has exhibited traits of political sophistication as well as a high degree of attentiveness to politics in their home country (McCann et al., 2019; Medina Vidal & Campos Carrasco, 2020). Moreover, national studies of Mexican voters indicate that perceptions of electoral integrity are related to key political attitudes like satisfaction with democracy (Monsiváis-Carrillo, 2021) and electoral trust (Monsiváis-Carrillo, 2022). Yet, empirical research remains scarce on how citizens' perceptions of electoral integrity shape the transnational political behavior of the Mexican diaspora. For these reasons, we are eager to understand how views of the quality of electoral processes are related to political participation and efficacy among members of the Mexican diaspora in the US.

Employing original data from two pre-election surveys of the Mexican citizens residing in the US, we explore self-reported voting behavior and efficacy in the context of the 2018 and 2024 Mexican federal elections. The results of our analyses lend strong support to the notion that perceptions of electoral integrity are positively linked to voter turnout and efficacy. We find that respondents who express confidence in the fairness of the vote count and the cleanliness of elections, respectively, are more likely to report voting in home elections and more likely to express feelings of efficacy. While the analyses also indicate that prior voting behavior, support for Mexico's electoral authority, and awareness of voting logistics are linked to the outcomes of interest, our key findings suggest that confidence in the integrity of the external vote process may contribute to transnational democratic participation and confidence among citizens abroad.

The rest of the study is organized as follows. Section 2 discusses the realities of external voting in Mexico. Section 3 presents the theoretical framework and key expectations related to our key outcomes of interest. Section 4 presents our research design and statistical findings. Section 5 discusses the implications of our findings and provides concluding remarks.

2. External Voting in Mexican Elections

External voting is a relatively recent development in Mexican politics. While discussions date to the 1920s, meaningful progress toward extending political rights to citizens abroad began with the 1996 constitutional reform permitting dual nationality, which granted civil and property rights but not suffrage (Fitzgerald, 2004, pp. 531–533; Lafleur, 2013). Full external voting rights were not extended until the 2005 electoral reform, which allowed expatriates to vote in presidential elections beginning in 2006 (Instituto Federal Electoral [IFE], 2006; Lafleur, 2013; Navarro & Carrillo, 2007).

Despite high expectations—given that approximately three million Mexicans abroad were eligible to vote in 2006 (Camp, 2014, p. 283; Fitzgerald, 2004, p. 535; Marcelli & Cornelius, 2005)—participation proved strikingly low. The IFE reported only 32,621 valid ballots in 2006, representing less than one-half of one percent of voting-age Mexicans in the US (Suro & Escobar, 2006). Critics characterized the reform as symbolically inclusive but substantively restrictive (Smith, 2008). As Lafleur (2013, p. 71) argues, the IFE's lack of institutional presence abroad and its inability to issue voter identification cards through consulates limited participation.

Incremental improvements were introduced in 2012. The IFE deployed staff and registration equipment in 30 US consulates, which modestly increased registration applications to 61,869 and valid votes to 40,737—an approximate 25 percent rise over 2006 (Gris Legorreta, 2014; IFE, 2012). Nevertheless, participation remained well below expectations, prompting descriptions of Mexico's model as a form of "truncated transnationalism," wherein formal rights existed but practical obstacles curtailed effective enfranchisement (Félix, 2012). Experiences in 2006 and 2012 also highlighted the limitations of an exclusively postal voting system (Navarro Fierro, 2016).

Comprehensive reforms enacted in 2014 transformed the institutional framework. The IFE was replaced by the Instituto Nacional Electoral (INE), and new legislation authorized voter registration and credential issuance abroad in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Cámara de Diputados, 2014; INE, 2018). The franchise was expanded beyond presidential contests to include certain senatorial and gubernatorial elections, and voting modalities were diversified to include postal and in-person options, with provisions for electronic voting (Beltrán Miranda, 2014; INE, 2018; Navarro Fierro, 2016). The INE also implemented outreach campaigns in major diaspora hubs in the US to disseminate information and encourage participation (personal communication by David Maciel, September 2018).

In addition to voter mobilization, the INE has sought to ensure a free, fair, and secret electoral process. The INE's public slogan, "El voto es libre y secreto" (The vote is free and secret), reflects its commitment to promoting an electoral process that adheres to international standards of electoral integrity, both domestically and internationally. In the 2018 election, its first major national election as arbiter, the INE sought to bolster voter confidence by assuring that ballots cast within Mexico and abroad would be counted fairly, and that the overall electoral process would be administered impartially and professionally.

The reforms introduced by the INE and its commitment to uphold the integrity of the electoral process produced measurable gains in terms of increased voter registration and turnout from abroad (see Figure 1). In 2018, 98,470 valid votes were cast from 181,873 registered voters, a 54 percent increase in turnout and a 142 percent increase in valid votes compared to 2012 (INE, 2018). The upward trajectory continued in 2024, when 184,326 Mexicans abroad voted, representing an 87 percent increase over 2018 and an 82 percent participation rate (INE, 2024). Collectively, these developments indicate that sustained institutional reform, administrative adaptation, and targeted outreach have enhanced the effective political incorporation of Mexico's diaspora electorate.

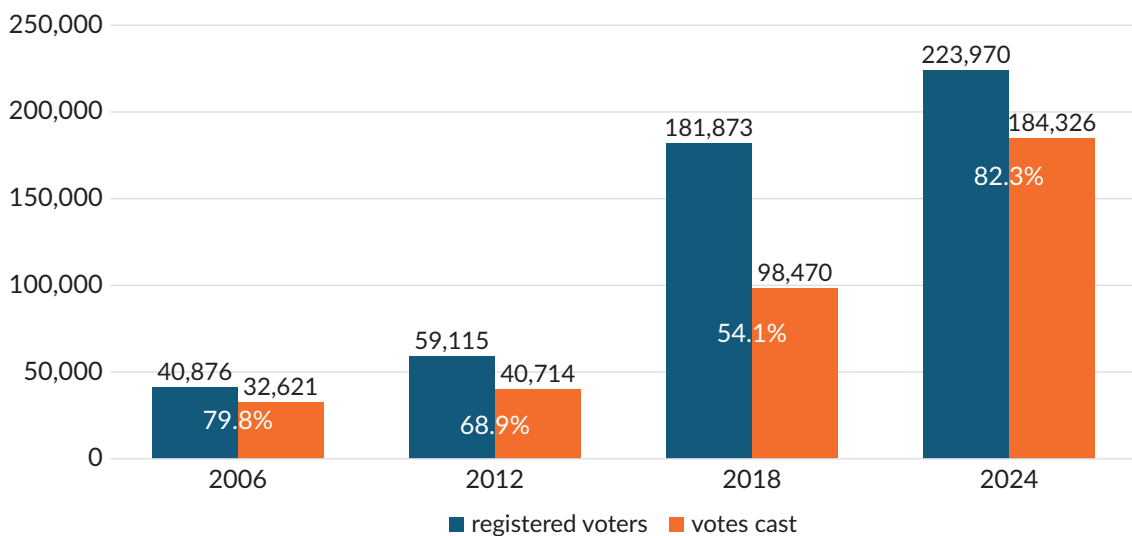


Figure 1. Registered voters and votes cast abroad in Mexican elections.

3. Theoretical Framework

While the previous section makes evident that great strides have been made to enhance the external voting landscape for the Mexican diaspora, the focus of this study is to understand the factors shaping the political behavior and attitudes of this population. The comparative scholarship has pointed to a number of factors that may shape the voting calculus among citizens living abroad, as well as whether they feel that their vote has a meaningful impact on their home country. These factors include the important role of previous political participation (Lafleur & Calderón Chelius, 2011), the role of electoral management bodies and election logistics (Aman & Bakken, 2021; Finn & Besserer Rayas, 2024), political identities linked with home-country political parties (Burgess & Tyburski, 2020; Goldberg & Lanz, 2021), exposure to mass media (Medina Vidal & Campos Carrasco, 2020), and the importance of transnational connections and engagement (McCann et al., 2019, 2021). We posit that an additional factor is a key predictor of external voting and efficacy: perceptions of electoral integrity.

Scholarship on electoral integrity consistently finds that citizens' perceptions of election fairness are central to political attitudes and democratic legitimacy. According to Norris (2014), electoral integrity is critical because it directly shapes democratic legitimacy and political behavior. When citizens perceive that elections meet the international standards of electoral integrity, they are more likely to trust political institutions, accept electoral outcomes, and participate in politics. Conversely, when elections are seen as flawed or manipulated,

public confidence declines, participation may fall or shift toward protest, which may in turn lead to political instability. This perspective builds on earlier work linking procedural fairness to democratic consolidation and system support (Birch, 2010; Lindberg, 2006).

One of the key findings in this literature is that positive evaluations of electoral integrity are associated with a host of factors considered key for democratic confidence. For one, scholars have identified an important link between electoral integrity and support for democracy. McAllister and White (2015) find that perceptions of unfair elections and widespread corruption in post-communist countries undermine citizens' confidence in democratic governance in these countries. Fortin-Rittberger et al. (2017) report similar findings. Using objective measures of electoral integrity, they find that higher levels of electoral fraud are associated with lower satisfaction with democracy (Fortin-Rittberger et al., 2017). Finally, Monsiváis-Carrillo (2021) finds that perceptions of electoral integrity are significantly related to democratic satisfaction with political interest as a key mediating factor in Mexico.

Another key finding is the relationship between electoral integrity and political participation. Exploring the link between electoral integrity and voter turnout, Martínez i Coma and Trinh (2017) contend that perceptions of electoral integrity are important predictors of political behavior. Through cross-national analyses, they find that when individuals believe elections are conducted fairly and transparently, they are more likely to engage in conventional political activities like voting because credible elections enhance political efficacy and system legitimacy. Regional analyses of Latin America point to similar trends. Carreras and Ćrepić (2013) find that confidence in the integrity of elections is a primary driver of voter turnout, though citizens who perceive elections as unfair are significantly more likely to abstain from voting. Similarly, Haime's (2017) analysis of voter turnout in Latin America finds that individuals who perceive elections as fair, transparent, and trustworthy are significantly more likely to vote, even after accounting for institutional and socioeconomic factors. These findings show that confidence in electoral integrity complements structural explanations of turnout and plays an important role in democratic participation.

In Mexico, the case that serves as the home country for our diaspora population of interest, much attention has been paid to electoral distrust or skepticism given the country's long history of electoral manipulation (Estrada & Poiré, 2007; Schedler, 1999, 2002). Indeed, scholars have noted that electoral malpractice, whether actual or perceived, has historically undermined turnout in Mexican elections (McCann & Domínguez, 1998; Simpser, 2012). Although Mexico has implemented significant political and economic reforms to strengthen electoral integrity, many citizens continue to question the legitimacy of elections despite the lack of credible evidence of widespread electoral malpractice. These political attitudes may be related to the populist rhetoric of leaders that "trash talk" democracy (Cella et al., 2025). Monsiváis-Carrillo (2022) refers to this dynamic as the "Mexican paradox" and contends that we view the link between perceptions of electoral integrity and trust in electoral processes through the lens of a liberal conception of democracy. Understood in this way, he finds a strong link between perceptions of electoral integrity and trust in elections in Mexico.

Building on theories of electoral integrity and political behavior, we argue that confidence in the integrity of elections plays a central role in shaping political engagement among Mexicans residing abroad. We expect that Mexicans living abroad who report greater confidence in the integrity of elections will be more likely to report voting (turnout) and to express stronger beliefs in the impact of their vote (political efficacy). Confidence in electoral integrity signals that the rules of competition are fair, ballots are counted accurately,

and outcomes reflect voter preferences. When expatriate citizens perceive electoral institutions as impartial and professional, the perceived benefits of participation increase while the perceived risks of fraud or manipulation decrease. In this sense, institutional trust lowers the psychological and informational barriers that often discourage extraterritorial political participation.

We also expect that confidence in electoral integrity is closely linked to political efficacy, or the belief that one's participation can influence political outcomes. For citizens residing abroad, the costs of participation are often higher due to potentially onerous administrative procedures, registration requirements, and geographic distance. Under such conditions, beliefs about the credibility and fairness of the electoral process become especially salient. If migrants believe their ballots will be counted accurately and meaningfully incorporated into the final result, they are more likely to perceive their participation as consequential rather than symbolic.

Thus, electoral integrity functions not only as a procedural guarantee but also as a motivational resource. Among Mexicans abroad, higher confidence in the integrity of elections should be related to both a higher likelihood of reported turnout and political efficacy. Conversely, doubts about fairness or impartiality may suppress participation and weaken political efficacy, even among those who remain politically interested or engaged in other ways.

Accordingly, we derive the following hypotheses:

H1: Mexicans living abroad who report higher levels of confidence in the integrity of elections will be more likely to report voting in national elections.

H2: Mexicans living abroad who report higher levels of confidence in the integrity of elections will be more likely to report greater political efficacy.

Together, these hypotheses reflect the expectation that electoral integrity operates not only as a procedural safeguard but also as a psychological mechanism that strengthens both participatory behavior and beliefs in the effectiveness of democratic engagement among expatriate citizens.

4. Research Design and Findings

To investigate the drivers of turnout and efficacy among Mexicans living abroad, this study considers the public opinion of the Mexican diaspora living in the US within the context of the 2018 and 2024 Mexican presidential elections. These election periods coincide with significant electoral reforms pushed by emigrant activists and implemented by Mexico's electoral authority to enhance accessibility and participation among its nationals living abroad, as well as with growing scholarly interests in these contests among researchers of political behavior and electoral management. As demonstrated earlier, the data on the external vote suggest that Mexicans living abroad have an increasing interest in their home-country elections. These trends evince the need to understand the dynamics of political behavior among this population.

4.1. Data

Large majorities of Mexican diaspora voters reside in the US: 76.88 percent of diaspora voters in 2018 and 82.84 percent of diaspora voters in 2024, respectively (INE, 2024; see Figure 1). Yet, there are very few political science survey-based studies of the political behavior of the Mexican diaspora in the US, and even fewer are designed with the explicit purpose of understanding this group's transnational political behavior. The current study is unique in that it employs two original survey data sets that include a number of different measures of transnational civic engagement and political behavior uniquely suited to test the expectations described in the previous section. The 2018 Mexican Vote From Abroad Survey (MVFAS) is a web-based survey of 526 Mexican citizens of voting age residing in the US with a margin of error of ± 5.4 percent. The survey recruited respondents from the 1.2 million-member YouGov panel and employs the sampling methodologies of the YouGov research firm. The sampling methods allow for the selection of representative samples from nonrandomly selected pools of respondents (Mexican citizens in the US). The MVFAS was fielded between June 15 and June 27, 2018, on the eve of Mexico's July 1 presidential election. To our knowledge, this is the first such scientific research study conducted in the US, and its design uniquely identifies the effects of Mexico's efforts to continue to expand the electoral franchise to its emigrants on citizens' attitudes and orientations. Surveys were completed in 14 minutes, on average, and 51 percent of them were administered in Spanish.

The second survey, the 2024 Mexicans Abroad International Survey of Elections (MAISE), is a national poll of Mexican citizen residents of the US. The MAISE is a web-based survey of 600 Mexican voting-age citizens residing in the US with a margin of error of ± 4 percent. The MAISE employs the sampling methodologies of the BSP Research firm, which specializes in culturally competent modelling and analyses, especially for under-represented demographic groups. The MAISE was fielded between April 5 and April 20, 2024, just over a month prior to Mexico's June 2 presidential election. Surveys were administered in both Spanish (43 percent) and English (57 percent). The data are weighted to reflect the Mexican national population in the US across state, by age, and gender. Like the 2018 MVFAS, the MAISE data are uniquely suited to evaluate the expectations put forth in the previous section, since they capture public perceptions of turnout and efficacy but also perceptions on accessibility and election integrity. To be sure, we are confident that the sampling methods used by both YouGov and BSP Research adhere to the strictest of social scientific standards. Yet, like every public opinion survey of voting behavior, these data are subject to confirmation bias.

4.2. Methods

To evaluate our hypotheses concerning turnout and efficacy within the context of the 2018 Mexican election, we employ data from the 2018 MVFAS. Our dependent variables include turnout and efficacy. Turnout is based on a survey item that asks, "Do you plan to vote or have already voted by mail from the United States?" Recoding a five-point scale into a dichotomous variable, responses are coded as *yes* (1) or *no* (0), with mean turnout = 0.342. Efficacy is based on a survey that asks, "How confident are you that your vote has a positive impact for Mexico?" Responses are coded as *yes* (1) or *no* (0), with mean efficacy = 0.754. Here we note that average self-reported voting is lower than the average level of efficacy.

We model turnout and efficacy, respectively, as a function of two measures of electoral integrity—fairness of the vote count and clean elections. The former is based on a survey item that asks, “How much confidence do you have that votes will be counted fairly in the upcoming election?” (1 for *none at all*, 2 for *a little*, 3 for *some*, and 4 for *a lot*). The latter is based on a survey item that asks, “How clean do you believe that the upcoming elections will be?” (1 for *not at all*, 2 for *not very*, 3 for *more or less*, and 4 for *totally clean*). Because these variables are highly correlated ($r = .756, p < .001$), we run separate logit models with each predictor.

Each of the models also incorporates variables found in the literature and relevant to our study such as whether respondents reported voting in the 2012 election (0 if *no*, 1 if *yes*), and opinion of the INE (a 0-to-10 scale, ranging from *very bad* to *very good opinion*). We also consider the fact that concerns over electoral logistics may be correlated with the dependent variables, so we include a variable measuring perceptions of the ease of voting from abroad (ranging from 1 if *very difficult* to 4 if *very easy*) and the perceptions of the ease of learning about the vote from abroad (ranging from 1 if *very difficult* to 4 if *very easy*). To control for the role of home-country partisanship, we include a categorical variable indicating respondents’ identification with the main political parties, as well as those with no party affiliation, using PAN (the National Action Party) as the reference category. Consistent with standard models of political behavior, we also include self-reported political ideology (1 for *very liberal* to 5 for *very conservative*). Because the literature suggests that connections to the home country are important for diaspora attitudes and behavior, we control for whether the respondent is an immigrant (0 if *no*, 1 if *yes*), the frequency of contact with friends and family in Mexico (ranging from 1 for *never* to 4 for *once a week or more*), and whether the respondent reported sending remittances to Mexico (0 if *no*, 1 if *yes*). Finally, key socio-demographic variables such as female (1 for *female*, 0 for *male*), age (continuous variable ranging from 18 to 86 years), income (intervals ranging from 1 for *less than \$10,000* to 15 for *\$350,000–399,999*), and education (categorical variable ranging from 1 for *no formal education* to 8 for *post-graduate education*) are included.

To evaluate our hypotheses within the context of the 2024 Mexican election, we employ data from the 2024 MAISE. Our measure of turnout is based on the following survey item: “Thinking ahead to the 2024 Mexican Presidential election, what would you say the chances are that you will vote in the upcoming election?” This survey item is originally coded on a 5-point scale ranging from *certain that I won’t vote* (0) to *100% certain that I will vote* (5). We recode this as *plan to vote* (1) or *not* (0). Our measure of efficacy is based on the following survey item: “When it comes to voting for President of Mexico, do you think your vote will have an impact or not?” We recode this as *yes*, if respondents believe that their vote will have an impact (1) or *no* (0). We note that average self-reported vote intention (mean = 0.718) is higher than the average level of efficacy (mean = 0.358). This pattern runs contrary to the relationship between these two measures in the 2018 MVFAS. It is plausible that these differences can be attributed to potential skepticism about the vote from abroad process and a stronger tone and rhetoric of a “transformation” movement with Andrés Manuel López Obrador as its leader in 2018 versus the effect of Movimiento de Regeneración Nacional (MORENA)’s party incumbency in 2024, lowered expectations about efficacy given that Claudia Sheinbaum’s campaign was one of continuity, and skepticism about efficacy as a function of the new voting modalities in 2024.

As with our models for 2018, we model turnout and efficacy as a function of the perceptions of the fairness of the vote count and clean elections. Fairness of the vote count is based on the following survey item: “How much confidence do you have that your vote will be counted fairly in the upcoming elections?” (1 for *none*, 2 for *a little*, 3 for *some*, and 4 for *a lot*). Clean elections is based on a survey item asking respondents

the following: “How clean do you believe that the upcoming elections will be?” (1 for *not clean* to 3 for *clean overall*). Given the degree of correlation between each of these variables ($r = .503$, $p < .001$), we run separate logit models with each predictor.

Theoretically relevant control variables include voted in the previous election (0 if *no*, 1 if *yes*), opinion of the INE (a 0-to-10 scale, ranging from *very bad* to *very good opinion*), and knowledge of electoral logistics. The latter include respondents’ knowledge that Mexicans can show up to vote at consulates on election day (1 if *yes*, 0 if *no*), knowledge that Mexicans can obtain or renew their voter ID in the US (1 if *yes*, 0 if *no*), and knowledge that the INE extended the deadline to register by 5 days (1 if *yes*, 0 if *no*). We also control for partisanship (with PAN identification as the reference category) and self-reported political ideology (1 for *very liberal* to 5 for *very conservative*). To control for home-country connections, we include a variable for immigrant (0 if *no*, 1 if *yes*), the frequency of contact with friends and family in Mexico on politics (0 if *they do not have contact*, 1 if *they do*), and remittances (0 if *they do not send remittances*, 1 if *they do*). Finally, key socio-demographic variables such as female (1 for *female*, 0 for *male*), age (a variable with five groups: 18–24, 25–44, 45–54, 55–64, and 65 years or older), income (ranging from 1 for *less than \$20,000* to 10 for *\$150,000 or more*), and education (categorical variable ranging from 1 for *did not complete high school or GED* to 7 for *post-graduate education*) are included. Descriptive statistics are reported in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics.

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.
2018 (n = 526)				
Vote intention	0.342	0.475	0	1
Voter efficacy	0.754	0.431	0	1
Learning	2.857	0.940	1	4
Ease of voting	2.667	0.957	1	4
Cleanliness	2.378	0.989	1	4
Fairness	2.371	0.999	1	4
Opinion of INE	5.426	2.411	0	10
PAN identification	0.105	0.306	0	1
PRI identification	0.067	0.249	0	1
PRD identification	0.068	0.253	0	1
MC identification	0.048	0.213	0	1
MORENA identification	0.141	0.348	0	1
Ideology	2.681	0.986	1	5
Immigrant	0.618	0.486	0	1
Contact	3.220	1.004	1	4
Remittances	0.772	0.420	0	1
Education	5.059	1.685	1	8
Income	13.316	25.822	1	97
Female	0.662	0.474	0	1
Age	34.75	11.003	18	86

Table 1. (Cont.) Descriptive statistics.

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.
2024 (n = 600)				
Vote intention	0.718	0.450	0	1
Voter efficacy	0.358	0.480	0	1
Aware of registration extension	0.400	0.490	0	1
Aware of voting in consulates	0.392	0.489	0	1
Aware of INE ID renewal from US	0.568	0.496	0	1
Cleanliness	2.228	0.882	1	3
Fairness	1.702	0.933	0	3
Opinion of INE	6.035	2.573	0	10
PAN identification	0.147	0.354	0	1
PRI identification	0.115	0.319	0	1
PRD identification	0.128	0.335	0	1
MORENA identification	0.335	0.472	0	1
Ideology	3.172	1.111	1	5
Immigrant	0.667	0.472	0	1
Contact	0.682	0.466	0	1
Remittances	0.412	0.493	0	1
Education	3.243	1.813	1	7
Income	5.545	2.979	1	11
Female	0.507	0.500	0	1
Age	3.367	1.067	18–24	65+

Notes: PRI = Partido Revolucionario Institucional; PRD = Partido de la Revolución Democrática; MC = Movimiento Ciudadano.

4.3. Findings

The results of the analyses for 2018 indicate that measures of electoral integrity are linked with self-reported turnout and feelings of political efficacy (see Table 2). The coefficient for the fairness of the vote count is positive and statistically significant ($p < .001$), suggesting a positive relationship between this variable and the propensity to vote from abroad. Going from a respondent who reports no confidence in the fairness of the vote count to one who reports a lot of confidence increases the probability of voting by about 35 percent, holding all other variables at their mean. The results indicate a similar relationship between clean elections and turnout; the coefficient is positive and significant ($p < .05$). In this case, moving from a respondent who reports that elections are not at all clean to one who reports that they are totally clean increases the probability of voting by 20 percent, holding other variables at their mean (see Figure 2).

The findings suggest that the relationship between our measures of electoral integrity and efficacy is more robust than that between electoral integrity and turnout (see Models 3 and 4). The coefficients for vote counted fairly and clean elections are both positive and significant ($p < .001$). Predictive margins indicate that the likelihood of reporting greater political efficacy increases to well over 90 percent for those with a lot of confidence in the fairness of the vote count and those reporting that elections are totally clean (holding all

other variables at their means). These findings suggest an important link between electoral integrity and political efficacy among the respondents in this survey.

Overall, the results indicate that our measures of electoral integrity are significantly linked to voting from abroad and efficacy based on our sample of Mexicans residing in the US during the Mexican 2018 election cycle. These findings provide strong support to our hypotheses.

Table 2. Predicting diaspora voting and political efficacy in the 2018 Mexican election.

	(1) Turnout	(2) Turnout	(3) Efficacy	(4) Efficacy
Vote counted fairly	0.601*** (0.159)		1.343*** (0.200)	
Clean elections		0.336* (0.155)		1.452*** (0.197)
Voted in 2012 election	1.312*** (0.264)	1.329*** (0.261)	1.295** (0.402)	1.289** (0.413)
Opinion of INE	-0.056 (0.061)	-0.008 (0.059)	0.148* (0.068)	0.136* (0.069)
Ease of voting from abroad	0.475** (0.172)	0.494** (0.170)	0.436* (0.194)	0.508* (0.206)
Ease of learning about the vote from abroad	0.249 (0.178)	0.251 (0.177)	0.0795 (0.191)	-0.027 (0.207)
Party identification (Base is PAN)				
PRI	0.030 (0.543)	0.099 (0.539)	-0.350 (0.738)	-0.179 (0.747)
PRD	1.158* (0.584)	1.082 (0.568)	-0.034 (0.815)	-0.329 (0.855)
MC	0.602 (0.600)	0.645 (0.595)	0.759 (0.976)	0.619 (1.005)
MORENA	0.432 (0.454)	0.552 (0.449)	1.263 (0.684)	1.369* (0.696)
Other party	0.827 (0.483)	0.848 (0.480)	-0.364 (0.666)	-0.365 (0.713)
No party	-0.355 (0.420)	-0.432 (0.416)	0.176 (0.471)	-0.112 (0.492)
Ideology	-0.261* (0.121)	-0.290* (0.120)	0.0757 (0.141)	0.0261 (0.147)
Immigrant	-0.479 (0.260)	-0.519* (0.256)	0.226 (0.322)	0.127 (0.330)
Contact	-0.363 (0.583)	-0.479 (0.578)	1.875*** (0.509)	1.592** (0.520)
Remittances	0.409 (0.358)	0.449 (0.358)	0.275 (0.351)	0.210 (0.361)
Education	0.105 (0.079)	0.113 (0.078)	-0.120 (0.096)	-0.121 (0.098)
Income	0.001 (0.005)	0.001 (0.005)	0.001 (0.005)	-0.003 (0.005)

Table 2. (Cont.) Predicting diaspora voting and political efficacy in the 2018 Mexican election.

	(1) Turnout	(2) Turnout	(3) Efficacy	(4) Efficacy
Female	-0.189 (0.256)	-0.173 (0.254)	0.358 (0.314)	0.367 (0.322)
Age	-0.002 (0.011)	-0.002 (0.011)	-0.005 (0.012)	-0.020 (0.013)
Constant	-4.078*** (1.068)	-3.589*** (1.044)	-5.780*** (1.231)	-4.620*** (1.211)
Observations	526	526	526	526
Pseudo R ²	0.338	0.323	0.413	0.436
Log likelihood	-223.8	-228.9	-172.1	-165.1

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses; * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$; PRI = Partido Revolucionario Institucional; PRD = Partido de la Revolución Democrática; MC = Movimiento Ciudadano.

The findings also indicate that some of the covariates are significantly related to our dependent variables. Prior voting experience and perceptions of the ease of voting from abroad are positively related to both turnout and efficacy, suggesting an important role for previous voting experience and awareness of electoral processes from abroad. While ideology self-placement is negatively associated with turnout, evaluations of the INE and contact with friends and family in Mexico are positively linked to efficacy. Finally, while there is some evidence of a significant relationship between some partisan identification and turnout (e.g., Partido de la Revolución Democrática) and efficacy (e.g., MORENA), these trends are not robust across multiple model specifications.

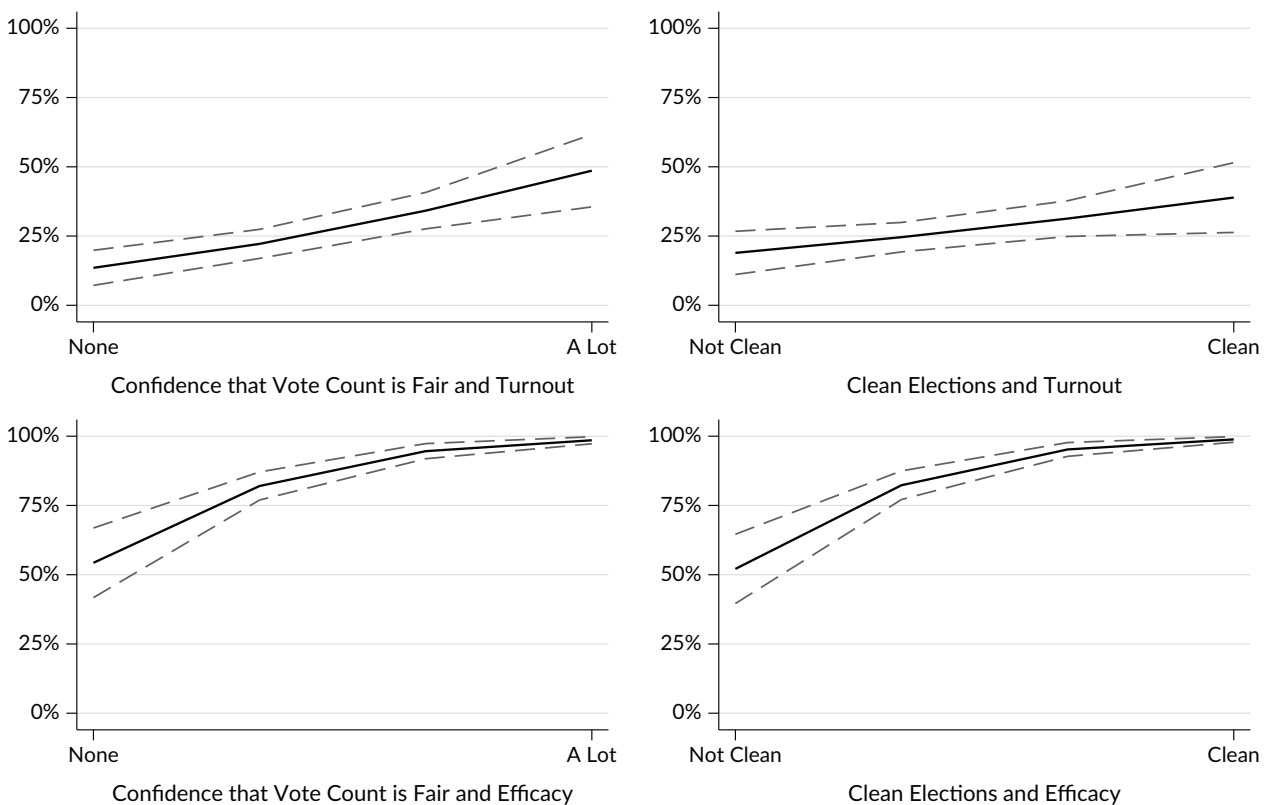


Figure 2. Predictive margins of electoral integrity, diaspora voting, and political efficacy in 2018.

The results of the analyses for 2024 also indicate a strong link between measures of electoral integrity, voting from abroad, and political efficacy (see Table 3). The positive and significant coefficient for the fairness of the vote count ($p < .001$) suggests a strong, positive association with voting from abroad (see Model 5). In fact, the probability of voting increases from about 26 percent for those with no confidence in the vote count to 65 percent for those reporting a lot of confidence in the fairness of the vote count, holding all other variables at their means (see Figure 3). While not as robust, the positive and significant coefficient ($p < .05$) for clean elections suggests that turnout from abroad is associated with this measure of electoral integrity (see Model 6). In this case, moving from a respondent who reports that elections are not at all clean to one who reports that they are totally clean increases the probability of voting by about 13 percent, holding other variables at their mean.

Electoral integrity is also statistically associated with political efficacy. The coefficient for fairness of the vote count is positive and significant ($p < .001$), as is the coefficient for clean elections ($p < .001$). Going from a respondent who reports no confidence in the fairness of the vote count to one who reports a lot of confidence increases the probability of reporting greater political efficacy by about 35 percent, holding all other variables at their mean. The probability of reporting greater political efficacy increases by about 18 percent as we shift from respondents who report that elections are not clean to clean, holding all other variables at their means.

Overall, the results indicate that our measures of electoral integrity are significantly associated with both voting from abroad and political efficacy in our sample of Mexicans residing in the US during the 2024 Mexican election cycle. These findings lend strong support to our hypotheses.

The analyses yield additional interesting findings. Opinion of the INE is linked to both turnout and efficacy in 2024, suggesting an important role for public evaluations of Mexico's electoral authority. Prior voting experience, knowledge of electoral logistics (e.g., awareness that Mexicans can show up to vote at consulates on Election Day and knowledge that the INE extended the deadline to register to vote), self-reported ideology, and contact with friends and family in Mexico to discuss politics are each positively linked to turnout. While identifying as an immigrant and a respondent's level of education are positively associated with reporting greater political efficacy, identifying with the Partido Revolucionario Institucional, sending remittances, and income levels are negatively associated with efficacy.

Table 3. Predicting diaspora voting and political efficacy in the 2024 Mexican election.

	(5) Turnout	(6) Turnout	(7) Efficacy	(8) Efficacy
Vote counted fairly	0.562*** (0.135)		0.584*** (0.126)	
Clean elections		0.251* (0.120)		0.419*** (0.117)
Voted in 2018 election	0.441* (0.220)	0.533* (0.217)	-0.236 (0.208)	-0.131 (0.206)
Opinion of INE	0.164*** (0.048)	0.197*** (0.048)	0.087 (0.045)	0.108* (0.044)
Aware that Mexicans can show up to vote at consulates on Election Day?	0.730** (0.244)	0.767** (0.242)	-0.133 (0.235)	-0.074 (0.234)

Table 3. (Cont.) Predicting diaspora voting and political efficacy in the 2024 Mexican election.

	(5) Turnout	(6) Turnout	(7) Efficacy	(8) Efficacy
Aware that Mexicans can obtain or renew their voter ID in the US?	-0.114 (0.234)	-0.0640 (0.231)	0.406 (0.223)	0.433 (0.221)
Aware that the INE extended the deadline to register by 5 days?	0.702** (0.245)	0.680** (0.241)	-0.010 (0.239)	-0.013 (0.237)
Party identification (Base is PAN)				
PRI	-0.0460 (0.453)	-0.110 (0.446)	-0.839* (0.421)	-0.914* (0.422)
PRD	0.0305 (0.469)	0.0565 (0.467)	-0.144 (0.415)	-0.097 (0.416)
MORENA	0.168 (0.391)	0.184 (0.385)	-0.267 (0.351)	-0.280 (0.351)
Other party	0.687 (1.118)	0.700 (1.043)	0.121 (1.004)	0.397 (0.976)
No party	0.183 (0.382)	0.0850 (0.376)	-0.142 (0.347)	-0.234 (0.344)
Ideology	0.255** (0.094)	0.231* (0.093)	0.056 (0.085)	0.041 (0.085)
Immigrant	0.340 (0.302)	0.299 (0.298)	0.571* (0.281)	0.530 (0.276)
Contact	0.878*** (0.246)	0.959*** (0.243)	0.243 (0.240)	0.312 (0.236)
Remittances	-0.0139 (0.218)	-0.0587 (0.214)	-0.398 (0.206)	-0.431* (0.204)
Education	0.0419 (0.060)	0.0546 (0.059)	0.135* (0.055)	0.152** (0.055)
Income	0.0151 (0.037)	0.0171 (0.037)	-0.070* (0.035)	-0.066 (0.034)
Female	-0.0387 (0.205)	0.00114 (0.204)	0.059 (0.190)	0.144 (0.190)
Age	-0.0224 (0.101)	-0.0357 (0.100)	0.147 (0.094)	0.125 (0.093)
Constant	-4.606*** (0.780)	-4.377*** (0.773)	-3.230*** (0.698)	-3.308*** (0.705)
Observations	600	600	600	600
Pseudo R ²	0.266	0.250	0.115	0.103
Log likelihood	-305.0	-311.9	-346.4	-351.1

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses; * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$; PRI = Partido Revolucionario Institucional; PRD = Partido de la Revolución Democrática.

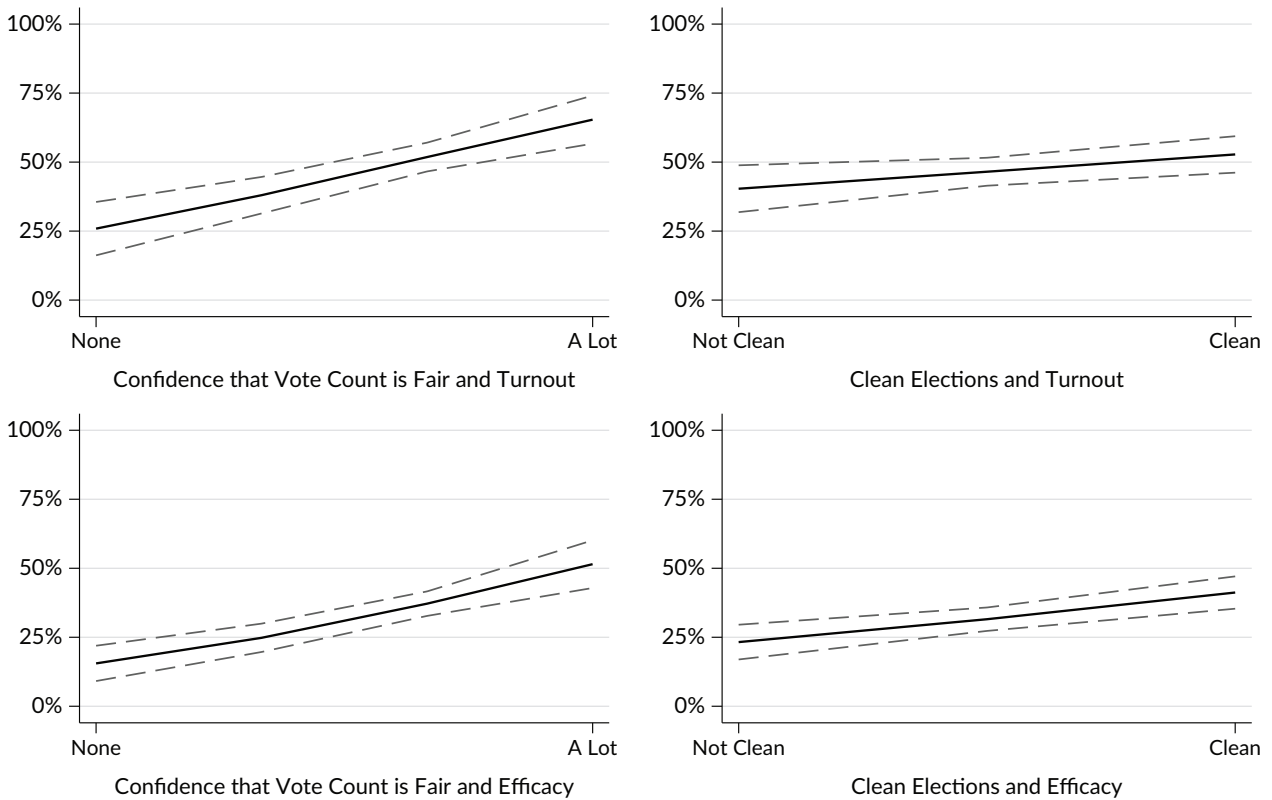


Figure 3. Predictive margins of electoral integrity, diaspora voting, and political efficacy in 2024.

5. Discussion and Concluding Remarks

The expansion of external voting rights has given citizens living abroad a meaningful opportunity to engage in the political life of their home countries. This development is particularly significant in the Western Hemisphere, which is characterized by large and politically active diaspora communities in countries like the US, especially those from Latin America. While the proliferation of external voting rights has coincided with increasing interest in the political behavior of these populations (see Lafleur, 2013; McCann et al., 2019, 2021; Medina Vidal & Campos Carrasco, 2020; Takahashi et al., 2026), we still know little of how these groups participate and relate to home-country politics.

The current study has sought to address this gap in the literature by exploring the Mexican diaspora population living in the US. This focus is critical given the relatively rapid evolution of Mexico’s electoral management body toward becoming more accommodating to potential voters in the diaspora and the estimated 11.4 million Mexican citizens currently residing in the US (Kramer & Passel, 2025). Using original survey data of Mexicans living in the US during the 2018 and 2024 Mexican election cycles, we have explored the self-reported voting behavior of the Mexican diaspora population living in the US (turnout) and whether this group views their electoral participation as meaningful for their home country (efficacy). While there are several factors that may influence these outcomes, we have argued that perceptions of electoral integrity are key predictors of turnout and efficacy for the respondents in our surveys.

Our findings highlight a consistent relationship between diasporic citizens’ perceptions of electoral integrity and their political engagement with their country of origin. Respondents who express greater confidence

in the fairness of the vote count and the cleanliness of elections are more likely to report participating in elections from abroad during the 2018 and 2014 election cycles. These patterns align with a large body of scholarship emphasizing the importance of institutional trust and perceptions of electoral integrity in shaping political behavior (Birch, 2010; Martínez i Coma & Trinh, 2017; Norris, 2014). The findings of the current study suggest that these relationships extend beyond territorial borders, linking perceptions of electoral integrity to the political attitudes and behaviors of citizens residing abroad.

Beyond turnout, the findings also indicate a positive association between perceptions of electoral integrity and feelings of political efficacy. Diasporic citizens who believe that elections in their countries of origin are conducted fairly and transparently appear more likely to feel that political participation is meaningful and that their involvement may have an impact. This relationship is notable in the context of diaspora politics, where geographic distance and limited direct contact with domestic political institutions could potentially weaken individuals' sense of influence over political outcomes (Bauböck, 2007; Lafleur, 2013). Among these survey respondents, the results suggest instead that confidence in democratic processes may help sustain feelings of political relevance among citizens residing abroad.

These findings contribute to the growing literature on transnational political behavior by highlighting the role of institutional perceptions in shaping diaspora engagement. Much of the existing scholarship on external voting focuses on institutional arrangements and the administrative barriers that emigrants face when attempting to participate in elections (Collyer, 2014). While these factors remain important, the results presented here suggest that attitudes toward the integrity of electoral processes may also be closely associated with participation and attitudes among diaspora populations. In this way, perceptions of democratic integrity may represent an additional dimension linking emigrants to the political life of their home countries.

The results also carry broader normative implications for debates about democratic legitimacy and diaspora enfranchisement. As countries increasingly extend voting rights to citizens residing abroad, questions arise regarding the conditions under which diaspora communities remain politically engaged with their countries of origin. This is particularly true of Mexico, where attempts by Mexico's electoral authority to accommodate potential voters in the diaspora have been linked to a substantial increase in diaspora ballots cast in Mexican presidential elections between 2006 and 2024. Still, considering the high number of voter IDs (1,685,402) distributed abroad in 2024 ("INE ha entregado," 2024) the actual level of participation is less impressive. Electoral observers have documented that this lag in voter participation is largely a function of poor communication from electoral authorities with the diaspora electorate, and a lack of information with which voters are expected to navigate the still complex system of voting from abroad (Tacher Contreras, 2024). The findings of this study suggest that confidence in electoral integrity may be an important factor in sustaining this engagement. When citizens believe that elections are administered fairly and transparently, they may be more inclined to participate and to view their involvement as meaningful. Conversely, declining confidence in electoral institutions could weaken these connections and reduce participation among external voters, potentially limiting the effectiveness of diaspora enfranchisement policies.

Finally, the findings should be interpreted with appropriate caution. The analyses presented here identify statistical associations rather than causal relationships, and the cross-sectional nature of the data limits the ability to determine the direction of these relationships. It is possible that individuals who are already more

politically engaged are more likely to hold positive views of electoral institutions. While our analyses incorporate theoretically motivated controls to partially remedy these concerns, future research could build on these findings by examining longitudinal data, employing experimental designs, or conducting comparative analyses across diaspora populations to better understand the dynamics linking electoral integrity with our outcomes of interest. Such research would further clarify how institutional trust shapes the political engagement of citizens living beyond their countries' borders.

In conclusion, this study's focus on the Mexican case of external voting provides practitioners and analysts with engaging lines of inquiry for future research. First, the link between perceptions of electoral integrity among diasporic citizens and engagement in home-country politics has important implications for future research on political behavior. At a very basic level, this suggests that electoral integrity may serve as a critical, motivating factor in the political engagement of diaspora communities. More broadly, however, these findings suggest that attempts to enhance electoral integrity may serve to bolster future diasporic engagement. Through its many rounds of reforms, the Mexican government has been marginally more responsive to expatriate citizen demands for political representation by enhancing accessibility and outreach, especially that focused on the integrity of the transnational electoral process. We hope that this study encourages analysts to take a deeper dive into how institutional reforms may serve to buttress diasporic political engagement, and how the dynamics of binational professional and personal networks influence diaspora voters' orientations. Advances in these lines of inquiry will enrich scholarship across multiple subfields. Finally, this study encourages critical thinking about Mexico's diaspora electorate, a group largely overlooked by US immigration and Latino politics scholars, who have focused mainly on its engagement with US institutions. We argue that when scholars ignore Mexican transnational political behavior and interpret migrant political behavior exclusively through a US lens, they neglect to understand many of the circumstances under which Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans maintain ties with their country of ancestry.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the editors of *Politics and Governance* and the anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflicts of interests.

References

- Aman, A., & Bakken, M. (2021). *Out-of-country voting: Learning from practice*. International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance.
- Bauböck, R. (2007). Stakeholder citizenship and transnational political participation: A normative evaluation of external voting. *Fordham Law Review*, 75(5), 2393–2447.
- Beltrán Miranda, Y. G. (2014). El voto de los mexicanos residentes en el extranjero. In J. M. Otálora Malassis (Ed.), *Fortalezas y debilidades del sistema electoral mexicano: Perspectiva federal y local* (pp. 462–487). Integralia Consultores; Tribunal Electoral del Poder Judicial de la Federación.
- Birch, S. (2010). Perceptions of electoral fairness and voter turnout. *Comparative Political Studies*, 43(12), 1601–1622.
- Burgess, K., & Tyburski, M. D. (2020). When parties go abroad: Explaining patterns of extraterritorial voting. *Electoral Studies*, 66, Article 102169.

- Cámara de Diputados. (2014). *Ley general de instituciones y procedimientos electorales*. Diario Oficial de la Federación.
- Camp, R. A. (2014). *Politics in Mexico: Democratic consolidation or decline?* Oxford University Press.
- Carreras, M., & İrepoğlu, Y. (2013). Trust in elections, vote buying, and turnout in Latin America. *Electoral Studies*, 32(4), 609–619.
- Cella, L., Çinar, I., Stokes, S., & Uribe, A. (2025). Building tolerance for backsliding by trash-talking democracy: Theory and evidence from Mexico. *Comparative Political Studies*, 59(6), 1226–1253.
- Collyer, M. (2014). A geography of extra-territorial citizenship: Explanations of external voting. *Migration Studies*, 2(1), 55–72.
- Ellis, A., Navarro, C., Morales, I., Gratschew, M., & Braun, N. (2007). *Voting abroad: The International IDEA handbook*. International IDEA; Instituto Federal Electoral.
- Erlingsson, H., & Tuman, J. P. (2017). External voting rights in Latin America and the Caribbean: The influence of remittances, globalization, and partisan control. *Latin American Policy*, 8(2), 295–312.
- Escobar, C. (2007). Extraterritorial political rights and dual citizenship in Latin America. *Latin American Research Review*, 42(3), 43–75.
- Estrada, L., & Poiré, A. (2007). The Mexican standoff: Taught to protest, learning to lose. *Journal of Democracy*, 18(1), 73–87.
- Félix, A. (2012). Truncated transnationalism: The migrant vote in the 2012 Mexican presidential election. *NACLA Report on the Americas*, 45(4), 37–38.
- Finn, V., & Besserer Rayas, A. (2024). Turning rights into ballots: Mexican external voting from the US. *Territory, Politics, Governance*, 12(9), 1425–1444.
- Fitzgerald, D. (2004). “For 118 million Mexicans”: Emigrants and Chicanos in Mexican politics. In K. Middlebrook (Ed.), *Dilemmas of political change in Mexico* (pp. 523–548). University of London, Institute of Latin American Studies.
- Fortin-Rittberger, J., Harfst, P., & Dingler, S.C. (2017). The costs of electoral fraud: Establishing the link between electoral integrity, winning an election, and satisfaction with democracy. *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties*, 27(3), 350–368.
- Goldberg, A. C., & Lanz, S. (2021). Living abroad, voting as if at home? Electoral motivations of expatriates. *Migration Studies*, 9(2), 279–310.
- Gris Legorreta, P. C. (2014). Voto en el extranjero: ¿Qué aprendimos de la experiencia de 2006? *Revista de Ciencias Sociales de la Universidad Iberoamericana*, 9(17), 103–121.
- Haime, A. (2017). What explains voter turnout in Latin America? A test of the effect of citizens’ attitudes towards the electoral process. *Revista de Ciencia Política*, 37(1), 69–93.
- INE ha entregado más de 1 millón 685 mil credenciales para votar desde el extranjero. (2024, December 17). *Central Electoral*. <https://centralectoral.ine.mx/2024/12/17/ine-ha-entregado-mas-de-1-millon-685-mil-credenciales-para-votar-desde-el-extranjero>
- Instituto Federal Electoral. (2006). *Elecciones 2006: Voto de los mexicanos residentes en el extranjero*.
- Instituto Federal Electoral. (2012). *Informe final del voto de los mexicanos residentes en el extranjero: Proceso electoral federal 2011–2012*.
- Instituto Nacional Electoral. (2018). *Voto de los mexicanos residentes en el extranjero*.
- Instituto Nacional Electoral. (2024). *Resultados del voto de los mexicanos residentes en el extranjero: Proceso electoral federal 2023–2024*. <https://votoextranjero.mx/web/vmre/elecciones-2024>
- International IDEA. (2019). *The global state of democracy 2019: Addressing the ills, reviving the promise*. <https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/the-global-state-of-democracy-2019.pdf>

- International IDEA. (2025). *The global state of democracy 2025: Democracy on the move*. <https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/2025-09/global-state-of-democracy-2025-democracy-on-the-move.pdf>
- Kramer, S., & Passel, J. (2025, August 21). What the data says about immigrants in the U.S. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2025/08/21/key-findings-about-us-immigrants>
- Lafleur, J. M. (2013). *Transnational politics and the state: The external voting rights of diasporas*. Routledge.
- Lafleur, J. M., & Calderón Chelius, L. (2011). Assessing emigrant participation in home country elections: The case of Mexico's 2006 presidential election. *International Migration*, 49(3), 99–124.
- Lindberg, S. I. (2006). *Democracy and elections in Africa*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Marcelli, E. A., & Cornelius, W. A. (2005). Immigrant voting in home-country elections: Potential consequences of extending the franchise to expatriate Mexicans residing in the United States. *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, 21(2), 429–460.
- Margheritis, A. (2017). The inclusion paradox of enfranchising expats in Latin America. *International Migration*, 55(2), 126–143.
- Martínez i Coma, F., & Trinh, M. (2017). How electoral integrity affects voter turnout in democracies. *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 52(1), 53–74.
- McAllister, I., & White, S. (2015). Electoral integrity and support for democracy in Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine. *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties*, 25(1), 78–96.
- McCann, J. A., & Domínguez, J. I. (1998). Mexicans react to electoral fraud and political corruption: An assessment of public opinion and voting behavior. *Electoral Studies*, 17(4), 483–503.
- McCann, J. A., Escobar, C., & Arana, R. (2019). Mexicans and Colombians at home and abroad: A comparative study of political engagement. *Latin American Research Review*, 54(1), 16–34.
- McCann, J. A., Leal, D. L., Navarre, R., & Cornelius, W. A. (2021). Transnational political engagement and the civic incorporation of Mexican immigrants in the United States. *Revista Latinoamericana de Opinión Pública*, 10(1), 129–164.
- Medina Vidal, X., & Campos Carrasco, A. (2020). El voto desde el norte. *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, 36(3), 393–424.
- Monsiváis-Carrillo, A. (2021). Electoral integrity, interest in politics, and satisfaction with democracy in Mexico. *Foro Internacional*, 61(4), 881–923.
- Monsiváis-Carrillo, A. (2022). Perception of electoral integrity, trust in elections, and the conditional role of the understanding of democracy: Addressing the “Mexican paradox.” *Colombia Internacional*, 110, 89–121.
- Navarro, C., & Carrillo, M. (2007). Mexico: Safeguarding the integrity of the electoral process. In A. Ellis, C. Navarro, I. Morales, M. Gratschew, & N. Braun (Eds.), *Voting from abroad: The International IDEA handbook* (pp. 189–192). International IDEA; Instituto Federal Electoral.
- Navarro Fierro, C. (2016). *Electoral studies in compared international perspective: Voting from abroad in 18 Latin American countries*. Instituto Nacional Electoral.
- Norris, P. (2014). *Why electoral integrity matters*. Cambridge University Press.
- Schedler, A. (1999). Civil society and political elections: A culture of distrust? *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 565(1), 126–141.
- Schedler, A. (2002). Elections without democracy: The menu of manipulation. *Journal of Democracy*, 13(2), 36–50.
- Simpser, A. (2012). Does electoral manipulation discourage voter turnout? Evidence from Mexico. *The Journal of Politics*, 74(3), 782–795.
- Smith, R. C. (2008). Contradictions of diasporic institutionalization in Mexican politics: The 2006 migrant vote and other forms of inclusion and control. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 31(4), 708–741.

- Suro, R., & Escobar, G. (2006). *Survey of Mexicans living in the U.S. on absentee voting in Mexican elections*. Pew Research Center.
- Tacher Contreras, D. (2024). *Evaluación de la justicia electoral en materia de derechos políticos de la ciudadanía mexicana residente en el extranjero*. Iniciativa Ciudadana para la Promoción de la Cultura del Diálogo A.C.
- Takahashi, Y., Song, J., & Iida, T. (2026). Transnational political participation of undocumented Mexican immigrants in the US: Respondent-driven sampling with the hard-to-reach population. *The Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Politics*, 11(1), 356–381.
- Umpierrez de Reguero, S., & Dandoy, R. (2026). External voting. In H. A. Garnett & T. S. James (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of electoral integrity*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780197777497.013.0028>

About the Authors

Xavier Medina Vidal is associate professor of political science and director of the Center for Mexican American Studies at the University of Texas at Arlington. His research focuses on a variety of contemporary issues in North American politics including transnational political behavior, Latino politics, and Hispanic political thought.

Antonio Ugues Jr. is associate professor of political science and chair of the Department of Political Science and Public Policy at St. Mary's College of Maryland. His research focuses on public attitudes of democracy and elections across the Americas.