

COVID-19 PULSE

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



STATS: 2,069,751 cases of COVID-19, 51,359 deceased, as confirmed by the Health Ministry.



[EXECUTIVE POWER] President Alberto Fernández arrived in Mexico City to join in the commemoration ceremonies of the 200 years of independence, to which he was specially invited by his counterpart, Andrés Manuel López Obrador. ([Source](#))



[LOCAL MEASURES] The government created the Economic and Social Council, the multisectoral organism that will function as a forum for debate and that will try to promote long-term national development. ([Source](#))



[DIGITAL ECONOMY] The Government established the requirements that must be met by companies that want to access the Knowledge Economy Regime, which provides benefits in the use of digitization of information. ([Source](#))



[COVID RELATED] The Ministry of Health authorized the coronavirus vaccine developed by the Chinese pharmaceutical company Sinopharm. In the next few days, a million doses of it will arrive in the country from Beijing. ([Source](#))



[FOOD AND BEVERAGE] The Total Basic Basket (CBT) registered an increase of 4.2% in January, so that a family group made up of two adults and two minors needed an income of \$56,459 pesos to avoid falling below the poverty line. ([Source](#))



[HEALTH] The President, Alberto Fernández, appointed Carla Vizzotti as the new Minister of Health. ([Source](#))



[ECONOMY] Economy Minister, Martín Guzmán, will travel to Washington between the second and third week of March to continue negotiations with the IMF. ([Source](#))



[TECHNOLOGY] The government calls for a multisectoral round table with the participation of the electronics and household appliances sector to reach an agreement in view of the persisting inflation. ([Source](#))



[MANUFACTURING] According to data from the UIA, the industry grew 4.8% in December. With this recovery, the year ended with a cumulative fall of 6.3%, like 2019 ([Source](#))



STATS: 10,197,531 cases of COVID-19, 247,276 deceased, as confirmed by the Health Ministry



[EXECUTIVE POWER] After months of President Jair Bolsonaro's denial of the purchase of vaccines that require "unfair" clauses, the Senate took over the discussion with the laboratories and must vote on changes in legislation to unlock these contracts. ([Source](#))



[LOCAL MEASURES] The governor of São Paulo, João Doria (PSDB), announced the payment of a "work grant" to grant financial aid of up to R \$ 450 per month in a program that aims to reach 100 thousand people in the state. ([Source](#))



[DIGITAL ECONOMY] The use of technological tools guaranteed the maintenance of work in times of the pandemic caused by the new coronavirus worldwide. In the Brazilian judiciary, these resources increased the productivity of the courts and allowed access to justice. ([Source](#))



[COVID RELATED] The number of people vaccinated against covid-19 in Brazil reached this Friday, 5,982,640, according to data gathered by the consortium of press vehicles at the state health departments. ([Source](#))



[FOOD AND BEVERAGE] The Ministry of Agriculture established the Crisis Committee to monitor and propose strategies to minimize the impacts of the coronavirus on agricultural production and food supply for the Brazilian population. ([Source](#))



[HEALTH] At a time when cities are stopping vaccinating against covid-19 due to lack of doses, the Ministry of Health is expected to have 5.6 million of the 11.3 million doses of immunizers expected for February. ([Source](#))



[ECONOMY] Brazil should continue with unbalanced accounts until the end of the decade, foresees the Independent Fiscal Institution (IFI) of the Senate. ([Source](#))



[TECHNOLOGY] The Oswaldo Cruz Foundation (Fiocruz) stated that the contract with the pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca that details the transfer of technology for the production of the active pharmaceutical ingredient (IFA) of the Oxford vaccine. ([Source](#))



[MANUFACTURING] The crisis caused by the pandemic is affecting the Brazilian industry with a drop in demand for its products, the difficulty in obtaining inputs and raw materials, transportation logistics and a reduction in the supply of working capital in the financial system. ([Source](#))



STATS: 242,292 cases of COVID-19, 11,465 deceased, as confirmed by the Health Ministry.



[EXECUTIVE POWER] Bolivia returned to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) a millionaire loan, contracted in 2020 by the transitional right-wing government to support the fight against COVID-19, and denounced impositions of the international organization, according to the Central Bank of Bolivia (BCB). ([Source](#))



[COVID RELATED] The Minister of Health, Jeyson Auza, confirmed that sub-national entities and private institutions can purchase vaccines against COVID-19 and asked municipal and government authorities not to politicize the issue. ([Source](#))



[ECONOMY] The Minister of Development Planning, Gabriela Mendoza, reported that the Government allocated, in three months of management, US \$ 725.8 million in public investment. ([Source](#))



[LOCAL MEASURES] The exceptional law that prohibited carnival celebrations and the consumption of alcoholic beverages in Sucre, with the aim of stopping the escalation of coronavirus cases, expired on February 21. ([Source](#))



[FOOD AND BEVERAGE] Government indicates that in December 2020 sales in restaurants, supermarkets, hotels and air transport grew by 38.2%. ([Source](#))



[TECHNOLOGY] The Vice Ministry of Science and Technology, dependent on the Ministry of Education, incorporates ICT in the teaching and learning processes in education. ([Source](#))



[DIGITAL ECONOMY] Business leaders in Bolivia and the world are actively looking for mobile device management solutions (EMM-MDM) that provide real-time information so that their companies can adapt quickly and maintain their operations using SOTI in a long-term sustainable strategy. ([Source](#))



[HEALTH] The Government sets the goal of immunizing more than seven million inhabitants against Covid-19 by September. The mass vaccination process will start in the course of the following days with the arrival of half a million doses of Sinopharm. ([Source](#))



[MANUFACTURING] The Chamber of Industry and Commerce asks to freeze salary increase due to the re-outbreak of COVID infections. This affects the labor stability of various sectors such as the case of factories and miners among others. ([Source](#))



STATS: 803,009 cases of COVID-19, 20,126 deceased, as confirmed by the Health Ministry.



[EXECUTIVE POWER] Piñera announced the start of the 2021 school year and the operating plan for educational institutions focused on promoting the return to face-to-face classes with a voluntary and safe system. Also, he highlighted the beginning of the vaccination process for teachers. ([Source](#))



[LOCAL MEASURES] According to the latest Clapes UC report, the Metropolitan Region has a COVID-19 positivity rate of 5%, the lowest in the country. Starting this week, four municipalities will advance to phase 4 of the Step-by-Step plan. ([Source](#))



[DIGITAL ECONOMY] According to Beetrack, the largest provinces increased their purchases during the pandemic. The Metropolitan Region led with almost 68%. ([Source](#))



[COVID RELATED] There will be 40 municipalities in Chile that will be in quarantine with the maximum restrictive measures. Between these cities, five will be more than a month in confinement. ([Source](#))



[FOOD AND BEVERAGE] The fishing sector has not been able to market their products in restaurants or outdoor markets. Thus, they are the most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and mandatory quarantines in the north of Chile. ([Source](#))



[HEALTH] The Ministry of Health reported that more than 9 million PCR tests have been performed in the country, the highest number in Latin America. ([Source](#))



[ECONOMY] The Ministry of Economy reported that, in 2020, more than 150,000 new companies were created, an increase of 14% per year, the highest growth in seven years. And only in January of 2021 15,000 new companies were registered, an increase of 34%. ([Source](#))



[TECHNOLOGY] Vitaltec, a Chilean telemedicine venture, brought to our country Tyto Care, a technological device that allows remote medical-guided examinations to be carried out on confined patients. The device examines the heart, lungs, blood oxygenation, and body temperature, among others. ([Source](#))



[MANUFACTURING] The salmon company Mowi Chile reported that despite registering a production record, 2020 was a difficult year due to the pandemic and salmon prices in the country fell 28% due to mandatory quarantines and high global supply. ([Source](#))



STATS: 2,237,542 cases of COVID-19, 59,260 deceased, as confirmed by the Health Ministry.



[EXECUTIVE POWER] The Government affirms that the ELN illegal armed group has a presence in Venezuelan territory. ([Source](#))



[LOCAL MEASURES] Bogotá started vaccination day against COVID-19 on February 18. On tuesday 23, the city received 12,026 Sinovac COVID-19 vaccines. ([Source](#))



[DIGITAL ECONOMY] In 2020, according to the Colombian Chamber of Electronic Commerce, there were 4.17 million online transactions, around COP 495.74 million. ([Source](#))



[COVID RELATED] President Duque announces the arrival of 50,000 Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine doses. In total, Colombia achieved 292,000 COVID-19 vaccines with Pfizer and Sinovac doses. ([Source](#))



[FOOD AND BEVERAGE] Bogotá City Hall allowed the operation of restaurants in the city but prohibited the bars and nightclubs opening. Recently, the Secretary of Government of Bogotá announced an agreement with the sector for a pilot project of reopening. ([Source](#))



[HEALTH] The Ministry of Health said that the first stage of the COVID-19 Vaccination Plan will end on March 20th. ([Source](#))



[ECONOMY] Ecopetrol reported an 87% drop in profits with COP 1.7 billion in 2020, less than COP 13.2 billion in 2019. ([Source](#))



[TECHNOLOGY] According to Edutic, there is a stagnation in the enrollment of ICT careers. In the last decade, 42,000 and 50,000 people enrolled per year, but the number of graduates is less than 5,000. The average salary for ICT professionals is COP 1.5 million. ([Source](#))



[MANUFACTURING] According to the DANE, 509,307 micro-businesses were lost between January and October 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Commerce, manufacturing, and agriculture were the most affected. ([Source](#))



STATS: 278,779 cases of COVID-19, 15,634 deceased, as confirmed by the Health Ministry.



[EXECUTIVE POWER] The Presidential candidate, Guillermo Lasso (Creo party), was confirmed as the second candidate for the second round of Presidential elections. ([Source](#))



[LOCAL MEASURES] The Ecuadorian indigenous movement marches to Quito on suspicions of electoral fraud. ([Source](#))



[DIGITAL ECONOMY] According to Unesco, women are only 28% of people with degrees in engineering and 40% of graduates in computer science. ([Source](#))



[COVID RELATED] The government of Ecuador will allow the direct importation of COVID-19 vaccines to municipalities. Companies that want to import vaccines must ensure that they are delivered free of charge. ([Source](#))



[FOOD AND BEVERAGE] In Quito, shopping centers, restaurants, banks, supermarkets, supply centers, among others, must maintain a capacity of 50% of their capacity. The measure, which remains in force since September 13, 2020. ([Source](#))



[HEALTH] Lenin admits to delays in the COVID-19 vaccination and expects 211,200 doses. 17,500 doses in February, 124,000 doses in March, and 39,700 in April. ([Source](#))



[ECONOMY] The Central Bank of Ecuador (BCE) carried out a short-term operation to obtain financing for USD 300 million in exchange for 240,000 ounces of gold from the Central's reserves. ([Source](#))



[TECHNOLOGY] The Ministry of Agriculture is working on the program of Technological Innovation Applied to Agriculture and Livestock AgroInventa 2021 for the application of technological tools for the agricultural sector of Ecuador. ([Source](#))



[MANUFACTURING] The private sector would lose more than 10% of its sales during the first quarter of 2021. Sectors such as construction and agriculture will deepen their crisis, but the manufacturing industries would be the only ones to grow 3%. ([Source](#))



STATS: 2,060,908 cases of COVID-19; 182, 815 deceased, as confirmed by the Health Ministry.



[EXECUTIVE POWER] The president of Argentina, Alberto Fernández, recognized the efforts made by president Andrés Manuel López Obrador in relation to vaccination and political refugees. ([Source](#))



[LOCAL MEASURES] In Mexico City, the historical archives, libraries and art galleries will be allowed to resume activities, under an appointment scheme. ([Source](#))



[DIGITAL ECONOMY] According to Adolfo Cuevas, president commissioner of the Federal Institute of Telecommunications, the development of 5G technology will be one of the pillars for the growth of the Mexican digital economy. ([Source](#))



[COVID RELATED] The first shipment of the Sputnik V vaccine arrived at Mexico, with 200,000 doses. ([Source](#))



[FOOD AND BEVERAGE] According to Statista, at least five Mexican food companies sold more than \$70 billion MXN in the last year. ([Source](#))



[HEALTH] The general director of the Mexican Institute of Social Security (IMSS), Zoé Robledo, said that most of the vaccines applied in Mexico so far come from the Serum Institute of India. ([Source](#))



[ECONOMY] According to Moody's Analytics, Brazil managed its fiscal and monetary policies during the pandemic better than Mexico did. ([Source](#))



[TECHNOLOGY] The Chamber of Deputies has approved an initiative to reform the Electricity Industry Law, which will shift away from clean energy technology. This reform has yet to be approved by the Senate. ([Source](#))



[MANUFACTURING] The National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) reported that at the end of 2020, 9 of the 21 activities that comprise the manufacturing industry in Mexico had recovered to the levels prior to the pandemic. ([Source](#))

COVID-19 PULSE – PUBLIC AFFAIRS LATAM

Tuesday, February 16– Monday, February 22, 2021

Paraguay



STATS: 152,658 cases of COVID-19, 3,080 deceased, as confirmed by the Health Ministry.



[EXECUTIVE POWER] The President of the Republic, Mario Abdo Benítez, traveled to Uruguay to carry out an official visit to strengthen bilateral relations between both nations. ([Source](#))



[LOCAL MEASURES] The head of the Social Security Institute, Andrés Gubetich, announced that the Pension Board ordered the readjustment in the payment of retirement benefits, from 50 to 75% of the current minimum wage, which will be applied automatically from this month. ([Source](#))



[DIGITAL ECONOMY] President Mario Abdo Benítez signed Decree No. 4845 that regulates the reduction of the use of paper in public institutions and replaces it with the digital format. ([Source](#))



[COVID RELATED] The president signed a decree establishing new specific measures within the framework of the Plan for the Gradual Lifting of General Preventive Isolation in the national territory from February 22 to March 14. ([Source](#))



[FOOD AND BEVERAGE] The Ministry of Social Development delivered 39,490 kilos of non-perishable food to popular pot organizations distributed in different departments of the country. ([Source](#))



[HEALTH] Due to the announcement of the arrival of the first 4,000 vaccines against covid-19 in Paraguay, representatives of the medical community stated that they expected more vaccines and launched harsh criticism of the Government for the deficiencies of the country's health system. ([Source](#))



[ECONOMY] The Paraguayan public debt closed 2020 reaching USD 12,212.9 million, according to the report published by the Ministry of Finance. ([Source](#))



[TECHNOLOGY] Researchers from the University of Agrarian Sciences of the National University of Asunción (FCA-UNA) intend to generate knowledge on best practices of nutrient management in agricultural systems for food production in the Eastern region of Paraguay. ([Source](#))



[MANUFACTURING] Soybean meal exports totaled US\$57.1 million during January, representing a growth of 182.4% according to the Foreign Trade report of the Central Bank of Paraguay (BCP). ([Source](#))



STATS: 1,286,757 cases of COVID-19, 45,263 deceased, as confirmed by the Health Ministry.



[EXECUTIVE POWER] The Government ordered the extension of the declaration of the health emergency as of March 7 of this year and for a period of 180 calendar days, in order to continue with the prevention, control and health care actions for the protection of the population across the country. ([Source](#))



[LOCAL MEASURES] The regional government of Cusco installed the Regional Vaccine Command, which will monitor the correct development of the immunization process in the department. ([Source](#))



[DIGITAL ECONOMY] Between February 21 and 25, new suppliers may be incorporated into nine electronic catalogs of the public purchasing center (Perú Compras). ([Source](#))



[COVID RELATED] President Francisco Sagasti announced the beginning of the donation of 20 tons of medicinal oxygen per day by Southern Peru, thanks to adaptation work carried out by Linde Peru, which allows its medicinal use and distribution to hospitals for the care of patients who face COVID-19. ([Source](#))



[FOOD AND BEVERAGE] Banco Agropecuario plans to allocate 300 million soles this year to promote the growth of family farming, through the financial inclusion of approximately 30,000 small agricultural producers. ([Source](#))



[HEALTH] The Ministry of Health (Minsa) projects that by July of this year there will be enough vaccines against COVID-19 to apply to 61% of the population in the country. ([Source](#))



[ECONOMY] The Central Reserve Bank of Peru (BCRP) confirmed that it is evaluating together with the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) the approval of a reprogramming scheme for loans granted through Reactiva Perú. ([Source](#))



[TECHNOLOGY] The Presidency of the Council of Ministers approved the regulations of the Digital Government Law and the electronic administrative procedure with the aim of strengthening public entities to provide digital services to citizens in the midst of the health emergency due to the coronavirus pandemic that affects to our country. ([Source](#))



[MANUFACTURING] The Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) authorized the transfer of 642 million 109,169 soles in favor of the Ministry of Transportation and Communications (MTC) to finance 94 reconstruction interventions via investments (IRI) of the Plan Integral de Reconstrucción con Cambios..([Source](#))

COVID-19 PULSE – PUBLIC AFFAIRS LATAM

Tuesday, February 16 – Monday, February 22, 2021

Uruguay



STATS: 52,815 cases of COVID-19, 574 deceased, as confirmed by the Health Ministry.



[EXECUTIVE POWER] The Executive estimates that the arrival of the vaccines is forthcoming, although there is still no delivery date. [\(Source\)](#)



[LOCAL MEASURES] President Lacalle Pou discusses with his ministers the course of the health emergency in the country and assesses new measures to be taken. [\(Source\)](#)



[DIGITAL ECONOMY] On beaches and parks, digital nomads take advantage of teleworking. [\(Source\)](#)



[COVID RELATED] The "Covid-19 hospital" inside: the battle at the CTI and the unprecedented plan for family members to enter. [\(Source\)](#)



[FOOD AND BEVERAGE] Being overweight is one of the greatest risks involved in low activity due to the pandemic. [\(Source\)](#)



[HEALTH] The Ministry of Public Health begins to distribute materials to health institutions this Monday. [\(Source\)](#)



[ECONOMY] A year to forget with the loss of almost 60,000 jobs. [\(Source\)](#)



[TECHNOLOGY] The pandemic triggered the need for teleworking and having a presence on the networks to sell a product. [\(Source\)](#)



[MANUFACTURING] The manufacturing industry and its behavior during the year of the coronavirus. [\(Source\)](#)