



**Faculty of Legal Sciences**

**School of International Studies**

**The Port of Chancay (Peru) as a Strategic Hub:  
Opportunities and Challenges for the Competitiveness  
of Exporters in Southern Ecuador**

**Project prior to obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in  
International Studies**

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*-Glenda Cumbe*

To my parents, for always being my safe place, the sustenance of each of my steps and my inexhaustible source of inspiration. Thank you for transforming your great sacrifices into my opportunities and for your words of encouragement in difficult moments. Thank you for having given me the wings to achieve my dreams and for teaching me that, when watered with effort and love, dreams always bloom. I dedicate this work to your unconditional love, which has always been the true engine of my formation, the heartbeat that guides my life and the essence of my integrity.

*-Johanna Jarrín*

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# **The Port of Chancay (Peru) as a Strategic Hub: Opportunities and Challenges for the Competitiveness of Exporters in Southern Ecuador**

## **ABSTRACT**

This study focuses on analyzing the Port of Chancay as a Strategic Node in the face of the competitiveness of exporting companies in the Southern Ecuadorian. The objective was to research are based on examining the international context of the Port of Chancay to evaluate the logistical and commercial opportunities that this Megaport can represent for the productive sectors of the Southern Ecuadorian. It also sought to identify the main challenges related to infrastructure, customs regulations, institutionality and land connectivity that may limit the use of this port. As a last objective, it aims to contrast the benefits and risks involved in its use against national ports for Ecuadorian exports. To this end, a triangulation of sources was implemented under a qualitative approach, as a type of exploratory/descriptive research with a framework of three areas: regulatory, private operational experience and public institutional vision, from different angles such as: documentary analysis, review of regulations and semi-structured interviews, the universe of this study being the productive sectors of the Austro. Among the findings obtained, the complementarity of the Megaport with the national ports stands out, as well as the opportunities it presents: technological innovation and automation, reduction of times, ship capacity. Likewise, among the challenges are: road infrastructure, lack of regulatory knowledge and institutional support.

**Keywords:** Asia, austro, international trade, Ecuador, export, Peru, port

# **El Puerto de Chancay (Perú) como Nodo Estratégico: Oportunidades y Desafíos para la Competitividad de las Exportadoras del Austro Ecuatoriano**

## **RESUMEN**

El presente estudio se enfoca en analizar el Puerto de Chancay como Nodo Estratégico frente a la competitividad de las empresas exportadoras del Austro ecuatoriano. Los objetivos de la investigación se basan en examinar el contexto internacional del Puerto de Chancay para evaluar las oportunidades logísticas y comerciales que este Megapuerto puede representar para los sectores productivos del Austro ecuatoriano. También busca identificar los principales desafíos relacionados con la infraestructura, normativa aduanera, institucionalidad y conectividad terrestre que podrían limitar el aprovechamiento de este puerto. Como último objetivo pretende contrastar los beneficios y riesgos que implica su uso frente a los puertos nacionales para exportaciones ecuatorianas. Para ello, se implementó una triangulación de fuentes bajo un enfoque cualitativo, como un tipo de investigación exploratoria/descriptiva con un marco de tres ejes: normativo, experiencia operativa privada y visión institucional pública, desde diferentes ángulos como: análisis documental, revisión de normativa y entrevistas semiestructuradas, siendo el universo de este estudio los sectores productivos del Austro. Dentro de los hallazgos obtenidos, resalta la complementariedad del Megapuerto frente a los puertos nacionales, así como, las oportunidades que este presenta: innovación tecnológica y automatización, reducción de tiempos, capacidad de buques. Asimismo, dentro de los desafíos destacan: infraestructura vial, falta de conocimiento normativo y apoyo institucional.

**Palabras clave:** Asia, austro, comercio internacional, Ecuador, exportación, Perú, puerto

## **1. Introduction**

This study originates from the interest in how the Port of Chancay could be a strategic project for regional foreign trade. This perspective allowed us to recognize that it is not only a new port infrastructure, but a logistical milestone that requires rethinking commercial tactics in the Southern Ecuadorian. In addition, in this research, concepts of Customs Legislation are applied in a scenario, such as costs and times, regulations, customs procedures and processes that affect the effectiveness of foreign trade between Peru and Ecuador.

In this sense, this study is essential because the start of operations of the Chancay Megaport, designed as a regional logistics center with a view to Asia, gives way to rethinking South American foreign trade, based on this study primarily for the Southern Ecuadorian. This region, which is distinguished by its mining, agricultural and industrial production, could take advantage of a more efficient logistics option; however, it also faces important challenges, such as the scarce land and logistics infrastructure. Because of this, they could take advantage of the competitiveness of national ports that raise strategic issues that need to be examined in depth. This study helps exporting companies in the Southern Ecuadorian to identify the real risks and advantages for strategic decision-making to optimize their competitiveness against the Port of Chancay, also, as a contribution to the industry and public institutions, it mentions the real situation of land connectivity in the region and binational customs procedures. In addition, this research is necessary as it determines whether the Port of Chancay is a concrete possibility to grow or, on the contrary, entails more risks.

The general objective of the study was to analyze the opportunities and strategic limitations of the Port of Chancay in the competitiveness of foreign trade in the Southern Ecuadorian, considering the logistical and commercial benefits it offers, as well as the challenges it poses for the region and the feasibility of its use by the exporters of the Austro. First, the international and regional context of the Port of Chancay was examined to evaluate the logistical and commercial possibilities that the Megaport represents for the productive sectors of the Southern Ecuadorian; as a second point was the identification of the challenges and limitations related to infrastructure, customs regulations, institutionality and land connectivity; the third and final specific objective was the comparison of the benefits and

risks that the use of this Megaport would imply compared to national ports in the exports of the Southern Ecuadorian.

## **2. Theoretical Framework and State of the Art**

### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

Foreign trade is a strategic pillar for regional and national economic development, allowing regions to specialize in goods and services that are competitive in international markets (Banco Central del Ecuador, 2024). From classical economic theory, international trade is explained through the Theory of Comparative Advantage. According to Ricardo (1817), countries specialize in producing goods for which there is a lower opportunity cost, in such a way that the direction of trade can be determined. Under this approach, even if a country has absolute advantages in all goods, trade is beneficial when there is specialization, which allows for increased global efficiency and economic growth. The analysis of contemporary international trade incorporates not only the exchange of goods, but also logistical efficiency, infrastructure, and integration into global value chains. In this context, it must be analyzed as an integrated system where economic, logistical, and institutional variables intervene.

The theoretical framework presents several relevant concepts and theories to support this research. To this end, it is important to understand what international trade is. “International trade can then be understood as the set of exchanges of goods in terms of exports and imports” (Salazar et al., 2020, p.566). In this way, exports, according to The Organic Code on Production, Trade and Investment (2010) provisions of art. 154, are those that “allow the exit ... of goods in free circulation, outside the community customs territory or to a Special Economic Development Zone located within the Ecuadorian customs territory” (p.74). From a theoretical perspective, exports should not be analyzed only as trade flows, but as the result of integrated logistics systems. According to Hummels and Schaur (2012), export competitiveness is directly linked to transit time, logistics reliability and port efficiency, factors that decisively influence the participation of regions in global value chains.

#### **2.1.1 Geopolitical Bases and New Port Ecosystem**

##### **Theory of Port Hubs and Territorial Reconfiguration**

Some authors give us certain definitions:

“Hub ports (called “pivot” ports by ECLAC analysts, who seek to adapt the term to Spanish) have been defined as seaports that concentrate cargo from different origins and destinations, national and foreign, for subsequent redistribution.” (Martner, 2010, p.323).

Mangan (2008) emphasizes that modern hubs function as integrated logistics platforms that, thanks to their infrastructure, connect maritime and land transport and even digital systems, evidencing that they play a role as strategic nodes within global supply chains. In other words, a hub port acts as a meeting place for the different cargoes that connects the main maritime corridors and then redistributes them, which reduces operating costs and transport times. Notteboom and Rodrigue (2005) argue that these ports can change the regional port hierarchy, changing logistics centralization towards more efficient infrastructures, this explains why these ports not only handle national cargoes but also those of the region around them.

## **Port Infrastructure and Economic Geopolitics**

From the economic geopolitical point of view, ports controlled by foreign capital acquire an additional strategic dimension. Farrell & Newan (2019) introduce the concept of “armed interdependence”, pointing out that the control of critical infrastructures allows influencing trade flows and regional economic decisions. In this framework, megaports financed by global actors can become instruments of power within international trade.

### **2.1.2 Logistics Node, Operational Efficiency and Regional Competitiveness**

#### **Definition and Components of the Logistics Node**

According to Apostolopoulou and Pizarro (2025), a logistics node is a point where modes of transport, operators, and services are linked to move goods; its efficiency depends on concrete engineering and operation decisions: draft for large ships, design of docks and yards, equipment (cranes, automated terminals) and information systems that avoid bottlenecks. These technical variables determine productivity (TEU per hour) and dwell times, which translate infrastructure into cost and time reduction for exporters and importers.

#### **Essential Operational Indicators**

The efficiency of a logistics node is evaluated using standardized indicators such as productivity (TEU per hour), average dwell time, and maritime connectivity. Tongzon and

Heng (2005) highlight that port productivity, maritime connectivity, and institutional quality are key determinants of a port's attractiveness to regional exporters. These factors make it possible to analyze whether a logistics node effectively fulfills its function of reducing costs and times.

### **Regional Competitiveness and Logistics Opportunities**

From the theory of competitiveness, Porter (1990) maintains that the competitiveness of a region is measured by the efficiency of its logistics chain and the ability to reduce costs and times in international trade. The theory of global value chains points out that regional competitiveness depends on the ability to efficiently integrate into international production networks (Gereffi, 2016). Also, both port infrastructure and logistics establish the positioning of regions within these global value chains, influencing local producers and how the region is seen in the world (Gereffi, 2016).

And similarly, Hausmann et al. (2014) highlight that logistics infrastructure affects the ability of coastal regions to expand their export basket and enter markets with high added value. The theory of trade costs proposed by Anderson and Van Wincoop (2004), indicates that transit times, administrative costs and logistical inefficiencies are important barriers to trade, and can even exceed traditional tariffs. From this perspective, port efficiency and the reduction of logistics inefficiencies are decisive for optimizing regional export competitiveness.

### **2.1.3 Multimodal Connectivity and Hinterland Logistics**

#### **Land-Sea Gap**

Land connectivity (roads, bridges, consolidation centers) is very important to know if ports can be used. According to Mesquita et al. (2008), the land-sea gap, quality of roads, transfer times, availability of consolidation services, determines whether the supposed savings on the coast translate into lower real costs for inland producers (RPDI). Hinterland logistics is a concept that has been around for a long time in trade, it is mentioned that before it referred to “the areas surrounding the former European colonies, areas that, although they did not belong to the aforementioned colonies, maintained close commercial ties with them” (Villaverde & Maza, 2012, p.181). In addition, this concept has recently been adapted to reality, it is mentioned that it “is usually applied to the territory or area of influence of a port,

that is, to the land area where the origin/destination of the goods transported through said port is located” (Villaverde & Maza, 2012, p.181).

The specialized literature emphasizes that the advantage of a port only materializes when there is efficient connectivity with its hinterland. Behdani et al. (2020) argue that internal logistics costs can neutralize port benefits if adequate land corridors are not developed, especially affecting inland regions such as the Southern Ecuadorian. According to Arvis et al. (2023) Chancay's assessment requires systematic benchmarking with indicators such as the Logistics Performance Index (LPI) requires identifying risks of cargo diversion that may affect the competitiveness of Ecuadorian ports.

### **Multimodal Corridors, Territorial Effects and Productive Agglomeration**

The theory of multimodal corridors must accompany the analysis, linking port infrastructure with internal logistics and efficient customs services; prioritizing critical sections and intermediate consolidation centers are essential for the port advantage to reach the Austro (Christopher, 2011; Martner, 2010).

The presence of a hub can generate agglomeration economies: logistics services, storage and manufacturing companies are located near the port to reduce costs and times, creating employment and productive chains (Porter, 1990). It is important to consider that this depends a lot on the local conditions of the sector such as accessibility to land, services and human capital, it also depends on public policies that encourage productive integration and its installation, in this way the benefits extend to more sectors and not only to the coast. In addition, there are territorial instruments that can also facilitate the Austro to benefit, such as incentives for logistics services, technical training and regional logistics parks.

### **Governance, Investment, Security and Resilience**

Logistics governance, on the other hand, refers to the set of rules, institutions, and actors that regulate the operation of the different megaports. Brooks et al. (2017) indicate that, to guarantee equitable benefits and impartiality of access for exporters from different regions, it is important that there are transparent regulatory frameworks and binational coordination between countries.

According to Maúrtua de Romaña (2024) and Villagra (2023), governance and the different forms of investment such as concessions, public and private partnerships, participation of foreign operators, condition precisely who makes the decisions, what the priorities are, and how rates and services are set. The entry of large operators into this area can improve connectivity, but it can also have consequences, since it can concentrate power and give way to dependence if there are not more mechanisms that take care of access and equity for local exporters.

According to Andrade Daza (2025) and Silva Do Nascimento (2024) security and resilience are key dimensions, large volume ports can be vulnerable to smuggling, illicit activities, such as cargo contamination, this generates additional costs for inspections, delays, insurance and directly affects confidence in the chain, additionally logistics resilience is defined as the ability of a system to overcome inconveniences, disturbances, etc. For its part Sheffi (2007), it mentions that these strategic nodes must work for security, technology and institutional coordination, to prevent unforeseen events that in some way affect the competitiveness of the region. It is also important to mention that institutional capacity such as customs, security forces, and contingency plans, determine operational resilience in the face of physical and cyber risks, being able to integrate these variables allows competitiveness to be evaluated in its entirety, but not only in terms of time and cost.

Lastly, from the point of view of the regional economy, for there to be a good analysis of logistics infrastructure, it must be analyzed as part of a territorial development strategy. In this way, Vickerman et al. (2010) points out that strategic nodes tend to concentrate benefits and enter into spatial inequalities without complementary policies. In summary, this theoretical framework combines all the aspects related to the subject, in essence the theories that support this research and some key concepts such as governance, investment, multimodal connectivity, security, resilience, etc. Only through a rigorous measurement and comparison of these dimensions will it be possible to answer whether Chancay represents a real opportunity for the Southern Ecuadorian or if its benefits will be concentrated on the coast due to lack of infrastructure, coordination and institutions.

## **2.2 State of the Art**

In recent years, there has been evidence of political, economic and academic interest in the port of Chancay, Peru, considering it as a strategic point for international trade, in

some cases even calling it the Megaport of Chancay. Several countries have carried out several previous investigations on megaports and logistics centers, in which challenges and opportunities similar to those currently faced by Ecuador have been examined. In this regard, the Research Service of the European Parliament points out that:

“Observers see the port as a game-changer in Latin American logistics, as it will also benefit other South American countries such as Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Ecuador, by serving as a gateway linking transport routes by land and sea, and between Asia and Latin America, acting as a central node of the Maritime Silk Road in the South Pacific” (Jütten, 2025, p.4).

This shows that related research has already been carried out, but it is also clear that there is still a gap, because the specific impact that the Chancay Megaport could have on the competitiveness of the Southern Ecuadorian has not yet been studied in the necessary depth, considering its specific particularities in terms of production and connectivity. To address the state of the art, below, they will be divided into some subtopics related to the problem, in order to better understand it.

The Chancay Megaport is an important maritime infrastructure, designed to change and improve trade throughout the South American area (Gobierno Peruano, 2025). This work is led by the Cosco Shipping company Ports Chancay Peru S.A., although it is classified as for public use, the majority control belongs to this private company, which presents as a mission of the port and as a company.

In particular, it verifies maritime trade businesses through the efficient management of port terminals and associated services, promoting Chancay as a first-class commercial center with the highest standards of efficient and safe operations, maximizing shareholder value (Cosco Shipping Ports Chancay Perú S.A., 2025). Megaports are characterized by their ability to operate deep-draft vessels, concentrate high volumes of cargo, and generate port economies of scale. The majority participation of Chinese capital positions Chancay within the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), projecting economic power and optimizing the supply chain between Asia and South America (Barboza Sánchez, 2024; Villagra, 2023). While this represents an opportunity for efficient access to key markets, it also generates a strategic dilemma: dependence on a foreign port could affect Ecuador's commercial autonomy and require mitigation policies.

### **2.2.1 Chancay as a Megaport and its Geoeconomic Dimension**

Several authors point out that the Chancay Megaport constitutes a large-scale infrastructure with implications that transcend the local and national. Villagra (2023) argues that Chinese investment in Chancay reconfigures South America's trade routes and corridors and could generate an operational dependence on the infrastructure financed by the Belt and Road. This approach reveals that Chancay should not only be analyzed as a commercial port, but as a key factor in geopolitics. And in the same way, as a complementary way, Vizcardo (2023) argues that Peru, through the construction of the Chancay Megaport, will become the most important center for trade and navigation in South America.

This approach evidences the idea that Chancay is presented as a logistics hub in the region, by integrating maritime, air and land transport, which could modify the commercial dynamics of neighboring countries such as Ecuador. And it is necessary to remember that, according to Villagra (2023), the data confirm the majority participation of the Chinese company in the development of the Chancay Megaport, considering that it can be said that the Port of Chancay is really developing to be a much larger and far-reaching project both in our continent and in the Asian continent, being able to have the financial support of a very large company is something that leads the Port of Chancay to grow unmatched.

### **2.2.2 Operational Impacts: Time, Costs and Logistics Efficiency**

One of the main arguments in favor of the megaport lies in the reduction of costs and transportation times. As mentioned:

“The Port of Chancay will be located 56 km north of Lima, in the province of Huaral. It seeks to be an alternative to decongest Callao, operating cargo that comes from the east and the central highlands ... Chancay will provide users with the facilities to remove cargo in the shortest possible time, in addition to having a road interchange, a truck center, an administrative building, service buildings, a container area, a customs area” (Mardones, 2022, p.7).

From an operational perspective, the literature points to potential advantages in time and cost, but also practical limitations in the initial stage of operations. In addition, to express this benefit, Global Americans argues that “The port's strategic location is designed to serve

as a direct link between South America and Asia, reducing shipping times by approximately 10 days” (Solis De Ovando, 2024, p.3).

A field study in the province where the port is located (Huaral) records that “40% of the participants perceive that the Port of Chancay contributes adequately to foreign trade” (Bazán Briceño et al., 2025, p.55). And at the same time, that “25% consider that their current competitiveness is still insufficient” (Bazán Briceño et al., 2025, p.55). Likewise, concrete opportunities can be generated such as optimization of transit time, reduction of up to 10 days in travel time to Asia, vital for perishable products (Cervilla J., 2024) and economies of scale by operating with deep-draft vessels, reducing unit transport costs (Delfin Group - Noticias Detalle, 2024).

This shows a mixed vision between strategic probability and concrete operational doubts (management, infrastructure and tangible benefits for local companies). In the face of the use of national ports, the use of the Port of Chancay is presented as a support, by ensuring a reduction in logistics expenses and greater speed in delivery. These operational benefits raise a question about the real applicability in the Southern Ecuadorian, whose area currently depends on national ports with draft limitations. In fact, the University of the Pacific at the Chancay Observatory, with experts from the Research Center (CIUP) and the Center for China and Asia-Pacific Studies emphasize that “the Port of Chancay stands out for its deeper natural draft 17.8 m ... constituting a strategic node of the network” (Universidad del Pacífico, 2025).

Similarly, studies on the design and management of port terminals highlight the importance of automation and modern infrastructure. Apostolopoulou and Pizarro (2025) mention that efficient flow depends on well-designed corridors, equipment that does not stop and digital processes that avoid bottlenecks, since a good organization helps us to improve intraregional connectivity by connecting production with ports, cities, etc. In this sense, Chancay, with its state-of-the-art infrastructure, could offer exporters in the Austro more competitive conditions than those currently available in Ecuadorian ports.

Another author has also analyzed how the Megaport would affect the region, especially the countries closest to Peru, such as Ecuador.

“Peru is quite clear about the strategic investments it is making in the future in terms of logistics, but above all connectivity to all the countries with which it has various trade agreements. In this case, Chancay is an investment by the shipping company Cosco that will help it connect with China in a shorter time than the current one. That implies a shorter journey, a lead time of approximately 10 to 15 days and what it may mean is that it will be at a lower cost. So, it has a focus in this first instance on all the Peruvian exportable supply that goes to Asia, especially in terms of agribusiness ... The competitiveness that Peruvian exports to Asia are going to are of another level, the time is drastically reduced, the minimum lead time drops by 10 days. Currently, it is approximately 25 days and there is a substantial reduction” (Mendoza, 2024, para.13).

### **2.2.3 Risks: Security, Governance and Externalities**

The development of megaports brings with it risks that must be considered. Silva Do Nascimento (2024) warns that high-traffic ports become new drug trafficking corridors due to their high volume of containers and the lack of inter-institutional coordination, since the absence of operational and legal protocols between entities of the countries that have led to the strengthening of the OCTs (Transnational Criminal Organizations). This is a critical point, since the competitiveness of a logistics corridor also depends on the security and reliability of its operations.

Other authors, through documentation or surveys, express environmental concern because by obtaining their own results they understand what could really happen. As Bazán Briceño et al. (2025) mention, “35% considered that the operation of the port could contribute to the destruction of natural resources” (p.56) and warns about the need to strengthen environmental management and governance so that the benefits are distributed. That is why it is also necessary to take into consideration the impact that the Port of Chancay can have on the environment and our planet in general, because we must not only try to make the economy evolve but also to take care of our environment.

It is also important to mention other authors who highlight that in Latin America in recent years the Chinese presence has been seen in a very strong way, through intense Chinese investments in the region, as is the case of the financing of the Chancay Megaport, because this project is part of one of China's strategies to grow globally.

“The Belt and Road Initiative is an initiative to develop economic corridors that link – even more – commercially and productively countries in Europe, multiple regions of Asia and North Africa ... the realization of large infrastructure works ranging from high-speed railways, extensive roads, bridges, tunnels, ports, airports, electricity and data transmission networks, power plants and even the redesign and improvements in urban centers” ( Slipak & Ghiotto, 2019, pag.6).

And this is what China has been doing in recent years, as mentioned above, the Port of Chancay with the aim of turning it into a logistics hub corridor.

The security risks presented by the Port of Chancay on the continent are indirectly high. As Ellis (2024) explains, the legal and physical structure of the port allows its use by the People's Liberation Army Navy in crisis scenarios, because all Chinese state-owned companies such as Cosco Shipping, are obliged to collaborate with the State on security issues, which is presented as a great security risk to the entire continent in the event of global tensions. The Chinese government can demand that the Chancay facilities be at the disposal of its Navy, where this port can also be presented as insurance for the flow of resources from South America to China.

#### **2.2.4 Other Ports and International Experiences**

The analysis of other international cases allows us to understand how large-scale infrastructures have transformed the competitiveness of different countries.

In Mexico, a study was carried out on the development of port hubs such as Manzanillo and Lázaro Cárdenas, noting that:

“A characteristic of Mexican ports with the potential to consolidate themselves as hubs is the clear predominance of cargo concentration through the expansion of internal connections inland, rather than through the development of maritime transshipment, so typical of today's Latin American hubs. Only the ports of Manzanillo and Lázaro Cárdenas, located on the Mexican Pacific coast, have recently begun to establish a maritime transshipment network of containers for flows moving between South America and the Far East” (Martner, 2010, p.342).

The possibility of developing transshipment is a purely geographical issue and cannot be separated from the analysis of the location of ports according to the main axes of the international multimodal transport network in the capitalist world economy. This indicates that it is not enough to build infrastructure, but that it is necessary to guarantee that the benefits reach inland regions, as in the case of the Southern Ecuadorian.

In Panama, the expansion of the Canal showed how infrastructure can radically modify global logistics routes. Valenzo Jiménez et al. (2020) point out that, although competitiveness increased, environmental and social tensions were also generated that had to be addressed through public policies. It also analyzes the logistics performance index of several developed countries to achieve and understand where those who are not up to the task must improve. This background reinforces the need to foresee collateral impacts in large-scale projects such as Chancay. Regarding this point, Global Americans projects that “The importance of Chancay lies in its ability to offer a more direct route to Asian markets, avoiding the need for transshipments in other regional centers or the dependence of the Panama Canal for certain trade flows” (Solis De Ovando, 2024, p.3).

In addition, also when analyzing studies on design, the importance of modern infrastructure is highlighted. In this regard, the Revista de Marina stresses that “the unique characteristics that this port will host is that it will have the capacity to receive container ships carrying more than 18 thousand TEUs and Triple E, ships that due to their size cannot pass through the Panama Canal” (Fuentes Zurita, 2024, para. 10).

The competition for control of global trade routes is a critical chapter that is leading to geopolitical tensions on the continent. Currently, there have been tensions over the control of the Panama Canal, a strategic and extremely important point for North America as well as for all of South America. As Rojas (2026) mentions:

A geopolitical perfect storm is presented where the current president of the United States, Donald Trump, turns Panama into a center of struggle of powers such as the United States and China. Trump has given an idea that the Panama Canal is a strategic asset that the U.S. should never have lost. The U.S. is imposing under threats for Panama to “lease” China's influences. The Port of Chancay is presented as the greatest threat and is the reason why Trump acts with such aggressiveness towards Panama, because it manifests itself as a

direct escape route to Asia, avoiding being under the influence of the United States and depending on the Panama Canal, preventing Donald Trump from reaffirming U.S. hegemony over maritime trade in the hemisphere.

In Chile, the debates around the Port of Chancay have also been analyzed from a geopolitical perspective. Mardones (2022) stresses that the proximity of the port to the Chilean region poses both opportunities for integration and risks of dependence on Chinese influence in the region, since there is some data that China has a lot of influence in the country due to the fact that it is its main buyer as a seller, so here too we have analyzed from the advantages to the challenges that this Megaport of Chancay can leave.

Lastly, in the Government of Peru itself, studies such as those of Barboza Sánchez (2024) highlight that the magnitude of the project can turn Chancay into a node of intercontinental articulation, with effects on international trade beyond Peruvian borders, since thanks to the technical design of the port, a reduction in times can be projected and specialized to reduce logistics costs, with the possibility of becoming the nucleus and the main connection of American trade with Asia, especially with China.

This is corroborated by CEPLAN, which indicates that “Chancay emerges as a catalyst for a new regional logistics centrality, conditioned by its ability to integrate services, absorb detours and articulate internal corridors” (Centro Nacional de Planeamiento Estratégico, 2025, para. 2). This positions it as the regional hub that will connect the bioceanic corridor with the Asia-Pacific, which presents clear opportunities.

All these cases show that there are previous investigations in other countries on port megaprojects, but they also highlight the gap: none focuses on how the Port of Chancay can specifically influence the competitiveness of the Southern Ecuadorian, an approach necessary to measure its true regional impact.

### **3. Methods**

The methodology applied in this article was developed under a qualitative approach, which included an in-depth analysis of the institutional and operational barriers, as well as the benefits that configure the use of the Port of Chancay in the competitiveness of exporters in the Southern Ecuadorian. Exploratory-descriptive research was carried out. It was

exploratory because the international and regional context of the Port of Chancay is examined to evaluate its logistical and commercial opportunities with the Southern Ecuadorian. It is also descriptive because the challenges and limitations faced by our region are identified.

The methodology implemented was the triangulation of sources and data, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation through the analysis of three axes of evidence, such as the regulatory framework, the private operational experience and the public institutional vision. As mentioned, the method of applying a triangulation with a qualitative approach, allows visualizing a topic from different angles and thus increasing the validity of what was found, as mentioned “triangulation not only serves to validate information, but is also used to broaden and deepen its understanding” ( Okuda Benavides & Gómez Restrepo, 2005, p.120). Within the framework of a research that is based on qualitative triangulation, “triangulation includes the use of several strategies when studying the same phenomenon, for example, the use of several methods” (Okuda Benavides & Gómez Restrepo, 2005, p.119).

The instruments used for the collection of information were the following, which were fundamental:

1. Documentary analysis and bibliographic review: This instrument focused on establishing the official context of the research through binational treaties and customs regulations.
2. Semi-structured interviews: Technicians, experts, former officials and diplomats were addressed to obtain different expert interpretations on the opportunities and challenges for the use of this port. To this end, this segment was divided into two sections, interviews for the private sector and others for the public sector.
  - Preparation of the interviews: the questions were asked based on the objectives of the study that are to be achieved and the experience of the participants in trade was taken into consideration, to achieve this the interview was divided into subtopics.

The universe of this study was based on the productive sectors of the Austro, as well as on the necessary regulations, to obtain this information a sample was defined in two important areas.

- **Private Sector:** Some companies specialized in foreign trade and that have a lot of experience in the area were included, especially in exports from the region. As is the case of the Malo and Arízaga Consortium, SICOMEXA, NAVIRE, and among other private companies that have an interest in or already export through this port to Asia.
- **Public Sector:** Customs technicians who work in the V District and a former high-level official with experience in that institution and in the Ministry of Production, Foreign Trade and Investment were present. The election of the former official was very important because she was part of Ecuador's negotiating team with the representatives of the Port of Chancay.

Data processing was carried out through the triangulation of sources and data, which made it possible to visualize the issue from different angles, from the private sector, the public sector, and what the regulations mention. The procedure including the following steps:

- **Qualitative content research:** Analysis of primary data to identify patterns in the information and classify them into risks or opportunities. In addition, all the information collected was classified into topics to organize the information from the interviews.
- **Cross-mechanism:** In this processing, it was analyzed through a comparison of what one actor tells us with what the other says, in order to validate a finding and in case the information between the actors does not coincide, this contradiction allows us to identify precisely where the fault is.
- **Contrast analysis:** The information on the efficiency of laws and binational agreements is compared with the real problems faced by companies and the capacity of institutions to manage these challenges. This allows us to verify if the Port of Chancay is a real opportunity or if there are barriers that limit its impact on regional competitiveness.

#### **4. Results**

In this segment, the results obtained from the application of the methodology are presented, for this, this section is divided into three important sections: in regulations, interviews and in contrast.

## **4.1 Regulations**

This section includes the current regulations, trade treaties and binational agreements that Ecuador has with other countries, which will allow you to visualize how exports would be achieved under these aspects and their limitations.

### **4.1.1 Ecuador-China Free Trade Agreement**

This free trade agreement was signed between Ecuador and China in 2023 and entered into force on May 1, 2024. It aims to facilitate trade by reducing trade barriers, helping in this way to regulate the exchange of goods and/or services through some measures related to market access, rules of origin, customs procedures, sanitary measures and international cooperation.

Within this Agreement, the way in which the elimination of tariffs will be carried out is mentioned. According to the Free Trade Agreement between the Government of Ecuador and the Government of the People's Republic of China (2023), Article 3.4 in point 2, it is mentioned that each party “shall reduce or eliminate its customs tariffs on goods originating in the other party, in accordance with its schedule” (p.100). This segment mentioned in the previous article is found in Appendix B, which mentions that a progressive elimination of tariffs on goods will be carried out, allowing Ecuadorian products to enter the Chinese market under preferential conditions.

Within chapter 5, in Article 3, several guidelines on trade facilitation in customs processes are clarified. According to the Free Trade Agreement between the Government of Ecuador and the Government of the People's Republic of China (2023), it indicates that the parties involved must ensure that customs processes are clear, concise, predictable and give way to the facilitation of the clearance of goods and trade in general. It is also emphasized that the customs administrations of both parties must cooperate and assist each other for the efficient application of legislation and simplification of customs processes by complying with their transparency agreement, it is even mentioned that they can use electronic systems for such management, which helps with the reduction of time and costs in foreign trade operations.

That said, it should be noted that this Agreement offers several advantages that increase the competitiveness of Ecuador's exporting companies compared to other countries.

Since it allows Ecuadorian products to access the Chinese market with lower costs, shorter export time thanks to the simplification of procedures, this is really important for those sectors that depend on times for the delivery of their goods. Based on the above, although this Agreement does not mention the Port of Chancay, having greater trade with China, leads Ecuador to seek much more efficient routes for the transport of its goods, as is the case of the Megaport of Chancay, which combines trade facilitation and customs modernization, complementing in a certain way the benefits offered by this Agreement to Ecuador.

#### **4.1.2 Decision 617 (CAN)**

The current regulation that was reviewed in the first instance is Decision 617 of the Andean Community, under which both Ecuador and Peru, as well as 2 other countries, are signed. The analysis of this regulation allows us to identify that there are legal instruments that regulate land trade between Ecuador and Peru and allow the transit of goods under customs control, without the need for them to be nationalized in the country of transit. In this sense, the Community customs transit regime established in Article 1 of Decision 617 allows goods declared at a customs office of departure, in a member country, to be moved to a customs office of destination, located in another member country, with the suspension of duties, taxes and other surcharges that may be due in the territory of transit. (Decisión 617: Tránsito Aduanero Comunitario, 2005).

This regulatory framework is very important, since it enables the possibility that goods exported from the Ecuadorian Australia can be transported by land to Peruvian territory and subsequently shipped from the Port of Chancay to the port of destination, which can usually be a Chinese port, such as the port of Shanghai, but maintaining at all times the international transit regime, in such a way that the cargo remains under customs control of that country of transit, until it leaves the territory and thus only has to be nationalized in the country of destination.

And in the same way, this Decision proposes coordinated control mechanisms between the different customs administrations that intervene in order to guarantee the monitoring of the international transport of goods. According to the Decision 617: Community Customs Transit (2005), this implies that the customs authorities of the member countries share several responsibilities by supervising the transfer and transit of the merchandise to the destination that is declared, facilitating the use of these regional corridors for foreign trade.

This regulation creates legal conditions for Ecuadorian exporters to use port infrastructure located in neighboring countries, such as Peru, as long as compliance with customs controls and formalities established by the competent authorities is maintained.

#### **4.1.3 Peruvian-Ecuadorian Comprehensive Agreement on Border Integration, Development and Neighbourhood**

Within this same analysis, the bilateral legal framework between Ecuador and Peru is also evident, which facilitates the mobility of goods and means of transport between the two countries. One of the most relevant is the Peruvian-Ecuadorian Comprehensive Agreement on Border Integration, Development and Neighborhood, which was signed in 1998 as part of the process of normalization of relations between the two countries and aimed at promoting economic integration and development of the border area.

This agreement promotes the creation of conditions that allow improving logistics connectivity and commercial exchange between Ecuador and Peru through institutional coordination, transport and the simplification of procedures at border crossings. This Agreement strengthens the logistics corridors between the two countries, in chapter 4, article 31 mentions that it facilitates the land movement of goods from the productive areas to international exit points located in either of the two territories (Acuerdo Amplio Peruano – Ecuatoriano de Integración Fronteriza, Desarrollo y Vecindad, 1998).

This provision is intended to have fewer unforeseen events or administrative obstacles and in a certain way improve commercial management at the borders, especially at border crossings as such, this strengthens regional economic integration. Consequently, this Bilateral Agreement between Ecuador and Peru serves as a complementary instrument to the existing regional integration mechanisms and that in a certain way favors the use of these land corridors for international trade, focusing especially on the transit of goods to the logistics infrastructure of the neighboring country.

#### **4.2 Interviews**

This section, describes the individuals who were interviewed from both the public and private sectors and offers a summary of the information obtained from those interviews.

#### **4.2.1 Private sector**

The interviews were conducted with representatives of companies that operate around international trade in the region and that have had a long career in the area. Such as some representatives of companies dedicated to advising on international trade, such as customs agents who import and export from Ecuador in general and others specifically from the Austro.

##### **Malo and Arizaga Consortium (COMAR)**

The information presented in this section was obtained from Mr. Santiago Malo, general manager of the company COMAR, who provided information based on his experience. It was possible to address the issue of export logistics, which was carried out in the Southern Ecuadorian and he mentioned that something very important is land connectivity and logistics costs. He perceives that the road infrastructure of the Austro constitutes one of the main logistical limitations, the land transport from the region significantly increases the positioning of the product in the port of shipment, because first we have only two routes to reach the ports, one is through the Cajas and the other through Cañar, and these are not in the best conditions. This shows a dependence on limited infrastructure to connect regional production with seaports. And hand in hand are logistics costs, since land transport is fundamental for the region and in turn represents a great cost, which affects the competitiveness of companies.

The current structure of the exports they make was also discussed, he mentioned that the ports they use the most are: the port of Guayaquil, the port of Manta and the port of Posorja, especially for exports from the Austro. Also, for the choice of the port of departure, the availability of routes and frequency of the shipping companies is taken into account, since the companies prioritize the ports where more shipping lines operate, resulting in a greater availability of routes and better logistical conditions, as is the case of the port of Guayaquil, since absolutely all shipping companies dock there. Within this, there are the commercial destinations to which this consortium exports the most, which are usually markets such as the EU, the US, Central America and Brazil. Although they are wanting to reach Asian markets, because they see it as a great strategic opportunity for expansion, due to their demand and economic growth. He also mentioned that, despite not yet exporting to China, they have made several imports.

Regarding the use of the Port of Chancay, from the business perspective, he believes that the port has the potential to become a large-scale port within the region, due to its capacity to receive large ships and handle large volumes of cargo, it can perform cargo redistribution functions, acting as a logistics center from which transshipments are made to other smaller-scale ports. For companies to start using this port, he said taking cargo by land through Huaquillas is not an option due to the high cost. The ideal scenario would be to take it by sea directly to the port of Chancay, so that from there it can be taken to the port of destination. It also depends on the logistical and economic advantages that this port offers and he does not consider it as a competition for national ports, but would act as a complementary port for them, since in one way or another the national ports must be occupied to reach this Megaport.

He also mentioned that currently, as this port is relatively new, there is still no clear knowledge about the regulations that have to be applied to carry out exports through this port, also that among the barriers that could limit its use, is the lack of regulatory stability and legal certainty, since uncertainty in the country is always present, it is not known if from one day to the next the Agreements will change. In general terms, the interviewee perceives this Megaport as a possible logistical opportunity, however, taking advantage of it will depend on factors such as logistics costs, regional connectivity and institutional conditions that allow companies to access its benefits.

## **SICOMEXA**

This is a leading Ecuadorian company in foreign trade, mainly in exports and imports based in the city of Cuenca. The information presented below was obtained from one of the auxiliary agents who are part of the consortium, Mesías Campoverde, in charge of the company's exports. The interviewee provided information from his technical experience in customs operations, from the technical function of the interviewee covers invoicing and tariff classification to the management of export budgets of destination origin. First, the evolution of exports in the Southern Ecuadorian was addressed. He pointed out that they have presented a considerable decrease after 2001, without showing a significant evolution, remaining stagnant, due to the lack of incentives and the increase in road safety, mainly affecting sectors such as handicrafts and wood.

Regarding logistics and land connectivity, he mentioned that they represent a critical obstacle to regional competitiveness. The interviewee identified critical limitations similar to those of other regions, mentioning that the transfer of a container from the city of Cuenca to the port of Guayaquil takes approximately 5-6 hours. However, connectivity to the southern ports is affected by the poor state of the roads, which increases transfer prices, affecting operating costs, due to higher fuel consumption because vehicles must circulate more slowly and the increase in freight costs.

In addition, he highlighted that routes such as Macara are currently closed due to government orders and security issues, limiting exit operations mainly to Huaquillas and Puerto Bolívar. Additionally, he mentioned that the lack of direct contact with shipping companies forces companies to depend on intermediaries to manage spaces and volumes of cargo on ships. A critical aspect that is mentioned is security and customs regulations. Campoverde identifies gaps in security, suggesting that there should be strict control from the factory or the point from where the goods are going to be transported and not only at the port of departure, to avoid legal complications or contamination of the cargo in the transfer. He also points out that there is currently no real technical interoperability between the Ecuadorian Ecuapass system and the Peruvian system, which forces different processes to be handled in case of wanting to transport the goods south, making it difficult to speed up the flow of these goods.

Lastly, with respect to the viability of the Port of Chancay, Campoverde identified certain potential advantages in terms of vessel draft, vessel frequency and cost reduction, which could reduce transit time by approximately two days. However, he considers that it is complex to carry out at this time due to the insecurity and violence on the routes to the border, which generates fear in exporters, especially from the Austro. Currently, multimodal transport departing from Guayaquil is preferred, since sending cargo by land to Chancay would imply facing several difficulties and dangers of contamination in the transfer. He defines that technically it is presented as a good opportunity to economize, but the lack of an efficient and safe logistics connection from Ecuador to Chancay prevents it, for the moment, from being a real operational option for the Austro industry.

## **NAVIRE**

The company Navire is a logistics operator with a presence in several countries such as Ecuador, Mexico and China, with worldwide coverage, whose core business focuses on customs management, consulting and international logistics coordination, including transportation and supply chain strategies with Asia. The information presented is the result of an interview with the CEO of the company, María del Cisne Zúñiga Jácome, an expert in foreign trade. She provided her analysis from a technical and operational perspective of foreign trade, based on her experience in customs processes, logistics planning, international transport and personalized advice to Ecuadorian exporters. Various aspects related to the logistics structure of Ecuadorian exports and exports from the Austro, the limitations it faces and the possible influence of the Port of Chancay on the different trade dynamics to Asia were analyzed.

First, the current structure of Ecuador's export logistics system was explained. Zúñiga pointed out that the main point of the goods is the port of Guayaquil, followed by Posorja and to a lesser extent by Manta. She mentioned that the departure of goods through Huaquillas by land is not something they do regularly, since the shipping companies with which they work prefer to transport the goods through the port. Analyzing the Southern Ecuadorian, especially the exports that are made from the city of Cuenca, most of the cargo must be moved by land to its destination, which is mostly Guayaquil, which functions as the main export hub of the country. The choice of the port of departure does not depend solely on the exporter; it is an analysis in which is conditioned by factors such as the available maritime routes and the shipping companies that operate the services, the frequency of available ships.

Subsequently, Zúñiga addressed the main export destinations of Ecuadorian products that they handle for their customers. These are concentrated in the United States, the European Union and China, with Latin America also being one of their important markets. In addition, in this context, she stressed that Asian markets, especially China, are strategic for products such as shrimp, bananas, cocoa and some processed foods, from the Austro some of the most exported products are ceramics and textiles. However, she also emphasized that exporting to these markets requires a more in-depth analysis, such as the presentation requirements, the characteristics and cultural attachment of the destination market.

In relation to exports from the Southern Ecuadorian, Zuñiga mentioned that there are logistical limitations, including security, the need for adequate controls for traceability and costs. She highlighted that road infrastructure is presented as the biggest challenge, as a critical factor for the Austro, especially the route that connects with the port with the greatest concurrence, being from Cuenca to Guayaquil, affecting transit and transfer times, since exporters must comply with strict entry times to the port in order to ship their goods on the scheduled ships.

In the final part of the interview, the port of Chancay in Peru was analyzed, which has been developed as a strategic port project to strengthen the commercial connection between the South American continent and Asia. According to the interviewee, this port seeks to consolidate itself as a regional logistics hub that allows improving maritime routes, increasing operational capacity for large ships and reducing the saturation of other ports. One of the main advantages is the significant reduction in transit times to Asia, which could decrease from approximately 60 days to about 26 days through more direct routes and according to their experience in previous exports, the most recent being in February of this year, although the cost of transportation can increase by 5% or from \$900 to \$1200 per 40-foot container, time optimization is crucial. However, it was also noted that the use of these routes may imply a slight increase in transportation costs, so exporters should carefully evaluate whether to prioritize the reduction of times or the optimization of logistics costs.

According to her perspective, for the use of the Port of Chancay to be profitable, a specific minimum volume is not required, but the consolidation of cargoes from different companies in the same sector can optimize internal transport costs and the use of containers. According to its latest exports, she identifies that currently the Port of Chancay is mainly prioritizing the handling of refrigerated cargo and perishable products, since in these cases the reduction of transport time represents an important competitive advantage to guarantee the quality of the product, without a drastic increase in price. In conclusion, the interviewee's position shows that logistics development and infrastructure play an important role in improving the competitiveness of Austro's exports. From her perspective, the Port of Chancay does not represent a threat to Ecuadorian ports, but an opportunity that would facilitate trade connection with Asia and optimize transit times for certain products, in addition, relieve a percentage of the cargo from national ports. However, its use depends on

the ability of exporters to assess their logistics costs, the type of goods they export, and the conditions of their supply chain.

## **ASINCOMEX**

It is a private company that provides advice and consulting on foreign trade issues, customs processes, etc. They advise exporting or importing companies, in the case of exporters they advise on how to position their products abroad, through international networking, they help them to find buyers and comply with all the regulations to access new markets. For importers, they give advice on everything in general, from the contact of the supplier, certifications abroad, until the merchandise arrives at their warehouses. The company also carries out trade missions, they have done so to Chile, Peru, Colombia and in plans to go to Canada with a group of businessmen.

The CEO of the company, María del Cisne Cisneros was interviewed and pointed out that there is a great interest on the part of businessmen from the Southern Ecuadorian in using this Megaport, especially because of the connectivity with Asia that it offers. She stressed that this port can represent a great reduction in costs, as well as time, and ASINCOMEX has already managed to corroborate this, since they already export through this port and it takes between 23 to 25 days to arrive in China leaving through the port of Guayaquil and doing cabotage to Chancay, but in the same way several logistical factors must be considered such as land transport, the frequency of shipping companies or routes and the various costs related to the handling of containers. The company has a lot of confidence in the port of Contecon in Guayaquil, because they already have a strategic alliance with the port of Chancay to take goods to Asia. Something very important that he mentioned is that it can be considered as a very viable logistics hub, both for larger companies and for MSMEs. She stated that, in terms of regulations, there are no significant customs risks to use this port, because there are already regulations that regulate international transit, however, there are still some gaps such as the fact that Ecuador does not have specific regulations that regulate multimodal transport, which can limit the optimization of logistics.

He also highlighted the importance of the roads for exporters to be competitive, since being an inland territory, they depend too much on land connectivity, to reach the ports in case of exporting by sea or to reach customs areas at borders, in case of taking the merchandise by land through Huaquillas. She emphasized that it is very important to

consider all the variables to choose where to export, since moving the merchandise by land is always more expensive than transporting it by sea. He also said that there will not always be only one ideal route, because it depends a lot on the type of merchandise that is being exported to choose the type of transport for the cargo. In conclusion, the company perceives the Port of Chancay as a great real opportunity for exporters, since it reduces costs, times and there are several trade agreements and regulations on international transit that facilitate trade, however, there are several factors such as land transport, logistical operability and the lack of regulations, for multimodal transport, which can limit its use in a certain way.

### **Private Sector Comparison**

Within this section, a comparative table is made between the positions of the aforementioned private companies. Table 1 shows a comparison of several benefits and limitations highlighted by these companies.

**Table 1***Comparison of Private Companies in the Export Sector of the Austro*

<b>Features</b>	<b>EAT</b>	<b>NAVIRE</b>	<b>SICOMEXA</b>
Nature and Services	Manager of the Malo y Arizaga consortium, specialized in foreign trade advice and consulting. Customs agents authorized by SENAE with specialization in customs clearance of goods and customs logistics.	Integrated logistics operations with operations in Ecuador, Mexico, China and worldwide coverage. Its strength is the customs part (import and export, consulting) and supply chain strategy in Asia.	Advice on sales invoice and tariff classification. Preparation of comprehensive budgets for customers, calculation of logistics costs from origin to final destination.
Exports from the Austro	Flowers and ceramics are the most exported product in his company. Currently, Indurama, agricultural and agro-industrial products (dragon fruit, avocados, powdered milk) with potential for China.	Ceramics and textiles are the products that are focused on when exporting. In addition, refrigerated products (dragon fruit, tuna, dairy) are the products that are most exported directly to Asia through Chancay. While flowers are the most common by air.	Handicrafts and wood products. Recently they have exported finished products such as gold and jewelry, by air. They made an attempt to export flowers by sea, but it was a failed test.
Top Destinations	European Union, United States, Central America, Brazil (only air for flowers). Great potential for China through trade agreements.	the United States, the European Union, China and Latin America.	Through local ports (Guayaquil, Posorja, Manta), China through the port of Guayaquil.
Opportunities of the Port of Chancay	Important transfer port for large ships, generating greater flow and business. Direct routes to Asia that would improve times and a significant improvement in strengthening competitiveness.	Logistics hub for South America and Asia. Reduction of transit times by half (from 60 days to 27 days). Greater capacity for large ships, giving priority to refrigerated cargo.	State-of-the-art technology, great depth and frequency of direct routes to Asia. Improvement of more competitive prices to reach China directly.
Challenges and Limitations (General)	Poor roads, with limited roads and in poor condition, which increase the value of the product. Border closures affect the merchant. Lack of a dry port in the Austro, especially in the city of Cuenca, with little support.	Safety is mentioned as the main limitation. Increase in the cost of fuel by having to go slower on roads in poor condition. Road infrastructure (Cuenca-Guayaquil highways).	Decrease in exports in the Austro since 2001. Lack of incentives for the export sector of the Southern Ecuadorian. The main challenge is security, due to the risks of contamination and organized crime in the movement of goods.
Challenges and Limitations (Port of Chancay)	It is not presented as a direct competitor, in addition, it only reflects a dependence on Peruvian regulations. An extra cost of transport with the land route to Peru.	Increase in the transport cost of approximately 5% per container. Dependence on connection ports.	Increase in the price of the final product due to the transfer from the Austro. There is no interoperability between the Peruvian and Ecuadorian systems.
Perspective of the Port of Chancay	Real opportunity for the Southern Ecuadorian and Latin America in direct exports to Asia. A transfer port option and not as a direct competitor.	Benefit for Ecuadorian exports, complementing national ports. Benefits in time reduction, but with a counterpart of price increase. Depending on a balance between cost and transit time, and the type of product	Attractive due to sailing times, but with land challenges that limit the use and exports of the Austro.

*Note.* This table summarizes the information provided in the interviews, and compares the perspectives and experience of the three private companies.

The joint perspective of private companies perceives foreign trade and the Chancay Megaport, from the Southern Ecuadorian, with a shared opinion presented with a mixture of opportunities and structural challenges. Mainly, interviewees from the private sector highlight the need to improve road infrastructure and safety on land routes, since the poor

state of the roads, especially in the Austro, increase operating costs, and increase the risk of cargo contamination, affecting competitiveness. Despite these internal obstacles, companies and agents from the Southern Ecuadorian show an interest and openness to new opportunities such as the Port of Chancay. They recognize its potential to optimize times and costs in trade with Asia, being a valuable complement to Austro products. However, they mention the dependence on the relaxation of regulations, freight competitiveness and, crucially, on binational agreements that facilitate fluid land transit.

Companies and agents in the Southern Ecuadorian, particularly in the city of Cuenca, face various challenges, including the structural ones that explain why many choose not to export. In logistical terms, the most relevant are the poor viability and limited routes, especially the Cuenca-Guayaquil connection, which significantly increase the cost of transport, as they force them to move more slowly, increasing fuel consumption and the wear and tear of the cargo. Added to this is the lack of a dry port in the region as mentioned above, which generates a strong dependence on other cities and raises operating costs. On the other hand, insecurity has become the main limitation to export in Ecuador. The risk of contamination of cargo with drugs and the presence of organized crime on transport routes generate uncertainty and possible legal sanctions that affect the reputation of various companies. Consequently, all these risks, including the increase in the price of the final product, and structural limitations, lead many companies in the Southern Ecuadorian to prefer to remain in the domestic market rather than take on the challenges of exporting from this region.

#### **4.2.2 Public Sector**

The results obtained from the interviews conducted with some elected representatives of the public sector, who operate in the area of international trade in the region and who have had a great career in the area, are presented.

##### **Operator Technician National Customs Service of Ecuador, District Directorate Cuenca**

This information was obtained from an economist who works as a SENAET Technical Operator who operates in the Southern Ecuadorian. The interviewee mentioned that one of the limitations to carry out exports through a foreign port such as the Port of Chancay, are the customs procedures because, if the merchandise is going to leave through the Megaport

to an Asian country, it needs an export declaration from Ecuador indicating that the final destination will be any Asian country, such as China, and the Peruvian port will be occupied as an international transit port.

As for the transfer routes, the technician was able to mention that a limitation for exports is also the issue of the control of the goods in their transfer to the ports. In the case of imports that come from any port in the country (Esmeraldas, Manta, Quito, Guayaquil, etc.) to Cuenca which is an inland customs, these are monitored and with an arrival time that in the case of coming from Guayaquil to Cuenca, is 12 hours and has to be done by the Cañar route. In case the carrier deviates and wants to reach Cuenca by the Cajas, he must be clear that he is going to receive a fine because he deviates from the route authorized by customs. However, in the case of exports, currently the customs located in Cuenca does not intervene directly, nor is there control from the moment the merchandise leaves a factory in the Austro to the ports, but it begins to be controlled when it entered the port of departure or the control zone, such as Guayaquil or Huaquillas. So, in that transfer of the merchandise from the Austro to the ports or to the borders is very risky for exporters, because at any time they can contaminate the cargo, or even steal from them, so it is dangerous not to have security on the part of the customs so that exporters can export, he also mentioned that many OCEs are dedicated to only importing because of the risk of making exports in terms of security as had already been mentioned. He also highlighted the case that for exports a customs agent is not needed as is the case with imports. An exporter registered in the Ecuapass system can transmit the customs declaration directly.

**Former Servant of the Ministry of Production, Foreign Trade and Investment and Former Director of the Basin District of the National Customs Service of Ecuador**

This interview was conducted with María Emilia Crespo, former MPCEI official, who has 15 years of experience in foreign trade. She was former district director of customs in Cuenca for three years and worked at the Ministry for 12 years as a negotiation leader of some of the trade agreements signed in Ecuador such as Mexico, the United States, Chile and China. Delving into the subject, she considered the Port of Chancay as a new logistics hub as it has a direct connection with Asia, especially to China, this being very important for Ecuador, because there are already real operations with transit times of approximately 23 to 25 days to the port of Shanghai in China. So, this is very important and a great opportunity for those goods that are perishable and need to reach Asian markets in less time.

Crespo stressed that this port, by having customs modernization, technological innovation in the port infrastructure, and managing everything from a control panel, plays a very important role within port activities. This optimizes times in the port, which leads to a reduction in costs, speeding up trade and its processes, in addition to improving cargo security by avoiding contamination of the same due to the reduction of human intervention. With respect to the regulatory framework, trade agreements, such as the one between China and Ecuador, encourages exporters to export through this port. Although the Agreement does not mention specific infrastructures such as this one, they do include provisions on trade facilitation and customs procedures that lead to the search for efficient options for the trade of goods. In this context, she highlighted the importance of customs transit that is regulated by the CAN in its Decision 617, mentioning that there is already a regulation in this aspect, which legally allows the use of foreign ports within international logistics chains.

This port can offer opportunities for the Southern Ecuadorian, including the geographical proximity it has with the north of Peru, which benefits the use of Chancay, both by land and by sea (cabotage). The interviewee mentioned that it is always better to carry cargo by sea than by land mainly because of the cost. As mentioned previously, the issue of the times that are less than taking through other ports, as well as the costs that can make it choose to export through Chancay thanks to its high level of operational efficiency. Chancay acts as a complementary port that has the vision of integrating Latin America with Asia, allowing Ecuador to reach markets with great demand for agricultural products and others in general. However, Crespo also highlighted important challenges that the Austro may face, such as road connectivity, the poor state of the roads and safety problems in land transport, especially in areas considered dangerous or high risk such as Huaquillas and nearby areas. Additionally, she emphasized the absence of a consolidated national logistics policy, which hinders the country's strategic relationship with respect to regional logistics dynamics that are currently taking place.

She stated that something that could facilitate the logistics connection would be to streamline customs documentation for international transit, which is already regulated in the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement. CAN already makes several efforts to connect the single windows of the member countries; which would greatly benefit collaboration and access to digitalized information and speeding processes. From a strategic vision, this port

is strong, and there are even Ecuadorian ports that carry out strategic cooperations with this Peruvian port such as the Contecon port, which has an alliance with this port to be able to move goods through this port from Ecuador to Shanghai. She mentioned that the port can be influenced by "trade or political wars" where countries such as China or the US try to be seeking to exhort control over it and become a great logistics corridor in the region. Since Chinese company is financing this port, control can be established on its part in this sector and on the other hand the US recently donated state-of-the-art scanners to Chancay, seeking to remain in the game. Therefore, issues like these can greatly influence the decision of whether or not to use that port, since Ecuador as a country involved in small problems mainly because both China and the United States have a trade agreement with Ecuador.

Lastly, the interviewee visualized the Chancay Megaport as a great opportunity for integration and insertion in Asian markets, strengthening exports to China. However, taking advantage of it effectively depends on the State's ability to improve road connectivity in the Southern Ecuadorian, guarantee cargo security in terms of cargo theft or contamination and strengthen logistics institutions. In this context, Chancay should first be considered something complementary to the national strategy to increase the competitiveness of exporters. To take a clear idea of the position of the interviews, Table 2 shows a summary of the results obtained from the interviews of the public sector.

**Table 2**  
*Public Sector Analysis*

<b>Features</b>	<b>Perspective of Operator Technician National Customs Service of Ecuador, District Directorate Cuenca</b>	<b>Perspective of María Emilia Crespo (Former official of the MPCEI and Customs of Ecuador)</b>
<b>Role and Experience</b>	Economist, Customs official in Cuenca. His experience focuses on the daily operation and application of customs regulations for imports and special regimes in an interior district.	Former district director of Customs in Cuenca for 3 years, and former leader of negotiations of trade agreements in the Ministry of Production, Foreign Trade and Investment for 12 years. With experience that covers both the customs operation and the formulation of trade policies and negotiations.
<b>Chancay's Strategic Vision</b>	A more cautious and operational perspective. It analyzes the technical feasibility and specific customs procedures that Ecuador should implement to export through the Port of Chancay.	He analyzes it as a new logistics hub for Latin America, key to connecting with Asia, especially China. He mentions the direct route to Shanghai as a great opportunity for perishable products. Establishing itself as a complementary port.
<b>Customs Procedures and Regulations</b>	It details the import processes (MRN, DAI, tacit abandonment and customs regimes). It identifies ambiguities in the current regulations, especially in cases of unauthorized routes or the lack of a clear framework when fining certain infractions.	It mentions customs transit as the key figure to operate with Chancay, regulated by Decision 617 of the CAN, allowing the use of foreign ports. In addition, they include chapters on trade facilitation and customs affairs, streamlining processes.
<b>Challenges and Limitations</b>	Container thefts during transport are identified as a challenge, which requires authorized routes and georeferential seals. The lack of clarity in the application of sanctions also stands out as a challenge, at the time of certain route deviations.	It presents as challenges the roads in poor condition, the risks of theft and contamination of cargo during land transport to the border, especially in high-risk areas. Possible trade wars between powers, which could influence the decision to use the port, given that both have trade agreements with Ecuador.
<b>Modernization</b>	He highlights the digitization of customs declarations, eliminating the need for physical inspection. However, he mentions the limitations in the system for operations such as reshippments, where transfer times cannot be generated.	He mentions the customs modernization and technological innovation of Chancay, through its cranes and robotic trucks and centralized control panels.
<b>Role of the Cuenca Customs in Exports</b>	It states that it mainly focuses on imports and special regimes. Exports are managed at the ports of departure, not in Cuenca. In addition, it is mentioned that a customs agent is not necessary to export if the exporter uses ECUAPASS.	He mentions that during his administration the possibility of exporting through the customs of the Cuenca district directorate was opened. He advocates for greater control and security from Cuenca, including the use of advanced electronic seals.
<b>Trade Facilitation</b>	It focuses on the application of existing procedures and the identification of operational constraints.	It emphasizes the importance of streamlining customs documentation for international transit, regulated by the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and local regulations. It also highlights the efforts of the CAN to connect, digitize and streamline processes.

*Note.* This table summarizes and compares the information provided from the Public Sector, extracted in the interviews carried out.

### 4.3 Contrast

Table 3 contrasts with the results obtained from the interviews, both from the private and public sectors, as well as with the regulations.

**Table 3**  
*Contrast of Results Obtained Between Sectors*

<b>Features</b>	<b>Public Sector</b>	<b>Private Sector</b>	<b>Regulations</b>
<b>Objective</b>	Ensure compliance with customs regulations, in addition to controlling the transit of goods and applying regulations.	Facilitate exports from the Austro, optimize costs and costs, and take advantage of new infrastructures such as Chancay to improve competitiveness and access to markets.	Thanks to Decision 617, international customs transit is facilitated without necessary interruptions.
<b>Opportunities</b>	The Port of Chancay is positioned as a new logistics hub with a direct connection to Asia, presenting a reduction in transit times and customs modernization, optimizing processes and offering an improvement in security in the port, in addition to implementing commercial agreements that encourage its use.	Chancay as a transfer port for large ships, direct routes to Asia, and improve times by half (23-25 days), greater capacity for refrigerated cargo, state-of-the-art technology, large draft, frequency of direct routes and an improvement compared to the rest giving competitive prices.	Based on the FTA between Ecuador and China, there is the progressive elimination of tariffs between these countries, which benefits the commercial flow of Ecuador's exports to China, and incidentally makes it beneficial to occupy this Megaport.
<b>Challenges</b>	Poor connectivity in the Austro presents itself with several limitations, such as roads in poor condition, the risks of theft and contamination of cargo, limited land routes without georeferential stamps. Trade wars between powers, reflecting an impact on the development of exports through this port, with the absence of a concrete national logistics policy.	Poor roads, limited roads and poor condition are factors that increase the value of the product, due to the increase in the cost of fuel when transporting. In addition, the closure of borders, lack of a dry port in the Austro, security when moving the merchandise, marking a great decrease in exports in the Austro, due to lack of incentives.	According to the Binational Agreement between Ecuador and Peru, there must be a state commitment to the maintenance of the 5 (Austro – Huaquillas) roads, in particular, which must be in optimal conditions for their use, however, these roads are in completely different conditions.
<b>Impact on the Austro</b>	Cuenca as an inland customs district does not manage exports directly from Cuenca, but from the port of departure. It requires improved road connectivity and safety. In general, the public sector mentions that this Megaport can represent a great opportunity for the sector.	There are real opportunities for direct exports to Asia, but limited by land challenges. It shows itself as a port that helps the release of exports, complementing national ports.	The regulations allow the local economy to be energized, and the exports of the Austro can be expanded thanks to the FTA with China, also to the Binational Agreement which improves border crossings and also thanks to Decision 617 that guarantees the international transit of goods through this port.
<b>Security</b>	In this aspect, the public sector plays an important role because it is in charge of the traceability of the cargo, for which the use of electronic seals is key.	Its main limitation is the risks of contamination and organized crime in the movement of goods.	Regarding cargo security, Decision 617 establishes parameters or standards for the seals and security of the transit transport unit, as well as the tracking of the cargo by the customs authorities of both countries, for greater security.
<b>Role in the port</b>	The public sector is very important because it must guarantee the interoperability of the customs systems of both countries so that the port is really beneficial for the Austro, however	Chancay as a logistics hub for all of South America and Asia, presenting itself as a port of transfer complementing national ports with goods.	The FTA with China allows for the definition of rules of origin and procedures for exported goods to be recognized as preferential treatment at the port of destination.
<b>Trade facilitation</b>	The digitization of customs procedures and customs	One of the main characteristics of the Port of Chancay is to offer	The Agreement and the Decision allow for an

modernization with technology in Chancay optimize times and speed up trade, facilitating processes and times. In addition, processes and efforts of the CAN to connect single windows.	state-of-the-art technology, showing development by facilitating trade by optimizing times with its technological advance.	improvement in logistics and in turn in the FTA with China, the commitment to "Fast Clearance" is mentioned, where the processes must be systematized so that the clearance of the merchandise is not longer than 48 hours and does not generate additional costs. Thus, there is ease and time reduction.
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*Note.* This table summarizes and compares the information obtained from the results of the public, private and regulatory sectors.

## 5. Discussion

There are several important aspects that must be considered when it comes to analyzing a port as a logistics hub in South America. For the Research Service of the European Parliament, the port is a significant factor of change for Latin American logistics, which benefits all countries and their surroundings, including neighboring countries such as Ecuador. With its borders and transport routes connected by land and sea, this hub serves as a gateway, between Asia and Latin America (Jütten, 2025). In contrast, the results maintain that multimodal transport departing from Guayaquil is currently preferred, since shipping cargo by land involves several difficulties, dangers of contamination of the cargo in its transfer and roads in poor condition, especially in dangerous or high-risk areas such as Huaquillas and nearby areas. In addition, although there is geographical proximity by land, the best option is still by sea, mainly due to cost issues, being the most attractive factor to export through Chancay thanks to its high level of operational efficiency.

On the other hand, Villagra (2023) and Mardones (2022) offer a shared vision, in which Chinese investment through the Port of Chancay reconfigures trade routes in South America, which creates the possibility of operational dependence due to the proximity to certain ports. In addition, China has a strong presence in the region as one of the main buyers and sellers. However, the results show that the Port of Chancay does not represent a direct threat to national ports and specifically to Ecuadorian ports. In this case, it is seen as an opportunity that facilitates commercial connection, with support in the discharge of cargo from national ports to the Megaport of Chancay, showing an optimization of transit time to its final destination, with an improvement of maritime routes and increasing operational capacity for large ships.

In another aspect, several authors express the benefit of reducing export times through the Port of Chancay. As argued by Solis De Ovando (2024) and Cervilla J. (2024), the strategic location of this port generates concrete opportunities such as a direct link with Asia, and the optimization of travel times of up to approximately 10 days. In line with the results of the study, this is the main advantage of the Port of Chancay, since it decreases time from approximately 60 days to about 23-25 days through more direct routes, leaving through the port of Guayaquil and cabotaging to Chancay. Several logistical factors must be considered, such as the frequency of shipping companies and the costs of container handling. According to exports made this year, although there is an increase in the cost of transportation, around 5% per 40-foot container, time optimization is crucial and relevant when exporting.

Fuentes Zurita (2024) also highlights the unique characteristics that this port presents compared to other national ports. One of these is the capacity to receive large container ships that can transport more than 18 thousand TEUs and Triple E, which cannot transit through the Panama Canal due to their structures and size. The study results can be contrasted with the business perspective that the port is attractive due to its operational capacity to receive large ships and handle large volumes of cargo, which offers the capacity to transport perishable goods, reducing transit times to Shanghai. The customs modernization it presents, its ship capacity and the technological innovation in its port infrastructure, streamline trade and it is shown as a point to stand out from all national ports even exceeding the capacity of the Panama Canal.

The great depth that characterizes the Megaport of Chancay is analyzed and generates economies of scale. Cervilla J. (2024) and Universidad del Pacífico (2025) proposed that the Port of Chancay stands out for its deeper natural draft, which constitutes it as a strategic node in the region. According to the findings of the study, its depth of draft and the capacity to handle large-scale operations is recognized as an advantage as well as, the design of the port so that they can enter the country, in this case Peru. These characteristics contribute to a greater port capacity, generating economies of scale, emphasizing the automation and technology of the port, being possible thanks to the volume that a deep-draft port can handle.

In addition, it is important to highlight the issue of hinterland and maritime transshipment, in which, according to Martner (2010), ports of this size, in order to consolidate themselves as hubs and make exporters competitive, must have a clear

concentration of cargo and optimization of internal connections such as land connectivity, rather than carrying out maritime transshipments. This approach is directly related to the results obtained and one can partially agree with the author, since a clear conditioning factor of the export competitiveness of companies in the Austro is land connectivity, because most of the exports in the Austro have to be transported by land to reach a port. Therefore, exports depend on this connection, which influences the costs of goods because the roads, not in optimal conditions, make logistics costs higher. Most consider that it is better to carry out cabotage than to take cargo by land to this port, and taking it by land is much more expensive than taking it by sea. By carrying out cabotage from the port of Guayaquil, a maritime transshipment can be carried out, because the Port of Chancay is designed precisely to consolidate cargoes in much larger ships. So, consolidating cargo in the port is really advantageous for Austro's exports because in this way the more merchandise is consolidated, the lower the costs will be and, in this way, there would be competitiveness for them.

According to Mendoza (2024), the trade agreements of the countries, as well as the different investments, must be analyzed because this can improve connectivity between them, such as the Port of Chancay. This implies less time and influences the reduction of costs, which benefits the exportable supply to Asia, especially related to agribusiness, which improves the competitiveness of exporters. In this sense, the authors of this study agree with the author partially because these agreements can improve the competitiveness of exporters, as is the case of the Ecuador-China FTA, which allows Ecuadorian products to enter that country with a greater advantage than those of other countries that do not have this type of trade agreement. Decision 617 of the CAN also allows for international transit between Ecuador and Peru, which benefits the competitiveness of both countries and the connection with the port by providing this facility, as well as logistical efficiency. Similarly, the investment of the Chinese company in the Port of Chancay allows the region to have better connectivity with China, since it is precisely what this investment seeks, to attract Latin America either for exports or imports.

On the other hand, the days are reduced when exporting through this port, which generates a reduction in costs. In the case of an Ecuadorian export that was made in February of this year through this port to China, the time was shorter but the costs increased by 5%, since they had to carry out an additional operation by moving the cargo to another port and then taking it to the port of destination makes these costs higher. However, for this to be

advantageous, there must be a consolidation of cargo to lower costs. The products that benefit from exporting through this port are indeed those of the agricultural sector for the most part, but there are also refrigerated products that have even been exported there, the Southern Ecuadorian has a lot of advantage when exporting its products through this port, apart from the fact that they are in high demand in China.

According to Silva Do Nascimento (2024), ports of this magnitude can become targets of drug trafficking due to their frequency of containers, the lack of inter-institutional coordination and the routes that must be taken to reach it, because the lack of operational and legal protocols has caused the strengthening of this. Based on the results, we do not agree with the author, since it is understood that the insecurity or contamination of the cargo can occur not necessarily due to the port, but rather due to the lack of greater control or security of the cargoes within the Ecuadorian territory itself by the authorities, since that is a great risk and that is why many of the OCEs prefer to carry out imports rather than exports. It can even be argued that simply being a deep-water port does not necessarily mean its containers will be contaminated. Our results show that the possibility of contamination cannot be eliminated; however, it would be somewhat more complicated for it to occur because, being a technologically advanced and automated port, there is less human intervention, making it more difficult for cargo to be contaminated.

Lastly, Mendoza (2024) and Ellis (2024) point out that the issue of trade and investment agreements must be analyzed because it can affect or benefit countries, such as this port that can present risks indirectly on the continent. The legal and physical structure of the Port of Chancay can allow its use by the Chinese Navy because Chinese companies such as the one that invested in this port are obliged to collaborate with the State, so it introduces a possible political risk. However, we can partially agree with the authors, because the results show that most of the trade relations bring advantages, but in others they affect. At the same time, they have good trade relations with those countries that are in trade or political wars, such as the case of Ecuador, which has trade relations very close to China and the US. These countries try to have control over the region or the port, on the one hand, and on the other hand, the Chinese company that finances the port the US that tries to control. In fact, it recently donated state-of-the-art scanners to the port so as not to get out of the game. This can affect Ecuador, since wanting to get along with both and wanting to participate in these new logistical dynamics such as the Port of Chancay, cause the country

to strategically manage its foreign and commercial policy, influencing the decision of whether or not to use this port.

## **6. Conclusions**

The results broaden the understanding of the opportunities and challenges presented by the consolidation of the Port of Chancay as a strategic node, in terms of regional competitiveness and its influence on the competitiveness of exporters in the Southern Ecuadorian.

These findings make this Megaport visible within the international context in the face of regional benchmarks, such as the Panama Canal, which stands out for its potential and reconfiguration of trade routes. However, the geopolitical tensions that arise between the United States and China become influential factors by influencing its positioning and commercial dynamics. Therefore, the Port of Chancay is consolidated as an emerging strategic node with the potential to take advantage of the dispute for influence in global supply chains, specifically directly to Asia. In this context, Chinese investment can generate tensions that affect its operation, such as trade agreements between countries, which would be conditioned by political interests and external pressures that derive from the rivalry between the United States and China.

Among the opportunities presented by this Megaport, the port's infrastructure is a key element for the optimization of foreign trade, emphasizing and standing out for its great depth that differentiates it throughout the region, as well as the implementation of technological innovation and its advanced automation processes. These conditions allow the port to be more attractive for exports, due to its operational efficiency and the reduction of loading and unloading times, as everything is carried out in an automated way, minimizing human errors and optimizing the flow of goods. In the same way, consolidating itself as a strategic node in global chains for having its own characteristics, such as a deep natural draft of 17.8m, the capacity to accommodate a large number of ships unlike national ports in South America and respond to the demands of current international trade.

In this framework of opportunity analysis presented by the Port of Chancay, direct export to Asia is an important competitive advantage, as it does not have and eliminates this type of intermediate stopovers between ports or on the route, which traditionally increased

costs and logistics times. The reduction of export time to approximately 23-25 days not only implies greater speed, but also an opportunity in Asian markets, since depending on the demand and the type of product, it is presented as a benefit to analyze in contrast to time and cost. This aspect is relevant for those perishable products that are exported from Ecuador, as well as refrigerated cargo, where all this logistical efficiency and connectivity with Asia directly affects the quality and condition of the final product, thus also strengthening the reputation of the exporting country in competitive markets and complying with international standards.

From the analysis of the economic perspective, when it comes to the increase in the cost of direct export from Chancay, a dynamic of equilibrium can be revealed where cost and time are contrasted, in turn between investment and benefit. Although according to the results obtained, the increase can be up to 5% in certain scenarios, this should be interpreted according to the benefit that this added value entails that generates the reduction of times and direct access to the Asian market. In turn, the slight increase in cost should be seen as a translation to better opportunities and greater profitability, by allowing fewer losses and a better response to the demand for the product at an international level.

On the other hand, the preference for cabotage over land transport shows a logic that is increasingly oriented towards the optimization of resources and their costs. This type of modality and preference not only allows a significant reduction in costs, but also presents an improvement in efficiency when planning routes and cargo volumes. In turn, it also contributes to the decongestion of road infrastructure, offering higher levels of safety when moving goods. In this way, it also generates better security that goods have not been contaminated in the process and prioritize solutions for a better competitive logistics environment.

The regulatory environment and trade agreements in force are also presented as a factor that benefits and enhances international trade. The regulation established by the Andean Community for the benefit of both parties, Decision 617, the Peruvian-Ecuadorian Comprehensive Agreement and other instruments, are essential to facilitate commercial operations and provide legal certainty by providing clear guidelines and stability when exporting and making safe and effective use of the Megaport. Likewise, the strategic trade agreement, such as the Free Trade Agreement between Ecuador and China, expands access

to markets with better potential. These instruments promote greater diversification for exports and a reduction of tariff barriers.

On the contrary, within this analysis, the real challenges for exports from Austro also stand out, as well as those that this Megaport presents if an exporter wishes to use it. Such as institutional support, which refers first to the fact that, in the District Directorate of Customs in Cuenca, exports are no longer coordinated, but only imports. Therefore, those who export from the region have to travel to a different District Directorate to carry out the due processes, which harms the cargo because there is no longer a security control by the authorities in its transfer to the port, which causes theft, cargo contamination, etc. This has even caused exports from the Austro to reduce to a certain extent and has given way to people preferring to import rather than export.

Another relevant aspect is land connectivity, most of the Austro's exports are made through ports, such as Guayaquil, Posorja, and others through borders whose connectivity with these is land, such as the road to Huaquillas, so road infrastructure is important. However, the condition of the roads at the moment is not in its best conditions to export and be competitive at the same time. In such a way, the roads, being in poor condition, cause the costs of transportation to the ports to increase, because carriers have to travel slower and spend more fuel, or even take other routes due to road closures, landslides, etc. Causing the price of products from this area to rise due to additional costs than normal, limiting the competitiveness of exporters even before they start exporting.

Also, a limitation that influences the decision to export there is the lack of knowledge of the processes or regulations used when exporting from Ecuador, passing through Peru and arriving in China or Asia. Being a new port, exporters do not understand how to make this international transit, therefore, they prefer to continue exporting through their traditional routes, it must be clear that there are regulations in force that regulate this type of export. Within the regulations there is also the case that Ecuador, having close trade relations at the same time with countries that can find themselves in "trade or political wars", is affected in the decision of whether or not to encourage the use of this new dynamic and logistics network, which limits it and makes it make strategic decisions in its trade policy.

Finally, it is understood that this Megaport of Chancay acts as a complementary port, but not as a port that replaces Ecuadorian ports because, in one way or another, the country's exports in general are made through the land borders, by plane or what is more common through the country's ports, so there is no way for this port to replace a national port, rather it gives it a new option of commercial route to take its exports to Asia through this port of large size, innovation and automation that is capable of receiving large ships, and whose specialty is to consolidate the cargo of different smaller ships, transshipping in larger ships. So, we have to see the Port of Chancay as a new alternative but not as a competition for Ecuadorian ports.

In summary, this research contributes to identifying the advantages and risks that exporting companies in the Austro must analyze for strategic decision-making that allows optimizing their competitiveness in an international market through the Port of Chancay. In this way, the real situation can be observed with its characteristics and influencing factors such as land connectivity, trade agreements, institutional support, times and costs, being of support to the industry, public institutions and exporters when contributing to better planning.

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## 8. Appendices

### Appendice A

#### *Informed Consent for the Interview with the Technical Operator of the National Customs Service of Ecuador*

 UNIVERSIDAD DEL AZUAY

**CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO PARA ENTREVISTAS**  
Proyecto académico – Tesis de grado

Título del proyecto: El Puerto de Chancay (Perú) como Nodo Estratégico: Oportunidades y Desafíos para la Competitividad de las Exportadoras del Austro Ecuatoriano

Yo, Daniel José Riera Rodríguez, en pleno ejercicio de mis facultades, declaro que:

1. He sido informado de que esta entrevista se realizará exclusivamente con fines académicos y formará parte de la tesis titulada "El Puerto de Chancay (Perú) como Nodo Estratégico: Oportunidades y Desafíos para la Competitividad de las Exportadoras del Austro Ecuatoriano", desarrollada por las investigadoras Glenda Brigitte Cumbe Mejía y Johanna Estefanía Jarrín Córdova
2. Comprendo que mi participación es voluntaria y que puedo negarme a responder cualquier pregunta, suspender la entrevista en cualquier momento, revocar mi consentimiento posteriormente o solicitar la eliminación parcial o total de la información proporcionada, sin que esto genere perjuicio o consecuencia alguna.
3. Autorizo la grabación en audio y/o video de la entrevista únicamente para fines de análisis académico, transcripción y verificación de la información.
4. Entiendo que la información que proporcione será tratada con estricta confidencialidad. Mi nombre será mantenido en anonimato si así lo solicito expresamente.
5. Se me ha informado que no recibiré compensación económica o material por mi participación, y que tampoco asumiré costo o riesgo alguno.
6. He podido realizar todas las preguntas necesarias sobre el propósito del estudio, el uso de la información y las medidas de protección de datos, recibiendo respuestas claras y satisfactorias.
7. Los datos recopilados serán almacenados de manera segura, utilizados únicamente para la tesis mencionada y no se compartirán con terceros sin mi autorización expresa.
8. Para cualquier consulta adicional, puedo contactar a las investigadoras responsables:  
Nombres: Glenda Cumbe / Johanna Jarrín  
Correo institucional: glenda.cumbe@es.azuay.edu.ec / johanna.jarrin@es.azuay.edu.ec  
Institución académica: Universidad del Azuay

Declaro que he leído y comprendido el contenido de este consentimiento y acepto participar bajo los términos descritos.


Firma del participante: [Firma]  
Nombre completo: Daniel José Riera Rodríguez  
Fecha: 20 / 02 / 2026

Firma de la entrevistadora: [Firma]  
Nombre completo: Glenda Brigitte Cumbe Mejía  
Fecha: 20 / 02 / 2026

Firma de la entrevistadora: [Firma]  
Nombre completo: Johanna Estefanía Jarrín Córdova  
Fecha: 20 / 02 / 2026

### Appendice B

#### *Informed Consent for the Interview with the COMAR Company*

 UNIVERSIDAD DEL AZUAY

**CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO PARA ENTREVISTAS**  
Proyecto académico – Tesis de grado

Título del proyecto: El Puerto de Chancay (Perú) como Nodo Estratégico: Oportunidades y Desafíos para la Competitividad de las Exportadoras del Austro Ecuatoriano

Yo, Santiago Melo Goveale, en pleno ejercicio de mis facultades, declaro que:

1. He sido informado de que esta entrevista se realizará exclusivamente con fines académicos y formará parte de la tesis titulada "El Puerto de Chancay (Perú) como Nodo Estratégico: Oportunidades y Desafíos para la Competitividad de las Exportadoras del Austro Ecuatoriano", desarrollada por las investigadoras Glenda Brigitte Cumbe Mejía y Johanna Estefanía Jarrín Córdova
2. Comprendo que mi participación es voluntaria y que puedo negarme a responder cualquier pregunta, suspender la entrevista en cualquier momento, revocar mi consentimiento posteriormente o solicitar la eliminación parcial o total de la información proporcionada, sin que esto genere perjuicio o consecuencia alguna.
3. Autorizo la grabación en audio y/o video de la entrevista únicamente para fines de análisis académico, transcripción y verificación de la información.
4. Entiendo que la información que proporcione será tratada con estricta confidencialidad. Mi nombre será mantenido en anonimato si así lo solicito expresamente.
5. Se me ha informado que no recibiré compensación económica o material por mi participación, y que tampoco asumiré costo o riesgo alguno.
6. He podido realizar todas las preguntas necesarias sobre el propósito del estudio, el uso de la información y las medidas de protección de datos, recibiendo respuestas claras y satisfactorias.
7. Los datos recopilados serán almacenados de manera segura, utilizados únicamente para la tesis mencionada y no se compartirán con terceros sin mi autorización expresa.
8. Para cualquier consulta adicional, puedo contactar a las investigadoras responsables:  
Nombres: Glenda Cumbe / Johanna Jarrín  
Correo institucional: glenda.cumbe@es.azuay.edu.ec / johanna.jarrin@es.azuay.edu.ec  
Institución académica: Universidad del Azuay

Declaro que he leído y comprendido el contenido de este consentimiento y acepto participar bajo los términos descritos.


Firma del participante: [Firma]  
Nombre completo: Santiago Melo Goveale  
Fecha: 04 / 03 / 2026

Firma de la entrevistadora: [Firma]  
Nombre completo: Glenda Brigitte Cumbe Mejía  
Fecha: 04 / 03 / 2026

Firma de la entrevistadora: [Firma]  
Nombre completo: Johanna Estefanía Jarrín Córdova  
Fecha: 04 / 03 / 2026

## Appendice C

### Informed Consent for the Interview with the SICOMEXA Company

 UNIVERSIDAD DEL AZUAY

**CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO PARA ENTREVISTAS**  
Proyecto académico – Tesis de grado

Título del proyecto: El Puerto de Chancay (Perú) como Nodo Estratégico: Oportunidades y Desafíos para la Competitividad de las Exportadoras del Austro Ecuatoriano

Yo, Patricio Augusta Pacca Quiroga, en pleno ejercicio de mis facultades, declaro que:

1. He sido informado de que esta entrevista se realizará exclusivamente con fines académicos y formará parte de la tesis titulada "El Puerto de Chancay (Perú) como Nodo Estratégico: Oportunidades y Desafíos para la Competitividad de las Exportadoras del Austro Ecuatoriano", desarrollada por las investigadoras Glenda Brigitte Cumbe Mejía y Johanna Estefanía Jarrín Córdova
2. Comprendo que mi participación es voluntaria y que puedo negarme a responder cualquier pregunta, suspender la entrevista en cualquier momento, revocar mi consentimiento posteriormente o solicitar la eliminación parcial o total de la información proporcionada, sin que esto genere perjuicio o consecuencia alguna.
3. Autorizo la grabación en audio y/o video de la entrevista únicamente para fines de análisis académico, transcripción y verificación de la información.
4. Entiendo que la información que proporcione será tratada con estricta confidencialidad. Mi nombre será mantenido en anonimato si así lo solicito expresamente.
5. Se me ha informado que no recibiré compensación económica o material por mi participación, y que tampoco asumiré costo o riesgo alguno.
6. He podido realizar todas las preguntas necesarias sobre el propósito del estudio, el uso de la información y las medidas de protección de datos, recibiendo respuestas claras y satisfactorias.
7. Los datos recopilados serán almacenados de manera segura, utilizados únicamente para la tesis mencionada y no se compartirán con terceros sin mi autorización expresa.
8. Para cualquier consulta adicional, puedo contactar a las investigadoras responsables:

Nombres: Glenda Cumbe / Johanna Jarrín  
Correo institucional: glenda.cumbe@es.uazuay.edu.ec / johanna.jarrin@es.uazuay.edu.ec  
Institución académica: Universidad del Azuay

Declaro que he leído y comprendido el contenido de este consentimiento y acepto participar bajo los términos descritos.


Firma del participante: Patricio Augusta Pacca Quiroga  
Nombre completo: Patricio Augusta Pacca Quiroga  
Fecha: 2 / 3 / 2026

Firma de la entrevistadora: Glenda Cumbe  
Nombre completo: Glenda Brigitte Cumbe Mejía  
Fecha: 2 / 03 / 2026

Firma de la entrevistadora: Johanna Jarrín  
Nombre completo: Johanna Estefanía Jarrín Córdova  
Fecha: 2 / 03 / 2026

## Appendice D

### Informed Consent for the Interview with the NAVIRE Company

 UNIVERSIDAD DEL AZUAY

**CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO PARA ENTREVISTAS**  
Proyecto académico – Tesis de grado

Título del proyecto: El Puerto de Chancay (Perú) como Nodo Estratégico: Oportunidades y Desafíos para la Competitividad de las Exportadoras del Austro Ecuatoriano

Yo, Maria del Cisne Zúñiga Jácome, en pleno ejercicio de mis facultades, declaro que:

1. He sido informado de que esta entrevista se realizará exclusivamente con fines académicos y formará parte de la tesis titulada "El Puerto de Chancay (Perú) como Nodo Estratégico: Oportunidades y Desafíos para la Competitividad de las Exportadoras del Austro Ecuatoriano", desarrollada por las investigadoras Glenda Brigitte Cumbe Mejía y Johanna Estefanía Jarrín Córdova
2. Comprendo que mi participación es voluntaria y que puedo negarme a responder cualquier pregunta, suspender la entrevista en cualquier momento, revocar mi consentimiento posteriormente o solicitar la eliminación parcial o total de la información proporcionada, sin que esto genere perjuicio o consecuencia alguna.
3. Autorizo la grabación en audio y/o video de la entrevista únicamente para fines de análisis académico, transcripción y verificación de la información.
4. Entiendo que la información que proporcione será tratada con estricta confidencialidad. Mi nombre será mantenido en anonimato si así lo solicito expresamente.
5. Se me ha informado que no recibiré compensación económica o material por mi participación, y que tampoco asumiré costo o riesgo alguno.
6. He podido realizar todas las preguntas necesarias sobre el propósito del estudio, el uso de la información y las medidas de protección de datos, recibiendo respuestas claras y satisfactorias.
7. Los datos recopilados serán almacenados de manera segura, utilizados únicamente para la tesis mencionada y no se compartirán con terceros sin mi autorización expresa.
8. Para cualquier consulta adicional, puedo contactar a las investigadoras responsables:

Nombres: Glenda Cumbe / Johanna Jarrín  
Correo institucional: glenda.cumbe@es.uazuay.edu.ec / johanna.jarrin@es.uazuay.edu.ec  
Institución académica: Universidad del Azuay

Declaro que he leído y comprendido el contenido de este consentimiento y acepto participar bajo los términos descritos.

Firma del participante: Maria del Cisne Zúñiga Jácome  
Nombre completo: Ing. Maria del Cisne Zúñiga Jácome  
Fecha: 07 / marzo / 2026

Firma de la entrevistadora: Glenda Cumbe  
Nombre completo: Glenda Brigitte Cumbe Mejía  
Fecha: 07 / 02 / 2026

Firma de la entrevistadora: Johanna Jarrín  
Nombre completo: Johanna Estefanía Jarrín Córdova  
Fecha: 01 / 03 / 2026

## **Appendice E**

### *Informed Consent for the Interview with the ASINCOMEX Company and Former Servant of the Ministry of Production, Foreign Trade and Investment*

#### **INFORMED CONSENT FOR INTERVIEWS**

Academic Project – Undergraduate Thesis

Project Title: The Port of Chancay (Peru) as a Strategic Node: Opportunities and Challenges for the Competitiveness of Exporters in the Ecuadorian South

I, María Emilia Crespo, in full exercise of my faculties, declare that:

1. I have been informed that this interview will be conducted exclusively for academic purposes and will be part of the thesis entitled "The Port of Chancay (Peru) as a Strategic Node: Opportunities and Challenges for the Competitiveness of Exporters of the Austro Ecuadorian", developed by the researchers Glenda Brigitte Cumbe Mejía and Johanna Estefanía Jarrín Córdova
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may refuse to answer any questions, suspend the interview at any time, revoke my consent at a later date, or request the partial or total deletion of the information provided, without prejudice or consequence of any kind.
3. I authorize the audio and/or video recording of the interview solely for the purposes of academic analysis, transcription and verification of information.
4. I understand that the information I provide will be treated with strict confidentiality. My name will be kept anonymous if I expressly request it.
5. I have been informed that I will not receive financial or material compensation for my participation, nor will I assume any cost or risk.
6. I have been able to ask all the necessary questions about the purpose of the study, the use of the information and the data protection measures, receiving clear and satisfactory answers.
7. The collected data will be stored securely, used only for the aforementioned thesis and will not be shared with third parties without my express authorization.
8. For any additional queries, I can contact the responsible researchers:

Names: Glenda Cumbe / Johanna Jarrín

Institutional email: [glenda.cumbe@es.uazuay.edu.ec](mailto:glenda.cumbe@es.uazuay.edu.ec) / [johanna.jarrin@es.uazuay.edu.ec](mailto:johanna.jarrin@es.uazuay.edu.ec)

Academic institution: University of Azuay

I declare that I have read and understood the content of this consent and agree to participate under the terms described.