ECUADOR

1. General trends

In 2016, GDP fell by 1.5% —after weak growth of 0.2% in 2015— owing to the drop in the average international oil price and the associated drop in oil revenues and shrinking of the country's fiscal space. The contraction affected all components of aggregate demand, particularly gross fixed capital formation, which dropped 8% after a contraction of 5.9% in 2015. In turn, the urban unemployment rate was 6.8%, up from 5.4% in 2015.

However, the last quarter of 2016 and the first quarter of 2017 saw positive year-on-year growth rates of 1.5% and 2.6%, respectively. On this basis, expectations point to a growth rate of 0.7% for 2017 overall, provided that there is sufficient funding to sustain the required levels of public spending.

Lenín Moreno, the candidate of the Movimiento Alianza PAIS, took office as the President of the Republic on 24 May. While the new government's policies are expected to be in line with its predecessor's, the new President is likely to be more conciliatory towards the private sector and to give greater support to export activities, given the need to generate more revenue in dollars.

Cumulative inflation stood at 1.1% in December 2016, the lowest rate since the dollarization of the Ecuadorian economy in 2000. By the end of May 2017, cumulative 12-month inflation remained at 1.1%, owing to continued weak demand. Inflation is expected to be around 1.0% for the whole year.

The sharp fall in fiscal revenues led to an increase in the total deficit of the non-financial public sector (NFPS) in 2016, which reached 7.5% of GDP, compared with 5.1% in 2015. Revenues recovered in the first quarter of 2017, but spending stepped up at a faster rate. Consequently, aggregate public debt rose to 40.7% at the end of April, and the new government is expected to restructure the foreign debt profile in the course of 2017, if an opportunity to do so arises.

In 2016, the balance-of-payments current account showed a surplus of 1.5% of GDP, thanks to the surplus on the balance of goods, which in turn was the result of the balance-of-payments safeguards and weak domestic demand. During the first quarter of 2017, the current account remained positive, thanks to strong growth in the value of oil exports, despite higher imports compared with the same quarter in 2016. The current account for the full year is expected to slip back into a small deficit.

2. Economic policy

(a) Fiscal policy

Non-financial public sector spending fell 2.7% in nominal terms in 2016, after contracting 12.8% in 2015, in response to the fall in the price of Ecuadorian crude (from US$ 42.17 per barrel in 2015 to US$ 35.25 in 2016) and the consequent fall in oil revenues. However, this spending cut was not enough to offset the 9.7% fall in revenues, leading to a primary deficit of 5.9% of GDP and an overall deficit of 7.5% (compared with 3.7% and 5.1%, respectively, in 2015).

In addition to a 14.9% fall in oil revenues there was also a drop in tax revenues, despite the tax reforms implemented in 2016, in particular, the Civic Solidarity and Shared Responsibility Act, which was designed to mobilize resources during one year for reconstruction activities after the earthquake of 16 April 2016. By December 2016, this Act had generated revenues of US$ 1.161 billion, and an additional US$ 372 million was raised between January and May 2017 (compared to an estimated total of US$ 1 billion). Nevertheless, tax revenues fell by 10.1%, owing to a 15.0% reduction in value added tax (VAT) revenues and a 23.1% drop in income tax revenues. Customs duties fell by 19.4%, owing to a sharp reduction in imports and the partial dismantling of general balance-of-payment safeguards (which were eliminated completely in June 2017).

Current expenditure was cut by 3.2%, while capital spending fell by just 1.5% after being slashed by 27.1% in 2015. Among current expenditure, the biggest cuts were in the procurement of goods and services (-8.4%) and in other expenses (-17.3%), which include government transfers to the Ecuadorian Social Security Institute. In turn, interest payments rose by 14.1% and wages and salaries by 1.1%.

During 2016, the government turned to external and domestic sources to finance the deficit, and aggregate public debt rose to 39.6% of GDP by the end of 2016 (from 32.7% in 2015). The external sources include three issuances of international bonds for a total of US$ 2.75 billion (at rates of 10.75% and 9.65%) and the rise of US$ 2.658 billion in the bilateral credit line with China, which thus came to account for 31.7% of Ecuador’s total external public debt. A further US$ 900 million was raised in future oil sales deals, which are not recorded as foreign debt. Overall, foreign debt rose to 26.7% of GDP (from 20.2% in 2015). At the same time, domestic debt inched up to 12.9% of GDP (from 12.5% in 2015) and remained unchanged in absolute terms, as the largest source of domestic financing, namely the central bank’s purchase of short-term treasury certificates, is not recorded as public debt. Despite the increase in aggregate debt, consolidated debt —which does not include debt held by the country’s public institutions— stood at just 27.9% of GDP.

As 2017 is an election year, the budget for 2016 was carried over and will remain in place until the budget of the new government comes into effect towards August 2017. The authorities reported in April that the government would need financing in the amount of US$ 12.5 billion in 2017, down from the US$ 13.643 billion requirement in 2016. Between January and April 2017, tax revenues grew 14% compared to the same period in 2016, thanks to a 12.2% rise in VAT and a 23.4% hike in the special consumption tax, and to a 6.8% expansion in income tax collection. However, spending grew at a faster pace, financed in part by two sovereign bond issues, of US$ 1.0 billion in January and of US$ 2.0 billion in May 2017.

In January 2017, the Law to Prevent Speculation on Land Value and to Set Tax Rates entered into force, introducing a 75% land value tax that is applied to capital gains resulting from the second sale of property and land. The revenues collected will be distributed among the decentralized autonomous governments for sanitation works and basic services, among other things.

In March 2017 the Public Procurement Efficiency Act came into force, which provides for contributions from citizens whose properties will gain value from infrastructure upgrading. Also, under the National System of Road Infrastructure for Ground Transport Act, as from May 2017 the government will be able to charge owners of properties adjoining public road infrastructure a fee for the maintenance of fronts and kerbs next to their properties.

In June 2017, the government created a Productivity Advisory Council, with the involvement of the private sector. New initiatives are expected to increase tax collection and hence compensate for the loss of income resulting from the unwinding of balance-of-payments safeguards and solidarity contributions.

(b) Monetary and exchange-rate policies

The volume of deposits in the national financial system grew 19.5% in 2016, after a falling 10.6% in 2015. This improvement in liquidity is due, on the one hand, to greater confidence by depositors in the financial system and, on the other hand, to liquidity injections from public spending financed by external sources. However, the volume of credit began to grow only from October 2016, and at a very slow rate. As of December 2016, year-on-year growth in lending was 6.2%. At the same time, the non-performing loan rate fell to 4.6%, compared with 5.0% in December 2015 and after having reached 6.0% in August 2016.

At April 2017, the volume of deposits had grown 20.9% year-on-year, in line with growth seen in 2016, while lending growth accelerated to 12.4% over the same period.

Throughout 2016 and during the first months of 2017, the central bank increased its funding of the Ministry of Finance by buying short-term Treasury notes (Cetes). By December 2016, the State's debt with the central bank was 4.4% of GDP, 3.1 percentage points higher than in 2015, and by April 2017 it had risen to 5.8%.

Caps on lending rates remained unchanged during 2016 and up to June 2017 across the 16 credit categories defined by the Board of Monetary and Financial Regulation. Overall, effective lending rates declined, with notable reductions in corporate and ordinary commercial lending rates (from 9.3% and 9.3% in June 2016 to 7.8% and 8.1% in June 2017, respectively), due to sluggish demand for credit.

At the end of November 2016, the Board of Monetary and Financial Regulation increased the reserve requirement from 2% to 5% for banks with assets worth more than US$ 1 billion (the country's seven largest banks). Among other measures, the method for calculating the domestic liquidity ratio was also modified. It entered into force on 30 March 2017 and required the repatriation of some US$ 500 million.

The average real effective exchange rate fell by 1.7% in 2016 (after dropping 8.9% in 2015). This prevailing trend towards appreciation continued to affect the production sector's international competitiveness, particularly when compared with neighbouring Andean Community countries whose share of imports to Ecuador increased from 12.9% in 2015 to 14.3% in 2016. However, in the 12 months up to April 2017, there was a 1.6% depreciation year-on-year.

(c) Other policies

In an effort to stabilize prices, at the end of November 2016 the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and other major oil producers agreed to cut production by 1.8 million barrels per day for the first six months of the year. As part of the agreement, which entered into force in January 2017, Ecuador promised to reduce its oil production by 522,000 barrels per day over that period. The OPEC reference oil price stabilized around US$ 52 per barrel at the beginning of the year, but fell again in March, due to increased shale oil output and higher global reserves. Consequently, on 25 May the parties decided to extend the agreement until March 2018.

The trade deal with the European Union entered into force in January 2017, allowing a wide range of Ecuadorian goods to enter the European Union market duty-free. In February 2017, Ecuador signed a trade agreement with El Salvador. Meanwhile, it is unclear whether the Generalized System of Preferences for access to the United States market will be extended beyond December 2017. The general balance-of-payments safeguard was eliminated in June 2017, which will jeopardize the trade surplus. Against this backdrop, Ecuador is looking to enter into an agreement with Andean Community countries to establish a new foreign-exchange safeguard mechanism that would be applied temporarily to goods from Colombia, Peru and the Plurinational State of Bolivia through tariffs, differentiated levies or quotas.

In May 2017, Ecuador terminated 16 bilateral investment agreements it considered unconstitutional, owing to their inclusion of international arbitration options to settle disputes. However, these treaties will still be valid for 5 to 12 more years, and their renegotiation is also under consideration.

3. The main variables

(a) The external sector

In 2016, the balance-of-payments current account surplus was equivalent to 1.5% of GDP, thanks to a goods balance surplus of 1.6% of GDP, which resulted from a sharp contraction of imports —owing to the combined effect of import safeguards and weak domestic demand— that more than offset the fall in the value of exports.

Despite a 0.8% increase in volumes, lower prices led to an 8.4% drop in the value of exports in 2016. On the one hand, the value of oil exports fell 18.0%, while their volume remained almost constant (-0.3%). On the other hand, the value of non-oil exports dropped 2.8%, while their volume increased by 3.6%. The main destination markets were the United States —with 32.5% of total exports—, the member countries of the Latin American Integration Association (LAIA) (25.6%), the European Union (16.9%), Asian countries (16.9%) and the Andean Community (10.6%).

The sharp fall in the value of imports (24%) was the result of smaller volumes (down 12%) and lower prices. Capital goods contracted the most, with a 26.2% fall in terms of value and 24.5% in volume. Among commodities, building materials fell by 37.8% in terms of value and 30.3% in terms of volume exported, following the contraction in this sector of the economy. In turn, consumer goods imports fell 24.0% in terms of value and 12.0% in terms of volume.

Current transfers were up to 2.8% of GDP (from 2.1% in 2015). Remittances increased 9.4%, thanks to improved economic conditions in workers’ countries of residence and reflecting extra efforts to send funds home to help those affected by the earthquake of 16 April.

By the end of 2016, international reserves were equivalent to 4.4% of GDP, 1.9 percentage points higher than in 2015 and more than double their level in May 2016. At the end of June 2017, they represented 4.6% of GDP.

The trade balance posted a surplus during the first quarter of 2017 thanks to a 28.2% jump in the value of exports compared with the same period in 2016, which more than offset the 14.8% increase in imports. This was mainly due to the substantial hike in the value of oil exports.

(b) Economic activity

GDP posted negative growth in 2016 (-1.5%), the first contraction since the 1999 banking crisis. The weakest component of aggregate demand was gross fixed capital formation, which fell 8%, after shrinking 5.9% in 2015. Government consumption also contracted (3.3%), as did household consumption (1.9%), owing to the weak performance of the labour market and economic uncertainty. The positive contribution of net exports —owing to a 6.4% drop in imports that considerably outweighed the 0.3% reduction in exports— curbed the decline in GDP in 2016.

Construction was the main driver behind the economic downturn, shrinking by 8.9% as a result of the slower pace of activity in the infrastructure and real estate sectors. The communications sector contracted even more sharply (10.8%), but its smaller share of GDP limited its impact on aggregate growth. In turn, trade and manufacturing fell by 1.1% and 0.5%, respectively. On the plus side, the oil sector started growing again after shrinking in 2015, thanks to a 1.6% increase in oil (and mining) production, and oil refining activities were up by 45.5% following the repowering of the Esmeraldas refinery. Among the non-oil sectors, there was strong growth in the aquaculture (9.3%) and fishing (6.3%) sectors, as well as in electricity and water supply (7.9%), chiefly as a result of the increase in hydroelectric power generation.

GDP grew 2.6% year-on-year in the first quarter of 2017, owing mainly to the 3.6% jump in household consumption. Exports rose 2.7%, but a 6.1% increase in imports meant that net exports made a negative contribution to growth. Far from recovering, gross capital formation contracted once again (1.9%). Once again, oil refining (28.4%), electricity and water supply (22.4%) and fishing (11.0%) recorded the highest growth; commerce (5.7%) and manufacturing (3.7%) also grew, but construction contracted (-7.3%).

Crude oil production expanded 1.3% in 2016, after a 2.4% fall in 2015, thanks in large part to operations at the new Tiputini field in the Yasuní ITT block. The output of public companies grew by 2.5%, while private production fell 3.0%. During the first four months of 2017, production fell 3.1% compared to the same period in 2016, as a result of Ecuador’s commitment to reduce oil production in the frame of the OPEC agreement. Production for 2017 as a whole is expected to be cut by around 5.0%.

(c) Prices, wages and employment

Cumulative inflation for the year to December 2016 was 1.1%, owing to weak aggregate demand and the moderating effect of the appreciation of the United States dollar on import prices. Food and non-alcoholic beverages —the largest component of CPI, with a weighting of 22.5%— recorded inflation of 1.2%, while the biggest price hikes were in health (2.7%) and education (2.6%). The clothing and footwear (-4.7%), communications (-0.5%) and furniture and household goods (-0.2%) sectors saw deflation. As of May 2017, cumulative 12-month inflation stood at 1.1%.

The average urban unemployment rate rose to 6.8% in 2016, 1.4 percentage points higher than it was the year before, although it did fall in the fourth quarter (to 6.5%), in line with the economic upswing. The average participation rate increased by 1.6 percentage points in 2016, reaching 65.7%. The average employment rate was also up, from 60.7% to 61.2%, possibly as a result of the population’s need to find work in the face of economic difficulties. In the same vein, inadequate employment also rose, from 39.8% in 2015 to 44.4%. The trend seen in the fourth quarter of 2016 continued in the first quarter of 2017, with unemployment falling to 5.64% but inadequate employment rising to 46.8%, while participation remained at 65.6%.

The minimum wage rose by 1.7% in real terms in 2016, thanks to low inflation (based on the standard minimum monthly wage plus the thirteenth and fourteenth wage payments). A nominal increase of 2.5% was agreed for 2017, which is estimated to represent a real-term increase of around 1.5%.

Table 1
ECUADOR: MAIN ECONOMIC INDICATORS

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016 a/
	Annual growth rates b/								
Gross domestic product	6.4	0.6	3.5	7.9	5.6	4.9	4.0	0.2	-1.5
Per capita gross domestic product	4.6	-1.1	1.8	6.2	4.0	3.3	2.4	-1.3	-2.9
Gross domestic product, by sector									
Agriculture, livestock, hunting, forestry and fishing	1.7	1.7	0.7	7.9	0.8	6.7	4.4	3.8	0.5
Mining and quarrying	0.0	-0.3	0.1	2.8	2.6	2.9	6.3	-1.7	1.6
Manufacturing	9.1	-0.8	2.4	6.4	4.1	2.2	-0.3	-0.9	2.3
Electricity, gas and water	30.0	-10.0	34.5	27.1	17.9	11.5	7.3	6.4	7.9
Construction	8.8	2.8	3.4	17.6	12.2	7.4	7.2	-1.7	-8.9
Wholesale and retail commerce, restaurants and hotels	10.0	-2.2	3.5	5.8	4.6	6.5	3.0	-0.9	-1.8
Transport, storage and communications	9.8	7.0	5.4	7.7	7.0	8.9	6.1	-2.3	-3.7
Financial institutions, insurance, real estate and business services	4.7	-29.8	2.7	6.5	5.0	1.6	7.4	0.4	-0.8
Community, social and personal services	4.2	36.4	5.6	7.1	6.6	4.9	3.2	4.2	-3.2
Gross domestic product, by type of expenditure									
Final consumption expenditure	6.2	0.9	7.2	5.7	4.2	5.0	3.8	0.0	-2.1
Government consumption	11.1	11.6	4.4	8.7	11.1	10.3	5.2	0.6	-3.3
Private consumption	5.4	-1.0	7.7	5.1	2.9	3.9	3.4	-0.1	-1.9
Gross capital formation	22.5	-7.3	10.5	11.5	4.2	9.5	4.8	-8.6	-6.2
Exports (goods and services)	3.0	-4.8	-0.2	5.7	5.5	2.6	4.2	-0.4	-0.3
Imports (goods and services)	14.4	-9.9	14.8	3.6	0.8	7.0	4.3	-8.6	-6.4
Investment and saving c/	**Percentajes of GDP**								
Gross capital formation	26.4	25.6	28.0	28.1	27.8	28.5	28.2	26.9	23.5
National saving	29.3	26.1	25.8	27.6	27.6	27.5	27.7	24.7	25.0
External saving	-2.9	-0.5	2.3	0.5	0.2	1.0	0.5	2.1	-1.5
Balance of payments	**Millions of dollars**								
Current account balance	1 769	313	-1 583	-399	-166	-924	-524	-2 114	1 435
Goods balance	1 549	144	-1 504	-303	50	-529	-63	-1 650	1 567
Exports, f.o.b.	19 461	14 412	18 137	23 082	24 569	25 587	26 596	19 049	17 425
Imports, f.o.b.	17 912	14 268	19 641	23 385	24 519	26 115	26 660	20 699	15 858
Services trade balance	-1 571	-1 282	-1 522	-1 563	-1 394	-1 420	-1 171	-805	-1 055
Income balance	-1 429	-1 271	-1 037	-1 256	-1 301	-1 374	-1 554	-1 737	-1 858
Net current transfers	3 221	2 722	2 481	2 722	2 480	2 399	2 264	2 078	2 780
Capital and financial balance d/	-835	-2 960	370	671	-416	2 770	99	626	-228
Net foreign direct investment	1 057	309	166	644	568	727	772	1 322	738
Other capital movements	-1 893	-3 268	205	27	-984	2 043	-673	-696	-966
Overall balance	934	-2 647	-1 212	272	-582	1 846	-424	-1 488	1 207
Variation in reserve assets e/	-952	681	1 170	-336	475	-1 878	411	1 453	-1 763
Other financing	18	1 966	42	64	107	32	13	35	556
Other external-sector indicators									
Real effective exchange rate (index: 2005=100) f/	108.4	100.7	99.6	102.1	98.1	96.5	93.3	85.1	83.6
Terms of trade for goods (index: 2010=100)	103.7	86.7	100.0	112.4	112.1	113.2	112.7	83.8	81.6
Net resource transfer (millions of dollars)	-2 246	-2 264	-625	-522	-1 611	1 427	-1 441	-1 076	-1 530
Total gross external debt (millions of dollars)	16 900	13 514	13 914	15 210	15 913	18 788	24 112	27 720	34 153
Employment	**Average annual rates**								
Labour force participation rate g/	67.7	65.3	62.5	62.5	61.7	62.1	63.2	66.2	68.2
Unemployment rate h/	6.9	8.5	7.6	6.0	4.9	4.7	5.1	5.4	6.8
Open unemployment rate i/	5.4	6.9	6.1	5.0	4.2	4.0	4.3	4.7	5.9
Visible underemployment rate j/	11.9	12.6	12.1	9.8	8.2	8.9	9.3	10.9	15.4

Table 1 (concluded)

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016 a/
Prices	**Annual percentages**								
Variation in consumer prices (December-December)	8.8	4.3	3.3	5.4	4.2	2.7	3.7	3.4	1.1
Variation in producer prices (December-December)	8.0	1.4	6.9	3.1	2.0	3.1	3.1	-0.7	1.7
Variation in minimum real wage	8.5	3.6	6.4	5.2	5.2	6.1	3.2	0.2	1.6
Nominal deposit rate k/	5.5	5.4	4.6	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.9	5.3	5.7
Nominal lending rate l/	9.8	9.2	9.0	8.3	8.2	8.2	8.1	8.3	8.7
Central government	**Percentajes of GDP**								
Total revenue	22.3	18.5	21.7	21.7	22.2	21.4	19.9	20.3	18.6
Tax revenue	10.6	11.6	12.6	12.3	13.9	14.4	14.1	15.6	14.0
Total expenditure	23.3	22.7	23.3	23.3	24.2	27.2	26.2	24.1	24.1
Current expenditure	13.7	14.3	14.1	13.1	13.6	15.0	14.6	14.5	14.5
Interest	1.3	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.2	1.4	1.8	1.9
Capital expenditure	9.6	8.5	9.2	10.1	10.5	12.2	11.5	9.6	9.6
Primary balance	0.3	-3.5	-0.9	-0.7	-1.0	-4.5	-4.9	-2.0	-3.6
Overall balance	-1.0	-4.2	-1.6	-1.6	-2.0	-5.7	-6.3	-3.8	-5.6
Central government public debt	15.1	10.7	11.5	12.1	11.9	13.6	16.2	19.1	25.2
Domestic	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.7	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.1
External	14.7	10.4	11.1	11.6	11.2	12.5	15.1	18.1	24.1
Money and credit	**Percentages of GDP, end-of-year stocks**								
Domestic credit	15.3	17.3	22.1	23.6	25.8	27.6	29.6	29.6	34.4
To the public sector	-7.9	-5.9	-2.8	-3.1	-1.7	-0.5	1.1	1.5	4.5
To the private sector	23.2	23.2	24.8	26.7	27.6	28.2	28.5	28.1	30.0
Monetary base	9.9	11.1	10.7	10.6	11.4	13.4	14.4	16.6	21.3
M2	27.1	29.0	31.2	32.5	34.4	35.9	38.1	38.1	44.5

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of official figures.
a/ Preliminary figures.
b/ Based on figures in local currency at constant 2007 prices.
c/ Estimates based on figures denominated in dollars at current prices.
d/ Includes errors and omissions.
e/ A minus sign (-) indicates an increase in reserve assets.
f/ Annual average, weighted by the value of goods exports and imports.
g/ Nationwide total
h/ Urban Total. Includes hidden unemployment.
i/ Includes an adjustment for workforce figures due to exclusion of hidden unemployment.
j/ Urban total.
k/ Weighted average of the system effective deposit rates. Up to July 2007, reference deposit rate in dollars.
l/ Effective benchmark lending rate for the corporate commercial segment. Up to July 2007, reference lending rate in dollars.

Table 2

ECUADOR: MAIN QUARTERLY INDICATORS

	2015				2016				2017	
	Q.1	Q.2	Q.3	Q.4	Q.1	Q.2	Q.3	Q.4	Q.1	Q.2 a/
Gross domestic product (variation from same quarter of preceding year) b/	3.4	0.2	-0.8	-2.0	-4.0	-2.1	-1.2	1.5	2.6	...
Gross international reserves (millions of dollars)	3 680	4 249	4 162	2 977	3 041	2 739	4 312	4 147	4 491	3 013 c/
Real effective exchange rate (index: 2005=100) d/	86.5	86.2	84.1	83.4	82.0	84.0	84.5	84.1	84.7	85.4 c/
Consumer prices (12-month percentage variation)	3.8	4.9	3.8	3.4	2.3	1.6	1.3	1.1	1.0	1.1 c/
Wholesale prices (12-month percentage variation)	4.3	3.7	1.6	-0.7	0.8	-1.5	-1.0	1.7	-2.7	-1.8 c/
Nominal interest rates (average annualized percentages)										
Deposit rate e/	5.3	5.5	5.5	5.1	5.8	5.8	5.9	5.5	5.0	4.8 f/
Lending rate g/	7.5	8.4	8.2	9.2	9.0	8.9	8.6	8.4	8.1	8.1 f/
Interbank rate	1.3	1.9	2.3	2.1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sovereign bond spread, Embi + (basis points to end of period) h/	865	824	1451	1266	1 058	913	845	647	666	694 c/
Stock price index (national index to end of period, 31 December 2005 = 100)	169	173	164	161	158	154	149	150	159	171
Domestic credit (variation from same quarter of preceding year)	14.5	10.9	11.9	3.6	-1.0	2.8	7.0	13.6	15.2 i/	...
Non-performing loans as a percentage of total credit	4.6	4.7	4.9	5.4	6.2	6.2	5.8	5.5	5.2	5.0 f/

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of official figures.
a/ Preliminary figures.
b/ Based on figures in local currency at constant 2007 prices.
c/ Figures as of May.
d/ Quarterly average, weighted by the value of goods exports and imports.
e/ Weighted average of the system effective deposit rates.
f/ Figures as of April.
g/ Effective benchmark lending rate for the corporate commercial segment.
h/ Measured by J.P.Morgan.
i/ Figures as of February.

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