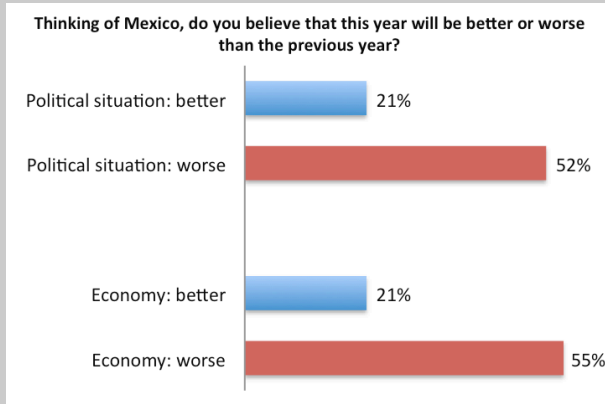
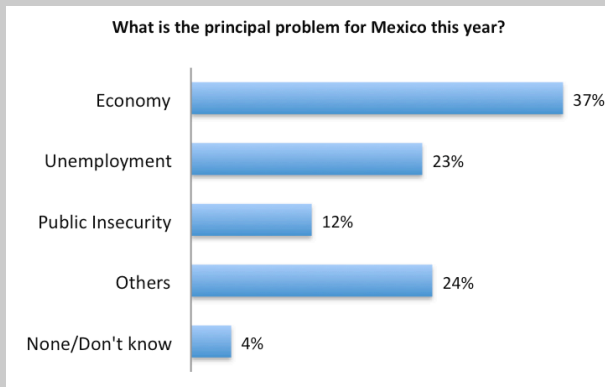


Alan Stoga, President
Daniel Wilson, Managing Director and Editor

Poll

Confidence remains low

An *El Universal*/Berumen national survey taken at the end of November and published in January showed that confidence remains low across the board. Economic issues predominate, and a mood of generalized pessimism about progress in resolving problems prevails. By better than 2:1, respondents think that both the economic and political situation will worsen rather than improve. Only 33% think that Mexico will make the changes that need to be made, while 67% do not. ([Universal 1/4](#))



Key Dates

2/1: Start of new congressional session	9/1: Presidential <i>Informe</i> ; start of fall congressional session
4/30: End of congressional session	9/15: 200 th Anniversary of Independence
5/16: Yucatán elections	10/3: Chiapas elections (possible)
7/4: Elections in 13 states	11/15: 100 th Anniversary of the Revolution

Calderón focuses on economy in message to the nation

In his first speech of the year, President **Felipe Calderón** said that the government had three priorities this year: job creation, fighting extreme poverty, and strengthening public security. Celebrating 2010 as the 'year of the fatherland'—marking the 200th anniversary of independence and the 100th anniversary of the revolution—Calderón promised economic recovery: "2009 was a hard year, but Mexicans continued forward. ... It was necessary to make difficult decisions, which required great sacrifices from all. However, I want to say that these sacrifices were precisely those that will enable us to avoid serious financial dangers for the country.... The efforts of all will allow for an accelerated economic recovery for our economy." ([Presidencia 1/6](#))

Calderón did not mention, even in passing, the political reform initiative he sent to Congress last December.

Cordero and Carstens draw similar pictures of the economy

The key economic policymakers, in their new roles, gave similar perspectives on the economy in back-to-back presentations at the ITAM's annual economic conference. Banco de Mexico governor **Agustín Carstens** said that the economic recovery that began in the second half of 2009 will continue, and that any increase in inflation that resulted from higher taxes and increased fuel prices was likely to be transitory and not require a monetary response from the central bank. Finance Secretary **Ernesto Cordero** emphasized the positive contribution from the government's reform initiatives: the liquidation of Luz y Fuerza, the energy reform, the liberalization of investment rules for pension funds, and the modernization of public-private partnership investment rules. The consensus outlook for 2010 is economic growth of about 3%, and inflation of about 5%.

Cordero keeps team intact at Ministry of Finance

Finance Secretary **Ernesto Cordero** ratified the three current undersecretaries in their posts, squashing speculation that there could be a wholesale exodus of officials. In a press release, the Ministry said that Undersecretary of Finance **Alejandro Werner**, Undersecretary for Income **José Antonio Meade**, and Undersecretary for Expenditures **Dionisio Pérez Jácome** would all remain in their posts. (SHCP 12/22)

PRI and PRD attack fuel price increases

Starting late December, the government began raising gasoline and other fuel prices to narrow energy subsidies. (In January 2009, President **Calderón** froze fuel prices as a response to the economic crisis.) The PRI and the PRD attacked the hikes, even though the price increases were implicit in the 2010 budget that both parties supported. PRI Senator **Manlio Fabio Beltrones** called the President 'deaf' to congressional demands to protect basic consumption goods from price increases. PRD Senator **Carlos Navarrete** said Congress could vote a rollback and take away the authority of the Ministry of Finance to set prices. (Reforma 1/8-9)

Bloody start for 2010, after record killings last year

Fifty-two persons were killed in gang related violence on January 9th, the bloodiest single day in this *sexenio*; the toll over the first nine days of the year was 189 according to *Excelsior*. In the tally kept by *El Universal*, there were a total of 7,724 gang related killings in 2009, up 37% from 5,630 in 2008. Close to half (3,250) the killings took place in Chihuahua, followed by Sinaloa (930), Durango (734), and Guerrero (672). ([Excelsior 1/10](#), [Universal 1/1](#))