



*¡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 Start-up Continent is Back Issue



After the exuberance of 2021 and the sharp correction that followed, Latin America's startup ecosystem has entered 2026 in a markedly different state. The headlines are no longer about record-breaking funding totals or rapid unicorn creation. Instead, the region is defined by a quieter but more consequential shift: a return of capital, paired with far greater selectivity—set against a backdrop of growing global instability.

Ongoing geopolitical tensions, including the war in Ukraine and persistent conflicts in the Middle East combined with trade fragmentation between major economies, have reshaped how global capital is allocated. In this environment, Latin America is increasingly being reconsidered—not as a high-growth outlier, but as a relatively stable and strategically relevant destination for venture investment.

Venture capital in the region has stabilized. In 2025, startups across Latin America raised approximately \$4.1 billion, according to recent [regional reports](#). While this represents a recovery from the trough of 2023, it remains far below the \$15B–\$20B peak seen in 2021. **More importantly, the composition of investment has changed:** deal counts are down, but capital per deal is up. Fewer companies are getting funded, but those that do are attracting larger, more conviction-driven rounds.

This dynamic has carried into 2026. Early data shows continued caution at the seed and Series A levels, while larger rounds persist for category leaders. For instance, [Mexico's Kavak](#) raised a major Series F round in early 2026 and [Argentina's Ualá](#) secured \$195 million in March 2026. These deals highlight a broader pattern: capital is concentrating in a small number of high-performing startups rather than being widely distributed.

Global instability is playing a subtle but important role in this shift. As investors rebalance portfolios away from regions with direct geopolitical exposure, Latin America is benefiting from relative positioning. While it is not risk-free, it is geographically distant from major conflict zones and less exposed to sanctions regimes or supply chain disruptions affecting Eastern Europe or parts of Asia.

This repositioning is particularly evident in how capital is being deployed. Investors are increasingly favoring startups that can generate revenue in stable currencies, expand across borders, or integrate into reconfigured global supply chains. [Mexico, for example, is benefiting from nearshoring trends](#) linked to U.S.–China tensions while Brazil continues to leverage its domestic scale and financial infrastructure.

Geographically, venture capital remains highly concentrated. [Brazil and Mexico together account for nearly 80% of all VC investment in the region](#). This concentration has intensified in the current cycle, as investors prioritize markets with depth, liquidity, and clearer exit pathways.

Brazil remains the region's anchor ecosystem. It leads in both deal volume and total capital deployed, supported by innovations such as [Pix](#) (central bank system) and the expansion of open finance. Recent deals like [Azos' \\$25M raise](#) and HRtech startup Comp's \$17.5M round led by [Khosla Ventures](#) demonstrate continued investor interest—albeit with greater scrutiny.

Mexico, meanwhile, has emerged as the region's most dynamic market for large-scale rounds. In addition to Kavak's financing, fintech startup [DolarApp raised \\$70M](#) in March 2026. The country's proximity to the United States, combined with its role in nearshoring, makes it particularly attractive in a fragmented global economy.

**Chile, Colombia, and Peru play smaller but still important roles.** Chile continues to function as an early-stage hub, supported by public programs such as [Start-Up Chile](#). Colombia is evolving into a regional expansion base, with startups increasingly scaling into neighboring markets. Peru remains an emerging ecosystem, where recent

developments focus on building local capital infrastructure—such as [ADN.vc's](#) new fund.

**The broader shift, however, is not sectoral but philosophical.** The “growth at all costs” era is over. Investors are now prioritizing efficiency, margins, and clear paths to profitability. For founders, this means a tougher fundraising environment—but also a more sustainable one. For investors, it presents an opportunity to deploy capital at more reasonable valuations while gaining exposure to a region that is becoming increasingly relevant in a fragmented global economy.

**Looking ahead, Latin America’s startup ecosystem appears to be entering a more mature phase.** Growth will likely be slower, but more durable. Capital will be harder to access, but more strategically deployed. And while global instability continues to shape investment flows, it may ultimately strengthen the region’s position as a destination for long-term, resilient capital.

In this new landscape, success will depend less on speed and more on execution. The startups that thrive will be those that can navigate both local complexity and global change—building businesses that are not only scalable, but resilient in an increasingly unpredictable world.

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## La Charla

*This week Karim Lesina talks to [Antonio López-Istúriz White](#), Member of the European Parliament and Chair of the EU–Mexico Delegation.*



*The EU–Mexico relationship has evolved significantly, particularly with the modernization of the Global Agreement. How do you assess the current state of EU–Mexico relations, and what are the key priorities to transform this partnership into a truly strategic alliance?*

The relationship between the European Union and Mexico has moved beyond being merely a commercial partnership and has entered a clearly strategic dimension. We are operating in a context of technological globalization, where power is no longer measured solely in terms of GDP, but in the ability to influence standards, data, and digital value chains.

Mexico is a natural partner for the EU: we share a common foundation that allows us to build more than cooperation, a true structural alliance. The priority is now clear: to transform this relationship into a pillar of global governance. To achieve this, we must move towards the creation of an interoperable economic and digital space, strengthen regulatory cooperation, and consolidate the modernised Global Agreement as a key instrument—not only commercially, but also geopolitically.

*The updated EU–Mexico trade agreement has been under discussion for several years. What are the main political and economic obstacles to its full implementation, and how can both sides ensure it delivers tangible benefits in areas such as digital trade, investment, and regulatory cooperation?*

The main challenge is not technical, but political. The modernisation of the agreement has progressed, but its full implementation requires sustained political will on both sides.

Among the key obstacles are regulatory complexity and the need to ensure normative compatibility; domestic political sensitivities, particularly in strategic sectors; and the need to adapt to emerging areas such as digital trade and the data economy.

The solution is not to replicate regulatory models, but to ensure regulatory interoperability, which provides legal certainty and facilitates investment. If implemented correctly, the agreement can become a global benchmark, particularly in areas such as digital trade, data protection, technological investment, and regulatory cooperation.

*Mexico is increasingly central to global supply chains, especially in the context of nearshoring and US–China tensions. How can the European Union deepen its engagement with Mexico to remain a competitive and relevant partner in this shifting geopolitical environment?*

Mexico occupies a central position in the reconfiguration of global supply chains, particularly in the context of nearshoring and tensions between the United States and China.

For the European Union, this represents a strategic opportunity: we must deepen our presence in Mexico not only as a trading partner, but also as an industrial and technological partner. This means integrating the digital dimension into the economic relationship and participating in the development of shared technological value chains.

**If Europe wants to remain a relevant actor, it must act with a geopolitical vision and not limit itself to a purely commercial logic.**

*As Chairman of the EU–Mexico Delegation, how do you see evolving EU–US relations influencing Europe’s positioning in Latin America?*

**Transatlantic relations remain essential, but they cannot fully define Europe’s external action in Latin America. Europe must develop its own policy towards the region. Latin America should not be seen as a secondary space, but as a strategic partner in shaping a global digital order based on democratic values.**

**In this context, the relationship with the United States is influential, but it does not replace the need for an autonomous, coherent, and sustained European presence in the region.**

**Latin America is increasingly a space of competition among global actors, including the United States, China, and Europe. What should be the EU’s differentiating value proposition in the region Europe has a clear differentiating factor: it offers a rights-based digital model. Today, three major models coexist globally: the state-control model, the deregulated market model, and the democratic model based on rights.**

**The EU, together with Latin America, can consolidate this third model. Our value proposition is not only economic, but also normative and political: legal certainty, data protection, balanced regulation, and respect for fundamental rights. In a competitive global environment, this is a strategic advantage.**

*In today’s polarized global environment, how can the EU and partners like Mexico reinforce democratic institutions, rule of law, and multilateral cooperation?*

**In a context of growing polarization, cooperation between the EU and Mexico must focus on strengthening democratic pillars. This includes reinforcing the rule of law, combating disinformation and hybrid threats, and promoting common standards in artificial intelligence and digital governance. Technology is no longer an isolated sector; it is an instrument of political power. Therefore, defending democracy today also requires technological sovereignty. Bi-regional cooperation must ensure that digitalisation strengthens, rather than weakens, our democratic institutions.**

*Following recent high-level engagements, including the Digital Summit LATAM in Madrid, what concrete steps should the EU take in the next 12–24 months to revitalize its strategy toward Latin America and the Caribbean?*

**Following events such as the Digital Summit LATAM, the next step is to move from reflection to action.**

**Over the next 12–24 months, the EU should focus on:**


- Fully implementing the EU–Mexico agreement with a strong digital component**
- Advancing interoperability in digital identity and electronic signatures**


- Establishing common cybersecurity standards
- Promoting a permanent EU–Latin America parliamentary dialogue


The objective is clear: to build an interoperable, secure, and trust-based Euro–Latin American digital space. Because ultimately, the question is no longer whether we regulate more or less, but who writes the rules. And if Europe and Latin America do not do it together, others will do it for us.


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## Elsewhere in Latam


 A major milestone was reached as Paraguay approved the long-awaited EU–Mercosur trade agreement, completing ratification among founding members. The deal creates one of the world’s largest trade blocs and could significantly reshape exports and investment flows across South America.

 Venezuela’s interim president, Delcy Rodríguez, has carried out a sweeping overhaul of the country’s military leadership, replacing all top commanders shortly after dismissing long-serving defense minister Vladimir Padrino López and appointing close ally Gustavo González López in his place. Announcing the changes as part of a “renewed military high command,” Rodríguez said the reshuffle aims to safeguard sovereignty, stability, and territorial integrity, while naming new leaders for the army, navy, and air force. The moves come in the aftermath of the capture of Nicolás Maduro by U.S. forces, which destabilized the previous power structure and made Padrino’s position untenable.

 Ecuador has deployed 75,000 soldiers and police to four violence-hit provinces, imposing a nightly curfew as authorities escalate efforts to combat rising drug-related crime.

 Brazil is pushing deeper into regional energy integration, with President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva proposing a [partnership between Petrobras and Mexico’s Pemex](#) to expand oil exploration in the Gulf of Mexico. The move highlights Brazil’s strategy to strengthen state-led investment and regional cooperation in energy markets.

 Argentina is boosting its international profile with a bid to host the [2035 Rugby World Cup](#), aiming to attract tourism, infrastructure investment, and global visibility.

 Colombia [remains under pressure](#) from drug trafficking networks, with authorities intensifying cooperation with Mexico and Ecuador following high-profile arrests tied to cartel-linked violence.

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“We suffer from stupidity.”

[Yann LeCun](#), Scientists and one of the AI’s godfathers

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## Numeros

Bogotá stands out as the tightest office market among major Latin American cities such as Buenos Aires, Santiago, Rio de Janeiro, and São Paulo, recording both the lowest vacancy rates and the strongest growth in rental prices. [According to the latest report by Cushman & Wakefield, cumulative net absorption of office space in Bogotá reached 66,359 square meters in 2025, marking a significant expansion compared to 2024.](#) This growth has been driven by sustained demand across the city’s main real estate corridors, within a context of historically low vacancy. By contrast, vacancy rates remain considerably higher in other regional markets: Rio de Janeiro stands at 26.1% (down 2.8 percentage points year-on-year), Buenos Aires at 17.8% (up 1.8 p.p.), and São Paulo at 12.8% (down 3.5 p.p.), further underscoring Bogotá’s relative strength and momentum in the office segment.

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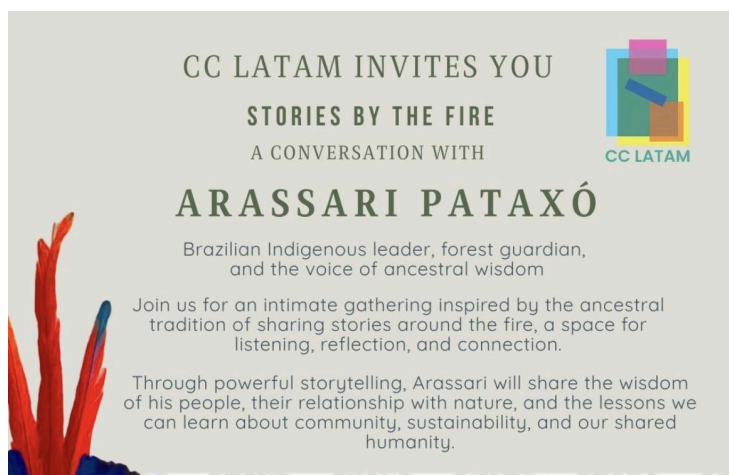
## El Evento



**What:** El Salvador Investment opportunities with the United States. A special dinner with Maria Luisa Hayem, Minister of Economy of El Salvador. CCLATAM Members Only

**Where:** Miami

**When:** Saturday April 18, 2026



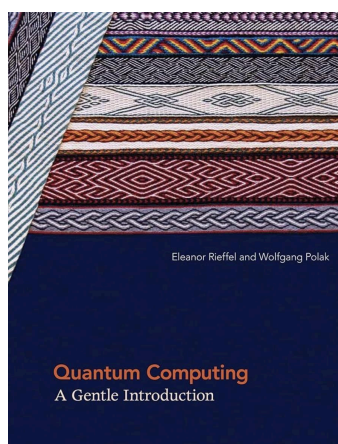
**What:** Stories by Fire. A conversation with Brazilian Indigenous Leader Arassari Pataxó'

**Where:** Miami

**When:** Sunday 2 April, 2026

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## La Lectura



[Quantum Computing: A Gentle Introduction](#) by [Eleanor G. Rieffel](#). Instead of throwing equations at you, Eleanor Rieffel explains why quantum computing works—how qubits differ from classical bits, what superposition really means, and why quantum algorithms matter.

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