Banxico minutes - Cuts will continue despite external uncertainty

- Banxico released the minutes of the decision held on March 27th. The vote was unanimous for a 50bps cut to 9.00%, in line with our expectations
- In our view, the document endorsed the more dovish tone of the <u>statement</u>, suggesting that a same-magnitude cut will be made at the next meeting
- Among the strongest arguments to support this scenario are: (1) The need to continue
 the calibration process of the monetary stance, given the level of the ex-ante real rate;
 and (2) greater weakness in economic activity in the context of high global uncertainty
- Members recognized the new trade order, stating that the magnitude of the impact still must be determined. We believe the majority considers this could induce lower inflation due to its effect on aggregate demand and the degree of economic slack
- We also highlight that our <u>natural processing language model</u> identified that Governor Victoria Rodríguez showed a relevant change in her narrative, adopting a less dovish tone and different semantics
- Finally, we reiterate our call of a 50bps cut in the next meeting on May 15th, with the reference rate at 7.75% by year-end 2025

Banxico will keep lowering the reference rate, with the 'forward guidance' suggesting another 50bps cut at the upcoming meeting. In our view, the document's tone emphasized the dovish bias of the last statement. This is also reflected in the forward guidance, which suggests a high probability of a consecutive 50bps cut in May. We think all members' remarks swirled around three main ideas: (1) The need to continue calibrating the reference rate given the current level of the ex-ante real rate; (2) the deterioration of economic activity in the context of high global uncertainty; and (3) the potential implications of tariffs by the US. In detail, most members acknowledged the progress in the disinflationary process, placing them at a stage in which they seek to bring inflation closer to historical averages. Some reiterated that the current restrictive level of the ex-ante real rate compared to the level of inflation allows for additional adjustments. As in the previous decision, economic slack was emphasized, indicating that it is a clear incentive to make additional cuts. Finally, members delved into some risks arising from the new trade order. These include the exchange rate, input prices, and the performance of domestic demand. However, and at least for now, the absence of clarity on this matter prevents them from determining a net effect or making specific decisions in this regard. All in all, we reaffirm our estimate of a 50bps cut on May 15 to 8.50%. Finally, we believe there will be additional cuts that will bring the rate to 7.75% by year-end.

Lower inflationary pressures and economic weakness are key for the rate cut cycle. On the former, we believe Governor Victoria Rodríguez stated that the balance of risks has improved, so we must not "...lose sight of the remarkable progress in the disinflationary process...". Another relevant point she emphasized is that the real ex-ante rate is visibly above neutrality and high, so she assured that "...there is sufficient room to continue with the calibration process...". In this regard, Galia Borja expressed that "...upward risks to inflation are contained...". Moreover, the majority acknowledged relative stability in core inflation. Regarding growth, all members referred to its weakness. Even Gabriel Cuadra considers it likely that "...the annual variation of GDP in 2025 could be in the lower part of the range published in the last Quarterly Report ...", and Omar Mejía recognized "...a further weakening of consumption due to the cooling of the labor market...".

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Alejandro Padilla Santana Chief Economist and Head of Research alejandro.padilla@banorte.com



Juan Carlos Alderete Macal, CFA Executive Director of Economic Research and Market Strategy juan.alderete.macal@banorte.com



Francisco José Flores Serrano Director of Economic Research, Mexico francisco.flores.serrano@banorte.com



Yazmín Selene Pérez Enríquez Senior Economist, Mexico yazmin.perez.enriquez@banorte.com



Cintia Gisela Nava Roa Senior Economist, Mexico cintia.nava.roa@banorte.com

Banxico's decisions in 2025

Dalixico 3 accisions in 2023			
Date	Decision		
February 6th	-50bps		
March 27 th	-50bps		
May 15 th			
June 26 th			
August 7 th			
September 25 th			
November 6 th			
December 18th			

Source: Banxico



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On the other hand, Jonathan Heath supported the rate cut, assessing that "...the anticipated magnitude of the economic weakness is such that it should really contribute to contain inflationary pressures...". Nevertheless, we believe he maintains greater caution, as for him "...the economic slowdown in itself will not guarantee that the target will be met in the forecast horizon...". Furthermore, he added that, moving forward, "...if current inflation persists [...] it will not be possible to continue reducing the monetary policy stance as anticipated by markets...". This refers to the notion that the interest rate spread between Mexico and the US cannot fall below the historical average in a context of uncertainty.

Banorte's assessment on Board member's comments in the March 27th minutes

Bias	Member	Order in the minutes	Relevant comments
Hawkish Dovish	Jonathan Heath	4	"considered that the space for monetary policy easing could be smaller in the future" "the forward guidance should emphasize that new information will be considered without haste and with caution" "the high uncertainty coming from abroad calls for acting with prudence"
	Gabriel Cuadra	3	"it is possible that a cut of the same magnitude could be implemented at the next meeting" "an eventual adjustment in relative prices should take place without contaminating the price formation process, and that, to achieve that, the monetary policy stance would have to remain restrictive" "the imposition of tariffs, as a negative demand-side shock, would result in a smaller pass-through [exchange rate] compared to other types of shocks"
	Galia Borja	2	"temporary inflationary pressures could be observed, although the greater slack would cause lower pressures going forward" "upward risks to inflation are contained and that inflation determinants are consistent with the convergence to the target in the forecast horizon" "the reference rate cut of 50 basis points is consistent with both the available information and the effects potentially associated with changes in trade policies"
	Victoria Rodríguez	1	"looking ahead, adjustments of a similar magnitude to the current decision could be made, while maintaining a restrictive monetary policy stance" "the bias of the balance of risks for the expected trajectory of inflation has improved" "highlighted the need for a comprehensive analysis of the tariff measures implemented or those that may materialize, including possible exceptions or preferential treatment differentiated by region"
	Omar Mejía	5	"greater-than-expected easing of slack conditions () the pass-through of an additional depreciation to prices and other cost increases could be limited" "looking ahead adjustments of the same magnitude in the reference rate could continue" "the US tariff policy () the scope and timing of the proposed changes are unknown and, in the event of more adverse scenarios materializing, although these would have effects on both sides of the balance, the downward bias for inflation would prevail"

Source: Banorte with information from Banxico

All members discussed the potential consequences of the new protectionist agenda of the

US. We believe that these comments gained more relevance among Board members. In this respect, each member's argument devoted some space on the new scenario for international trade. The issues were tackled with the reservation that there is very high uncertainty and low visibility about the result of US policy on tariffs. We identified three broad conclusions: (1) That high uncertainty has already had a negative effect on the economy; (2) that if tariffs are persistent, they will translate into lower external demand and an additional depreciation of the Mexican peso; and (3) that the effect could be stronger and will depend on the durability and level of the tariffs. In our view, a highlight was that the majority sees risks to the downside for inflation due to lower economic activity. Meanwhile, the pass-through effect would be relatively contained. Lastly, on tariffs, it is important to stress that Board members stated that their decisions will be prudent and based only on the measures effectively implemented.



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Directory Research and Strategy



Raquel Vázquez Godinez Assistant raquel.vazquez@banorte.com (55) 1670 – 2967



María Fernanda Vargas Santoyo Analyst maria.vargas.santoyo@banorte.com (55) 1103 - 4000 x 2586





Juan Carlos Alderete Macal, CFA
Executive Director of Economic Research and
Market Strategy
juan.alderete.macal@banorte.com
(55) 1103 - 4046



Yazmín Selene Pérez Enríquez Senior Economist, Mexico yazmin.perez.enriquez@banorte.com (55) 5268 - 1694





Santiago Leal Singer Director of Market Strategy santiago.leal@banorte.com (55) 1670 - 1751



Carlos Hernández García Senior Strategist, Equity carlos.hernandez.garcia@banorte.com (55) 1670 – 2250



Marcos Saúl García Hernandez Analyst, Fixed Income, FX and Commodities marcos.garcia.hernandez@banorte.com (55) 1670 - 2296



Juan Carlos Mercado Garduño Strategist, Equity juan.mercado.garduno@banorte.com (55) 1103 - 4000 x 1746

Alejandro Cervantes Llamas

Quantitative Analysis



Executive Director of Quantitative Analysis alejandro.cervantes@banorte.com (55) 1670 - 2972



Daniel Sebastián Sosa Aguilar Senior Analyst, Quantitative Analysis daniel.sosa@banorte.com (55) 1103 - 4000 x 2124



Alejandro Padilla Santana Chief Economist and Head of Research alejandro.padilla@banorte.com (55) 1103 - 4043



Itzel Martínez Rojas Analyst itzel.martinez.rojas@banorte.com (55) 1670 - 2251



Lourdes Calvo Fernández Analyst (Edition) lourdes.calvo@banorte.com (55) 1103 - 4000 x 2611



Francisco José Flores Serrano Director of Economic Research, Mexico francisco.flores.serrano@banorte.com (55) 1670 - 2957



Cintia Gisela Nava Roa Senior Economist, Mexico cintia.nava.roa@banorte.com (55) 1105 - 1438



Marissa Garza Ostos Director of Equity Strategy marissa.garza@banorte.com (55) 1670 - 1719



Hugo Armando Gómez Solís Senior Strategist, Equity hugoa.gomez@banorte.com (55) 1670 - 2247



Gerardo Daniel Valle Trujillo Senior Analyst, Corporate Debt gerardo.valle.trujillo@banorte.com (55) 1670 - 2248



Ana Gabriela Martínez Mosqueda Strategist, Equity ana.martinez.mosqueda@banorte.com (55) 5261 - 4882



José Luis García Casales Director of Quantitative Analysis jose.garcia.casales@banorte.com (55) 8510 - 4608



Jazmin Daniela Cuautencos Mora Strategist, Quantitative Analysis jazmin.cuautencos.mora@banorte.com (55) 1670 - 2904



Katia Celina Goya Ostos Director of Economic Research, Global katia.goya@banorte.com (55) 1670 - 1821



Luis Leopoldo López Salinas Economist, Global luis.lopez.salinas@banorte.com (55) 1103 - 4000 x 2707



Víctor Hugo Cortes Castro Senior Strategist, Technical victorh.cortes@banorte.com (55) 1670 - 1800



Leslie Thalía Orozco Vélez Senior Strategist, Fixed Income and FX leslie.orozco.velez@banorte.com (55) 5268 - 1698



Ana Laura Zaragoza Félix Strategist, Corporate Debt ana.zaragoza.felix@banorte.com (55) 1103 - 4000



Paula Lozoya Valadez Analyst, Equity paula.lozoya.valadez@banorte.com (55) 1103 - 4000 x 2060



José De Jesús Ramírez Martínez Senior Analyst, Quantitative Analysis jose.ramirez.martinez@banorte.com (55) 1103 - 4000



Andrea Muñoz Sánchez Strategist, Quantitative Analysis andrea.muñoz.sanchez@banorte.com (55) 1105 - 1430

