

*¡Bienvenidas y bienvenidos to El CC, CCLATAM's newsletter!. Every other week you'll find the main events shaking up Latin America, from Ushuaia in the south to Los Algodones in the north. Sign up [here](#) to stay updated on the region. Get [in touch](#) with us, we may feature an excerpt of your response in the next newsletter.*

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## The Challenge of Technological Exclusion



**President of Uruguay Yamandu Orsi addressing South American Ministerial Meeting in Montevideo**

In an increasingly interconnected world, technological exclusion has become a matter of vital importance, especially in the context of telecommunications in Uruguay. During the recent South American Ministerial Meeting held in Montevideo, organized by Certal and CCLATAM, critical issues regarding the future of the sector were addressed, where leaders from operators like [Millicom](#), [Antel](#), [Telecom Argentina](#), expressed their concerns about restrictive policies that limit competition and affect users.

Uruguayan [President Yamandú Orsi](#) posed a necessary reflection: digital transformation is not just a technical issue but also a matter of rights. In an age where innovation advances at a breakneck pace, the role of the state must be that of a facilitator who

promotes inclusion, not an obstacle that hinders progress. Institutional rigidity can lead to the country falling behind while others move toward a more connected future.

Industry executives agreed that current restrictions not only harm businesses but also limit consumer choices. The quality of services and costs are directly impacted by the lack of competition. This is a crucial moment for Uruguay to reassess its approach and adopt policies that foster a more dynamic and competitive environment.

On the other hand, Brazil's experience shows that a favorable regulatory approach can lead to significant advances in infrastructure deployment and service quality. Policies that promote competition and innovation not only benefit businesses but also elevate the standard of living for the population.

As operators face the challenge of becoming more efficient in a changing market, the pressure to adapt to consumer expectations intensifies. Digitalization and artificial intelligence present enormous opportunities for enhancing customer experience and optimizing operations. However, this will only be possible if a framework is established that supports innovation and competition. Could Uruguay be an inspiration for the region?

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## **El State of Affairs**

It's been a dynamic July across Latin America—and the weeks ahead promise even more momentum. The region is making headlines not just for challenges like inflation or trade tensions, but for its resilience, innovation, and growing voice in global affairs..

In Chile, voters are preparing for a historic presidential election. Jeannette Jara, a seasoned public servant from the Communist Party, has emerged as the official candidate of the governing Unity for Chile coalition. Her track record includes progressive labor reforms, such as the 40-hour workweek, and she is positioning herself as a voice for inclusive growth and democratic values.

Meanwhile in Brazil, the economy remains a focal point. Inflation reached 5.3% in July, prompting the central bank to hold its benchmark interest rate at 15% (Reuters). While some worry about borrowing costs, others see Brazil's commitment to monetary stability as a sign of institutional strength—particularly in uncertain global markets.

Trade is once again front-page news as Mexico and the United States navigate a new phase in their complex relationship. Former U.S. President Donald Trump has floated the idea of 50% tariffs on key Mexican exports like tomatoes and automobiles. Mexico's leaders have responded calmly but firmly, stressing the importance of cooperation and mutual benefit. The deadline for negotiations is August 1, and regional businesses are watching closely.

Yet even amid political and trade uncertainty, Latin America is drawing new global interest—this time, from investors. With Wall Street shaken by U.S. protectionism and Europe focused on energy security, countries like Argentina, Chile, Brazil, and Uruguay

are catching the eye of global markets. From clean energy and AI to biotech and fintech, innovation hubs are flourishing. .

Looking ahead, the region will remain in focus. Brazil's central bank meets July 29–30, and economists expect steady rates with hints of a policy shift later in the year. Trade talks between Mexico and the U.S. reach a critical point on August 1. And across Chile, Colombia, and Argentina, election campaigns are ramping up—with voters eager to shape the next chapter.

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## La Charla



*This week Maria Rocio Vargas chats with Sebastián Mejía, International Vice-President, Juan Valdez -the only internationally recognized coffee brand that is owned by coffee producers. Created in 2002 by the National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia, a non-profit organization representing more than 550,000 coffee-growing families, created the Juan Valdez® brand for coffee shops and value-added businesses. He talks about coffee, franchising as Smart Play for global growth, branding and life balance.*

Sebastián, we've heard that Juan Valdez is making a significant move. What's the exciting news?

**After two decades of developing and steering the global growth of the brand, it's time to concentrate on the most vibrant and competitive coffee market worldwide, which is valued at over \$20 billion. Focusing on this region marks a strategic milestone for Juan Valdez's future in an environment that requires exceptional vision, strategy, and execution.**

What does this emphasis on North America signify for you?

**It represents a deep commitment and considerable responsibility to the Colombian coffee farmers we stand for. North America poses the greatest challenges, but it also offers the most substantial opportunities for those who are bold enough to seize them. I am highly motivated by this new challenge and the chance to further establish Colombian coffee on the global stage.**

How has your upbringing in Manizales impacted your journey?

**I was born in Manizales, at the heart of Colombia's Coffee Triangle. My family has been involved in coffee cultivation and cattle raising for generations, instilling in me a profound respect for the land, the people, and the coffee heritage. This background has shaped my identity and fueled a passion that continues to drive me today.**

Your experiences have taken you to numerous cities—how has that influenced you?

**I've lived in Medellín, Bogotá, and Santiago de Chile, and I've had the chance to travel across Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and Latin America. These experiences have taught me to appreciate and respect diverse cultures while connecting people, ideas, and businesses across borders. This global perspective has become a crucial foundation in my approach to work.**

It seems that international expansion is a core aspect of your work.

**It's part of who I am. I'm passionate about creating connections between individuals, cultures, and markets. For me, expanding globally isn't just a business tactic; it's a calling and a purpose that motivates me every day.**

How would you characterize your leadership style?

**I consider myself pragmatic, systematic, and straightforward, yet tactful. I believe in cultivating strong relationships and demonstrating respect through actions. I prefer to speak less and accomplish more.**

Coffee is more than just a job for you, isn't it?

**Absolutely. I roast my own beans at home, use various brewing methods, and enjoy about ten cups of Colombian coffee daily—always dark. I even secured third place in a barista competition in Chile. It's more than just a beverage; it's a ritual.**

What other interests do you pursue?

**I have a passion for motorsports, horses, and automobiles. I've competed in karting and closely follow major international racing events. I also enjoy reading, meditating,**

and jogging. For me, it's about maintaining balance: depth alongside focus, intensity paired with tranquility.

What has your journey with Juan Valdez been like up to this point?

It has been an extraordinary 20-year journey. I have led the brand's international expansion, and now the aim is to establish North America as one of our most strategic markets globally. This represents the next significant leap for both the brand and myself.

Why is international expansion especially critical at this moment?

Local markets can experience volatility. Expanding internationally diversifies risk, broadens the customer base, and fosters long-term resilience. It's not merely about growth; it's about evolution.

What makes the franchise model appealing?

Franchises facilitate quick and capital-efficient growth. Local partners contribute expertise and investment, while we provide the brand and support. If executed correctly, it's a win-win for all involved.

What are the primary challenges of global growth?

The mindset. We need cultural intelligence, adaptability, and openness. Without these qualities, even the finest products may falter internationally.

How should brands prepare for foreign markets?

They must be adaptable. Brands need to adjust to local preferences, regulations, and operational practices. It's essential not to simply replicate the domestic model; instead, they should localize while preserving the brand's core essence.

What would you say to entrepreneurs in Latin America?

Latin America is brimming with world-class talent. However, to thrive, we need to look beyond our borders. Strategic franchises and partnerships can unlock global opportunities. Those who embrace a global mindset won't just succeed abroad; they will also fortify their brand domestically.

One last question: The World Cup is set to take place in North America just as you are focusing on this area. What are your hopes?

As a football enthusiast and Colombian, I hope to attend as many matches as I can, especially those featuring my national team.

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## Elsewhere in LATAM

 Mexico has dissolved the [Federal Telecommunications Institute \(IFT\)](#) under a new law that took effect July 17, 2025. The IFT will cease operations once the newly created Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (CRT) is established. The CRT, operating under the Agency of Digital Transformation and Telecommunications (ATDT), will take over IFT's powers, including managing licenses, spectrum auctions, and regulatory oversight of telecom and broadcasting. Commissioners will be appointed by the President and ratified by the Senate. A 15-day suspension of proceedings will follow the CRT's formation, and a new spectrum bidding plan is expected within 180 days. While the CRT is meant to operate independently, critics warn it may be more vulnerable to executive influence, as it is not constitutionally autonomous. The move marks a major shift in telecom regulation and centralizes oversight within the federal government's digital transformation agenda.

 At a recent event in Bogotá organized by the [Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean \(ECLAC\)](#), multilateral development bank executives emphasized that Latin American countries must urgently address regulatory barriers, improve regional electrical interconnection, and strengthen renewable energy project structuring to attract the estimated \$200 billion in annual investment needed for the region's energy transition. Despite the availability of capital, speakers such as Felix Fernandez from the European Commission stressed that poor permitting processes and unclear legal frameworks are deterring investment.

 President Javier Milei is set to veto recently approved legislation that increases pensions, introduces a new pension moratorium, and declares a disability emergency. The decision will be made next week, just before the ten business-day deadline the Executive has to reject laws passed by Congress. The government argues that the fiscal impact of these measures threatens its commitment to a zero-deficit policy, a cornerstone of its economic strategy. The administration is already working to ensure Congress does not override the vetoes.

 [Mexico City marked its 699th anniversary](#), celebrating the legendary founding of the ancient Mexica capital, Tenochtitlan. Believed to have been established in 1325 on a lake island, the city's symbolic birth was honored with traditional Aztec dances, rituals, and a call to recognize Indigenous heritage. The mayor of Mexico City emphasized the importance of reclaiming historical memory, while scholars reminded the public that the Mexica were builders of empires long before Spanish conquest.

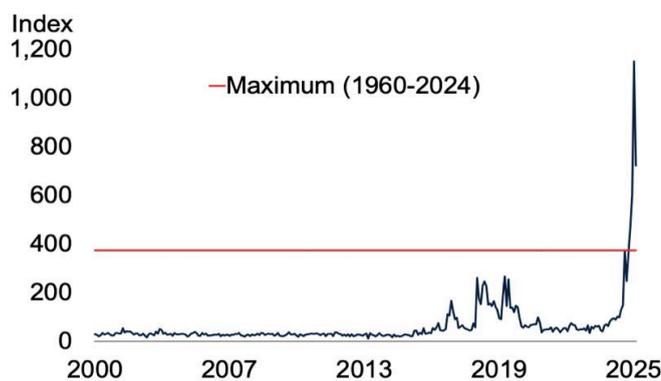
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*“What people call ‘problems’ in Latin America – informality, bureaucracy, inefficiency – are actually huge opportunities to build better systems.”*

– David Velez, CEO and founder of Nubank, Brazil

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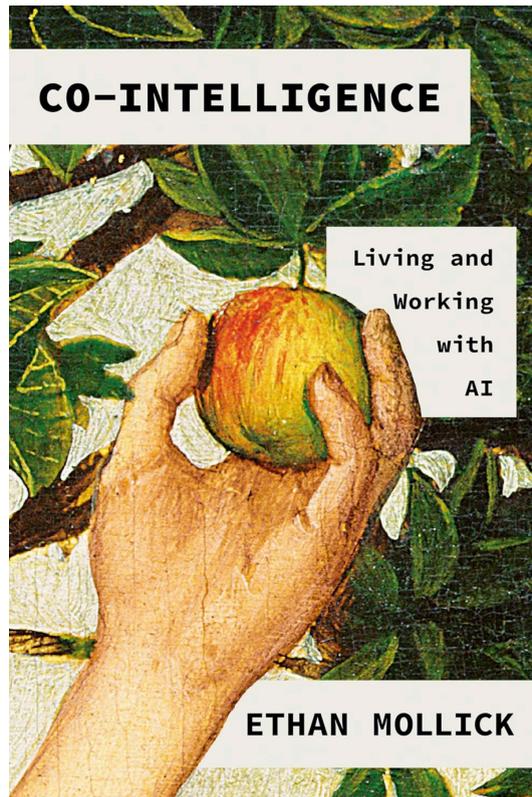
## El Grafico



According to the World Bank June’s [Global Economic Prospects](#), economic growth in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) is expected to remain stable at 2.3 percent in 2025 and edge up slightly to 2.4 percent in 2026. This outlook reflects a broad slowdown across most economies in the region, with the exception of Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, and the Caribbean. The projection represents a downward revision of 0.2 percentage points for regional growth, with over half of LAC economies facing downgraded forecasts compared to earlier estimates. Weaker commodity prices and rising trade barriers are expected to curb export revenues, adding to the challenges posed by an increasingly uncertain global environment. Mexico’s growth outlook has been sharply revised downward, with the 2025 forecast cut by 1.3 percentage points to just 0.2 percent. In 2026, growth is projected to reach 1.1 percent.

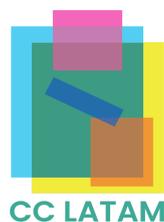
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## La Lectura



In *Co-Intelligence*, [Ethan Mollick](#) discusses the rise of artificial intelligence and how it is poised to transform not only business, but the future of humankind itself. Mollick urges readers to embrace AI as a collaborative tool that can enhance creativity, decision-making, and innovation, while remaining grounded in our human values and identity. With Latin America emerging as a key player in data innovation and digital transformation, this book offers timely insights into how the region can strategically harness AI to drive equitable development, foster inclusion, and shape a more intelligent and humane future.

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