

COVID-19 PULSE

Start off with a weekly recap of the main Public Affairs developments across **LATAM**.



STATS: 798,486 cases of COVID-19, 21,018 deceased, as confirmed by the Health Ministry.



[EXECUTIVE POWER] This week, Chief of Staff Santiago Cafiero will present at the Congress the third report of the Presidential Period of Alberto Fernández, where he will answer the questions of the Legislators, that will be mainly focused on the economy. ([Source](#))



[LOCAL MEASURES] The City of Buenos Aires, is currently working on the next phase of the mandatory social isolation, which will begin on October 11th, for which they have requested the National Executive to authorize the classes resumption. ([Source](#))



[DIGITAL ECONOMY] The Secretary of Commerce updated the regulation on e-commerce, and established that from now on, companies who sell products or services online, should include a “regret button”, to allow the consumer to cancel the purchase. ([Source](#))



[COVID RELATED] The National Executive launched the Plan DetectAr Federal, by which the COVID-19 tests daily performed in the country may be tripled. ([Source](#))



[FOOD AND BEVERAGE] Under the framework of the Plan Argentina contra el Hambre, the specialized commissions led by the Minister of Social Development, met to work on policies for the access to alimentary goods of the most vulnerable sectors of the population. ([Source](#))



[HEALTH] By Decree, the National Government extended for another three months, the money granted to health workers, in addition to their salaries. ([Source](#))



[ECONOMY] The Minister of Economy announced several measures destined specifically to the promotion of the exporter sector, in order to increase the dollars entry to the country. These include a modification on the exchange market’s regime, and the reduction of export duties for industrial and agricultural products. ([Source](#))



[TECHNOLOGY] The Minister of Science & Technology Roberto Salvarezza expressed that, if the next results of the vaccine, which is being developed in Argentina, are positive, the vaccine would begin to be produced at the end of the year, and distributed during the first semester of 2021. ([Source](#))



[MANUFACTURING] According to the Monthly Estimator of Economic Activity, recently published by INDEC, in July, the economy had its third consecutive raise –this time, it was of 1.1%-. Nevertheless, the economic activity registered a 13.2% interannual fall ([Source](#))



STATS: 4.918.022 cases of COVID-19, 146.417 deceased, as confirmed by the Health Ministry



[EXECUTIVE POWER] The Government and Ministry of Economy presented Renda Cidadã, a new social program to replace “Bolsa Família”, which President Bolsonaro intends to implement by the end of 2020. The financial market and press criticized the proposal for violating the spending ceiling, postponing debt payments, and use education resources. [\(Source\)](#)



[LOCAL MEASURES] This week, the State of São Paulo will release the return a presencial schools' classes. Estimates are that 80% of private institutions reopen and 40% of families do not support the measure. [\(Source\)](#)



[DIGITAL ECONOMY] The Covid pandemic accelerates the use of big data and telemedicine. Digital transformation expands to all supplier chain. [\(Source\)](#)

[COVID RELATED] The State of SP exceeds 1 million cases of Covid-19; the daily average of deaths is in a downward trend with a negative variation of 20% on this weekend [\(Source\)](#)



[FOOD AND BEVERAGE] The Brazilian slaughterhouses start automation projects due to food contamination by Covid-19. Some countries stopped to import Brazilian meat. [\(Source\)](#)



[HEALTH] Despite signs of a drop in contamination in Brazil according to the Health Ministry report, Fiocruz affirms the cases of severe acute respiratory is increasing in 7 Brazilian capitals [\(Source\)](#)

[ECONOMY] The Brazilian stock market retracted 4.80% in September, the fall is due to covid pandemic, political instabilities, fiscal crisis, new lockdowns in Europe, uncertainties in Brexit, and the American elections. The financial market expected a recovery month in October with definitions of fiscal adjustments, better economic numbers, and companies results. [\(Source\)](#)



[TECHNOLOGY] The Covid pandemic accentuated fake news and the online political campaigns to 2020s elections. The Superior Electoral Court (TSE) decided to create the unprecedented Digital Coordination to Combat Disinformation. [\(Source\)](#)



[MANUFACTURING] The Brazilian manufacturing activity increased and hit a record in September. IHS Markit reported that Brazil's industry PMI reached 64.9 in September, the highest level since the beginning of the historical series since February 2006. In August, PMI had scored 64.7 [\(Source\)](#)



STATS: 136,868 cases of COVID-19, 8,100 deceased, as confirmed by the Health Ministry.



[EXECUTIVE POWER] The National Government launched a housing plan, through the signing of an agreement with the Banco de Desarrollo Productivo (BDP) and financial entities, to grant social housing loans up to almost 10,000 USD. ([Source](#))



[LOCAL MEASURES] Officials of the municipal mayor of Sucre are considering the possibility of lowering their salaries. ([Source](#))



[DIGITAL ECONOMY] The business sector committed to investing 12 million Bolivians in the coming years, the resources of which will be used to digitize the institution's service and facilitate business procedures. ([Source](#))



[COVID RELATED] Chuquisaca Scientific Committee evaluates vaccine offer for COVID-19. It is a vaccine that is in the third phase of clinical trials and was tested in other countries. ([Source](#))



[FOOD AND BEVERAGE] Senasag seizes and destroys 1,500 kilos of avocados for not having an import permit. The food came from Brazil and it did not have the respective documentation to be brought into the country and marketed. ([Source](#))



[HEALTH] The Government urged the population that participates in the acts towards the general elections to take care of their health and not lower their guard against COVID-19. ([Source](#))



[ECONOMY] Electricity companies proposed a trust to avoid the threat of a financial “blackout.” The companies in the sector request to overcome illiquidity and guarantee service. Distributors cannot pay transporters and generators, and they do not have the necessary resources to operate normally. ([Source](#))



[TECHNOLOGY] The Farmacorp chain of pharmacies joined forces to counteract the advance of the Sars-CoV-2 virus and minimizing the chances of an outbreak through epidemiological surveillance with the application of tests of diagnosis of COVID-19. ([Source](#))



[MANUFACTURING] Jewelers reveal that rising gold prices plummeted demand and sales. ([Source](#))



STATS: 470,179 cases of COVID-19, 12,979 deceased, as confirmed by the Health Ministry.



[EXECUTIVE POWER] Sebastián Piñera reported the main objectives of the budget plan for 2021, mainly focused on reactivating employment and the economic recovery of the country caused by the COVID-19 pandemic ([Source](#)).



[LOCAL MEASURES] For the first time since March, the Metropolitan Region is completely "released" from quarantines. Currently, the municipalities are in phase 2 and phase 3 of the "Step by Step Plan" ([Source](#)).



[DIGITAL ECONOMY] According to a survey by the Center for Retail Studies, 49% of those surveyed said they "agree" or "totally agree" with continuing to buy through online sales channels. ([Source](#)).



[COVID RELATED] Institute of Public Health authorized the first clinical trials of COVID-19 vaccines will begin in two weeks. About 2,000 people over 18 years of age could receive the dose from Janssen Laboratory ([Source](#)).



[FOOD AND BEVERAGE] The advancement of cities to the "Step by step Plan" has generated hope in the gastronomic sector, which for months had to close due to the pandemic. The opening has been appreciated by the clients ([Source](#)).



[HEALTH] Rate of critical patients with COVID-19 has fallen by half compared to the beginning of the pandemic, last March. One of the causes would be that the doctors have learned to better manage the coronavirus symptoms ([Source](#)).



[ECONOMY] The labor market achieved its first rebound since the start of the pandemic. According to the INE, jobs increased 119 thousand, while unemployment fell from 13.1% to 12.9% in the June-August quarter ([Source](#)).



[TECHNOLOGY] A study by the Foundation for the Promotion and Development of Women revealed that one in five women living in poverty cannot access the Internet. Among the reasons are the high cost of the service (42%) and not knowing how to navigate on the web (26.9%) ([Source](#)).



[MANUFACTURING] According to the INE, local manufacturing production fell 8.2% in August, a more negative figure than expected by specialists (-5.2%) and the one registered last month (-7.2%) ([Source](#)).



STATS: 855,052 cases of COVID-19, 26,712 deceased, as confirmed by the Health Ministry.



[EXECUTIVE POWER] Next Tuesday, October 6, the House of Representatives will hold a vote of no-confidence against Defense Minister Carlos Holmes Trujillo. Another debate about a vote of no-confidence in the Senate will take place on October 13. ([Source](#))



[LOCAL MEASURES] The governor of Antioquia, Luis Fernando Suárez, assured that they do not doubt that in the department there will be a re-outbreak of COVID-19 that, according to epidemiologists, could occur in October. ([Source](#))



[DIGITAL ECONOMY] Redeban data shows an increase of 37% in the number of activities in physical establishments and 12% in digital commerce, compared to the average of the months of isolation. ([Source](#))



[COVID RELATED] The National Government issued Decree 1297 of 2020 that aims to extend the validity of Decree 1168 of August 25, 2020. It means that the selective isolation and the closure of land, sea, and river borders will continue until next November 1. ([Source](#))



[FOOD AND BEVERAGE] According to the president of Acodres Henrique Gómez París, 48.100 restaurants will not reopen their doors. Only 19.500 were able to reactivate, while another 22.000 are waiting to be able to do so. ([Source](#))



[HEALTH] According to Health Minister Fernando Ruiz, if there is an outbreak in the country, the possibility of a new quarantine is not ruled out. It could occur, and it will depend a lot on the intensity of the outbreak. ([Source](#))



[ECONOMY] The World Bank approved on Wednesday a US \$ 500 million loan to Colombia to guarantee continuity and access to infrastructure services for the most vulnerable groups. ([Source](#))



[TECHNOLOGY] ICT Minister Karen Abudinen Abuchaibe launched the Credit Line 'ICT Reactivation', which is aimed at entrepreneurs in the technology sector. The line of credit was possible thanks to the union of the Trade Ministry, Bancoldex, INNpursa, the National Guarantee Fund, and the ICT Ministry. ([Source](#))



[MANUFACTURING] The National Administrative Department of Statistics (Dane) announced that Colombian exports between January and August 2020 were 20,292 million USD, which means that there was a reduction of 24.3% compared to the same period in 2019 when it closed in 26,821 million USD. ([Source](#))



STATS: 141,339 cases of COVID-19, 11,681 deceased, as confirmed by the Health Ministry.



[EXECUTIVE POWER] President Lenin Moreno created the Public Company of Public Communications Media of Ecuador through executive decree 1160. The new company will assume the assets, liabilities, and duties related to public broadcasting and public television services. ([Source](#))



[LOCAL MEASURES] Groups of students, social organizations, the unemployed, and informal vendors marched in Quito on Thursday against the policies of the Government and the Municipality during the "new normal". ([Source](#))



[DIGITAL ECONOMY] The Ministry of Telecommunications (Mintel) gave a workshop to publicize the regulatory project for the protection of telecommunications users with the sector's actors. The workshop included: the defense of consumer rights; treatment and circulation of personal data; and the confidentiality, intimacy, integrity, and inviolability of communications. ([Source](#))



[COVID RELATED] On October 1, Ecuador registered 114,215 recovered patients by COVID-19. 83.34% of the infected defeated the virus. The country ranks sixth in South America. ([Source](#))



[FOOD AND BEVERAGE] During the pandemic, the banana sector has been the main agricultural export product and it is almost the main source of foreign currency above the oil. ([Source](#))



[HEALTH] In Ecuador, according to Luis Guillermo Jiménez, scientific director of La Santé, 70 percent of the drugs used to treat COVID-19 were generic. ([Source](#))



[ECONOMY] President Lenin Moreno confirmed the approval of the USD 6.5 billion 10-year loan by the IMF. Mainly, the resources will be used to pay the salaries of public servants, pay small and medium State providers, among others. ([Source](#))



[TECHNOLOGY] The Private Technical University of Loja (UTPL) has the Science and Technology Park, an ecosystem that seeks to promote innovation and creativity of students and teachers. The director, Juan Pablo Suarez, mentioned that the objectives are the promotion of collaboration between the university, the State, and private companies. ([Source](#))



[MANUFACTURING] According to data from the Central Bank of Ecuador (BCE), the manufacturing sector decreased by 9.8% in the second quarter of 2020. However, some industries had a positive performance: Shrimp processing and conservation; manufacture of products from the milling industry, bakery, and noodles; elaboration of other food products and manufacturing industries. ([Source](#))



STATS: 761,665 cases of COVID-19, 79,088 deceased, as confirmed by the Health Ministry.



[EXECUTIVE POWER] President Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) said that the Guatemalan and Honduran authorities successfully "persuaded" migrants from the last caravan to return to Honduras, as there are no safe sanitary conditions in Mexico. ([Source](#))



[LOCAL MEASURES] The integration of the first 100% electric bus to the Bus Rapid-Transit System, *Metrobús*, in Mexico City was announced to improve mobility and reduce polluting emissions. ([Source](#))



[DIGITAL ECONOMY] Francisco Cervantes, president of the Confederation of Industrial Chambers (Concamin) shared the urgent need for Mexico to transition to a digital industry and use technological platforms to boost connectivity. ([Source](#))



[COVID RELATED] President AMLO and private sector representatives presented the National Infrastructure Plan. It was stressed that private investment will help overcome the crisis caused by coronavirus, as it represents 87% of total investment in Mexico. ([Source](#))



[FOOD AND BEVERAGE] German González, vice president of the National Chamber of the Restaurant Industry (Canirac) shared that up to 120,000 business will have to close due to the pandemic and its economic impacts if lockdowns continue. ([Source](#))



[HEALTH] The Ministry of Health has not ruled out the possibility of shutting down economic and social activities if a second wave of high contagion is registered in the country. ([Source](#))



[ECONOMY] According to the monthly Survey on the Expectations of Private Sector Economics Specialists of the Bank of Mexico (Banxico), Mexican GDP will have a 9.8% contraction this year caused by the COVID-19 crisis. ([Source](#))



[TECHNOLOGY] The Committee for Budget and Public Spending in the Lower Chamber of Congress has agreed to revise, adjust and disappear 109 trust funds that mainly promote scientific and technological research in the country. ([Source](#))



[MANUFACTURING] The National Council of Manufacture and Export Industry (Index) has petitioned the authorities to not consider COVID-19 as a work risk situation because this would increase insurance costs and fees. ([Source](#))



STATS: 44, 182 cases of COVID-19, 947 deceased, as confirmed by the Health Ministry.



[EXECUTIVE POWER] Under the framework of the gradual flexibilization of the preventive isolation, the National Executive excepted new activities from the sanitary restrictions set for all the Paraguayan territory, which will be in force until October 25th. ([Source](#))



[LOCAL MEASURES] The Governor of Alto Paraná referred to the economic situation of the city and explained that since the borders with Brazil were closed, the economic drop of the area was total. In this sense, he looks forward to the economic reactivation, only after the borders are reopened. ([Source](#))



[DIGITAL ECONOMY] According to private estimations of the digital economy sector, e commerce grew 113% between January and September of 2020, in Paraguay. ([Source](#))



[COVID RELATED] President Mario Abdo Benítez finally confirmed that the reopening of the borders with Brazil, will be carried forward before October 15th. ([Source](#))



[FOOD AND BEVERAGE] According to a report issued by the Central Bank, September's inflation was of 0.3%. As this report explains, the items which contributed the most to this result, were food & beverage, domestic repair products, and durable goods. ([Source](#))



[HEALTH] The Public Health Ministry urged the population to maintain the sanitary protocols during the new phase initiated, and warned about a potential regression to a former phase, if the pandemic situation gets worse. ([Source](#))



[ECONOMY] According to the official figures released by the Undersecretary of Taxation, although the tax collection registered an increase in the month of September, the interannual loss was still of of 11.4%. ([Source](#))



[TECHNOLOGY] The Ministry of Industry and Commerce organized a meeting with international investors, to show opportunities of development in the country, and request technological and technical cooperation for the development of local productive chains. ([Source](#))



[MANUFACTURING] According to the Work Ministry, since the pandemic began, around 30,000 workers were suspended from their jobs, and are still waiting to be reincorporated. ([Source](#))



STATS: 828,169 cases of COVID-19, 32,742 deceased, as confirmed by the Health Ministry.



[EXECUTIVE POWER] President Martín Vizcarra assured that Peru would have a vaccine against COVID-19 in the first quarter of next year. ([Source](#))



LOCAL [MEASURES] Social immobilization on Sundays is maintained in the departments of Cusco, Puno, Moquegua, and Tacna. ([Source](#))



[DIGITAL ECONOMY] Migrations presented an application for migration control with minimal contact, created for people who want to travel abroad. ([Source](#))



[COVID RELATED] To guarantee the 2021 Elections and safeguard the health of all the people who work to carry them out, President Martín Vizcarra confirmed that the polling station members would be part of the first group of people to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. ([Source](#))



[FOOD AND BEVERAGE] Expoalimentaria 2020 inaugurated on October 02, a virtual edition of the fair where the country's food export offer was exhibited. ([Source](#))



[HEALTH] The Minister of Health, Pilar Mazzetti, assured that the different authorities of the Health sector at the national level are preparing for the eventual arrival of the second wave of infections by COVID-19; however, it is not possible to establish a magnitude of this situation or an exact date for this to occur. ([Source](#))



[ECONOMY] A bill that allows the rescheduling and freezing of debts for natural persons and mypes in the context of the health emergency caused by COVID-19 was approved as a result of joint work between the Executive and the Legislature. ([Source](#))



[TECHNOLOGY] The Ministry of Housing has begun to develop an early warning tool for COVID-19 based on wastewater monitoring, as a complementary initiative to address the national health emergency.. ([Source](#))



[MANUFACTURING] The public and private sectors involved in the fashion industry come together to provide exporting entrepreneurs and potential exporters with information on new trends and challenges facing the sector at the Peru Moda Feel & Live Sustainable forum, to be held during the month October, reported Promperú. ([Source](#))



STATS: 2.061 cases of COVID-19, 48 deceased, as confirmed by the Health Ministry.



[EXECUTIVE POWER] Parliament recognized the task of the Honorary Scientific Advisory Group, made up of experts Rafael Radi, Fernando Paganini and Henry Cohen, who have collaborated with the authorities of the National Executive in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. ([Source](#))



[LOCAL MEASURES] The infectologist Eduardo Savio stressed that this is not the time to open the borders, considering the situation of neighboring countries, and affirmed that the proposal of the schools to review the distancing is understandable and logical. ([Source](#))



[DIGITAL ECONOMY] The Chamber of Digital Economy (CEDU) started a cycle of webinars with recommendations on digital commerce for MSMEs. ([Source](#))



[COVID RELATED] Since the health emergency was declared on March 13, 2,061 confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 coronavirus have been registered in Uruguay, 1,844 have already recovered and 253 are developing the disease. ([Source](#))



[FOOD AND BEVERAGE] A food supplement linked to Uruguay is considered an ally against the fight against the worst cases of COVID-19 but also to prevent the spread: Omega-3. ([Source](#))



[HEALTH] Both in Soriano and Colonia the public activities planned within the framework of Heritage Day were suspended, due to the appearance of covid-19 outbreaks in these Departments. ([Source](#))



[ECONOMY] After three consecutive months of decline, inflation accelerated slightly in September (0.62), which once again raised year-on-year inflation, which is on the verge of 10%. ([Source](#))



[TECHNOLOGY] The Faculty of Sciences reported that a team of researchers from the institution managed to identify new genetic changes in the SARS-CoV-2 samples in Uruguay. ([Source](#))



[MANUFACTURING] Exports fell again but at a slower rate: 3.96% in September; unlike previous months, sales to Argentina and Brazil increased compared to the same month last year. ([Source](#))