

Central American Market | Annual Report 2022

Highlights

- Total marketplace traffic reached 126 million visits in 2022, a 23.4 per cent increase from 2021.
- Countries from inside the region are the main source of traffic, with an 83 per cent share in 2022.
- While Costa Rica is the largest market in terms of traffic, with 31 per cent of total traffic in the block, ebay Guatemala is the most popular website.

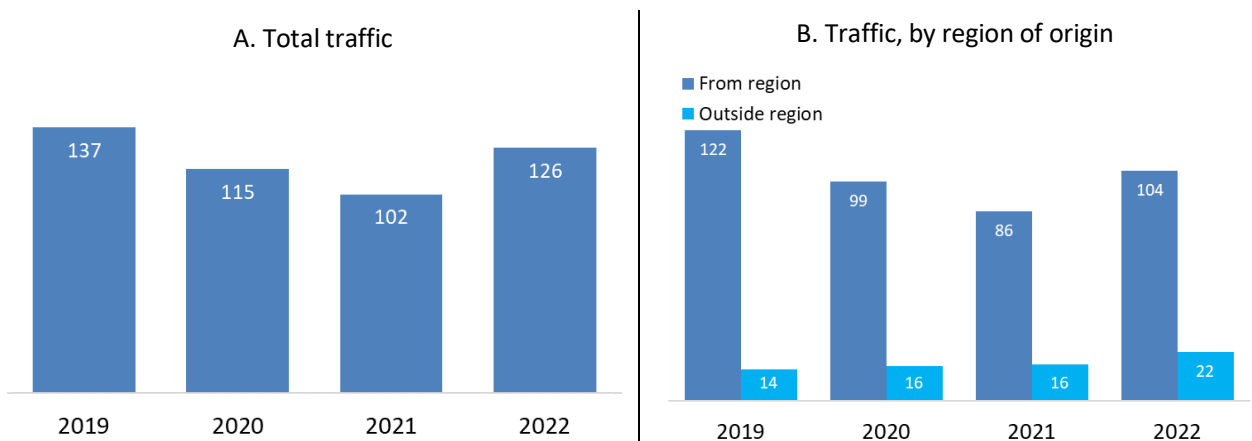
1. Marketplace activity

Marketplace traffic reached 126 million visits in 2022. After decreasing in 2020 and 2021, visits increased 23.4 per cent from 2021 (Figure 1.A). The increase is mostly explained by the evolution of traffic originated outside the region, which represents 17 per cent of total traffic (22 million visits) and increased 35.2 per cent in 2022, while traffic from within the block grew at a slower pace, at 21.4 per cent (Figure 1.B).

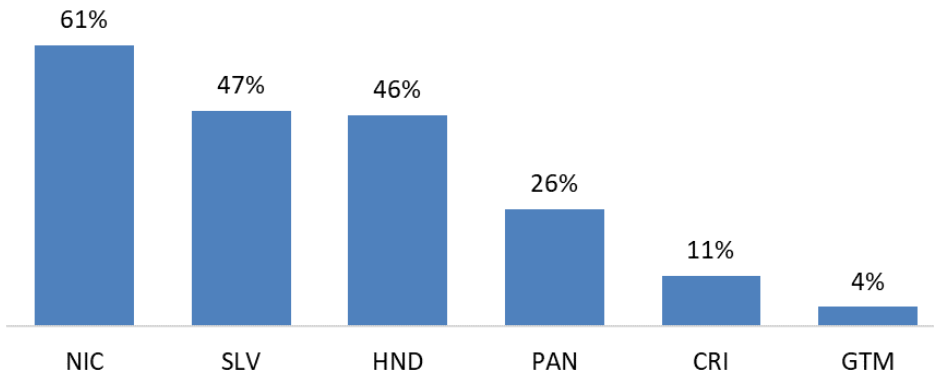
All countries showed positive growth rates in 2022. Nicaragua, El Salvador and Honduras, the smallest markets, grew the most (Figure 3), at 61, 47 and 46 percent y.o.y., respectively (Figure 2).

Costa Rica concentrates almost one-third of total traffic in the block. Panama was the second largest market in terms of traffic, with a 21 per cent share.

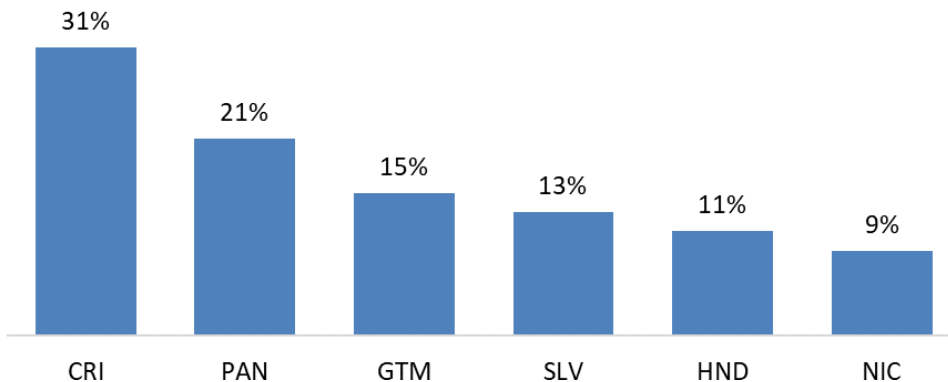
Figure 1. Evolution of marketplace traffic, Central American Market, 2019-2022 (million visits)



Source: LACME.

Figure 2. Marketplace traffic annual growth across countries in the Central American Market, 2021-2022

Source: LACME.

Figure 3. Distribution of marketplace traffic across countries in the Central American Market, 2022

Source: LACME.

2. Marketplace landscape

In 2022, there were 213 B2C active marketplaces for goods in the Central American Market. The top 5 most visited marketplaces concentrated 28.6 per cent of total traffic (Table 1), showing particularly lower concentration than other regions or countries. ebay Guatemala was the most popular marketplace, with 6.1 per cent of total traffic, followed by Crautos, an automobiles classifieds site, with 5.9 per cent. Among global sites that ship to Central American Market countries, the most visited one was Amazon, with 63.9 per cent of total traffic directed to those sites.

The fastest growing marketplaces in 2022 were CarroCarros, a classified site specialized in automotive vehicles (such as cars, trucks, and motorcycles) and related services and products; Top Free Ad and Evisos, both classifieds sites; and Pedidos Ya, an online food market (Figure 4).

Table 1. Leading marketplaces targeting the Central American Market, 2022

Marketplace	Traffic (mill. visits)	Traffic share	Annual growth
Ebay (Guatemala)	7.7	6.1%	35.4%
Crautos	7.5	5.9%	-10.7%
Oferta Simple	7.2	5.7%	44.7%
El Salvador Anuncios	7.1	5.6%	72.2%
Mercado Libre (Costa Rica)	6.5	5.2%	-14.8%
Top-5	36.1	28.6%	18.8%

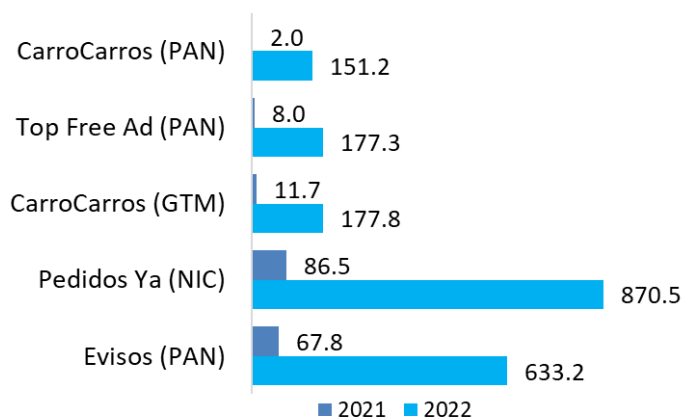
Source: LACME.

Table 2. Traffic on leading global marketplaces that ship to the Central American Market, 2022

Marketplace	Traffic (mill. visits)	Traffic share (%)	Annual growth (%)
Amazon.com	162.0	63.9	-4.4
eBay	53.7	21.2	-6.5
Aliexpress	16.5	6.5	-15.9
Etsy	7.4	2.9	13.4
Casa del Libro	3.0	1.2	40.9
Top-5	242.6	95.7%	-4.9

Note: Marketplaces include all their country domains (e.g., Amazon includes amazon.es and amazon.fr).

Source: LACME.

Figure 4. Traffic of fastest growing marketplaces in Sub-region, 2021-2022 (thousand visits)

Note: Marketplaces are ordered in decreasing order of percentage annual growth rates.

Source: LACME.

Table 3. Selected e-commerce environment indicators, Central American Market, 2019-2022

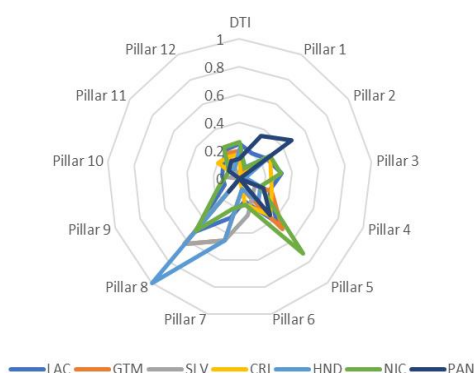
Indicator	2019	2020	2021	2022
Active mobile-broadband subscriptions (per 100 inh.)	62.2	69.2	61.1	42.9
Population using the Internet (%)	52.1	55.9	60.3	82.6
Cross-border e-commerce (% of online sales)	-	-	41.7	46.7
Credit card ownership (% of adults)	-	-	6.0	-
Digital Trade Restrictiveness Index	0.1	-	-	-
Integrated Index of Postal Development (2IPD)	30,8	30,5	17,7	13,3

Note: The indexes are calculated based on the average of the available indexes for each country in the sub-region. The 2IPD for Guatemala and Nicaragua is available only for 2022; the one for Honduras is not available for 2019.

Source: OECD. ECLAC. World Bank. Ebanx. UPU. DTI Project.

3. Regional digital trade integration index

From the analysis of relevant policies for the integration of digital trade, the Regional Digital Trade Integration Index (RDTII) shows the Central American Market countries' performance compared to the LAC average. This analysis integrates the scores of 12 pillars using a simple average method, where each pillar of the DTII is the weighted average of the indicator-level scores. Indicator scores range from "0" to "1" (where 0 indicates a better integration index) and are based on a review of existing policies and regulations, including those for ICT goods, intermediate goods, and inputs; digital delivery services; foreign investment in sectors relevant to digital trade; and use of personal data. The framework covers two components of digital trade policies, namely restrictions and enabling policies.

Figure 6. RDTI – pillar scores, Central American Market (by country)

TBC by CEPAL:

- Main strengths of member countries.
- Key recommendations.

Table 3. RDTI – pillars scores

	Central American Market	LAC
DTI index	0.18	0.25
Pillar 1: Tariffs and trade defence	0.12	0.20
Pillar 2: Public procurement	0.32	0.25
Pillar 3: Foreign Direct Investment	0.06	0.32
Pillar 4: Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs)	0.20	0.24
Pillar 5: Telecom infrastructure & competition	0.31	0.42
Pillar 6: Cross-border data policies	0.12	0.17
Pillar 7: Domestic Data policies	0.27	0.29
Pillar 8: Intermediary liability	0.55	0.51
Pillar 9: Content access	0.00	0.12
Pillar 10: Quantitative trade restrictions	0.02	0.13
Pillar 11: Technical standards	0.08	0.15
Pillar 12: Online sales and transactions	0.14	0.23

Note: The pillars are calculated based on the average of the available pillars for each country in the sub-region.

Source: Digital Trade Integration Project.

Additional resources

Central American Market

- [A sugerir por equipo de CEPAL](#)
#link

Latin America and the Caribbean

- Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean (eLAC 2024)
<https://www.cepal.org/en/projects/digital-agenda-latin-america-and-caribbean-elac2024>
- eTrade for all news and resources
<https://etradeforall.org/es/noticias/>
- International Trade Centre Country Profiles
<https://marketanalysis.intracen.org/en/country-profile>

About the LAC Marketplace Explorer

The Latin America and the Caribbean Marketplace Explorer maps and monitors activity on retail e-commerce marketplaces across the region. It covers visitor traffic and other main characteristics of almost 900 marketplaces and more than 2,900 marketplace websites. It was developed by the ecomConnect team at the International Trade Centre (ITC), the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-ECLAC), and the Centre for Market Insights of the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, with the support of the Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation (FEALAC). Learn more and explore the data at <https://www.cepal.org/en/notes/latin-america-and-caribbean-marketplace-explorer-lacme>.