

# MEXICO

## Creating a national lead agency for artificial intelligence

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### Key Takeaways:

- The setting up of a national AI strategy in Mexico has been mandated through the creation of a Mexican Agency for the Development of Artificial Intelligence in 2023. Concurrently, previous multisectoral initiatives in the country are convening discussions on and development of AI technologies with an important role of universities.
- Challenges in Mexico lay in spearheading the next steps of the newly founded agency and focusing on local AI technology development rather than relying on foreign technology.

In October 2023, an initiative to issue a *Law for the Mexican Agency for the Development of Artificial Intelligence* was presented in the Parliamentary Gazette of the Chamber of Deputies (Government of Mexico, 2023a). The AI agency proposed in this legislative initiative would be the creation of a decentralized public body with technical and managerial autonomy. Its main objectives would include formulating a national strategy on AI, implementing a national AI policy, promoting the development of AI in various areas (education, industry, science, technology), fostering international cooperation in AI, and overseeing the responsible use of this technology. The assets of the AI agency would consist of resources, amounts allocated in the Budget of Expenditures, income from services and donations.

The AI agency would have a Governing Board composed of 14 members, including the Head of the Executive as president and representatives from various ministries and organizations. The Board would have responsibilities such as formulating the AI development policy, approving programs and projects of the agency and issuing recommendations. Additionally, experts, stakeholders and the general public would be involved in discussions and decision-making to ensure that any regulation is fair, effective and adaptable to the changing circumstances in the field of AI (Government of Mexico, 2023b). The Governing Board would organize and convene permanent forums and work tables within its first six months.

### **Next steps for a new agency**

This proposed Mexican Agency for the Development of Artificial Intelligence represents a significant step towards the regulation and responsible promotion of AI in Mexico, but it is essential to remember that there are still more stages in the legislative process to go through.

The implications of these changes on science and research involve a series of fundamental actions. These include formulating and proposing a national strategy on AI; implementing a national AI policy in Mexico; and promoting the effective development of AI activities to expand the country's capabilities in educational, industrial, scientific and technological areas. If established, the AI agency will achieve these aims by developing the country's scientific and technological capacity, fostering international cooperation and serving as an instrument of state leadership to strengthen sovereignty and national security. Additionally, the AI agency will seek to facilitate the incorporation of related sectors, especially the productive sector, to enhance competitiveness in markets. It will also promote ongoing dialogue on studies and implications of AI, ensuring public interest and population protection. Finally, public, private and social entities will be encouraged to submit proposals and observations in the field of AI for study and consideration, aiming to advance development, security and peace in Mexico.

### **IA2030Mx**

Since 2018, another ongoing initiative called IA2030Mx has emerged as a multisectoral coalition composed of practitioners, academic institutions, companies, startups, public agencies, organizations, media and other key players in Mexico's digital and AI ecosystem (IA2030Mx, no date). Among its objectives are to facilitate a deeper debate on present and future opportunities and challenges related to AI, translate this debate into actions, make AI knowledge accessible to everyone, advance the use and application of AI for the benefit of Mexicans, and localize the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development AI Principles in the Mexican context.

The IA2023Mx initiative has marked significant achievements in catalysing research, fostering innovation and advancing Mexico's presence in the global AI landscape. Through the initiative, universities have spearheaded groundbreaking research endeavours, contributing to the development of cutting-edge AI technologies across various academic disciplines. Moreover, IA2023Mx has facilitated international collaboration, enabling knowledge exchange and positioning Mexico as a key player in the AI domain. Additionally, the initiative has played a crucial role in nurturing AI talent by providing educational programs, scholarships and training opportunities, thereby bolstering the country's pool of skilled professionals.

### **The role of universities**

Despite its successes, IA2023Mx also faces several challenges that universities must address to sustain momentum and maximize impact. These challenges include securing adequate infrastructure and resources to support AI research and education effectively; addressing the skills gap through comprehensive training initiatives; and ensuring that

AI developments adhere to ethical standards and societal values. Furthermore, promoting interdisciplinary collaboration and securing sustainable funding sources remain persistent challenges for academic institutions involved in the initiative.

Universities play a pivotal role in driving the IA2023Mx initiative forward by leveraging their research excellence, educational expertise and innovation capabilities. As hubs of knowledge creation and dissemination, universities lead AI research endeavours, educate the next generation of AI professionals and serve as platforms for collaboration between academia, industry and government. Additionally, universities contribute to shaping AI policies, advocating for responsible AI deployment and engaging with communities to address societal concerns and promote digital literacy. Through their multifaceted role, universities are instrumental in realizing the vision of IA2023Mx and positioning Mexico as a global leader in AI innovation and development.

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### **National research entities**

A National Laboratory of Artificial Intelligence was founded in Mexico as early as 1990, but it later changed its name to the National Laboratory of Advanced Informatics (LANIA), since an understanding had not yet emerged about what AI would actually be. As a national laboratory, LANIA typically receives funding from various government agencies and entities to support its research activities, infrastructure and operations, including the Mexican government. This funding is often allocated through grants, contracts and other mechanisms to support LANIA's mission of advancing informatics research, innovation, and education in Mexico (LANIA, no date).

Another of the main initiatives in this field is the Artificial Intelligence Centre of the Technological Institute of Monterrey (ITESM), which focuses on the development of AI-based technologies to improve processes in areas such as medicine, transportation, agriculture and security. ITESM currently has a research project called Advanced Artificial Intelligence, which is composed of a group of researchers developing different research lines such as machine learning, computational intelligence and hyper-heuristics, data science and applied mathematics, and biomedical engineering Tecnológico de Monterrey, no date).

Finally, one of the challenges in Mexico for implementing various initiatives related to AI is the country's austerity policy. The constraints of this policy keep Mexico locked in as a user of foreign technology. The goal should rather be for Mexico to become a producer of its own technology and, in the medium term, to export AI solutions.

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