The eighties were characterized by strong periods of disinvestments on infrastructures on many South American countries. The three countries under study: Argentina, Mexico and Chile were not an exception. Their negligence implied different kind of problems, mainly social and economical. Studies made by different countries have quantified the loss produced by the deficient road networks, on thousands of millions of dollars.

The successive crisis which affected this region and economical problems of their governments forced the private sector into the construction and management of works, considered, up to then, as public works. The protectionist policies of Argentina and Mexico during most of the eighties and beginning of the nineties placed those countries into an extremely critical situation during the 1995 and 1998 crisis. On the contrary, Chile, introduced some changes on their economical policies, liberalizing it on the seventies. This liberalization allowed Chile to face the nineties crisis from a very different situation. This period has been considered as the golden decade of the Chilean economy, which allow it to obtain growths of the GPD over the 10% during most of this decade.

On the other hand the biggest Spanish construction groups: ACS, ACCIONA, DRAGADOS, FERROVIAL, AGROMAN, FCC I OHL include on their business areas infrastructures concessions. The new reality on the road management has not been unnoticed to these six big groups, from which three of them belong to six first concession groups worldwide, according to the prestigious magazine Public Works Financing. Argentina and mainly Chile, have been the target of some of the subsidiaries concessions of this groups. The participation has not been homogeneous on the Argentinean country. Dragados, the main worldwide concessionaire by number of concessions, has monopolized the Spanish participation on the highway concession program in Argentina, with more than the 80% of the investment made by these six big groups. On the contrary, in Chile, the participation has been more diversified. Actually, the totality of the companies under study has succeed to get a concession, except for FCC. The case of Mexico has been very different. Any Spanish Group got road concessions but they are the awardees of the management of country airports.

Argentina and Mexico were the pioneers on this region to start highway concession programs through a private participation. The haste on the elaboration of both programs implied opposite results to the wants desired. On one hand, the Argentinean government had to renegotiate the first contracts, extending the period of concession, while the Mexican government had to take back half of the concessions awarded during the first years. On the other hand, Chile did not haste and, learning from the bad experiences of other countries, made a specific concession program, well studied and trying to avoid the errors committed by his neighbours. The five years of delay of his program with respect to the ones of Argentina and Mexico and a better economical position has allow Chile to attract bigger investments from the main Spanish construction Groups.