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ARTICLE

JOE BIDEN'S FIRST YEAR: IN SEARCH OF A NEW STRATEGY

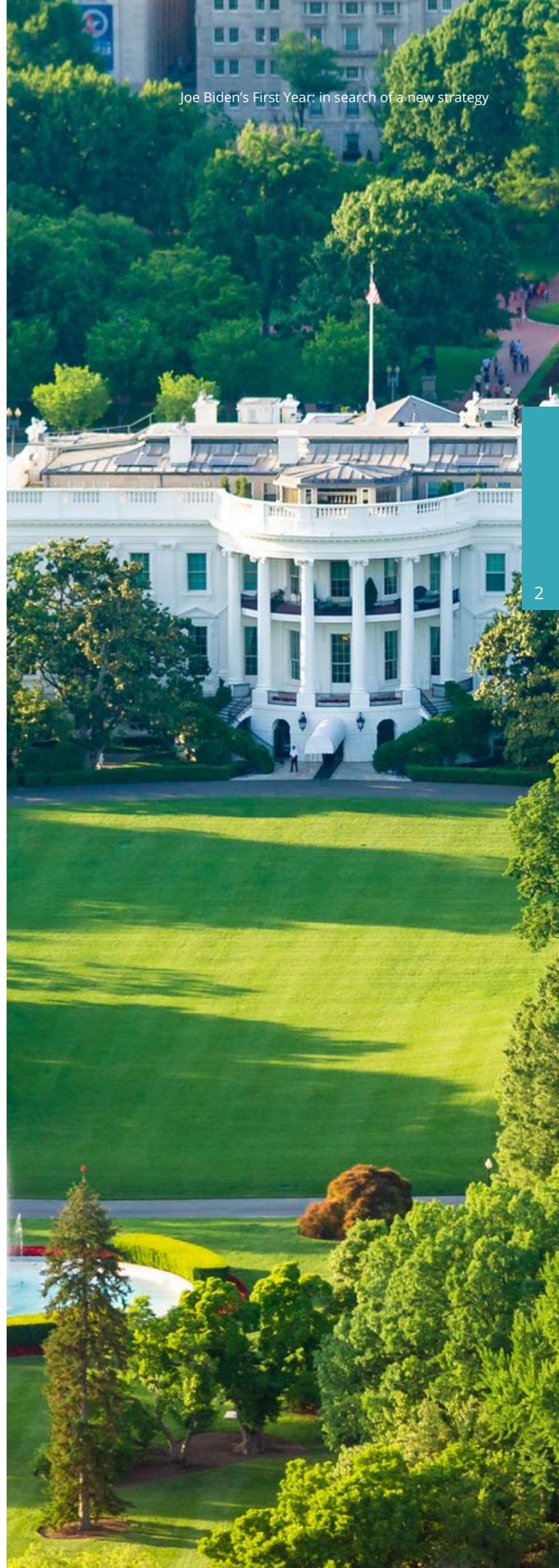
Madrid, February 8, 2022

INTRODUCTION

On January 20, 2020, Joe Biden was sworn in as President of the United States in the midst of a crisis of historic proportions. This crisis has occurred at a health, institutional, racial, social, immigration, political, and economic level. One year on, the situation has changed quantitatively but not qualitatively. This means that, although new problems have not emerged, none of the pre-existing ones have been resolved.

Biden has sought to focus on domestic policy, following the tradition of other Presidents of the United States, who traditionally focus their first term of office on internal questions. Many await their second term, if re-elected, to focus on international policy, with the aim of leaving behind a political 'legacy'.

The President has not managed to implement this strategy due to the nation's withdrawal from Afghanistan, with the Taliban taking power in August. This took focus away from his narrative of economic reforms. Since then, Biden has been unable to fully restore focus on his internal policy goals, and the anniversary of his first year in the White House has been marked by another international crisis: Ukraine. In general, Biden's presidency has shown a limited capacity for communication to the public, both in relation to achievements and to crises. If this dynamic does not change, Biden may face serious difficulties in getting re-elected in 2024.



BIDEN'S FIRST YEAR IN THE WHITE HOUSE

This period has been defined by the fight against COVID-19 and by a series of economic reforms, in the midst of a political climate marked by social and political polarization.

AN UNPOPULAR PRESIDENT

Biden's popularity has gone through two six-month periods:

- **Success and initiative.** From January to July, popular support for Biden's administration ranged from 50% to 57%¹ - a historically low approval rating, but higher than Donald Trump ever enjoyed in his four years in the White House. Over these months, the President managed to approve the third round of aid against COVID-19, and the number of deaths from the pandemic dropped by 89.1 %, which allowed social distancing measures to be relaxed.
- **Deadlock and unpopularity.** On July 21, Biden's popularity fell below the threshold of 50% and, since then, has continued to fall to 42%, despite the approval of the Infrastructure Plan in November. The health crisis has worsened, the social protection and energy transition plan (Build Back Better) has not been approved, and the Taliban have returned to power in Afghanistan. Finally, the news in January 2022 has been dominated by another international crisis, the situation in Ukraine.

Although it is normal that the popularity of the president falls after his first few months in office, Biden had already started from a very low base. His popular support is the lowest of any president one year after winning the elections since 1944, with the sole exception of Donald Trump.

¹ Presidential Job Approval Center ([gallup.com](https://www.gallup.com)).

² [New York Times | SurveyMonkey poll: January 2021](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/01/us/politics/survey-monkey-poll-january-2021)

³ [U.S. Vaccination Rates Rose Somewhat in June. Will It Last? | Time](https://www.time.com/2021/06/01/us-vaccination-rates-rose-somewhat-in-june-will-it-last/)

⁴ [COVID-19 continues to be a leading cause of death in the U.S. in June 2021 - Peterson-KFF Health System Tracker](https://www.petersonkff.com/2021/06/01/covid-19-continues-to-be-a-leading-cause-of-death-in-the-u.s.-in-june-2021/)

BIDEN'S PRIORITIES

Biden has focused on the economic agenda and the fight against COVID-19 – the two greatest concerns of the American people (in January 2021, 35 % of them quoted the economy as their main concern, followed by health, with 19%².)

COVID-19

The president's popularity has been tied to the ups and downs in the fight against the pandemic. This can be divided into two periods:

• January-June:

The vaccination rollout began swiftly, and the United States hit a record of 4.3 million doses administered on April 8³. Between January and June, the number of daily deaths dropped from 3,136 to 342⁴. Popular support for Biden's policy to combat COVID-19 barely dropped below 60% in this period⁵.

After April, the vaccination rate plummeted, partly because there were fewer unvaccinated people who wished to be immunized. By July 4, only 67% of the population entitled to vaccination had received the first dose, when the President's target was 70%.

While 47.1% of adults in the USA were completely vaccinated⁶ by July 4, by January 7, 2022, this figure has only risen to 62.4%.

• September-January:

Since September, the number of deaths from COVID-19 has fluctuated between 1,000 and 2,000 per day, in other words, three to six times the figure for June. The approval of Biden's handling of COVID-19 has dropped to 47.6%⁷ accordingly.

Meanwhile, the Republicans and a portion of the public have toughened their opposition to many of the measures proposed by the US Administration to fight the pandemic. They oppose limitations on public activities, obligatory vaccinations, and wearing face masks. At the current vaccination rate, the USA will need nine more months to immunize 90% of the population.

⁵ [How Americans View Biden's Response To The Coronavirus Crisis | FiveThirtyEight](https://www.fortune.com/2021/01/01/how-americans-view-biden-s-response-to-the-coronavirus-crisis/)

⁶ [COVID vaccine tracker update: U.S. map shows how your state is doing | Fortune](https://www.fortune.com/2021/06/01/covid-vaccine-tracker-update-u.s.-map-shows-how-your-state-is-doing/)

⁷ [How Americans View Biden's Response To The Coronavirus Crisis | FiveThirtyEight](https://www.fortune.com/2021/01/01/how-americans-view-biden-s-response-to-the-coronavirus-crisis/)

The continuing health crisis has also led part of the public to become frustrated. This includes the President's supporters, who have complained loudly about school closures due to the Omicron variant.

“The president’s popularity has been tied to the ups and downs in the fight against the pandemic”



ECONOMY

The main changes in economics are Biden’s legislative initiatives and the upward swing of inflation.

• **Legislative initiatives:**

Biden’s project is framed within the Democrats’ political tradition to expand regulation and the Welfare State, now updated to include the fight against climate change.

His calculation is that COVID-19 has created a window of opportunity for the Democratic Party to achieve a series of goals that it has been pursuing for more than a decade. This has been firmed up in three draft laws:

- 1- The third major round of aid to combat the economic consequences of COVID-19, which was approved by the House of Representatives in March.
- 2- The Infrastructure Plan approved in November – the largest initiative of this kind since the interstate highway system in 1956.
- 3- Build Back Together– a draft law on energy transition and the expansion of the social protection network, which is at an impasse due to a lack of support in the Senate.

• **Inflation**

Under Biden, inflation in the USA has risen from 1.4% when he arrived in the White House to 7% in December – its highest level in 39 years. The rest of the world has seen a similar rise. In the USA this is caused by two specific issues summed up by the expression the ‘Great Resignation’:

- 1- The rising number of positions that offer the lowest salaries due to increased demand for less qualified jobs, which has led to a massive turnover of employees.
- 2- The reticence of workers to return to the job market after losing their jobs due to the COVID-19 crisis, which has reduced the active population.

Despite the fact that price stability is under the purview of the Federal Reserve and not of the Executive, 72% of the population are critical of the way Biden's has handled this situation. The Republican opposition has taken advantage of this situation, coining the term 'bidenflation' (a play on words of "Biden" and "inflation.") In addition, 60% of the public is critical of Biden's economic policy, which shows a lack of communication by the White House. Biden did not remind the public that price responsibility was the purview of the Federal Reserve and not of the Executive until January 19, 2022. It is possible that by then this message had little impact since public opinion had already assigned responsibility for the rise in inflation to the President.

This price increase may have a major impact on the elections to the House of Representatives in November. Inflation affects every citizen but is particularly tough on those on the lowest incomes, who depend on income from work and not from capital. This is a group that includes both minorities – particularly African Americans and Hispanics – whose key support the Democratic Party needs, and white workers – a group that may tip the balance depending on which party they vote for. Prices rising this dramatically is unfamiliar to the public, given that the USA has not experienced an inflationary episode in three and a half decades. When added to supply chain problems for certain necessities due to interruptions caused by COVID-19, this landscape is particularly unfavorable for the President. It is possible that this scenario will be resolved before voting if inflation is swiftly moderated, although this possibility seems unlikely, and the Federal Reserve has stated that prices will remain high until the middle of the year.

The evolution of the pandemic and the negative perception of the economic situation are not good news for Biden for the following reasons:

- 1– These were the two areas he had planned as the pillars of his administration's action.
- 2– They harm the image of competency that his team tries to project, to contrast with Trump's internal struggles and improvisation.

FOREIGN POLICY

Foreign policy is a secondary matter right now in the United States. In January 2021, only 2% of citizens considered it their greatest concern⁸. This indifference can be seen clearly in the lack of political impact of the withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Biden came to power at a time when the USA is facing a new situation in its foreign policy. This era is marked by "strategic competition" with China that some described as the 'New Cold War,' worsening relations with Russia, and a deterioration of the system of alliances that Washington had forged over the seven previous decades.

With this backdrop, the President played his trump card of continuing Obama's policy of multilateralism and looking to the Pacific, while Trump had focused on challenging Russia and China.

The reforging of alliances is perhaps the only area in which Biden has managed to completely reverse the situation handed down to him. The USA has re-established its commitment to NATO; it has returned to the fold of the Paris Agreement; and, to contain China, it has created the AUKUS Alliance (with Australia and the United Kingdom), has strengthened 'Quad' (another alliance with India, Singapore and Japan) and has stepped up its commitment to defend Taiwan.

“Foreign policy is a secondary matter right now”

⁸ [New York Times | Momentive Poll: December 2021 \(survey-monkey.com\)](#)

Latin America continues to have less importance, except for the control of migratory flows that arrive from Mexico from the Northern Triangle (Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador.) Immigration will be one of the factors that decide this year's legislative elections. On this topic, Biden has proceeded with a policy of more dialogue than Trump, which includes promoting investment and the economic development of these countries. For the time being, the strategy has not led to any significant results. The resumption of negotiations with Iran to ensure that it renounces its nuclear program has not made progress either.

THE POLITICAL DYNAMICS OF 2021

US policy in 2021 was marked by the negative effects of Donald Trump not recognizing Joe Biden's victory in the 2020 elections and the attack on the Capitol on January 6.

Although most of the leaders of the Republican Party continue to reject the former President, Donald Trump has a strong influence on the party, exercised through three groups:

- His voters. 78%⁹ of Republicans want Trump to stand in the 2024 elections.
- Many who hold office in lower-level public administrations (town halls and counties).
- The House of Representatives.

The elections on November 3 were the most important electoral event of the year, which decided many local political offices, along with the Governors of Virginia and New Jersey.

The Republicans achieved better results than expected, particularly in Virginia, where Glenn Yougkin was elected as Governor with a campaign based on a type of 'Trumpism without Trump.' He staunchly defended of conservative values but does not support allowing the former President to take part in electoral events. This strategy may be imitated by other Republicans in 2022 and 2024.

For its part, the Democratic Party managed to maintain the unity of its left wing and center, which required all of the White House's effort.



⁹ [10/19/21 - 78% Of Republicans Want To See Trump Run For President In 2024, Quinnipiac University National Poll Finds; Americans Now Split On Border Wall As Opposition Softens | Quinnipiac University Poll](#)

OUTLOOK FOR 2022

2022 seems to be marked by the division and confrontation of 2021, in a new political scenario with legislative elections in November. These elections will determine the whole House of Representatives and one third of the Senate, along with the governors of 39 of the 50 states and thousands of local offices. The Democrats hold 222 seats in the House of Representatives and the Republicans 212, with one vacancy. In the Senate, each party has 50 senators and the Vice-President, Kamala Harris, has the casting vote in the event of a tie.

The elections would seem to favor the Republicans, who are very likely to recover the House of Representatives and perhaps even the Senate. This is for two reasons:

- Legislative elections held after presidential elections do not tend to bode well for the President's party (this has been the case every year since 1982, except for 2002 – an exceptional year due to the popular support for George W. Bush after 9/11 and the invasion of Afghanistan.)
- Biden's low level of popularity. If the legislative elections of 2018 are taken as a benchmark, held when Donald Trump had similar support to Biden at this time, the Republican Party will achieve an overwhelming majority in the House of Representatives.

The first consequence of Republican control of the House would be the dissolution of the committee investigating the attack on the Capitol. This would make the political climate tougher, given that most Republicans in the House have a political philosophy in line with Trump. They plan to remove certain Democratic representatives from committees and perhaps try to impeach Biden in retaliation for the two attempted impeachments of Trump. The initiative would not have any chance of leading to the President's removal, but it would add more tension to the political landscape.

A Republican victory in November would increase the chances of Donald Trump running in 2024, since his supporters would remain highly mobilized, while the Democrats are demoralized. Other Republicans that could announce their candidacies after the elections are the Governor of Florida, Ron DeSantis, who has a similar ideology and political style to Trump, the former Vice-President, Mike Pence, whose support outside of evangelical voters appears to be very limited, and the Governor of South Dakota, Kristi Noem. However, Trump is still the favorite for the Primaries in the event that he decides to stand.

The Republican strategy for the campaign is based on the following points:

- 1– The rise in crime, that began in 2020 and has continued under Biden.
- 2– Inflation.
- 3– Illegal immigration.
- 4– School curriculums, particularly in relation to the so-called Critical Race Theory – a school of thought defended by the democratic left that argues that social sciences must be analyzed from the perspective of relations between races, marked by the fact that the USA is a country that suffers from systemic racism.
- 5– COVID-19, both from the point of view of the persistence of the pandemic and of the rejection of widespread vaccination and lockdown measures.

The Democrats' strategy is less well-defined, with three main lines for the time being:

- 1– The idea that democracy in the USA is in danger, both due to the attack on the House of Representatives in 2021 and to the restrictive measures approved by the Republicans in the states they control, designed to make voting by racial minorities and inhabitants of inner-city areas more difficult – the two largest demographics that tend to vote.

2- The identification of Republicans with Donald Trump, which should mobilize the party's voters.

3- Racial and gender equality.

The main difference between these strategies is that the Republican's is based on new elements, while the Democrat's strategy is a partial revamp of those from 2018 and 2020.

The situation could change a lot in the next ten and a half months before the elections. The White House has redirected its strategy, sidelining part of its economic agenda that is still pending, focused on the Build Back Better Bill. Instead they are promoting two draft laws that, if approved, would combat the voting restriction imposed by the Republicans: the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

The future of these initiatives is uncertain even if approved, given that Biden would need the support of the Democratic senators Joe Manchin and Kyrsten Sinema. Both of these senators blocked the Build Back Better Bill, even though the White House was willing to amend and reduce it drastically.

The tension between Manchin and the White House over legislative initiatives reflects the division between the left wing and center of the Democratic Party. To date, these difficulties have not hampered the Administration's actions, but they could surface in the months leading up to the elections, or after them, in the event that the party suffers a major defeat.

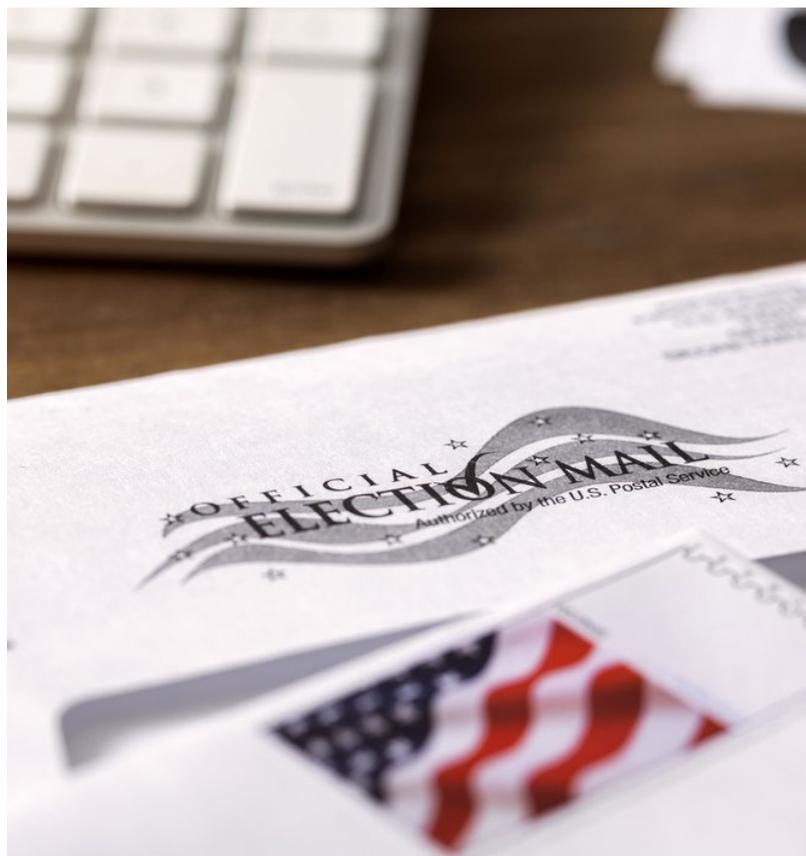
Another key political maneuver following the elections could be the replacement of Nancy Pelosi – the current Speaker of the House of Representatives – who has headed up the Democratic Party in this legislative chamber since 2003. The left wing of the Democrats reached an agreement in 2018 with Pelosi that she would step down following the 2022 elections. The search for a new House leader may create a power vacuum and lead to new internal struggles.

The Republican Party is not tension-free either, although in their case these tensions revolve

around one person - Donald Trump. Given Trump's tremendous popularity at a grass-roots level, the party needs him to mobilize voters. Meanwhile, Trump doesn't have the power individually to break ranks with the party, and lacks the necessary weight to take full control of it.

This has already translated into Primaries in which the former President has given his support to candidates that support him directly. He has backed candidates who will try to defeat Republican congressmen and governors that refused to back his election fraud argument. The problem for the Republicans is that Trump has massive influence with his supporters, even though he is rejected by other parts of society. Therefore, his candidates may win the Primaries but lose the general election.

“The elections would seem to favor the Republicans”



LEGITIMACY AND POLARIZATION CRISIS

In 2021, US politics were marked by two unprecedented events in the country's history: Trump's refusal to acknowledge Biden's victory in the 2020 elections and the attack on the Capitol on January 6. It has been a full year, but the consequences of this crisis continue to affect many other issues in the country.

Biden arrived in the White House promising to unify the country but, aside from gaining the support of 13 Republican senators for his Infrastructure Act, he seems to have completely failed in this goal. In a survey carried out on January 4 and 5, 2021 – on the eve of the attack on the Capitol – only 58% of US citizens considered him to be a legitimate President. 27% classified him as illegitimate while 11% were unable to adopt a position¹⁰.

Another survey, carried out from January 1 to 3, 2022, showed that the percentage of US citizens that consider Biden legitimately elected experienced a slight fall with little statistical importance, now standing at 55%. Those that maintain he is illegitimate account for 26 % while those who are unsure account for 17%¹¹.

This situation creates problems at all levels, and some of the difficulties that Biden has encountered originate in the fight against COVID-19. Republican governors like Greg Abbot (Texas), Kristi Noem (South Dakota), Asa Hutchinson (Arkansas) and, above all, Ron DeSantis (Florida) have made resistance to the vaccination rollout and social distancing measures a political hallmark which has enhanced their visibility nationwide. Some media commentators close to the Republican Party and Donald Trump, like Fox News, refer to these territories as "free states" in a new sign of the country's division.

In New England – a Democratic region – more than 75% of the population is vaccinated, while

in the Republican states of Wisconsin, Alabama, and Mississippi, less than 50% of people are vaccinated. Between May and November, the death rate in the counties that Trump won in the 2020 elections was 173% higher than in those Biden won. In some cases, the difference amounted to 600%¹².

This whole controversy revolved around one person – Donald Trump. The former President still does not accept Joe Biden's victory and holds tremendous sway over the Republican Party. He maintains influence through his statements and Political Action Committees (Super PACs) that allow him to channel funds obtained from private donors to his preferred candidates. Last summer alone, Trump's Super PACs collected more than 100 million dollars¹³. At present, it seems likely that Trump will run in the 2024 elections, given his popularity among Republican supporters (between 58%¹⁴ and 78%¹⁵ of Republican voters want him to stand for President again.)

“At present, it seems likely that Trump will run in the 2024 elections, given his popularity among Republican supporters”

Trump's influence over Republicans could be clearly seen in the investigation of the attack on the Capitol only being able to be carried out in the House of Representatives. The Republicans blocked the formation of a committee to this end in the Senate. In turn, only 32% of Republicans supported the creation of this committee, while it was supported by 88% of Democrats.

¹⁰ [Axios | SurveyMonkey poll: voting certification](#)

¹¹ [Axios | Momentive Poll: January 6th revisited \(surveymonkey.com\)](#)

¹² <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2021/12/05/1059828993/data-vaccine-misinformation-trump-counties-covid-death-rate>

¹³ https://news.yahoo.com/midterms-2024-loom-trump-political-125336076.html?soc_src=community&soc_trk=tw

¹⁴ <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/a-majority-of-republican-voters-actively-want-trump-to-run-for-president-again/>

¹⁵ <https://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/577453-nearly-80-percent-of-republicans-want-to-see-trump-run-in-2024-poll>

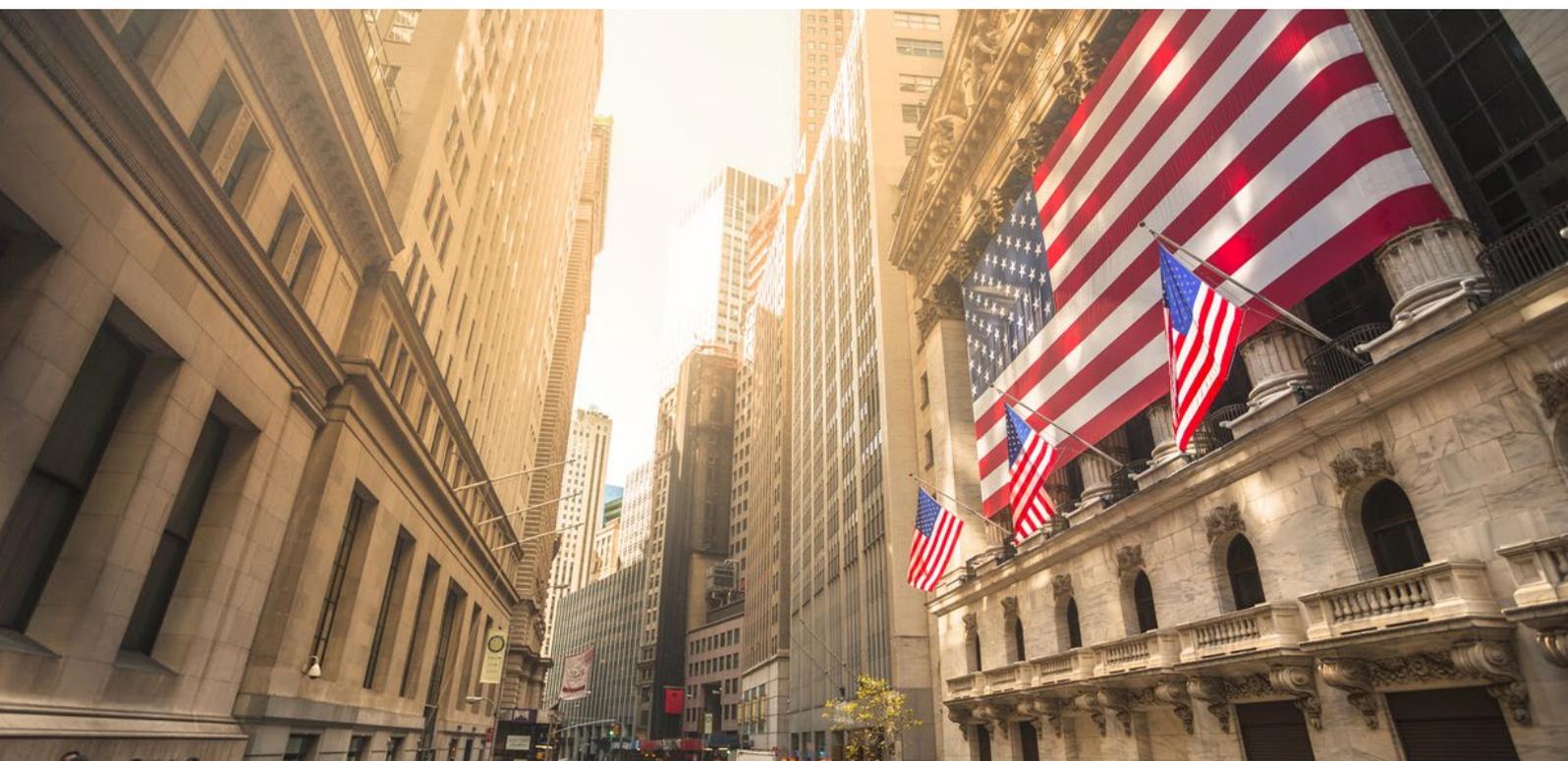
The situation is even more uncertain due to persistent rumors that Joe Biden will not opt for a second term of office due to his advanced age. The natural candidate to succeed him – the Vice-President, Kamala Harris – has a very low level of popularity, bad relations with the House of Representatives, little influence in the Cabinet, and has lost a good part of her team in recent months. This will all make her nomination difficult, if Biden decides not to run. Another potential candidate to succeed Biden would be the Secretary of Transportation, Pete Buttigieg.

Given that the US political and institutional system is designed to forge consensus among different legislators and State powers, the division of the political body into ideological blocs makes this process ineffective. Legislative paralysis has been practically constant since the Presidency of George W. Bush. Although Biden has had some success in the House of Representatives, he has very little room to maneuver. The President will try and change the Senate rules, limiting the so-called “filibuster” to ensure the approval of two laws to combat restrictions on voting rights established by the Republicans in several states they control. However, the success of Biden's initiative is by no means guaranteed. And should it be pushed through, it is likely that it will only exacerbate the division of a country in

which even the most fundamental political right in a democracy – the right to vote – is subject to controversy.

Surveys reveal that the White House has a serious communication problem. Biden has managed to approve an Infrastructure Act where both Barack Obama and Donald Trump failed and has done nothing to exacerbate the division of the country in his first 12 months as President. However, he has adopted a distant style since arriving in the White House, with few public press briefings. That combined with the difficulties in combating COVID-19, and the fact that a good part of his measures are long term with few immediate effects have generated the public perception that Joe Biden is not doing anything. Many Republicans view him as a figurehead without real power who is manipulated by his advisors.

Biden's Administration has shown little ability to adapt to shifting political, economic, and social power in the United States and around the world. This was demonstrated in his slow response to the Afghanistan crisis, his inability to capitalize on the success of the Infrastructure Plan, and his failure to minimize the negative impact of the failure of the Build Back Better Plan.



His communication strategy of maintaining the course in a disciplined fashion, without becoming distracted, proved effective in the first few months of Biden's term of office. It stood in contrast to the mass media and social media presence of Donald Trump. However, he hasn't set goals that address the new problems have arisen, leading to the sense that the President does not have an agenda. Biden's team has not conveyed the idea to voters that the President has achieved major successes in areas such as his Aid Plan against COVID-19 and his Infrastructure Plan. When crises have arisen, such as in Afghanistan, he has not found a way to convey readiness and competence.

Public opinion in the United States has become deeply pessimistic about the future. 53% of the population consider it likely that the division will continue into the future, while 62% fear a return of political violence in the presidential elections in 2024¹⁶.

Despite this, there have been some positive developments in the last few months. The most noteworthy has been the disappearance of the wave of racial unrest and protests that ravaged the country in the summer of 2020. Although racial tensions are far from gone for good, tensions between the different groups seems to have settled down.

“Public opinion in the United States has become deeply pessimistic about the future”

THE DEBATE IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA

The impact of social media on politics, which date back to the 2016 elections that Donald Trump won, became more intense in 2021. The year started with an exceptional decision by Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and the other platform leaders banning the President, Donald Trump, along with a great many of his followers, particularly those that adhere to the conspiracy theory known as QAnon. Other less important forums on which violent, racist, or antisemitic messages were frequently exchanged, like 8chan and 4chan, dissolved once they were left without companies that would allow them to use their servers. Apple and Alphabet also removed some of these platforms from the online stores where apps are downloaded iOS and Android respectively.

These decisions did not silence the debate on the political role of these systems and the social responsibility of the companies that run them. In fact, the opposite occurred. For the conservatives, this was viewed as an exercise in censorship. For the left wing, this measure was insufficient and did not offset the policy of companies to allow violent political and conspiracy messages. This debate was fueled by the conspiracy theories about COVID-19. In total, two senators and three congressmen were temporarily thrown out of Twitter (on seven separate occasions,) YouTube (two,) and Facebook (one) for breaching the platforms' terms of use. All were Republicans.

In September and October, the debate further intensified with the disclosure of the internal practices of Facebook made public by Frances Haugen, a former employee of this company. Of all the large technology companies, Meta (formerly Facebook) is the only one that was devalued on the stock market. This has been attributed by many to the concerns of investors regarding the political consequences of their activities, which could lead to sanctions, and regarding the vulnerability of the company to new measures to reinforce privacy introduced by Apple. The name change, announced in

¹⁶ <https://www.umass.edu/news/article/new-umass-amherst-poll-election-reforms-shows-continued-national-support-expanding>



November, appears to be an attempt to improve the public image of the company, which also announced that it would redirect its activity toward the metaverse.

In practice, however, the conclusions were more moderate. Some of Trump's followers have migrated toward the social media sites Gab, Parler and, to a lesser extent, Rumble. The former President has not made any attempt to move to those platforms but has found a way to maintain his presence in the political debate simply through his web page, like-minded media outlets, and speeches.

It is noteworthy how Trump has avoided being thrown out of these social media platforms and has offset his refusal to grant interviews to large media outlets – with the exception of Fox News. He instead utilizes a growing cluster of new online media outlets that serve to broadcast his ideas, such as OANN, Newsmax, The Blaze, and Infowars, along with podcasts, including that of his former campaign manager, Steve Bannon, and Ben Shapiro's podcast. The existence of this online media network has gone relatively unnoticed, despite seemingly holding a considerable influence over US politics.

It is impossible to know what would have happened if Trump had continued on social media, but some believe that his removal has favored him by limiting his public exposure and only allowing his supporters to continue following

him. This shields him from the considerable rejection that Trump faces among a part of the population. In any case, the former President has announced the launch of his own social media platform, Truth, for 2022.

For the time being, it does not seem like the debate will shift in 2022. Some of these companies are under investigation for potentially holding a dominant position, but this is a long process that involves the judiciary system. There is the possibility of repealing or amending Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act 1996, which would mean that Internet companies are not responsible for content posted there by users. This option has been raised by politicians from both parties, but for the time being does not have sufficient support to be pushed through in the House of Representatives.

Meanwhile, Microsoft and other large technology companies, like Uber, whose lines of activity do not include social media or messaging services, have distanced themselves from those that have platforms on which users can post content like Meta, Alphabet and Twitter. This has translated into the closure of the Internet Association – the main sector lobbyist – which was set up in Washington in 2012, with a view to becoming the voice of 'big tech' communicating with the federal government.

CONCLUSIONS

In his first year as President, Joe Biden has stood on the democratic left in terms of social protection and energy transformation, and more in the center on infrastructure. He has found a way to control the party and avoid a conflict between its left and right wings, and has managed to harness his slim legislative majority to push through part of his economic agenda. Biden faces 2022 with a low level of popularity and a serious communication problem. He is in danger of losing his majority in the House of Representatives and perhaps in the Senate in November's elections.

The political and institutional crises are deadlocked and seems doomed to continue to be long term. Although racial tensions have practically disappeared, the possibility of more political violence cannot be ruled out. US citizens fear for the future of their democracy on both sides, with Democrats looking at voter suppression and the Republican belief that Biden is an illegitimate President. Donald Trump continues to have a leading public presence and may run in the 2024 presidential elections.

Like the rest of the world, the United States remains immersed in the COVID-19 crisis. Specific political elements have exacerbated it in ways other nations with a similar socio-economic level haven't faced, such as the low vaccination rate and a significant rejection of the mandatory use of face masks, vaccines, and a reduction in public activities.

On the international front, Biden has re-established sound ties with the traditional allies of the United States. He has also forged new alliances and reinforced existing ones to contain China. Relations have continued to deteriorate with both China and Russia.



AUTHORS



Juan Felipe Muñoz. CEO U.S. In 2012, Muñoz became the youngest member of the cabinet of Nobel Laureate Juan Manuel Santos of Colombia, serving as the president's senior communications adviser. He designed the digital strategy for the president, his cabinet and the FARC peace process while advising the government how to position the country internationally to attract foreign investment as the 50-year-old civil conflict drew to a close. Prior to his work with Santos, Muñoz advised the Mexican government and the Mexican Ministry of Tourism on the country's global brand, helping it overcome challenges such as the H1HN outbreak and the other tourism issues. Munoz started his career at Santander Bank, and later worked with Violy McCausland investment banking firm in New York, Violy, Byorum and Partners, before pivoting to branding and communications. Muñoz received an MBA from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University and a Master in International Affairs from Columbia University in New York. He studied quantitative economics at Universidad de los Andes and at The London School of Economics. He lives with his wife and children in Greenwich, CT. If not walking his energetic dog, a Vizsla, he might be playing doubles squash.

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