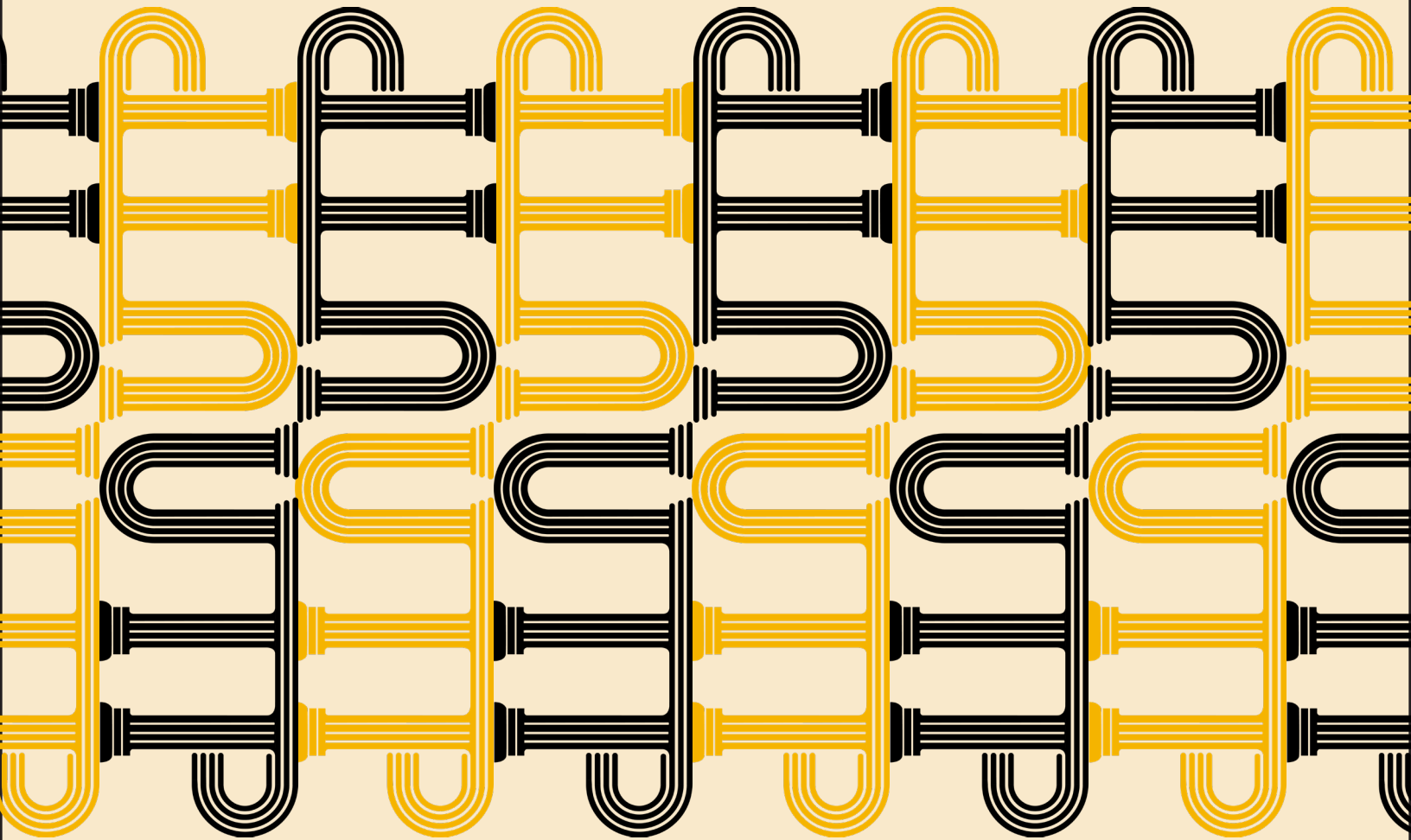


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**CANADA'S STRAINED  
RELATIONSHIP WITH  
MEXICO**  
**ZOHA MOBEEN**

## CANADA'S STRAINED RELATIONSHIP WITH MEXICO

Canada is one of the most multicultural countries in the world, home to countless immigrants who contribute to its cultural heritage. Located in North America, its neighbor to the south is the United States, which also neighbors Mexico. Within this geography, Canada has implicated itself in several trade agreements between the US and Mexico. Throughout their history, Canada and the US have been highly involved in one another's politics, though Canada's relationship with Mexico has been less close.

Due to the historical lack of closeness between Canada and Mexico, it is hard to typify the precise relationship between the two when it comes to agreements that enabled free trade and business between the major states of North America. Typically when it comes to free trade both countries are able to cooperate, however as of late, Canada and Mexico's relationship seems to have become strained. One issue contributing to this strain, pointed out by Peter Zimonjic in a recent article, relates to Canada's decision to implement new visa rules for travelers from Mexico.

In recent years, Canada has found itself in a difficult position: it has been grappling with a growing backlog of requests for asylum, and this sparked discussion surrounding why a significant fraction of asylum seekers come from Mexico. Zimonjic's article, "Minister says Mexico isn't threatening

trade consequences over new visa rules," explored the rising concern that Mexican travelers would use their visas and ability to enter Canada to move into the US (Zimonjic, 2024). This was a concern for the US as many Mexican individuals were, according to sources in the US, entering through Canada instead of Mexico, their place of origin (Zimonjic, 2024).

The other issue that arises from this influx of Mexican asylum seekers is that the majority of requests are ultimately not granted. There is a very low acceptance rate for Mexicans seeking asylum status (Zimonjic, 2024). In 2009, under the Harper administration, Canada imposed a visa requirement for Mexicans that would ease the influx of asylum cases in Canada, however its policy became more lenient when Prime Minister Trudeau was elected, and this new policy facilitates the excessive backlog of asylum requests by Mexican travelers today (Zimonjic, 2024).

Importantly, Canada's new visa rules for Mexican citizens will not affect those that have valid work or study permits as well as those that are part of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program or the International Mobility Program (Zimonjic, 2024). The new policies risk undermining the relationship between Canada and Mexico, though as of yet, Mexico has not retaliated in any way, it has voiced concerns however. The situation prompts questions surrounding what Mexico will do in response to Canada's new visa rules: will Canadians see restrictions when traveling to Mexico?

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*To conclude, it is clear that this is just the beginning of what may become a larger issue. There has not been a large-scale response from the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which could be either a positive and negative sign. However, it is impossible to dismiss concern regarding the possibility of new barriers for Canadian travelers.*

## REFERENCES

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