

## **Sixth North American Process Symposium: Economic Coordination and Adaption**

Friday, October 23, 2020

Virtually Hosted by the Wilson Center via Zoom

On October 23, 2020, the School of Public Policy at the University of Calgary, the School of Global Studies at Universidad Anáhuac México, and the Watts College of Public Service and Community Solutions at Arizona State University, in association with The Wilson Center in Washington D.C., joined together for the Sixth Annual North American Process Symposium: Economic Coordination and Adaption.

Participants highlighted that the purpose of the symposium is to develop concrete solutions to pressing policy problems faced by North Americans. To this end, after the panel where participants of the federal government of all three countries discussed issues pertaining to trilateral economic coordination in North America, two working groups followed. These are their recommendations.

### **Working Group A: North American Coordination and Competitiveness**

This working group asked the following questions: how can North America drive the private sector to further coordination and competitiveness? How can North America benefit from the weakening China-US relationship? How can North America utilize USMCA/CUSMA/T-MEC to its fullest potential? How should North America promote trade with different stakeholders?

#### **Policy Recommendations:**

- 1) Create private-public institutionalized mechanisms for cooperation between Canada, the U.S. and Mexico, involving the highest levels of each partners' business/industry and each government. This should become a regularly programmed North American Leadership Summit.
- 2) Engage the private sector in the development of policies, facilitating and promoting ongoing communication between the three countries' business communities. A possible mechanism includes creating a Trilateral Chamber of Commerce, as well as strengthen alliances between private sector organizations, like the chambers of commerce.
- 3) Streamline regulation to facilitate North American trade and investment within the USMCA, taking advantage of the revision of the treaty.
- 4) Promote a label "Made in North America", taking advantage of the uniqueness of the productive chains that make the product North American.



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## **Working Group B: The Adaption of Business Supply Chains**

The Covid-19 pandemic has once again put global value chains (GVCs) front-and-center in policy debates. When shortages of personal protective equipment (PPE) came to light in the first six months of 2020, many academics and policymakers were quick to point fingers at structural flaws in cross-border supply chains, which they believed had made North American access to essential goods vulnerable to pandemic-related supply chain disruptions. This led to several questions: has the COVID-19 pandemic and changes in the geopolitical landscape uncovered key vulnerabilities in global value chains? Could global value chains play a role in ramping up supply during demand hikes? Should NA value chain-oriented policies be adopted to strengthen the resilience of NA supply chains?

### **Policy Recommendations:**

- 1) Identify the source of shortages in essential goods (PPEs). This includes obtaining more evidence on global value chain disruptions.
- 2) Connect security with commerce in North American policy making.
- 3) Increase government funding for studies of the North American trading relationship.