

Brazilian Banks Again Most Sustainable in Latin America

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Itau, Bradesco Again Top Ranking; Top 10 Mainly Brazilian and Chilean

MIAMI and MADRID, Spain, Sept. 4 /PRNewswire/ -- Itau and Bradesco, Brazil's largest private banks, again occupy the top spots in the annual Management & Excellence/Latin Finance (M&E/LF) ranking of the 40 best large Latin banks in sustainability, corporate governance and social responsibility (CSR). The top six banks are Brazilian and Chilean, with BCI at a surprising 3rd.

Ranking 2007

Bank	Country	Score
1. Itau	Brazil	95.41%
2. Bradesco	Brazil	94.50%
3. BCI - Chile	Chile	86.24%
Santander Chile	Chile	86.24%
5. ABN AMRO Real	Brazil	85.32%
6. Unibanco	Brazil	84.40%
BBVA Peru	Peru	84.40%
8. BBVA Venezuela	Venezuela	82.57%
9. Banco de Chile	Chile	80.73%
BBVA Mexico	Mexico	80.73%
11. BBVA Colombia	Colombia	77.98%
HSBC Mexico	Mexico	77.98%
13. Santander Brazil	Brazil	76.15%
14. Banco do Brasil	Brazil	74.31%
15. Banco de Bogota	Colombia	70.64%
16. Scotiabank Mexico	Mexico	69.72%
17. BBVA Argentina	Argentina	68.81%
Santander Mexico	Mexico	68.81%
B. de Credito del Peru	Peru	68.81%
20. Bancolombia	Colombia	66.06%
AVERAGE		64.89%
21. Banco Galicia	Argentina	63.30%
Ixe	Mexico	63.30%
23. Banco Hipotecario	Argentina	61.47%
Nossa Caixa	Brazil	61.47%
25. HSBC Brazil	Brazil	60.55%
26. Banorte	Mexico	59.63%
27. Santander Argentina	Argentina	58.72%
28. Safra	Brazil	57.80%
Banamex	Mexico	57.80%
30. BBVA Chile	Chile	56.88%
31. Suramericana de Inver. Mercantil	Colombia	55.05%
33. B. Del Estado de Chile	Venezuela	55.05%
34. Macro Bansud	Chile	54.13%
35. Scotiabank Peru	Argentina	44.95%
36. Patagonia	Peru	44.04%
37. Votorantim	Brazil	43.12%
Interbank	Brazil	42.20%
Mutual Fund Center	Peru	42.20%
39. B. Nacion Argentina	Peru	42.20%
40. Bancafe	Argentina	19.27%
	Colombia	14.68%

Tough competition, sustainability and corporate governance indices at Bovespa, new governance legislation and growing public sensitivity helped Brazilian banks attain leading spots in the 3-year old ranking, which is one of several annual sustainability studies on Latin America by M&E. With 10 banks in the ranking and a country score of 73.21%, Brazil also wins the country ranking just ahead of Chile, which was the first country in Latin America to initiate serious corporate governance reforms in 2000.

Investments in sustainability and CSR alone easily exceed US\$ 100 million at leading banks and permeate most operational areas ranging from quality control and customer service to community aid. CSR swallows half of these costs where budgets typically grew 25%+ this year, such as at Banco do Brasil, which is catching up with Itau, Bradesco and Real.

Performance among Santander and BBVA banks is unequal, suggesting that uniform policies are far from implementation. Santander Chile, BBVA Venezuela and BBVA Colombia are big gainers while BBVA Chile and BBVA Peru are dramatic losers. Yet network banks benefit from parent companies' research resources and codes of ethics.

Mexico, with seven banks and coming in 4th in the country ranking of seven banks, is led by BBVA Bancomer, which dropped 13 places over 2006, suggesting a lax regulatory environment in the country.

An excerpt of the study can be found in the September issue of LatinFinance.

The study is available for sale from M&E: <http://www.management-rating.com>. To order the study you can also call 0034 91 590 2950 or email info@management-rating.com.

The screenshot shows the AOL Money & Finance website interface. At the top, there are navigation links for AOL, MyAOL, Mail, News, and Money. The main content area features the article title "Brazilian Banks Again Most Sustainable in Latin America" with a sub-headline "MIAMI and MADRID, Spain, Sept. 4 /PRNewswire/ -- Itau and bradesco Brazil's largest private banks, again occupy the top spots in the management & excellence/latin finance (m&e/lf) ranking of the 40 best large latin banks in sustainability, corporate governance and social r (csr). the top six banks are brazilian and chilean, with bci at a 3rd." Below the article text is a table titled "Ranking 2007" with columns for Bank, Country, and Score. The table lists 40 banks, with Itau and Bradesco at the top. To the right of the article, there are several promotional banners: "FIND EVERYTHING YOU NEED" with a search bar, "Latest Business News Headlines" with a list of news items, "Caught in the Mortgage Mess?" with a photo of a woman, and "5.05% APY SAVINGS ACCOUNT".