

Financial sector authorities and experts discuss Cofece's proposals for financial inclusion

Mexico City, November 07, 2024. Federal authorities, academics, experts, and representatives of the fintech sector met at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM per its initials in Spanish) to analyze the challenges and opportunities of the sector in the context of the publication of the *“Study on competition and free market access in digital financial services”*, prepared by the Federal Economic Competition Commission (Cofece). The study makes recommendations on practices and legislation of the financial sector with the goal of reducing the financial inclusion gap in our country through specific actions that facilitate access to more and better financial services for all people in Mexico.

Dr. Sonia Venegas Álvarez, director of the UNAM Faculty of Law, welcomed the attendees highlighting the relevance of digital financial services to provide access to the financial system, particularly for those living in rural areas and places with low penetration of services. The entry of fintech companies, she noted, is an opportunity for development and social equality. She also thanked the presence of various authorities and their willingness to continue working together in the development of the financial system for the benefit of the population.

The Secretary of Finance and Public Credit, Rogelio Ramírez de la O, indicated that the use of digital financial services has the potential of reducing financial exclusion in Mexico, facilitating access to fast, safe, and user-adapted solutions. He reaffirmed the commitment of the Ministry of Finance and Public Credit to promote regulatory changes that encourage fair competition and ensure the protection of users, while providing the necessary conditions for the fintech sector to thrive in an environment of equity and security. Finally, he expressed his recognition to Cofece for its leadership in this study, emphasizing that collaboration between the government, the private sector, and other key stakeholders is fundamental to build a more accessible and equitable financial system for all Mexicans.

Andrea Marván Saltiel, Chair of Cofece, stressed that the study is based on the premise that public institutions must promote financial inclusion with decisive and clear decisions, so it is important to deepen competition between fintech and traditional financial companies. This would enhance the options for savings, credit, and insurance for millions of families and small businesses, promoting financial stability and development throughout the country. She highlighted that, in this new phase of competition policy, Cofece's work focuses on building consensus to enhance welfare and generate tangible benefits for the population.

Vidal Llerenas Morales, Undersecretary of Industry and Commerce of the Ministry of Economy, thanked UNAM for the forum and Cofece for conducting the study. He highlighted the relevance of digital financial services, which have served in countries with economies similar to Mexico's to inject competition and bring more options that are simpler, more accessible, and generally tailored to each consumer.

In his speech, Jesús de la Fuente Rodríguez, president of the National Banking and Securities Commission, (CNBV, by its initials in Spanish) thanked Cofece for its contributions to building a healthier and more robust Mexican financial system. Regarding digital finance, he noted that it is not just a matter of technology, but a means to improve the economic and social conditions of the population. He emphasized the importance of including those who have been excluded from the traditional financial system, women and men in remote places who open an account for the first time, families who can invest with confidence for their future,

and small businesses that obtain a loan for growth for the first time. He urged the traditional financial sector and fintech companies to work together and learn from each other so that the benefits of digitalization reach the most vulnerable people.

Óscar Rosado Jiménez, president of the National Commission for the Protection and Defense of Financial Services Users, (Condusef, by its acronym in Spanish) emphasized the importance of collaboration between the private and public financial sectors to promote inclusion and improve the financial education of the population. To take advantage of the rise of digital finance, he pointed out that the focus should always rest on three issues: access, inclusion, and financial health, since the goal is not for the services to exist and be used, but rather for the population to have good money management that allows them to have greater certainty about their future and a more dignified life.

Subsequently, Juan Manuel Espino Bravo, General Director of Economic Studies at Cofece, presented the study which analyzes the impact of digital financial services on free market access and competition conditions in the markets for savings, credit, and payments, which have a very important impact on the welfare of the population.

The event consisted of two panels. The first, titled "Barriers to Entry and Expansion and Promotion of Financial Inclusion," presented ideas on the possibility to transform the Mexican financial system with more efficient digital services, favoring the entry of new players. It also addressed the obstacles faced by digital services, such as the lack of connectivity, the preference for the use of cash, or the size of the informal economy.

In the second panel, "Regulatory Barriers and the Implementation of Open Finance," participants debated over the entry into the market of fintech companies under different legal figures, each with its own regulatory burden and authorized services. The possibility of moving towards an open finance regime was also analyzed, considering the principles of competition and the promotion of innovation.

The event showed the interest and relevance that authorities and experts have in modernizing the financial sector to enhance development and inclusion.

[Consult the full study here](#) (in Spanish)

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