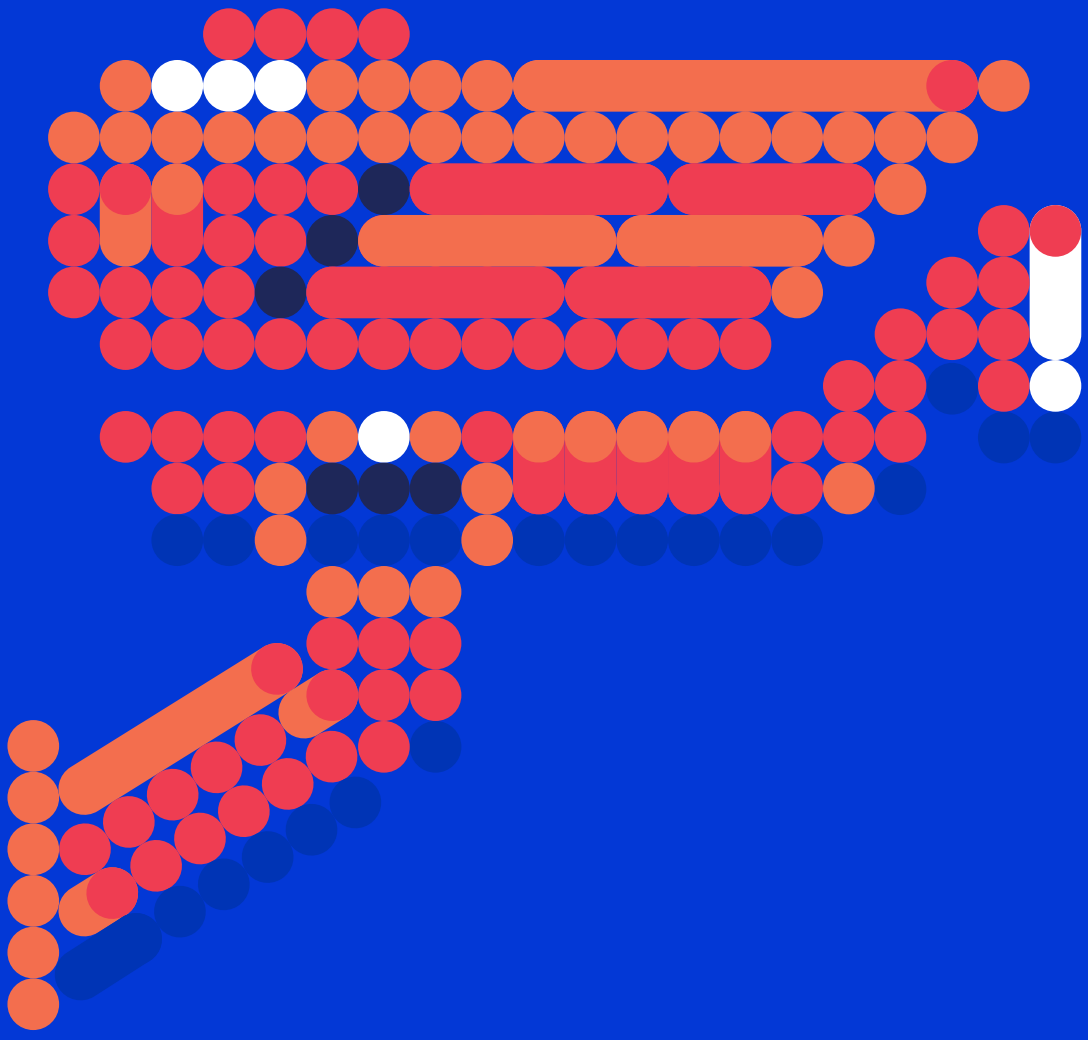
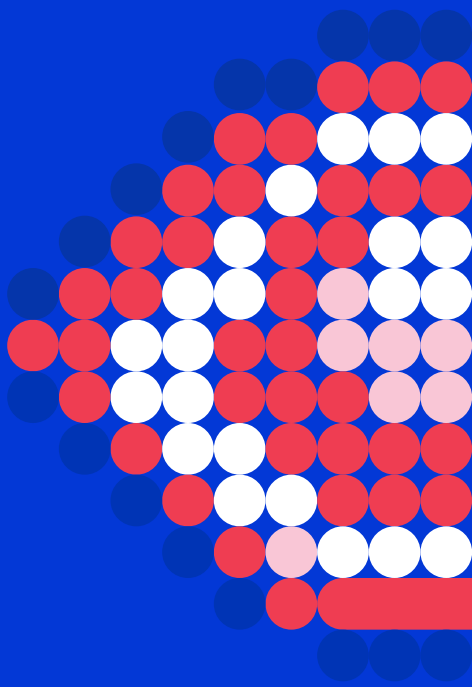
Facial recognition and surveillance technologies in Latin America:

cases, providers and commercial dynamics.





AlSur

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"AlSur" is a consortium of 11 organizations working in civil society and academia in Latin America that seek to strengthen human rights in the region's digital environment by working together.

ALSUR MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS:

- Asociación por los Derechos Civiles (ADC) - Argentina
- Centro de Estudios en Libertad de Expresión y Acceso a la Información (CELE) - Argentina
- Coding Rights - Brazil
- Derechos Digitales - Chile/Brazil
- Fundación Karisma - Colombia
- Hiperderecho - Peru
- Instituto Brasileiro de Defesa do Consumidor (IDEC) - Brazil
- Instituto Panameño de Derecho y Nuevas Tecnologías - Panama
- InternetLab - Brazil
- Red en Defensa de los Derechos Digitales (R3D) - Mexico
- TEDIC - Paraguay

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Introduction

In 2021, an AlSur report identified 38 facial recognition initiatives implemented as part of public policy across nine Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay and Peru)[1]. These initiatives focused on the surveillance of public spaces and on identity authentication for accessing rights and social benefits. The findings were presented on a dedicated microsite[2].

Four years after that milestone, this journalistic investigation revisits and updates that strategic starting point to examine the current status of the initiatives identified at the time, while also incorporating new cases of interest. The goal is to identify key providers and map the main commercial trends surrounding surveillance technologies, with attention to both export and import dynamics, as well as to the regulatory frameworks that govern them, whether regional blocs or bilateral and multilateral agreements. This analysis also helps situate Latin American countries within a broader configuration of expanding geopolitical and commercial interests.

While the term "surveillance technologies" can encompass a wide range of systems, this investigation focuses primarily on previously identified facial recognition technologies and certain urban monitoring systems.

This report is organized into three sections: an updated mapping of initiatives in the region, including new relevant cases; an analysis of the composition of surveillance technology supply chains and their main providers; and an examination of the relationship structures shaped by dominant geopolitical interests and the position Latin American countries occupy within this broader landscape.

1 Facial recognition in Latin America: trends in the implementation of a perverse technology https://www.alsur.lat/en/report/facial-recognition-latin-america-trends-implementation-perverse-technology

2 Facial Recognition in Latin America https://estudio.reconocimientofacial.info/en/

Methodological aspects

Based on the mapping conducted by AlSur, this investigation adopted a multiple case study design to verify the status of the 38 initiatives reported in 2021 in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay and Peru. To that end, the consortium's research was reviewed for information on surveillance technology providers, and the status of each initiative was cross-checked using various journalistic, official and corporate sources.

Methodologically, this report is the result of a journalistic investigation conducted between December 2024 and March 2025. During this period, available information was reviewed to update and incorporate new data on the status of the initiatives reported in 2021. Additional initiatives were also included, selected based on the research team's realistic ability to identify and verify the available information within the study's limited timeframe, in order to expand the basis for subsequent analysis. Furthermore, the scope of the survey was broadened to include other countries in the region, incorporating initiatives that made it possible to identify trends, key actors, and, in turn, analyze the commercial dynamics in which they are involved. For this reason, the information presented below, organized by country, does not aim to constitute an exhaustive mapping.

As in the previous report, this investigation focused on facial recognition systems implemented in public policy, especially those intended for the surveillance of public space and identity authentication. In this context, public space is understood to include areas under general public ownership, control and use, such as streets, parks, highways, buildings, border crossings and airports, among others.

It is worth clarifying that the current mapping includes an additional specific initiative involving the use of surveillance technologies in soccer stadiums. This case was selected to illustrate a State-driven initiative (rather than one promoted by sports federations) intended for permanent use. The scope also excluded systems deployed in private spaces (such as stores, shopping malls or banks), as well as those used in contexts like e-commerce or for accessing digital devices or applications that are not tied to access to public services.

Following the methodology of the previous report, country-specific datasheets were developed using the same categories (initiative name, start date, providers, technology origin, type of contract and status) to ensure methodological continuity. Bolivia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Uruguay were added to the original nine countries, bringing the total to 15.

The survey drew on reports from specialized organizations, official documents, news articles and online research on companies and governments. It is also worth noting that municipal initiatives were excluded if there was no conclusive information regarding contracting, providers or project details.

Following the survey, business intelligence and data visualization tools were used to identify connections among key actors in the surveillance technology supply chain and to detect commercial patterns and dynamics.

Finally, three specialists in business practices were interviewed to help contextualize and analyze the findings from the survey of regional initiatives. Two of them provided official statements, which are referenced in the report, while the third contributed on the express condition of not being cited; therefore, their input was used solely to inform the analysis.

Preliminary findings

This section presents some relevant preliminary findings identified throughout the research. These findings are intended to help guide the reading of the report and are further explored and/or contextualized in the following chapters.

First, the research confirmed significant difficulties in accessing official information regarding government facial recognition initiatives in the region. While in countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Uruguay the availability of official information is broader than in others, in many cases details could only be obtained through journalistic investigations covering these initiatives.

This report identifies 45 new initiatives, in addition to the 38 reported in 2021. Of these new initiatives, 27 are active, 12 are in the process of implementation, 5 have an unconfirmed status and 1 has been deactivated. Regarding the 2021 initiatives, 26 are currently active, 6 are in the process of implementation, and 6 have been deactivated. In total, 83 initiatives were identified in the region: 53 active, 18 in the process of implementation, 7 deactivated, and 5 with unconfirmed status.

Facial recognition in LATAM: Status of initiatives by country

Interactive visualization showing the classification of countries based on the status of the identified initiatives.

As mentioned, Bolivia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Uruguay were added to the list of countries analyzed in the region. New cases relevant for further analysis were detected in all countries where initiatives had already been identified, with the exception of Costa Rica. The highest number of new cases was reported in Chile (11), Brazil (9), Argentina (6), Colombia (5) and Panama (4).

While public security remains the primary area of application for these technologies, their use in migration and border control is also increasing, as illustrated by several highlighted cases.

The EUROFRONT Program[3], funded by the European Union, deserves special attention. It is a delegated cooperation initiative between the European Union and Latin America, aimed at "strengthening the effectiveness" of border management in "the fight against human trafficking and migrant smuggling." As a pilot programme, EUROFRONT covers seven countries in the region, where surveillance technologies such as facial recognition and biometric registration are being deployed. Through this programme, these technologies have been implemented at border crossings between Colombia and Ecuador (Rumichaca), Bolivia and Peru (Desaguadero), Bolivia and Argentina (Bermejo-Aguas Blancas) and in the Triple Frontier region between Paraguay, Argentina, and Brazil.

As in the previous report, local providers continue to lead the deployment of facial recognition technologies in the region (see Annex I). However, a significant presence of global actors was also observed in several countries. IDEMIA (France), NEC (Japan), Dahua (China), Hikvision (China), Veridos (Germany), Innovatrics (Czech Republic), General Dynamics Mission Systems (Canada) and Herta (Spain) are the companies most frequently mentioned in this research.

Finally, an emerging trend in remote surveillance has been identified: Video Surveillance as a Service (VSaaS), a cloud-based video surveillance system powered by artificial intelligence. In this model, rather than relying on the local installation and maintenance of hardware and software, state agents can access security cameras and monitoring systems through an internet connection.

3 What is EUROFRONT? https://programaeurofront.eu/en/pages/que-es-eurofront

On surveillance technology initiatives in the region

The following section aims to assess the current status of the initiatives reported in AlSur's latest report (2021) and to highlight some new implementations that were of interest for identifying trends, key providers (including their origin and affiliations), and for analysing the commercial dynamics in which these actors operate. As previously mentioned, the information provided below, organised by country, is not intended to be an exhaustive mapping[4].

ARGENTINA

AlSur's 2021 report documented four initiatives in Argentina. At present, three remain active[5] and one is currently inactive: the Facial Recognition System for Fugitives (SRFP) in the City of Buenos Aires. The SRFP was suspended by the judiciary in March 2024, after it was confirmed that biometric data had been collected from thousands of individuals who were not being sought by the justice system, the only legal basis permitted for its use. The investigation also revealed that the system may have been manipulated to unlawfully and improperly access personal information. Among those affected were political figures, public officials, journalists, and other public personalities[6]. The company responsible for the system's implementation was Danaide, which also provides other video surveillance technologies in the city. In August 2024, when the SRFP had already been suspended by the judiciary, the city government of Buenos Aires extended until July 2026 a "turn-key"[7] audio and video transmission service using multiple wireless links, originally awarded to the company through a 2022 tender[8].

4 Annex I to this report provides the complete list of companies operating in each of the surveyed countries, along with detailed information about their operations.

5 The three active initiatives are: SIBIOS (Federal Biometric Identification System for Security); the Facial Recognition System of the Municipality of Tigre, in the Province of Buenos Aires; and the Facial Recognition System of the Province of Salta. https://estudio.reconocimientofacial.info/en/mapped-initiatives/

6 Juzgado de Primera Instancia en lo Contencioso, Administrativo y Tributario N° 2 de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires. (2022, April 12). Suspenden el sistema de reconocimiento facial de prófugos (SRFP) (Medida cautelar, Expte. N° 783420/2022). iJudicial. Retrieved from https://ijudicial.gob.ar/2022/suspenden-el-sistema-de-reconocimiento-facial-de-profugos/

7 Pliego de especificaciones técnicas. Licitación pública para la contratación de un servicio de transmisión de audio y video utilizando múltiples vínculos inalámbricos con su correspondiente soporte y capacitación con destino a la división exteriores de video, bajo la modalidad de llave en mano (Gobierno de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires, 2022) https://documentosboletinoficial.buenosaires.gob.ar/publico/PE-RES-MJYSGC-SSGA-100-22-ANX-1.pdf

8 Boletín Oficial No. 6935, (2024, August 14) Gobierno de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires. https://documentosboletinoficial.buenosaires.gob.ar/publico/20240814.pdf

New initiatives identified

- **Quilmes Emergency Center (CEQ) |** In September 2017, the municipality of Quilmes launched the CEQ[9], an initiative that has since been reformed and expanded to incorporate advanced technology, artificial intelligence and improved operational protocols for crime prevention[10]. The company Danaide was directly contracted to provide comprehensive video management and analysis services[11]. The project is currently operational.

- **Facial recognition System for fugitives in Mar del Plata |** In August 2022, the Deliberative Council of the city of Mar del Plata approved the contracting of software to implement a facial recognition system aimed at detecting fugitives from justice[12]. A year later, a public tender was launched. However, the process was halted because the national authorities failed to provide the necessary comparison databases. In April 2024, the municipality reported that a second call for tenders was being prepared. Local media reported that Danaide had expressed interest in taking on the initiative, which remains in the early stages of implementation[13].

- **Facial recognition system in Santa Fe |** In November 2024, the provincial government launched Expedited Tender 05/2024 to procure the provision, installation and operation of a public video surveillance system with facial recognition capabilities. The tender specifications include servers, artificial intelligence configuration for existing cameras, the addition of 5,050 new cameras, preventive maintenance and comprehensive project management, including data analysis. As of now, it is not possible to confirm whether the system has been awarded or is operational[14].

- **Urban bus monitoring plan in Salta |** In April 2023, the Ministry of Security and SAETA, one of the companies providing urban public transport services in the city of Salta, announced that all bus units would be equipped with a video surveillance system featuring facial recognition technology. This is a continuation of an initiative launched in 2018, as the president of the transport company noted that the surveillance cameras already installed on the buses are compatible with the facial recognition system currently used by the Salta branch of the company Nubicom[15].

- **Facial recognition at control posts in Salta |** In October 2024, the province announced the installation of scanners, security cameras with facial recognition capabilities and license plate recognition systems at control posts at the entrances to the territory. Salta has had this technology since 2018, which has enabled the implementation of various surveillance initiatives. At the time, as reported by AlSur in its 2021 report, the provider was Nubicom, a local company specializing in connectivity, hardware and software services[16]. The new initiative could signal the continuation or expansion of the use of technology supplied by this company.

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9 La Tecla. (September 25, 2017). Patricia Bullrich y Molina inauguran en Quilmes el Centro Único de Monitoreo (CUM). https://www.latecla.info/83074-patricia-bullrich-y-molina-inauguran-en-quilmes-el-centro-nico-de-monitoreo-cum

10 Ministerio de Seguridad de la Provincia de Buenos Aires.(2022, November 11). Subsecretaría de Tecnologías Aplicadas a la Seguridad visita el Centro Único de Monitoreo de Quilmes. https://www.mseg.gba.gov.ar/prensa/visita-cum-quilme

11 Municipio de Quilmes. (2023, February 17). Boletín Oficial N° 457. http://datos.quilmes.gov.ar/dataset/0257a32d-65f1-48fa-8d3c-80cb0d36f722/resource/5d2f7b9d-401a-4e4f-b0c7-d6a9c4e2594c/download/boletin-457.pdf

12 La Capital (2022, August 25). El Concejo Deliberante aprobó el proyecto de reconocimiento facial. La Capital Mar del Plata. https://www.lacapitalmdp.com/el-concejo-deliberante-aprobo-el-proyecto-de-reconocimiento-facial/

13 La Tecla Mar del Plata. (2024, September 3). Reconocimiento facial: dos años después, la ordenanza sigue esperando [La licitación pública N° 08/23 quedó trunca por falta de la base de datos biométricos nacionales]. La Tecla Mar del Plata. https://www.lateclamardelplata.com.ar/52420-reconocimiento-facial-dos-anos-despues-la-ordenanza-sigue-esperando

14 Gobierno de la Provincia de Santa Fe. (n.d.). Gestión de compras N.º 13 2680 [Public tender]. Gobierno de la Provincia de Santa Fe. https://www.santafe.gov.ar/gestionesdecompras/site/output.php?a=gestiones.ver&idGestion=132680&print=1

15 Gobierno de la Provincia de Salta; SAETA. (2023, April 10). Inició el Plan de Monitoreo para la instalación de más cámaras de seguridad en colectivos de SAETA [Official statement]. Gobierno de la Provincia de Salta https://www.salta.gob.ar/prensa/videos/institucional-1/inicio-el-plan-de-monitoreo-para-la-instalacion-de-mas-camaras-de-seguridad-en-colectivos-de-saeta-12631

16 AlSur. (2021). Facial recognition in Latin America: trends in the implementation of a perverse technology [Report]. Retrieved from https://www.alsur.lat/sites/default/files/2021-10/ALSUR_Reconocimiento%20facial%20en%20Latam_EN_Final.pdf

- **Mobile facial identification posts in Mendoza |** In May 2024, the municipality of Guaymallén announced the launch of this initiative. The system consists of a digital camera connected to a tablet operated by a police officer. Authorities highlighted the system's mobility, noting that "it can be used at mass events." At the time of writing this report, the system was in its testing phase and had been deployed at several high-traffic locations and sports events. During the public launch, police authorities were seen operating a camera presumably manufactured by the company Avigilon[17].

BOLIVIA

Unlike the 2021 report, in which no initiatives were documented, the greater availability of information in the current survey made it possible to identify two new initiatives:

- **BOL-110 Security system |** Installation of the system began in 2019 and it was inaugurated during the Oruro Carnival in 2020. Its initial objective was to activate approximately 300 video surveillance cameras and at least eight cameras equipped with facial recognition technology, complemented by intelligent patrol vehicles deployed along strategic routes. In 2023, the project continued with an expansion in the number of facial recognition cameras. At present, the BOL-110 Integrated Citizen Security System includes 18 facial recognition cameras, 10 license plate recognition cameras, and 12 community alarms. The technological implementation is being carried out by the Chinese state-owned company CEIEC (China National Electronics Import & Export Corporation), the same company that developed the ECU-911 system infrastructure in Ecuador. The contract was signed in January 2016, and funding comes from the Export-Import Bank of China (Eximbank)[18], which granted Bolivia a loan of 105 million dollars for its implementation[19]. The initiative is part of the public security policy of the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

- **Equipment for migration management at the border with Peru (Desaguadero) and Argentina (Bermejo) |** In 2023, migration management equipment was deployed in Desaguadero and Bermejo. The initiative was implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) within the framework of the EUROFRONT Program, primarily aimed at improving integrated border management and combating human trafficking and migrant smuggling. EUROFRONT's pillar on infrastructure and technological equipment for integrated border management seeks to provide "equipment to improve the inspection of travel documents at border crossings, as well as other biometric or identity verification tools."[20]

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17 Gobierno de la Provincia de Mendoza. (2024, May 23). Reconocimiento facial: nuevo sistema de seguridad aplicado en Guaymallén. https://www.mendoza.gov.ar/prensa/reconocimiento-facial-nuevo-sistema-de-seguridad-aplicado-en-guaymallen/
Municipalidad de Guaymallén. (2024, May). Guaymallén implementa puestos móviles de identificación facial. https://www.guaymallen.gob.ar/guaymallen-implementa-puestos-moviles-de-identificacion-facial/
Diario Uno Mendoza. (2024, May 24). Guaymallén presentó el sistema de reconocimiento facial con cámaras móviles. https://www.diariouno.com.ar/mendoza/guaymallen-presento-el-sistema-reconocimiento-facial-camaras-moviles-n1324567

18 "12 elementos tecnológicos componen el BOL-110" in Eju. Published on 07/22/2018. https://eju.tv/2018/07/12-elementos-tecnologicos-componen-el-bol-110/

19 "Desafíos críticos para Latinoamérica y el Caribe", Universidad de Chile, page 182. https://libros.uchile.cl/files/presses/1/monographs/1207/submission/proof/182/#zoom=z

20 EUROFRONT Programme, Componente 1, Pilar 4. Términos de referencia. https://www.oportunidades.onu.org.bo/docs/221409-4630-20230125223812.pdf

BRAZIL

Of the initiatives identified in 2021, three remain active, one is in the process of implementation (the Integrated Monitoring Camera Center - CICC - in Itacoatiara) and two are inactive: the facial recognition technology installed in some São Paulo metro stations (ViaQuatro) and the facial recognition system of the Companhia do Metropolitano de São Paulo[21]. Among the active initiatives, the 2024 São João de Campina Grande event incorporated new video surveillance technologies, including drones, "super cameras" and facial identification. While the provider, Staff of Security Technologies do Brasil Software Ltda, was de-registered in 2023, no information was obtained about a new provider. Monitoring efforts were intensified with the deployment of 221 fixed cameras, 18 360-degree PTZ cameras and 36 facial recognition cameras[22].

New initiatives identified:

- **Smart Sampa |** In August 2023, an ambitious project was launched to implement a system of over 40,000 cameras equipped with facial recognition technology in the city of São Paulo. The goal was to integrate these cameras into a unified video surveillance platform to support the operation of traffic co|ntrol, emergency response, public transportation and security forces. By 2024, the installation of up to 20,000 cameras was planned, while the rest correspond to private devices that would be gradually incorporated into the network. The system would receive data from images captured by drones, body-worn cameras and vehicle-mounted cameras. The contract, valid for 60 months, was awarded through a public tender to the SMART CITY SP consortium[23], composed of Jorge Marques Moura, CID Constructora Lacos Detetores e Eletrônica Ltda, Flama Serviços Ltda, Camerite Sistemas SA, and PL9 Tecnologia e Serviços Ltda[24]. Due to concerns about the system's potential for racial bias, the bidding process was suspended twice. However, São Paulo courts ruled that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate such bias and the procurement process proceeded[25]. The winning bid amounts to USD 1.9 million per month[26]. According to information accessed through YouTube videos and social media posts, some of the installed cameras belong to the Brazilian company Flama Serviços Ltda, and the facial recognition system used is from Sentinel X, also a Brazilian company. Additionally, another portion of the cameras was provided by Camerite Sistemas SA and is operated using the Hórus System, which was patented and made available by the same company.

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21 The initiatives identified in 2021 were: Validation of the national driver's license by biometric data;Proof of life to acquire benefit/pension from the INSS (National Institute of Social Security), both currently active; the Edital de Licitação do Metrô de São Paulo; the Integrated Monitoring Camera Center of Itacoatiara (CICC); and the project in São João de Campina Grande, Paraíba (Brazil). https://estudio.reconocimientofacial.info/en/mapped-initiatives/

22 Segurança: São João de Campina Grande 2024 começa com tecnologia de videomonitoramento por drones, 'supercâmera' e identificação facial. Published on 05/29/2024. tps://paraiba.pb.gov.br/noticias/seguranca-sao-joao-de-campina-grande-2024-comeca-com-tecnologia-de-videomonitoramento-por-drones-supercamera-e-identificacao-facial

23 Nova Plataforma de Videomonitoramento Smart Sampa https://participemais.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/legislation/processes/209

24 1º TERMO ADITIVO AO CONTRATO N.º 032/SMSU/2023 https://www.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/cidade/secretarias/upload/seguranca_urbana/1_TERMO_ADITIVO_AO_TC_032SMSU_2023_SMART_SAMPA.pdf

25 Preocupación en Sao Paulo por Smart Sampa, un sistema de 40 mil cámaras con reconocimiento facial, by Red en Defensa de los Derechos Digitales (R3D). Published on 27/07/2023. https://r3d.mx/2023/07/27/preocupacion-en-sao-paulo-por-smart-sampa-un-sistema-de-40-mil-camaras-con-reconocimiento-facial/

26 EDITAL DE PREGÃO ELETRÔNICO PARA PRESTAÇÃO DE SERVIÇOS CONTÍNUOS N.º 079/SMSU/2022 OFERTA DE COMPRA https://capital.sp.gov.br/documents/d/seguranca_urbana/edital-smart-sampa-pdf

- **Fronteira Tech - Muralha Inteligente de Brasil |** "Muralha Inteligente" is an agreement signed in December 2020 between Itaipu Binacional, the Receita Federal de Brasil (the federal agency responsible for customs inspections) and PTI-BR. The goal is to implement, research and develop smart technological solutions to more effectively combat smuggling, embezzlement and arms and drug trafficking in the Triple Frontier area (Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay)[27]. The Fronteira Tech program, which includes the Muralha Inteligente project[28], uses 33 smart streetlights, each equipped with two cameras, amounting to 66 devices capable of facial recognition and license plate identification. There are also four fixed cameras with the same technologies installed at strategic points, as well as 15 LED streetlights with remote management and GPS and 11 sensor units that form part of the system. The use of high-definition cameras for border surveillance generates real-time information and is managed by an operations center, which influences customs operations[29].

- **FRT in Copacabana, Rio de Janeiro |** In Rio de Janeiro, facial recognition technology has been used by the Military Police since 2023 in certain raids and preventive operations. However, during the 2024 New Year's Eve celebration on Copacabana Beach, 17 screening points equipped with facial recognition systems and metal detectors were set up as part of a broader security scheme[30].

- **FRT in Paraíba |** In late July 2023, the state government of Paraíba signed a cooperation agreement with the Chinese company Dahua Technology for the "management of Big Data traffic and police body cameras." Urban facial recognition projects using Chinese technology are also underway in Campinas, in the state of São Paulo, and in at least 78 cities across the state of Bahia, following a 2019 decision by former governor Rui Costa, who now serves as Chief of Staff in the current federal government. The data collected by the hundreds of cameras installed on the streets is fed into a centralized computer system and used to create a file that maps facial features and serves as a "facial identification number."[31].

- **FRT and AI in Rondônia |** Since April 2021, the state of Rondônia has deployed 265 specialized vehicles to reinforce public security. These vehicles are equipped with video monitoring, weapon mounts, satellite tracking, digital radios and remote monitoring capabilities via an app. Of these, 19 are fitted with artificial intelligence and video surveillance systems for facial and license plate recognition[32]. The consortium formed by the companies TB and Tecway won the public tender and selected the Chinese company Dahua Technology to supply the video monitoring and AI solutions. The equipment provided by Dahua includes recorders, mobile PTZ cameras, fixed cameras, monitors, joysticks and HD, as well as central management software[33].

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27 Tecnología y derechos humanos en la triple frontera, by TEDIC. Published on January, 2023 https://www.tedic.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Tecnologia-y-DDHH-en-la-Triple-Frontera-1.pdf

28 Fronteira Tech https://www.abdi.com.br/fronteira-tech/

29 LATAM, una región enamorada de la vigilancia en 2023, by AccessNow. Published on 12/20/2023 https://www.accessnow.org/latam-una-region-enamorada-de-la-vigilancia-en-2023/

30 Mais de 28 mil agentes de segurança vão trabalhar no reveillón no RJ, by Portal de Noticias GNC. Published on 12/20/2024 https://portaldenoticiasgncnews.com.br/noticia/60897/mais-de-28-mil-agentes-de-seguranca-vao-trabalhar-no-reveillon-no-rj

31 Crecen los proyectos de vigilancia china en Brasil tras la entrada de Huawei: desde las prisiones hasta la seguridad urbana, by Infobae. Published on 09/211/023 https://www.infobae.com/america/america-latina/2023/09/11/crecen-los-proyectos-de-vigilancia-china-en-brasil-tras-la-entrada-de-huawei-desde-las-prisiones-hasta-la-seguridad-urbana/

32 Rondônia implanta recursos de IA e reconhecimento facial e de placas em viaturas, by Tiinside. Published on 04/07/2021 https://tiinside.com.br/07/04/2021/rondonia-implanta-recursos-de-ia-reconhecimento-facial-e-de-placas-em-viaturas/

33 Rondônia adota IA e reconhecimento facial na segurança pública, by Infra News Telecom. https://www.infranewstelecom.com.br/rondonia-adota-ia-e-reconhecimento-facial-na-seguranca-publica/

- **Surveillance cameras with FRT in the state of Espírito Santo |** In 2021, the state of Espírito Santo issued a call for bids to acquire surveillance cameras with facial and license plate recognition capabilities. The winning consortium was made up of two local companies—Perkóns and Velsis—along with Dahua Technology. However, the process was challenged by several competing companies, who claimed that the tender specifications had been designed to favor the consortium[34]. Brazilian media reported allegations of corruption based on a leaked USB drive purportedly containing internal documents and emails from Dahua. It was claimed that the materials showed Dahua's involvement in the specifications process before they were made public, in order to ensure that only its products would meet the requirements[35]. Despite the accusations, Dahua remained part of the consortium under the contract, and in 2022 implemented the first phase of the project, in which 1,160 surveillance cameras were integrated into the company's big data–based analytics platform.[36].

CHILE

According to the current survey, of the ten initiatives reported in 2021[37], eight remain active and two are now inactive: the Anti-evasion formula in Transantiago and Valparaíso Metro (with facial recognition), and the Facial recognition mobile application to deliver the Unique Key, which is no longer available due to security concerns[38]. Among the active initiatives is the Immigration automation system at the Arturo Merino Benítez International Airport in Santiago, which at the time was still being implemented. Particularly noteworthy is the Mobile Remote Surveillance System, launched in 2019, which has been reinforced through various agreements between the Chilean government and regional authorities since its inception. A similar case is the Safe Street Plan, reported to have started in February 2021 and later reformulated under Gabriel Boric's administration, without the facial recognition system being discontinued.

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34 A Gazeta. (n.d.). STJ derruba decisão que barrava contrato de cerco eletrônico no ES. Retrieved from https://www.agazeta.com.br/es/politica/stj-derruba-decisao-que-barrava-contrato-de-cerco-eletronico-no-es-1221
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Realidade Capixaba. (n.d.). Licitação do cerco eletrônico do Detran: perícia e depoimento de empresários na justiça. Retireved from https://www.realidadecapixaba.com/licitacao-do-cerco-eletronico-do-detran-pericia-e-depoimento-de-empresarios-na-justica/
Século Diário. (n.d.). Juíza dá prazo para réus em ação da OAB explicarem suposta fraude no Detran. Retrieved from https://www.seculodiario.com.br/justiaa/juiza-da-prazo-para-reus-em-acao-daoab-explicarem-suposta-fraude-no-detran/
Supremo Tribunal Federal. (n.d.). DECISÃO: Cuida-se de reclamação constitucional, com pedido de liminar, ajuizada pela Associação Brasileira de Imprensa (ABI). Retrieved from https://www.stf.jus.br/arquivo/cms/noticiaNoticiaStf/anexo/RCL47792.pdf

35 Cortes, E. (2021, April 10). Episódio do pen drive: Denúncia foi feita com base em documentos adulterados e falsificados. Blog do Elimar Cortes. https://elimarcortes.com.br/2021/04/10/episodio-do-pen-drive-denuncia-foi-feita-com-base-em-documentos-adulterados-e-falsificados/

36 Majerowicz, E. and Henriques de Carvalho, M. (2023) China's Expansion into Brazilian Digital Surveillance Markets https://hummedia.manchester.ac.uk/institutes/gdi/publications/workingpapers/di/dd_wp100.pdf

37 The initiatives identified in 2021 were: the Anti-evasion formula in Transantiago and Valparaíso Metro; the Mobile Remote Surveillance System; the Safe Street Plan; the Facial recognition mobile application to deliver the Unique Key; the Immigration automation system for Arturo Merino Benítez International Airport in Santiago; the "Maipú Seguro" program; the Santiago Smart City initiative; the biometric surveillance camera plan to combat crime in that municipality; the modernization of the Lo Barnechea Security Unit; and the surveillance cameras with facial recognition software in the Municipality of San Joaquín. https://estudio.reconocimientofacial.info/en/mapped-initiatives/

38 Ramírez, F. (2020, March 31). Pandemia y tecnología: los riesgos del reconocimiento facial y el manejo de datos. uchile.cl. https://uchile.cl/noticias/162239/pandemia-y-tecnologia-los-riesgos-del-reconocimiento-facial

New initiatives identified:

- **Automated Biometric Identification System (ABIS) |** In December 2022, Chile's central government, regional authorities and the Investigations Police (PDI) launched this initiative, which enables the identification of individuals through facial, voice or fingerprint recognition. The multi-biometric identification system comprises both software licenses and hardware, and was implemented for migration control purposes. Several media reports indicate that the provider is NEC Chile, although no official information could be found on the company's website[39]. It is worth noting that in September 2024, the company announced a new system using biometric authentication technology, capable of identifying a large number of individuals simultaneously, even while in motion[40].

- **Video surveillance system with artificial intelligence |** In April 2024, the Government of Santiago introduced an integrated video surveillance system powered by artificial intelligence to detect danger alerts in public spaces[41]. No official documentation was found regarding the contracting of the company. However, press reports indicated that the platform was provided by VSaaS.ai[42]. According to the company's website, it offers image analysis services, including facial detection. Nonetheless, the company does not list the Government of Santiago among its clients. This initiative also highlights a new trend in the field of video surveillance: the use of artificial intelligence–based Video Surveillance as a Service (VSaaS) software, which offers cloud-based monitoring services[43].

- **Integrated Teleprotection System with Artificial Intelligence |** This initiative is currently in the pilot testing phase, promoted by the Chilean government through the Ministry of the Interior and implemented by the Undersecretariat of Crime Prevention[44]. Its goal is to harness the potential of artificial intelligence (AI) and emerging technologies to support crime prevention and enhance the safety of people and communities[45]. As a public-private partnership, the central government invited technology companies to join the project, and reportedly, 11 companies from Canada, Chile, China, Spain, the United States and Japan have agreed to support the initiative's innovation lab[46].

- **Multi-Biometric passport |** This document was officially launched in December 2024, with new security measures and the option to have it in digital form[47]. In this way, Chilean citizens will be able to opt for a Digital ID card, which can be used through an app. It will allow access to both public and private sector services, making it easier to complete procedures digitally. The provider of this technology is the French company IDEMIA.

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39 Last accessed on 04/31/2025.. https://cl.nec.com/es_CL/press/index.html

40 NEC lanza un nuevo sistema utilizando tecnología de autenticación biométrica. Press release. Published in September 2024 https://cl.nec.com/es_CL/press/PR/20240905025904_23634.html

41 Gobernador de Santiago y delegada lanzan el primer Sistema integrado de cámaras de televigilancia y gestión de tránsito con uso de inteligencia artificial de la RM. Published on 04/30/2024. https://www.gobiernosantiago.cl/gobernador-de-santiago-y-delegada-lanzan-el-primer-sistema-integrado-de-camaras-de-televigilancia-y-gestion-de-transito-con-uso-de-inteligencia-artificial-de-la-rm/

42 Implementan sistema de televigilancia con IA en la Región Metropolitana, by Meganoticias. Published on 05/01/2024 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j4L7LdiYvsg&feature=youtu.be

43 VSaaS AI. Optimized Artificial Intelligence Process for your Business https://vsaas.ai/en/technology/VSaaS-AI.html

44 Lanzamiento Proyecto Sistema, por Sistema Sitia.Published on 06/05/2024. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=stAV-Hrgnow

45 SITIA https://sitia.gob.cl/

46 Genetec, Microsoft, NEC, AWS, Herta, Google, Softserve, Gaio, Hikvision, Vsaas.ai and EY.

47 Comienza a operar nueva cédula de identidad digital y pasaporte. Published on 12/16/2024. https://www.gob.cl/noticias/comienza-operar-nueva-cedula-identidad-digital-pasaporte-documentos-identificacion/

COLOMBIA

Of the five initiatives documented in 2021, two are currently inactive: the Integrated Intelligent Video Surveillance System for Transmilenio (SIVIT) and the Integrated Multibiometric Information System[48]. The remaining three are still active.

The Ágata initiative (Data Analytics Agency) in Bogotá, established in 2021, aims to utilize the data generated daily by the city for decision-making. From the outset, it was envisioned as playing a central role in analyzing and intelligently managing information from the city's video surveillance network, with the primary goal of improving citizen security. To that end, the agency would connect camera data to enable new forms of predictive action by authorities[49]. However, a report published in August 2024 by the Municipal Ombudsman's Office of Bogotá revealed serious shortcomings in the existing infrastructure: 46% of the city's security cameras were out of service. Of these, 63.49% had connectivity issues or massive signal losses, which were attributed to infrastructure failures[50]. In this context, the Government of Bogotá has announced plans to implement advanced technologies, including automatic license plate recognition (LPR) and facial recognition capabilities in some of these cameras or systems[51].

Regarding the ABIS initiative, the Mayor's Office of Medellín has been implementing a video surveillance system since late 2022 and throughout 2023 and 2024. This system includes 80 smart facial recognition cameras from Herta Technology[52]. These cameras, strategically placed across the city, on public transportation and in high-traffic areas, integrate a database containing the facial profiles and identifications of approximately 19,000 to 22,000 individuals with active arrest warrants[53]. In this context, the Government of Bogotá has expressed plans and taken steps towards the implementation of advanced technologies, including automatic license plate recognition (LPR) and facial recognition capabilities in some of these cameras or systems. Additionally, two new initiatives were identified:

48 The initiatives identified in 2021 were: Integrated Intelligent Video Surveillance System for Transmilenio (SIVIT), Ágata (Data Analytics Agency) of Bogotá, Digital identity card , Integrated Multibiometric Information System and ABIS Multibiometric System (Automatic Biometric Identification System) https://estudio.reconocimientofacial.info/en/mapped-initiatives/

49 Ágata - Agencia Analítica de Datos. (n.d.). Quiénes Somos. Retrieved from https://agata.gov.co/quienes-somos/
Alcaldía Mayor de Bogotá D.C. (2021, May 26). Nace Ágata, la primera Agencia Analítica de Datos para una Bogotá inteligente. https://bogota.gov.co/mi-ciudad/tecnologia/nace-agata-la-primera-agencia-analitica-de-datos-para-una-bogota-inteligente
El Espectador. (2021, 25 de mayo). Así funcionará Ágata, la nueva agencia de analítica de datos de Bogotá. https://www.elespectador.com/bogota/asi-funcionara-agata-la-nueva-agencia-de-analitica-de-datos-de-bogota-noticias-hoy/

50 Personería de Bogotá. (2024, August 15). Personería de Bogotá señaló que la ciudad enfrenta una grave falla en sistema de videovigilancia y geolocalización. Infobae. https://www.infobae.com/colombia/2024/08/15/personeria-de-bogota-senalo-que-la-ciudad-enfrenta-una-grave-falla-en-sistema-de-videovigilancia-y-geolocalizacion/

51 Infobae. (2024b, August 17). Bogotá contará con cámaras para reconocimiento automático de placas: alcalde Galán detalló el plan para contrarrestar la criminalidad. https://www.infobae.com/colombia/2024/08/17/bogota-contara-con-camaras-para-reconocimiento-automatico-de-placas-alcalde-galan-detallo-el-plan-para-contrarrestar-la-criminalidad/

52 Herta Security. (n.d.). Medellín implements Herta's facial recognition to strengthen citizen security. Retrieved from https://hertasecurity.com/en/news/medellin-implements-hertas-facial-recognition-to-strengthen-citizen-security/

53 Alcaldía de Medellín. (2024, February 2). Con sistema ABIS, Medellín cuenta con base de datos de 22.000 delincuentes. https://www.medellin.gov.co/es/sala-de-prensa/noticias/con-sistema-abis-medellin-cuenta-con-base-de-datos-de-22-000-delincuentes/

- **New migration control system at the border with Ecuador (Rumichaca) |** In November 2023, Colombia signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Ecuador through the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) EUROFRONT Program for the implementation of the One Stop Control system. This system aims to establish a single-entry control and automatic exit registration[54] at the Rumichaca border (Colombia-Ecuador) with the objective of strengthening security at the Rumichaca International Bridge, which connects both countries. According to official reports, the Video Surveillance System with Data Analytics includes facial recognition capabilities, automatic license plate reading and a people counter. It was not possible to access information regarding the provider or the period during which the project will be active.

- **René: A biometric application to reduce insecurity and prevent forgery in Medellín |** The application, developed jointly by the National Registry and the National Police, uses facial recognition technology to verify individuals' identities. Its purpose is to reduce insecurity and prevent cases of identity fraud. This tool, designed for institutional mobile devices, enables real-time verification of the authenticity of identity documents[55].

COSTA RICA

The 2021 report identified three initiatives in Costa Rica related to facial recognition. These remain fully active: the Biometric Passport for the Bicentennial and the Migratory Biometric Identification System. The latter began implementation and moved towards full integration in early 2022[56].

Meanwhile, the Automated Biometric Identification System (ABIS) also remains fully operational in Costa Rica, serving as an essential platform for the country's civil and migratory identification management (National Registry of Costa Rica, 2024). Although its current use remains focused on existing services, no significant expansions into new areas have been announced.

ECUADOR

The 2021 report did not identify any initiatives in Ecuador. However, the current survey highlights four, namely:

- **Facial recognition in ECU 911 |** This is a visual surveillance system using security cameras to monitor public safety in public spaces. Although ECU 911 does not officially report the use of facial recognition, journalistic sources indicate that the system has been using this technology since 2020. Additionally, since 2011, the National Police has had voice and facial image identification software, with its database reportedly in use since 2006. Reports also reference a presentation of the system involving Ecuadorian authorities and representatives from the Russian company Speech Technology Center[57], which is believed to be the service provider[58]. By 2025, the ECU 911 system plans to enable interoperability for 19,088 security cameras across the country[59].

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54 Cinco años de Eurofront: Transformando la gestión fronteriza en América Latina. Published on 01/07/2025. https://programaeurofront.eu/0/novedad/cinco-anos-de-eurofront-transformando-la-gestion-fronteriza-en-america-latina

55 Policía contará con nueva aplicación para verificar documentos: así funcionará, by W Radio Colombia. Published on 05/16/2024. https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=828434346007868

56 Observador.cr. (2025, January 14). ¿Fiebre de viajar? Costa Rica emite un pasaporte cada minuto. Retrieved from https://observador.cr/pasaporte-de-costa-rica-solicitudes-record-2024/
IOM, UN Migration. (2024, February 5). Mecanismos de acceso a la identidad legal para personas migrantes en Costa Rica. https://lac.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl1446/files/documents/2024-03/il_costa_rica_final.pdf

57 Cámaras realizarán reconocimiento facial y captarán a delincuentes en tiempo real, by Metro Ecuador. Published on 02/12/2020. https://www.metroecuador.com.ec/ec/noticias/2020/02/12/camaras-reconocimiento-facial-captaran-delincuentes-tiempo-real.html

58 Smart Tracker FRS. Intelligent biometric identification and face search system https://speechpro.com/products/face-recognition-system-smarttracker-frs

59 República del Ecuador. (2024, August 2) Resolución N° SISECU911-DG-2024-005. Servicio integrado de seguridad ECU 911 https://www.ecu911.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/RESOLUCION-INTEROPERABILIDAD-ok-.-signed.pdf

- **Video surveillance in Quito |** Nine critical spots with the highest accumulation of waste in the Ecuadorian capital are monitored through surveillance cameras installed by the Quito Metropolitan Public Cleaning Company (EMASEO EP). According to official reports, the cameras provide high-definition images and are equipped with facial recognition technology[60].

- **Remote electronic voting from abroad |** In the 2023 elections, a remote electronic voting system was implemented for Ecuadorian citizens residing abroad, following prior registration with the National Electoral Council (CNE). The identification process included identity verification through facial recognition. The CNE reported that the overseas voting system was targeted by cyberattacks originating from various countries, including India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Russia, Ukraine, Indonesia and China. The project was deactivated once the elections had concluded[61].

- **Migration control at Rumichaca |** The International Organization for Migration (IOM), through the EUROFRONT Program, donated 24 cameras to the Undersecretariat of Migration of the Ministry of the Interior[62]. The objective, as stated officially, is to "strengthen security" at the Rumichaca International Bridge, on the border between Ecuador and Colombia. According to official statements, the Video Surveillance System with Data Analytics has facial recognition capabilities, automatic license plate reading and a people counter. As with the Colombian case, information about the provider or the project's validity period could not be accessed.

EL SALVADOR

In the 2021 report, El Salvador was not included within the scope of the investigation, so no initiatives were documented. However, the current survey highlights two:

- **Biometric cooperation agreement with Guatemala and Honduras |** The "Biometric cooperation agreement" for the identification of criminals in the Northern Triangle of Central America was launched in 2024[63] and is currently being implemented. This agreement prioritizes the exchange of information stored in each country's automated biometric identification system database, allowing for immediate queries and automatic fingerprint comparison to verify the identity of "irregular" migrants[64]. Since 2012, the U.S. Government has invested in implementing the AFIS (Automated Fingerprint Identification System) and other biometric systems in countries across the region. Between August and October 2019, the U.S. Government established individual agreements with the governments of Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador to share biometric information through a platform called BDSB[65]. Through this platform, Central American countries register biometric information of "imprisoned criminals and travelers," and in return, Central American police and migration agents receive criminal and migration data from the U.S. database called Ident.

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60 EMASEO EP. (2023, May 19). Nueve cámaras de vigilancia se instalan en puntos críticos. Retrieved from https://www.emaseo.gob.ec/snueve-camaras-de-vigilancia-se-instalan-en-puntos-critico/

61 El sistema de voto telemático en el exterior de Ecuador sufrió ciberataques desde 7 países, by Infobae. Published on 08/20/2023. https://www.infobae.com/america/agencias/2023/08/20/el-sistema-de-voto-telematico-en-el-exterior-de-ecuador-sufrio-ciberataques-desde-7-paises/

62 Donación de Sistema de Videovigilancia fortalece la seguridad en el Puente Internacional de Rumichaca. Published on 02/26/2024. https://www.ministeriodelinterior.gob.ec/donacion-de-sistema-de-videovigilancia-fortalece-la-seguridad-en-el-puente-internacional-de-rumichaca/

63 Preocupaciones sobre Acuerdos de Datos Biométricos en Guatemala, El Salvador y honduras, by Ipandetec. Published on 07/02/2024. https://www.ipandetec.org/centroamerica/preocupaciones-sobre-acuerdos-de-datos-biometricos-en-guatemala-el-salvador-y-honduras/

64 Países del Triángulo Norte centroamericano acuerdan cooperación en biometría y seguridad, by InfoDefensa. Published on 06/29/2024. https://www.infodefensa.com/texto-diario/mostrar/4890027/paises-triangulo-norte-centroamericano-acuerdan-cooperacion-biometria-seguridad

65 Gobiernos de Arévalo, Bukele y Castro firman convenios de cooperación biométrica, by Prensa Libre. Published on 06/24/2024. https://www.prensalibre.com/guatemala/politica/gobiernos-de-arevalo-bukele-y-castro-se-unen-en-lucha-contra-el-crimen/

- **HART (Homeland Advance Recognition Technology) |** It is a biometric database powered by U.S. military technology, designed to collect large amounts of data from migrants and exchange this information between the U.S., Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and other countries.Launched in 2022, its implementation is still ongoing and it is expected to store sensitive information on millions of people, including facial recognition data, iris scans, fingerprints, voice recordings and even DNA. The U.S. government has been training officials in Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica and the Bahamas to collect biometric information from individuals seeking to emigrate to the United States; all this data would be stored in the HART database on AWS servers[66].

GUATEMALA

In the 2021 report, Guatemala was not included within the scope of the investigation, so no initiatives were documented. However, the current survey includes one that is in the process of being implemented:

- **Facial recognition System of the General Comptroller of Accounts' Office (SIREFA-CGC) |** In January 2025, the General Comptroller of Accounts' Office (CGC) launched the Facial Recognition System (Sirefa-CGC)[67] with the goal of verifying the identity of public employees and preventing irregularities in selection procedures, ensuring that established standards are met. The provider of the secondary software for facial recognition and cloud imaging for this system is the local company ITZDATA INTERNACIONAL, SOCIEDAD ANÓNIMA.[68] All state employees must update their personal information using facial recognition by December 31 to complete this process. According to the CGC, Guatemala has approximately 450,000 public employees. The registration process can be done via the "Contraloría GT" mobile application, available on Google Play and the App Store. The CGC's Directorate of Information and Communication Technologies will be responsible for the proper functioning of the system and the protection of the data.[69]

66 Letter to AWS re hosting of HART biometric database_24 May 2022 https://www.accessnow.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Letter-to-AWS-re-hosting-of-HART-biometric-database_24-May-2022_Final.pdf

67 Pasos a seguir para la validación facial en la aplicación Contraloría GT https://www.contraloria.gob.gt/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/BOLETIN-50-2024-PASOS-A-SEGUIR-PARA-LA-VERIFICACION-FACIAN-EN-LA-APP-CGC-GT.pdf

68 Guatecompras. (2025, 23 de abril). Consulta Detalle Proveedor: ITZDATA INTERNACIONAL, SOCIEDAD ANONIMA (NIT: 107539527).https://www.guatecompras.gt/concursos/consultaConcurso.aspx?nog=25318276&o=4

69 Contraloría implementará Sistema de Reconocimiento Facial para servidores públicos, by La Hora. Published on 12/09/2024. https://lahora.gt/nacionales/dguzman/2024/12/09/contraloria-implementara-sistema-de-reconocimiento-facial-para-servidores-publicos/
Cómo hacer la actualización y registro en el Sistema Sirefa-CGC, by Agencia Guatemalteca de Noticias.Published on 01/10/2025 https://agn.gt/como-hacer-la-actualizacion-y-registro-en-el-sistema-sirefa-cgc/
Reconocimiento facial: la nueva modalidad de registro para los empleados del Estado, by Prensa Libre. Published on 12/09/2024. https://www.prensalibre.com/guatemala/comunitario/reconocimiento-facial-la-nueva-modalidad-de-registro-para-los-empleados-del-estado/

HONDURAS

In the 2021 report, Honduras was not included within the scope of the investigation, so no initiatives were documented. This new report highlights one that is currently in the process of implementation:

- **Facial recognition at Palmerola International Airport |** The airport, currently under construction, will use 22 cameras with the latest version of the SmartFace facial recognition platform to "ensure the safety" of more than 1.5 million passengers annually. SmartFace is a flexible platform capable of providing facial detection and recognition in a variety of different scenarios. "This project takes advantage of SmartFace's ability to process multiple video streams simultaneously. It will be able to detect suspicious individuals through more than 20 cameras strategically placed throughout the facility," explained Peter Martis, Sales Director at Innovatrics.[70]

MEXICO

The 2021 investigation identified three facial recognition initiatives in Mexico. Of these projects, the Video-Intelligence System of the State of Coahuila remains inactive. The other two—the implementation of the Command and Control Center (C29) of the Central de Abastos of Mexico City and the Comprehensive Urban Video Surveillance Project with Analytical Technology—are still active.

Regarding recent initiatives, two notable projects involving facial recognition at airports were identified: one at Mexico City International Airport and another at Santa Lucía Airport. The former is currently operational. In contrast, although it has been announced that Santa Lucía Airport would incorporate this technology as a distinctive feature, the initiative has not been activated to date. Several municipal initiatives in Ciudad Juárez also stand out, even after the installation of a similar system in Coahuila in 2019 and the 2021 ban imposed on the company Dahua. This ban was enforced by the U.S. government due to national security risks, including cybersecurity vulnerabilities and ethical concerns regarding its alleged ties to mass surveillance programs in China[71]. Despite this ban and the associated concerns, new video surveillance projects were detected in 2022 in the municipalities of Chihuahua, Baja California, and Nuevo León. While no updated information on the launch of these projects was found, it was confirmed that installations proceeded despite the ongoing restrictions. These include:

- **City of Toluca |** In June 2024, Toluca strengthened its security infrastructure by adding 200 cameras in strategic locations. Of these, 50 cameras are designed to monitor panic buttons, while another 50 are designed for facial and license plate recognition. These cameras feature 360-degree rotation and a range of 150 meters. The expanded surveillance covers more than 70% of the population, from Toluca's industrial center to the borders of Zinacantepec. Authorities highlighted that, with these latest additions, the city now has a network of 296 urban surveillance cameras, consolidated into 80 smart monitoring centers.[72]

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70 Innovatrics SmartFace Tapped to Provide Facial Recognition for Palmerola International Airport in Honduras. Published on 10/06/2021. https://www.innovatrics.com/news/innovatrics-smartface-will-provide-facial-recognition-for-palmerola-international-airport-in-honduras/

71 Reuters. (2022, November 25). US bans new Huawei, ZTE, Hikvision, Dahua, Hytera equipment sales. https://www.reuters.com/technology/us-bans-new-huawei-zte-hikvision-dahua-hytera-equipment-sales-2022-11-25/

72 C5 conecta 10 mil cámaras de seguridad en Toluca, by Debate Digital. Published on 06/16/2017 https://www.debate.com.mx/mexico/C5-conecta-10-mil-camaras-de-seguridad-en-Toluca-20170616-0128.html

- **Port of Tampico Madero |** In February 2024, a surveillance system was installed at the Port of Tampico Madero, consisting of 40 cameras and the establishment of a monitoring center. These cameras included a combination of explosion-proof, anti-corrosion bullet cameras and PTZ cameras from Hikvision.

- **Facial Recognition at Mexico City International Airport |** Mexico City International Airport uses AI-powered facial and biometric recognition technology. Cameras capture images of travelers, which are then compared against security databases to verify identities and detect individuals sought by authorities.[73]

- **Facial Recognition at Felipe Ángeles International Airport (AIFA, Santa Lucía) |** One of the features of the new terminal in Santa Lucía is the use of facial recognition and biometric data collection to streamline both check-in and boarding. AIFA aims to offer a fully automated boarding experience, from check-in to takeoff. To this end, it will integrate a biometric system at gates and counters, as well as into a mobile app. Users will be able to download the app, take a photo and check in prior to arriving at AIFA. Once at the airport, they will go to the kiosks or airline counter if they need to check luggage. Older adults or those unfamiliar with the technology will receive assistance from airline and airport staff. Although it is claimed that the use of biometric data at access points improves operational efficiency, it also poses risks to passenger privacy and security. Neither the government nor the Secretariat of National Defense (Sedena) has disclosed what measures are in place to protect this information.[74]

- **Facial Recognition in Ciudad Juárez |** In 2022, the municipality of Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, acquired surveillance cameras with facial recognition technology from the Chinese companies Dahua and Hikvision, both of which had been banned by the United States government for posing threats to the country's communication networks and for their links to human rights abuses.[75]

- **Facial Recognition in Nuevo León |** In 2021, Empower identified a contract signed in 2020 for 3,582,723.97 Mexican pesos (equivalent to 1,723,209.91 USD) with the company Geosoft Solutions, S.A. de C.V. The contract was for the supply, installation, configuration, and commissioning of facial recognition software. Finally, the last entity involved in the acquisition of this type of technology is the state of Tamaulipas, where, as in Nuevo León, the state prosecutor's office has withheld the available information.[76]

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73 Cómo los controles fronterizos están utilizando la IA para rastrearnos, by TyN Magazine. Published on 06/12/2024. https://tynmagazine.com/como-los-controles-fronterizos-estan-utilizando-la-ia-para-rastrearnos/

74 AIFA: México inaugura el nuevo aeropuerto de Santa Lucía con un preocupante sistema de reconocimiento facial, by Hipertextual. Published on 03/21/2022. https://hipertextual.com/2022/03/aifa-mexico-santa-lucia-reconocimiento-facial
El manejo de datos biométricos, otro reto para el aeropuerto de Santa Lucía, by Expansión. Published on 11/02/2022. https://politica.expansion.mx/mexico/2022/02/11/el-manejo-de-datos-biometricos-reto-para-el-aeropuerto-de-santa-lucia

75 Ciudad Juárez adquiere cámaras con reconocimiento facial de empresas vetadas por EE.UU., by Red en Defensa de los Derechos Digitales (R3D). Published on 16/06/2023 https://r3d.mx/2023/06/16/ciudad-juarez-adquiere-camaras-con-reconocimiento-facial-de-empresas-vetadas-por-ee-uu/

76 Ciudad Juárez adquiere cámaras con reconocimiento facial de empresas vetadas por EE.UU., by Red en Defensa de los Derechos Digitales (R3D). Published on 16/06/2023 https://r3d.mx/2023/06/16/ciudad-juarez-adquiere-camaras-con-reconocimiento-facial-de-empresas-vetadas-por-ee-uu/

PANAMA

In 2021, three security initiatives were reported and remain active. On the one hand, there is the Biometric System at Tocumen Airport. Although the specific implementation of facial recognition systems could not be verified, recent reports on construction progress and modernization at the airport indicate that advanced security systems are still in place[77]. On the other hand, the National Security and Emergency Operations Center (CON-C5)[78] stands out as a key piece of infrastructure operated by the U.S company General Dynamics Mission Systems[79]. The term "C5" refers to Command, Control, Communications, Computing and Cybersecurity/Quality, underscoring its comprehensive capabilities for national security and emergency management. It includes a set of computerized systems for receiving, handling and dispatching emergency calls with geolocation, surveillance towers, panic buttons, facial recognition and video analytics[80].

Additionally, in the city of Colón, the Security and Emergency Operations Center (C2) was built and operates with Huawei's technological infrastructure as part of a cooperation agreement with China[81]. This center was equipped with facial recognition systems for advanced video surveillance, and no verified information has been found indicating that these capabilities have been deactivated since its launch[82]. Furthermore, a new initiative was identified:

- **National Identity Issuance System using multimodal biometrics |** In October 2024, this project, led by Panama's Electoral Tribunal, was launched. It relies on advanced facial and fingerprint recognition technologies. The system is provided by Innovatrics and currently holds records for nearly five million people. The project remains active.[83]

77 El Siglo. (2022, 17 de febrero). Migración usará equipos de última tecnología en Terminal 2 de Tocumen. El Siglo. Retrieved from https://elsiglo.com.pa/panama/nacionales/migracion-usara-equipos-ultima-tecnologia-terminal-2-tocumen-NIES24194301

78 Redacción Nacional. (2024, January 21). CON – C5: Aliado clave del Ministerio Público para la seguridad ciudadana. El Siglo. https://elsiglo.com.pa/panama/nacionales/con-c5-aliado-clave-del-ministerio-publico-para-la-seguridad-ciudadana-BH8081740

79 Embassy of the U.S. in Panama [@USEmbPAN]. (2024, July 30). La @USAmbassadorPan visitó el Centro Interagencial de Operaciones de Emergencia y Seguridad (CON-C5) operado por General Dynamics Mission Systems, una empresa estadounidense que apoya la inversión y seguridad en Panamá. #BuenaCompañia. [Tweet]. X.https://x.com/USEmbPAN/status/1818319482789478704

80 La Prensa. (2019, January 21). Gobierno inaugura el centro de videovigilancia C5 Panamá. Retrieved from https://www.prensa.com/judiciales/Gobierno-inaugura-vigilancia-C5-Panama_0_5219478015.html

81 La Estrella de Panamá. (2018, December 21). Varela inaugura el primer Centro de Operaciones de Seguridad y Emergencias. Retrieved from https://www.laestrella.com.pa/panama/nacional/varela-primer-centro-inaugura-operaciones-NQLE34395

82 Telemetro. (2019, October 15). Centros de Operaciones C2 y C5 serán dotados de nuevo sistema inteligente. Retrieved from https://www.telemetro.com/nacionales/2019/10/15/centros-operaciones-c2-c5-inteligente/2206792.html

83 Panamá actualiza el Sistema Nacional de Emisión de Identidad mediante biometría multimodal https://www.innovatrics.com/es/referencias/panama-actualiza-el-sistema-nacional-de-emision-de-identidad-mediante-biometria-multimodal/

PARAGUAY

The 2021 report highlighted three key initiatives related to the implementation of biometric recognition technologies in Paraguay[84]. Of these, two remain active, including the nationwide expansion of the AFIS system, which is still operational[85]. The third initiative, which was in a pilot phase at the time, has since undergone significant updates.

Among the initiatives underway in Paraguay, the implementation of facial recognition technologies in major cities such as Asunción and Ciudad del Este stands out. Research by the organization TEDIC reveals that this deployment, managed by the 911 System, has grown in these cities, although it has not been possible to determine the number of cameras in operation due to a lack of official information. Given this situation, it is difficult to determine which agencies purchased the surveillance technologies. For example, tenders awarded to the local company Tecnología, Seguridad y Vigilancia del Paraguay S.R.L (TSV) are only visible on the website of the entity that manages the funds and not on the official public procurement portal[86].

For its part, the Ministry of the Interior and the National Police coordinated the use of the AFIS (Automated Fingerprint Identification System) some time ago, initially through a pilot program at the Club Cerro Porteño stadium[87]. According to statements reported by the local press, the company Asunción Comunicaciones S.A. (ASUCOM) would be in charge of supplying and maintaining the AFIS system, which is also used for issuing identity cards and passports[88]. In addition, another investigation by the TEDIC organization revealed that in October 2023, the local company ITTI signed an agreement with the National Sports Secretariat (SND) to install video surveillance cameras and biometric systems to capture and analyze data on people attending sporting events[89]. As for new initiatives, one additional initiative was identified:

- **Automated Migratory Facial Recognition System (SMARF) |** This is a new border control technology implemented by the Paraguayan government, launched in 2020. It consists of an automated system that registers individuals crossing borders using facial recognition. Initially deployed on the Paraguayan side of the Triple Frontier area, it was later expanded to Silvio Pettirossi International Airport.[90] The system captures facial biometric data from individuals crossing the Friendship Bridge at the border between Ciudad del Este (Paraguay) and Foz do Iguaçu (Brazil).[91]

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84 The initiatives identified in 2021 were: the use of facial recognition in the streets of various cities in Paraguay; the expansion of the AFIS system's capabilities, safeguards and functionalities; and its implementation, for the first time, at a sporting event held by Club Cerro Porteño.

85 Consejo de Defensa Nacional & Secretaría Permanente. (2023). Plan estratégico: Seguridad para el desarrollo 2023-2028 [PDF]. Ministerio de Defensa Nacional. https://mdn.gov.py/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Plan-Seguridad-para-el-Desarrollo-2023-2028.pdf

86 TEDIC. (2025, marzo 13). Con mi cara no: Implementación de cámaras de reconocimiento facial por el Estado paraguayo [PDF]. https://www.tedic.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Reconocimiento-Facial-Estado-Paraguayo.pdf

87 Cable Onda Sports. (2017, 24 de noviembre). Aplicarán sistema de seguridad por huellas en el Cerro Porteño–Luqueño [Artículo]. EFE vía COS Panamá. https://www.cospanama.com/futbol/internacional/america/aplicaran-sistema-de-seguridad-por-huellas-en-el-cerro-porteno-luqueno_0_12578

88 ABC Color. (2024, 25 de noviembre). Daños en el sistema AFIS retrasa la expedición de cédulas y pasaportes. Recuperado de https://www.abc.com.py/policiales/2024/11/25/danos-en-el-sistema-afis-retrasa-la-expedicion-de-cedulas-y-pasaportes

89 TEDIC. (2024, 21 de marzo). #ConMiCaraNo: La videovigilancia con reconocimiento facial avanza en los estadios de fútbol en Paraguay. Recuperado de https://www.tedic.org/conmicarano/

90 [Research Launch] Technology and Human Rights in Border Zones, by TEDIC. Published on 01/30/2023. https://www.tedic.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Technologies-and-Human-Rights-in-the-Triple-Border-Area.pdf

91 "Not with my face": mass surveillance through facial recognition in Paraguay, by TEDIC. Published on 12/19/2023. https://www.tedic.org/en/not-with-my-face-mass-surveillance-through-facial-recognition-in-paraguay/

PERU

While only one initiative was identified in the 2021 report, this survey found three new ones of particular interest. Regarding the Gamarra case, significant developments took place: on July 14, 2022, Peru's Personal Data Protection Authority sanctioned the Municipality of La Victoria for the unlawful use of personal data. During the proceedings, it was confirmed that the facial recognition software used in the cameras, "Anyvision - 1.24.02," is owned by the Israeli company now known as Oosto.[92]

In 2024, the installation of cameras with facial recognition technology in Lima's shopping malls was announced for September. However, by December of that year, it was reported that the project was still not operational. A more recent announcement suggests that, during the first half of 2025, and following an agreement between the Ministry of the Interior and the Association of Shopping and Entertainment Centers of Peru (ACCEP), the Peruvian National Police may gain access to these facial recognition cameras[93].

New initiatives identified:

- **Facial recognition cameras to combat insecurity in Peru |** In July 2023, the Peruvian National Police (PNP) announced the activation of 3,500 video surveillance cameras to be monitored from the 105 Emergency Center, as part of efforts to strengthen public safety in critical areas of Lima[94]. In October 2023, the Municipality of Lince joined the initiative by installing 100 facial recognition cameras (HikVision TandemVu PTZ Camera ColorVu), although only 50 of them were operational at the time. In April 2024, the district of El Agustino also joined with 33 facial recognition surveillance cameras. Since 2023, the Metropolitan Municipality of Lima has also been advancing in the deployment and use of facial recognition surveillance cameras in public spaces, particularly in the context of protests and social demonstrations[95]. One of the most concerning aspects of the implementation of facial recognition surveillance systems in Lima is the prominent role taken on by the mayor himself in promoting these measures, presenting them as a central pillar of his administration[96]. Public reports also indicate the existence of agreements and donations from telecommunications companies, suggesting an expansion of the surveillance infrastructure with limited transparency regarding the terms of these arrangements[97].

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92 Victoria en La Victoria: Municipalidad de Perú sancionada por uso ilegítimo de datos personales, by Access Now. Published on 07/21/2022. https://www.accessnow.org/press-release/la-victoria-sancionada-uso-ilegitimo-datos-personales/

93 Instalan 21 cámaras de videovigilancia con reconocimiento facial en SMP, by Andina. Published on 11/19/2019. https://andina.pe/agencia/noticia-instalan-21-camaras-videovigilancia-reconomiento-facial-smp-774464.aspx

94 Cámaras con reconocimiento facial contra la inseguridad en Lima: "Todo va a estar perennizado", by Latina Noticias. Published on 5/07/2023. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=inDk8sw6f6o&ab_channel=LatinaNoticias

95 La municipalidad de Lima está vulnerando la Constitución https://hiperderecho.org/2023/07/la-municipalidad-de-lima-esta-vulnerando-la-constitucion/

96 In March 2025, the Peruvian media outlet Perú21 revealed that Lima's mayor, Rafael López Aliaga, has created an intelligence group operating in complete secrecy and without external oversight. According to the report, this team conducts phone interceptions of alleged criminals with authorization from the National Police, although it remains unclear whether these practices are supported by an adequate legal framework or institutional supervision. The existence of this parallel surveillance system has raised concerns due to its lack of transparency and the potential for discretionary use. Available at: https://peru21.pe/investigacion/lopez-aliaga-el-servicio-secreto-del-alcalde-de-lima-chuponeo

97 Bitel invierte US$500 mil en nuevo sistema de ciudad inteligente en Lima https://bitel.com.pe/nosotros/sobre-bitel/responsabilidad-social/bitel-invierte-us-500-mil-en-nuevo-sistema-de-ciudad-inteligente-en-lima.html

- **New video surveillance and biometric control system at the border with Bolivia (Desaguadero) |** In November 2023, the European Union, through the Eurofront program, donated equipment for the deployment of a video surveillance system featuring facial recognition cameras and biometric controls in the Puno region. The goal was to "strengthen security in the border area with Bolivia." The system is connected to the database of the Peruvian National Police (PNP). The equipment includes HP computers, Xerox multifunction printers and network video recorders from the Chinese company Dahua Technology, which enable the use of AI technology for facial identification and matching faces against a database.

- **ATU to implement facial recognition cameras on public transport buses |** In September 2024, Minister of Transport Raúl Pérez Reyes announced that the Urban Transport Authority (ATU) will implement facial recognition cameras on public buses. ATU will begin installing video surveillance cameras on public transport units to identify individuals who commit criminal acts. The footage will be saved on a hard drive within each bus and also stored on a central server, making it accessible to the Peruvian National Police as crucial evidence. The government stated that it will install surveillance cameras both inside and outside of the more than 24,000 urban transport vehicles operating across the capital's districts.

URUGUAY

In the 2021 report, Uruguay was not included in the scope of the investigation, and no initiatives in the country were documented. However, six new ones were identified:

- **Use of facial recognition by the Uruguayan police |** Since February 2020, the installation of an automated facial recognition (AFR) system for police use in security operations has been underway. The system is provided by a consortium composed of DDBA Ltda (the Uruguayan representative of the Spain-based company Herta Security), CDT LATAM LLC and TTY SA. The monitoring systems are part of the Integrated Video Surveillance and Emergency System (SIVVE), which is managed by the Unified Command Center (CCU). This center also oversees the 911 emergency system, the Electronic Monitoring Directorate (DIMOE), which operates the electronic ankle bracelet program, and the Criminal Analysis Directorate[98]. Uruguay has yet to implement specific regulations or public protocols to ensure safeguards for police use of AFR technology[99].

- **Police use of AI for video surveillance |** In 2023, it was announced that the Uruguayan police would have access to approximately 11,900 video surveillance cameras. The Ministry of the Interior's objective is to automate a significant portion of the visualization—through artificial intelligence—and for the system to issue alerts when a face matching a database of wanted individuals is detected, or when it locates a sought-after person dressed in a specific way[100]. In October 2024, it was announced that with the addition of new cameras in neighborhoods in Montevideo, the total number of cameras (LPR, PTZ, and fixed) in the capital reached 848. This is in addition to the 147 already installed in Canelones and 342 in San José, completing Phase 4 of the camera installation for the Ministry of the Interior's video surveillance system[101].

- **Use of facial recognition at sports events |** Since 2017, cameras and facial recognition systems from the company Herta (via DDBA) have been installed to prevent individuals listed in the registry of people with a history of sports-related violence from entering sports events. In 2016, following a proposal by the Honorary Commission for the Prevention, Control and Eradication of Violence in Sports, a registry of individuals with criminal records related to violent behaviour in sports was created, under the authority of the Ministry of the Interior (MI). That same year, Decree 387/016 established the obligation for sports federations to implement biometric control systems using Automated Facial Recognition (AFR). Between 2017 and 2018, the Uruguayan Football Association and the Uruguayan Basketball Federation, with guidance from the MI, began installing cameras and AFR systems to prevent individuals listed in the registry from entering their events. The cameras are operated by MI personnel[102].

98 "Fuera de control. Uso policial del reconocimiento facial automatizado en Uruguay", by Datysoc. Published on March 2022. https://datysoc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Informe-reconocimiento-facial-automatizado-Uruguay-2022-Datysoc.pdf

99 Uso policial del reconocimiento facial automatizado en Uruguay, by Datysoc. Published on 03/23/2022. https://datysoc.org/2022/03/23/uso-policial-del-reconocimiento-facial-automatizado-en-uruguay/

100 Policía uruguaya apuesta a la inteligencia artificial: así será el sistema que permitirá reconocer a delincuentes, by El Observador. Published on 05/09/2023. https://www.elobservador.com.uy/nota/policia-apuesta-a-la-inteligencia-artificial-asi-sera-el-sistema-que-permitira-reconocer-a-delincuentes-20235817390

101 Con la instalación de 1.337 cámaras, se completa la Fase 4 de optimización del sistema de videovigilancia del Ministerio. Published on 10/22/2024. https://www.gub.uy/ministerio-interior/comunicacion/noticias/instalacion-1337-camaras-se-completa-fase-4-optimizacion-del-sistema

102 "Fuera de control. Uso policial del reconocimiento facial automatizado en Uruguay", by Datysoc. Published on March 2022. https://datysoc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Informe-reconocimiento-facial-automatizado-Uruguay-2022-Datysoc.pdf

- **Monitoring of individuals on assisted release using FRT |** Since June 2024, a system has been in operation to monitor individuals on assisted release who are under arrest or house arrest. The mechanism allows for up to five daily biometric checks using facial recognition and does not replace the use of electronic ankle bracelets. Biometric data is used to create individual profiles and establish a secure link between the individual's identity and the monitoring system operated by the National Directorate of Alternative Measures (DINAMA)[103].

- **EasyAirport - Facial recognition at Carrasco and Punta del Este Airports |** In April 2018, a facial recognition system was implemented in the boarding areas for migration control. The provider is Vision-Box[104], a Portuguese company that in 2024 was acquired by the AMADEUS conglomerate, originally founded in 1987 by Air France, Iberia, Lufthansa and SAS under the name Amadeus Marketing SA. The initiative is part of EasyAirport, the airport's technological development plan implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Defense (through the National Directorate of Civil Aviation) and the Ministry of the Interior (through the National Directorate of Migration), aiming to fully automate the terminal[105].

- **Facial Recognition for border control |** In 2024, the Integrated Migratory Management System of Uruguay (SIGMU) began to be implemented, (SIGMU), which incorporates new technologies to enhance "security and efficiency in migration control." For instance, the system can detect forged documents by scanning a person's face, their document and its chip, using infrared and ultraviolet light. Although facial recognition is currently only used at Carrasco International Airport, SIGMU will expand this type of control to the country's 53 border crossings, including ports and land checkpoints such as Rivera, Chuy, and Río Branco[106]. Through a bidding process led by the Ministry of the Interior, the government awarded a 10-year contract, with a possible extension, for the nationwide migration control system to Veridos México, a consortium backed by Mexican capital[107].

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103 Interior implementará nueva herramienta para seguimiento de personas en libertad asistida. Published on 4/06/2024. https://www.gub.uy/presidencia/comunicacion/noticias/interior-implementara-nueva-herramienta-para-seguimiento-personas-libertad

104 How advanced is the employment of biometrics at present? (2021) https://nap.nationalacademies.org/read/26180/chapter/3?term=uruguay#30

105 Aeropuerto de Carrasco es el primero en América Latina con sistema de biometría facial en proceso de embarque. Published on 26/10/2018. https://www.gub.uy/presidencia/comunicacion/noticias/aeropuerto-carrasco-es-primero-america-latina-sistema-biometria-facial

106 Uruguay implementará el Sistema Integral de Gestión Migratoria (SIGMU) para reforzar el control fronterizo, by El Explorador. Published on 10/09/2024. https://elexplorador.com.uy/uruguay-implementara-el-sistema-integral-de-gestion-migratoria-sigmu-para-reforzar-el-control-fronterizo/

107 El Gobierno uruguayo entrega control de las fronteras por 10 años a empresa mexicana Veridos México, by Caras & Caretas. Published on 04/05/2024. https://www.carasycaretas.com.uy/politica/el-gobierno-uruguayo-entrega-control-las-fronteras-10-anos-empresa-mexicana-veridos-mexico-n72469

Regional trends in the procurement of surveillance technologies

This section identifies patterns, explores connections, and begins to outline potential commercial relationships tied to surveillance technologies and their deployment in Latin America. The first step involved identifying foreign providers—those based outside the region—with the greatest presence in the previously surveyed initiatives, aiming to map their operations across different countries, either directly or through local integrators.

Additionally, the relationships between the countries of origin of these companies and the recipient countries of the technologies are analyzed to better understand the patterns in the commercial dynamics.

Who are the foreign companies and where do they operate?

IDEMIA (France), NEC (Japan), Dahua (China), Hikvision (China), Veridos (Germany), Innovatrics (Czech Republic), General Dynamics Mission Systems (Canada) and Herta (Spain) are the foreign companies with the most significant presence in Latin America. These companies are involved in multiple initiatives per country and are active in 21 projects across the region[108].

IDEMIA appears to be the company with the broadest reach in the region, reported as a provider in Argentina, Chile, Colombia and Costa Rica. Dahua, meanwhile, is involved in four identified initiatives. However, its operations could only be verified in two countries: Brazil (3) and Peru (1). Herta, a Spanish-owned company, participates in three initiatives split between Uruguay (2) and Colombia (1).

The Japanese company NEC is active in Argentina and Chile, with one notable initiative in each country. Meanwhile, Hikvision is involved as a provider in one of the identified initiatives in Mexico and another in Peru. The German company Veridos is active in Costa Rica and Uruguay, with one project in each. The Czech company Innovatrics is also present in Panama and Honduras, with one initiative per country. Finally, Canadian company General Dynamics Mission Systems is the only foreign provider identified as participating in more than one active project within a single country: Panama.

IDEMIA

IDEMIA is a French multinational specializing in security solutions, including facial recognition systems and other biometric identification services. The company was formed through the 2017 merger of Oberthur Technologies (OT) and Safran Identity & Security (Morpho). With a presence in over 180 countries, IDEMIA provides biometric services to public agencies in countries such as France, Albania, the United Kingdom, Congo, Guinea, Togo, Mali, Morocco, Nepal and Singapore, among others. In 2020, Amnesty International reported that IDEMIA owns the Morpho Security System subsidiary based in Shanghai and also revealed that the company supplied automated facial recognition equipment directly to the Shanghai Public Security Bureau.

108 ACTIVE providers https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/21056497/

Since 2002, IDEMIA's official distributor in Latin America has been IAFIS, a company that offers and integrates the French firm's biometric services throughout the region. In addition to its official partner, IDEMIA also has offices in Buenos Aires (Argentina), Santiago (Chile) and Bogotá (Colombia), as well as factories in Cali (Colombia), San José (Costa Rica) and São Paulo (Brazil). According to the company, the majority of its shares are held by Advent International[109], an investment fund headquartered in the United States with operations in Colombia and Brazil. Brazil is also where IDEMIA has established its regional headquarters.

IDEMIA in Argentina

The company's presence in Argentina dates back to 2011, when the Federal Biometric Identification System for Security (SIBIOS) was launched. Since then, the French company has remained active in the project. In December 2021, Argentina's Ministry of Security announced the exclusive direct contract awarded to IDEMIA for the technological upgrade of the AFIS METAMORPHO system to MBIS, as well as the expansion of the database's capacity[110], thereby securing the company's ongoing role as the entity responsible for the country's biometric identification system.

A few months earlier, in April 2021, it was officially announced that the shareholding structure of IDEMIA's Argentine branch would be split between IDEMIA Colombia (94.61%) and IDEMIA do Brasil (5.39%)[111]. However, in January 2024, the Official Gazette reported that in November 2023, IDEMIA Colombia waived its preferential subscription and preemptive rights. As a result, the majority shareholding of IDEMIA's Argentine branch is now held by IDEMIA Brasil (91.8%), while IDEMIA Colombia holds a minority stake (8.2%)[112].

IDEMIA in Costa Rica

The company entered the country in 2016[113] under the auspices of the Safran Group, a conglomerate that was later acquired by IDEMIA, which announced the establishment of an EMV card factory[114]. Operating as IDEMIA since 2020, the company has been responsible for the Automated Biometric Identification System (ABIS), a system that uses fingerprint and facial biometrics for the identification and verification of citizens. IDEMIA is responsible for providing the technological solution, in collaboration with IAFIS Costa Rica Limitada and Componentes El Orbe, S.A.

109 GRI CONTENT INDEX https://www.idemia.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/idemia-csr-report-gri-appendix-2023.pdf

110 BORA, Ministerio de Seguridad, Decisión Administrativa 1293/2021. Contratación Directa por Exclusividad N° 347-0025-CDI21 https://www.boletinoficial.gov.ar/pdf/aviso/primera/255553/20211231

111 MORPHO DE ARGENTINA S.A. https://www.boletinoficial.gob.ar/pdf/linkQR/TXpBTUNnQTJDLzkreFpJZ1U0d1UwZz09

112 Boletín Oficial de la República Argentina (BORA), año CXXXII, N° 35.337, January 9, 2024 https://otslist.boletinoficial.gob.ar/ots/download/b1faabfd409cc95b1d952d6e7f9317087445c8c7b788e9fc231c86c67f7f3376/0/

113 Safran groups companies under a single brand https://www.idemia.com/press-release/safran-groups-companies-under-single-brand-2016-05-19

114 EMV is an interoperability standard for IC cards and POS terminals with integrated circuit support, used for authenticating payments made via credit and debit cards.

IDEMIA in Chile

IDEMIA's relationship with the Chilean Government is not new[115]. In 2012, Chile's Civil Registry and Identification Service selected IDEMIA to modernize its national identification and passport systems[116]. Following a competitive bidding process, IDEMIA and the Chilean Government signed a ten-year contract. As part of this agreement, the company built a data center to store the fingerprints and facial images of Chilean citizens.

In May 2022, IDEMIA announced the signing of a new 10-year contract with the central government to provide "the next generation" of identity documents and passports[117], incorporating a multi-biometric system that includes fingerprints, facial recognition and iris scans[118].

The tender won by IDEMIA was not without controversy. In 2021, IDEMIA and the Sonda–Thales consortium filed a complaint before the Public Procurement Tribunal (TCP), requesting the suspension of the ongoing bidding process[119], which was being led by the Chinese company Aisino. They argued that the Asian firm did not meet the required technical standards. It is worth noting that a total of five companies participated in the tender to produce Chilean identity cards and passports: IDEMIA, Aisino, the Sonda–Thales consortium, Telefónica (Spain) and Veridos (Germany).

In December 2024, the new passport came into effect, and problems were reported shortly thereafter. In January 2025, the Comptroller General of the Republic' Office (CGR) launched an audit of the Civil Registry following reports of identity cards being issued with errors in photographs and personal data[120].

IDEMIA in Colombia

IDEMIA operates three support and technical service centers (Medellín, Cali and Bogotá), a factory (Cali) and representative offices (Bogotá). Since 2020, the company has been in charge of the Digital ID Card, assisting with the strengthening, maintenance and sustainability of the PMT II technological platform for the national civil registry and identification system. It is also in charge of producing both physical and digital identification documents[121].

Since 2021, IDEMIA has also been responsible for developing the fingerprint database for the Automated Biometric Identification System (ABIS). The company managed the migration from the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) previously used by the police, integrating it with the new features of the ABIS system.[122].

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115 IDEMIA Modernizes Chile's Identity Management and Document Production System https://www.idemia.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/idemia-modernizes-chile-identity-management-document-production-system-success-story-201906.pdf

116 IDEMIA Modernizes Chile's Identity Management and Document Production System https://www.idemia.com/idemia-modernizes-chiles-identity-management-and-document-production-system

117 IDEMIA to provide Chile with the new generation of ID documents for the next 10 years https://www.idemia.com/press-release/idemia-provide-chile-new-generation-id-documents-next-10-years-2022-04-05

118 Comienza a operar nueva cédula de identidad digital y pasaporte. Published on 12/16/2024 https://www.gob.cl/noticias/comienza-operar-nueva-cedula-identidad-digital-pasaporte-documentos-identificacion/

119 Chile: denuncian irregularidades en la licitación de los pasaportes y cédulas de identidad que favorecerían a una empresa china, by Infobae. Published on 09/01/2021 https://www.infobae.com/america/america-latina/2021/09/01/chile-denuncian-irregularidades-en-la-licitacion-de-los-pasaportes-y-cedulas-de-identidad-que-favorecerian-a-una-empresa-china/

120 Idemia: La empresa francesa detrás del cuestionado Nuevo Sistema de Identificación del Registro Civil, by Emol. Published on 01/16/2025. https://www.emol.com/noticias/Nacional/2025/01/16/1154442/idemia-sistema-identificacion-registro-civil.html

121 Colombia steps up its digital transformation with its Cédula Digital https://www.idemia.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/colombia-digital-transformation-idemia-case-study-202202.pdf

122 López-Solano, J., & Castañeda, J. D. (2024). 'A promising playground': IDEMIA and the digital ID infrastructuring in Colombia. Information, Communication & Society, 27(15), 2669-2685. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2024.2302995

NEC

NEC is a Japanese multinational technology and communications company that provides solutions for both businesses and governments. The company is structured into three divisions: IT Solutions, Communications Solutions and Electronic Devices. With over 100,000 employees across 250 offices, it reported US$23 billion in revenue in 2024 and projects reaching US$35 billion by 2027. While most of its investors are Japanese companies, 6% of NEC is owned by JP Morgan[123]. Among the members of its board of directors is Harufumi Mochizuki, who served as Japan's Vice Minister of Economy between 2008 and 2010.

In Latin America, NEC operates in seven countries[124], with offices in Buenos Aires (Argentina), São Paulo (Brazil), Santiago (Chile), Bogotá (Colombia), Mexico City (Mexico), Caracas (Venezuela) and Lima (Peru). The company's regional headquarters are located in São Paulo, while the Lima office is managed by its Colombian subsidiary. Finally, the Competence Centre of Public Safety business in Latin America is located in the Argentine office.

NEC in Argentina

NEC has been present in Argentina since 1978 and currently employs around 150 people. In January 2025, NEC Argentina decided to exit the telecommunications market to focus on its two most profitable and in-demand business areas in the country: digital biometrics and Smart City solutions[125].

The subsidiary offers "criminal identification" solutions which, according to its website, focus on the use and application of biometric technologies "to guarantee Law and Public Order." NEC presents itself as a global leader in biometric technologies and highlights as a success story the public surveillance system implemented in the city of Tigre in 2011, which remains operational to this day.

Although there are no reports of NEC providing facial recognition services in other Argentine cities, it is worth mentioning that the company is one of the providers of surveillance cameras in Mar del Plata[126]. The city is currently in the process of implementing a facial recognition system and local press has reported that the Japanese company is among those interested in offering the service to the municipality[127].

NEC in Chile

NEC Chile was founded in 1989 and is the local subsidiary of NEC Corporation. In December 2022, Chile implemented the Automated Biometric Identification System (ABIS) for migration control. The Regional Government of Arica and Parinacota was the first to launch the system, followed by the regions of Tarapacá, Los Lagos and Metropolitana. Several press reports claim that NEC Chile is the provider, although no official information on this can be found on the company's website. It is worth noting that in September 2024, the company announced a new system using biometric authentication technology, capable of quickly identifying a large number of individuals simultaneously, even while in motion.

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123 NEC Integrated Report (2024) https://www.nec.com/en/global/ir/pdf/annual/2024/ar2024-e.pdf

124 NEC Offices. https://www.nec.com/en/global/office/index.html

125 Gigante japonés NEC deja negocio en Argentina para concentrarse en sus actividades con más potencial https://www.cronista.com/negocios/gigante-japones-nec-deja-negocio-en-argentina-para-concentrarse-en-sus-actividades-con-mas-potencial/

126 NEC Consolida sus operaciones en Mar del Plata https://ar.nec.com/es_AR/press/PR/20220208051716_1361.html

127 Reconocimiento facial: dos años después, la ordenanza sigue esperando, by La Tecla Mar del Plata. Published on 09/03/2024. https://www.lateclamardelplata.com.ar/52420-reconocimiento-facial-dos-aos-despus-la-ordenanza-sigue-esperando

DAHUA TECHNOLOGY

Dahua Technology is a leading Chinese company specializing in video surveillance and security solutions, founded in 2001. Since the late 2000s, the company has expanded its international presence, including in Latin America. In fact, Dahua and Hikvision—also Chinese—entered Latin American markets, specifically Mexico and Ecuador, in 2007, capitalizing on the demand for low-cost security equipment[128].

Since 2010[129], Dahua has intensified its regional expansion by opening offices and signing contracts in multiple countries across the region, becoming one of the main providers of surveillance cameras and facial recognition systems for the public sector. Today, Dahua has subsidiaries and representation in key countries such as Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Peru, Panama, Argentina, among others[130]. From these locations, it carries out "Safe City" projects and builds partnerships with local and national governments. This presence has allowed the company to participate directly in public tenders and government collaborations. According to its marketing manager for Latin America, Martín Otazúa[131], product sales in the rest of the region are handled through wholesalers or allied partners.

Dahua's strategy has been to offer advanced video surveillance technology at competitive prices, including high definition (HD) cameras, management systems and video analytics powered by artificial intelligence. This approach has enabled the company to gain a significant market share in the region[132]. It is worth noting that the company has faced reports of technical vulnerabilities and is included on a "blacklist" compiled by the U.S. Department of Commerce due to its alleged involvement in the Chinese government's repression, arbitrary detentions and surveillance of Muslim minority groups[133].

The company serves various types of clients and partners, with its primary focus on B2B (business-to-business) operations. It starts with a network of wholesale distributors, who form the foundation of the sales channel. These distributors collaborate with installers and integrators, who are responsible for installing the cameras for end clients. In addition, the company also operates in vertical markets, which allows it to reach governments, industries and other sectors where specific projects are being carried out.

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128 China's Digital Advance in Latin America, by Diálogo Américas. Published on 07/07/2022. https://dialogo-americas.com/articles/chinas-digital-advance-in-latin-america/

129 Dahua Technology: "Crecimos 200% en el mercado de seguridad electrónica de Latinoamérica", by América Economía. Published on 01/05/2021 https://www.americaeconomia.com/dahua-technology-crecimos-200-en-el-mercado-de-seguridad-electronica-de-latinoamerica

130 Dahua Technology Perú busca su lugar en el mercado de la Seguridad Inteligente, by EcosDigitales. Published on 12/14/2017 https://ecosdigitales.com/dahua-technology-busca-su-lugar-mercado-seguridad-ciudadana.html

131 Dahua Technology: "Crecimos 200% en el mercado de seguridad electrónica de Latinoamérica", by América Economía. Published on 01/05/2021 https://www.americaeconomia.com/dahua-technology-crecimos-200-en-el-mercado-de-seguridad-electronica-de-latinoamerica

132 How are the United States and China intersecting in Latin America?, by Brookings. Published on 09/252024 https://www.brookings.edu/articles/how-are-the-united-states-and-china-intersecting-in-latin-america/

133 Vigilancia biométrica: el tortuoso camino de Coahuila hacia el reconocimiento facial, by 5° Elemento. Published on 11/11/2020 https://quintoelab.org/project/vigilancia-biometrica-reconocimiento-facial-coahuila

Dahua in Brazil

It is estimated that since 2018, hundreds of thousands of the company's cameras have been operating in the country. A security breach also revealed that nearly one million Dahua cameras installed in various countries, including Brazil, had been compromised by hackers[134].

In 2019, legislators from the Partido Social Liberal (PSL), led by then-President Jair Bolsonaro, traveled to China to learn about the facial recognition camera systems used there[135]. This trip marked a transfer of knowledge and models from China to Brazil. Unlike Western allies who have restricted Dahua for national security reasons, Brazil has kept its doors open to Chinese companies such as Huawei, ZTE and Hikvision[136]. This official cooperation is evident in the 2023 agreement between Dahua and the state of Paraíba, which covers the management of police body cameras and Big Data traffic.[137]

Dahua in Mexico

Dahua secured several agreements with local governments in Mexico for advanced surveillance projects. A notable case is that of the state of Coahuila, which acquired nearly 1,300 Dahua cameras in 2019 through a direct award, as part of an integrated intelligent video surveillance system[138]. The company worked closely with Coahuila authorities: senior security officials and members of the Mexican military traveled to Hangzhou (China) to meet with Dahua executives and oversee the progress of the installation.

Empower, an organization dedicated to strengthening civil society and improving corporate accountability[139], found that in 2022, the Municipal Public Security Secretariat of Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, acquired surveillance equipment from Dahua and Hikvision through local companies[140] [141].

The project, commonly referred to as Coahuila's video intelligence system, faced both technical and legal challenges, yet continued despite controversy surrounding the U.S. Department of Commerce's sanctions against Dahua. In the case of Mexico, the Coahuila cameras were reportedly used to assist the U.S. government in tracking two individuals who had participated in the Black Lives Matter movement, following the murder of George Floyd, according to the organization Red en Defensa de los Derechos Digitales (R3D)[142].

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134 Vigilancia biométrica: el tortuoso camino de Coahuila hacia el reconocimiento facial, by 5° Elemento. Published on 11/11/2020 https://quintoelab.org/project/vigilancia-biometrica-reconocimiento-facial-coahuila

135 Brasil estrena cámaras de reconocimiento facial coincidiendo con el inicio del Carnaval, by Xinhuanet en Español. Published on 03/02//2019 http://spanish.xinhuanet.com/2019-03/02/c_137862459.htm

136 Crecen los proyectos de vigilancia china en Brasil tras la entrada de Huawei: desde las prisiones hasta la seguridad urbana, by Infobae. Published on 09/11/2023 https://www.infobae.com/america/america-latina/2023/09/11/crecen-los-proyectos-de-vigilancia-china-en-brasil-tras-la-entrada-de-huawei-desde-las-prisiones-hasta-la-seguridad-urbana/

137 Crecen los proyectos de vigilancia china en Brasil tras la entrada de Huawei: desde las prisiones hasta la seguridad urbana, por Infobae. Published on 09/11/2023 https://www.infobae.com/america/america-latina/2023/09/11/crecen-los-proyectos-de-vigilancia-china-en-brasil-tras-la-entrada-de-huawei-desde-las-prisiones-hasta-la-seguridad-urbana/

138 Vigilancia biométrica: el tortuoso camino de Coahuila hacia el reconocimiento facial, by 5° Elemento. Published on 11/11/2020 https://quintoelab.org/project/vigilancia-biometrica-reconocimiento-facial-coahuila

139 Ciudad Juárez acquires video surveillance equipment from Chinese companies banned by the U.S., by Empower. Published on 06/07/2023 https://empowerllc.net/en/2023/06/07/surveillance-border-dahua-hikvision/

140 Ciudad Juárez adquiere cámaras con reconocimiento facial de empresas vetadas por EE.UU., by Red en Defensa de los Derechos Digitales (R3D). Published on 06/16/2023 https://r3d.mx/2023/06/16/ciudad-juarez-adquiere-camaras-con-reconocimiento-facial-de-empresas-vetadas-por-ee-uu/

141 The companies INT Intelligence and Telecom Technologies México S.A. de C.V. provided and installed a total of 1,000 cameras at 250 intelligent monitoring points, while Novitech S.A. de C.V. supplied complementary services.

142 Gobierno de Coahuila usó sistema de reconocimiento facial para perseguir a manifestantes del movimiento Black Lives Matter, by Red en Defensa de los Derechos Digitales (R3D). Published on 08/02/2021 https://r3d.mx/2021/08/02/gobierno-de-coahuila-uso-sistema-de-reconocimiento-facial-para-perseguir-a-manifestantes-del-movimiento-black-lives-matter/

Dahua in Peru

In 2015, Dahua opened an office in Lima to promote its brand and strengthen its relationship with the Peruvian national government[143]. Since then, the company has aimed to position itself in public safety and smart city projects. Dahua Peru has stated that its goal is to work closely with the national government and to promote its solutions to the public sector, seeking to become a local reference in smart security.

HIKVISION

Hikvision is a leading Chinese security technology company, founded in 2011, specializing in AIoT (Artificial Intelligence of Things). In 2015, its global expansion included a strategic move into Latin America through a distribution agreement with Brazil's WDC Networks—the country's largest video surveillance solutions distributor[144]. In November 2016, Hikvision opened its first office in Chile, marking its second in the region[145]. At the same time, it launched partner programs (VASP) for local integrators, offering technical training and commercial support with the goal of "closing major deals" in the region, according to José García, Hikvision's Marketing Manager for Latin America[146].

In 2022, while Hikvision's sales declined in the United States and Europe due to controversies related to human rights violations, they increased in Asian and Latin American markets[147]. The company's products are banned in the United States over espionage concerns, allegations that have been denied by the Chinese government[148]. In various media outlets, Hikvision has been described as "the world's largest supplier of video surveillance systems" and as a company "closely tied to the Chinese government." Its main shareholder is China Electronics Technology Group, a state-owned defense contractor that manufactures drones and other military equipment[149].

Due to the limited public information available from official sources, obtaining up-to-date company data for this investigation posed an additional challenge. When reviewing the company's website, the available information was incomplete and outdated. Moreover, although there was a section listing financial reports, the files could not be downloaded for consultation[150].

143 Dahua Technology Perú busca su lugar en el mercado de la Seguridad Inteligente, by EcosDigitales. Published on 12/14/2017 https://ecosdigitales.com/dahua-technology-busca-su-lugar-mercado-seguridad-ciudadana.html

144 Hikvision targets No.1 spot in Brazil, by Security Market. Published on 09/10/2015 https://www.securityworldmarket.com/na/Newsarchive/hikvision-signs-distribution-contract-with-wdc-networks-brazil

145 Hikvision abre oficina en Chile, un mercado que la compañía califica "con nivel europeo", by Tecnoseguro. Published on 11/18/2016 https://www.tecnoseguro.com/noticias/cctv/hikvision-abre-oficina-chile-mercado-cono-sur

146 Hikvision abre oficina en Chile, un mercado que la compañía califica "con nivel europeo", by Tecnoseguro. Published on 11/18/2016 https://www.tecnoseguro.com/noticias/cctv/hikvision-abre-oficina-chile-mercado-cono-sur

147 Surveillance Tech Series: Hikvision's Links to Human Rights Abuses in East Turkistan, by Uyghur Human Rights Project. Published on 10/17/2023 https://uhrp.org/report/hikvisions-links-to-human-rights-abuses-in-east-turkistan/

148 The world's biggest surveillance company you've never heard of, by MIT Technology Review. Published on 06/22/2022 https://www.technologyreview.com/2022/06/22/1054586/hikvision-worlds-biggest-surveillance-company/

149 Las videocámaras chinas compradas por Moncloa, sospechosas de espionaje, by El Confidencial Digital. Published on 06/23/2024 https://www.elconfidencialdigital.com/articulo/seguridad/videocamaras-chinas-moncloa-vetadas-sospecha-espionaje/20240623000000803086.html

150 Hikvision Annual/Quarterly Financial Reports https://www.hikvision.com/en/ir/annual-quarterly-financial-reports/

Hikvision in Mexico

In Mexico, the company expanded through its network of distributors. In 2021, it acquired a stake on the board of Syscom, Mexico's largest provider of surveillance systems[151], alongside its own office and partnerships with system integrators[152].

The government's adoption of smart video surveillance systems has been underway since 2021, with a notable example being the Comprehensive Urban Video Surveillance Project with Analytical Technology in the municipality of Aguascalientes, which integrated 20 cameras with facial recognition capabilities[153].

Hikvision in Peru

In Peru, the company operates through representatives and authorized channels. For example, Nexus Technology partnered with Hikvision to showcase AI-powered public safety solutions at local trade fairs.

In July 2023, the Peruvian National Police (PNP) announced the activation of 3,500 video surveillance cameras, to be monitored from the 105 Emergency Center in order to strengthen public safety in various critical areas of Lima[154]. In October 2023, the municipality of Lince joined the initiative, installing 100 facial recognition cameras (Hikvision TandemVu PTZ Camera ColorVu), although only 50 were operational at the time[155]. In April 2024, the district of El Agustino also joined, adding 33 facial recognition surveillance cameras[156]. Despite the significance of the project, especially given the involvement of the National Police, it was very difficult to find public information from either the Peruvian government or the company.

HERTA

Herta is a Spanish company that develops advanced facial recognition and computer vision solutions. Headquartered in Barcelona (Spain), with offices in Madrid (Spain), London (UK), and Los Angeles (USA), the company is known for providing technologies for video surveillance, access control, time and attendance tracking, and marketing. Herta specializes in real-time facial recognition, particularly in crowd settings, and its technology is used in international projects through a network of more than 150 certified integrators across 50 countries.[157]

The company offers solutions such as BioSurveillance, a video surveillance tool that enables real-time detection and tracking of multiple faces, even under highly dynamic conditions such as moving individuals or low-light environments. Another product, BioSurveillance NEXT, is designed to identify people in large crowds and constantly changing situations. Herta also developed BioFinder, which enables the rapid search for individuals in recorded video footage, using high processing power to conduct forensic analysis or classify information more efficiently than real-time monitoring.

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151 New Developments in China-Latin America Engagement, by CEEEP (Think Tank of the Peruvian Army). Published on 12/20/2022 https://ceeep.mil.pe/2022/12/20/nuevos-desarrollos-en-las-relaciones-entre-china-y-america-latina/?lang=en

152 HikVision presentó avances en inteligencia artificial para la seguridad ciudadana, by Business Empresarial. Published on 02/06/2019 https://www.businessempresarial.com.pe/hikvision-presento-avances-en-inteligencia-artificial-para-la-seguridad-ciudadana/

153 Mapped initiatives https://estudio.reconocimientofacial.info/en/mapped-initiatives/

154 Cámaras con reconocimiento facial contra la inseguridad en Lima: "Todo va a estar perennizado", by LatinaNoticias. Published on 07/05/2023 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=inDk8sw6f6o&ab_channel=LatinaNoticias

155 Lince: municipalidad instala cámaras con reconocimiento facial tras aumento de delincuencia, by TV Perú. Published on 10/03/2023 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BSqKhSaAFc4&t=312s&ab_channel=TVPer%C3%BANoticias

156 El Agustino: municipalidad implementa cámaras de seguridad con reconocimiento facial, by TV Perú. Published on 04/11/2024 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mbhGmqrf130&ab_channel=TVPer%C3%BANoticias

157 Herta Security https://www.siempria.com/proyecto/herta-security

The company's origins trace back to the European Union's Horizon 2020 Programme, an initiative dedicated to research and innovation that ran from 2014 to 2020 with a budget of nearly €80 billion. The program's main goals were to foster world-class science, eliminate barriers to innovation and promote collaboration between the public and private sectors. It is currently in its second phase, running through 2027, with a budget of €95.5 billion.

Herta in Colombia

In August 2023, Herta was selected by the National Police to implement a facial recognition system in Medellín. The contracting process sparked debate over its transparency. The company responsible for developing the tool, Integradores SAS, was selected without a public bidding process. According to journalistic sources, the contract was awarded directly, which would constitute a violation of public procurement principles. The firm "Control Social de la Gestión Pública de Colombia SAS" acted as an oversight body and filed a complaint with the Attorney General's Office, requesting an investigation into the contracting process.

According to the complainants, Medellín's Special District for Science, Technology and Innovation should have launched a public bidding process. Instead, the contract was awarded to Integradores SAS[158] on the grounds that it was the only company capable of providing the required service. The Secretariat of Security and Coexistence of Medellín responded that no other provider with similar capabilities had been identified, and that Integradores SAS is the exclusive distributor of Herta technology, which is needed to connect the cameras to the Police database.

Despite this justification, the oversight body has called for the intervention of the Attorney General's Office, arguing that the lack of competition in the contracting process may have violated fundamental principles of public procurement.[159]

Herta in Uruguay

In 2020, the government acquired an automated facial recognition system for use in public security. The system was implemented by the company through a tender won by its local representative, DDBA, a Colombian-based firm[160].

The system acquired by the Uruguayan government integrates with data from the National Directorate of Civil Identification using facial images of registered citizens. This system also has potential applications beyond security, such as biomarketing, where the software can identify individuals' demographic characteristics to deliver targeted advertising.

158 Information about Integradores SAS https://www.datacreditoempresas.com.co/directorio/integradores-sas.html

159 Polémica por contrato de $3.738 millones para 'pillar' criminales con cámaras en Medellín, by El Colombiano. Published on 01/10/2023 https://www.elcolombiano.com/antioquia/polemica-por-contrato-de-3738-millones-para-pillar-criminales-BH19785613

160 Ddba Due Diligence Business Ally S.a.s https://www.datacreditoempresas.com.co/directorio/ddba-due-diligence-business-ally-sas.html

INNOVATRICS

Innovatrics is a company specializing in biometric solutions for governments and businesses, founded in the Czech Republic in 2004. With a global presence, it has offices in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Saudi Arabia, Brazil and the United States. With over 16 years of experience, Innovatrics has developed fingerprint and facial recognition algorithms that are used in more than 80 countries. As part of its regional expansion strategy, the company opened an office in São Paulo, Brazil, in September 2021 to strengthen relationships with clients in the region. Its growth in Latin America has also been fueled by the involvement of key integrators, including Thomas Greg & Sons, Veridos, Diebold Nixdorf, Valid and Certisign. Company projections estimate that demand for biometric technologies in Latin America will grow by 16.35% by 2028, reinforcing Innovatrics' expansion potential in the region.[161]

Innovatrics in Honduras

In 2021, Palmerola Airport in Honduras began using Innovatrics' SmartFace platform, equipped with 22 cameras. The service allows for the simultaneous processing of multiple video streams. This project is part of the Honduran government's plan to position the country as a key transportation hub in Central America by adopting solutions like Innovatrics' SmartFace[162].

Innovatrics in Panama

In 2024, Panama's Electoral Tribunal implemented a new National Identity Issuance System through a consortium comprising IECISA[163], a Spanish company acting as integrator, and Innovatrics as the biometric technology provider.

One of the main tasks involved migrating the old fingerprint database, which needed to be cleaned to remove duplicate records, while maintaining high system performance to process third-party requests.

Innovatrics successfully transferred the data from a legacy AFIS solution, including biometric records of minors. The system developed included IFace, a high-speed facial recognition solution designed to optimize the verification process prior to issuing identity cards. In addition, Innovatrics' fingerprint identification software, recognized as an industry leader, was implemented with a real-world matching rate of 99.98% according to NIST (National Institute of Standards and Technology) standards. The system is now supported by Innovatrics ABIS, and its database contains more than five million records.[164]

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161 As Biometric Adoption Grows in Latin America, So Does Innovatrics' Market Share, by Innovatrics. Published on 03/12/2021 https://www.innovatrics.com/news/biometric-adoption-grows-in-latin-america/

162 Innovatrics SmartFace Tapped to Provide Facial Recognition for Palmerola International Airport in Honduras, by Innovatrics. Published on 10/06/2021 https://www.innovatrics.com/news/innovatrics-smartface-will-provide-facial-recognition-for-palmerola-international-airport-in-honduras/

163 IECISA was a technology consulting firm specializing in providing digital solutions and services to large companies and public administrations through technological innovation. The company ranked among the top three information technology firms in Spain. Most of its activities were carried out in Spain, but it also had offices in Portugal, Mexico, Colombia, Peru, Brazil and other countries. On April 27, 2020, Gfi Group announced the final acquisition of IECISA, and the group was subsequently renamed INETUM.

164 Panamá actualiza el Sistema Nacional de Emisión de Identidad mediante biometría multimodal, by Innovatrics https://www.innovatrics.com/es/referencias/panama-actualiza-el-sistema-nacional-de-emision-de-identidad-mediante-biometria-multimodal/

GENERAL DYNAMICS MISSION SYSTEM

General Dynamics Mission Systems is a Canadian company specializing in defense electronics, with expertise in the land, sea, air, space and cyber domains. The company is part of a conglomerate of U.S. aerospace and defense firms and operates across four main business areas: naval systems, combat systems, information technology systems and aerospace.

General Dynamics IT specializes in cybersecurity, advanced data protection and statistical analysis. Globally, General Dynamics established itself as the world's fifth-largest defense contractor in 2012 and has undergone significant evolution over the past three decades.

General Dynamics Mission Systems in Panama

General Dynamics Mission Systems entered the Panamanian market in 2019. The company was selected to participate in a security project at Tocumen International Airport, one of Central America's most important transportation hubs.

The company was chosen to implement a biometric facial recognition system in Terminals 1 and 2 of the airport, as well as at the National Operations Center. The system aims to enhance security and optimize access control for both passengers and airport staff.

VERIDOS

Veridos is a company specializing in biometric identity and security solutions, founded in 2015 as a joint venture[165] between Germany's Giesecke+Devrient (60%) and the state-owned printing company Bundesdruckerei (40%)[166]. Since its creation, Veridos has aimed to expand its presence in the global identification market, with a strong focus on government projects. In Latin America, the company has established a significant presence through its subsidiary Veridos México S.A. de Capital Variable, which was launched to serve the region. This subsidiary—together with the German parent company, Veridos GmbH—has led several high-profile initiatives in Latin America, ranging from identity document issuance in Mexico to advanced biometric border control systems in Uruguay. Veridos' first projects in the region date back to the mid-2010s.

Veridos in Mexico

In 2015, the company was awarded a contract with Mexico's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to modernize the issuance of electronic passports using biometric identification systems[167]. The project sparked controversy over alleged irregularities, as the contract was challenged for possible favoritism. Within a few months, a collapse in Veridos' platform was reported, which drastically reduced the daily issuance of passports[168]. Despite this, Veridos continued operating in the country and, in 2019, secured a new contract, valid through 2024, related to the Voter ID Card[169].

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165 This concept refers to a joint venture or strategic alliance, which is a commercial agreement where two or more companies come together to develop a shared business or project, pooling investments, risks, benefits and control.

166 Veridos https://www.biometricsinstitute.org/supplier_directory/veridos/

167 SRE contrató a empresa para expedir pasaportes que colapsó en 2015, by Las Plumas del Tecolote. Published on 30/03/2019 https://lasplumasdeltecolote.com/sre-contrato-a-empresa-para-expedir-pasaportes-que-colapso-en-2015/

168 La polémica por la empresa que expedirá las nuevas credenciales de elector, by Infobae. Published on 06/28/2019 https://www.infobae.com/america/mexico/2019/06/28/la-polemica-por-la-empresa-que-expedira-las-nuevas-credenciales-de-elector/

169 Define el INE a la empresa ganadora de la licitación para producir la nueva credencial para votar, by INE. Published on 06/28/2019 https://centralelectoral.ine.mx/2019/06/28/define-ine-la-empresa-ganadora-la-licitacion-producir-la-nueva-credencial-votar/

Veridos in Uruguay

Uruguay stands out as an emblematic case of the company's expansion in the region, given the comprehensive scope of the solution implemented and the nature of the agreement with the government. In September 2023, the Uruguayan Executive Branch approved a concession to Veridos México S.A. to modernize and operate the national migration control system using facial recognition and biometric identification technologies[170]. Through an international tender launched by the Ministry of the Interior, Veridos was selected over other bidders (Dafiway S.A. and Vilnago S.A.) to deploy the new Integrated Migratory Management System of Uruguay (SIGMU).

The contract establishes a 10-year concession for Veridos to implement the technological infrastructure and provide border control services at all points of entry into the country. This public-private partnership model means the company finances a significant portion of the investment, estimated at US$7 million annually, in exchange for operating the system. Compensation would come through a security fee applied to passenger transport tickets[171]. The SIGMU system was officially launched in November 2024. It incorporates biometric identification technologies, integrating facial and fingerprint recognition, data analysis and mobile modules for field controls[172]. The system also includes inspection equipment such as body scanners and enables predictive analysis of migratory patterns. The award to a foreign consortium sparked political debate in Uruguay, as this is the first time border control has been granted as a concession to an international private entity.

Veridos in Costa Rica

As part of the Biometric Passport for the Bicentennial Project, the General Directorate of Migration and Foreigners (DGME) in Costa Rica launched a public tender to modernize the national passport to an electronic format. Following this international bidding process, the contract was awarded to a consortium led by the Costa Rican company Grupo de Soluciones Informáticas (GSI) in partnership with Veridos (a German provider of identity solutions), as well as the firms Sertracen and Dinámica Consultores[173].

Veridos and GSI-Sertracen were contracted to design and implement the entire electronic passport system, including the production of the new passports, the personalization system and associated software[174]. The contract was formalized in early 2022, enabling the issuance of biometric passports to begin later that same year. The total cost of the project was approximately 3.548 billion Costa Rican colones (the local currency), equivalent to about 5.5 million US dollars.[175]

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170 El Gobierno uruguayo entrega control de las fronteras por 10 años a empresa mexicana Veridos México, by Caras & Caretas. Published on 04/05/2024 https://www.carasycaretas.com.uy/politica/el-gobierno-uruguayo-entrega-control-las-fronteras-10-anos-empresa-mexicana-veridos-mexico-n72469

171 Por el costado, by Brecha. Published on 03/01/2024 https://brecha.com.uy/por-el-costado/

172 Uruguay lanza el Sistema Integral de Gestión Migratoria (SIGMU) para reforzar la seguridad en sus fronteras. Published on 11/12/2024 https://www.gub.uy/ministerio-interior/comunicacion/noticias/uruguay-lanza-sistema-integral-gestion-migratoria-sigmu-para-reforzar

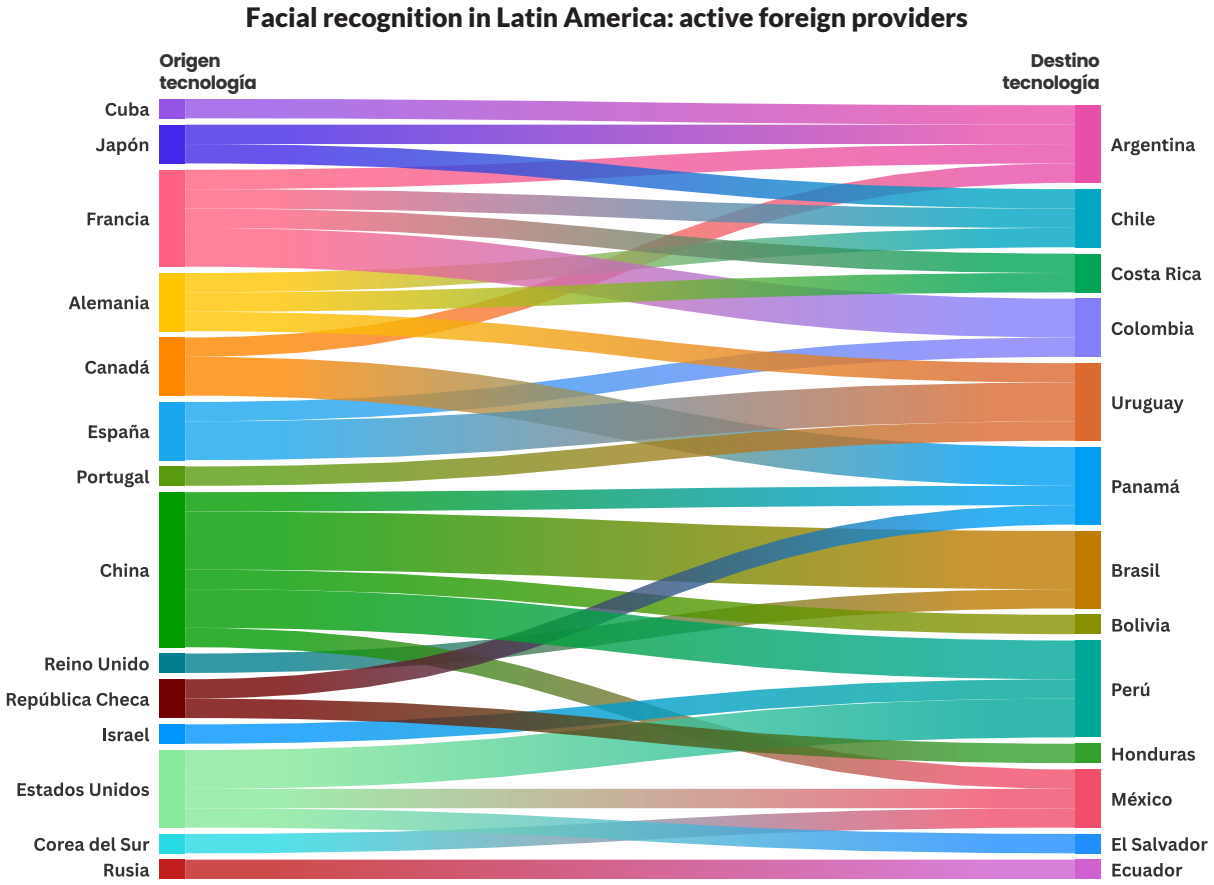
173 Facial recognition in Latin America Trends in the implementation of a perverse technology, by AlSur. Published on October 2021 https://www.alsur.lat/sites/default/files/2021-10/ALSUR_Reconocimiento%20facial%20en%20Latam_EN_Final.pdf

174 Costa Rica elevates its identity document technology to the next level, by Veridos. https://www.veridos.com/en/successstories/costa-rica-elevates-its-identity-document-technology-to-the-next-level.html

175 Pasaportes biométricos costarán ¢3.550 millones, by Guana Noticias https://guananoticias.com/nacionales/pasaportes-biometricos-costaran-%C2%A23-550-millones/

Origin and destination of surveillance technologies

According to the information gathered, Argentina receives surveillance technologies from companies based in four different countries: Cuba, Japan, France and Canada. It is worth noting that the commercial relationship between Argentina and Cuba, as well as between the Mexican subsidiary of a German-origin company and Uruguay, are the only reported instances of trade between countries within the region. On the other hand, Bolivia, El Salvador, Honduras and Ecuador source these technologies from a single country of origin: China, the United States, the Czech Republic, and Russia, respectively.



An interactive visualization displaying the relationship between the countries of origin of the main surveillance technology providers and the recipient countries.

If we divide the regional map by the country of origin of the companies providing the identified initiatives, China ranks first[176]. Eight initiatives involving companies from the Asian giant stand out, spread across five different countries. In this regard, Brazil appears as the leading recipient, followed by Bolivia, Peru, Panama and Mexico.

France ranks second, with its participation spread across initiatives in four countries: Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, and Colombia. The United States takes third place, with companies from that country present in three countries: El Salvador, Mexico and Peru.

176 By Technology Origin - ACTIVE https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/21071223/

The geopolitical and commercial dynamics of surveillance technologies in the region

As shown in this journalistic report, the leading global players in the deployment of surveillance technologies are present in Latin America. These are provider companies originating from powers that dominate the development and commercialization of these technologies, such as the European Union, the United States and China, all of which belong to major trade blocs. The information presented so far suggests that Latin America serves as a setting where these actors are expanding in a relatively balanced manner.

The previous survey suggests that European and Chinese companies stand out over North American companies. However, the presence of US capital is seen through its control of European and Japanese companies. Meanwhile, China's influence in the region is evident through several initiatives, with Brazil being the most prominent country. It is worth mentioning that the South American giant is the only Latin American nation that has been part of the BRICS so far[177]. However, Brazil is also home to the headquarters of IDEMIA, a leading provider of biometric services in the region, which is of European origin but under the control of a North American venture capital fund.

The approach taken to these initiatives suggests that the region is positioned as merely a recipient of surveillance technologies, where the rules are not always clear, unlike the global players, who seem to have a precise understanding of how and with whom they wish to operate. Before delving into the relevant commercial dynamics and connections in this field, we will first offer a brief genealogy of surveillance capitalism to contextualize the subsequent analytical approach.

Genealogy of surveillance capitalism

At the end of the 20th century, capitalism underwent a profound transformation. Industrial production, which had been the cornerstone of the global economy for decades, began to give way to another resource that was gaining increasing value in market terms: information. Companies no longer just sold products or services; they started to structure themselves around the capture, processing, analysis,and circulation of data. This paradigm shift gave rise to what sociologist Manuel Castells referred to as the informational mode of development[178].

For Castells, this mode of development did not replace the industrial model but rather reconfigured it. The key to growth shifted from material production to the ability to process information in real-time, enabling the expansion of economic networks operating on a global scale. With digitalization, the most powerful companies were no longer manufacturers of goods but those managing information flows: banks, telecommunications, media and, with the advent of the internet, technology companies.

177 The BRICS are a group of five of the world's largest emerging economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, whose initials form the acronym. Since 2024, they have expanded to include new members, prompting a rebranding as BRICS+. For the sake of readability, the original acronym has been retained, as it is the most widely recognized.

178 Castells, M. (1996). The informational city: Information technology, economic restructuring, and the urban-regional process. Blackwell Publishers.

This was the context in which, a few years later, what the theorist Nick Srnicek calls platform capitalism emerged[179]. Unlike previous models, where economic power resided in the ownership of infrastructure or financial capital, digital platforms managed to concentrate power by becoming intermediaries in social and economic activity. These platforms not only facilitate transactions but also extract and process user data to optimize their profitability.

In this ecosystem, where every action leaves a digital footprint, what the scholar Shoshana Zuboff defines as surveillance capitalism became firmly established[180]. According to Zuboff, this economic model is not only based on the collection of personal data but also on its use to anticipate and modify behaviors. This form of capitalism was partly the result of a process in which the absence of regulations, technological acceleration and the pursuit of profitability allowed platforms to operate without restrictions in data collection and monetization. Surveillance capitalism became entrenched within a global context dominated by deregulation—or re-regulation—and the opening of markets.

Martín Schapiro is a lawyer, specializing in international relations. Until 2023, he served as Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs at the Secretariat of Strategic Affairs of Argentina and also worked as an advisor on foreign affairs at the Ministry of Productive Development of Argentina. In an interview for this research, he commented that trade in services, including surveillance technologies like facial recognition, is generally more open than trade in goods, which has traditionally faced more barriers: "The services sector is relatively open compared to the trade in goods. Generally, there are few restrictions related to services, and that's why it operates as an open system, whereas trade in goods is characterized as a more closed scheme."

Ultimately, this sector is characterized by commercial openness, which emerged strongly during a time when market deregulation became the norm. The technological leap that began in the late 1990s, marked by the introduction of the internet for civilian and commercial use, was the starting point for the exponential growth of information and communication technology services. This growth was supported by an economic, political and social context that also shaped the countries in the region, exemplified by the privatization of public services, and more specifically, telecommunications companies.

In Latin America, the privatization of telecommunications marked the entry of foreign capital into a key sector that paved the way for what followed: the expansion of connectivity and the widespread adoption of information and communication technologies in everyday life. The various privatization processes, which began in the region in the 1980s under Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship in Chile and reached their peak in the 1990s, were driven by an influx of venture capital. Investors saw a major opportunity to acquire connectivity infrastructure at low cost, with the prospect of obtaining high short-term returns. Three decades later, this equation appears to be resurfacing, this time driven by a new frontier in information and communication technologies: surveillance technologies.

Thus, it could be said that facial recognition and biometric identification systems spread rapidly and globally because they found support across governments, businesses, and society. For states, these technologies offer effective tools for social control, security and public administration. For companies, they represent an unprecedented business opportunity. And for citizens, the constant collection of data has become normalized as part of everyday interaction with digital platforms.

179 Srnicek, N. (2016). Platform capitalism. Polity Press.

180 Zuboff, S. (2019). The age of surveillance capitalism: The fight for a human future at the new frontier of power. PublicAffairs.

Import and export control regimes

Facial recognition systems require at least three components: an image capture technology (video surveillance, scanners, etc.), an algorithm for analyzing those images—sometimes accompanied by an automatic or human validation mechanism that determines the confidence threshold for a match—, and a biometric database to compare the images or their mathematical representations, such as hash codes. These three components have been at the center of global geopolitics and trade agendas for years, with ongoing disputes involving the United States, China and the European Union.

In this context, it is worth paying attention to certain key aspects of the global landscape in which the commercialization of surveillance technologies such as facial recognition is taking place.

European Union: regulations on dual-use items and the AI Act

In March 2021, the European Union approved new rules to control the export of dual-use items[181], aiming to prevent their misuse and interference with human rights. The term dual use refers to technologies, products or services that can be used for both civilian and military purposes, and it has its origins in the Wassenaar Arrangement[182]. Since then, the EU has required authorization for the export of dual-use items that could be used for internal repression or to commit serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

Additionally, in March 2024, the European Parliament approved the Artificial Intelligence Act[183], a regulatory framework governing the use of artificial intelligence in the European Union. The regulation sets out obligations for providers based on the risk classification level of the AI system. Among the AI systems classified as posing an "unacceptable risk", and therefore banned in the EU, are real-time and remote biometric identification systems, such as facial recognition in public spaces. However, the law allows for the use of facial recognition with a judicial warrant and in specific cases, including the search for victims of kidnapping, human trafficking or sexual exploitation, as well as the prevention of terrorist threats. Article 23 of the regulation also establishes obligations for importers of high-risk AI systems, as may be the case with facial recognition technology[184].

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181 Parliament agrees to new EU export rules on dual use ítems. Published on 03/25/2021 https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/es/press-room/20210322IPR00534/parliament-agrees-to-new-eu-export-rules-on-dual-use-items

182 This concept has its origins in the Wassenaar Arrangement, an international treaty signed in 1996 that regulates the export of conventional weapons and dual-use technologies. Its goal is to promote transparency and accountability in the transfer of these goods, ensuring they are not used for human rights violations or threats to international security https://www.wassenaar.org/the-wassenaar-arrangement/

183 Artificial Intelligence Act https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=OJ:L_202401689

184 Appointment of an Authorized Representative: A written mandate must be used to designate an individual or entity to act as the authorized representative within the Union. This representative will be responsible for ensuring that the system complies with legal requirements before it is marketed in the region. The representative's duties include verifying that the provider has prepared the necessary technical documentation to meet the safety and efficacy standards required by the EU, maintaining a record of essential documents (such as the EU Declaration of Conformity) for at least 10 years, and providing European authorities with all necessary information to demonstrate compliance with EU regulations. This may include, for instance, records of activities performed by the AI system, such as storing AI-generated data to verify its operation. Furthermore, the representative must cooperate with the competent authorities if risks or issues related to the AI system are identified. They will also be responsible for taking appropriate measures to mitigate the risks associated with the technology, ensuring that the proper procedures are followed for its safe use in the EU.

At this point, a potential double standard on the part of the European Union becomes apparent when contrasting its internal regulations on artificial intelligence and dual-use items with its approach to foreign trade. The European bloc, through the Artificial Intelligence Act passed in March 2024, sets strict obligations and bans unacceptable-risk AI systems such as real-time and remote facial recognition, except in limited cases with a court order, and reserves the right to sanction companies that fail to comply with these rules. However, its export policy for sensitive technologies appears to be less restrictive. Although Regulation (EU) 2021/821 does provide for sanctions against exporters of dual-use items that violate the rules, including license revocation and fines, it does not apply the same level of scrutiny and restrictions to the export of cyber-surveillance technologies or high-risk AI systems, despite their potential use in repression or human rights violations[185]. This gap is particularly relevant for Latin America, where European companies maintain a consistent presence, raising questions about the coherence between the EU's internal values and its trade policy on sensitive technologies.

United States: AI export controls and the tariff war

In January 2025, a week before leaving the White House, former President Joe Biden introduced new export controls, placing restrictions on advanced AI chips, cloud access and AI models[186]. The regulation aims to enable US companies to export and take the lead in key global AI markets by reducing and streamlining bureaucratic barriers to exports. The regulation divides countries into three groups: close allies and partners, exempt from AI export controls, including Germany, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Spain, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Norway, New Zealand, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, the Republic of Korea, Sweden and Taiwan; countries of concern, presumed ineligible to receive advanced US AI technology, such as China and Russia; and a middle category that includes all other countries, such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

At the time this report was written, no significant updates had been made regarding the future of these regulations under the Trump administration. However, a new chapter in the tariff war waged by the Republican government had already unfolded. In early April 2025, the U.S. government imposed new tariffs on imports as part of its trade policy, with China being the country most affected by the measure. As expected, China responded swiftly, announcing a sharp increase in tariffs on imports from the United States. and threatening to add U.S. companies to its "unreliable entities" list[187].

185 European Union. (2021). Regulation (EU) 2021/821 - EN - EUR-Lex. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A32021R0821

186 What to Know About the New U.S. AI Diffusion Policy and Export Controls. Published on 01/13/2025 https://www.cfr.org/blog/what-know-about-new-us-ai-diffusion-policy-and-export-controls

187 China responde a Trump con aranceles del 34%. Published on April 4, 2025. https://www.nytimes.com/es/2025/04/04/espanol/negocios/china-aranceles-trump-respuesta.html

For Latin American countries—except for Mexico, due to its participation in the USMCA[188]—almost all of their products will be subject to the minimum tariff imposed by the White House[189]. While the full impact of the United States' decision on the trade of surveillance technologies remains uncertain, it is reasonable to anticipate changes in trade dynamics in the medium term. This backdrop of tariff disputes is unfolding while Mercosur continues to work towards finalizing a trade agreement with the European Union (EU), a process that has spanned decades[190].

In parallel, some countries in the Southern Cone have initiated or are exploring talks with China with the aim of establishing free trade agreements. Similarly, the possibility of exploring or finalizing bilateral trade agreements between certain Mercosur members and the United States represents another potential avenue that could shape the future of regional trade.

China: innovation, technological strategy, and export controls

A recent analysis conducted by academics from Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) reveals that China is currently the world's leading exporter of facial recognition technology[191]. The report shows that Chinese companies lead this segment with 201 international contracts, followed by U.S. companies with 128. In the broader field of artificial intelligence, China also leads exports, with 250 out of the 1,636 contracts signed with 136 importing countries. The United States ranks second, with 215 agreements.

The study also maintains that these exports may contribute to other governments to conduct increased surveillance, potentially harming the human rights of the population.

In this context of technological leadership, particularly in the fields of artificial intelligence and facial recognition, China has also started to take a more active role in its geopolitical competition with the United States. While in the past, it responded slowly to restrictions imposed by Washington D.C., it has recently ramped up its strategy by imposing export controls more swiftly. One example of this is the decision to ban the sale of gallium, germanium and antimony to the United States, announced just one day after the US introduced new controls on semiconductors, which will come into effect in December 2024[192].

It is a commercial scenario in which Latin America seems to be left out of the global discussion. However, it is worth mentioning that the presence of Chinese companies as suppliers of facial recognition technologies in countries such as Brazil, Peru, and Bolivia has a strong background linked to trade and investments in key sectors such as mining and infrastructure.

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188 This refers to the Free Trade Agreement between Canada, the United States, and Mexico. It is also known as USMCA (Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement) or NAFTA 2.0 to distinguish it from its predecessor, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

189 Trump impone un arancel a Latinoamérica, mayor para Venezuela y Nicaragua y excluye a México. Published on April 2, 2025. https://efe.com/economia/2025-04-02/trump-aranceles-argentina-brasil-colombia-chile-latinoamerica/

190 Ante las tensiones con EEUU por los aranceles, Suecia y Finlandia apoyaron el acuerdo Unión Europea- Mercosur https://www.infobae.com/economia/2025/04/08/ante-las-tensiones-con-eeuu-por-los-aranceles-suecia-y-finlandia-apoyaron-el-acuerdo-union-europea-mercosur

191 Beraja, M., Yang, D. Y., & Zuo, N. (January 2023). Exporting the surveillance state via trade in AI. Brookings Institution. Retrieved from https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Exporting-the-surveillance-state-via-trade-in-AI_FINAL-1.pdf

192 China's use of export controls, por IISS. Published on 02/27/2025 https://www.iiss.org/online-analysis/charting-china/2025/02/chinas-use-of-export-controls/

Currently, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Nicaragua and Peru are the countries in the region with a Free Trade Agreement with China. Colombia, Panama and Ecuador are at various stages of negotiations, while Uruguay has expressed its intention to finalize a free trade agreement with the Asian giant but has not yet moved beyond the preliminary discussion stage[193].

Exploring the region's trade relations

The global landscape is shifting: major players are setting new rules for the commercial regulation of technological deployment. In this context, where do Latin American countries stand in terms of trade? How will they navigate the new export regulations and tariff disputes related to surveillance technologies like facial recognition? These are some of the key questions facing the region in the coming years.

To begin outlining some answers, it is useful to look at how the main trade relationships of Latin American countries are currently structured. In this section, we will analyze both individual cases and their participation in trade blocs, also considering whether there are special agreements with the main exporters of surveillance technologies. This will help us reach a more accurate understanding of the region's positioning and room for maneuver within the global trade order.

Mercosur: Free trade agreement with the European Union and its role in the World Trade Organization (WTO)

Mercosur (Southern Common Market) is an economic and trade bloc made up of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. Bolivia completed its accession process in July 2024, after depositing its instrument of ratification for the Accession Protocol, and is currently in the process of becoming a full member of the bloc. Venezuela, meanwhile, has been a suspended member state since 2016. Mercosur also has associated states such as Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Guyana. Founded in 1991, the bloc's main objective is to create a common space to promote trade and investment through the competitive integration of national economies into the international market. Following intense discussions, the final Association Agreement between Mercosur and the European Union was signed on December 6, 2024. The signing marked the culmination of over two decades of negotiations and represented a milestone in the international trade relations of both blocs[194]. However, the agreement's entry into force is still pending ratification, particularly by the EU member states.

This agreement not only covers trade-related aspects but is also part of a broader Association Agreement that includes cooperation and political dialogue between the two blocs. Negotiations on these complementary matters concluded on June 18, 2020, consolidating the framework for collaboration. With the signing of the Association Agreement, the legal process of review and ratification began, including the official translation of the agreement prior to its final implementation.

193 Infobae. (2023, November 23). China y Uruguay anunciaron que avanzan hacia una asociación de libre comercio. Retrieved from https://www.infobae.com/america/america-latina/2023/11/23/china-y-uruguay-anunciaron-que-avanzan-hacia-una-asociacion-de-libre-comercio/
América Retail. (2024, March 4). Uruguay: Potential Change with a Free Trade Agreement with China. Retrieved from https://america-retail.com/paises/uruguay/uruguay-potencial-cambio-con-un-tratado-de-libre-comercio-con-china/

194 The Southern Common Market (Mercosur) is an economic bloc comprising Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela. The latter has been suspended from the bloc since 2016.

The agreement has the potential to transform the trade dynamic between the European Union and Mercosur. One of its most significant features is the elimination of over 90% of tariffs on goods traded between the two regions, which would represent an estimated annual saving of €4 billion in import duties, directly benefiting European companies. Moreover, the reduction of non-tariff barriers will facilitate trade in services, while the environmental and labor safeguards included in the agreement are primarily intended to ensure that transactions comply with the EU's strict regulatory standards, thereby reinforcing the Union's position and norms[195].

Beyond its commercial benefits, the agreement also carries significant geopolitical implications, particularly regarding the trade of critical raw materials. Mercosur, home to substantial reserves of lithium and nickel, plays a strategic role in Europe's energy transition[196]. Demand for these minerals is expected to grow considerably in the coming years, driven by the expansion of clean technologies. In this context, the agreement emerges as a strategic instrument to reduce Europe's dependence on China for the supply of key resources essential to the energy transition, an adjustment that could have far-reaching consequences for global geopolitics.[197]

Regarding the European Union's relationship with the region, specialist Martín Schapiro, in an interview for this report, highlighted several key points that should be taken into account and could potentially generate tensions. "One chapter of the agreement concerns companies' access to public procurement, which I find particularly relevant. It opens the door for European companies, giving them an advantage over Chinese and U.S. firms in accessing public tenders. That said, when it comes to surveillance technologies such as facial recognition, I expect restrictions related to defense or national security to come into play, as these are the safeguards included in all such agreements," he noted.

As previously noted, the European Union has adopted strict regulations on technologies such as facial recognition, with the aim of protecting privacy and fundamental rights within its territory. However, at the same time, it has promoted the export of these same technologies to Mercosur countries, apparently under different requirements. This raises questions about the consistency between the principles that underpin its internal regulatory framework and the practices that guide its technological outreach abroad. Such tension could affect both how the EU is perceived in the region and the conditions for building a long-term relationship based on mutual trust.

As the agreement between the two blocs moves forward, it will be essential to address these tensions and strike a balance that ensures the interests of both parties are respected fairly.

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195 European Commision. (2019, June 28). EU and Mercosur reach agreement on trade (Press Release IP/19/3396). https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/es/IP_19_3396

196 FocusEconomics. (2024, December 16). The EU-Mercosur trade deal: What does it mean for global trade and the economic outlook? Retrieved from https://www.focus-economics.com/blog/the-eu-mercosur-trade-deal-what-does-it-mean-for-global-trade-and-the-economic-outlook/

CAF (Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean). (2023, December 14). The Mercosur-EU Agreement and Decarbonization. Retrieved from https://www.caf.com/es/blog/el-acuerdo-mercosur-ue-y-la-descarbonizacion/

197 The EU-Mercosur trade deal: What does it mean for global trade and the economic outlook?, by Focus Economics. Published on 12/16/2024 https://www.focus-economics.com/es/blog/el-acuerdo-comercial-ue-mercosur-que-significa-para-el-comercio-mundial-y-las-perspectivas-economicas/

Moreover, it is relevant to consider for a moment the role of Mercosur in the WTO, as this organization sets the rules governing global trade and, therefore, significantly influences the trade and tariff policies that may affect the acquisition and deployment of technologies in the region. The participation and positioning of Mercosur countries within the WTO can also help define the bloc's approach to tariffs and trade regulations, influencing its ability to build more balanced relationships.

Sofia Scasserra is an economist specializing in the digital economy, trade, development and employment. She is the director of the Observatory of the social impacts of artificial intelligence (OISIA - UNTREF) at the Universidad Nacional Tres de Febrero and serves as a professor and researcher at the Institute of the World of Work (IMT - UNTREF). She is also an advisor to the international trade union movement and the Argentine Senate, and a researcher at the Transnational Institute.

In an interview conducted specifically for this research, Scasserra was critical of Mercosur's position within the WTO, stating that "the region has an agenda that is heavily focused on agriculture," to the detriment of the technology-related agenda. She cited the e-commerce agreement as an example: "Argentina has always supported the agreement and, for instance, has never proposed including algorithmic auditing, which is crucial in a facial recognition system because it allows one to know what data a system was trained with. No one is fighting for that agenda, and it is easier for the countries in the region to just say yes to everything." When asked about the potential influence Brazil could have in such negotiations as a regional leader, Scasserra affirmed that, in her opinion, Brazil's agenda "has always been focused on agriculture and textiles," as "when it comes to technology, it has always followed the path of the global agreement."

Given the rather discouraging outlook regarding the region's participation in global negotiations on e-commerce and new technologies, such negotiations may prove more viable within the framework of bilateral agreements. This could be explained by the growing number of agreements between regional countries and global powers outside of common blocs, with Brazil and China playing leading roles.

Brazil and China: Trade relations as a strategic link

China is currently Brazil's main trading partner[198]. In terms of exports, it has also become the leading destination for key products from Mercosur countries, including soybeans, beef and pork, iron ore and oil[199]. This growth in trade has been driven primarily by Chinese demand and, fundamentally, by bilateral dynamics, although market-opening agreements and the reduction of trade barriers within Mercosur have also helped facilitate regional commerce among its members[200].

One of the most promising initiatives to further strengthen trade between Brazil and China is the Bioceanic Corridor project. This regional infrastructure initiative connects the state of Mato Grosso do Sul in Brazil with the Chilean ports of Antofagasta and Iquique, passing through Paraguay and Argentina[201]. The project has the potential to significantly reduce transportation costs and shipping times for Brazilian exports to Asian markets. Linking the Atlantic and the Pacific would not only boost Brazil's global competitiveness but also enable it to diversify its exports and move closer to the Chinese market and other Asian countries.

Negotiations for a free trade agreement between Mercosur and China have signaled a clear intent to deepen commercial ties, particularly between Brazil and the Asian giant. Greater market openness represents a significant opportunity for Brazil, a major exporter of raw materials, to meet China's growing demand for food and natural resources. Moreover, the agreement would not only increase the flow of goods but also create new opportunities for Chinese investment in Brazil, especially in strategic sectors such as infrastructure, energy, agribusiness and manufacturing.[202]

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198 Portal Gov.br (Presidência da República). (2024). Brazilian Foreign Trade - Exports. Retrieved from https://comexstat.mdic.gov.br/en/home.
The Observatory of Economic Complexity (OEC). (n.d.). Brazil's Trade Profile. Retrieved from https://oec.world/en/profile/country/bra.

199 Bolsa de Comercio de Rosario (BCR). (2023, March 23). China: El motor de la demanda mundial de granos y carnes. Retrieved from https://www.bcr.com.ar/es/mercados/otras-cotizaciones/analisis/china-el-motor-de-la-demanda-mundial-de-granos-y-carnes
Forbes Argentina. (2021, March 23). A 30 años del Mercosur, cómo China se convirtió en su principal destino de exportación. Retrieved from https://www.forbesargentina.com/negocios/30-anos-mercosur-china-se-convirtio-su-principal-destino-exportacion-n12437
The Observatory of Economic Complexity (OEC). (n.d.). MERCOSUR's Trade Profile. Retrieved from https://oec.world/en/profile/international_organization/mercosur

200 Instituto de Relaciones Internacionales (IRI) - Universidad Nacional de La Plata. (2021). Las relaciones comerciales entre el MERCOSUR y China (2001-2021): Un análisis de la especialización productiva. Retrieved from: http://www.iri.edu.ar/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/MERC_CHINA.pdf
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202 "Mercosur y China: Hacia una integración comercial sólida y dinámica" (Revista Parlasur, N° 36, June 2023). https://www.parlamentomercosur.org/innovaportal/file/21539/1/revista-36-junio-2023-es.pdf

IIn an interview with Scasserra, the specialist highlighted Brazil's role in the BRICS, which has strengthened its relationship with China and made it easier to negotiate more advantageous technology agreements for the country[203]. "The BRICS have a technological agenda focused on productive integration in emerging sectors. Basically, it is about producing technology. The BRICS operate under a different logic than the G20, whose agenda is dominated by the United States, and that's why we are seeing more investment in Brazil," she noted. Regarding technology transfer, Scasserra pointed out that agreements between Latin American countries and China often include clauses on technology exchange or labor conditions, such as the hiring of local workers.

For his part, Schapiro noted that, beyond the relationship through BRICS, China's influence in the region, and especially in Brazil, is due to the development of trade and investments: "China was a major investor in the opening processes that came with Michel Temer's government."[204] Later, Jair Bolsonaro initially expressed an open stance toward Chinese business investments, distinguishing it from the acquisition of strategic Brazilian assets, ultimately leading to a trip to Beijing[205] .

Chile and its trade relations with China and the EU

Chile is perhaps the country in the region with the strongest commercial ties to the main exporters of surveillance technologies. For example, the commercial relationship between Chile and China is exceptionally strong, with China being the primary destination for Chilean products[206]. In Schapiro's words, "China's importance to Chile's foreign trade is overwhelming."

Bilateral trade between both countries has grown at an average annual rate of 9% between 2019 and 2024. According to official figures, Chile's main export to the East is copper minerals, while smartphones top the list of imports from China[207]. This is a clear indicator: primary products in exchange for information and communication technology.

The fact is that commercial relations between the two countries have been consolidating for over 20 years, supported by a Free Trade Agreement that has been updated over time[208]. Negotiations for the signing of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Chile and China began in 2002, with formal talks officially starting in 2004. By 2005, the Goods Free Trade Agreement was signed and came into effect in October 2006. Two years later, a services trade agreement was finalized, which took effect in 2010. The regulatory framework governing the provision of services between the two countries ensures equal conditions with respect to nationals.

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203 The BRICS bloc is an alliance composed of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. The first letter of each country's name formed the bloc's acronym, which held its first ministerial meeting in September 2006. Since 2024, it has welcomed new members: Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Ethiopia, Indonesia and Iran.

204 He served as the president of the Federative Republic of Brazil from 2016 to 2018.

205 He served as the president of the Federative Republic of Brazil from 2019 to 2023.

206 China se consolida como principal destino de las exportaciones chilenas entre enero y marzo 2024. Published on 04/17/2024 https://www.prochile.gob.cl/noticias/detalle-noticia-comunicados/2024/04/17/prochile-china-se-consolida-como-principal-destino-de-las-exportaciones-chilenas-entre-enero-y-marzo-2024

207 FICHA PAÍS: CHILE- CHINA https://www.subrei.gob.cl/docs/default-source/estudios-y-documentos/fichas/china-anual-10c2b0cc88be48bca8b90595a01e5f11.pdf

208 Chile-China. Acuerdo de Libre Comercio https://www.subrei.gob.cl/acuerdos-comerciales/acuerdos-comerciales-vigentes/china

By 2012, both countries had signed a Supplementary Agreement on Investment, which came into force two years later. Broadly speaking, the agreement protects investments in line with the prevailing regulations of each country. Beginning in 2015, the FTA was further deepened when 97.2% of Chilean goods started entering the Chinese market duty-free. Meanwhile, Chinese products also enter Chile duty-free, with the exception of 2% of goods listed in the FTA's exclusion list.

The deepening of the FTA between Chile and China took place in 2019 through negotiations that introduced new chapters, including Market Access, Rules of Origin, Customs Procedures and Trade Facilitation, Competition Policy, Economic and Technical Cooperation, as well as Trade in Services. In addition, two new chapters were added: one on E-commerce and another on Environment and Trade. The Trade Facilitation provisions were also incorporated under a new institutional framework.

For its part, the first commercial engagement between Chile and the EU took place in 1990, when its predecessor, the European Economic Community (EEC), and then-President Patricio Aylwin signed a Cooperation Agreement, marking the beginning of a new era in bilateral relations. In 1996, within the framework of the EU, both parties signed a Framework Cooperation Agreement, which entered into force in 1999. In 2002, the Association Agreement (AA) was signed; in addition to trade-related aspects, it includes political cooperation and the establishment of common rules in areas such as goods, services, investment and intellectual property. A key component was the democratic clause, which allows for sanctions in cases of violations of democratic principles.

In 2023, after five years of negotiations, Chile and the EU signed two new agreements: the Advanced Framework Agreement (AFA) and the Interim Trade Agreement (ITA). The AFA is a comprehensive agreement that covers political dialogue, cooperation, trade and investment. Meanwhile, the ITA replaces the trade section of the 2002 agreement and will be implemented first, as it does not require approval from all EU Member States. The AFA will come into force once it has been ratified by all EU countries, establishing a modernized and comprehensive framework for the bilateral relationship between Chile and the EU.[209]

In this context, the Interim Trade Agreement (ITA) signed between Chile and the European Union in 2023 is regarded by the specialists consulted as one of the most advanced trade agreements in the region. A particularly relevant component is Chapter 19, which focuses on digital trade. This chapter sets out key commitments between the parties to guarantee cross-border data flows, a crucial element in facilitating and expanding digital trade between the two blocs. Notably, it ensures that neither party will impose unnecessary restrictions on the free flow of data between them.

The agreement prohibits either party from requiring the exclusive use of computing facilities or network elements located within its territory for processing or storing data. It also prevents the imposition of data localization requirements, such as mandating that data be stored or processed within a specific territory, which could create unnecessary barriers to digital trade. In addition, it establishes that neither party may prohibit the storage or processing of data in the other party's territory, nor condition data transfers on the use of infrastructure or networks located within its own territory.

Therefore, Chapter 19 seeks to remove barriers that could hinder the free flow of data and to foster a more dynamic, efficient and accessible digital environment for businesses on both sides, supporting the growth of e-commerce and technological innovation.[210]

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209 Chile - Unión Europea https://www.subrei.gob.cl/acuerdos-comerciales/acuerdos-comerciales-vigentes/union-europea

210 Capítulo 19. Comercio digital. https://www.subrei.gob.cl/docs/default-source/acuerdos/ama/aic/capitulo-19-comercio-digital.pdf?sfvrsn=f8f0709c_2

Mexico, Colombia and Peru: Pacific Alliance, regional integration and global engagement

The Pacific Alliance (PA) is an economic integration and development initiative comprising Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru. Since its creation in 2011, the PA has evolved into a key player in regional dynamics, coordinating efforts among its member countries beyond national borders. Through a framework of cooperation and integration, it aims to promote economic growth and competitiveness. The Alliance is grounded in the principle of gradually advancing toward the free movement of goods, services, capital and people, as well as strengthening ties among its members.

Since its formation, the PA has proven to be more than just a trade agreement, actively working to position itself as a dynamic bloc in the global economic arena, with a particular focus on the Asia-Pacific market. Member countries participate jointly in international trade fairs, where the Alliance maintains a coordinated presence through specialized technical groups in areas such as Trade Facilitation, Customs Cooperation, Environment and Green growth, among others.

Each member of the PA has forged strong ties with various countries and regions, reflecting the global dynamics of trade and cooperation. In Mexico's case, for instance, negotiations for a free trade agreement with South Korea have been promoted to liberalize the exchange of goods and services. With China, there is growing interest in infrastructure investment under the Belt and Road Initiative, along with the exploration of opportunities for Chinese companies seeking proximity to the North American market. Finally, relations with the United States are primarily structured through the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), which sets out comprehensive trade rules and aims to facilitate regional commerce. These are just a few examples of the initiatives that position Mexico as a key player in intercontinental trade relations.

No initiatives had been identified linking European companies to the provision of surveillance technologies in Mexico. However, the agreement Mexico signed with the EU in 2018[211] is worth noting. In Scaserra's words, it "wasn't very beneficial" when it comes to digital trade.

According to a report published in 2021 by Scasserra and one of the authors of this report, Martinez Elebi[212], the agreement signed between the EU and Mexico stipulates, among other things, the non-disclosure of software source code and related algorithms. This means that neither party may require the transfer of, or access to, the source code of software owned by a legal entity or individual from the other party. This clause poses a risk to the protection of citizens, as algorithmic biases could potentially affect fundamental rights.

211 EU-Mexico agreement: The agreement in principle https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/eu-trade-relationships-country-and-region/countries-and-regions/mexico/eu-mexico-agreement/agreement-principle_en

212 Digital colonialism. Analysis of Europe's trade agenda https://www.tni.org/files/publication-downloads/digital-colonialism-report-tni_en.pdf

Meanwhile, Colombia has strengthened its trade relations with countries such as France, Spain, Israel and China, aiming to expand its markets, diversify exports, and attract strategic investments in key sectors like infrastructure, technology, agriculture and clean energy[213]. For example, it has an association agreement with the EU that facilitates trade with France and Spain, and in 2020 it signed an FTA with Israel focused on technological cooperation. Although it does not have an FTA with China, Colombia has deepened ties through cooperation agreements and participation in the Belt and Road Initiative. Chile, as previously mentioned, has embraced a strategy of openness to multiple regions. It maintains trade agreements with the United States, Japan (Economic Partnership Agreement since 2007) and the European Union, and is also a member of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), which connects it with ten other Pacific economies. Peru, for its part, has expanded its foreign trade with key Asian actors, including an FTA with China since 2010, recently upgraded, as well as agreements with Israel and Thailand. It is also a member of the CPTPP. These ties not only diversify exports but also position these countries as key players in global value chains.

Nonetheless, the countries that are part of the Pacific Alliance are not exempt from the limitations the region faces when it comes to regulating the trade of surveillance technologies. In this regard, specialist Sofía Scasserra notes, "Latin America in general, and the peripheral countries of the region in particular, follow the prevailing trend when it comes to the agenda of technological debates. Since they don't have exportable products, they don't raise objections, which is why their positions tend to be weak."

One example that illustrates this situation is that, although Mexico, Colombia and Peru are part of the WTO's Work Programme on E-Commerce and the E-commerce Joint Statement Initiative (a plurilateral initiative aimed at establishing common rules for digital trade among a group of member countries), their ability to influence negotiations remains limited. For instance, in discussions on cross-border data flows, these countries have little leverage compared to larger economies such as the United States or the European Union, which have more developed agendas and greater weight in global trade decisions. "In general, these countries tend to say yes to everything," Scasserra adds, pointing to a lack of independent and strategic positions on sensitive issues like data transfers, algorithmic governance or the regulation of international trade in technologies that may be used for surveillance and social control.

213 Ministerio de Comercio, Industria y Turismo (MINCIT). (2021, October 7). España, Francia y China socios estratégicos de Colombia, con oportunidades de inversión. Recuperado de https://www.mincit.gov.co/prensa/foto-noticias/espana-francia-china-socios-estrategicos-colombia
Ministerio de Comercio, Industria y Turismo (MINCIT). (n.d.). Acuerdos Internacionales de Inversión (AIIs). TLC. Retrieved from https://www.tlc.gov.co/acuerdos/a-internacional-de-inversion
Infobae. (2025, May 14). Colombia firma con China un plan de cooperación para adherirse a nuevas Rutas de la Seda. Retrieved from https://www.infobae.com/america/agencias/2025/05/14/colombia-firma-con-china-un-plan-de-cooperacion-para-adherirse-a-nuevas-rutas-de-la-seda/
SWI swissinfo.ch. (2025, May 14). Colombia firma un acuerdo con China para sumarse a la iniciativa de la Franja y la Ruta. Retrieved from https://www.swissinfo.ch/spa/colombia-firma-un-acuerdo-con-china-para-sumarse-a-la-iniciativa-de-la-franja-y-la-ruta/89316313
Grupo Atlas. (n.d.). Diversificar exportaciones, clave para mitigar riesgos geopolíticos. Retrieved from https://www.atlas.com.co/diversificar-exportaciones-clave-para-mitigar-risgos-geopoliticos/
Solunion. (n.d.). Comercio exterior de Colombia en 2025: oportunidades y desafíos. Retrieved from https://www.solunion.co/blog/comercio-exterior-colombia/
Infobae. (2022, December 11). Cuál es la estrategia de Colombia para sumar más inversiones que permitan el desarrollo sostenible. Retrieved from https://www.infobae.com/inhouse/2022/12/12/cual-es-la-estrategia-de-colombia-para-sumar-mas-inversiones-que-permitan-el-desarrollo-sostenible/

Over the past two decades, the Asia-Pacific region has witnessed a surge in trade. Initially based on agreements between neighboring economies, this process expanded toward the formation of trans-Pacific blocs such as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), a free trade agreement signed in 2020 by 15 countries in Asia and Oceania—including China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand and the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) members—that aimed to reduce tariffs, facilitate trade and strengthen regional supply chains.

Along with other initiatives like the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), these agreements are the result of the evolution of trade in the Pacific, integrating economies such as Australia, Japan, Chile, Mexico, Peru and Vietnam. The TPP was initially formed in 2006 as the Pacific-4 (P4) within the framework of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum and was transformed in 2008 with the inclusion of the United States. However, the U.S. withdrew in 2017, prompting the remaining countries to reformulate the agreement under the name CPTPP (Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership), which was signed in 2018.

The U.S. withdrawal from the TPP opened the door for China to lead trade in the region, solidifying the RCEP (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership) as a key pillar in the Pacific economy. In this context, the member countries of the Pacific Alliance are strategically positioned to leverage trade ties with Asia, contributing to the growth of interconnected and multilateral global trade.

The Pacific Alliance has solidified its standing as a model for regional integration in Latin America, not only due to its economic and commercial openness but also because of its ability to align with the dynamism of the Asian market. Its institutional flexibility and effective cooperation among its members allow it to adapt to a constantly changing global environment, where intercontinental alliances are gaining increasing strategic importance. Thus, the Alliance offers a model of integration that transcends geographical and cultural barriers. However, a key question remains regarding how this bloc will address emerging regulatory challenges, especially concerning the cross-border trade and use of surveillance technologies, whose implications for fundamental rights are still far from being resolved.[214]

Andean Community: International cooperation in technology

The Andean Community (CAN), made up of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, operates under a supranational and binding Community Legal System that applies across its member states. Within this institutional framework, on February 6, 2025, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) and the General Secretariat of the Andean Community (SGCAN)[215].

The agreement sets out a bilateral cooperation agenda focused on trademarks, industrial designs, models and the strengthening of intellectual property rights enforcement. Planned actions include training, awareness-raising and public education programs, as well as the exchange of knowledge on technological solutions for managing these rights. The agreement also provides for the organization of seminars, workshops and technical meetings aimed at promoting the development of IT systems, ensuring quality standards, and sharing best practices in the field.[216]

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214 La Alianza del Pacífico y la hegemonía de China y Estados Unidos https://portal.amelica.org/ameli/jatsRepo/187/1871860009/html/index.html#redalyc_1871860009_ref16

215 The EUIPO is the European Union agency responsible for managing trademarks, designs and copyrights.

216 Memorandum of Understanding on Bilateral Cooperation between the EUIPO and the SGCAN https://www.comunidadandina.org/DocOficialesFiles/Convenios/MOUSGCAN_EUIPO.pdf

In parallel, within the framework of information and communication technologies (ICTs), a notable agreement was signed in 2021 between the SGCAN and Huawei's subsidiaries in Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia[217]. The objective of the agreement is to promote comprehensive, balanced and autonomous collaboration on ICT-related matters. Huawei, a Chinese company, has become one of the most influential actors in the development of global digital infrastructure, leading the rollout of 5G networks and providing solutions in areas such as smart cities, cloud computing, and technological surveillance.

In this context, Article 5 of the agreement underscores the need to protect national and regional critical infrastructure, stating that telecommunications products must be free from "backdoors" or any form of espionage. However, despite these safeguards, ongoing concerns remain about the use of sensitive technologies, such as facial recognition and mass surveillance, that may be included in the solutions provided by Huawei. In Ecuador, which signed the Multi-Party Trade Agreement with the EU in 2016, questions have also emerged regarding the implications of such agreements for the adoption of surveillance technologies. While free trade agreements can promote infrastructure modernization and facilitate access to advanced technologies, they may also generate tensions concerning privacy and the protection of fundamental rights.

Central American Common Market (CACM)

The Central American Common Market (CACM) is a trade bloc established through the General Treaty on Central American Economic Integration, which entered into force on June 4, 1961, with the participation of Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua. Honduras joined the following year, and Costa Rica did so in 1963. The CACM's main goal is the progressive integration of these countries, promoting Central America's development through joint efforts, fostering the production of goods and services and improving the living conditions of its population. Today, the Central American Economic Integration System is understood as a region where 99% of products are traded freely, governed by a modern regulatory framework aligned with international standards and other existing trade agreements on various trade-related matters.[218]

During the 1990s, the CACM underwent a revitalization process driven by three key factors. First, there was strong support from the European Community, institutionalized since 1984 through the San José Conferences held in Costa Rica. Second, in 1991, an agreement was reached between the presidents of the five Central American countries and the president of Mexico, with the aim of advancing the creation of a Free Trade Area between Mexico and Central America. Finally, the oil pact with Mexico and Venezuela, originally signed in 1981, was strengthened. Under this pact, both countries granted 20% of the value of Central America's oil purchases as credit to the central banks of the five CACM member states.

With the beginning of a period of stability and renewed momentum towards integration, CACM countries strengthened their ties with other countries and trade blocs. In this context, in March 1998, the Central American countries—together with Panama, the Dominican Republic, and Belize—signed an agreement with the United States to establish the Central American–United States Council on Trade and Investment, with the goal of promoting economic integration, free trade and investment. As for CACM's relationship with Mexico, it took on a bilateral character, reflected in the signing of specific free trade agreements: Costa Rica/Mexico (1995), Nicaragua/Mexico (1997), and El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras/Mexico (2000).

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217 Agreement between the SGCAN and Huawei https://www.comunidadandina.org/DocOficialesFiles/Convenios/2021SG-CANHUAWEI.pdf

218 Central American Common Market (CACM) in figures https://www.legiscomex.com/informacion-universidades-abc-del-comercio-internacional/mcca

Finally, on April 23, 2007, the 15th meeting of the Joint Committee between the European Union and Central America was held in Guatemala, where the negotiation guidelines for the Association Agreement were confirmed.[219] Subsequently, on June 28 and 29 of the same year, a high-level meeting between the European Commission and Central America took place in Brussels, during which both parties officially agreed to launch the negotiation process, which by 2012 had already resulted in a series of agreements.

Despite progress in economic integration, no specific initiatives have been identified within the CACM that directly address the commercial regulation of surveillance and recognition technologies. This suggests that, in this area, member countries may be opting for bilateral approaches.

For example, Panama has actively pursued bilateral trade agreements with various strategic partners. It has a Trade Promotion Agreement (TPA) with the United States, as well as FTAs with countries such as Canada, Chile, Peru and the European Union, among others. Although these agreements do not focus specifically on surveillance technologies, they may have important implications for their trade and the protection of related intellectual property, illustrating how countries in the region are also engaging in trade through bilateral channels. Costa Rica appears to have adopted a similar bilateral strategy, having formalized FTAs with Mexico, Canada, China, the European Union and other countries. These agreements seek to facilitate trade and investment, and their provisions on services, intellectual property and e-commerce could have indirect implications for how surveillance technologies are marketed and used in the country.

219 El Mercado Común Centroamericano. https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=4125481

Final Considerations

Below are some final considerations drawn from the analysis conducted thus far.

- Until 2021, facial recognition technologies were primarily associated with the public security agenda, under the slogan of "safe cities." However, in recent years, their use in migratory control has expanded, opening a new chapter in the development of these technologies. Border monitoring is emerging as the main area of contention, not only for its potential in terms of control and security but also for the risks it poses to fundamental rights.

- The link between surveillance technologies and migratory control in the region presents a crucial point for in-depth regional analysis, at a time when the issue is regaining prominence on Latin America's political agenda. This relationship raises questions about its ethical and social implications, and highlights the need to access undisclosed agreements to ensure greater transparency and a more informed public debate.

- The initiatives outlined show that China and the European Union have a strong presence in the region through their domestic companies involved in the development of facial recognition technologies. Although the direct involvement of the United States is more limited, its influence remains indirect, primarily through investment funds that control certain European companies and through pressure related to bans on Chinese firms.

- The strategic shift by the United States towards a more flexible approach in its trade policies could mark a turning point in global dynamics, although the outlook remains uncertain. While the trend towards cooperation and openness in certain key sectors may offer new opportunities for businesses, the "tariff war" and protectionist policies of the European Union could create additional tensions. These developments suggest we are entering a phase of reconfiguration in global trade relations, where the political decisions of economic powers will be pivotal for the balance of international trade. However, given the rapid pace of these changes, it is difficult to predict exactly how this new phase will unfold.

- The competition between the United States and China in defining their foreign trade policies, especially in key sectors like information and communication technologies, has intensified significantly. This rivalry, with precedents such as the dispute over the implementation of 5G technology, highlights how the control and regulation of emerging technologies have become strategic priorities for both countries, not only in commercial terms but also in relation to national and economic security.

- Contrary to the hypothesis suggesting that China acts solely as a geopolitically focused power, reality shows that the country prioritizes its commercial relations over geopolitical interests. This pragmatic approach has been key to China's sustained economic expansion. Its growing presence in Brazil and its establishment as a key player in global supply chains highlight its ability to integrate into emerging markets and strategic sectors such as technology and manufacturing. By focusing on economic cooperation rather than geopolitical confrontation, China has been able to play a significant role in shaping international trade, particularly in emerging markets, and in redefining global commercial relations.

- Unlike the United States, China and the European Union member countries, which are actively engaged in international forums or through concrete regulations, Latin American countries seem to show little interest in agendas related to the trade of surveillance technologies. In fact, quite the opposite: these issues are often perceived as largely irrelevant. In this context, regional debates appear to be focused on the commercialization of raw materials from agricultural or mining products. The need for foreign direct investment may be a factor that explains this stagnation regarding the acquisition of surveillance technologies. At the same time, trade exchanges focused on the export of agricultural and mining products could be the key to driving regional negotiations in the field of surveillance technologies.

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Annex I

Main providers identified by country

This section provides a summary of the main local and foreign providers identified in the initiatives surveyed across the countries in the region.

ARGENTINA

Danaide

The company presents itself as having over 25 years of experience and appears to be the leading player in video surveillance systems in Argentina. According to the latest official information, the company's shareholders are Hernán Cazarlo (95%) and Juan Cazarlo (5%)[220]. Its operations in the surveillance technology sector have expanded in recent years, acquiring new subnational clients, such as the municipality of Quilmes, with the potential to expand into Mar del Plata. Additionally, two cases were identified where the company consolidated its position as a provider of this type of surveillance.

NEC

NEC is a Japanese company that has been present in Argentina for over 40 years. It offers criminal identification solutions based on biometric technologies aimed at strengthening security and public order. NEC is a global leader in these technologies. As noted in the 2021 report, the company remains in charge of managing the monitoring center for the municipality of Tigre. NEC's facial recognition services have not been registered in other Argentine cities. However, its role as a provider of surveillance cameras in Mar del Plata is noteworthy, as the city is currently moving forward with the implementation of a facial recognition system.

Nubicom

Nubicom is a local firm from the province of Salta that has been offering technological solutions in communications for over 20 years, with a strong focus on connectivity services. One of its business areas is specifically dedicated to providing public safety solutions to governments. Under the concept of "Smart Cities," it offers services in video surveillance, traffic control and information management. Its video surveillance services include real-time visualization of events on public streets and the identification of the elements involved. Additionally, it provides features such as intelligent video analysis, detection of people and objects and facial recognition.

Avigilon

Avigilon is a Canadian company that designs, develops and manufactures security solutions, including video analytics and video surveillance management software and hardware. In 2018, Motorola acquired Avigilon, which then became part of the suite of companies under the telecommunications technology giant. On its website, Avigilon presents itself as an expert in flexible software with AI technology. It also states that Avigilon's video management systems integrate cameras, access and analytics into a single management platform.

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220 Boletín Oficial de la República Argentina (BORA), año CXXXI, N° 35.328, December 26, 2023 https://otslist.boletinoficial.gob.ar/ots/download/74198de3970481488645235b93eb1edce8ebc4a7a3933434af0de24947a9a888/0/

IDEMIA

IDEMIA is a multinational company from France specializing in technology development, with a commercial office in Argentina. In December 2021, the Ministry of Security announced the exclusive direct contract of IDEMIA for the technological upgrade of the AFIS METAMORPHO system to MBIS and the expansion of the database capacity[221]. A few months earlier, the new shareholding structure of IDEMIA's Argentine branch was disclosed, with IDEMIA Colombia holding 94.61% and IDEMIA do Brasil 5.39%[222]. However, in January 2024, the Official Gazette reported that in November 2023, IDEMIA Colombia waived its preferential subscription and preemptive rights. As a result, the majority shareholding of IDEMIA's Argentine branch is now held by IDEMIA Brasil (91.8%), while IDEMIA Colombia holds a minority stake (8.2%)[223].

BOLIVIA

China National Electronics Import & Export Corporation (CEIEC)

CEIEC is a Chinese state-owned company with a presence across multiple sectors. It is one of the few companies authorized to represent China's defense production industries in international trade, particularly in the sale of electronic defense equipment. Additionally, it operates in the field of engineering, specializing in civil infrastructure construction. Based on its international contract revenue, CEIEC was ranked among the "Top 250 International Contractors" in 2015, as published by Engineering News Record."[224]

BRAZIL

Agência Brasileira de Desenvolvimento Industrial (ABDI) and Instituto de Desenvolvimento Tecnológico (INDT)

Together with the Brazilian Federal Revenue and the Institute for Technological Development, they developed the Fronteira Tech project. The Institute for Technological Development is an independent, non-profit research and development (R&D) center with the goal of creating new technology-based businesses by developing innovative products, solutions, and services for Industry 4.0.

Smart City SP Consortium

Comprised of Jorge Marques Moura, CLD Construtora Lacos Detetores e Electronica Ltda, Flama Serviços Ltda, Camerite Sistemas SA and PL9 Tecnologia E Servicos Ltda[225]. CLD Construtora, the consortium leader, is the new name for Consladel, owned by partners Labib Faour Auad and Jorge Marques Moura[226]. It began selling radars in the early 2000s but now offers a broader range of services.While still operating under the name Consladel, the company and its partners Auad and Moura were involved in a series of corruption allegations, mostly related to fraud in multi-million-dollar tenders, including those in the city of São Paulo[227].

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221 Ministerio de Seguridad, Decisión Administrativa 1293/2021. Contratación Directa por Exclusividad N° 347-0025-CDI21 https://www.boletinoficial.gov.ar/pdf/aviso/primera/255553/20211231

222 Morpho de Argentina S.A. (BORA). Publication date: 04/09/2021 https://www.boletinoficial.gob.ar/pdf/linkQR/TXpBTUNnQTJDLzkreFpJZ1U0d1UwZz09

223 BORA, año CXXXII, N° 35.337, January 9 2024 https://otslist.boletinoficial.gob.ar/ots/download/b1faabfd409cc95b1d952d6e7f9317087445c8c7b788e9fc231c86c67f7f3376/0/

224 The 2015 Top 250 International Contractors 201-250, in ENR. https://www.enr.com/toplists/2015_Top_250_International_Contractors3

225 1° TERMO ADITIVO AO CONTRATO N.º 032/SMSU/2023 https://www.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/cidade/secretarias/upload/seguranca_urbana/1_TERMO_ADITIVO_AO_TC_032SMSU_2023_SMART_SAMPA.pdf

226 Modificación del contrato N.º 32/SMSU/2023 https://www.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/cidade/secretarias/upload/seguranca_urbana/1_TERMO_ADITIVO_AO_TC_032SMSU_2023_SMART_SAMPA.pdf

227 Crise de imagen. Smart Sampa: denunciada por corrupção foi quem abocanhou R$ 588 mi para capturar seu rosto em SP, por Intercept Brasil. Published on 08/14/2023 https://www.intercept.com.br/2023/08/14/smart-sampa-denunciada-por-corrupcao-capturar-seu-rosto-em-sp/

Dahua Technology

Dahua Technology is a global company specializing in intelligent AIoT solutions and services based on video and image analytics. In Brazil, Dahua's solutions and products have been implemented in major projects such as São Paulo International Airport, Allianz Parque, Salvador Metro, Recife Metro and São Paulo City Hall, among others. Currently, Dahua operates an Advanced Technology Institute, AIoT Research Center, Cybersecurity and Smart City.

SERPRO

SERPRO develops technological solutions that enable the strategic actions of the Brazilian government. The company has a nationwide presence, a robust technological infrastructure and extensive experience with the key systems of the Federal Public Administration. It is responsible for the initiative to validate the national driver's license with biometric data and the proof of life process for acquiring benefits or pensions from the National Social Security Institute.

Tecway

Tecway is a Brazilian company that was awarded a contract through a tender process for the development of biometric technologies for the Integrated Monitoring Camera Center in Itacoatiara, Amazonas province, which is currently being implemented.

CHILE

Pegasus

Pegasus has been operating the Immigration automation system at Arturo Merino Benítez International Airport in Santiago since 2024. The company was founded in 2007 by engineers José Francisco Barrera Collao and his son Bruno Barrera Carvajal (now Barrera Chevecich). The following year, Aldo Pérez Cabezas joined the company, replacing Barrera Collao. Since then, the company has won several public tenders in the field of digital transformation and—according to its website—has had clients such as the Army, Carabineros (Chilean national police), the Gendarmerie, Sernapesca (National Fisheries and Aquaculture Service), the General Treasury of the Republic, the Internal Revenue Service and the Public Prosecutor's Office, among others.

Dermalog

Headquartered in Hamburg, Dermalog is the largest German manufacturer of biometric products and is recognized as one of the leaders in biometric and security innovation. It operates in more than 260 countries. In Chile, the company was responsible for developing the biometric recognition software for passengers at Santiago Airport and is the provider of the identification kiosks[228].

Metric Arts

Metric Arts is a local company specializing in data science. It focuses on data modeling and artificial intelligence and machine learning solutions. The Santiago Metro project began in 2017 with a pilot program. In 2019, the company was acquired by the North American multinational EY.

228 Self Registration Kiosk https://www.dermalog.com/products/smart-borders/self-registration-kiosk

VSaaS.ai

VSaaS.ai is a Chilean startup founded by professionals with over 10 years of experience in the IoT and Analytics industry. The VSaaS.ai platform is described as "hardware agnostic," allowing it to connect any camera—whether IP or analog—using the manufacturer's protocols, thereby replicating functionalities such as PTZ movement, zoom and sweep, among others. Additionally, the company claims it has the ability to add functionalities that can "grant superpowers to regular cameras," enabling them to reuse already installed hardware. In this way, the company emphasizes compatibility with various hardware providers, including Axis, Lorex, Interlogix, Sony, Hikvision, Avigilon and Bosch.

NEC

NEC Chile is the local subsidiary of NEC Corporation, a Japanese company that has been present in the country since 1989. It specializes in information and communication technology solutions, integrating products and services in areas such as unified communications, collaboration, video-conferencing, digital signage, security and biometrics. In September 2024, NEC announced the launch of a new system based on biometric authentication technology, designed to quickly identify a large number of people simultaneously, even while they are in motion.

IDEMIA

IDEMIA is a French multinational technology company headquartered in Courbevoie. It provides identity-related security services and sells facial recognition products and software, along with other forms of biometric identification, to private companies and public administrations. Its operations in Chile date back to 2012, when it was selected to renew the country's national identification and passport systems. In 2022, it signed a new agreement to provide "the new generation" of identity documents and passports, incorporating a multi-biometric system: fingerprints, facial recognition and iris scanning.

COLOMBIA

Ágata – Agencia Analítica de Datos S.A.S.

Ágata is a local mixed-economy company created in 2020 by the Mayor's Office of Bogotá. Established as a Simplified Joint Stock Company (S.A.S.), it is primarily composed of the Empresa de Telecomunicaciones de Bogotá (ETB), the Grupo de Energía de Bogotá, and other public partners. Its mission is to develop solutions based on artificial intelligence and data analytics to enhance public and private decision-making, promoting the city's digital transformation in areas such as health, employment, mobility, citizen services and environmental management.

Empresa de Telecomunicaciones de Bogotá (ETB)

ETB is the Colombian Telephone Company, which in 2020, when the District's Data Analytics Agency, Ágata, was launched, became a partner in the initiative. It is a mixed-capital public services company of a special nature, established as a joint-stock company with administrative, financial and budgetary autonomy, operating within the framework of private law (Law 142 of 1994, Article 32, and Law 1341 of 2009, Article 55). It is also an Indirect Decentralized District Entity, specifically linked to the Habitat Sector. ETB is dedicated to providing and organizing telecommunications services (Law 1341 of 2009), as well as the creation, development, implementation and commercial operation of information and communication technologies (ICT) within Colombia and abroad.

IDEMIA

IDEMIA is a multinational company of French origin specializing in technology development, with four locations in Colombia: three support and technical service centers (Medellín, Cali, and Bogotá), a factory (Cali) and representative offices (Bogotá). It provides identity-related security services and sells facial recognition products and software, as well as other biometric identification products, to private companies and governments. In Colombia, it is responsible for developing the system's fingerprint records and was tasked with migrating the system previously used by the police—AFIS (Automated Fingerprint Identification System)—to integrate it with the new features of the ABIS system.

Herta Technology

Herta Technology is a Spanish company specializing in facial recognition and video analytics solutions, headquartered in Barcelona. In Colombia, it had already migrated approximately 44,000 photographs into the database and installed its core applications [Biodata, BioFinder, and Biogenerator] within the National Police system. In 2023, the company also installed 80 facial recognition cameras in Medellín.

Unión Temporal Tecnocom (Compañía Internacional de Integración S.A.)

This Colombian company offers technological products and solutions to the domestic market. Its range of products and services includes solutions for telecommunications projects, electronic security, CCTV systems and maritime applications. As part of the ABIS initiative, the company was responsible for the acquisition, installation, implementation, licensing, testing, commissioning, guarantee, support and maintenance of the facial, palm and fingerprint biometric system for the Colombian National Police.

COSTA RICA

Veridos

Veridos is a German company specializing in identity and security solutions, with expertise in technologies for issuing identity documents, passports and biometric systems. In Costa Rica, it was contracted to create and implement an e-passport system. The project includes the production of passports with a polycarbonate data page, as well as the development of the necessary personalization software and hardware to issue the documents. Additionally, Veridos implemented its CLIP IP solution, which is responsible for capturing and producing color images for the passports.

IDEMIA

IDEMIA is a French company providing biometric and security solutions in several countries across the region. In Costa Rica, it is responsible for the Automated Biometric Identification System (ABIS), which uses fingerprints and facial biometrics for citizen identification and matching. IDEMIA is the company responsible for delivering the technological solution, in collaboration with IAFIS Costa Rica Limitada and Componentes El Orbe, S.A. In the future, the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) plans to assess the possibility of extending this system to other services, always in compliance with personal data protection regulations.

ECUADOR

Speech Technology Center

Speech Technology Center is a Russian company specializing in voice recognition technology. It was founded in 1990 from programs developed by the KGB (Committee for State Security) of the Soviet Union, in collaboration with the scientific development center of the Soviet Ministry of Communications. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the company transitioned into the commercial sector. Speech Technology Center defines itself as a developer of products and solutions based on biometrics, machine learning and AI-driven computer vision technologies. In this regard, they highlight their 33 years of experience in voice recognition and multimodal biometrics to deliver top-tier solutions to B2B and B2G clients. They claim to have led over 5,000 projects worldwide in more than 75 countries.

EL SALVADOR

Through El Salvador's agreement with the United States Department of Homeland Security, biometric data of migrants crossing the borders of El Salvador will be added to the HART database, which is powered by military technology. Some of the companies participating in the U.S. HART project include: Veritas Capital, NEC, Peraton, Thales Corporation, NTT Data Federal Services, Inc., Global Infotek, Inc., Amazon Web Services, Bayfirst Solutions, The Mitre Corporation and General Dynamics. However, public information on which companies are providing the biometric data registration technologies in El Salvador could not be accessed[229].

GUATEMALA

ITZDATA INTERNACIONAL, SOCIEDAD ANÓNIMA[230]

This local company provides technological solutions and has been identified as the secondary provider of facial recognition software and cloud storage for the SIREFA-CGC Facial Recognition System, launched in January 2025 by the General Comptroller's Office.

HONDURAS

Innovatrics

Innovatrics is a provider of biometric solutions for governments and businesses, headquartered in the EU, with origins in the Czech Republic. Through its SmartFace facial recognition platform, it plays a crucial role in enhancing security at Palmerola International Airport in Honduras. Innovatrics' solution can process multiple video streams simultaneously, enabling the identification of individuals flagged as suspicious through a network of strategically located cameras. This project is part of the Honduran government's efforts to transform Palmerola into a key transportation hub in Central America, supported by Innovatrics' advanced technology to improve the country's security infrastructure.

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229 USA: Report warns of significant human rights risks from HART biometric database & CSOs call on AWS to terminate agreement to host the database, por Business Human Rights. Published on 08/02/2022. https://www.business-human-rights.org/es/%C3%BAltimas-noticias/usa-report-warns-of-significant-human-rights-risks-from-hart-biometric-database-csos-call-on-aws-to-terminate-agreement-to-host-the-database/

230 Guatecompras. (2025, April 23). Consulta Detalle Proveedor: ITZDATA INTERNACIONAL, SOCIEDAD ANONIMA (NIT: 107539527). https://www.guatecompras.gt/concursos/consultaConcurso.aspx?nog=25318276&o=4

MÉXICO

Telmex

Teléfonos de México (Telmex) is a telecommunications and information technology provider, a subsidiary of the Mexican telecommunications giant América Móvil. The company offers connectivity, internet access, and interconnection services in Mexico, operating a copper and fiber optic network to provide voice and data services.[231]

Hanwha

Hanwha is part of the original Hanwha Group from South Korea, founded in 1952. The company specializes in developing advanced solutions based on the collection and analysis of visual data, using cutting-edge technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and advanced analytics. Hanwha stands out in the market for its ability to collect and analyze visual data in sophisticated ways, employing cloud computing and AI technologies to identify patterns and predict critical events.[232]

Hikvision

Hikvision is a Chinese company specializing in the manufacturing and supply of video surveillance equipment. The company has established itself as one of the leading providers of security cameras and systems. In Mexico, Hikvision is developing the Comprehensive Urban Video Surveillance Project with Analytical Technology in the municipality of Aguascalientes. This project includes the installation of 40 cameras with facial recognition capabilities, distributed across 20 strategic locations in the city.

Micro Focus

Founded in the United States in 1976, Micro Focus has its headquarters in the English city of Newbury. The company provides software and consulting services to help clients upgrade their legacy systems to more modern platforms, as well as manage the lifecycle and quality of their applications. Micro Focus is listed on the London Stock Exchange and is part of the FTSE 250 index.

Integra Technologies

Integra Technologies is a Mexican company with more than 18 years of experience in the Information and Communications Technologies industry[233]. With a workforce of over 700 employees, it serves more than 200 clients across Mexico, the United States and Central America.

231 Teléfonos de México, S.A.B. de C.V. (Telmex) https://www.bnamericas.com/es/perfil-empresa/telefonos-de-mexico-sab-de-cv

232 Hanwha Vision https://www.tecnoseguro.com/empresas/fabricantes/hanwha-vision

233 Integra Technologies https://cintegra.mx/nosotros/

PANAMA

Innovatrics

Innovatrics is a provider of biometric solutions for governments and businesses, headquartered in the EU and founded in the Czech Republic. For over 16 years, the company has collaborated with various organizations to develop reliable and flexible biometric identification solutions. In Panama, Innovatrics is active through the National Identity Issuance System, which uses multimodal biometrics.

General Dynamics Mission Systems

General Dynamics Mission Systems is a Canadian company that provides technology solutions in defense and cybersecurity. In Panama, it is involved in initiatives such as the Biometric Facial Recognition Project at Tocumen Airport. Additionally, the company collaborates with the National Operations Center (CON).

Huawei

Huawei is a Chinese company and a global leader in information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure and telecommunications equipment. In Panama, it has played a key role in the development of the C2 Security and Emergency Operations Center in the city of Colón, where it implemented an advanced video surveillance system.

PARAGUAY

TSV

Tecnología, Seguridad y Vigilancia del Paraguay (TSV) is a local company specializing in security, telecommunications and technology solutions. It was responsible for implementing and maintaining the initiative reported in 2021,which involved the first deployment of the AFIS system, provided by the Ministry of the Interior, at a sporting event.

ASUCOM

ASUCOM is a local company focused on providing solutions based on information and communication technologies. It is responsible for the implementation and maintenance of the initiative reported in 2021 to expand the capabilities, safeguards and facial recognition features of the Ministry of the Interior's AFIS system.

ITTI

The company is formally known as ITTI S.A.E.C.A., (Sociedad Anónima Emisora de Capital Abierto) which was originally founded in 2004 as IT Consultores Tecnología y Organización and is currently one of the leading technology firms in Paraguay[234]. Headquartered in Asunción, it offers a wide portfolio that includes software development and commercialization, transactional solutions for the financial sector (FinTech and RegTech), printing, document management and biometric technologies, including facial recognition[235]. In October 2023, ITTI reportedly signed an agreement with the National Sports Secretariat to install video surveillance cameras and biometric systems at sporting events.[236]

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234 Banco Central del Paraguay. (n. d.). ITTI S.A.E.C.A.En Superintendencia de Valores. Retrieved from https://siv.bcp.gov.py

235 InfoNegocios S.A.. (2022). ITTI: la fusión de dos grandes tecnológicos inaugura nueva casa y consolida liderazgo. Retrieved from https://infonegocios.com.py/default/itti-la-fusion-de-dos-grandes-tecnologicos-inaugura-nueva-casa-y-consolida-liderazgo

236 TEDIC. (2025, April 28). Implementation of facial recognition cameras by the Paraguayan State. Retrieved from https://www.tedic.org/reconocimiento_facial_py/

PERU

Oosto (formerly AnyVision)

Oosto is an Israeli company specializing in Artificial Intelligence-based facial recognition technology and temperature detection for real-time facial and human recognition at crowd events. In October 2021, the company announced it would change its name and rebrand as "Oosto." Under its new brand, the company offers computer vision and facial recognition technologies for public safety, such as touchless biometric access control, video analytics and new forms of video-based recognition. According to the company, by 2019, its software had been installed on over 100,000 cameras across 43 countries, as part of approximately 350 projects. The software works by scanning in real time and cross-analyzing data collected from various sources, including open-source data.

Hikvision

Hikvision is a Chinese state-owned manufacturer and provider of video surveillance equipment for both civilian and military purposes, headquartered in Hangzhou, Zhejiang. At events like Seguritec Perú 2022, the company showcased innovations aimed at addressing urban challenges such as traffic congestion and public safety, promoting advanced technological solutions to enhance urban management. Additionally, Hikvision has developed specific solutions for "Safe Cities," offering cameras designed for complex urban environments.

Dahua Technology

Dahua Technology is a Chinese company specializing in video surveillance and security solutions, providing intelligent AIoT-based solutions and services powered by video and image analytics. The company has established a significant presence in Peru through its subsidiary, Dahua Technology Perú S.A.C., located in the San Isidro neighborhood of Lima.

URUGUAY

Herta

Herta is a Spanish company specializing in facial recognition and video analytics solutions, headquartered in Barcelona. Since 2017, it has established a significant presence in Uruguay, with its technologies implemented in several football stadiums across the country. The company also has an office in Montevideo, Uruguay.

Vision-Box

Vision-Box is a Portuguese company headquartered in Lisbon. Founded in 2001, the company specializes in identification and passenger management solutions, primarily for airports and other transportation hubs. The company has pioneered the implementation of "digital passport" systems and biometric controls, enabling touchless identification. Vision-Box has a strong global presence, with projects implemented in over 70 countries, including high-traffic international airports. The company also maintains robust device production at its plant in Portugal.

Veridos México

Veridos México is the Mexican subsidiary of the German-based company. It develops, manufactures and distributes products and solutions that protect payment processes, identities, connectivity and data. In addition to complete identification card and passport systems, the company provides identification documents, high-security cards, document verification hardware and security software, as well as electronic identification services and trust centers.

AlSur

www.alsur.lat