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FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

The Political Culture of Democracy, 2010

Democratic Consolidation in the Americas in Hard Times

Report on the Americas

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Preface

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) takes pride in its support of the *AmericasBarometer*. While their primary goal is to give citizens a voice on a broad range of important issues, the surveys also help guide USAID programming and inform policymakers throughout the Latin America and Caribbean region.

USAID officers use the *AmericasBarometer* findings to prioritize funding allocation and guide program design. The surveys are frequently employed as an evaluation tool, by comparing results in specialized "oversample" areas with national trends. In this sense, *AmericasBarometer* is at the cutting-edge of gathering high quality impact evaluation data that are consistent with the 2008 National Academy of Sciences recommendations to USAID. *AmericasBarometer* also alerts policymakers and donors to potential problem areas, and informs citizens about democratic values and experiences in their countries relative to regional trends.

AmericasBarometer builds local capacity by working through academic institutions in each country and training local researchers. The analytical team at Vanderbilt University first develops the questionnaire and tests it in each country. It then consults with its partner institutions, getting feedback to improve the instrument, and involves them in the pretest phase. Once this is all set, local surveyors conduct house-to-house surveys. With the help of its partner, the Population Studies Center at the University of Costa Rica (CCP), interviewers are now entering the replies directly into Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) in several countries. Once the data is collected, Vanderbilt's team reviews it for accuracy and devises the theoretical framework for the country reports. Country-specific analyses are later carried out by local teams.

While USAID continues to be the *AmericasBarometer's* biggest supporter, this year the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), the Swedish Development Corporation (SIDA), Princeton University, the University of Notre Dame, and York University and Université Laval (Canada) helped fund the surveys as well. Vanderbilt University's College of Arts and Science made a major contribution to the effort. Thanks to this support, the fieldwork in all countries was conducted nearly simultaneously, allowing for greater accuracy and speed in generating comparative analyses.

USAID is grateful for Dr. Mitchell Seligson's leadership of *AmericasBarometer* and welcomes Dr. Elizabeth Zechmeister to his team. We also extend our deep appreciation to their outstanding graduate students from throughout the hemisphere and to the many regional academic and expert institutions that are involved with this initiative.

Regards,

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Democracy Specialist
Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean
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Prologue: Background to the Study

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This study serves as the latest contribution of the **AmericasBarometer** series of surveys, one of the many and growing activities of the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP). The 2010 study is the largest we have undertaken, and we believe that it represents the largest survey of democratic values ever undertaken in the Americas. It covers every independent country in mainland North, Central and South America, and all of the larger (and some of the smaller) countries in the Caribbean, with the exception of Cuba. In 2010 we added, for the first time, Trinidad & Tobago, as well as Suriname. The study involved the tireless efforts of our faculty, graduate students, national team partners, field personnel, donors and, of course, the many thousands of citizens of the Americas who took time away from their busy days to be interviewed. This prologue presents a brief background of this study and places it in the context of the larger LAPOP effort.

LAPOP, founded over two decades ago, is hosted (and generously supported) by Vanderbilt University. LAPOP began with the study of democratic values in one country, Costa Rica, at a time when much of the rest of Latin America was caught in the grip of repressive regimes that widely prohibited studies of public opinion (and systematically violated human rights and civil liberties). Today, fortunately, such studies can be carried out openly and freely in virtually all countries in the region. The **AmericasBarometer** is an effort by LAPOP to measure democratic values and behaviors in the Americas using national probability samples of voting-age adults. In 2004, the first round of surveys was implemented with eleven participating countries; the second took place in 2006 and incorporated 22 countries throughout the hemisphere. In 2008, 24 countries throughout the Americas were included. Finally, in 2010 the number of countries increased to 26. All reports and respective data sets are available on the LAPOP website www.LapopSurveys.org. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has provided the principal funding for carrying out these studies. Other donors in 2010 are the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB); the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA); York University and Université Laval in Canada; and Princeton University, Notre Dame University, and Vanderbilt University in the United States.

We embarked on the 2010 **AmericasBarometer** in the hope that the results would be of interest and of policy relevance to citizens, NGOs, academics, governments, and the international donor community. We are confident that the study can not only be used to help advance the democratization agenda, but that it will also serve the academic community, which has been engaged in a quest to determine which values and behaviours are the ones most likely to promote stable democracy. For that reason, we agreed on a common core of questions to include in our survey. The Inter-American Development Bank provided a generous grant to bring together leading scholars from around the globe in January 2009 to consider how the sharp economic downturn might influence democracy in Latin America

and the Caribbean. The scholars who attended that meeting prepared proposals for inclusion of question modules in the 2010 round of surveys. All of those proposals are available on the LAPOP web site.

The LAPOP Central Team then considered each of these proposals and, as well, sought input from its country teams and the donor community. The initial draft questionnaire was prepared in early 2009, and we began the arduous task of determining which items from prior **AmericasBarometer** surveys would be cut so as to make room for at least some of the new items being proposed for 2010. We were able to keep a very strong core of common questions, but deleted some items and modules on which we had already conducted extensive research and believed we had a good understanding of the issues involved.

We then distributed the draft questionnaire to our country teams and donor organizations and built a Wiki on which we placed the draft so that all could make comments and suggestions. We began pretesting the instrument, first here on the Vanderbilt campus, then in the local Hispanic community, and then in countries throughout the hemisphere. Very slowly, over a period of months spent testing and retesting, we refined the survey by improving some items and dropping modules that were just not working. We sent repeated versions to our country teams and received invaluable input. By late October, we had a refined working draft of the core questionnaire.

We then brought all of our country teams and several members of the donor community to San Salvador, El Salvador in November. Building on experiences from the 2004, 2006 and 2008 rounds, it was relatively easy for the teams to agree upon the final core questionnaire for all the countries. The common nucleus allows us to examine, for each country, and between nations, themes such as political legitimacy, political tolerance, support for stable democracy, participation of civil society and social capital, the rule of law, evaluations of local governments and participation within them, crime victimization, corruption victimization and electoral behavior. For 2010, however, we also focused on new areas, especially the economic downturn and how it was affecting citizens. Each country report contains analyses of the important themes related to democratic values and behaviors.

A common sample design has been crucial for the success of this comparative effort. We used a common design for the construction of a multi-staged, stratified probabilistic sample (with household level quotas) of approximately 1,500 individuals per country.[1] Detailed descriptions of the sample are contained in annexes of each country publication.

The El Salvador meeting was also a time for the teams to agree on a common framework for analysis. For 2010 the reports are cantered on the economic downturn. Part I contains extensive information on the economic problem as it affected citizens and shows in what ways economic issues are related to key support for democracy variables. Yet, we did not want to impose rigidities on each team, since we recognized from the outset that each country had its own unique circumstances, and what was very important for one country (e.g., crime, voting abstention) might be largely irrelevant for another. But, we did want each of the teams to be able to make direct comparisons to the results in the other countries. So, we included a Part II, in which each team developed their own discussion of those common core issues. This report on the Americas includes Parts I and II, with a focus on general trends we can identify across the entire hemisphere. The reports on individual countries also include a Part III, in which each country team was given the freedom to develop its own discussion relevant to their country of focus.

[1] With the exception of Bolivia (N=3,000), Chile (N = 1,965), Ecuador (N=3,000), and Brazil (N = 2,500).

A common system of presenting the data was developed as well. We agreed on a common method for index construction. We used the standard of an alpha reliability coefficient of greater than .6, with a preference for .7 as the minimum level needed for a set of items to be called a scale. The only variation in that rule was when we were using "count variables," to construct an *index* (as opposed to a *scale*) in which we merely wanted to know, for example, how many times an individual participated in a certain form of activity. In fact, most of our reliabilities were well above .7, many reaching above .8. We also encouraged all teams to use factor analysis to establish the dimensionality of their scales. Another common rule, applied to all of the data sets, was in the treatment of missing data. In order to maximize sample N without unreasonably distorting the response patterns, we substituted the mean score of the individual respondent's choice for any scale or index in which there were missing data, but only when the missing data comprised less than half of all the responses for that individual. For example, for a scale of five items, if the respondent answered three or more items, we assign the average of those three items to that individual for the scale. If less than three of the five items were answered, the case was considered lost and not included in the index.

LAPOP believes that the reports should be accessible and readable to the layperson reader, meaning that we make heavy use of bivariate graphs. But we also agree that those graphs should always follow a multivariate analysis (either OLS or logistic regression), so that the technically informed reader could be assured that the individual variables in the graphs are (or are not) indeed significant predictors of the dependent variable being studied.

We also agreed on a common graphical format using STATA 10. The project's lead data analyst, Dominique Zéphyr, created programs using STATA to generate graphs which presented the confidence intervals taking into account the "design effect" of the sample. This approach represents a major advancement in the presentation of the results of our surveys, as we are now able to have a higher level of precision in the analysis of the data.[2] In fact, both the bivariate and multivariate analyses as well as the regression analyses in the study now take into account the design effect of the sample. The implementation of this methodology has allowed us to assert a higher level of certainty if the differences between variables averages are statistically significant.[3] Furthermore, regression coefficients are presented in graphical form with their respective confidence intervals. For 2010 we have refined these programs further, making the results, we hope, easier to read and quicker to comprehend.

Finally, a common "informed consent" form was prepared, and approval for research on human subjects was granted by the Vanderbilt University Institutional Review Board (IRB). All investigators involved in the project studied the human subjects protection materials utilized by Vanderbilt and then took and passed the certifying tests. All publicly available data for this project are de-identified, thus

[2] The design effect becomes important because of the use of stratification, clustering, and weighting in complex samples. It can increase or decrease the standard error of a variable, which will then make the confidence intervals either increase or decrease. Because of this, it was necessary to take into account the complex nature of our surveys to have better precision and not assume, as is generally done, that the data had been collected using simple random samples. While the use of stratification within the sample tends to decrease the standard error, the rate of homogeneity within the clusters and the use of weighting tend to increase it. Although the importance of taking into account the design effect has been demonstrated, this practice has not become common in public opinion studies, primarily because of the technical requirements that it implicates. In this sense, LAPOP has achieved yet another level in its mission of producing high quality research by incorporating the design effect in the analysis of the results of its surveys.

[3] All **AmericasBarometer** samples are self-weighted expect for Bolivia and Ecuador, Brazil, Trinidad & Tobago, Suriname and the United States. Users of the data file will find a variable called "WT" which weights each country file, which in the case of the self-weighted files, each respondent's weight is equal to 1. The files also contain a variable called "WEIGHT1500" that makes each country file weighted to a sample size of 1,500 so that no one country would count any more than any other in a comparative analysis.

protecting the right of anonymity guaranteed to each respondent. The informed consent form appears in the appendix of each study.

Our concern from the outset was minimization of error and maximization of the quality of the database. We did this in several ways. First, we agreed on a common coding scheme for all of the closed-ended questions. Second, all data files were entered in their respective countries, and verified (i.e., double entered), after which the files were sent to LAPOP at Vanderbilt for review. At that point, for those countries still using paper questionnaires, now a minority of all countries, a random list of 50 questionnaire identification numbers was sent back to each team, who were then asked to ship those 50 surveys via express courier to LAPOP for auditing. This audit consisted of two steps. The first involved comparing the responses written on the questionnaire during the interview with the responses entered by the coding teams. The second step involved comparing the coded responses to the data base itself. If a significant number of errors were encountered through this process, the entire data base had to be re-entered and the process of auditing was repeated on the new data base. Fortunately, this occurred in only one case during the 2010 round of the **AmericasBarometer.** The problem for that country was quickly resolved after all of the data were re-entered. Finally, the data sets were merged by our expert, Dominique Zéphyr into one uniform multi-nation file, and copies were sent to all teams so that they could carry out comparative analysis on the entire file.

An additional technological innovation in the 2010 round is the expansion of the use of personal digital assistants (PDAs) to collect data in 17 of the countries and the use of the Windows Mobile platform for handheld computers. Our partners at the Universidad de Costa Rica developed and enhanced the program, EQCollector, and formatted it for use in the 2010 round of surveys. We have found this method of recording the survey responses extremely efficient, resulting in higher quality data with fewer errors than with the paper-and-pencil method. In addition, the cost and time of data entry was eliminated entirely. Another benefit of the PDAs was that we could switch languages used in the questionnaires in countries where we used multi-lingual questionnaires. Our plan is to expand the use of PDAs in future rounds of LAPOP surveys, hopefully making it universal in the next round.

In the case of countries with significant indigenous-speaking population, the questionnaires were translated into those languages (e.g., Quechua and Aymara in Bolivia). We also developed versions in English for the English-speaking Caribbean and for Atlantic coastal America, as well as a French Creole version for use in Haiti, and a Portuguese version for Brazil. In Suriname we developed versions in Dutch and Sranan Tongo, as well as our standard Caribbean English. In the end, we were using versions in 15 different languages. All of those questionnaires form part of the www.LapopSurveys.org web site and can be consulted there or in the appendixes for each country study.

Country teams then proceeded to analyse their data sets and write their studies. The draft studies were read by the LAPOP team at Vanderbilt and returned to the authors for corrections. Revised studies were then submitted and they were each read and edited by the LAPOP Central team. Those studies were then returned to the country teams for final correction and editing and were sent to USAID for their critiques. What you have before you, then, is the product of the intensive labor of scores of highly motivated researchers, sample design experts, field supervisors, interviewers, data entry clerks, and, of course, the over 40,000 respondents to our survey. Our efforts will not have been in vain if the results presented here are utilized by policy makers, citizens and academics alike to help strengthen democracy in Latin America.

The following tables list the academic institutions that have contributed to the project.

Country	Institutions	
Mexico and Central America		
Costa Rica	CCP	Universidad de Costa Rica
El Salvador	iudop	FundaUngo
Guatemala	asies	
Honduras	FOPRIDEH Federacion de Organizaciones para el Desarrollo de Honduras	Hagamos Democracia
Mexico	data Opinión Publica y Mercados	ITAM INSTITUTO TECNOLÓGICO AUTÓNOMO DE MÉXICO
Nicaragua	B&A Borge y Asociados	
Panama	Alianza Ciudadana Pro Justicia	

Andean/Southern Cone		
Argentina	UNIVERSIDAD TORCUATO DI TELLA	
Bolivia	Ciudadanía Comunidad de Estudios Sociales y Acción Pública	
Brazil	Universidade de Brasília	
Chile	Instituto de Ciencia Política	Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile
Colombia	Universidad de los Andes Facultad de Ciencias Sociales	observatorio de la democracia
Ecuador	FLACSO ECUADOR	CEDATOS Gallup International
Paraguay	CIRD Centro de Información y Recursos para el Desarrollo	
Peru	***IEP Instituto de Estudios Peruanos***	
Uruguay	CIFRA	UM UNIVERSIDAD DE MONTEVIDEO
Venezuela	CISOR	

Caribbean		
Dominican Republic	GALLUP REPÚBLICA DOMINICANA	intec INSTITUTO TECNOLÓGICO DE SANTO DOMINGO
Guyana	DP DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS	
Haiti	Groupe de Recherche GRESS En Sciences Sociales	
Jamaica	THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES AT MONA, JAMAICA	
Suriname	THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES AT ST. AUGUSTINE, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	
Trinidad & Tobago	THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES AT ST. AUGUSTINE, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	

Canada and United States	
Canada	YORK UNIVERSITÉ UNIVERSITY redefine THE POSSIBLE.
United States	VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

Acknowledgements

The study was made possible by the generous support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Vanessa Reilly and Eric Kite assisted selflessly in all aspects of the project. Margaret Sarles, formerly of USAID, was one of those who helped the project get off the ground in its early phases, and helped out again this round with the Haiti survey. At the UNDP, we thank Rebecca Grynspan, Luis Felipe López Calva and Juan Pablo Corlazzoli for their strong support. At the Inter-American Development Bank we are especially grateful to Eduardo Lora and Suzanne Duryea for providing critical support as well as intellectual guidance. Professor Ed Telles at Princeton helped introduce us to the complexities of ethnicity and provided strong support from his grant from the Ford Foundation to enhance that aspect of the project. We also thank François Gélineau at Université Laval in Canada for providing support from the Canadian SSHRC for the module on federalism. Simone Bohn of York University was able to find support for aspects of the Canadian version of the survey, and Nat Stone helped us with the French translation for Canada. Lucio Renno provided generous support from his Brazilian CNPq grant to expand the Brazil survey. Scott Mainwaring at Notre Dame University was able to provide support for the Uruguay component of the research.

At Vanderbilt University, the study would not have been possible without the generosity, collaboration and hard work of many individuals. The College of Arts & Sciences provided critical support, while the Office of the Provost provided space. Neal Tate, Chair of the Department of Political Science at Vanderbilt was a strong supporter of the project since its inception at Vanderbilt and facilitated its integration with the busy schedule of the Department. Tragically, Neal died during the development of the 2010 round and never saw its completion. His position was filled by Professor Bruce Oppenheimer, who supported the project above and beyond the call of his temporary duty. Professors Jon Hiskey, Zeynep Somer-Topcu and Efren Pérez of the Department of Political Science made many helpful suggestions as the research effort proceeded. Tonya Mills, Grants Administrator, and Patrick D. Green, Associate Director, Division of Sponsored Research, performed heroically in managing the countless contract and financial details of the project. In a study as complex as this, literally dozens of contracts had to be signed and hundreds of invoices paid. They deserve special thanks for their efforts. Tonya Mills, our Grants Manager and Tina Bembry, our Program Coordinator, have provided exceptional support for the project. Rubí Arana took charge of the complex task of synchronization of the many versions of each country questionnaire and our common core. Without her careful eye, we would have missed many minor but critical errors in the translations and country customization process. Fernanda Boidi, who received her Ph.D. from our program last year, played a major role in the pretesting in many countries. She invested countless hours refining the questionnaire for us and saving us from many errors. María Clara Bertini ably supported us from her perch in Quito, Ecuador by running our web page, handling the subscriptions to the databases and by formatting many of the reports written by country teams. We also want to name all of the Ph.D. students at Vanderbilt who did so much to make this round the best ever: Margarita Corral (Spain) Arturo Maldonado (Peru), Alejandro Díaz Domínguez (Mexico), Juan Carlos Donoso (Ecuador), Brian Faughnan (USA), Matt Layton (USA), Trevor Lyons (USA), Diana Orcés (Ecuador), Daniel Montalvo (Ecuador), Mason Moseley (USA), Scott Revey (USA), Mariana Rodríguez (Venezuela), and Daniel Zizumbo-Colunga (Mexico).

Critical to the project's success was the cooperation of the many individuals and institutions in the countries studied. Their names, countries and affiliations are listed below.

Country/ Institution	Researchers (located in country of study unless otherwise noted)
Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, USA	●Dr. Mitchell Seligson, Director of LAPOP and Centennial Professor of Political Science ●Dr. Elizabeth J. Zechmeister, Associate Director of LAPOP and Associate Professor of Political Science ●Dr. Susan Berk-Seligson, Associate Professor of Spanish and Portuguese Department ●Dominique Zéphyr, Research Coordinator of LAPOP ●Dr. Abby Córdova, Post-doctoral Fellow, LAPOP
Mexico and Central America Group	
Mexico	●Pablo Parás García, President of DATA Opinión Pública y Mercados ●Dr. Alejandro Moreno, Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México (ITAM)
Guatemala	●Dr. Dinorah Azpuru, Senior Associate at ASIES in Guatemala and Assistant Professor of Political Science at Wichita State University, USA ●Sample design and coordination of field survey: Juan Pablo Pira, ASIES
El Salvador	●Dr. José Miguel Cruz, Visiting Professor, Florida International University ●Dr. Ricardo Córdova, Executive Director of FUNDAUNGO
Honduras	●Dr. José Rene Argueta, University of Pittsburgh, USA ●Dr. Orlando Pérez, Professor and Chair of Political Science at Central Michigan University, USA
Nicaragua	●Dr. John Booth, Regents Professor of Political Science, University of North Texas, USA
Costa Rica	●Dr. Jorge Vargas, Sub-Director of the Estado de la Nación project, United Nations
Panama	●Dr. Orlando Pérez, Professor and Chair of Political Science at Central Michigan University, USA
Caribbean Group	
Dominican Republic	●Dr. Jana Morgan, Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Tennessee, USA ●Dr. Rosario Espinal, Professor of Sociology, Temple University, USA
Guyana	●Everette Cleveland Marciano Glasgow, Development Policy and Management Consultants ●Mark Bynoe, Director, Development Policy and Management Consultants
Haiti	●Dominique Zéphyr, Research Coordinator of LAPOP, Vanderbilt University, USA
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Suriname	●Dr. Mark Kirton, Institute of International Relations, The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad & Tobago ●Dr. Marlon Anatol, Institute of International Relations, The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad & Tobago
Trinidad & Tobago	●Dr. Marlon Anatol, Institute of International Relations, The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine ●Mr. Niki Braithwaite, Institute of International Relations, The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine
Andean/Southern Cone Group	
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Country/ Institution	Researchers (located in country of study unless otherwise noted)
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Canada	●Dr. Simone Bohn, Assistant Professor of Political Science, York University

The Report on the Americas is the product of many researchers' efforts. While the Table of Authors lists those who have written the text, a number of other members of our team have contributed ideas and analytical insights, including Abby Córdova, Dominique Zéphyr, Elizabeth Zechmeister, Alejandro Díaz-Domínguez, and Diana Orcés (who, in addition to coauthoring a number of chapters, ran much of the final analysis for this report). In addition, the executive summary was written by Margarita Corral and Amy Erica Smith. The report was translated from English into Spanish by Diana Orcés, Margarita Corral, and Alejandro Díaz Domínguez, and the Spanish translation was edited by Dinorah Azpuru and Margarita Corral.

Finally, we wish to thank the more than 40,000 residents of the Americas who took time away from their busy lives to answer our questions. Without their cooperation, this study would have been impossible.

Nashville, Tennessee
November, 2010

Executive Summary

How do citizens' democratic attitudes and behaviors change under crisis conditions? As the 2010 AmericasBarometer survey went into the field, the Americas were undergoing one of the worst worldwide economic crises of the past century. In this report we seek to understand the impact of the crisis on citizens' lives and democratic values in the Americas. We ask such questions as: *Did pro-democracy attitudes decline under crisis conditions? Is support for the political system lower? And, who has been most affected by the economic crisis?* As the reader will find, there are many surprises, a number of them pleasant ones for those who might have feared that democracy would collapse under the weight of economic crisis.

In Part I of this report, we present a descriptive overview of the economic crisis at the global, regional, and individual levels. We also provide the main descriptive cross-national evidence regarding key economic variables from the AmericasBarometer 2010, comparing the countries and regions in our sample. In other words, we are able to assess who within the Americas has been most affected by the crisis and in what ways, if any, their attitudes and behaviors toward democracy may have been altered under crisis conditions.

The introductory chapter first provides an overview of the economic crisis, documenting its impact on economic growth, poverty, employment, and remittances across the hemisphere. It then describes the regional and worldwide "democracy recession," and discusses reasons to be concerned that the economic crisis might affect democratic attitudes and values.

In Chapter II we assess economic experiences and perceptions in 2010 across the Americas. Results indicate that the vast majority of citizens, 90%, perceive that there is an economic crisis in 2010, and that they are evenly split between those who perceive it as not very serious and those who perceive it as very serious. Perceptions of crisis are higher in countries such as Jamaica, Honduras, Nicaragua and the United States, where nearly all respondents report that their countries have faced an economic crisis. Interestingly, when asked who is responsible for the economic crisis, 40% percent of citizens across the Americas point to either their own previous or current administration; few citizens of the Americas blame the advanced industrial nations for the crisis, although those with greater access to political information are more likely to do so. Yet, even though most economists would argue that the crisis began with a serious meltdown of the financial systems in the advanced industrial nations, citizens of Latin America and the Caribbean do not see those nations as the primary cause of the crisis.

Regarding personal impacts of the economic crisis, 27% of households in the Americas have seen at least one of their family members lose their jobs; unemployment has especially affected countries such as Mexico and Colombia, where almost 40% of respondents reported that someone in their household lost his or her job in the last two years. At the same time, a little over a quarter of households in the Americas report a drop in income in the past two years, while a little under a quarter report a rise in income. Still, about half of all respondents report no real change in their incomes, leaving us with about three out of every four citizens telling our interviewers that they either gained income or did not lose it during this period of worldwide economic decline. Because of that, it is not surprising that we find that citizens of many countries in the Americas are actually more positive about the national and personal economies in 2010 than they were in 2008. Nonetheless, we should highlight that the economic crisis has not affected

all citizens equally. Reduction of income has been more widespread among citizens living in rural areas, especially those within the lowest wealth brackets, than among their urban and wealthier counterparts.

In the third chapter we examine respondents' life satisfaction (happiness) and democratic values in the context of the economic downturn. On the one hand, the survey data suggest that respondents who report that they are less satisfied now than they were two years ago are also likely to have reported that their personal economic situations have deteriorated over the past two years, that they have had a drop in household income, that they perceive a national economic crisis and that someone in their households has lost a job. On the other hand, the finding that most stands out in this round of surveys is that citizens who perceive that the national government has been doing a good job are more likely to report increased levels of satisfaction and stronger support for democratic values. In other words, we find that good governance matters; during times of crisis, good governance can help citizens retain their confidence in democracy and other key values.

We examine further democratic values in the context of global economic crisis. In this section, we uncover a puzzle. At the individual level, we find strong evidence that positive perceptions of government economic performance and of the national economy are a major determinant of support for democracy and the political system. In addition, economic variables such as the perception of a serious crisis and experiences with unemployment are negatively linked to support for democracy and system support, while they are positively related to support for military coups in the Americas. However, our results also demonstrate that in general in the Americas support for democracy, system support and satisfaction with democracy have not declined substantially in the past two years as a consequence of the crisis (although there is some variation across countries). We resolve this puzzle by showing that changes in these democratic attitudes were very strongly linked to changes in perceptions of both the national economy and the economic performance of government in the 2008-2010 period. The fact that in many countries perceptions of both actually *improved* over this period buoyed political support in the Americas despite hard times. Governments have confronted the crisis more ably than they have done in many prior crises in the Americas, suggesting a new level of improved governance in many countries. We thus conclude the first part by arguing that unprecedented levels of macroeconomic stability coupled with pro-poor policies that helped mitigate the crisis for those most affected by it, in the midst of a worldwide economic crisis may well have staved off not only more serious economic decline but also threats to democracy itself.

Part II shifts the focus away from the economic crisis and deals with the rule of law, crime, corruption, and civil society. Chapter IV investigates the association between crime and corruption and democratic values in the region, showing that corruption and crime hurt support for the political system and the rule of law, or the belief that all citizens should be subject to the law. Results from the 2010 AmericasBarometer show high levels of perceived insecurity in the Americas, with Peru topping the list. Moreover, almost 20% of respondents across the region report having been victims of crime in the past year. In this case, Peru and Ecuador are the countries with the highest levels of victimization as reported to our survey teams. Important variation exists by the type of crime (violent vs. non-violent) and across countries and regions. One pattern uncovered in the study is that men, those with higher incomes, and the highly educated are more likely to be victims of crime in the AmericasBarometer countries.

We then investigate perceptions and experiences of corruption among public officials. We find that in every country in the region, citizen perceptions of public corruption are quite high. We find, however, that perception of corruption is not closely linked to actual victimization by corruption, and we believe that the latter is a better measure of corruption levels than the former. The carefully developed and reliable LAPOP corruption series measures corruption victimization at the level of the common

citizen and therefore does not claim to measure high-level corruption. Yet, there is strong reason to believe that levels of corruption found in everyday life are closely linked to the levels of corruption among high public officials. The data from the AmericasBarometer show that experiences with corruption present a very diverse pattern across countries. For instance, in Haiti half of respondents reported having been asked for a bribe in the year prior to the survey, while only 4% of Canadians did so. We think that variation is a valid reflection of corruption levels in the two countries, yet Haitian and Canadian citizens differ little in their perceptions of the level of corruption in their countries. It is encouraging to find that whereas perceptions of corruption have remained high over time, actual corruption victimization has declined since 2004, at least in the eleven countries for which we have data from that year. Finally, as with crime victimization, we find that men and citizens with higher levels of wealth are more likely to be victims of corruption. We interpret this to mean that those who demand bribes direct their attention to those who have the money to pay (the wealthier) and to those who are more likely to be conducting public transactions (men).

Chapter V examines levels of system support and political tolerance in the Americas along with levels of trust in the main institutions and support for and satisfaction with democracy. The evidence shows that the percentage of citizens with attitudes favorable to stable democracy, that is those with high levels of both support for the political system and political tolerance, varies from country to country in the Americas. For instance, whereas half of Uruguayans hold the combination of attitudes most conducive to stable democracy, only 3.7% of Haitians do so. The survey data also reveal that levels of support for stable democracy are affected negatively by perceptions of and experiences with crime and corruption and by poor evaluations of the performance of the incumbent president, one of the key variables that emerges throughout this report.

We also measure levels of confidence in the main political institutions in each country, contrasting those levels with trust in certain social institutions. Across the Americas, respondents trust the Catholic Church and the Army the most, while political institutions such as congresses and political parties receive the least trust. Finally, we observe that support for the idea that democracy is the best form of government is relatively high and stable over time. Moreover, in 2010 in the Americas as a whole almost 60% of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the way democracy is working in their countries.

Chapter VI is devoted to civil society and political participation. First, we examine levels of interpersonal trust and find that the majority of respondents across the Americas consider the people in their communities to be either somewhat or very trustworthy. However, we find sharp contrasts among countries. Citizens in Costa Rica, one of the most consolidated democracies in the Americas, express the highest levels of interpersonal trust (an average of 70.2 on a 100-point scale), whereas those in Haiti express the lowest (at 32.7 on the same scale). Many studies confirm that social capital, measured in terms of interpersonal trust, is important for democracy. The data also reveal that levels of interpersonal trust are shaped by respondents' perceptions of insecurity, crime victimization, and perceptions of the economy.

Second, in this chapter we assess participation in civil society organizations. This chapter shows that citizens in the Americas participate in religious meetings more than in any other type of organization, and that Haitians are exceptionally participatory within civil society groups. When we consider participation in protests and electoral participation we find wide variation across countries. For instance, Haiti has the highest levels of participation in protests and Chile has the highest turnout levels, while Jamaicans engaged in the lowest levels of participation in these two types of activities. Protest levels, however, vary by circumstances, so the earthquake in Haiti probably has a lot to do with the current high

levels of participation found there. Furthermore, we also see that most citizens throughout the Americas report little or no interest in politics, though this is a common phenomenon worldwide. Still, we find great variation in political interest throughout the Americas, with average reported political interest ranging from 28 in Haiti, Chile, and Guyana to 73 in the United States.

Finally, Chapter VII addresses citizens' perceptions and experiences related to local government. In general, we observe low levels of attendance at municipal meetings in most countries. The Dominican Republic has the highest levels of attendance, while Panama and Chile have the lowest ones. The survey data reveal that 13% of respondents have made demands or requests to local government in the past year, but that most report that despite their demand-making, their problems went unresolved. We find that those who attend municipal meetings and who perceive their family economic situation as negative are most likely to make a request or demand of a local government official. Last, levels of satisfaction with local services are generally moderate. Colombia and Canada have the highest levels of satisfaction with local services, while Haitians, not surprisingly in light of the devastation of the earthquake that preceded our survey, are among the most dissatisfied.

Our goal in this report is to take a citizen-eye view of the quality and prospects of democracy in the Americas at the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century. We are driven in particular by concern for the possible negative impacts of the economic crisis that rolled across the hemisphere over the past two years, and for the potential effects of intensifying crime and corruption in the region. A number of our empirical findings, based on over 40,000 interviews in 26 countries, should allay many of these concerns, though others point to areas in which democracy continues to be at risk in terms of citizen support. On the positive side of the regional democratic balance sheet, we find that the economic crisis did not correlate with declining democratic attitudes in the region, that support for and satisfaction with democracy remain high, and that there has been little change in support for the political system over the past six years.

On the other hand, however, we find that economic experiences and perceptions *do* affect democratic attitudes, such that an even more severe economic crisis might have a more deleterious impact. Crime and corruption continue to pose barriers to democratic consolidation at the citizen level. And, citizens holding both high system support and high political tolerance, the combination of attitudes we believe are most conducive to creating a political culture supportive of stable democracy, remain in the minority in the region. While support for democracy as a system of government is high, participation in many forms of civil society as well as in politics is low in most countries, suggesting that most citizens in the Americas support democracy in theory but are disengaged from the activities and behaviors that can contribute to a more robust democracy. Most importantly, this report reveals great variation among countries, both across the hemisphere and within Latin America and the Caribbean; democratic attitudes and behaviors are highly consolidated in some countries, while in others we find worrisome democratic weaknesses.

Technical Note

The 2010 AmericasBarometer study is based on interviews with 43,990 respondents in 26 countries. Nationally representative surveys were conducted in all major languages, using face-to-face interviews in Latin America and the Caribbean and web surveys in the United States and Canada. Samples in each country were developed using a multi-stage probabilistic design (with quotas at the household level), and were stratified by major region of the country and by urban and rural areas. For more information on the sample within each country, please see the country reports and technical information sheets on the AmericasBarometer website, http://www.AmericasBarometer.org.

Country	Sample Size	Sampling Error
Mexico and Central America		
Mexico	1,562	±2.5%
Guatemala	1,504	±2.5%
El Salvador	1,550	±2.5%
Honduras	1,596	±2.5%
Nicaragua	1,540	±2.5%
Costa Rica	1,500	±2.5%
Panama	1,536	±2.5%
Andean/Southern Cone		
Colombia	1,506	±2.5%
Ecuador	3,000	±1.8%
Peru	1,500	±2.5%
Bolivia	3,018	±1.8%
Paraguay	1,502	±2.9%
Chile	1,965	±2.5%
Uruguay	1,500	±2.5%
Brazil	2,482	±1.8%
Venezuela	1,500	±2.5%
Argentina	1,410	±2.5%
Caribbean		
Belize	1,504	±2.5%
Dominican Republic	1,500	±2.5%
Guyana	1,540	±2.5%
Haiti	1,752 (+4,248)	
Jamaica	1,504	±2.5%
Suriname	1,500	±2.5%
Trinidad & Tobago	1,516	±2.0%
United States and Canada		
Canada	1,500	±2.2%
United States	1,500	±2.0%

Table TN.1. Sample Sizes and Sampling Errors in the 2010 AmericasBarometer

Understanding Figures in this Study

AmericasBarometer data are based on a sample of respondents drawn from each country; naturally, all samples produce results that contain a margin of error. It is important for the reader to understand that each *data point* (for example, a country's average confidence in political parties) has a *confidence interval*, expressed in terms of a range surrounding that point. Most graphs in this study show a 95% confidence interval that takes into account the fact that our samples are "complex" (i.e., *stratified* and *clustered*). In bar charts this confidence interval appears as a grey block, while in figures presenting the results of regression models it appears as a horizontal bracket. The dot in the center of a confidence interval depicts the estimated mean (in bar charts) or coefficient (in regression charts).

The numbers next to each bar in the bar charts represent the values of the dots. When two estimated points have confidence intervals that overlap, the difference between the two values is not statistically significant and the reader should ignore it.

Graphs that show regressions also include a vertical line at "0." When a variable's estimated coefficient falls to the left of this line, it indicates that the variable has a negative impact on the dependent variable (i.e., the attitude or behavior we seek to explain); when the coefficient falls to the right, it has a positive impact. We can be 95% confident that the impact is *statistically significant* when the confidence interval does not overlap the vertical line.

Part I: Hard Times and Their Effects on Democracy

Chapter I. Hard Times in the Americas: Economic Overview

Introduction

Since the last round of the AmericasBarometer in 2008, one of the most severe worldwide economic recessions since the Great Depression took place. This crisis took place in the context of what organizations like Freedom House were reporting as a worldwide "democracy recession." The economic crisis affected most nations in the world; the Americas have not been immune. Yet, many of the nations in Latin America and the Caribbean seem to have managed the crisis unusually well, no doubt mitigating its potential impact on democracy. In this study, we first briefly examine the data on the economic downturn, but then we turn to the core of our analysis, the AmericasBarometer survey data, the largest survey of democratic public opinion ever conducted in the Americas. We look at the 2008 round, which was conducted before the full weight of the crisis had been experienced, and the 2010 round, when most countries were recovering. Sparked by a massive set of financial problems in the United States, the problem reached crisis proportions in September 2008, several months after the 2008 AmericasBarometer fieldwork had been completed. The upshot was a near-universal decline in economic growth, increased unemployment, and increased poverty levels that are still being felt, albeit unequally, around the globe.

In the prior study in this series of analyses of public opinion in the Americas, we examined the impact of various governance indicators on support for stable democracy. In this round of the AmericasBarometer 2010, we report on the characteristics of those affected by the crisis, especially those who lost their jobs and those who state that their personal economies have deteriorated. Is the crisis linked to citizens' support for democracy and democratic principles? And ultimately, does the economic crisis threaten support for democracy?

In this chapter, we begin with a global overview of the economic crisis in terms of economic growth, unemployment, and poverty levels. We then document a global, as well as a regional, "democracy recession." We conclude by identifying the important relationships scholars have theorized and found between economic and democratic decline.

Economic Overview

The 2010 AmericasBarometer survey took place in the context of the greatest global economic crisis in the past 80 years. In terms of economic expansion, world real GDP growth showed a systematic decline from 3.9 to 3 percent by the end of 2008, and in 2009 fell to a negative 1.4 percent (see Figure I.1). Yet, as the 2010 survey began, there were projections estimating a recovery was underway.[1] Moreover, while some countries were seriously affected by the crisis, others were not and were even able to sustain growth in the context of a worldwide slowdown. Indeed, it appears that unlike the severe crises of the past that sharply weakened Latin American and Caribbean economies, careful management of counter-cyclical policies averted many of the worst effects.

[1] IMF, *World Economic Outlook 2009: Crisis and Recovery* (Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund, 2009).

While by the time the 2010 round of surveys began, the world economy was exhibiting signs of economic recovery in a variety of countries, the effects of the crisis were still being suffered across the globe. Forty three poor countries in 2009 suffered serious consequences of the economic crisis, with many facing underperformance in vital areas such as education, health, and infrastructure. By the end of 2010, even with recovery, it is believed that as many as 64 million more people may be living in extreme poverty than in 2009, that is, on less than $1.25 per day. Moreover, initial predictions were that more than 1 billion people were expected to go chronically hungry, reversing many benefits that had been obtained from successful anti-poverty programs implemented in the previous decade.[2] Again, these predictions and projections did not factor in successful counter-cyclical and pro-poor policies that many nations implemented, so the final toll will have to await studies conducted after this one is published.

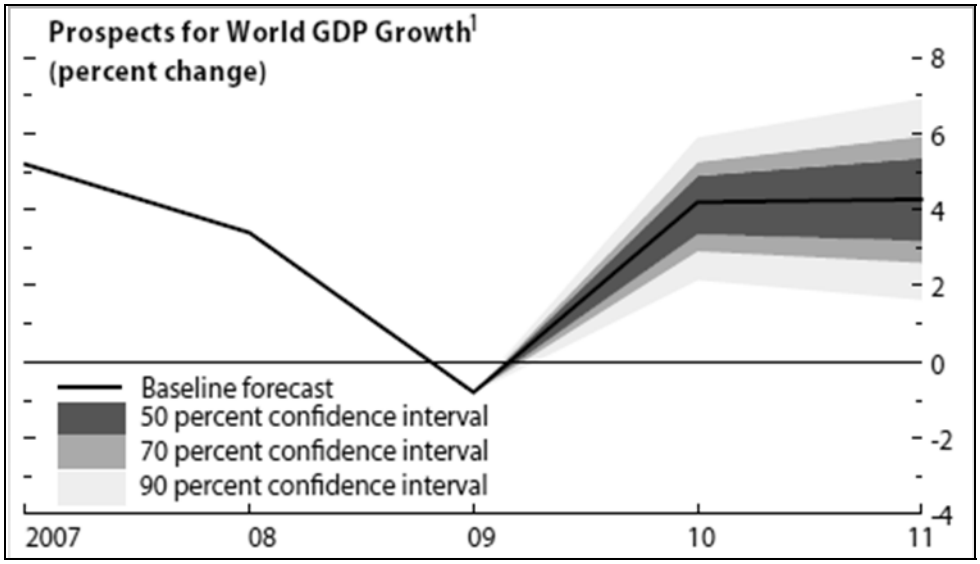

Figure I.1. World Real GDP Growth Estimates and Projections, 2007-2011
(Source IMF, World Economic Outlook 2010)[3]

Crisis-related unemployment increases were substantial and widely felt. According to the International Labour Organization, the global unemployment rate for 2009 was estimated at 6.6 percent, corresponding to about 212 million persons. This means an increase of almost 34 million people over the number of unemployed in 2007, with most of this increment taking place in 2009. In addition, many workers fell into more vulnerable forms of employment and this, in turn, has reduced work benefits, swollen precarious employment conditions and elevated the number of the working poor. It is estimated that vulnerable employment increased by more than 100 million workers between 2008 and 2009.[4] Furthermore, even though the number of "extreme working poor," that is, individuals living on less than $1.25 per day, was reduced by 16.3 percentage points between 1998 to 2008, by the end of 2008, the extreme working poor remained at a total of 21.2 percent of all employment, implying that around 633 million workers were living with their families on less than $1.25 a day worldwide.[5] The unemployment rate is estimated to have increased to 8.5 percent in the first quarter of 2009 compared to 7.8 percent during the same period in 2008, suggesting that more than one million more Latin American workers

[2] See www.worldbank.org/financialcrisis/bankinitiatives.htm and http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:22152813~pagePK:64257043~piPK:437376~theSitePK:4607,00.html.
[3] IMF, *World Economic Outlook 2010: Rebalancing Growth* (Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund, 2010).
[4] ILO, *Global Employment Trends: January 2010* (Geneva: International Labor Organization, 2010), 42.
[5] Ibid., 22.

were unable to find jobs.[6] Similarly, even though the working poor (i.e., those living on less than $2 a day) decreased by 6.2 percentage points between 2003 and 2008, best estimates are that a reversal took place in 2009.[7] Furthermore, the extreme working poor (i.e., those living on less than $1.25) rose from 7 to 9.9 percent in 2009.[8] These are just some examples of the serious effects that the financial crisis has had on Latin America.

All these figures point to the severity of the impact of the economic recession around the world. Yet, the crisis did not impact all regions or countries uniformly. While some regions and countries experienced pronounced economic setbacks, such as the United States, the European Union, and Japan to name a few, the impact in Latin America and the Caribbean as a region was more uneven and not as severe in many countries.[9] Recent data from the World Bank indicate that after nearly a decade of strong performance, GDP growth in Latin America and the Caribbean decreased from an average of 5.5 to 3.9 percent between 2007 and 2008, and fell even further in 2009 (2.6%).[10] Economic recovery, however, seems to be underway based on the latest projections available as of this writing, and studies show that real GDP growth may increase to 3.1 and 3.6 percent in 2010 and 2011, respectively.[11] However, other projections from the Inter-American Development Bank suggest that Latin American exports are likely to decrease significantly for a time until worldwide demand is restored. Similarly, terms of trade between Latin American and advanced industrialized countries are also likely to deteriorate, as the prices of primary commodities have fallen.[12]

The economic crisis in the U.S. and other advanced industrial nations also affected the level of remittances (that is, money sent home by family members working abroad) on which so many families in Latin America depend. For example, some estimates suggest that remittances constitute more than half the income for about 30% of recipient families, helping to keep these families out of poverty.[13] Remittances represent an important percentage of inflows to many local economies. Seven of the region's nations receive 12% or more of GDP from their families abroad: Haiti, Guyana, Jamaica, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala. In many of these countries, remittances have become the first or second source of revenue, sometimes exceeding exports, tourism, and foreign investment.[14] As early as 2008 the growth rates of remittances declined considerably across Latin America, even becoming negative in some countries (see Figure 1.2).

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[6] United Nations, *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2010: Global Outlook* (New York: United Nations, 2009).
[7] World Bank, *Global Economic Prospects: Crisis, Finance, and Growth 2010* (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2010).
[8] ILO, *Global Employment Trends: January 2010*, 30.
[9] Following an estimated economic growth decline of 2.5% in 2009, the U.S. is expected to grow by 2.1% in 2010. Japan, on the other hand, the country that most severely felt the consequences of the crisis (-5.4%) compared to other industrialized nations is expected to grow only marginally in 2010 (0.9%). See http://www.un.org/esa/policy/wess/wesp2010files/wesp2010pr.pdf
[10] World Bank, *Global Economic Prospects: Crisis, Finance, and Growth 2010* (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2010).
[11] Ibid.
[12] Eduardo Fernandez-Arias and Peter Montiel, "Crisis Response in Latin America: Is the 'Rainy Day' at Hand?," (Inter-American Development Bank, 2009).
[13] See http://idbdocs.iadb.org/wsdocs/getdocument.aspx?docnum=1910986 and http://www.ifad.org/events/remittances/maps/latin.htm
[14] UNDP, *Human Development Report 2009: Overcoming Barriers: Human Mobility and Development* (New York: United Nations Development Program, 2009).

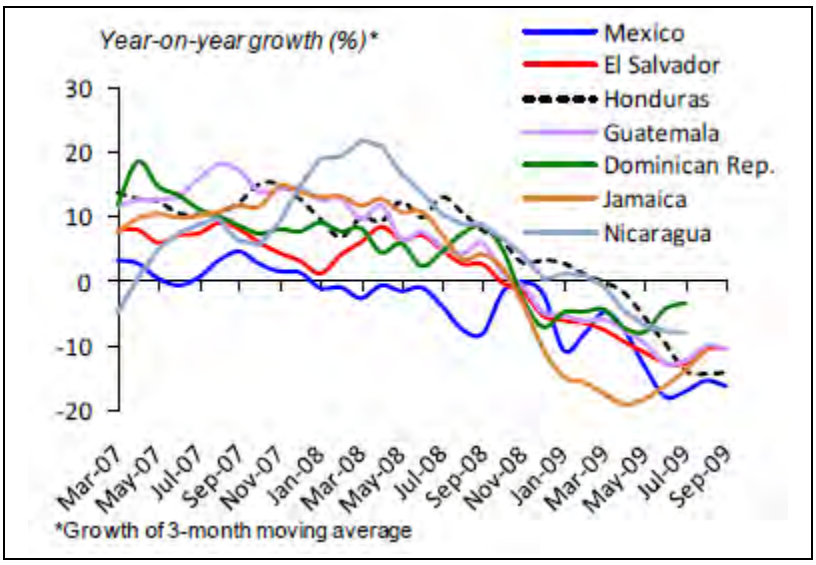

Figure I.2. Declines in Remittances to Latin America, 2007-2009, as Reported by the World Bank

Figure I.2 shows that throughout the year 2009, the growth rate of remittances decreased and turned negative in Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, and Jamaica, all countries that are major recipients of remittances. For example, remittances in Mexico decreased by 13.4 percent in the first nine months of 2009 from a remittance growth rate of over 25 percent in 2006. Declines in remittances were also registered in South American countries, such as Ecuador, Bolivia, Colombia, and Peru.[15]

The most recent data available as of the writing of this report shows that while the crisis was the worst experienced in the region over the last two decades, by 2010 recovery was underway.[16] As shown in Figure I.3, drawn from a recent IDB study, which is based on the seven largest economies in the region (collectively accounting for 91% of the region's GDP), the growth decline in 2009 was -2.0%, but the rebound in growth for 2010 is forecast to be a positive 3.7% growth rate.

[15] See http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1110315015165/MigrationAnd DevelopmentBrief11.pdf

[16] Alejandro Izquierdo and Ernesto Talvi, *The Aftermath of the Global Crisis: Policy Lessons and Challenges Ahead for Latin America and the Caribbean* (Washington, D. C.: Inter-American Development Bank, 2010).

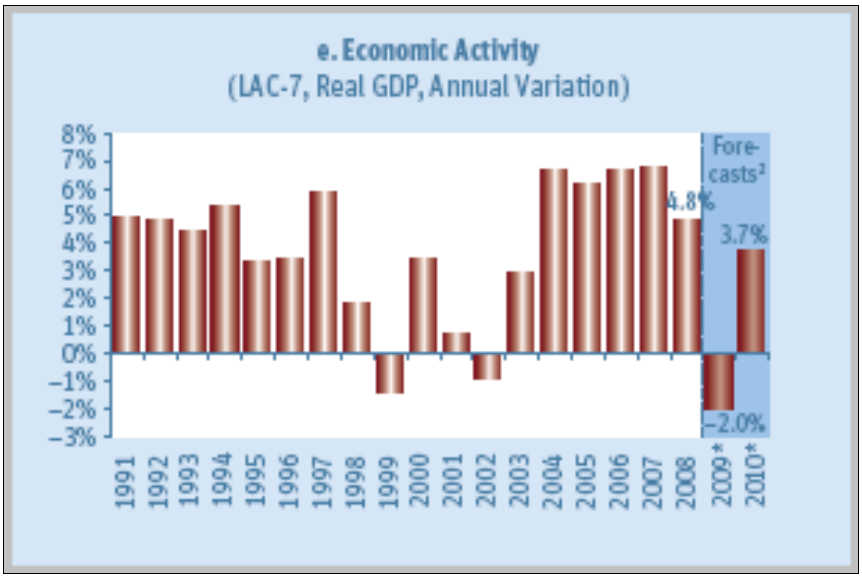

Figure I.3. Annual Change in Real GDP in Latin America, 1991-2010
(Source: Izquierdo and Talvi, 2010, p. 25)

The Mexican economy, for instance, experienced the steepest contraction compared to other countries in the region, dropping from a growth rate of 3.4 percent in 2007 to -6.5 percent in 2009. The general economic problems worldwide were exacerbated in Mexico in part due to the outbreak of the H1N1 flu virus that produced declines in the important tourism industry. Brazil, in contrast, one of the relatively less affected countries in the region, still experienced a reduction in growth from 5.7 to -0.2 percent between 2007 and 2009. Projections for both countries indicate economic growth is expected to recover to between 3.5 and 3.9 percent in 2010-2011. The change from 2008-2009 in real GDP is shown in Figure I.4. As can be seen, all but eleven of the countries covered by the AmericasBarometer suffered declines in GDP. Some of those declines, such as that in Ecuador, were very slight, whereas others, such as that in Mexico, were more severe.[17]

[17] Data on economic growth come from different sources and are not always consistent across time or between sources; as various parts of this report were written, we used the databases that seemed most trustworthy and that were available at the moment of the writing.

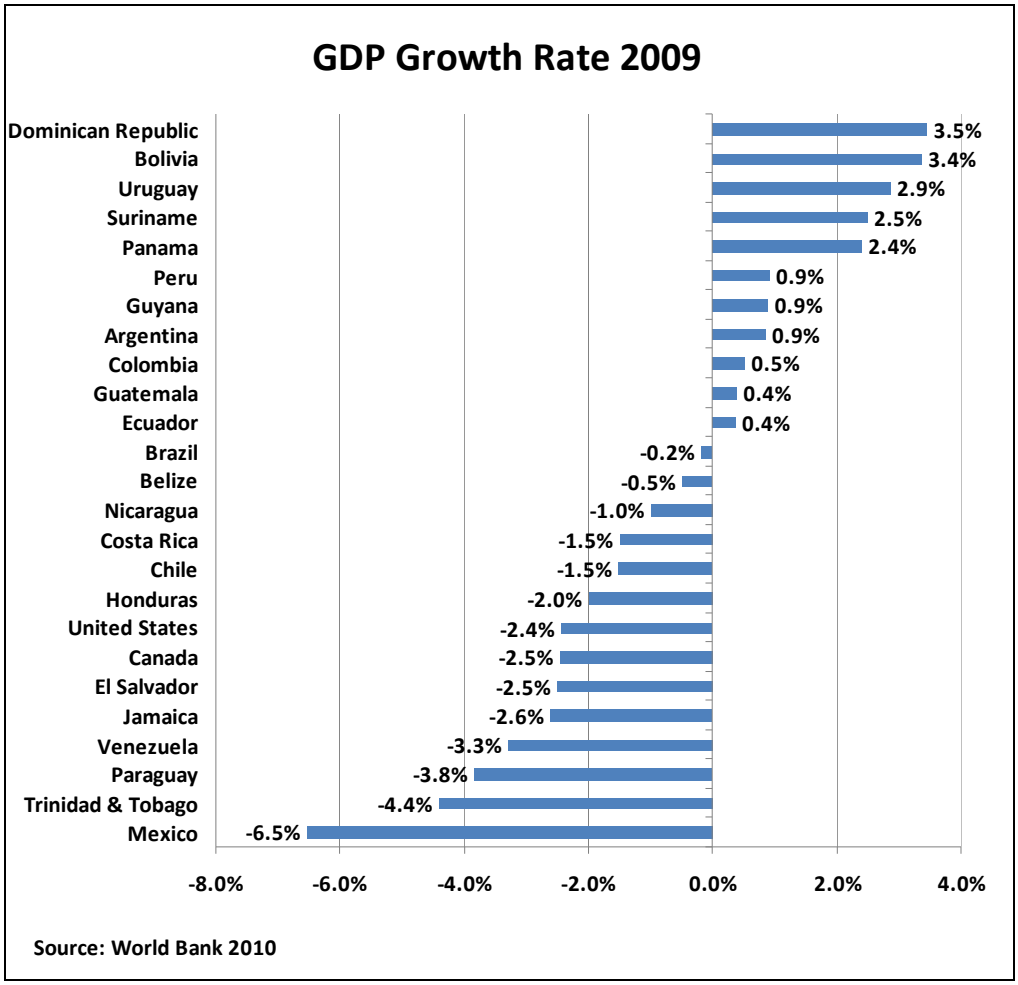

Figure I.4. Change in Real GDP, 2008-2009

Fortunately, the potential impact of the crisis was reduced owing to a number of factors. As the IDB's latest analysis states:

> "…even at the peak of the crisis, with the bottom of the abyss nowhere in sight, emerging markets in general and Latin America in particular, for the most part performed surprisingly well. True, following the Lehman Brothers debacle, stock and bond prices tumbled, currencies depreciated sharply and growth came to a halt as the region slipped into a recession in 2009. However, the region avoided currency and debt crises and bank runs so typical of previous episodes of global financial turbulence (1982, 1998 and 2001). The ability of the region to withstand an extremely severe shock without major financial crises was truly remarkable….[18]

According to the IDB, the consensus opinion is that a combination of low inflation, the availability of fiscal surpluses and international reserves, a largely flexible exchange rate system and sound banking systems make the impact of this crisis so much less severe than in the past.

[18] Izquierdo and Talvi, *The Aftermath of the Global Crisis: Policy Lessons and Challenges Ahead for Latin America and the Caribbean*, 1.

Trends in Democratic Development

While the economic recession was a major event in many countries, politically it has been accompanied by a reversal in democratic development in many parts of the developing world.[19] According to the Freedom House 2010 Report *Global Erosion of Freedom*, for the fourth consecutive year, freedom declines offset gains in 2009 (Figure I.5). This is the longest uninterrupted period of democratic decline in the 40 year history of the Freedom House series.[20] Many countries around the world suffered an escalation in human rights violations, at the same time as non-democratic nations became even more repressive. Even countries that had experienced increases in freedom in recent years have now undergone declines in political rights and civil liberties (e.g., Bahrain, Jordan, and Kenya).

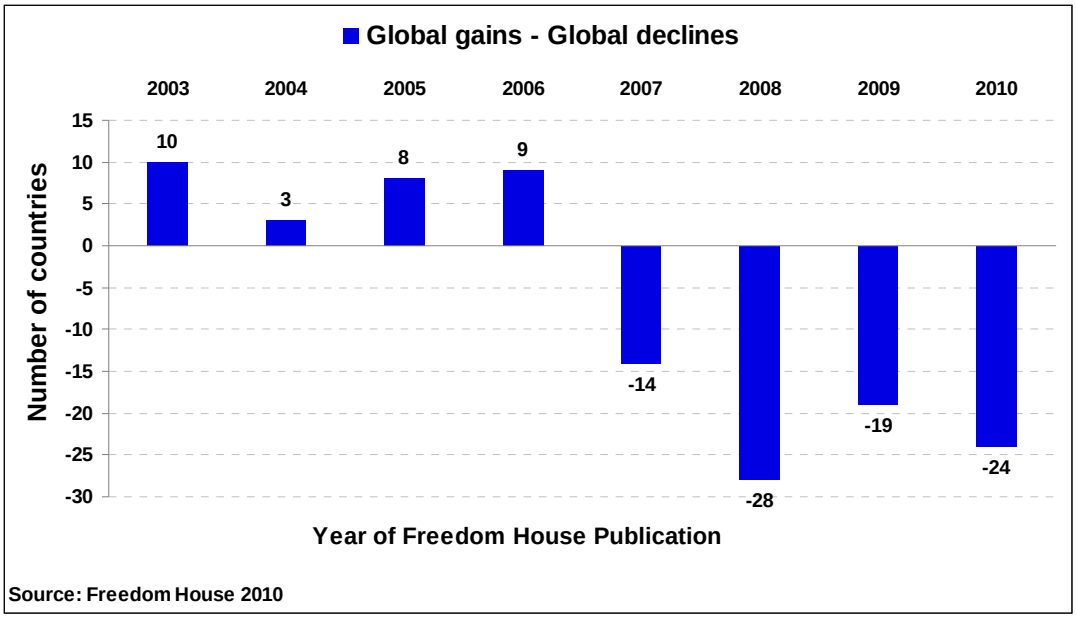

Figure I.5. Freedom in the World: Global Gains Minus Declines from 2003-2010

Examining Freedom House's specific classification of countries (Table I.1), we find that in 2009 89 countries belonged to the "free" category, representing 46 percent of the world's 194 countries as well as 46 percent of the global population. The number of countries that considered "partly free" decreased from 62 to 58 between 2008 and 2009, while the number of "not free" nations rose from 42 to 47 during the same period, corresponding to 20 and 24 percent of the world's population, respectively. More than 2.3 billion individuals reside in "not free" countries, that is, ones where their political rights and civil liberties are violated in one form or another. One nation, China, makes up 50 percent of this figure. Electoral democracies also diminished to 116 from 123 in 2006 and nine of the 47 countries considered "not free" scored the lowest possible ratings on indicators of both civil liberties and political rights.[21]

[19] Arch Puddington, "The Freedom House Survey for 2009: The Erosion Accelerates," *Journal of Democracy* 21, no. 2 (2010).
[20] Freedom House includes two measures of democracy: *political rights* and *civil liberties.* Both measures contain numerical ratings between 1 and 7 for each country with 1 indicating the "most free" and 7 the "least free."
[21] See http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=70&release=1120.

Table I.1. Global Trends in Freedom, 1979-2009

Year	TOTAL COUNTRIES	FREE		PARTLY FREE		NOT FREE	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1979	161	51	32	54	33	56	35
1989	167	61	37	44	26	62	37
1999	192	85	44	60	31	47	25
2006	193	90	47	58	30	45	23
2007	193	90	47	60	31	43	22
2008	193	89	46	62	32	42	22
2009	194	89	46	58	30	47	24

Source: Freedom House 2010

Within Latin America and the Caribbean region, Central America experienced the greatest setbacks in democratic development in the 2008-2010 period, according to Freedom House. This is highlighted by the 2009 coup d'état in Honduras, which resulted in the removal of this country from the "electoral democracy" category. Other decreases in freedom were registered in Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Venezuela.[22] In the remaining 22 countries of the region, Freedom House scores remained unchanged between 2008 and 2009. Figure I.6 indicates that of the 35 countries in the Americas, nine are not considered "free." That is, 26% of Latin American nations are rated "partly free" because they exhibit deficiencies in their democracies, measured in terms of political rights and civil liberties. All these figures point to a current "democracy recession" in the Americas, much as there is a "democracy recession" in the world as a whole.

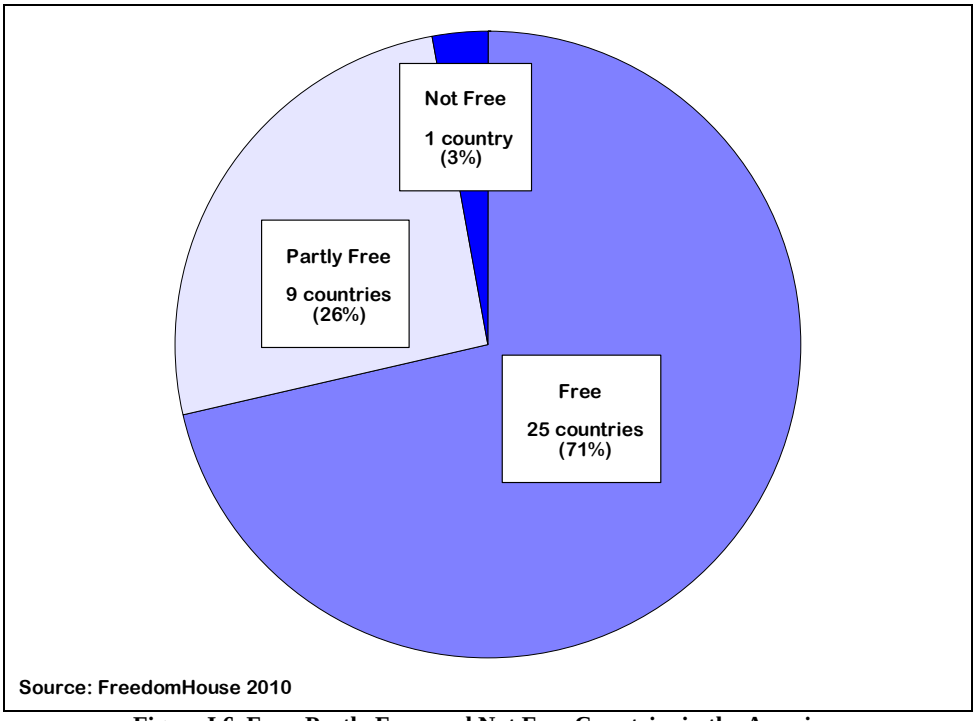

Figure I.6. Free, Partly Free, and Not Free Countries in the Americas

[22] *Ibid*

While Freedom House registers declines in freedom in the world and in Latin America, this does not mean that citizens have lost faith in democracy. Rather, the Freedom House measure focuses on institutions, not political culture, which is the focus of the present study. It is central to the theory of political culture that over the long term culture and institutions should be congruous with each other, but over the short term significant incongruities can emerge.[23] For example, in the years prior to the emergence of competitive democracy in Mexico, political culture there exhibited strong support for democracy.[24] So, too, it may well be that the democracy recession that is affecting institutions may be "corrected" over the long term by citizen support for democracy.

The Relationship between Hard Times and Democracy

Should we be concerned that the economic crisis could have spilled over and affected democracy? Are the declines measured by Freedom House in 2009 partially a result of economic troubles? Or can we find evidence in the AmericasBarometer of a robust democratic culture that has withstood the challenges brought on by hard times? Over the years, many scholars have examined the apparent connection between economic crisis and democratic instability, approaching the problem from two schools of thought. The first has focused on the individual, analyzing the impact of economic crisis on democracy through the lens of ordinary people—in short, how do individuals react to perceived economic decline? Much of the literature tells us that certain segments of society are more vulnerable to supporting anti-democratic alternatives than others. The poor in particular seem to lead this group of "democracy's fickle friends"[25], as they are seen as having led the backlash against democratic governments during times of economic crises. The current economic crisis has, as noted, produced more impoverished Latin American citizens, thereby creating potentially problematic conditions for democracy in the region.

Other research has addressed the effects of national level economic conditions on democracy, focusing specifically on how underdevelopment, sluggish economic growth, and severe income inequality affect democratic consolidation. In their often-cited analysis of the relationship between economic development and democracy, Przeworski et al.[26] found that no democracy had collapsed where the country's per capita income exceeded $6,055. In Latin America, however, only Chile and Argentina currently lie above that threshold, meaning that most Latin American countries entered the current economic crisis without the "inoculation" protection of historically adequate levels of economic development.[27]

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[23] Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963).

[24] John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson, "Political Culture and Democratization: Evidence from Mexico, Nicaragua and Costa Rica," in *Political Culture and Democracy in Developing Countries*, ed. Larry Diamond (Boulder: Lynne Reinner, 1994), Mitchell A. Seligson and John A. Booth, "Political Culture and Regime Type: Evidence from Nicaragua and Costa Rica," *Journal of Politics* 55, no. 3 (1993).

[25] Nancy Gina Bermeo, *Ordinary People in Extraordinary Times: The Citizenry and the Breakdown of Democracy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003). Bermeo disputes this notion in her book, arguing that breakdown is largely elite driven.

[26] Adam Przeworski et al., "What Makes Democracies Endure?," *Journal of Democracy* 7, no. 1 (1996).

[27] Abby Córdova and Mitchell Seligson, "Economic Shocks and Democratic Vulnerabilities in Latin America and the Caribbean," *Latin American Politics and Society* 52, no. 2 (2010).

In terms of economic growth, Przeworski et al.[28] also found that "democracies in poorer countries are more likely to die when they experience economic crises than when their economies grow." As mentioned above, economic growth in Latin America has slowed to a crawl in most of the countries, placing most nations in Przeworski et al.'s danger zone. Finally, scholars have demonstrated that the grievances brought on by high levels of inequality can produce violent forms of political participation and potentially destabilize democracies.[29] Historically, Latin America has had the highest levels of income inequality of any region in the world.[30]

While widespread democratic breakdown seems inconceivable in Latin America after so many years of democratic stability, the breakdown in Honduras and the continued declines in Venezuela show that democracy remains fragile in some countries. Might the economic crisis undermine citizen support for key components of liberal democracy and weaken democratic stability?[31] In this round of the AmericasBarometer surveys, including over 40,000 interviews in twenty-six countries, we have the data to explore that very question.

Following a discussion of the economic crisis' impact on the region, the present chapter looked at how democracy has fared during the economic crisis in the Latin American and Caribbean region. It also analyzed the trends in democratic development in the last few years and concluded with a brief discussion of the theoretical relationship between economic crisis and democracy. In the following chapter, we will focus on citizen perceptions of the economic downturn as measured by the AmericasBarometer 2010. In Chapter III of this study we will examine how well the political culture of democracy has fared under economically difficult times. In that chapter we will examine three main variables, namely, support for democracy, system support, and life satisfaction, to understand how the region as a whole has weathered the present economic crisis.

[28] Adam Przeworski et al., *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-being in the World, 1950-1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 117.
[29] Edward N. Muller and Mitchell A. Seligson, "Insurgency and Inequality," *American Political Science Review* 81 (1987).
[30] UNDP, *Informe regional sobre desarrollo humano en América Latina y el Caribe* (New York: UNDP, 2010).
[31] Abby Córdova and Mitchell A. Seligson, "Economic Crisis and Democracy in Latin America," *PS: Political Science and Politics* (2009), Abby Córdova and Mitchell A. Seligson, "Economic Shocks and Democratic Vulnerabilities in Latin America and the Caribbean," *Latin American Politics and Society* 52, no. 2 (2010).

Chapter II. Citizens' Perceptions and Experiences During Hard Times in the Americas

Introduction

In the previous chapter we presented a general overview of the economic crisis in the world and in the Americas, followed by a summary of the trends in democracy since the 2008 AmericasBarometer study was conducted. In this chapter we concentrate on citizens' perceptions and experiences during hard times by attempting to answer the questions: 1) how did citizens perceive the crisis, 2) whom did they blame for it, and 3) how did citizens experience the crisis in the Americas*?* We first present a regional comparative assessment of citizens' perceptions of the crisis in the Americas. We then assess citizens' experiences with economic instability in the countries included in the 2010 AmericasBarometer survey.

Perceptions of the Magnitude of the Economic Crisis

In order to look specifically at the economic crisis, the Latin American Public Opinion Project developed two new survey items. This is the first time that these items have been used in the AmericasBarometer. They were developed especially for the 2010 round of surveys and were administered in every country except Haiti. The two items represent a sequence. First, respondents were asked if they perceived an economic crisis. Second, among those who thought that there was one, we asked who is to blame for it. The following is the text of the items themselves:

CRISIS1. Some say that our country is suffering a very serious economic crisis, others say that we are suffering a crisis but it is not very serious, while others say that there isn't any economic crisis. What do you think? **[Read options]** (1) We are suffering a very serious economic crisis (2) We are suffering a crisis but it is not very serious, or (3) No economic crisis
CRISIS2. Who is the most to blame for the current economic crisis in our country from among the following: **[READ LIST, MARK ONLY ONE RESPONSE]** (01) The previous administration (02) The current administration (03) Ourselves, the [people of this country] (04) The rich people of our country (05) The problems of democracy (06) The rich countries **[Accept also Unites States, England, France, Germany, and Japan]** (07) The economic system of the country, or (08) Never have thought about it (77) **[Don't read]** Other

Because questions about the economic crisis were not asked in Haiti (where the questionnaire focused on the earthquake), the analysis presented in this chapter is based only on the 25 countries where questions about the economic crisis were asked. Looking at the Americas as a whole, we can see in Figure II.1 that most citizens in the Americas perceive an economic crisis, be it serious or not very serious.

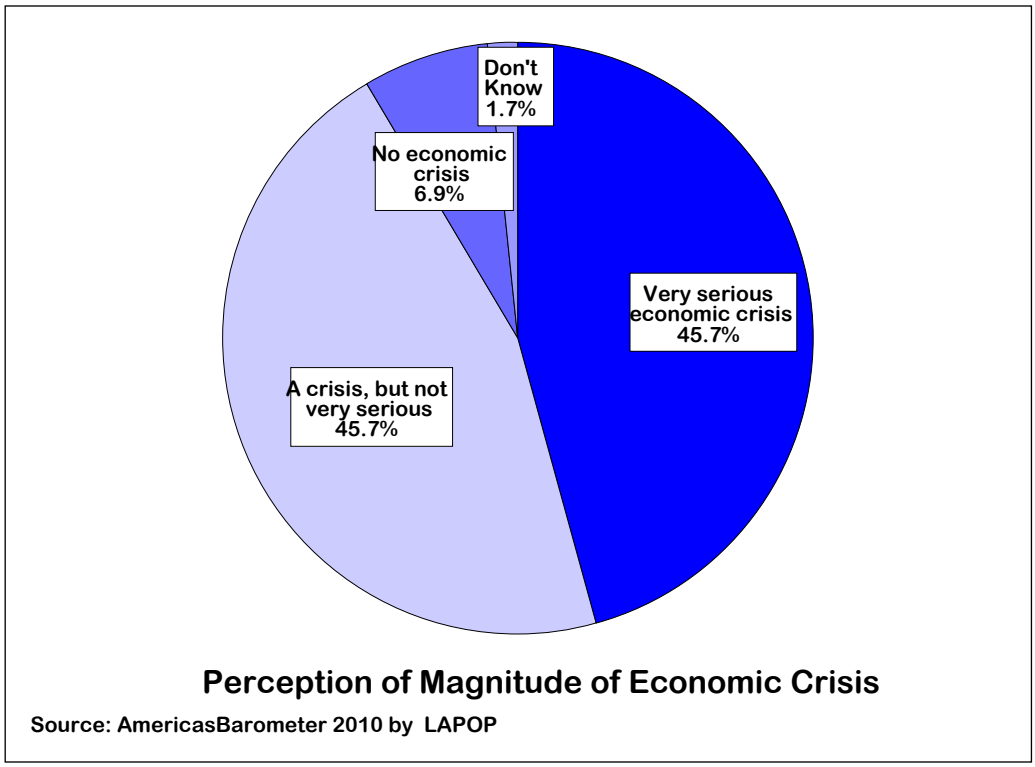

Figure II.1. Perceptions of the Economic Crisis in the Americas, 2010

We see in Figure II.2 that the percentage of citizens who perceive a crisis is highest in Jamaica, Honduras, Nicaragua, the United States, and El Salvador, although in all of the countries a very high percentage of citizens perceives a crisis.

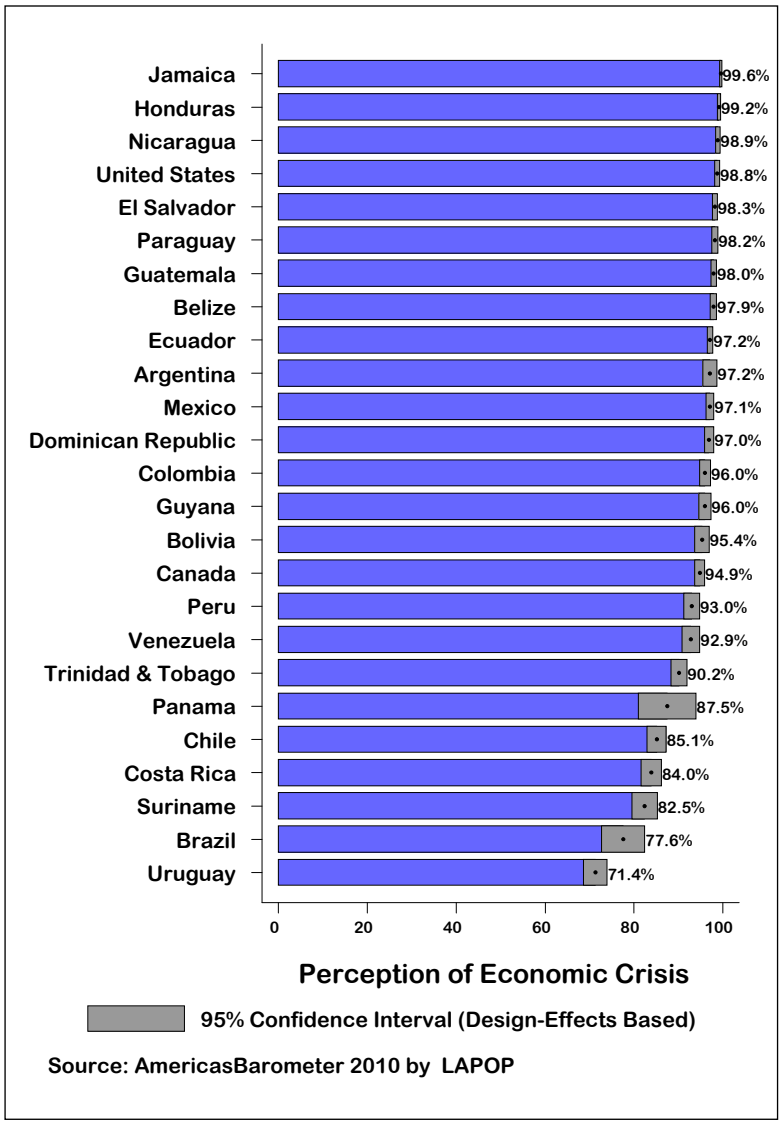

Figure II.2. Percentage of the Population that Perceives an Economic Crisis, 2010

Who is to Blame for the Economic Crisis?

In this section we examine to whom citizens attribute responsibility for the economic crisis. The results for the Americas as a whole are provided first.

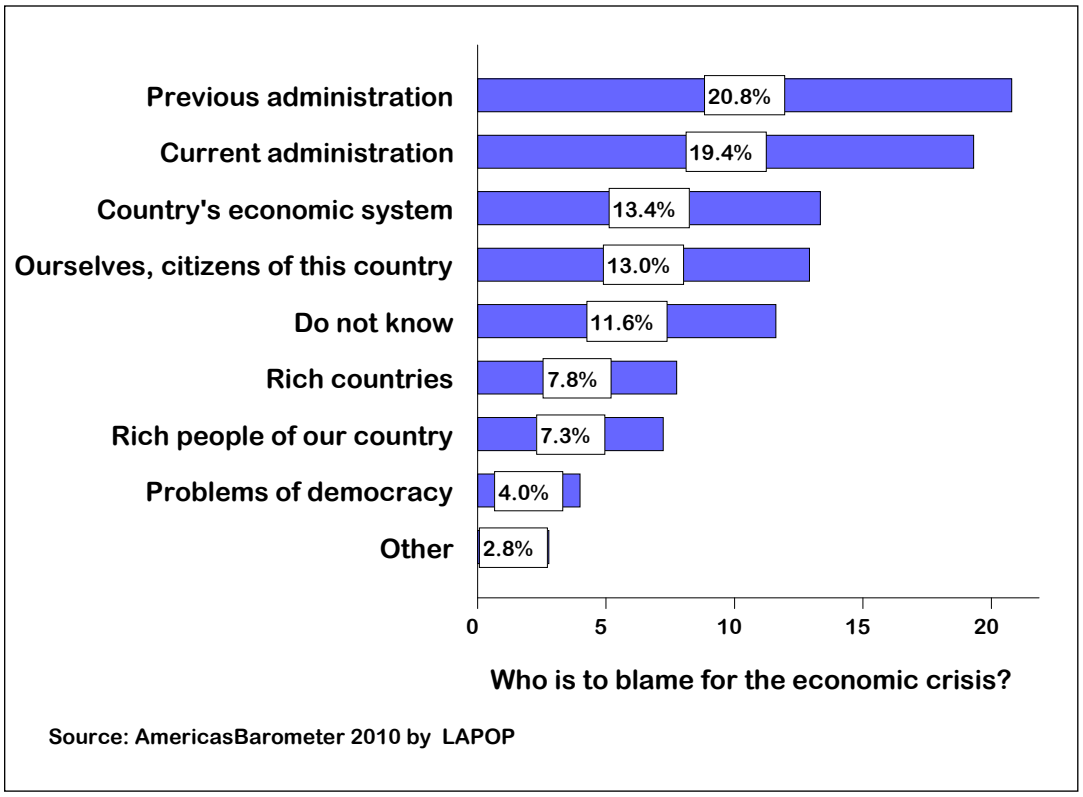

Figure II.3. Who is to Blame for the Economic Crisis? According to Citizens in the Americas Who Perceive a Crisis, 2010

The majority of citizens in the Americas who perceive a crisis blame either the current or previous administration for the economic crisis (Figure II.3). Fewer than 10 percent of citizens who perceive a crisis blame the "rich" or advanced industrial countries, contrary to what one might have expected, especially in the Latin American context. Many individuals in these countries, instead, blame themselves for the economic crisis. We do, however, find that more politically knowledgeable citizens are more likely to blame "rich countries."

We examine these results by the major regions in the Americas, with the results shown in Figure II.4. In every region, we see that the top four objects of blame are the current (i.e., incumbent) and previous governments, the economic system of the country, and citizens of the country. In every region except the Caribbean, by far the most popular targets of blame are the current and previous administrations, while in the Caribbean citizens are more likely to blame themselves than the previous government. In no part of Latin America and the Caribbean does the percentage of citizens blaming rich countries exceed a tenth of respondents.[1] These results confirm that citizens perceived the economic crisis in political terms, and that they were focused inwardly, on domestic politics, rather than outwardly, on foreign affairs.

[1] Arguably, the high percentage of respondents in the United States and Canada who blame the government, their country's economic system, or their fellow citizens indicates that most citizens in these two countries implicitly do blame "rich countries."

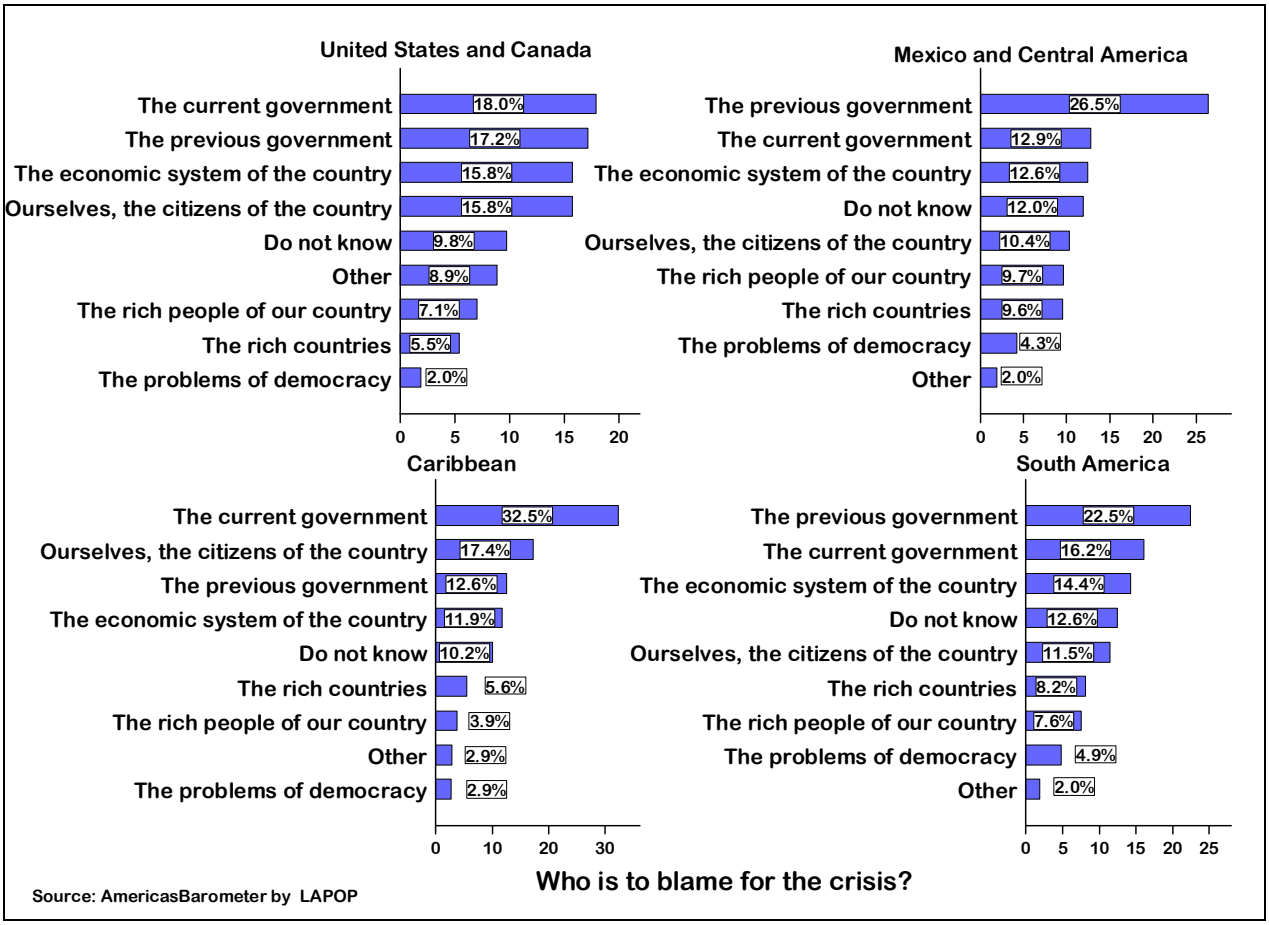

Figure II.4. Who is to Blame for the Economic Crisis? Results by Region, 2010

Personal Experiences with Economic Instability

In the previous section, we analyzed the magnitude of the economic crisis and who is to blame for it. Here, we explore how citizens experience the crisis.

Job Loss

The questions used in this section are the following:

OCUP1B1. Have you lost your job in the past two years? **[Read options]**
(1) Yes, you lost your job but found a new one.
(2) Yes, you lost your job and have not found a new one
(3) No, you did not lose your job
(4) No, you did not work because you decided not to work or because of disabilities

OCUP1B2. Besides you, has anyone in your household lost his or her job in the past two years? **[Read options]**
(1) Yes (2) No

The results for the Americas as a whole are shown in Figure II.5 below. While three-quarters of the population did not report having lost a job, about 7% reported having lost one but found a new one, and 8% of respondents had lost a job but not found a new one. The remainder reported not having a job for personal reasons. Over 16% of respondents reported that at least one other member of their households had lost a job.

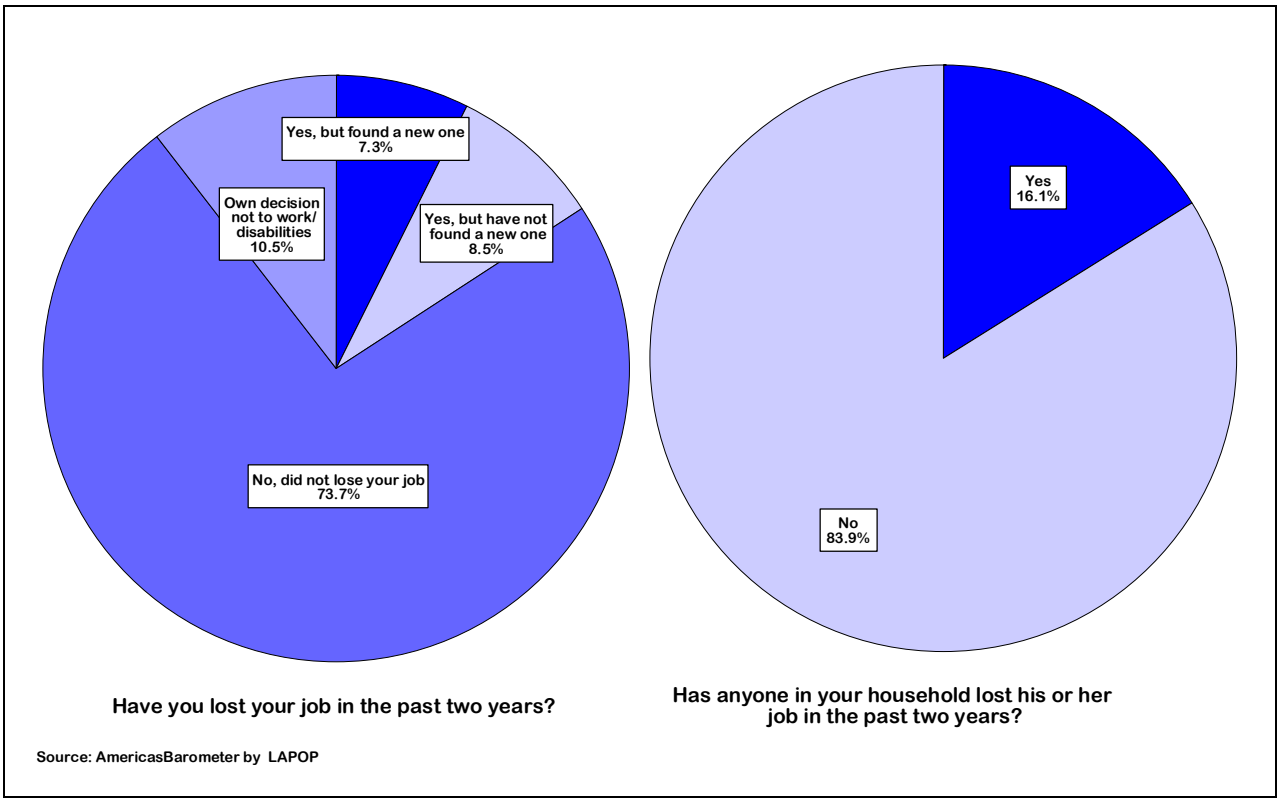

Figure II.5. Job Loss in the Americas, 2010

To get an overall picture of job loss, a composite indicator variable was computed based on these two items, which shows if at least one household member lost his or her job in the past two years (see Figure II.6).

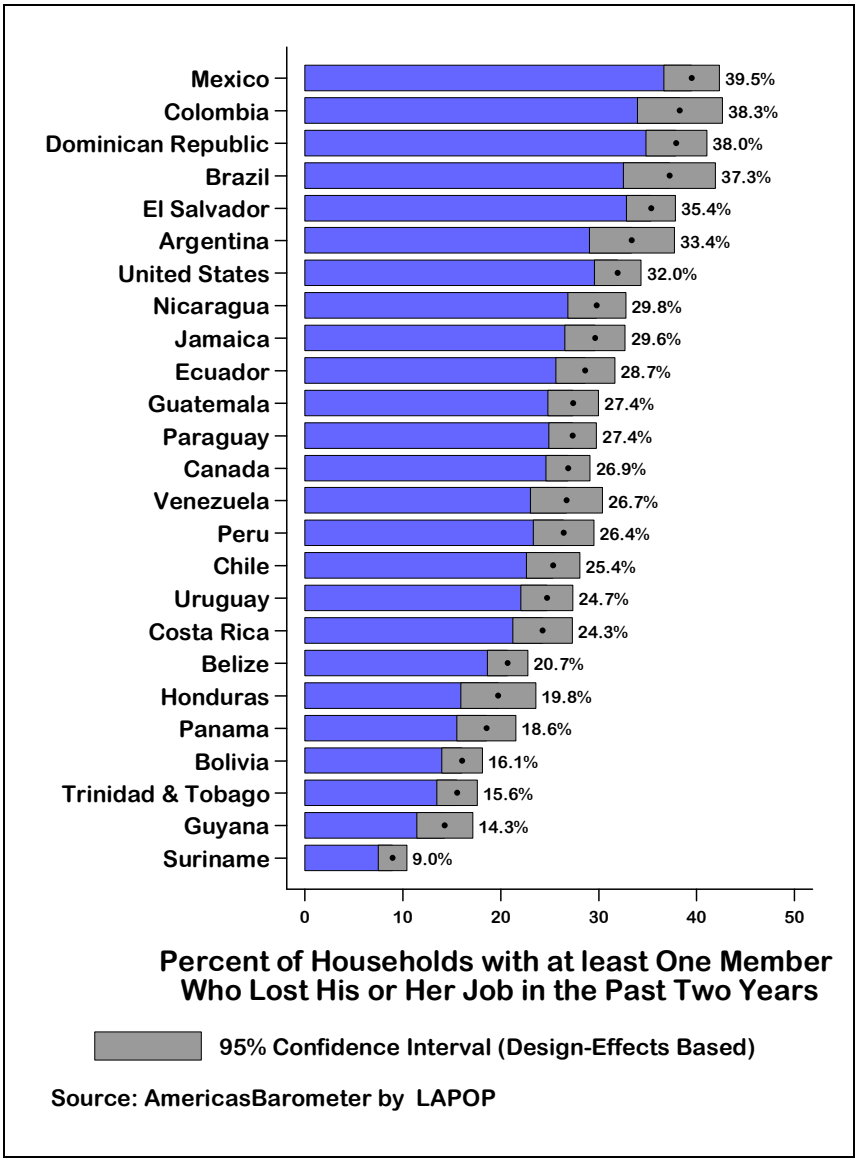

Figure II.6. Percentage of Households with at Least One Member Who Lost a Job in the Past Two Years, 2010

As Figure II.6 displays, Mexico, Colombia, the Dominican Republic and Brazil have the highest percentages of households where at least one family member lost his or her job in the past two years in the Americas. Percentages in all these four countries rise above 36%. At the other extreme, fewer than 16% of households were affected by this problem in Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and Suriname. Across the region, 27% of households in the Americas have at least one member who has lost a job in the past two years.

Reported Decrease in Household Income

We now examine reports by our respondents about changes in their household incomes. We asked the following question:

Q10E. Over the past two years, has the income of your household: **[Read options]**
(1) Increased? **[Go to Q11]**
(2) Remained the same? **[Go to Q11]**
(3) Decreased? **[Go to Q10F]**

The results for the Americas as a whole (see Figure II.7) show that about half of the respondents say that their incomes have remained the same, with nearly 30% saying that their incomes have declined, and one-fifth saying that it has increased.

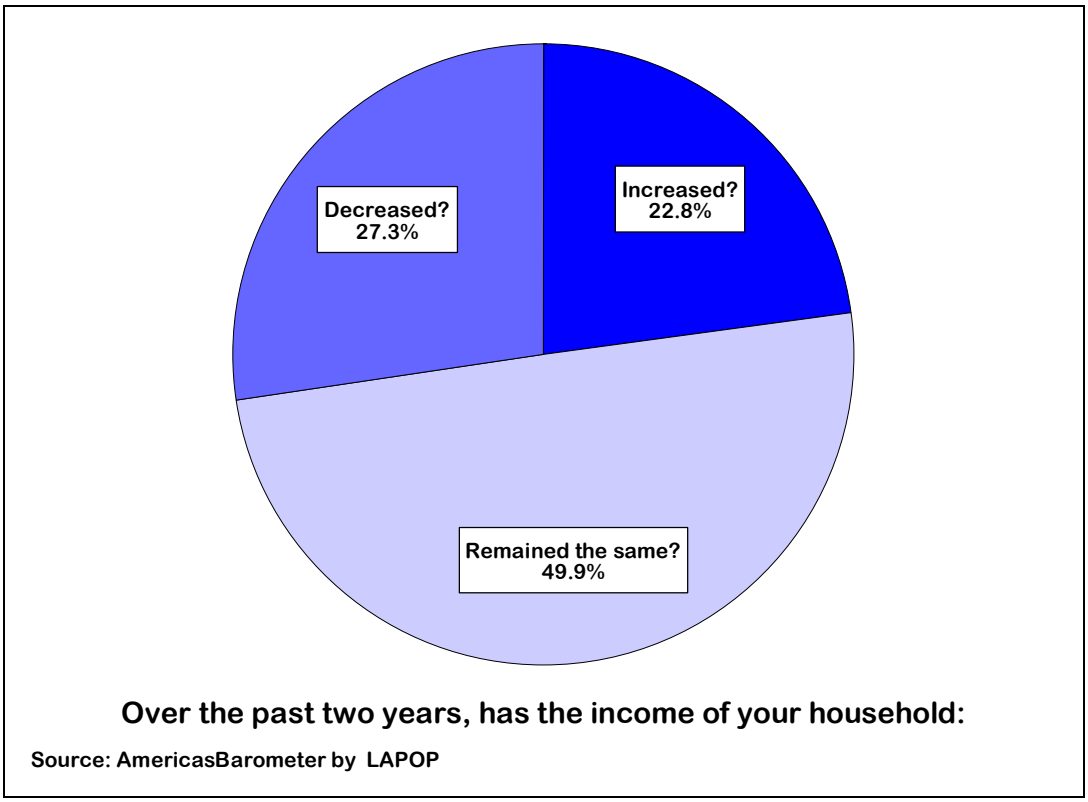

Figure II.7. Reported Household Income Changes in the Americas, 2008-2010

Figure II.8 shows these results by country, ranked by the percentage who say that their incomes have declined. As can be seen, there is wide variation in the Americas, with up to half of respondents in some countries reporting a decline in income, whereas in other countries the situation is the reverse, with up to half of respondents reporting an increase in income. These findings reinforce our argument that the economic downturn has affected countries in very different ways in the Americas.

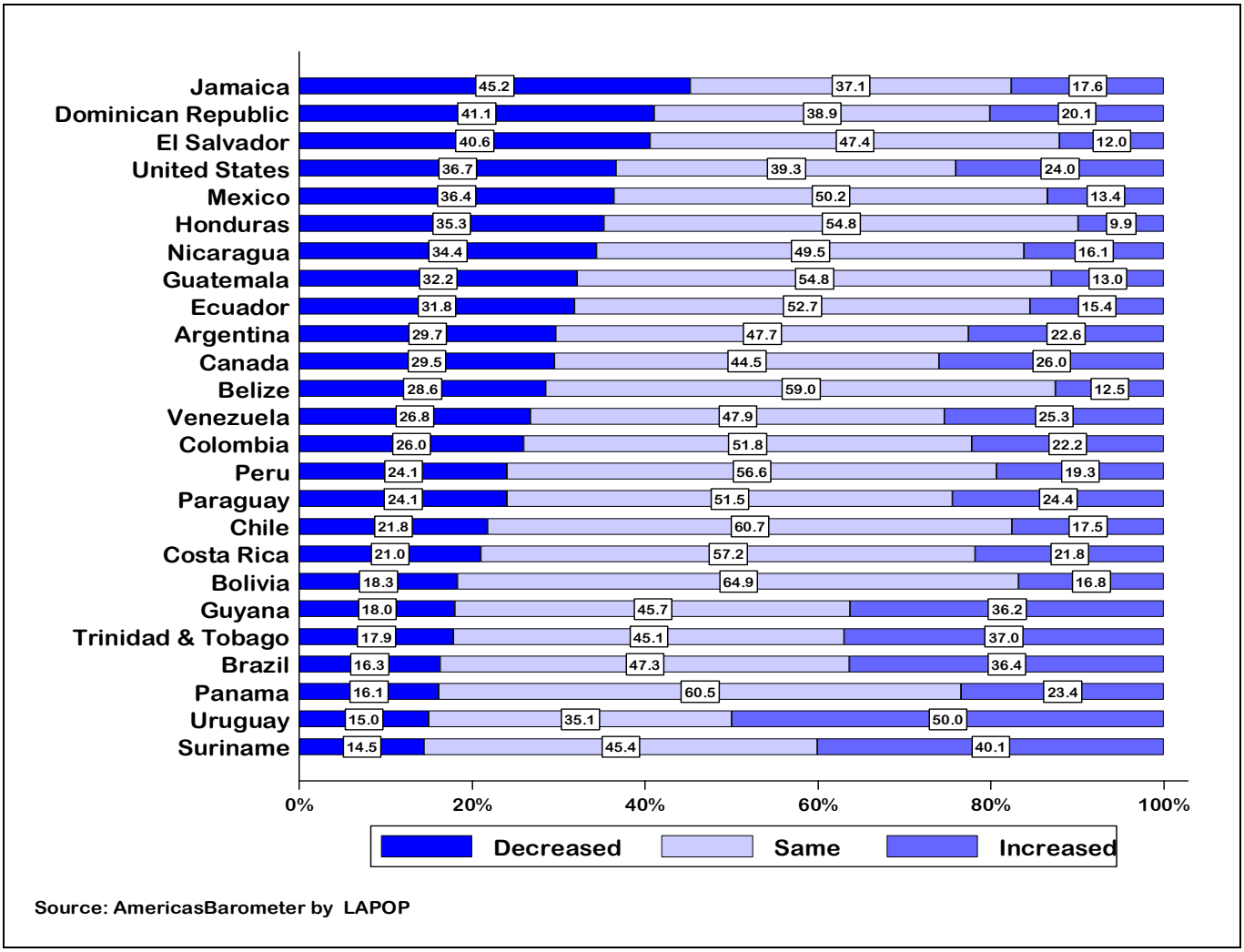

Figure II.8. Has Your Household Income Decreased, Remained the Same, or Increased over the Past Two Years?

Who Was Most Affected by Economic Hardship?

As shown in Figure II.9, a greater percentage of individuals living in rural areas reported that their household income decreased over the past two years in the Americas as a whole. Moreover, Figure II.9 shows that as family wealth declines, the percentage of individuals reporting a decline in income increases; the poorest individuals in the region (those in the first quintile of wealth shown in the figure) are most likely to have reported suffering a decline in their household income. While in prior LAPOP studies we have used an indicator of wealth based on an additive index of ownership of household goods, in this study we implement a new indicator using the same variables, but based on a different methodology for measuring relative wealth, one based on Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The methodology allows ranking individuals from poor to rich taking into account local economic conditions.[2]

[2] For more information on how this indicator was computed and its reliability, see: Córdova, Abby B. 2009 "Methodological Note: Measuring Relative Wealth using Household Asset Indicators." In AmericasBarometer *Insights* Series, 2009. (http://sitemason.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/AmericasBarometerInsightsSeries).

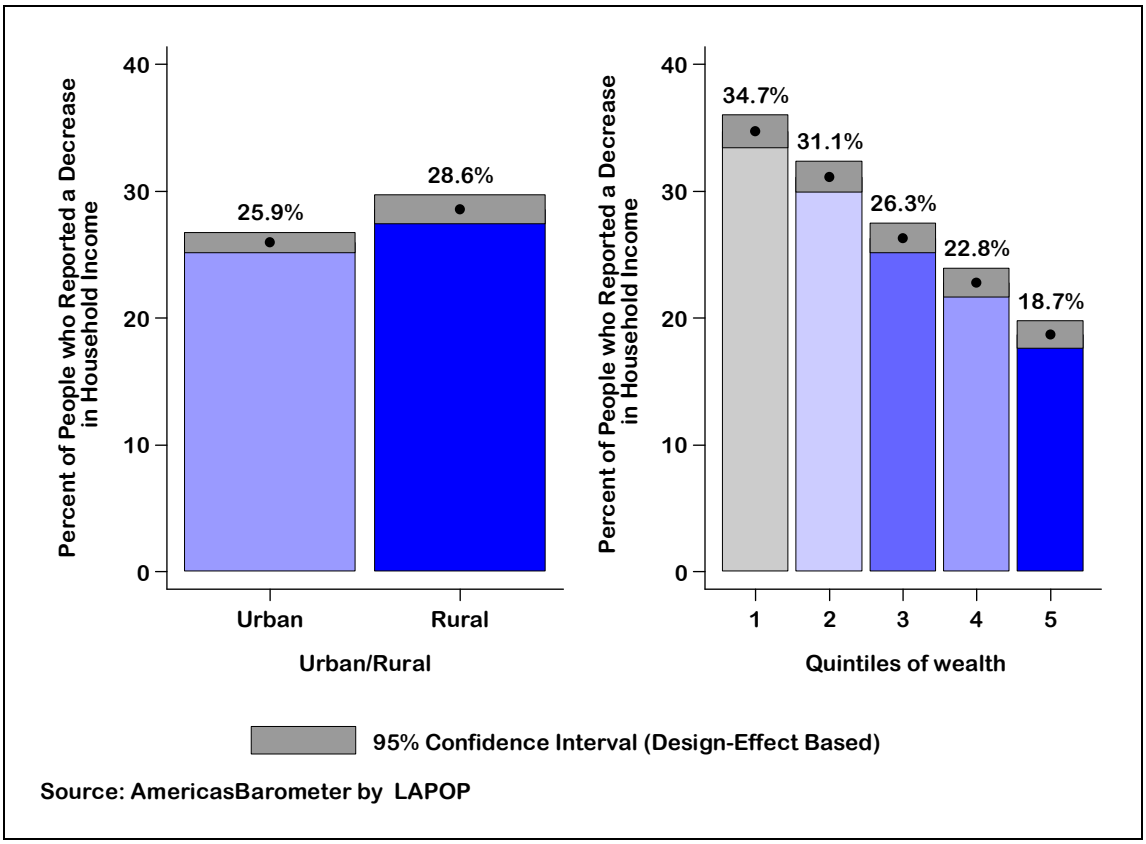

Figure II.9. Percentage of Individuals in the Americas Reporting a Decrease in Their Household Income by Area of Residence and Level of Wealth, 2010

Perceptions of Both the Personal and National Economy

The AmericasBarometer traditionally reports on respondents' perceptions of their personal and national economic situation. We ask respondents to consider their personal and national economic situations currently and as compared to a year prior. Below are the items used in the survey:

SOCT1. How would you describe **the country's** economic situation? Would you say that it is very good, good, neither good nor bad, bad or very bad?
(1) Very good (2) Good (3) Neither good nor bad (fair) (4) Bad (5) Very bad
(88) Doesn't know (98) Doesn't Answer

SOCT2. Do you think that **the country's** current economic situation is better than, the same as or worse than it was 12 months ago?
(1) Better (2) Same (3) Worse (88) Doesn't know (98) Doesn't Answer

IDIO1. How would you describe **your** overall economic situation? Would you say that it is very good, good, neither good nor bad, bad or very bad?
(1) Very good (2) Good (3) Neither good nor bad (fair) (4) Bad (5) Very bad
(88) Doesn't know (98) Doesn't Answer

IDIO2. Do you think that **your** economic situation is better than, the same as, or worse than it was 12 months ago?
(1) Better (2) Same (3) Worse (88) Doesn't know (98) Doesn't Answer

We now couple these items with the one analyzed above asking about reports of decreases in household income. As can be seen in Figure II.10, those who perceive their personal or economic situation to be very bad are far more likely to have experienced a loss of household income when compared to those who are reporting that their personal economic situation is very good. The same findings hold, a bit less sharply, for the perception of the national economy and also for perceptions of personal and national economic situations when compared to a year earlier.

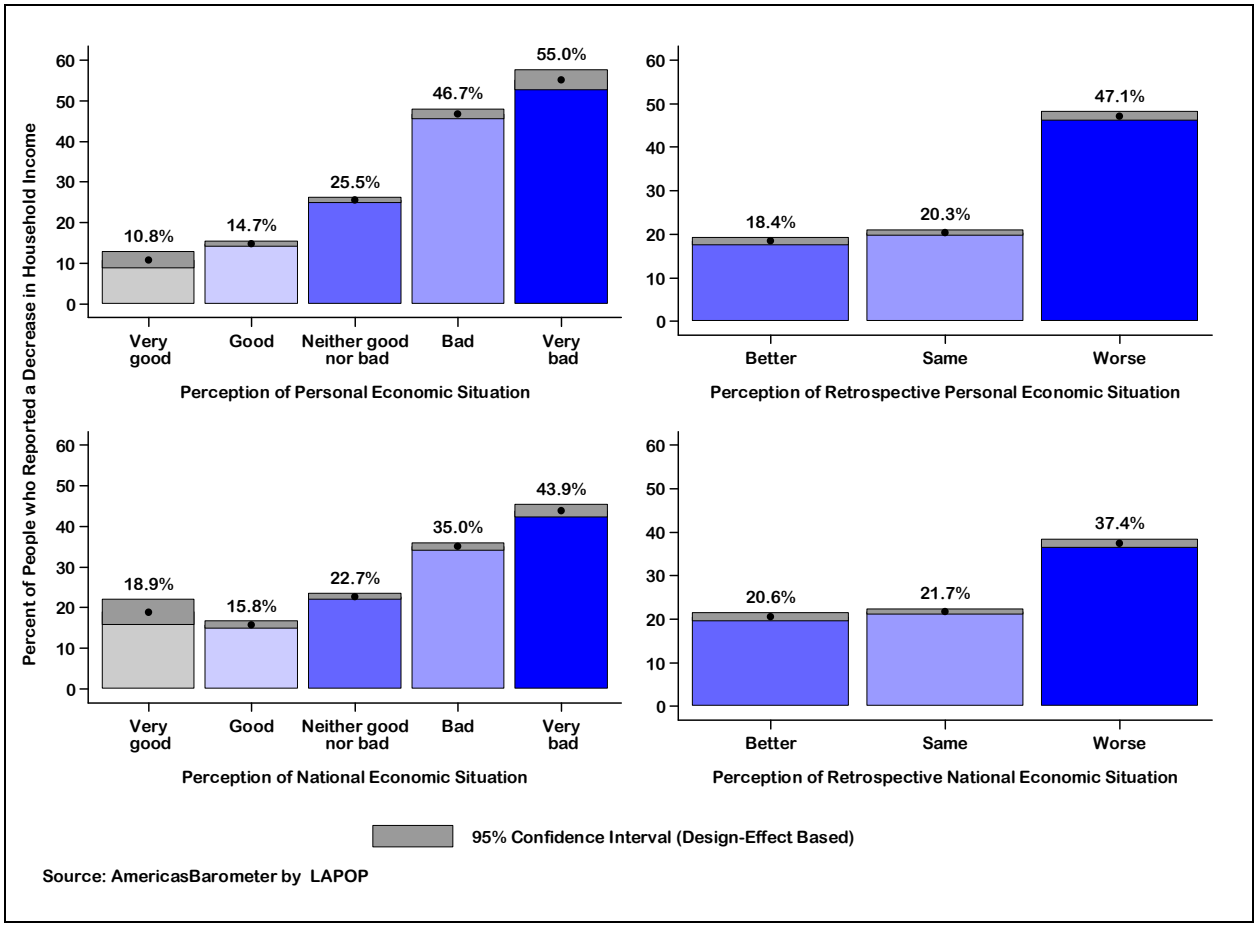

Figure II.10. Relationship between Citizens' Experiences and Perceptions of the Economy During Hard Times in the Americas, 2010

We also assess the relationship between perception of the national economic situation and of economic crisis in 2010. As Figure II.11 shows, there is a very strong relationship between the two, such that citizens who perceive a severe economic crisis give the national economy much lower ratings than those who perceive no crisis. This suggests that perceptions of the national economy are a reasonable proxy for economic crisis attitudes in years for which no questions about the economic crisis were asked.

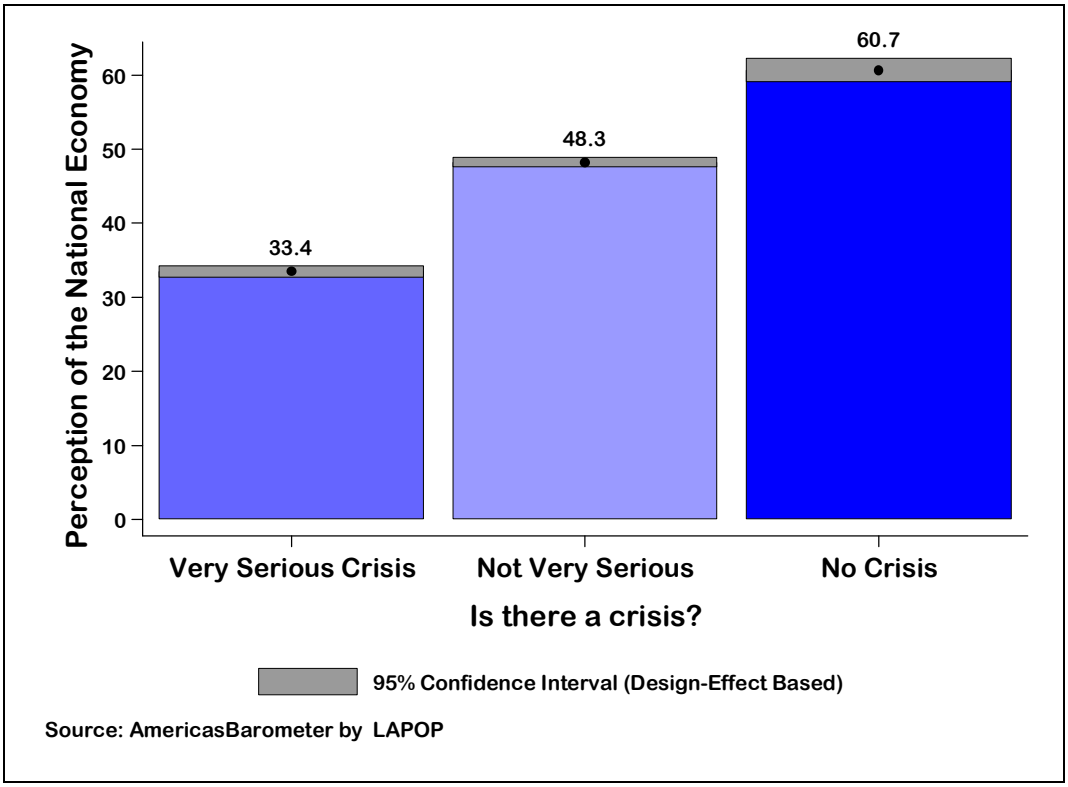

Figure II.11. Relationship between Perceptions of the Crisis and of the National Economy, 2010

Trends in Economic Perceptions

How have perceptions of the national economy changed over time? Since the battery of questions on the economic crisis was administered for the first time in 2010, it is impossible to know how public opinion and experiences on these topics in particular may have changed. However, for many years the AmericasBarometer has administered the questions described in the previous section. Following the LAPOP standard, responses to these questions were recoded to run from 0 to 100, where a score of "0" represents the perception that either the national or the personal economy are "very bad," and a score of "100" represents the perception that either the national or the personal economy are "very good."

We examine average reported perceptions of the national economy, as reported in response to SOCT1, in every country in which this question was administered in 2008 or 2010 (see Figure II.12).[3] Strikingly, the percentage of respondents reporting that the economy was either good or very good actually rose between 2008 and 2010, while the percentage reporting that the economy was either bad or very bad declined over the same period.

[3] This question was not administered in Canada in 2008. In addition, the 2010 data include Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, countries that were added to the survey in that year.

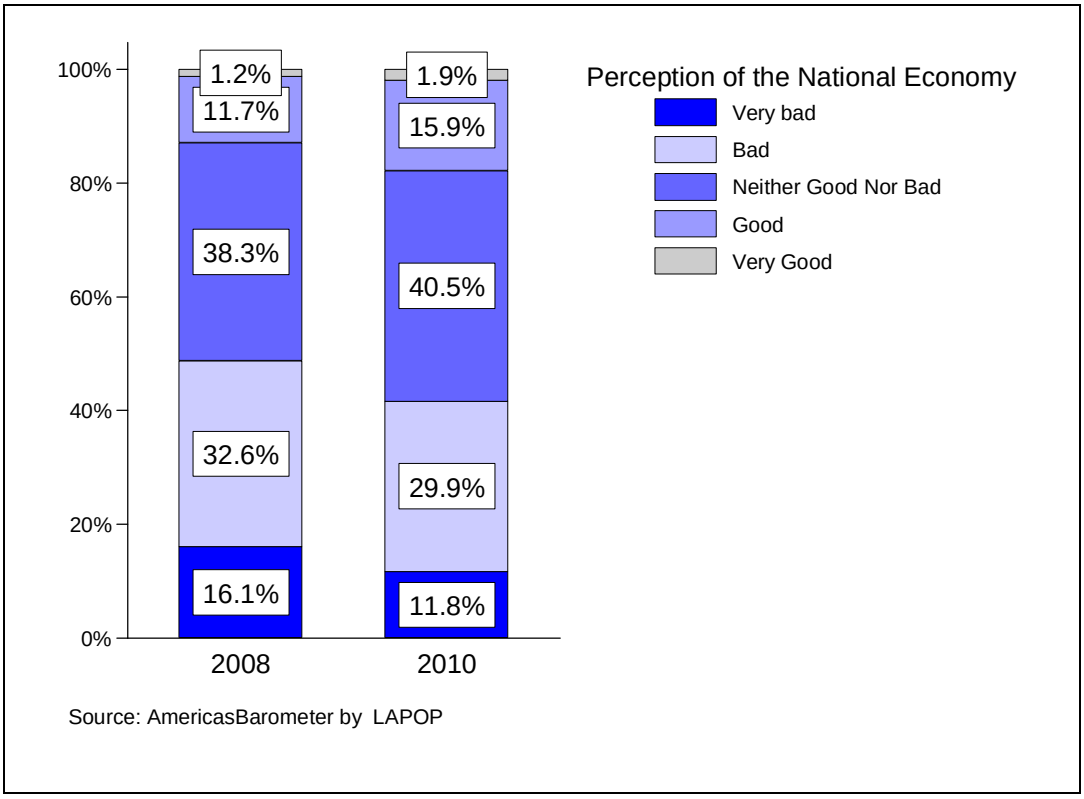

Figure II.12. Perception of the National Economy, 2008-2010

How do changes in perceptions of the national economy vary from country to country? The pattern of results we found in Figure II.2 suggests that perceptions of the national economy may vary a great deal from one country to another.

We examine changes between 2008 and 2010 in average perceptions of the national economy in the Americas in Figure II.13.[4] Here, we find that changes in perceptions of the national economy varied across the Americas. The citizens of thirteen of the twenty-three countries for which we have data in both years reported levels of satisfaction with the national economy that were higher – and statistically significantly so – in 2010 than in 2008. These countries include Uruguay, Brazil, Bolivia, Ecuador, Paraguay, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Peru, Nicaragua, Panama, Chile, Guyana, and (perhaps most surprisingly, in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake, though perceptions of the economy were already extremely low prior to the quake) Haiti. Meanwhile, in five countries perceptions of the national economy experienced statistically significant declines in this period: Colombia, Argentina, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, and Mexico. In general, however, we see improvement in citizens' perceptions in most countries.

[4] This is the only analysis in this chapter that includes Haiti.

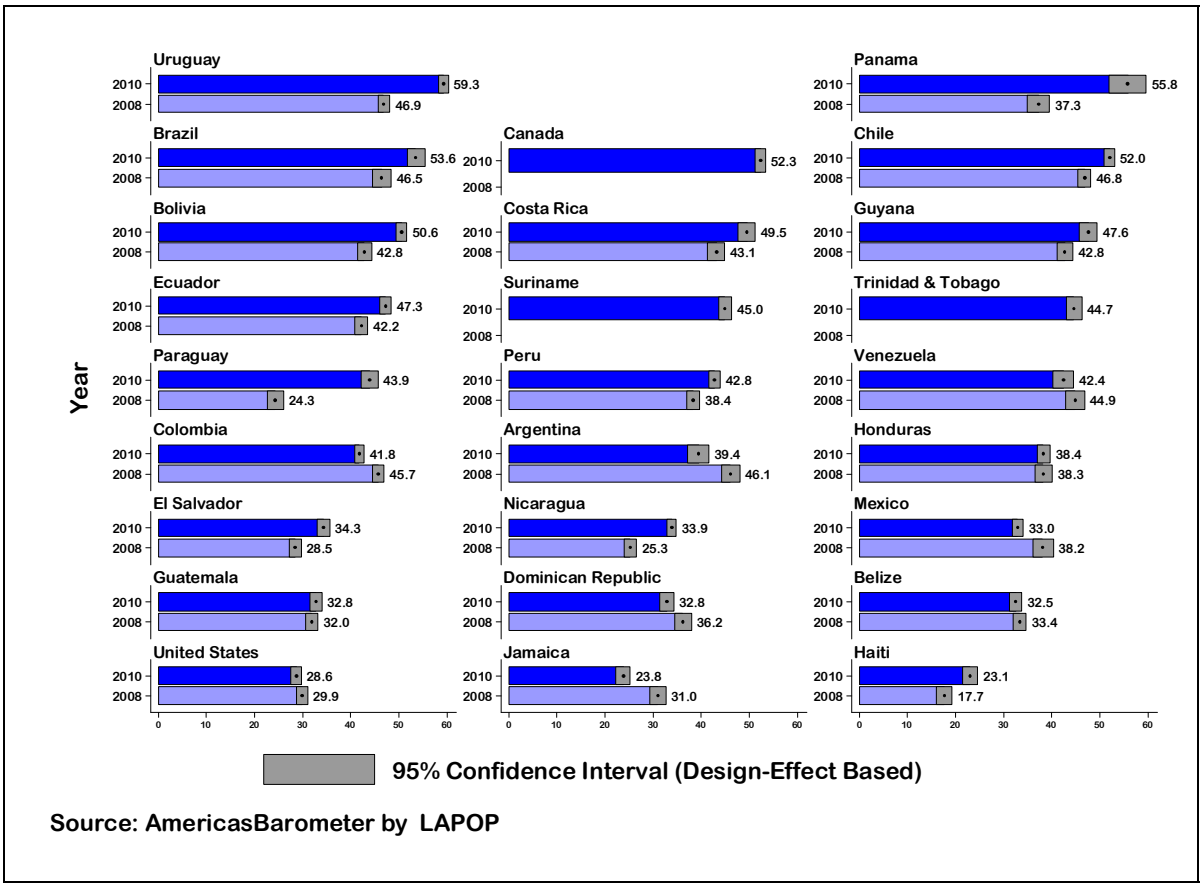

Figure II.13. Perception of the National Economy in Comparative Perspective, 2008-2010

The improvement over time in economic perceptions may seem surprising, especially given the high percentage of citizens in 2010 who believe that their country is in economic crisis. What these data reveal is that *in spite of the crisis that was evident to most people*, many governments in the region did a good job of convincing citizens that the national economy was fundamentally sound, despite individuals' current economic misfortunes. Moreover, since many economies were indeed recovering in 2010 at the time the surveys were carried out, citizens sensed this recovery and reported it in their responses to the survey question.

Trends in personal experiences with the economy, what political scientists refer to as "ideotropic" reactions, are in line with perceptions of the national economy. In Figure II.14 we assess changes in the perception of the personal economy over time.[5] We find a similar pattern to that for perceptions of the national economy: an increase in the number of respondents in the Americas who report that their personal economies are doing well, and a decrease in the number of respondents who report that they are doing poorly.

[5] Again, the 2008 data exclude Canada, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

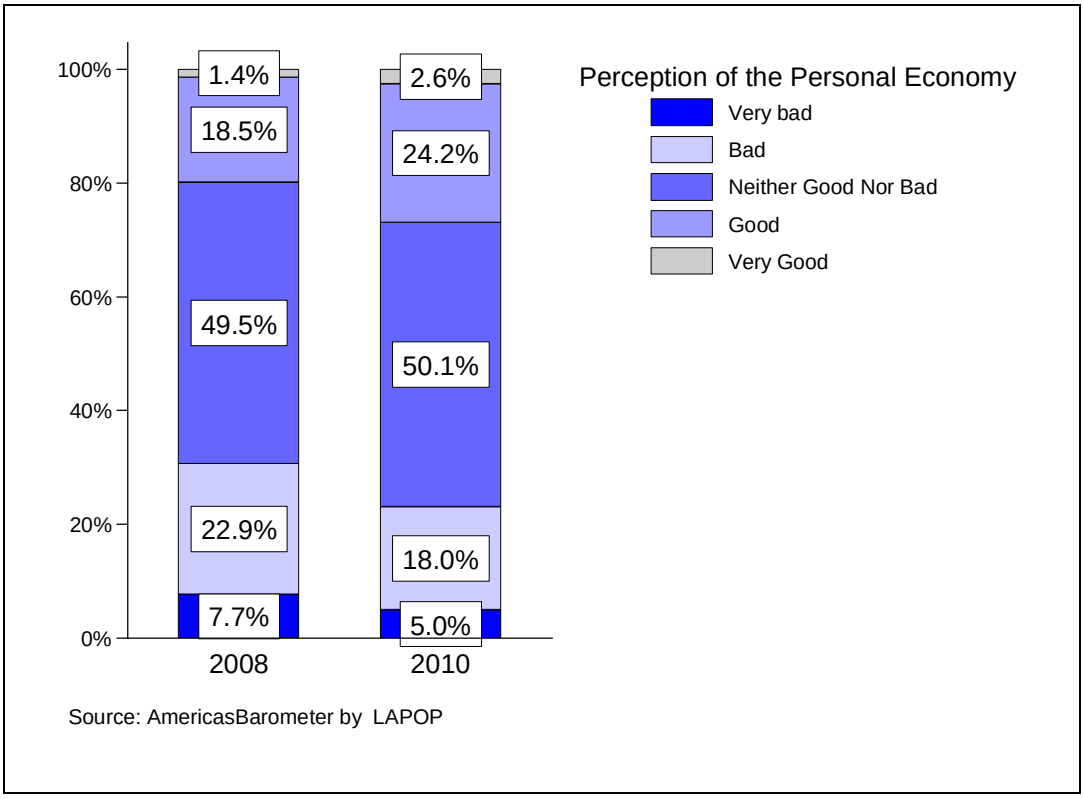

Figure II.14. Perception of the Personal Economic Situation in the Americas, 2008 vs. 2010

Conclusion

This second chapter has addressed citizens' perceptions of the economic crisis in the Americas as well as the extent to which this downturn has affected their personal economic situation. Results indicate that the vast majority of citizens in the western hemisphere perceive an economic crisis in 2010, although there are some differences across countries. A serious crisis is perceived with greatest intensity in countries such as Jamaica, Honduras, Nicaragua and the United States. Respondents were also asked whom they blamed for the economic crisis; four out of ten citizens responded that they held either the previous or the current administration responsible. In over-time perspective, however, the results become more nuanced, as we find that perceptions of the national economies have actually improved in most countries in the Americas in recent years.

Apart from perceptions of the crisis, this chapter has also examined personal experiences related to the economic downturn. In this regard, we have observed that 27% of households have seen at least one of their family members losing their jobs, and in the same percentage of households income has fallen. Nonetheless, the economic crisis has not affected all citizens equally. Citizens in rural areas and in the poorest quintiles of wealth have been more likely to experience a reduction in their incomes.

Chapter III. Democratic Values in Hard Times

Introduction

Thus far, we have seen how Latin American citizens have fared during the great economic recession that began in 2008 in relation to their experiences with unemployment, household income, and their perceptions of national and personal economic well-being. In this chapter, our objective is to go a step further and see how key attitudes toward democracy have fared during these hard times.

Bad economic times have often been linked in the academic and journalistic literature to challenges to democracy. For example, some research suggests that poor individuals, whom we have seen above were hard hit by income declines in the current crisis afflicting wide swaths of the region, are particularly vulnerable to increasing support for anti-democratic alternatives during hard economic times.[1] Others suggest that national economic underdevelopment and low growth rates also affect democracy, while poor national economic indicators may affect individuals' support for key components of democracy.[2]

Given the severity of the most recent economic recession in many regions of the world, and to a lesser extent in Latin America and the Caribbean, we want to know how citizens' democratic values have fared during this difficult period. Has the crisis been associated with declines in support for democracy as a system of government and satisfaction with democracy? Furthermore, has system support (i.e., political legitimacy) declined when times got tough, or have citizens rallied around governments that have dealt effectively with the crisis? And most importantly, do Latin American citizens express greater authoritarian preferences under crisis conditions? We saw in the previous chapter that the economic recession had different effects on different regions in the Americas. Through the analysis of the AmericasBarometer 2010, we will take a more detailed look into these conundrums by examining the results by region.

Under hard economic conditions worldwide, we want to know how the citizens of the Americas perceived the crisis. We begin by looking at the most general of all measures, that of subjective well-being, commonly referred to "life satisfaction," or "happiness." We do this because research suggests that economic conditions are linked to citizens' feelings about their lives in general, with those individuals who experience economic hard times presumably expressing low levels of subjective well-being, while those individuals who enjoy better economic conditions expressing greater happiness.[3] On the other hand, the same research takes note of contradictions between economic conditions and life satisfaction or happiness.[4]

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[1] But see the work of Bermeo, who reviews this thesis and ultimately rejects it: Bermeo, *Ordinary People in Extraordinary Times: The Citizenry and the Breakdown of Democracy*.

[2] Córdova and Seligson, "Economic Shocks and Democratic Vulnerabilities in Latin America and the Caribbean"; Ethan B. Kapstein and Nathan Converse, *The Fate of Young Democracies* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Przeworski et al., *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-being in the World, 1950-1990*.

[3] Frey S. Bruno and Alois Stutzer, *Happiness and Economics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002); Ronald Inglehart and Hans-Dieter Klingemann, "Genes, Culture, Democracy, and Happiness," in *Culture and Subjective Well-Being*, ed. Ed Diener and Eunkook M. Suh (Cambridge, Mass MIT Press, 2000).

[4] Carol Graham, *Happiness Around the World : The Paradox of Happy Peasants and Miserable Millionaires* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Carol Graham, Eduardo Lora, and Inter-American Development Bank., *Paradox and*

When we look at the Americas, how satisfied with their lives are the citizens of the Americas now in the aftermath of the economic recession compared to two years ago? To respond to this question we examine two survey items, one of which asks people about their current happiness and the other of which asks them how happy they were in 2008, the period before the crisis had become full-blown. We subtract from their reports of their current happiness their reported level of happiness in 2008 and compute national averages for each of the countries in the Americas. The questions asked are shown below:

[GIVE CARD "A"]
LS6. On this card there is a ladder with steps numbered 0 to 10. 0 is the lowest step and represents the worst life possible for you. 10 is the highest step and represents the best life possible for you.
On what step of the ladder do you feel **at this moment**? **Please choose the ladder that represents best your opinion. [Point out the number on the card that represents "the worst life possible" and the number that represents "the best life possible." Indicate to the interviewee that he/she can choose an intermediate score]**.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	88	98
Worst life possible										**Best life possible**	**Doesn't Know**	**Doesn't Answer**

LS6A. On which step would you say you stood two years ago, that is to say in 2008?

Figure III.1 shows that there is an even split in the Americas, with about half the countries having citizens who report, on average, that they are happier today than they were in 2008, while about half of the countries have citizens who report, on average that they are less happy in 2010 than in 2008. Examining Figure III.1, we see that Uruguayans, Guyanese, Brazilians, and Paraguayans are, on average, those who report the greatest increases in satisfaction with their lives in 2010 over 2008. In stark contrast, Jamaicans report that their happiness in 2010 is sharply lower than they report it was in 2008. Other countries in which average reported happiness in 2010 is lower than respondents said they had in 2008 are Belize, Haiti, El Salvador, the United States, El Salvador, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Honduras.[5] Thus, we have our first hint that even though the economic crisis affected the Americas in many ways, it was not associated with a hemisphere-wide decline in life satisfaction/happiness. But this finding is very general, and in the following section we examine a set of items designed to measure more specifically citizens' perceptions of the economic recession.

Perception: Measuring Quality of Life in Latin America (Washington, D.C.: Inter-American Development Bank: Brookings Institution Press, 2009), Carol Graham and Stefano Pettinato, *Happiness and Hardship: Opportunity and Insecurity in New Market Economies* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2001).

[5] To be clear, we are not comparing here the 2008 and 2010 survey, but two items from the 2010 survey that report on current (2010) and prior (2008) happiness. We do not have a panel design in this survey (we have repeated cross-sections) and do not know the actual level of happiness reported in 2008 for those interviewed in 2010.

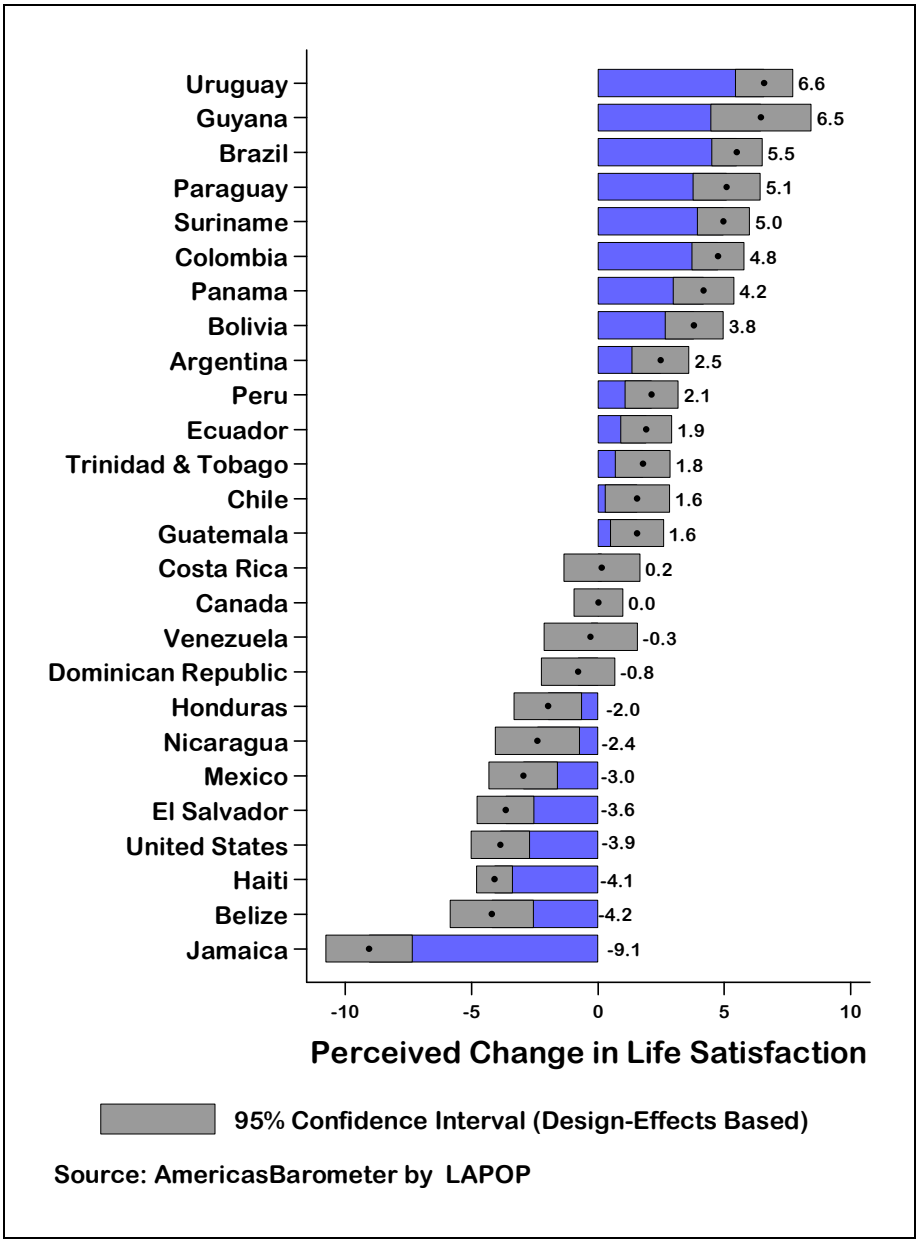

Figure III.1. National Average Increases and Decreases in Reported Life Satisfaction, 2010 vs. 2008

A different view of these data looks a bit more carefully at each segment of the survey population to show the percentages that expressed declines or increases in life satisfaction, and those that reported no difference between 2008 and 2010. The results are shown in Figure III.2. At one extreme, in Jamaica over half of the population expressed a decline in life satisfaction. At the other extreme, in Brazil, Uruguay, and Suriname fewer than one-fifth reported a decline, and just under one-half an increase.

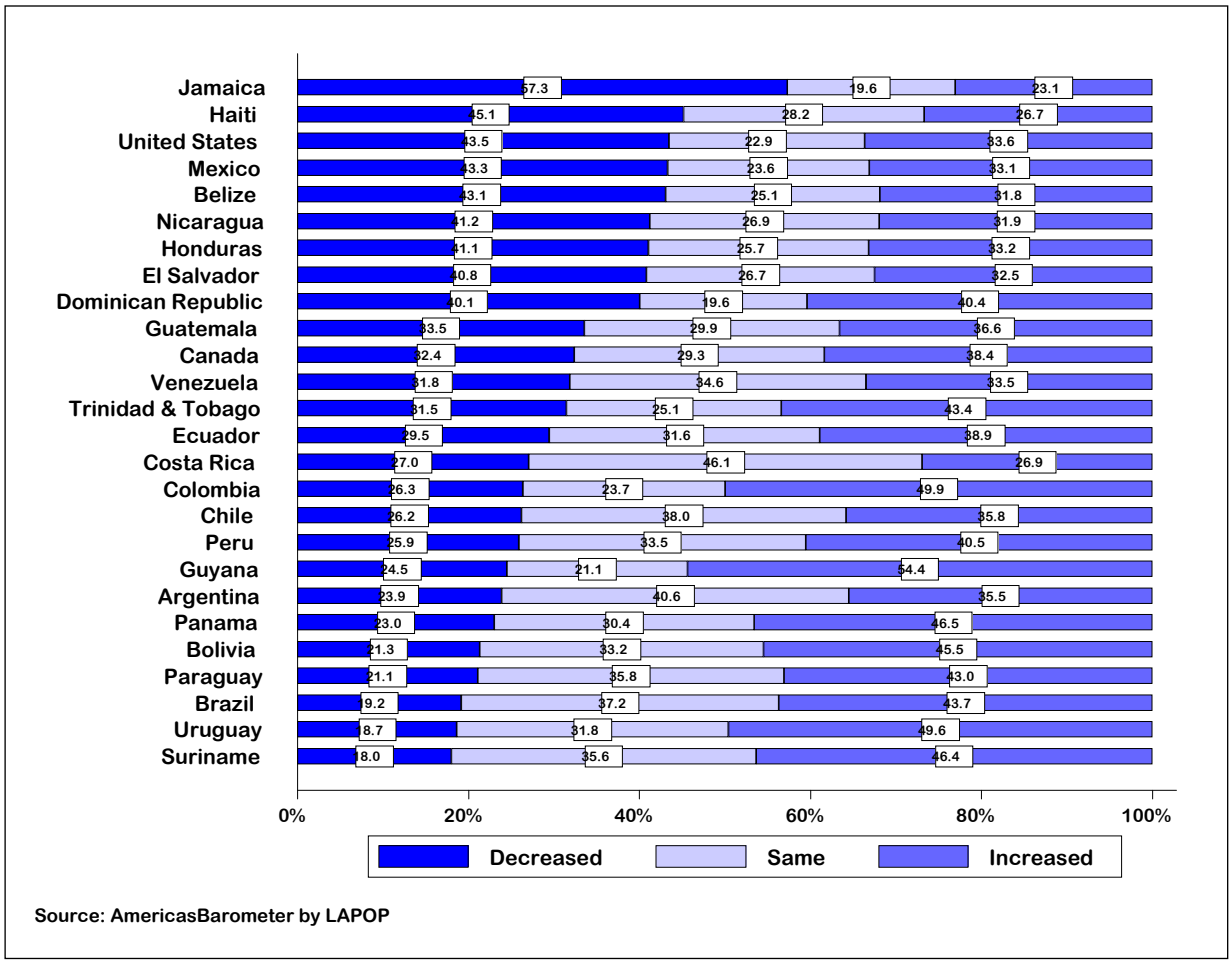

Figure III.2. Perceptions of Changes in Life Satisfaction, 2008 vs. 2010

We now examine how life satisfaction changes relate to respondents' evaluations of their personal retrospective economic situation. In the prior chapter we examined how respondents viewed their own (and also the national) economic situations at the moment of the interview and then looking back a year. Looking now only at those who expressed a decline in life satisfaction as shown in this chapter, we can see from Figure III.3 that there is a systematic link to the perception of respondents' retrospective personal economic situations. Those who report a decline in their personal economic situations are much more likely also to report a decline in their life satisfaction than are those who report improvements in their personal economic situations. Figure III.3 shows this is the pattern for each country in the study except Haiti. The overall conclusion is that nearly everywhere, life satisfaction declines when individuals report that their personal economic conditions have deteriorated, indicating, as we suspected, a strong link between these two variables.

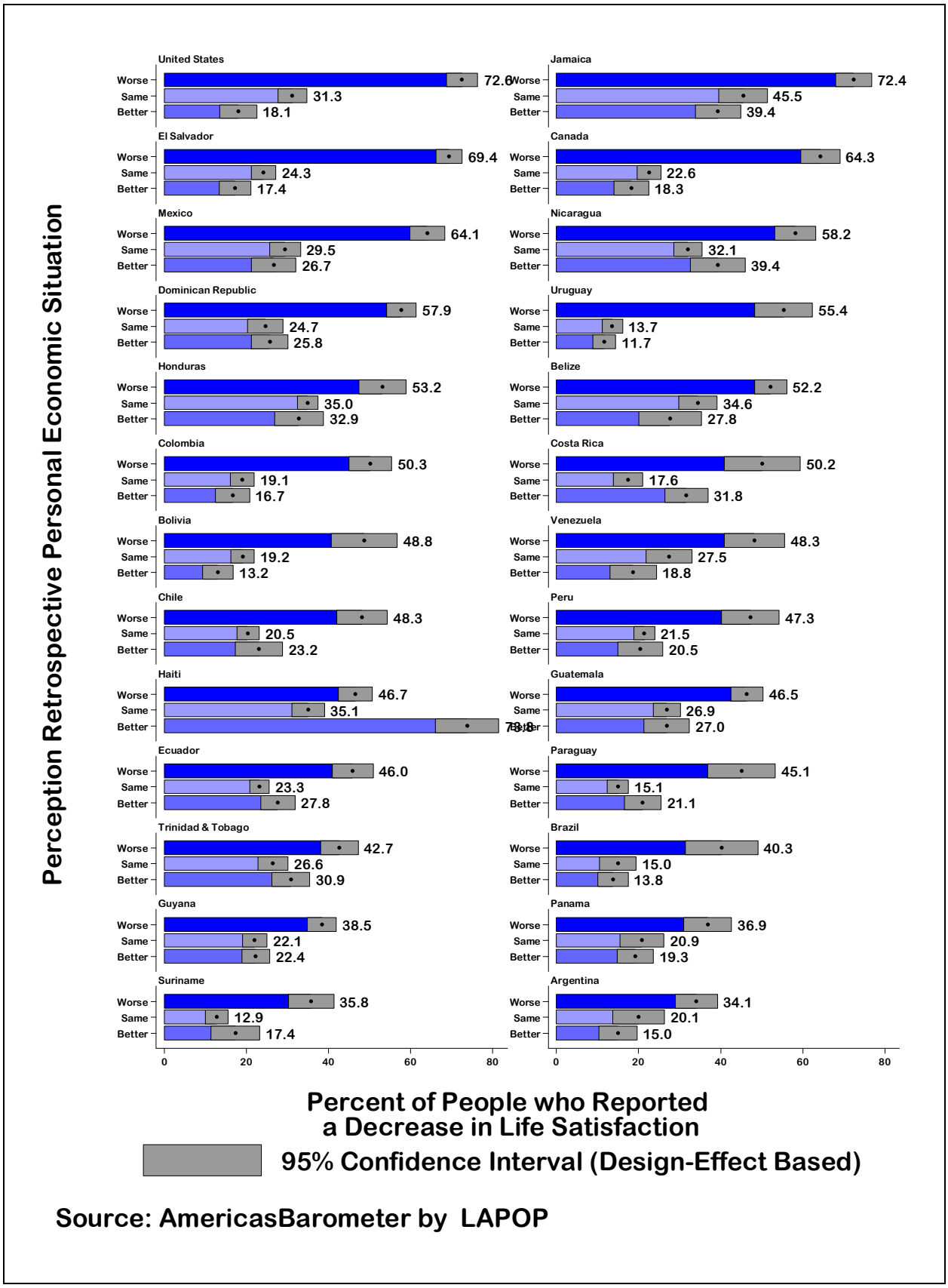

Figure III.3. Percentage of the Population Who Perceived a Decline in Life Satisfaction by Perceptions of their Personal Retrospective Economic Situation

Putting this finding into a broader context, we can examine multiple determinants of changes in life satisfaction. These results are shown in the regression chart in Figure III.4.[6] We need to emphasize that we are not explaining levels of life satisfaction, but the *changes* in life satisfaction reported by our respondents when we compare the level of such satisfaction that they reported possessing at the time of the interview to the one that they reported having possessed two years earlier.[7] To this regression equation, we added the traditional socioeconomic and demographic control variables including age, sex, education, residence (urban vs. rural) area, and wealth quintiles. While in prior LAPOP studies we have used an indicator of wealth based on an additive index of ownership of household goods, in this study we implement a new indicator using the same variables, but based on relative wealth.[8] Also included in the regression are variables measuring economic evaluations and government economic performance.

The results shown in the regression plot (Figure III.4) are controlled for variation by country (the "country fixed effects"), the variation that was shown in Figures III.1 and III.2 in this chapter. Each variable included in the analysis is listed on the vertical (y) axis. The impact of each of those variables on change in life satisfaction is shown graphically by a dot, which if located to the right of the vertical "0" line indicates a positive contribution, and if to the left of the "0" line a negative contribution. Confidence interval lines stretch to the left and right of each dot; only when the confidence intervals do not overlap the vertical "0" line is the factor statistically significant (at .05 or better). The relative strength of each variable is indicated by standardized coefficients (i.e. "beta weights").

The results show that basic socio-economic characteristics such as education and wealth have no significant effect on changes in satisfaction. We do see that the demographic characteristics of age and sex matter to some degree; females are more likely to report a positive change over the 2008-2010 period, while older respondents report just the opposite, namely lower or more negative changes in life satisfaction. This result, however, may be influenced by the normal aging process, such that older people on average suffer from more health afflictions and limitations and as such have more reason to report a decline in their life satisfaction.

A block of economic variables, though, has a consistent and in most cases far stronger impact on life satisfaction. The strongest impact by far has already been shown in Figure III.3; respondents who have a negative retrospective perception of their own personal economic situation have a strongly diminished sense of life satisfaction. Also associated with decreases in life satisfaction is the respondent's perception that his country is experiencing a serious economic crisis. Not only does perception of one's economic situation matter, but the objective survey report of a decline in household income over that same period of time (2008-2010) is associated with lower levels of life satisfaction. Similarly, respondents who live in households in which at least one member has lost his or her job during this period are more likely to report drops in life satisfaction.

[6] Because questions about the economic crisis were not asked in Haiti, this model excludes respondents from that country.
[7] We stress that this is not a panel design, and therefore we do not have data on the same respondent in 2008 and 2010. We are relying on self reports of current and previous levels of satisfaction.
[8] For more information on this indicator, see: Córdova, Abby B. 2009 "Methodological Note: Measuring Relative Wealth using Household Asset Indicators." In AmericasBarometer *Insights* Series. (http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/insights.php).

Finally, we find a strong positive impact of the perception of government economic performance.[9] Since satisfaction with the general performance of the incumbent chief executive is also included in the regression equation (and it also has a positive effect), this means that even though individuals may perceive that they are not doing well economically, and may also have lived in a household that has suffered unemployment, when the government is perceived as managing the economy well, life satisfaction is higher. This finding points to the importance of government policy in managing the economy in times of stress.

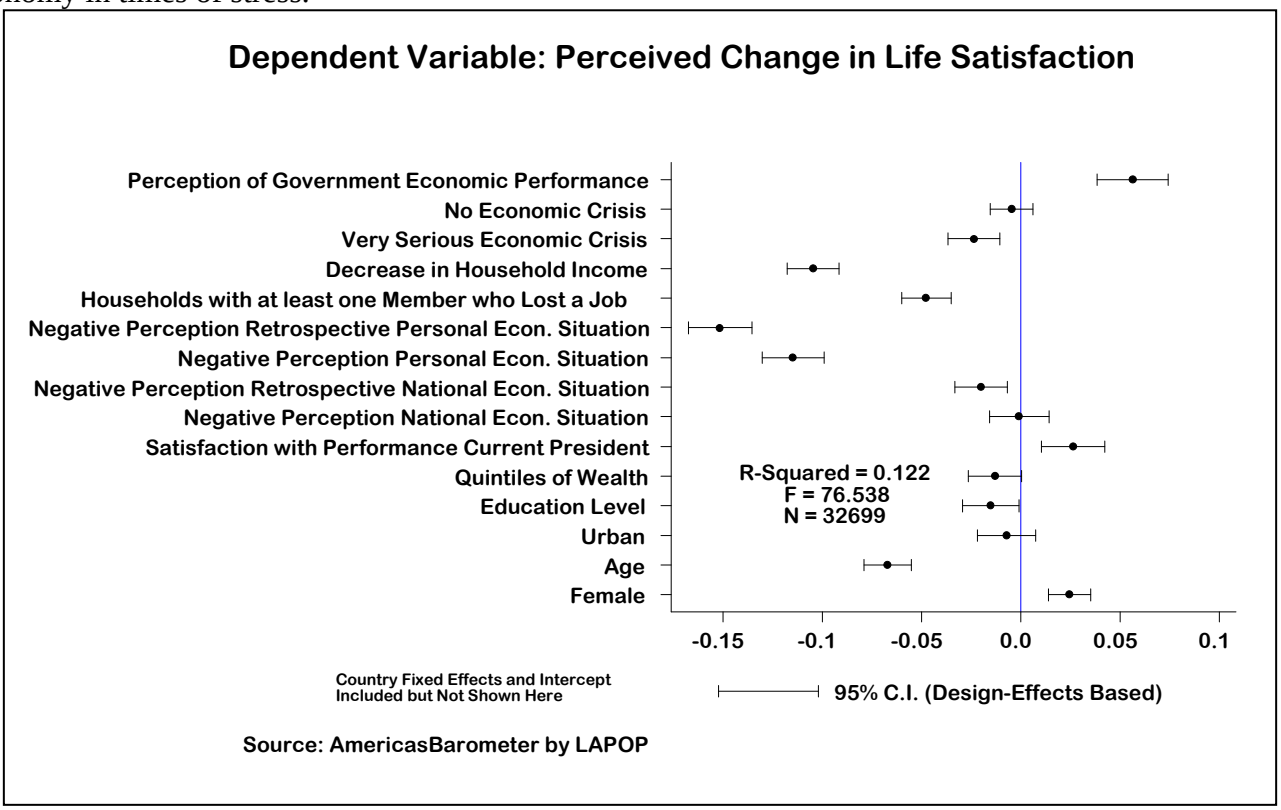

Figure III.4. Determinants of Perceived Change in Life Satisfaction in the Americas, 2010 (Excluding Haiti)

Support for Democracy

We now turn from respondents' attitudes towards their own lives to their attitudes towards democracy and their political systems. This round of the AmericasBarometer provides evidence that, despite the economic crisis, support for democracy in the region has not declined. The results comparing support for democracy in 2008 with those in 2010 are shown in Figure III.5.[10] The dark blue bars in this chart show the *average* levels of support for democracy found in 2010 whereas the light blue bars show the average levels found in 2008.[11] The reader should note that whenever the two grey areas overlap, there is no statistically significant difference between the two years. For example, support for democracy

[9] This was measured by two survey items, N1 and N12, which examine respondents' evaluations of the government's effectiveness in fighting poverty and unemployment.

[10] Support for democracy was measured by the following question: **ING4.** Democracy may have problems, but it is better than any other form of government. To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements (1-7 scale)? This item, like most other LAPOP items, was recoded into a 0-100 scale to facilitate comparisons.

[11] Note that in some countries (Trinidad and Tobago and Suriname), we do not have 2008 survey data, so only one bar is shown.

declined in Mexico from 68.5 to 66.8, but this decline is not statistically significant. Indeed, what we find is that in many countries the change is not significant in either direction. The only countries that experienced a significant decline in support for democracy in 2010 compared to 2008 are Argentina, Canada, El Salvador, Peru, Venezuela, and the Dominican Republic. The Venezuelan decline was the sharpest. Only in Chile did support for democracy increase significantly between 2008 and 2010, at least as measured by this general "Churchill" item that has been so widely used in the comparative study of democracy. Across the entire region, support from democracy experienced only a very small but statistically significant decline from an average score of 72.5 to 71.4, measured on a 100-point scale.

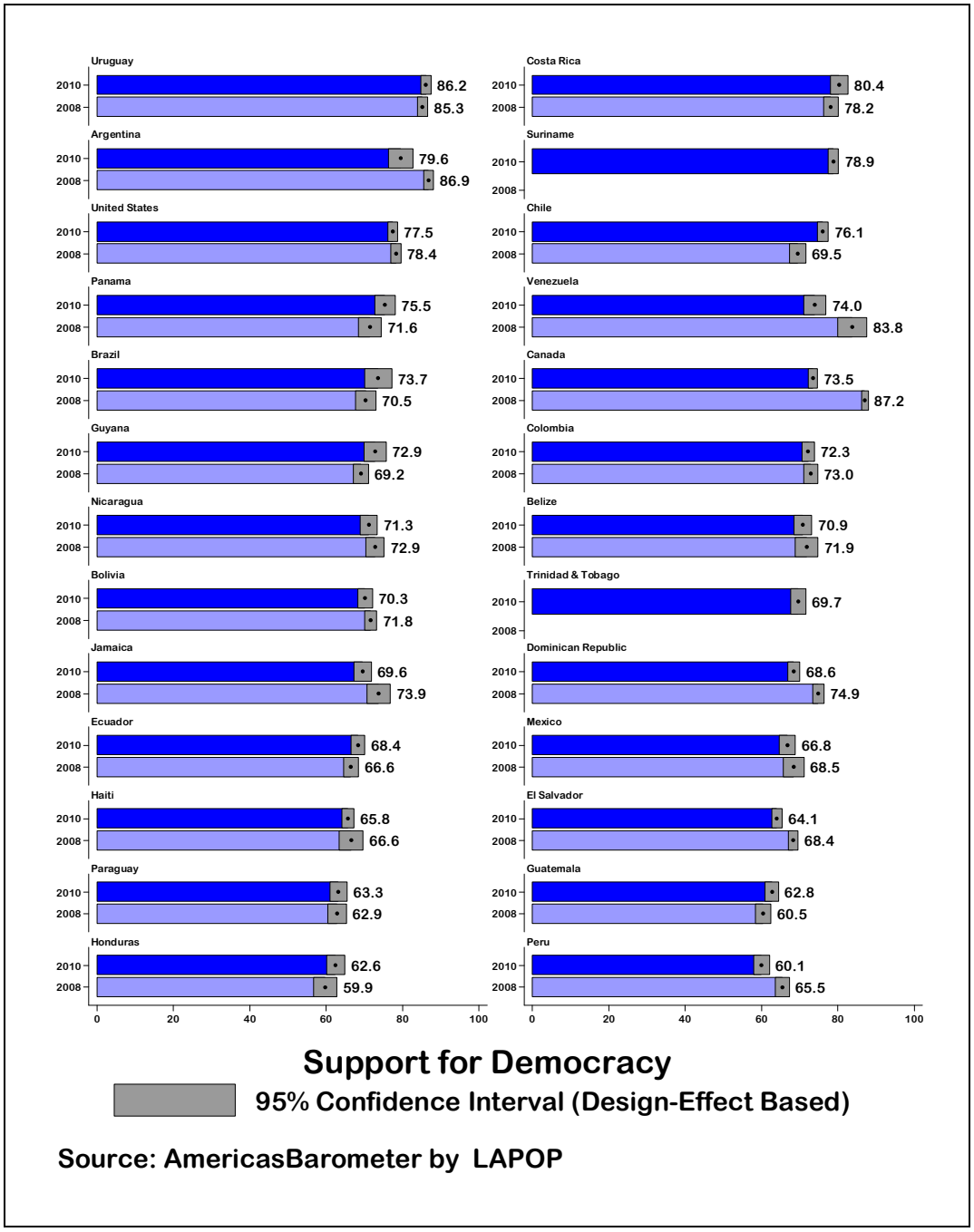

Figure III.5. Average Support for Democracy across the Americas, 2008 vs. 2010

While national averages in support for democracy declined significantly in only a minority of countries, this does not mean that the crisis itself did not take its toll. Support for democracy, like all attitudes, is affected by a wide variety of factors, with the economic crisis being only one of them. A given country may have been seriously buffeted by the economic decline, but if the crisis was managed well by the government, citizens are not likely to have lost faith in their systems. In order to have a better idea of the magnitude of the impact of hard times on *individual attitudes toward democracy*, we examine the relationships among support for democracy, perceptions of the national economy, and satisfaction with government economic performance (Figure III.6). Support for democracy varies significantly across the range of both economic variables, but satisfaction with government economic performance has a bigger impact.

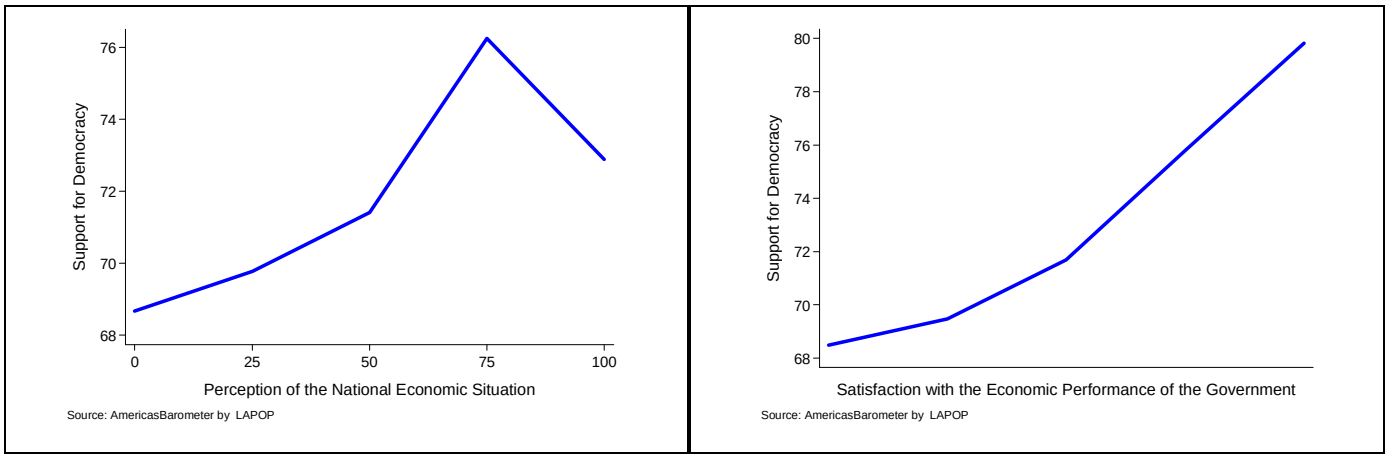

Figure III.6. The Impact of Economic Attitudes on Support for Democracy in the Americas, 2010

To explore these relationships further, we carry out a multivariate regression analysis (See Figure III.7).[51]

[51] Because questions about the economic crisis were not asked in Haiti, this model excludes respondents from that country.

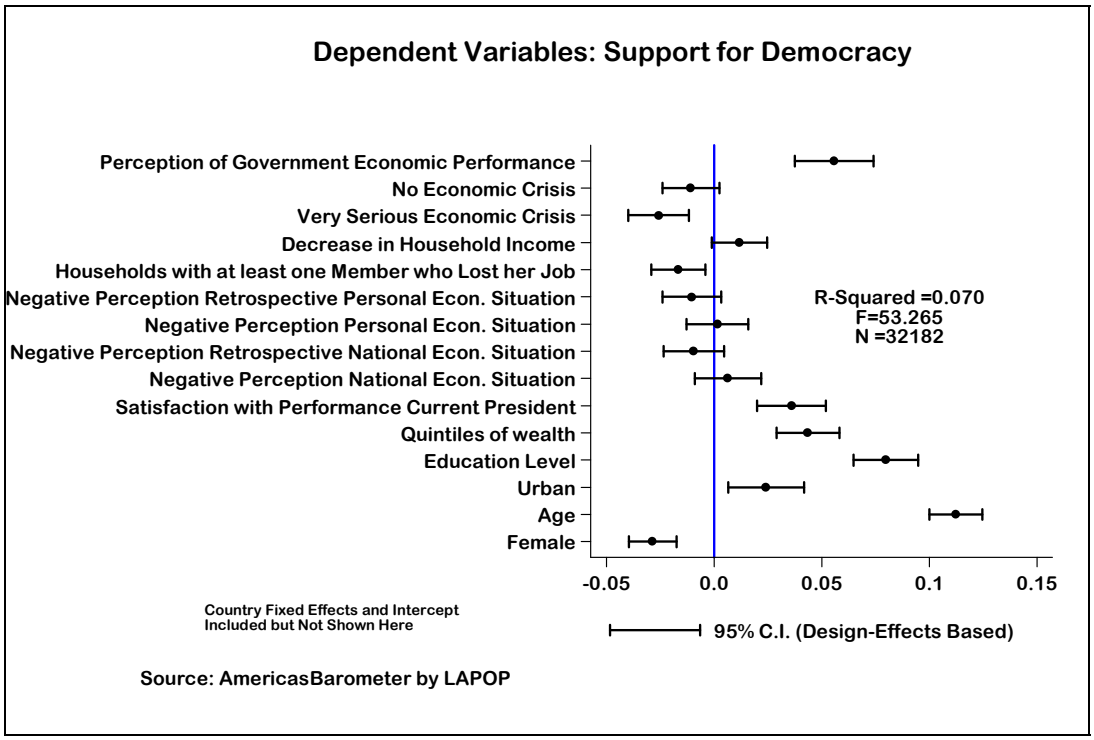

Figure III.7. Determinants of Support for Democracy in the Americas, 2010 (Excluding Haiti)

Figure III.7 shows that age and education are the most powerful predictors of support for democracy. This result is consistent with our previous studies of democracy in the Americas, and once again reinforces the notion that education is one of the most effective ways to build a political culture that is supportive of democracy. Elsewhere in this report we take note of the power of education to increase political tolerance, another key element in a democratic political culture. We also find that those who live in urban areas are more supportive of democracy than those who live in rural areas, a finding we have also reported before. Females are often found to be less supportive of democracy, and we find this again here, even when controlling for education and other variables. While there is much dispute in terms of the theoretical impact of wealth on support for democracy, looking at the region as a whole (but controlling for the impact of country of residence, the "country fixed effects") we find that higher levels of wealth are positively associated with support for democracy.[52]

What is striking about the results presented in Figure III.7 is that economic perceptions have only a limited impact on support for democracy in the multivariate analysis. Among respondents who live in households in which a member has lost a job and among those who perceive a severe economic crisis, there is a small reduction in support for democracy, but other economic perceptions play no significant role one way or the other. But far more important is the very strong effect, once again, of positive perceptions of government management of the economy. We find that, as with life satisfaction, when citizens perceive that their government is handling the economy well, they are more supportive of democracy.

[52] John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson, "Inequality and Democracy in Latin America: Individual and Contextual Effects of Wealth on Political Participation," in *Poverty, Participation, and Democracy*, ed. Anirudh Krishna (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

Our conclusion is that at the very general level of support for democracy, we do not find an overall regional trend in the direction of decline. This is certainly encouraging news, suggesting greater resilience of democracy than many analysts had predicted and feared. It also suggests that the democracy recession observed by Freedom House does not seem to have affected public commitment to democracy in most of the Americas.

Support for the Political System

Belief in the legitimacy of one's government (i.e., system support) is a key requisite for political stability. In an extensive investigation based on LAPOP survey data John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson found that legitimacy emerges from multiple sources, but that the performance of government in satisfying citizen needs and demands is central.[53] Some research suggests that there has been a steady decline in support for the political system over the past 30 years, even in many advanced industrial democracies.[54] Does this decline mean that low levels of system support place democracy at risk? Thus far, there is no indication of that for the advanced industrial democracies. But what of the consolidating democracies in Latin America and the Caribbean? This subject was treated in depth for the 2006 round of the AmericasBarometer data, but we look at it in this year's report in the context of the severe economic crisis.

For many years LAPOP has utilized a system support index based on five variables, each scored on a 1-7 basis, but converted to the traditional 0-100 LAPOP scale for better understanding of the results:

B1. To what extent do you think the courts in (country) guarantee a fair trial? (**Read*:*** If you think the courts do not ensure justice at all, choose number 1; if you think the courts ensure justice a lot, choose number 7, or choose a point in between the two.)

B2. To what extent do you respect the political institutions of (country)?

B3. To what extent do you think that citizens' basic rights are well protected by the political system of (country)?

B4. To what extent do you feel proud of living under the political system of (country)?

B6. To what extent do you think that one should support the political system of (country)?

To understand the dynamics of system support, we compare the levels from 2008 to those in 2010. As shown in Figure III.8 some countries experience important changes in system support. For example, Honduras, in the aftermath of the coup and the elections that restored democracy to the country, support soared from its pre-coup low of 46.4 up to 60.4. It needs to be kept in mind, however, that the survey in Honduras was taken only one month after the inauguration of the new administration, and thus the level of support may be elevated by the well-known "honeymoon effect" that new governments usually get.

[53] System support is an index created from five questions. For a more detailed explanation of how this index was created, see Chapter V in Part II of this study. See also John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson, *The Legitimacy Puzzle in Latin America: Political Support and Democracy in Eight Nations.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

[54] Russell J. Dalton, *Democratic Challenges, Democratic Choices: The Erosion of Political Support in Advanced Industrial Democracies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Pippa Norris, ed., *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Government* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

Ecuador, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, Panama, El Salvador and Nicaragua also saw statistically significant increases in support for the political system, despite the economic crisis. On the other hand, Haiti, Jamaica, Canada, Belize and the Dominican Republic saw statistically significant decreases in system support between 2008 and 2010. The other countries remained statistically unchanged. Across the Americas over this period, system support actually experienced a small, statistically significant rise, from an average of 51.5 to an average of 53.2 on the 100-point scale.

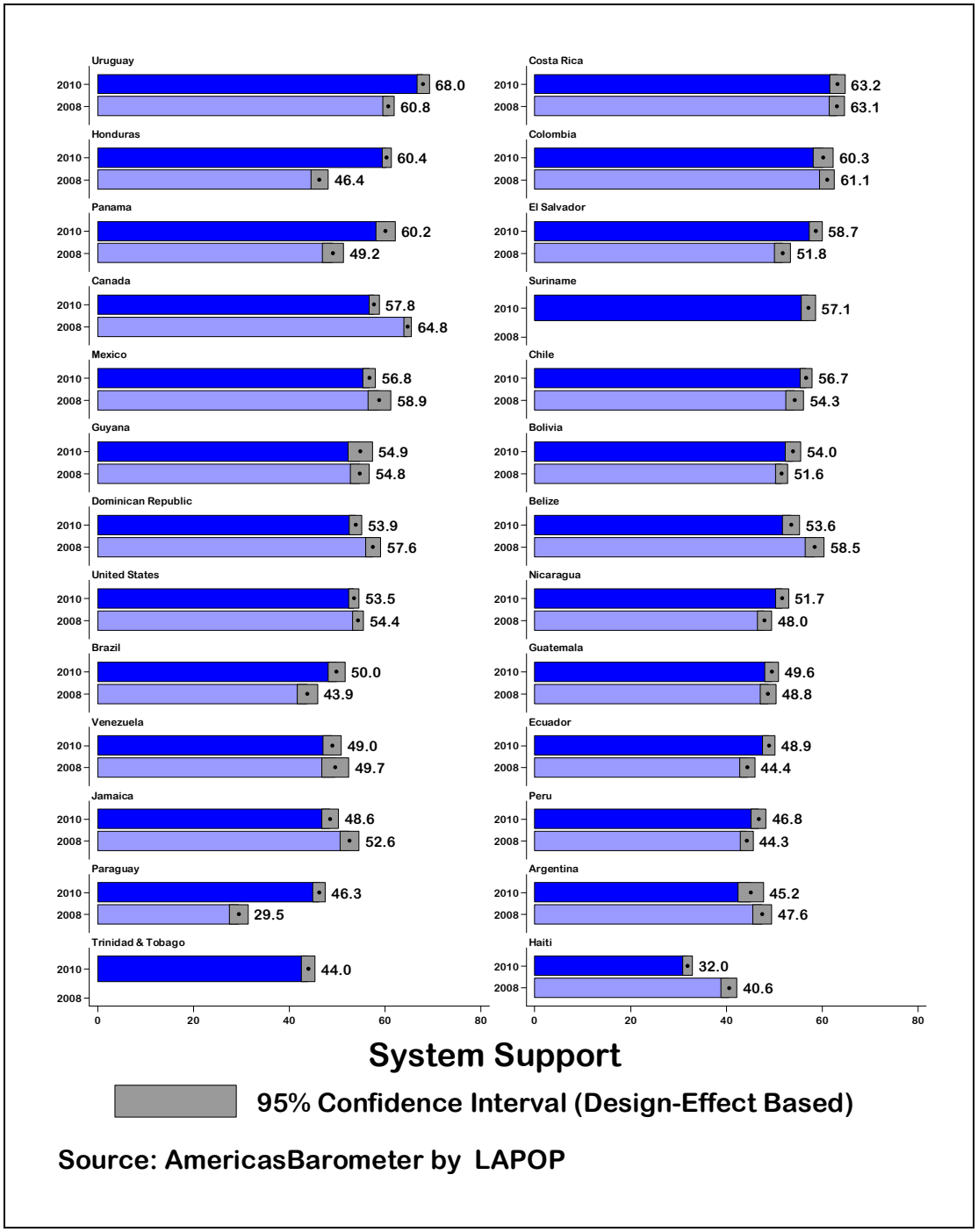

Figure III.8. Average System Support in the Americas, 2008 vs. 2010

Turning now to the determinants of system support, we see in the bivariate analysis presented in Figure III.9 that system support is much higher among those who perceive a strong national economy and strong government economic performance than among those who perceive either as weak.

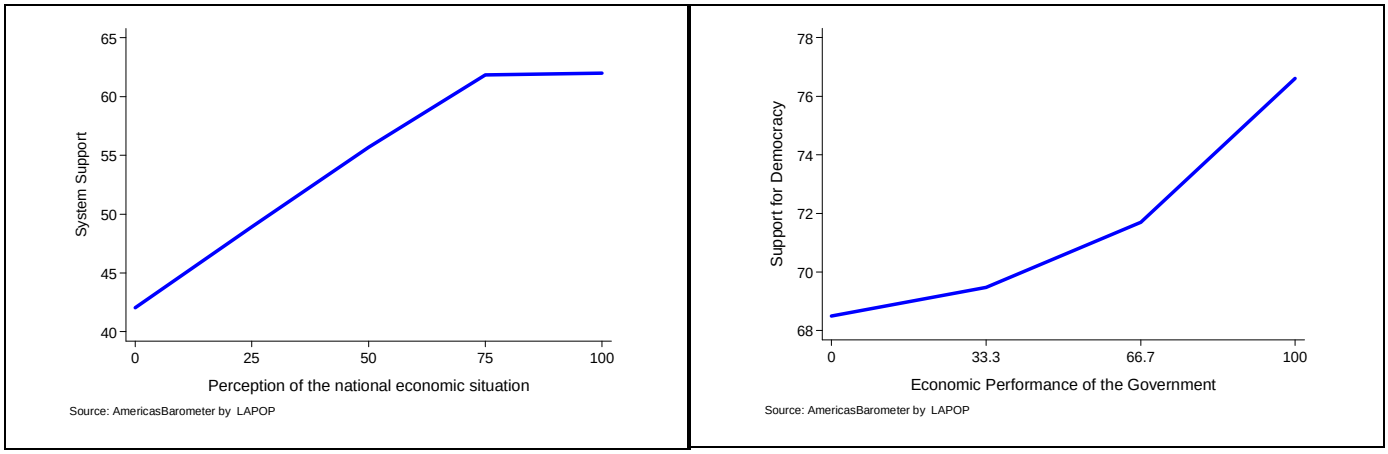

Figure III.9. The Impact of Economic Attitudes on System Support in the Americas, 2010

In regression analysis, we again find that perception of a very serious economic crisis correlates negatively with system support, illustrated in Figure III.10.[55] Further, as we saw with support for democracy, low system support is present among those who hold a pessimistic view of their household and national economic situations, and who live in households where at least one member lost a job. Older people and women have significantly higher system support, but the effect is quite small. *The major impact on system support, as in the case with support for democracy, is perception of government economic performance.* Once again, then, we see that individuals in the Americas are strongly affected by their views as to how their governments perform. Clearly we also see that satisfaction with the incumbent president matters, but what matters most is their views of government performance. This finding once again suggests that the impact of the economic crisis was mitigated by governments that are perceived to have responded effectively to the challenge.

[55] Because questions about the economic crisis were not asked in Haiti, this model excludes respondents from that country.

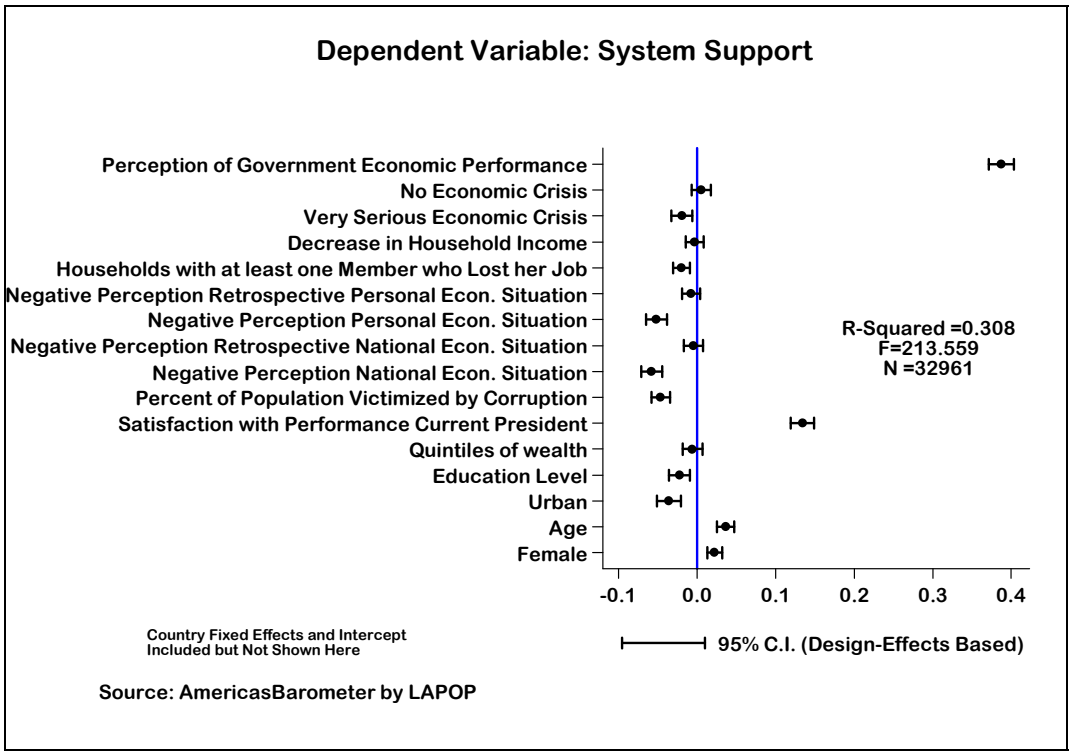

Figure III.10. Determinants of System Support in the Americas, 2010 (Excluding Haiti)

We turn now to consider the determinants of satisfaction with the way democracy works.

Satisfaction with Democracy

While support for democracy as a system of government continues to be high in the Americas despite the economic crisis, what about satisfaction with democracy, another variable commonly used in tracking democratic consolidation around the world? Research in the advanced industrial democracies has found that the satisfaction with democracy has been in long-term decline, a process that began some decades ago and continues, indicating that this is a process not directly linked to economic downturns.[56] During periods of economic crisis in the Americas, is it more likely that citizens will express lower levels of satisfaction with democracy? Certainly that is what the classical hypotheses based on considerable social science literature suggest, as we noted in Chapter I. Put differently, citizens may continue to support democracy in principle as the best form of government, but in practice, they may feel that democracy has not delivered in their own countries. The question thus becomes: Are citizens of the countries of the Americas less inclined to express satisfaction with democracy in their countries when they are living in hard economic conditions? Country-level evidence from the AmericasBarometer provides mixed results.

An examination of Figure III.11 shows that in a number of countries average satisfaction with democracy declined between 2008 and 2010. In Mexico, for example, a country especially hard hit by the

[56] Dalton, *Democratic Challenges, Democratic Choices: The Erosion of Political Support in Advanced Industrial Democracies*; Norris, ed., *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Government.*

economic crisis, satisfaction dropped from 50.4 on our 0-100 scale to 44.6, a decline that is statistically significant. Venezuela suffered by far the sharpest decline, dropping from 58.8 to 46.3. Other statistically significant declines occurred in the Dominican Republic, Guatemala and Canada. Likewise, in the United States, where the effects of the crisis were heavily felt by most citizens, there is a statistically significant decrease in the levels of satisfaction with democracy from 57.3 to 50.6 during this period. On the other hand, there were some countries in which satisfaction with democracy increased sharply. Consider Honduras, a country that experienced a coup in 2009.[57] In that country, satisfaction increased from 44.8 to 57.8. The largest shift occurred in Paraguay, a country which was at the very bottom of satisfaction in 2008, with a score of 30.2, and which leaped to 49.9 in 2010. The 2008 survey was conducted just prior to the April, 2008 election that brought the decades long dominant party rule to an end in that country; no doubt this was a factor in the robust increase in democratic satisfaction measured in the 2010 survey. Another significant increase occurred in El Salvador, where, as in the case of Paraguay, the opposition (in this case the FMLN) won power for the first time in the presidential election prior to the survey. Uruguay, Panama, Bolivia and Chile also experienced statistically significant increases in levels of satisfaction. In many countries, however, there was no statistically significant shift in satisfaction with democracy in spite of the severe economic crisis that left its imprint worldwide. Across the region during this period, satisfaction with democracy experienced a negligible increase from 50.8 to 51.3, a gain which is not statistically significant.

[57] Mitchell A. Seligson and John A. Booth, "Trouble in Central America: Crime, Hard Times and Discontent," *Journal of Democracy* 21, no. 2 (2010).

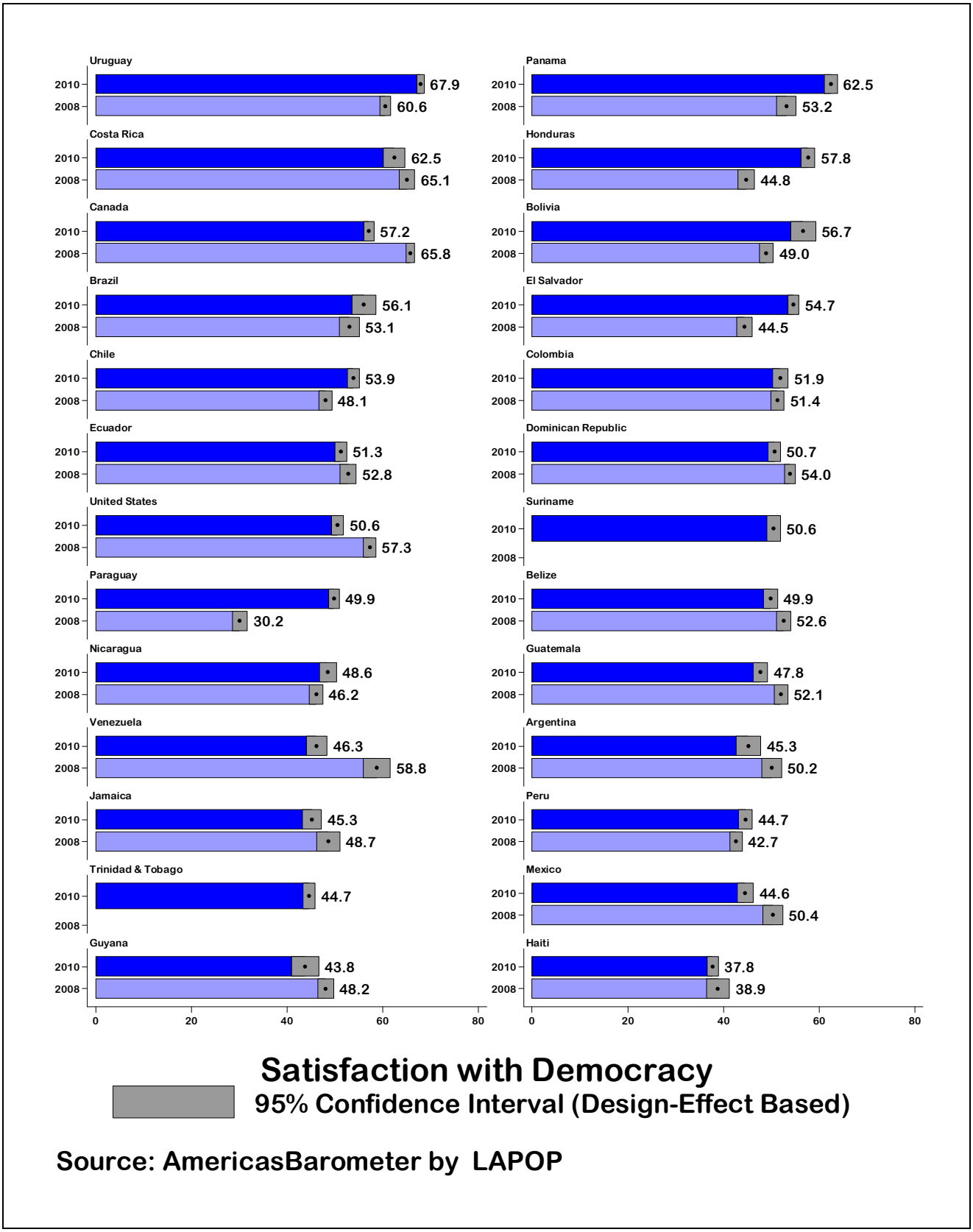

Figure III.11. Satisfaction with Democracy in the Americas, 2008 vs. 2010

Moving on to the determinants of democratic satisfaction, in bivariate analysis we see that both perception of the national economic situation and satisfaction with the economic performance of the government have major impacts on satisfaction with democracy (see Figure III.12).

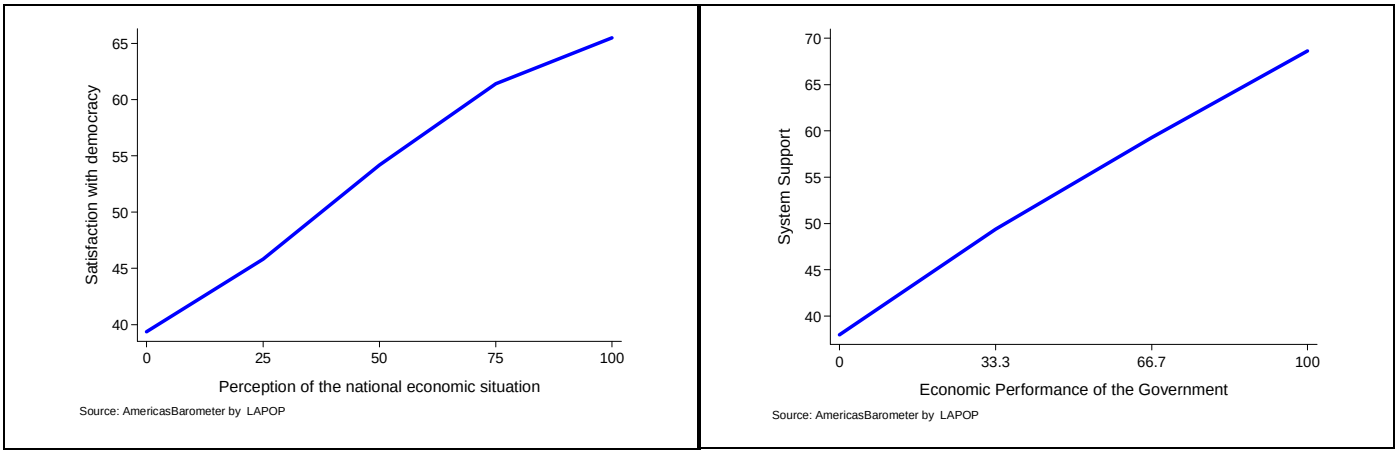

Figure III.12. The Impact of Economic Attitudes on Satisfaction with Democracy in the Americas, 2010

In multivariate regression analysis we find that, indeed, perception of a very serious economic crisis correlates negatively with this satisfaction among citizens in the western hemisphere, shown in Figure III.13.[58] We also see that declines in household income as well as negative current and retrospective perceptions of the personal and national economic situations are associated with lower levels of satisfaction with the way democracy works. In addition, older people have significantly higher democratic satisfaction, while wealthier and more educated individuals, and those who live in urban areas show lower levels of this satisfaction. Yet these effects are quite small. More interestingly, as we found with support for democracy and system support, the major factor affecting satisfaction with democracy is perception of government economic performance *in addition to satisfaction with the performance of the current president.* Once again, we see that individuals in the Americas are strongly affected by their views as to how their governments perform. But we also see that satisfaction with the incumbent president matters *more* when related to satisfaction with democracy (as opposed to its lower impact on support for democracy); this suggests that while perceptions of governments as responding effectively to the crisis were important, perceptions of presidents' performance during hard economic times are also highly important.

[58] Because questions about the economic crisis were not asked in Haiti, this model excludes respondents from that country.

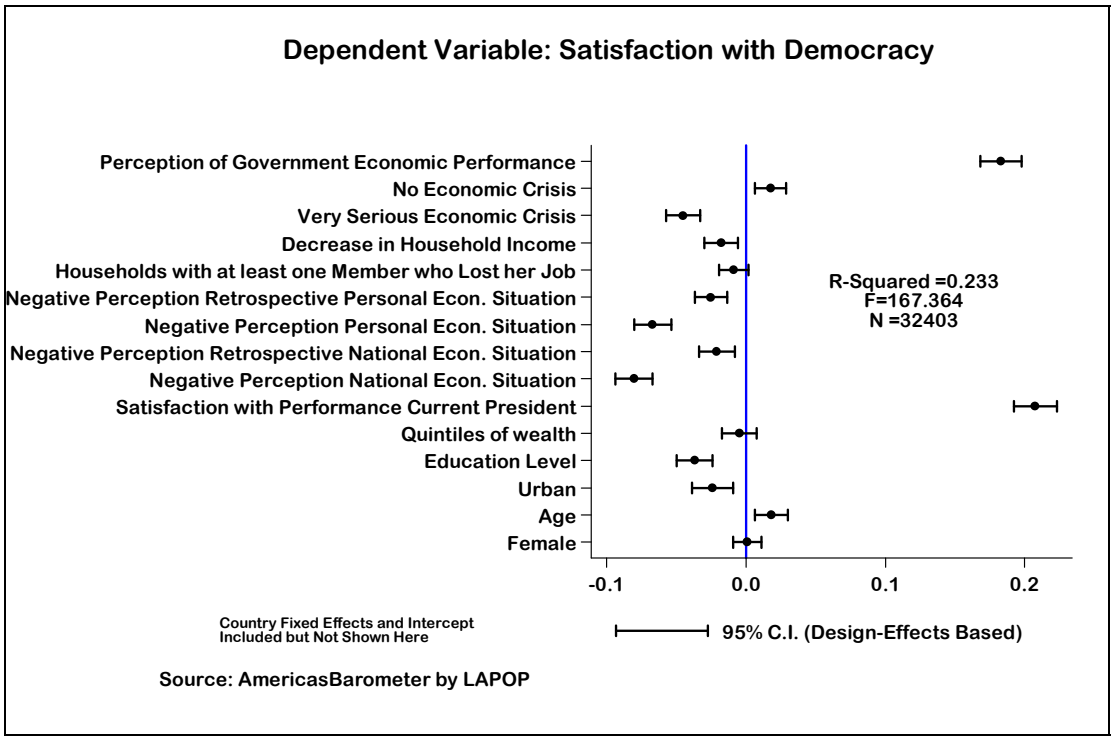

Figure III.13. Determinants of Satisfaction with Democracy in the Americas, 2010 (Excluding Haiti)

Support for Military Coups

An extreme reaction to hard times is for the military to take over in a coup. Historically in Latin America a number of such coups have been attributed to economic crises, but militaries have also been forced from power when economic crises broke out during their period of authoritarian rule. The Honduran coup of 2009 heightened interest in military coups that many had thought were a thing of the dark past of Latin America's history. In the context of the current economic crisis, we now evaluate citizens' support for this authoritarian alternative. We asked our respondents if they would justify a coup under three distinct conditions: high unemployment, high crime, and high corruption.[59] The comparisons for 2008 versus 2010 are shown in Figure III.14. We do not have comparative data for all countries since three countries that do not have an army (Costa Rica, Panama and Haiti) were not asked these questions in 2008. In 2010, however, in Costa Rica and Panama we did ask about a take-over by police forces, in order to create a hypothetical alternative. Moreover, the question on a military coup was not asked in nine other countries in 2008.

The results show that support for a coup is very low in most countries and is lowest in Panama and Argentina. On our 0-100 scale, no country scores even as high as 50 in 2010. On the other hand, such support was very high in Honduras in 2008, and, perhaps not surprisingly, a coup occurred there in 2009.

[59] The Index of Support for Military Coups was created from three questions. They ask: "Now, changing the subject, some people say that under some circumstances it would be justified for the military of this country to take power by a coup d'état (military coup). In your opinion, would a military coup be justified under the following circumstances? **JC1**. When there is high unemployment. **JC10**. When there is a lot of crime. **JC13**. When there is a lot of corruption." Response options were: (1) A military take-over of the state would be justified; and (2) A military take-over of the state would not be justified. These were later recoded into 100 = a military coup is justified and 0 =a military coup is not justified.

Post-coup, support for such illegal take-overs of a democratic system dropped sharply in Honduras. It may be that the coup itself resolved the problems that Hondurans were having with the regime and now they saw no reason for it; or, it could be that the experience with the coup itself lessened support for this type of action. We leave the discussion of the coup issue to the detailed country report on Honduras. In two other countries support for coups was above the 50-point mark on the 0-100 scale in 2008: Peru and Guyana. In Guyana, support for coups fell by 20 points by 2010. Coup support also declined significantly in 2010 from 2008 levels in Nicaragua and Ecuador. We note that coup support increased significantly only in one country for which we have data, Guatemala, between 2008 and 2010. Across the Americas as a whole, measuring only the countries where the questions were administered in both years, support for coups dropped from 41.3 in 2008 to 37.2 in 2010, a decline that is statistically significant.

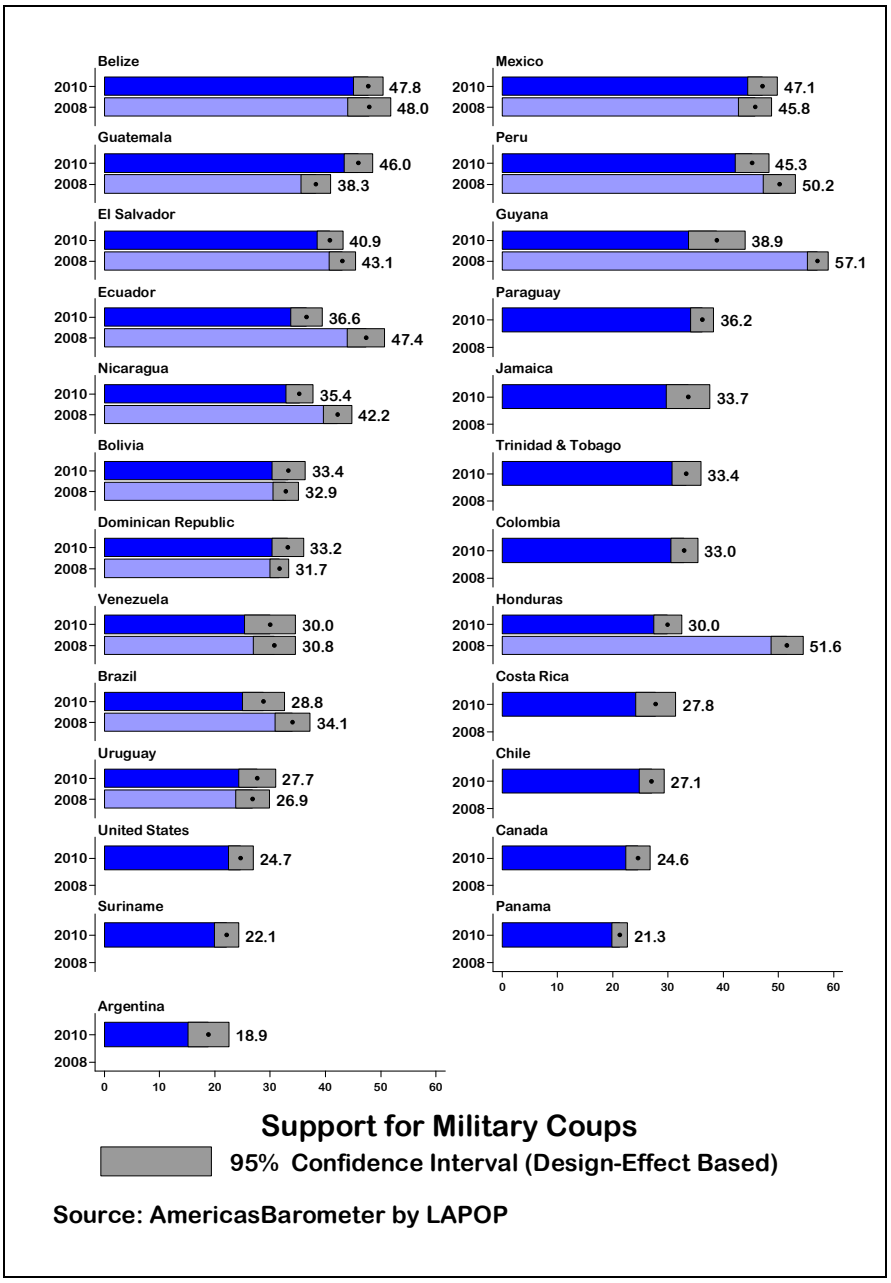

Figure III.14. Justification of a Military (Police) Coup in the Americas, 2008 vs. 2010

Returning to the relationship between hard economic times and authoritarian tendencies: is support for military coups higher among those who perceive the national economic situation or government economic performance to be poor? In Figure III.15 we find that the answer is yes, though the evidence is somewhat more ambiguous than we had found for the other democratic attitudes.

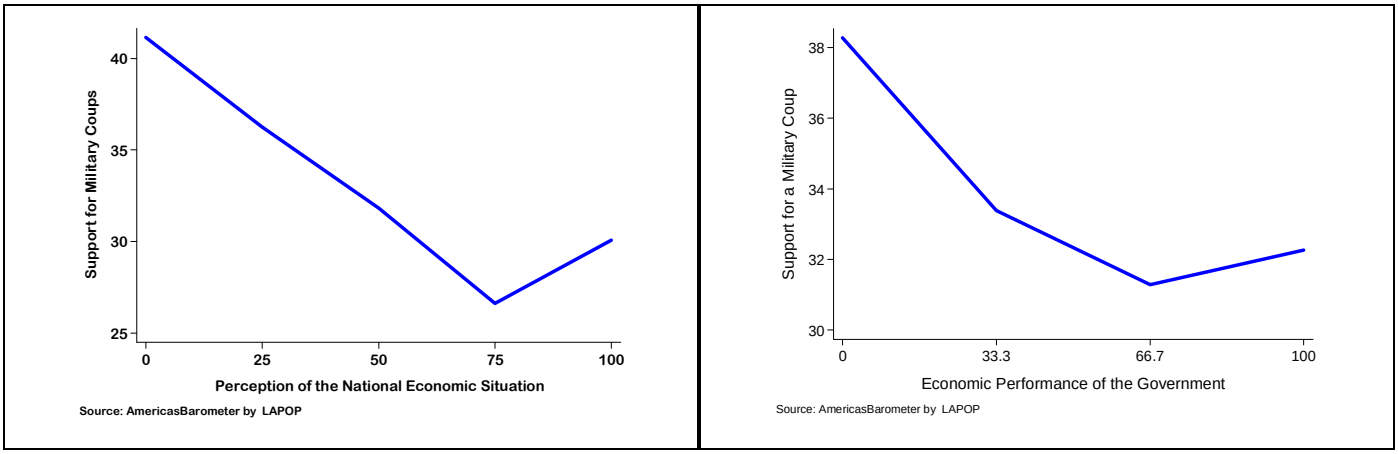

Figure III.15. The Impact of Economic Attitudes on Support for Military (Police) Coups in the Americas, 2008

In Figure III.16 we turn to multivariate analysis, assessing the impact of the full range of economic attitudes and experiences.[60] We find that unemployment and the perception of a very serious economic crisis are associated with significantly greater support for military coups. Furthermore, individuals who exhibit a negative perception of the current and retrospective national economic situation also show a higher support for military coups, suggesting that citizens in the Americas, under crisis conditions, do take into account economic factors when thinking about ways to punish those in power, even if these may put democracy at risk. Puzzlingly, however, negative perceptions of the personal pocketbook economic conditions *depress* support for coups. Interestingly, women also express (slightly) higher levels of support for coups. However, the effect is very small and is not quite statistically significant. Older, wealthier, and more educated individuals show lower pro-coup tendencies. An interesting finding that is consistent with previous results is the effect of satisfaction with the performance of the current president. Those who evaluate the president positively show lower levels of support for coups, indicating the significant role that the president plays in reducing support for authoritarian alternatives. Perception of government efficacy did not yield any significant results when related to support for military coups.

[60] Because questions about the economic crisis were not asked in Haiti, this model excludes respondents from that country.

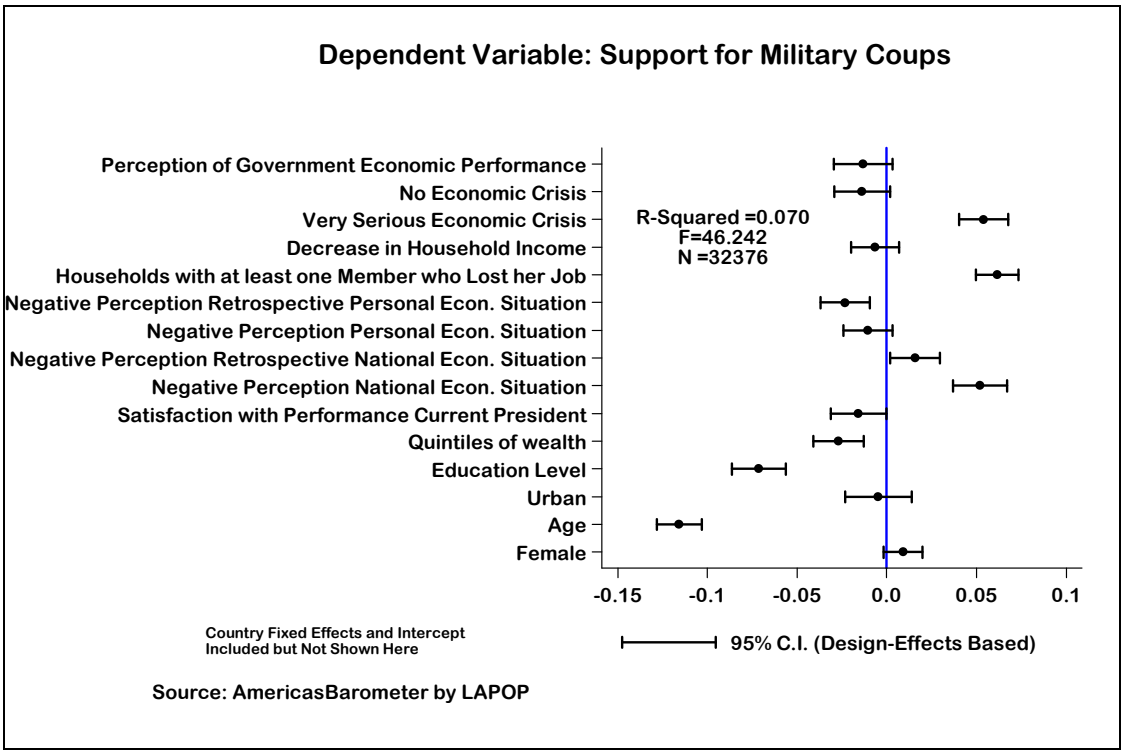

Figure III.16. Predictors of Support for Military Coups in the Americas, 2010 (Excluding Haiti)

The Puzzle: Economic Perceptions and Democratic Attitudes

In this and the previous two chapters we have uncovered a puzzle: at the individual level, economic perceptions and experiences have important effects on attitudes towards democracy and the political system. Throughout the Americas, citizens whose households undergo financial crisis, who have negative perceptions of the national economy, and who perceive the government as performing poorly at managing the economy are more likely to withdraw support for their political systems. At the macro level, however, we discover that in the midst of a major, worldwide economic crisis, citizens across the Americas have not, on the whole, altered their attitudes towards democracy. What could explain our findings of effects at the individual level but not at the country level?

We contend that two closely related factors produced this pattern: first, the fact that the crisis was not as severely felt in most countries of the Americas as other crises had been felt in most prior historical instances of economic downturn; and second, governments' unusually strong economic performance. With respect to the first factor, the findings shown in the previous chapter indicate that throughout the Americas, while citizens perceived an economic crisis their perceptions of their national economies actually improved between 2008 and 2010. This suggests to us that when citizens in Latin America and the Caribbean responded to the 2010 questionnaire, they remembered periods of extreme macroeconomic instability in their own countries and concluded that while their national economies in 2010 were indeed experiencing hard times, by comparison things were not as bad as they had been in prior crises. It is likely that governments may have had a hand in such judgments by framing economic news, reporting to citizens that circumstances, though difficult, were better than they had been under prior regimes.

With respect to the second factor, evidence that in 2010 the citizens of many countries did in fact perceive improved government economic performance compared with 2008 appears in Figure III.17. Note that in the United States, Uruguay, Chile, Brazil, Ecuador, Paraguay, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, and Peru significant increases were found. However, in Guatemala, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Haiti and Belize significant declines were recorded.

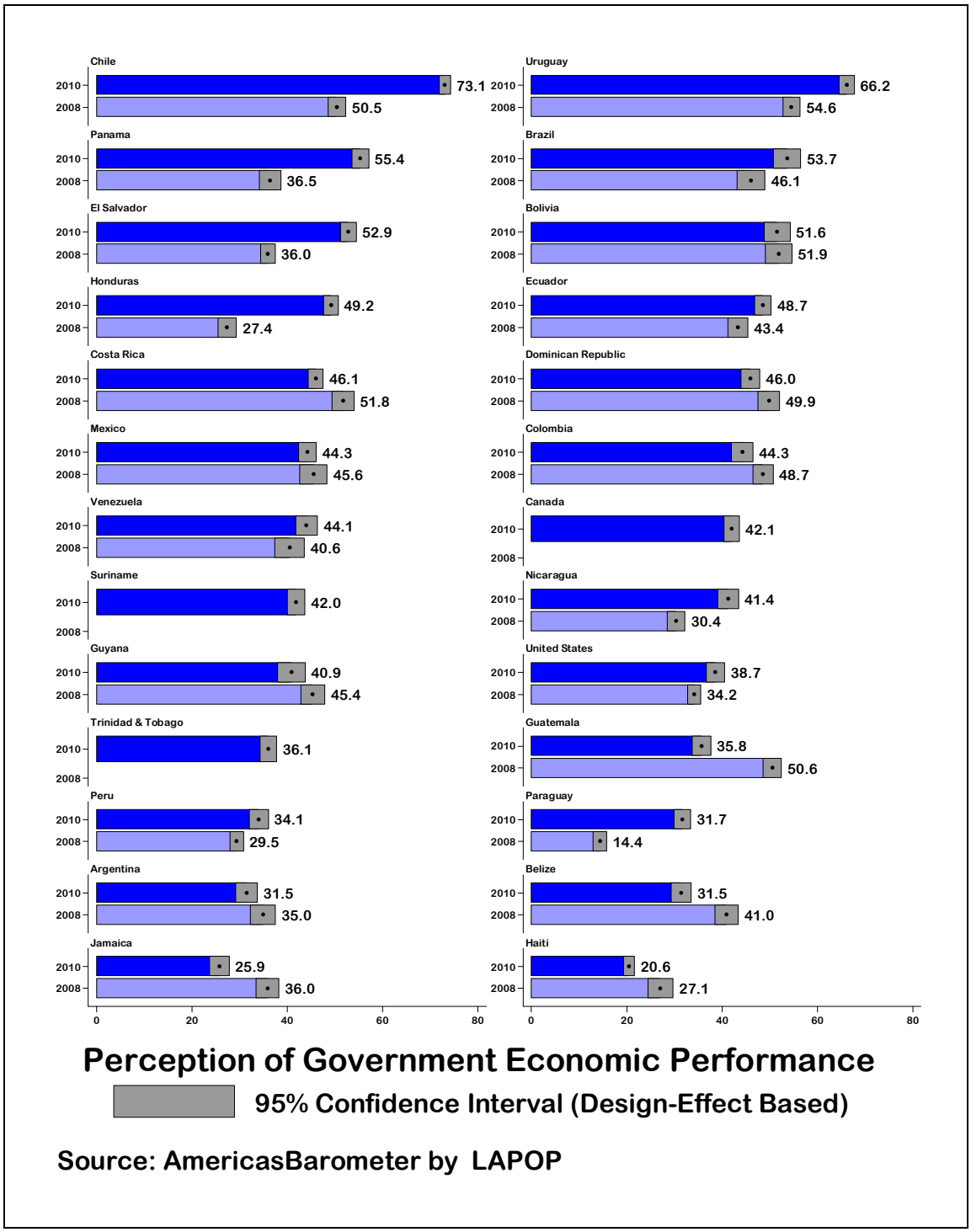

Figure III.17. Perception of Government Economic Performance in the Americas, 2008 vs. 2010

It turns out that these two factors – perceptions of the national economy and of government economic performance – explain much of the country level variance in system support as well as support for and satisfaction with democracy and support for military coups. We focus here on system support and then deal briefly with the other democratic attitudes.

Direct evidence at the national level that improvements in the perception of government economic performance are in part driving levels of system support is shown in Figure III.18. In this chart, country averages are presented for both the variation in average perception of government performance and the 2008-2010 variations in system support. The results are very clear: the greater the increase in satisfaction with governments' management of the economy, the greater the increase in system support. The results show a very powerful relationship explaining 65% of the variance in system support at the national level.

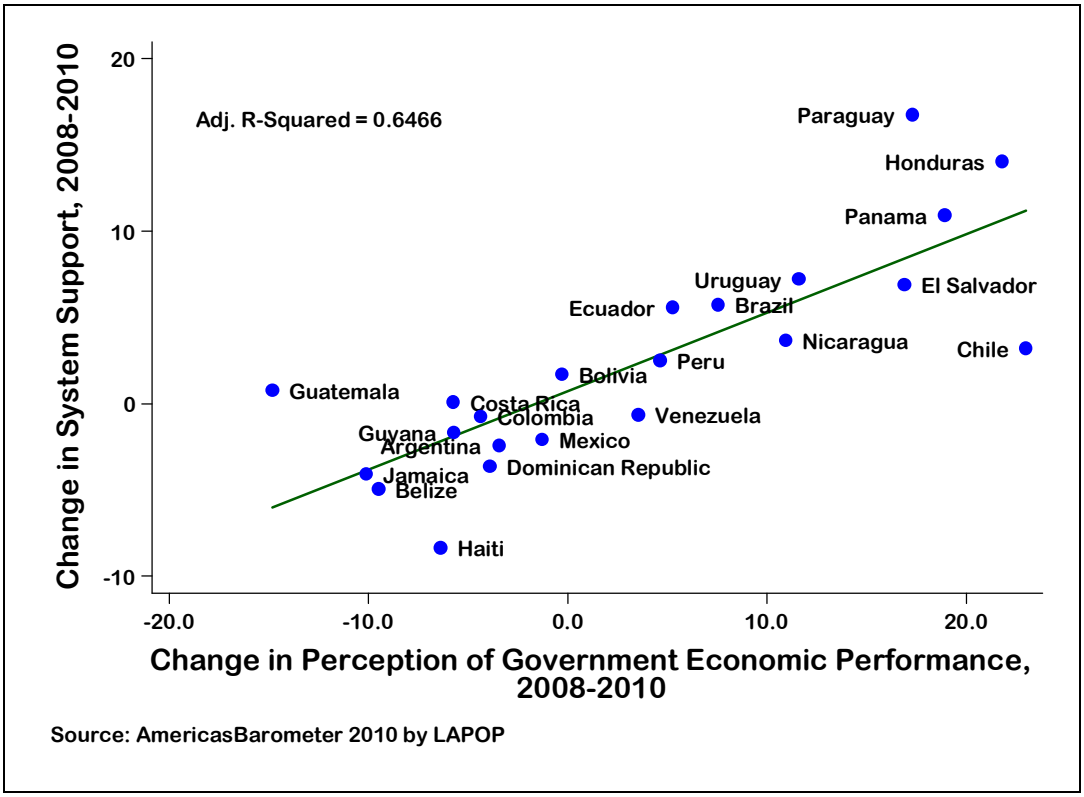

Figure III.18. Change in Perceptions of Government Economic Performance as a Predictor of Change in System Support, 2008-2010, Country Level Analysis

Not only is this result found at the national level, we find it within countries as well. In Figure III.19 we examine these same items of change in perception of government performance and change in system support, but use the subnational strata of each sample (the variable ESTRATOPRI). For example, in Bolivia, each department is a separate sample stratum, and in other countries regions are used for the strata (such as the coast, highlands and Amazonian regions in Ecuador). Details of the sample designs takings note of these strata are contained in the appendix of each country report.[61] What we see is that

[61] In El Salvador, where the sample design is based on the size of the municipality rather than geography, the strata were re-aggregated to form geographically based regions.

even at the subnational level, when the average perception of government economic performance is perceived as shifting in a more positive direction, average system support increases.

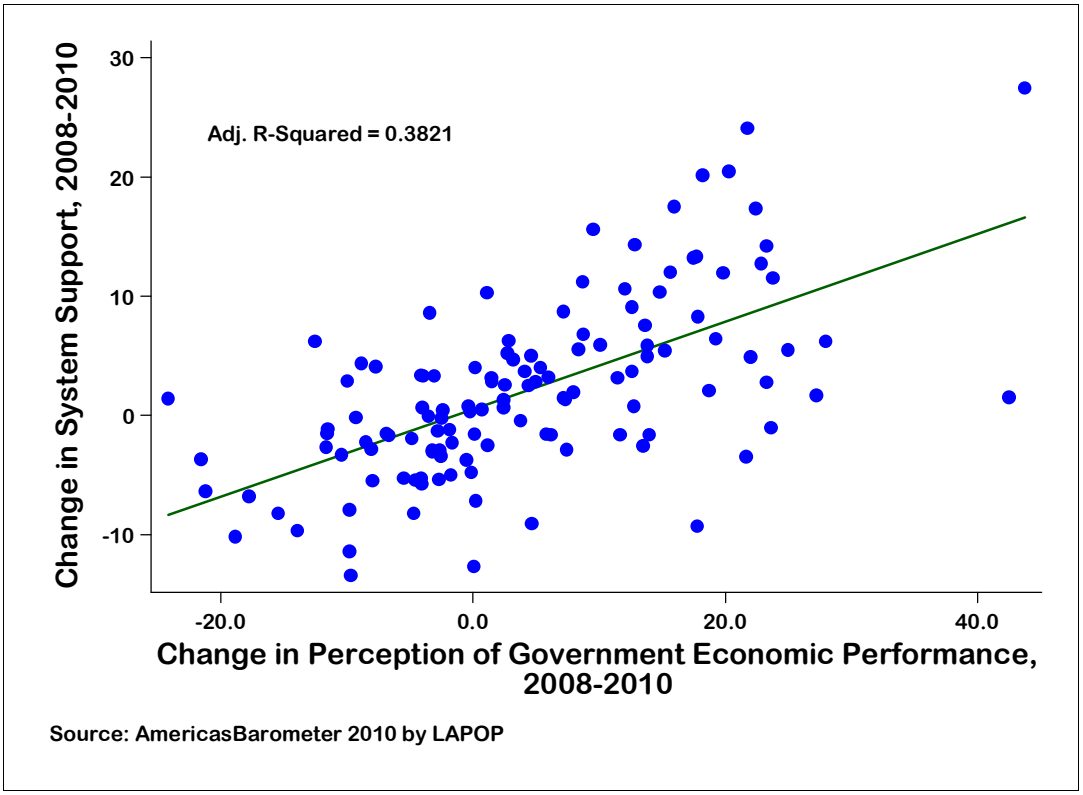

Figure III.19. Change in Perceptions of Government Economic Performance as a Predictor of Change in System Support, 2008-2010, Subnational Level Analysis

But beyond perceptions of government performance, more general perceptions of the national economy also determined changes in system support. In Figure III.20 we assess the bivariate relationship between changes in perception of the national economy and changes in system support. Again we find a clear picture: the greater the improvement in average perceptions of the economy, the greater the rise in average system support. The relationship is extremely tight except for a few, very interesting outliers: Honduras, Paraguay, and Haiti. In Honduras, we suspect that the coup and subsequent restoration of democratic elections explain the added "bump" in system support, over and above what would be expected based on perceptions of the national economy. In Paraguay, we expect that the larger-than-expected increase in system support is due to the historic elections and change in government that occurred in 2008, after the survey had been conducted. In those elections, the party that had ruled the country for decades was turned out of office. And in Haiti, it is quite likely the devastating earthquake dragged system support below what it would have been based on the state of the national economy alone. Even taking into account these outliers, the relationship between changes in the perceptions of the national economy and changes in system support is clearly evident in the graph.

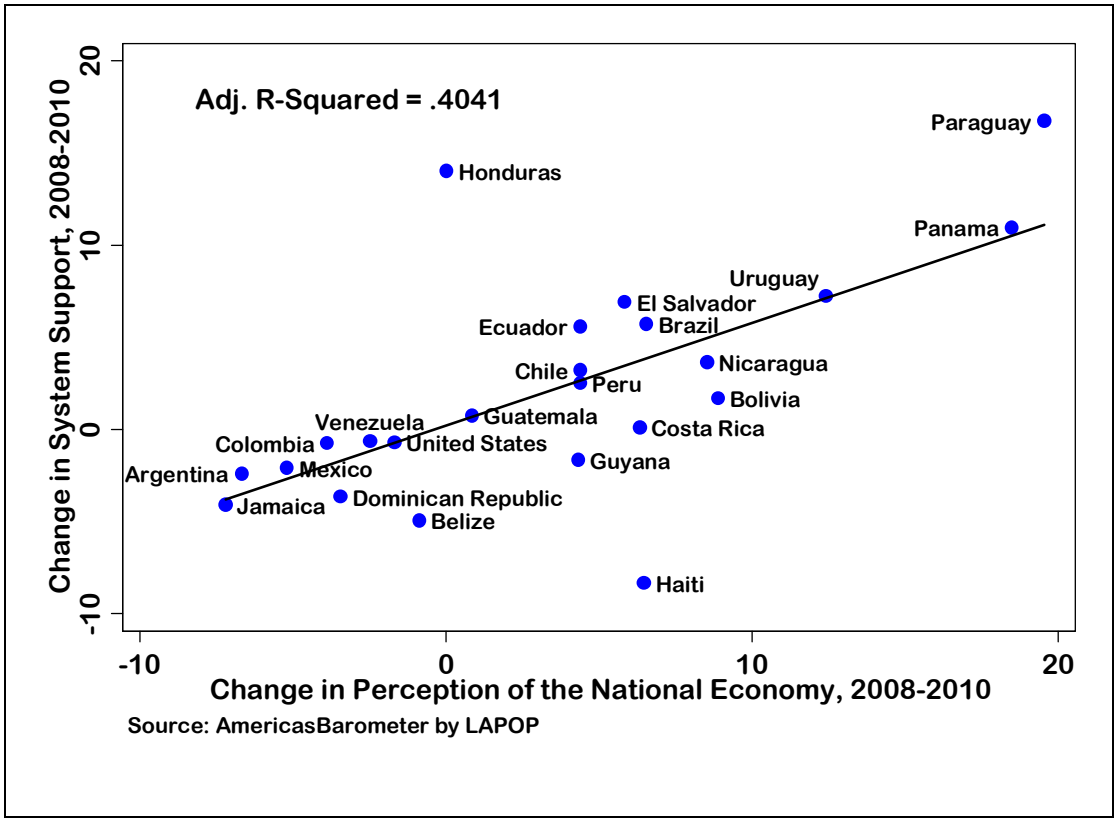

Figure III.20. Change in Perceptions of the National Economy as a Predictor of Change in System Support, 2008-2010

How do these two factors fit together in explaining changes in system support? We ran multivariate models assessing the impact of changes in perceptions of both the national economy and government economic performance on changes in system support, support for and satisfaction with democracy, and support for coups. We find that together these two variables are extremely powerful predictors of many of the democratic attitudes we examine here. In a joint model, they explain 72% of the variance in changes in system support, 67% of the variance in changes in satisfaction with democracy, 21% of the variance in changes in support for democracy, and 24% of the variance in changes in support for military coups. In each case, changes in perceptions of the national economy and government economic performance are statistically significant.

Thus, these findings provide strong evidence that the unprecedented and surprising macroeconomic stability in many countries of the Americas during the current economic crisis may have prevented not only a more serious crisis but also a region-wide decline in political legitimacy and threats to progress in the consolidation of the democratic regime. The coup in Honduras did indeed happen during this period of serious economic downturn; however, we believe most observers would not link it to economic conditions, but rather to political factors related to policies of the government in power at the time. Those interested in greater detail on the Honduran situation should read the country report LAPOP has published, as well as an *Insights* series paper on this subject, both of which are available online at the LAPOP website, www.LapopSurveys.org.[62]

[62] Pérez, Orlando J., John A. Booth, and Mitchell A. Seligson, "The Honduran Catharsis," AmericasBarometer *Insights* Series, 2010.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined how the economic crisis affected democratic values and life satisfaction (happiness) in the Americas. The evidence presented here suggests that decreased reported levels of happiness are linked to negative retrospective personal economic perceptions, to income drops, to the perception of economic crisis and to having experienced the loss of a job in the household. Conversely, perceiving that the governing is performing well is associated with increased reported levels of happiness.

Regarding the impact of the global economic crisis on democratic values, results from the AmericasBarometer indicate that support for democracy, system support and satisfaction with democracy have not declined substantially in most countries as a consequence of the economic crisis in the Americas (although there are some exceptions for a small number of countries). The main finding of this chapter is that perceptions of government economic performance and of the national economy are strong determinants of a variety of key democratic attitudes. Finally, it is noteworthy that other economic variables such as the perception of a serious crisis and experiences with unemployment and income loss do correlate with lower support for and satisfaction with democracy as well as reduced system support, and are related to greater levels of justification for military coups.

Part II: Rule of Law, Crime, Corruption, and Civil Society

Introduction

In Part I of this study, we presented a general overview of the economic crisis and democratic development. We also focused on citizens' perceptions of the economic crisis by answering the question: *who are those most likely affected by the crisis?* We presented a regional comparative assessment of citizens' perceptions of key economic variables, followed by an evaluation of the impact of the crisis in terms of unemployment and perceptions of national and personal economic welfare. We concluded Part I with a general assessment of the extent to which those who report being affected by the crisis may express lower democratic support. In Part II of this study, we attempt to test key hypotheses that relate to rule of law, crime, and corruption, themes that have emerged as important in a number of prior LAPOP studies. The objective of this section is to specify the degree to which crime and corruption influence support for democracy. The variables used in Part I that measure the economic crisis are used as additional control or predictor variables in this part, but are not the central focus here.

Chapter IV. Rule of Law, Crime, and Corruption

Theoretical Background

Crime and corruption stand as two of the major governance challenges facing the Americas. With the end of the Cold War and the emergence of new democracies in most regions of the developing world, corruption has surfaced as one of the leading policy issues on the international political agenda, as well as in the national agendas of many countries.[1] Corruption, often defined as the use of public resources for private gain, was widespread during the long period of authoritarian rule in Latin America. However, the media were widely censored and those who reported on corruption placed themselves at serious risk of retribution; thus, it was a topic not widely discussed. With the emergence of democracy, however, reporting and discussion of corruption have become widespread.

Economists have taken note of the adverse impact on growth and distribution that corruption causes. Corruption diverts public funds into private hands and often results in less efficient and lower quality public services. There is growing understanding of corruption's toxic effects on economic development and of how it undermines democratic governance.[2]

At the level of public opinion, there is strong evidence that those who are victims of corruption are less likely to trust the political institutions of their country. The first study was carried out by Mitchell A. Seligson using LAPOP data from only four countries in the region, while additional research showed that the patterns held more broadly.[3] A larger study of legitimacy consistently shows that corruption victimization erodes several dimensions of citizens' belief in the legitimacy of their political system.[4] Corruption victimization could also erode social capital, making victims of corruption less trusting in their fellow citizens.

Crime is also a serious and growing problem in many countries of the Americas. The least violent of the countries in Latin America have officially reported murder rates that are double the U.S. rate, which itself is more than double the rate in Canada, while many countries in the region have rates that are

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[1] Schedler, Andreas, Larry Diamond, and Marc F. Plattner, *The Self-Restraining State: Power and Accountability in New Democracies*, (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999).

[2] Doig, Alan, and Stephanie McIvor.. Corruption and Its Control in the Developmental Context: An Analysis and Selective Review of the Literature. *Third World Quarterly* (20, no. 3: 657-76, 1999); Doig, Alan, and Robin Theobald, eds., *Corruption and Democratization*, (London: Frank Cass, 2000); Pharr, Susan J., Officials' Misconduct and Public Distrust: Japan and the Trilateral Democracies. In *Dissaffected Democracies: What's Troubling the Trilateral Countries?*, edited by Susan J. Pharr and Robert D. Putnam, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Rose-Ackerman, Susan, *Corruption and Government: Causes, Consequences, and Reform*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Seligson, Mitchell A. The Impact of Corruption on Regime Legitimacy: A Comparative Study of Four Latin American Countries. *Journal of Politics* (64, no. 2: 408-33, 2002); Seligson, Mitchell A. The Measurement and Impact of Corruption Victimization: Survey Evidence from Latin America. *World Development* (34, no. 2: 381-404, 2006).

[3] Seligson, "The Impact of Corruption on Regime Legitimacy: A Comparative Study of Four Latin American Countries."; Seligson, "The Measurement and Impact of Corruption Victimization: Survey Evidence from Latin America."

[4] Booth and Seligson, *The Legitimacy Puzzle in Latin America: Political Support and Democracy in Eight Latin American Nations*.

ten and even more than twenty times the U.S. rates. The contrast with European and Japanese murder rates, which hover around 1-2 per 100,000, is even starker.

In the Latin American context of extremely high crime, political scientists and policymakers alike need to ask whether crime and the associated fear of crime are threats to the durability of democracy in Latin America. It is easy to see how crime victimization and the fear of crime might affect citizen support for democracy. Belief in democracy as the best system could decline if citizens are subject to crime or fear crime. Citizens might also become less tolerant of others or lose faith in their fellow citizens, thus eroding social capital, if they have been victims of or fear crime. Fear of crime could make citizens less willing to support the right to public contestation. Finally, crime victimization and the fear of crime could drive citizens to lose faith in their political institutions, especially the police, but also the judiciary.

What is less clear is whether the more important factor is crime itself or the fear of crime. Even in countries with a high murder rate, the chance of an individual being murdered or even the victim of a serious crime is still quite low. Therefore, the impact of victimization might not be as great as the fear of crime, which is a feeling that can be held by a far greater portion of the population than the victims themselves. Citizens hear about crime from their neighbors, read about it in the newspapers, and are inundated with often macabre images of crime in the media.

In this chapter we seek to understand how exposure to and perceptions of crime and corruption affect democratic attitudes across the Americas. We also seek to understand whether *experiences* or *perceptions* have greater impact.

Perception of Insecurity and Crime Victimization

Perception of Insecurity

The Americas Barometer measures citizens' perception of their safety by asking the following question:

> **AOJ11**. Speaking of the neighborhood where you live and thinking of the possibility of being assaulted or robbed, do you feel very safe, somewhat safe, somewhat **un**safe or very **un**safe?

Following the LAPOP standard, responses were recalibrated on a 0-100 scale, where higher values mean greater perceived insecurity. Figure IV.1 shows the results for all the countries in the survey.

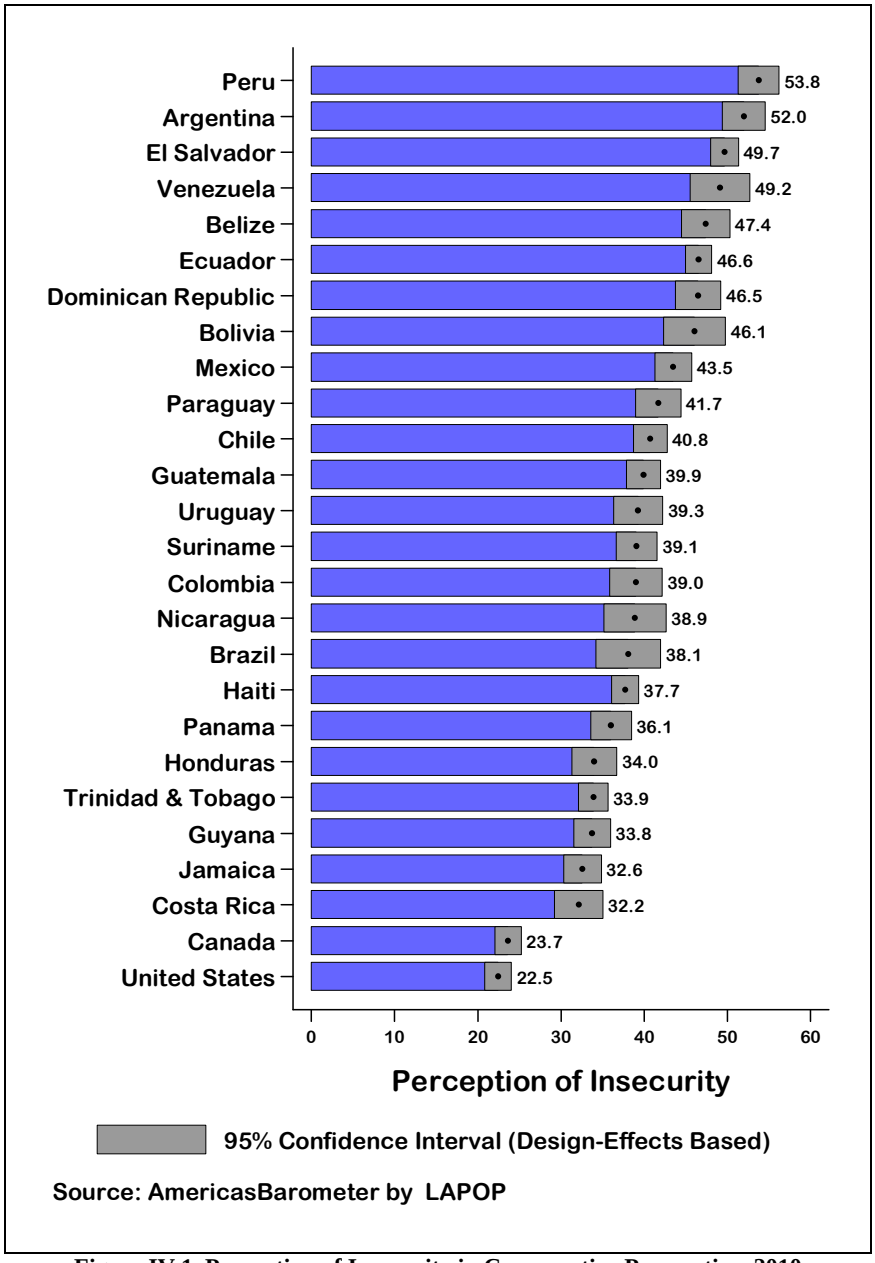

Figure IV.1. Perception of Insecurity in Comparative Perspective, 2010

These results show that Peru, Argentina, El Salvador and Venezuela exhibit the highest levels of insecurity, with scores around the midpoint of 50 on the scale. At the other extreme we find the United States and Canada with values below 24 points. Between these two extremes, the vast majority of the countries in the Americas fall between the 30's and 40s on the 0-100 scale.

Figure IV.2 shows how perceptions of insecurity in these eleven countries have suffered ups and downs since 2004. This analysis, like all cross-time analyses from 2004-2010 presented in the rest of this report, is based only on the eleven countries in which interviews were conducted in 2004 (and where interviews were repeated in 2006, 2008, and 2010): Mexico, the countries of Central America, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, and the Dominican Republic. Thus, results from 2010 reported in these cross-time

analyses are based only on those 11 countries and differ from the stand-alone results for 2010 reported in this study.

We see that 2006 was the year with the highest average levels of perceived insecurity, at 44.3. In the remaining years, average levels of insecurity have remained close to 40 points on the 0-100 scale. The only statistically significant differences are found between the 2006 and 2008 scores and between those in 2006 and 2010.

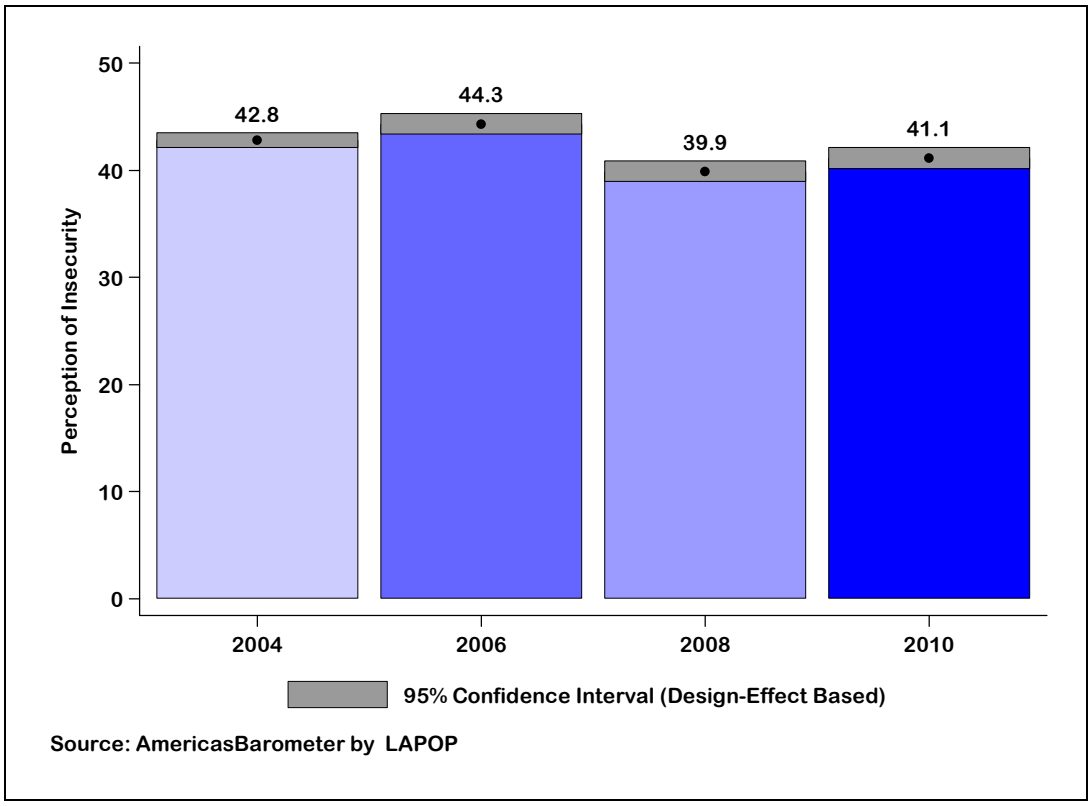

Figure IV.2. Perception of Insecurity over Time in Eleven Countries of the Americas, 2004-2010

Crime Victimization

LAPOP has developed a new item to measure crime victimization more accurately by obtaining more precise responses. In previous surveys respondents were asked about crime victimization using the following question: *"Have you been a victim of any type of crime in the past 12 months?"* In this round, based on a series of experimental studies conducted by LAPOP that show that new wording helped increase the validity of the responses, this question was slightly modified and is now accompanied by some key examples of criminal acts. In addition, items related to the place where the crime occurred were added. The new wording is the following:

VIC1EXT. Now, changing the subject, have you been a victim of any type of crime in the past 12 months? That is, have you been a victim of robbery, burglary, assault, fraud, blackmail, extortion, violent threats or **any other type** of crime in the past 12 months?
VIC2AA. Could you tell me in what place that last crime occurred?**[Read options]** (1) In your home (2) In this neighborhood (3) In this [Parish] (4) In another [Parish] (5) In another country (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) N/A
VIC1HOGAR. Has any other person living in your household been a victim of any type of crime in the past 12 months? That is, has any other person living in your household been a victim of robbery, burglary, assault, fraud, blackmail, extortion, violent threats or **any other type** of crime in the past 12 months? (1) Yes (2) No (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer

Figure IV.3 combines responses from VIC1EXT and VIC1HOGAR, revealing that 19.3% of respondents in the Americas reported having been a victim of a crime during the twelve months prior to being surveyed, while nearly a third said that either they or another member of their household had been victimized by a crime. Of the latter, 7.4% reported that both they and another family member had been victims.

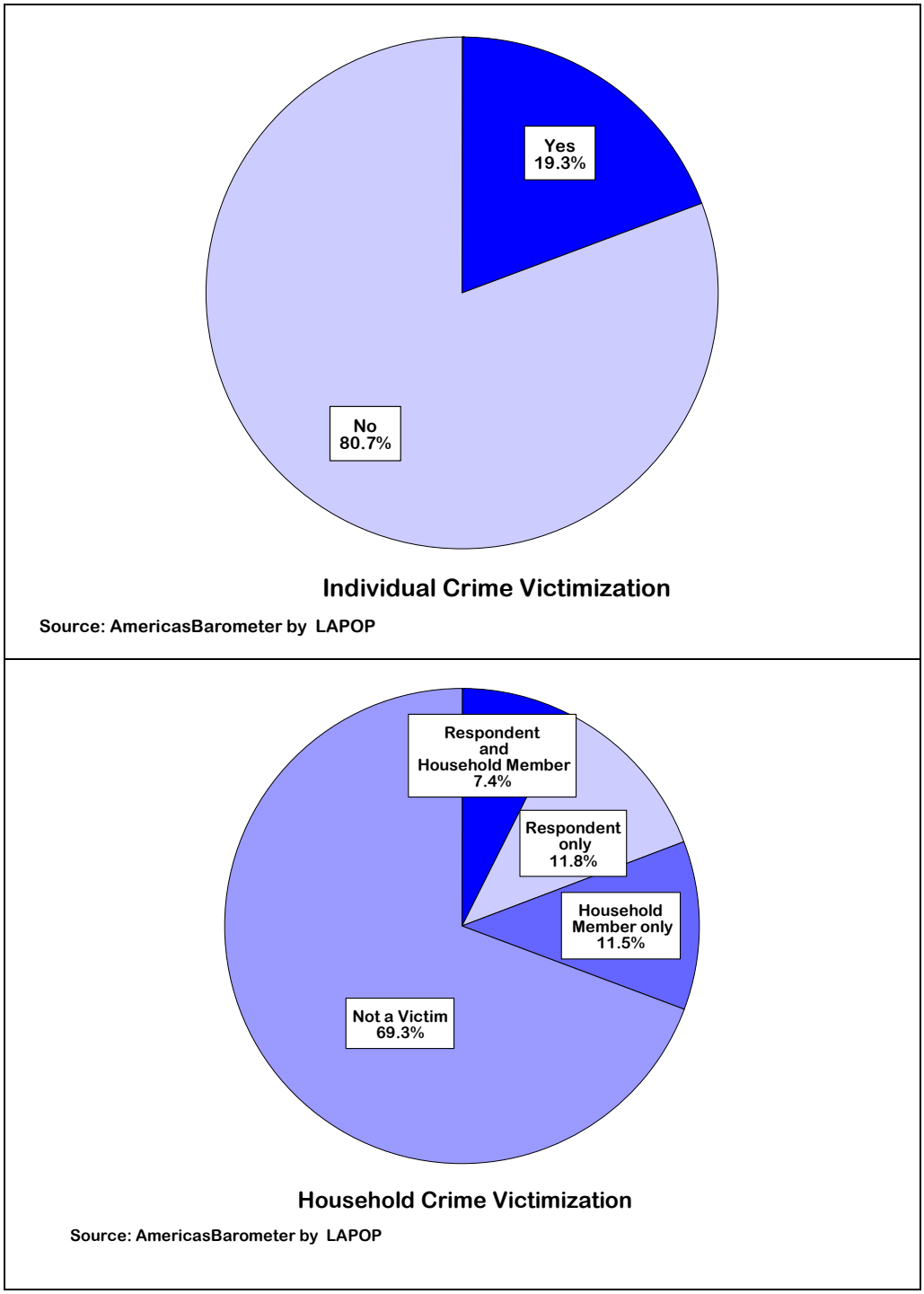

Figure IV.3. Individual and Household Crime Victimization, 2010

As we saw above, the survey also asked about the place where the respondent was victimized. Figure IV.4 presents quite varied results: 28.1% of crimes occurred in the home of the respondent, while a similar percentage, 27.8, reported that the crime took place in their municipality. Another 23.3% locate the crime somewhere in their neighborhood, while 20.5% said that the crime was in another municipality. Only 0.4% reports that the crime occurred in another country.

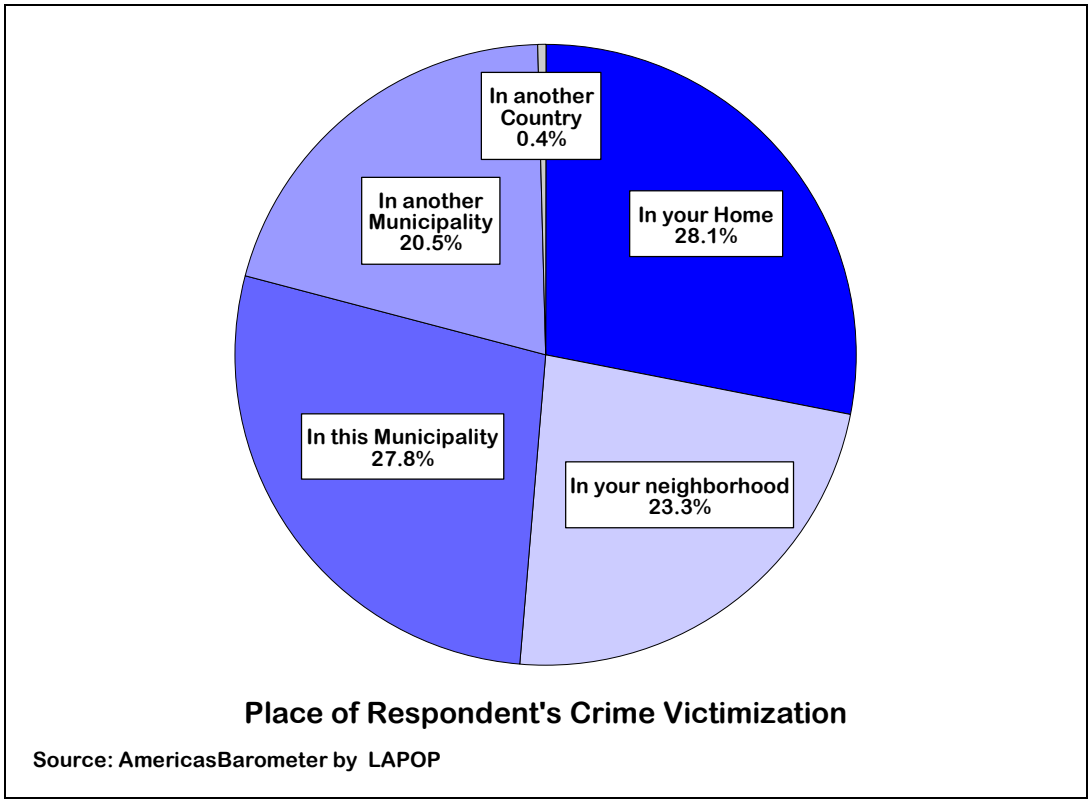

Figure IV.4. Place of Respondent's Crime Victimization, 2010

Figure IV.5 offers a comparative perspective showing the percentages of respondents who reported having been the victim of a crime across countries. The comparative results indicate that crime victimization rates are highest in Peru (31.1%) and Ecuador (29.1%), with Venezuela, Bolivia, and Argentina tied for third place, at 26.2%. At the other extreme, Belize, Panama, Jamaica and Guyana exhibit the lowest rates of victimization, with percentages of 11.8%, 11.3%, 10.1% and 9%, respectively.

We stress four things. First, readers need to look carefully at the confidence intervals; large clumps of countries have crime victimization rates that, statistically speaking, do not differ significantly from each other. For example, it is impossible to say that Ecuador has a higher crime rate than El Salvador as the error bars in the chart overlap. Second, our survey of personal crime victimization includes only those of voting age and older, and thus excludes some youth cohorts. Nonetheless, reports of victimization of other members in the household may include minors. Third, while these rankings are consistent with other measures of crime victimization reported by some other sources, for various reasons in some cases they disagree. Fourth, crime rates vary strongly between urban and rural areas in most countries in the Americas; victimization rates in rural areas are lower than in urban ones. Since our data report national levels of crime victimization, which are influenced by the rural/urban distribution of the national population, countries that are heavily rural might show relatively low crime rates even though urban crime could be quite high.

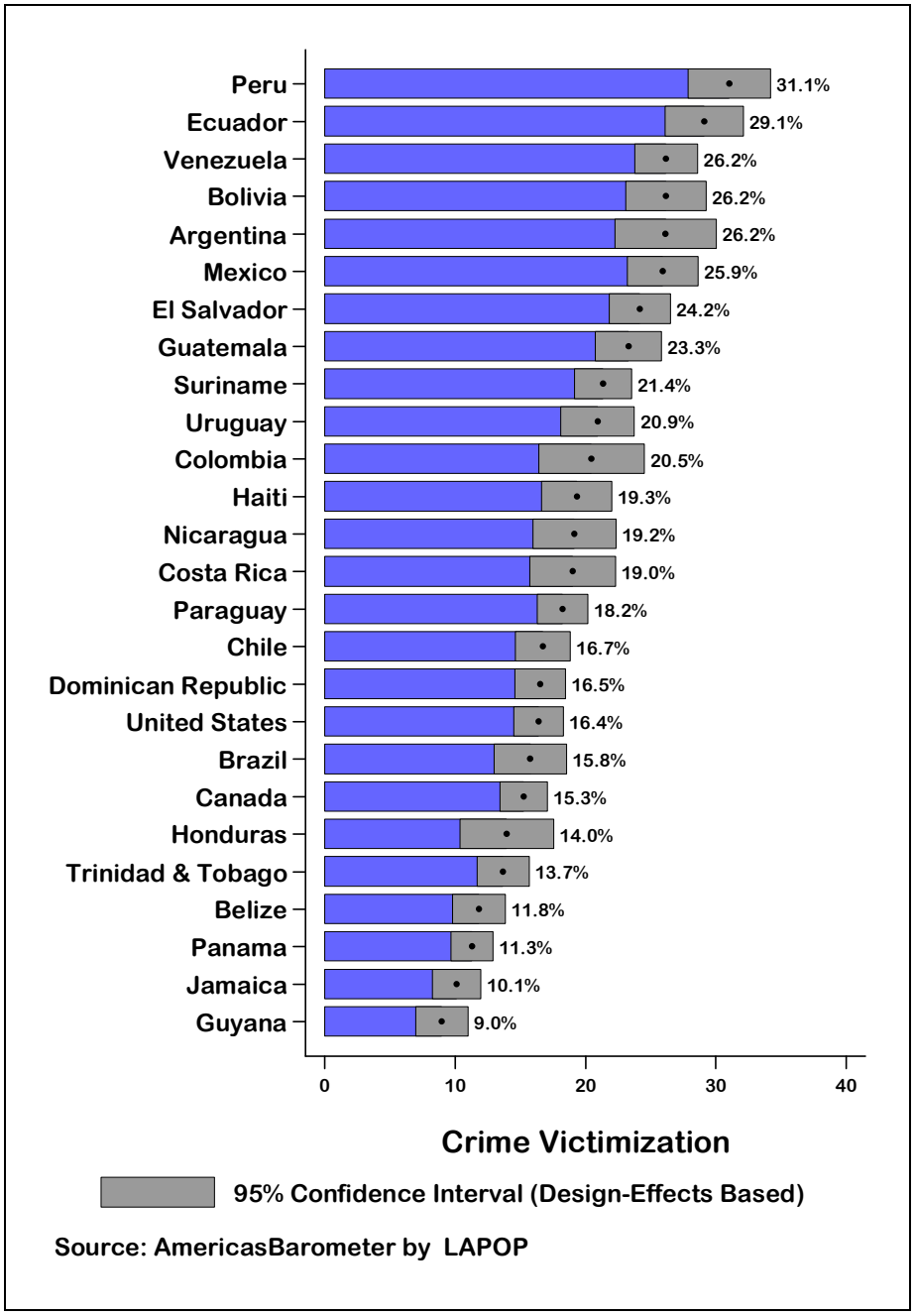

Figure IV.5. Percentage of People Victimized by Crime in Comparative Perspective, 2010

The results in Figure IV.6 show trends in crime victimization in the eleven countries for which there are surveys from 2004 to 2010. We observe that levels of crime victimization in 2010, at 21%, are significantly higher than levels reported in any previous year. Recall from the results presented above that for all 26 countries in the 2010 data set, the percentage victimized was 19.3%, somewhat lower than the victimization rate in the 11 countries for which we present cross-time data. The lowest levels of crime victimization for the 11 countries are found in 2004, with 14.7% of respondents reporting having been victims of a crime. The percentages for 2006 and 2008 are slightly higher than in 2004, at around 16%. Recall, however, that the 2010 survey coincided with a change in question wording. We had expected that the new question would yield higher reports of crime victimization even in the absence of any real change

in underlying incidences of crime because the examples would stimulate respondents to remember events that they otherwise would not have reported. It is thus difficult to know to what extent the rise in reported crime victimization in 2010 represents a real change or is simply an artifact of the survey instrument. Thus we strongly caution against making the assumption that there was a major leap in crime between 2008 and 2010.

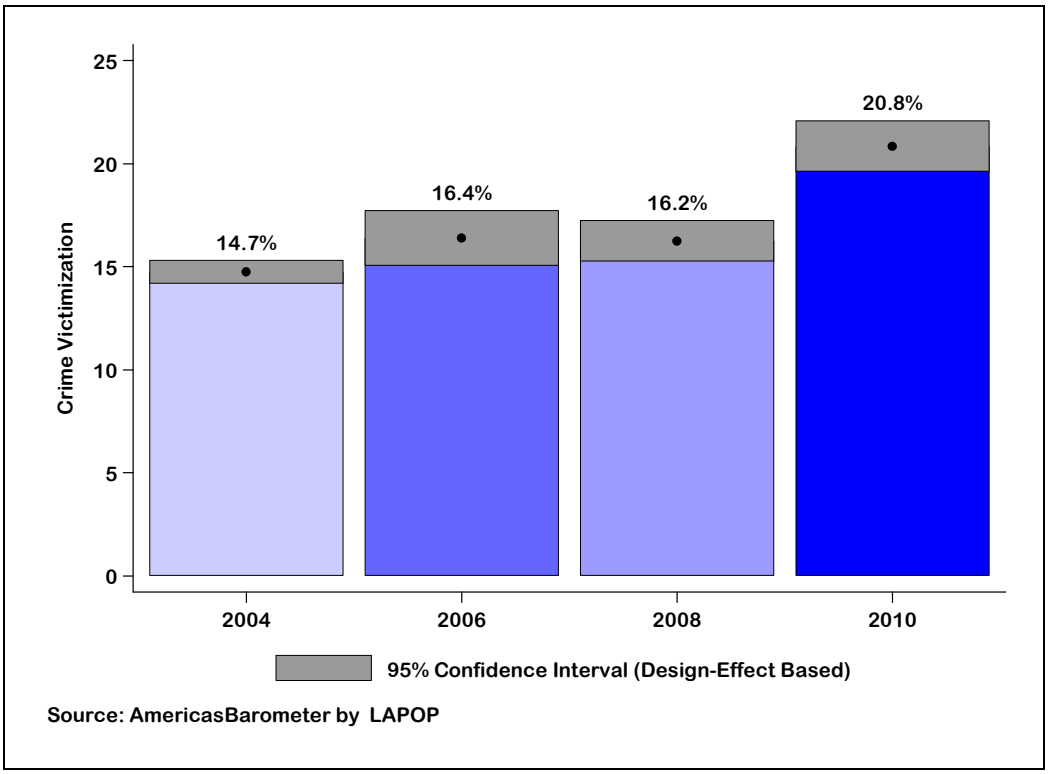

Figure IV.6. Crime Victimization over Time in Eleven Countries of the Americas, 2004-2010

Who is Likely to Be a Victim of Crime?

Figure IV.7 depicts the results of a logistic regression model assessing who is likely to be a victim of a crime in the Americas using the 2010 data set. In this and all other regression charts, we standardize all variables. As in prior regression plots reported in this study, coefficients measuring each variable's effect are indicated by dots, and confidence intervals by whiskers. If a confidence interval does not intersect the blue line at 0.0, the variable has a statistically significant effect (at $p<0.05$). A coefficient with a confidence interval that falls entirely to the right of the zero line indicates a positive and statistically significant net effect on the dependent variable. In contrast, a coefficient with a confidence interval to the left of the zero line indicates a negative and statistically significant net effect.

These results reveal that more educated citizens and ones with higher socioeconomic status are more likely to be victims of crime, much as we found in the analysis of the corruption variables. We attribute this finding to the fact that those who have more to steal are more likely to be targets of crime. In contrast, women and older citizens in the Americas are less likely to be crime victims than men and younger citizens. Our interpretation of this result is that females and older people are more likely to spend

much of their time at home (recall from the findings above that about three-quarters of all crime occurs outside the home), and thus are somewhat more protected from crime than the males and younger respondents. Furthermore, as noted before, crime rates are higher in urban areas than in rural; we find here that the larger the respondent's size of city/town, the more likely the respondent is to be victimized by crime.[5] Finally, those who view their family economic situation (defined below) as positive are somewhat less likely to experience crime than other citizens. However, we also show in the next chart that, in absolute terms, this variable makes very little impact.

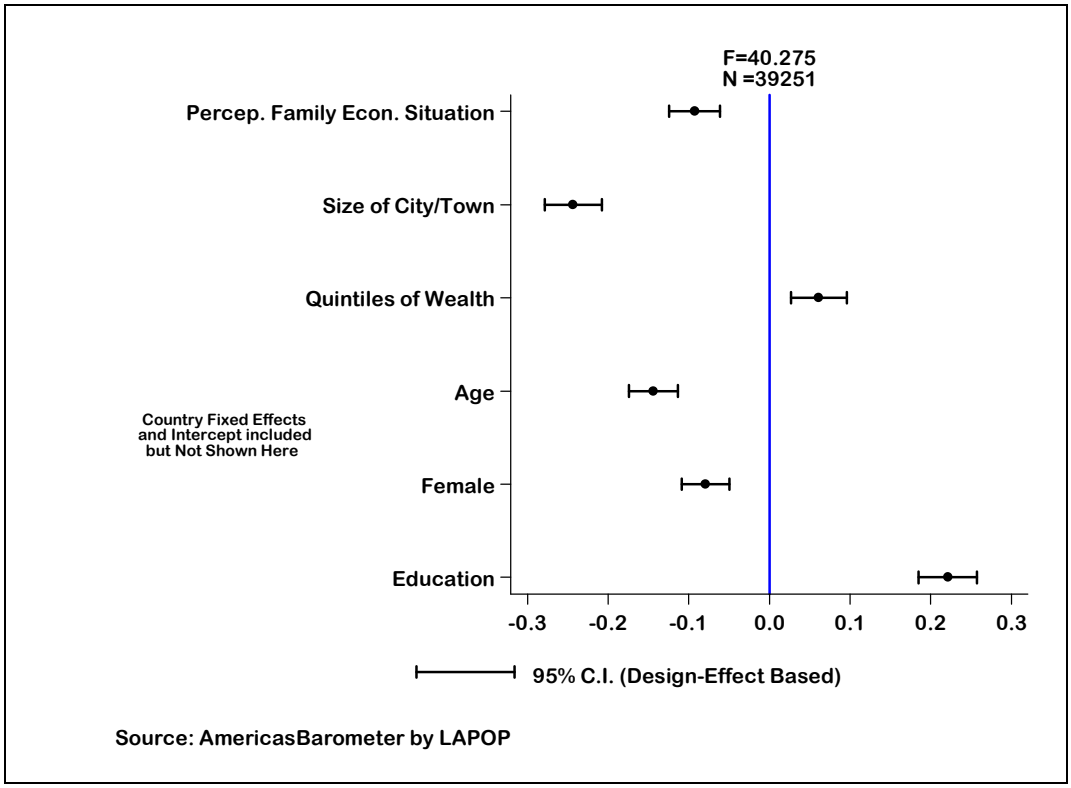

Figure IV.7. Who is Likely to Be a Victim of Crime in the Americas (2010)?

In order to get a clearer picture of the impact of each independent variable on crime victimization in the Americas, Figure IV.8 graphs each bivariate relationship. We observe no statistically significant differences across age cohorts, though age had been negatively related to crime victimization in the multivariate model. This suggests that other variables in the model, once controlled, are what allow the age difference to emerge. But, as shown in the multivariate model, men are significantly more likely to be victimized than women. Respondents with university education are twice as likely to be victims of crime as respondents with no or primary education. Crime victimization increases slightly across the range of wealth: at the lowest levels of wealth, the rate is 17.1% whereas it increases to 24.3% at the highest levels. However, perceptions of the family economic situation do not have a significant relationship with crime victimization, despite the statistically significant finding reported in the multivariate analysis. Finally, the size of the place of residence matters. Respondents living in large or metropolitan areas are significantly more vulnerable to crime than those who live in small or medium sized cities or in rural areas. Nearly 25% of respondents in the largest areas reported being victims of crime in the last year, whereas only 14.4% of those living in small cities or rural areas were victimized.

[5] The size of city/town is coded so that higher values are assigned to smaller cities and rural areas.

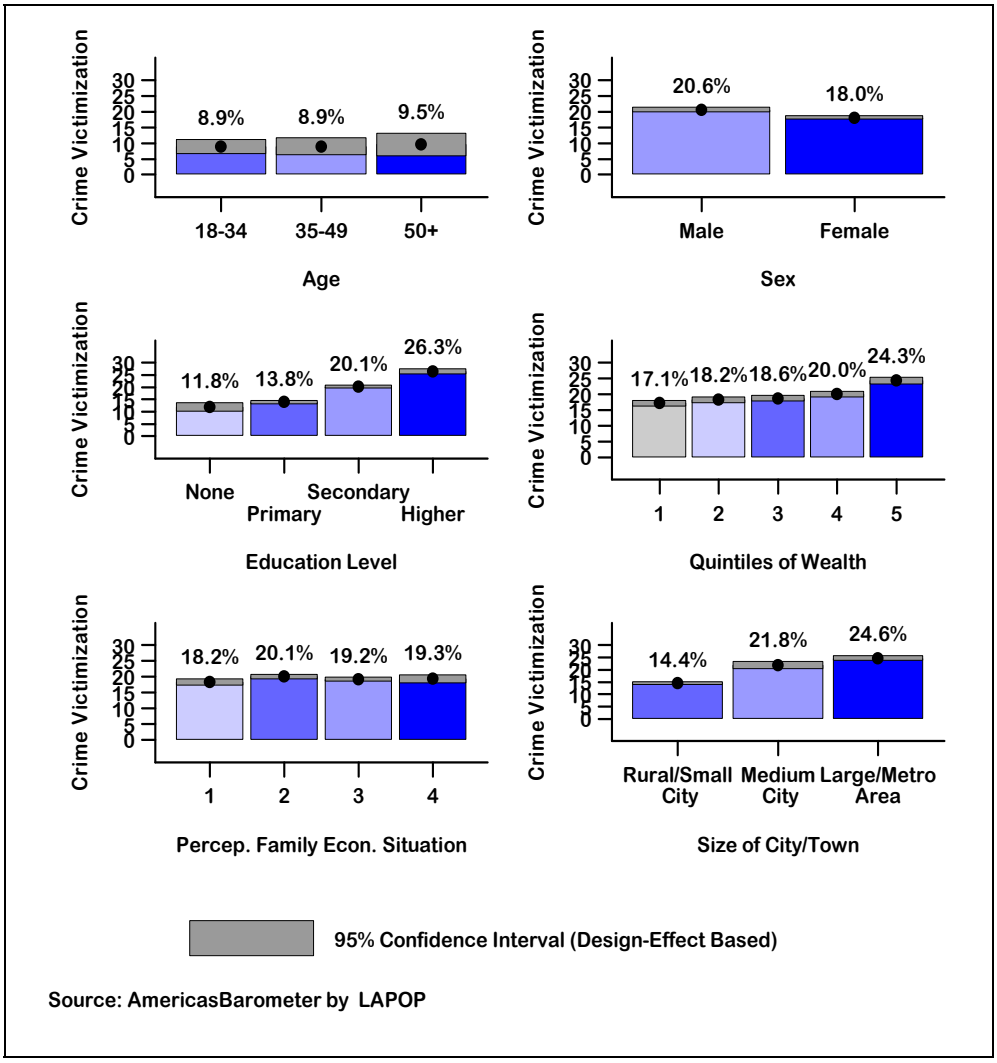

Figure IV.8. Crime Victimization by Age, Sex, Education Level, Wealth, Perception of Family Economic Situation, and Size of City/Town in the Americas, 2010[6]

Corruption

The Latin American Public Opinion Project has developed a series of items to measure corruption victimization. These items were first tested in Nicaragua in 1996 (Seligson, 1999, Seligson, 1997) and have been refined and improved in many studies since then. Because definitions of corruption can vary by culture, to avoid ambiguity we define corrupt practices by asking such questions as this: "Within the last year, have you had to pay a bribe to a government official?" We ask similar questions about bribery demands at the level of local government, in the public schools, at work, in the courts, in public health facilities, and elsewhere. This series provides two kinds of information. First, we can find out where

[6] On this graphic (IV.8), the categories of the variable "Perception of the Family Economic Situation" are the following: 4 = Covering expenses well and can save, 3 = Just covering expenses and no problems, 2 = Not covering expenses and has problems, and 1 = Not covering expenses and has serious problems.

corruption is most frequent. Second, we can construct overall scales of corruption victimization, enabling us to distinguish between respondents who have faced corrupt practices in only one setting and those who have been victimized in multiple settings. As in studies of victims of crime, we assume it makes a difference if one has a single experience or multiple experiences with corruption.

The full series of corruption items is as follows:

	N/A Did not try or did not have contact	**No**	**Yes**	**Doesn't Know**	**Doesn't Answer**
Now we want to talk about your personal experience with things that happen in everyday life...					
EXC2. Has a police officer asked you for a bribe in the last twelve months?		0	1	88	98
EXC6. In the last twelve months, did any government employee ask you for a bribe?		0	1	88	98
EXC11. In the last twelve months, did you have any official dealings in the city/town /Village council office? **If the answer is No → mark 99** **If it is Yes→ ask the following:** In the last twelve months, to process any kind of document like a permit, for example, did you have to pay any money beyond that required by law?	99	0	1	88	98
EXC13. Do you work? **If the answer is No → mark 99** **If it is Yes→ ask the following:** In your work, have you been asked to pay a bribe in the last twelve months?	99	0	1	88	98
EXC14. In the last twelve months, have you had any dealings with the courts? **If the answer is No → mark 99** **If it is Yes→ ask the following:** Did you have to pay a bribe to the courts in the last twelve months?	99	0	1	88	98
EXC15. Have you used any public health services in the last twelve months? **If the answer is No → mark 99** **If it is Yes→ ask the following:** In order to be seen in a hospital or a clinic in the last twelve months, did you have to pay a bribe?	99	0	1	88	98
EXC16. Have you had a child in school in the last twelve months? **If the answer is No → mark 99** **If it is Yes→ ask the following:** Have you had to pay a bribe at school in the last twelve months?	99	0	1	88	98

An item that is related to the topic but that taps the perception of corruption, rather than victimization, is also included in the questionnaire. As noted in Part I of this study, perception of corruption and direct experiences with it are not closely associated. The perception item reads as follows:

EXC7. Taking into account your own experience or what you have heard, corruption among public officials is **[Read]**
(1) Very common (2) Common (3) Uncommon or (4) Very uncommon? (88) Doesn't Know
(98) Doesn't Answer

We recode this variable on a 0-100 scale, where 0 represents a perception that corruption is very uncommon and 100 a perception that corruption is very common.

Perception of Corruption

Figure IV.9 shows that citizens across the Americas perceive corruption among public officials to be a widespread phenomenon. The average in every country falls above 50 points on our standard scale from 0 to 100. The highest levels of perceived corruption are found in Trinidad & Tobago, Jamaica and Peru, with averages of 83.1, 81.7 and 79.4, respectively. Only four countries have average levels of perceived corruption below 65 points: El Salvador (64.6), Uruguay (62.1), Canada (58.4) and Suriname (50.5). Most countries have average levels of perceived corruption falling in the 70's.

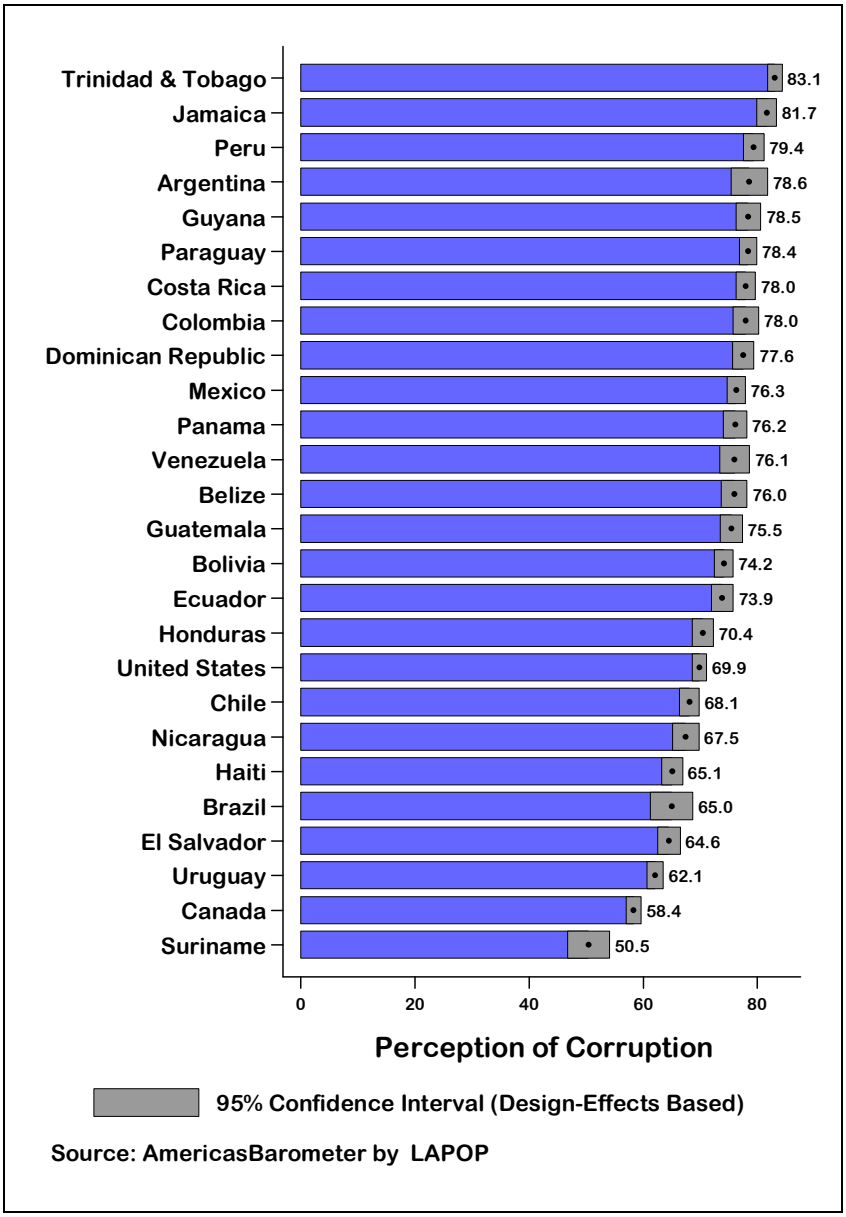

Figure IV.9. Perception of Corruption in Comparative Perspective, 2010

As we have been doing for other indicators throughout this report, we present how perceptions vary over time from 2004 to 2010. Figure IV.10 depicts trends in perception of corruption in the eleven countries for which we have data since 2004: Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, and the Dominican Republic. In general terms we observe that after a statistically significant increase from 73 to 76 points between 2004 and 2006, average perception of corruption in this set of countries remained close to 74 points on our 0-100 scale in the last two waves of surveys. In short, during the last six years citizens in these eleven countries have perceived corruption among public officials as a widespread problem.

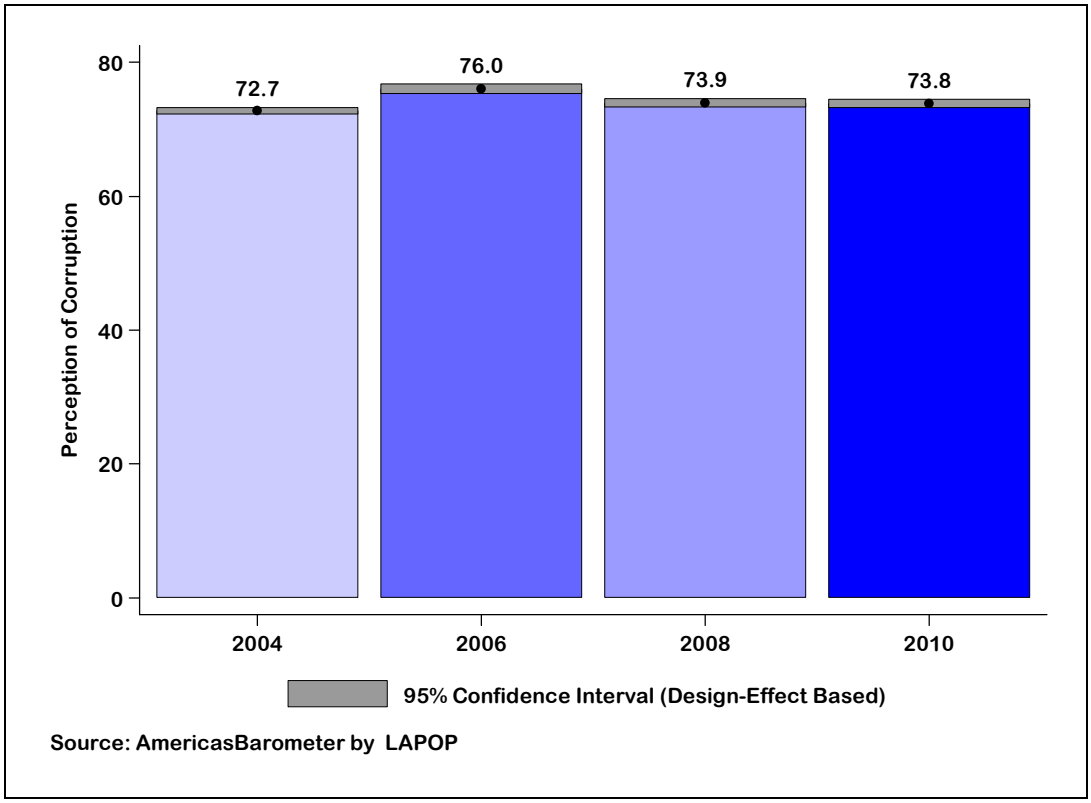

Figure IV.10. Perception of Corruption over Time in Eleven Countries of the Americas: 2004-2010

Corruption Victimization

This section addresses the extent to which citizens across the Americas are victims of corruption. Specifically, it presents the percentage of respondents who have been victimized by corruption, the total ways they have been victimized, and the determinants of victimization.

As Figure IV.11 shows, corruption victimization varies widely from country to country in the Americas. Haiti is the country with the highest percentage of respondents who report having experienced corruption, and it is the only one where that percentage falls above 50%. This means that more than one out of every two Haitians report that they were asked to pay some sort of bribe in the year prior to the survey. No other country in the Americas comes close to that extreme level. Mexico, Bolivia, and Peru also present high levels of corruption victimization, with percentages around 30%, indicating that close to one-third of the voting aged adults in those countries have confronted bribery in the year prior to the survey. At the other extreme, we find that the United States, Chile and Canada have the lowest levels of corruption victimization. Most countries in the Americas display percentages between 10 and 25%.

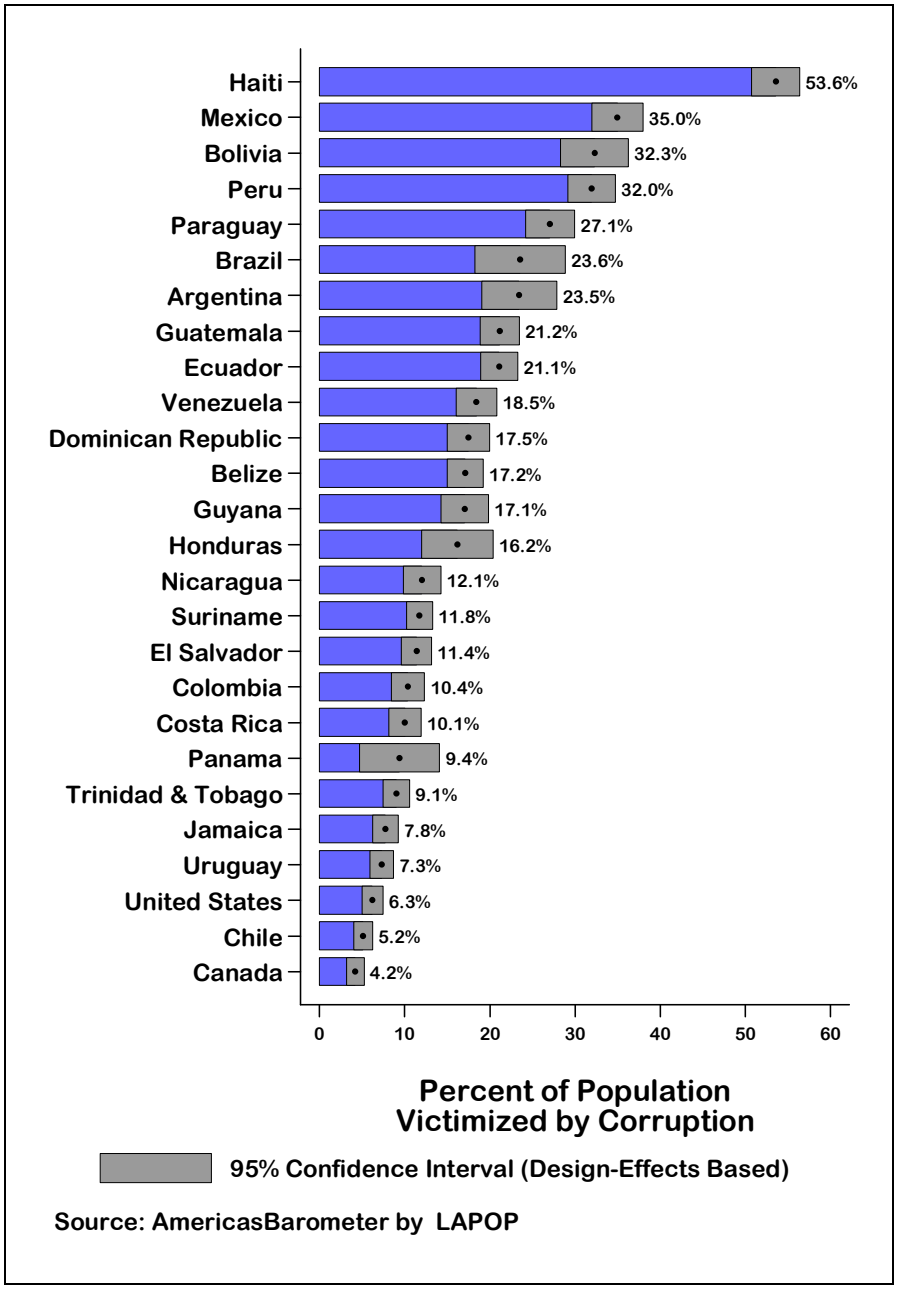

Figure IV.11. Corruption Victimization in Comparative Perspective, 2010

Trends in corruption victimization within the eleven countries for which LAPOP has data since 2004 show a slight but steady decline over time. In 2004, 21.5% of respondents reported having been victims of corruption, while that percentage dropped to 18% in 2010, a difference which is statistically significant. If we compare these results with those regarding perceptions of corruption, we observe that whereas actual victimization has declined, perception of corruption has remained at the same high level. However, the reader needs to keep in mind that the corruption perception variable asks not about personal experience, but about the perception of the behavior of public officials, which, as discussed previously, tends to refer to high-level officials. At LAPOP we generally place more trust in the corruption victimization information as it measures direct, personal experience. For that reason we are heartened by the finding that corruption seems to be dropping in the Americas.

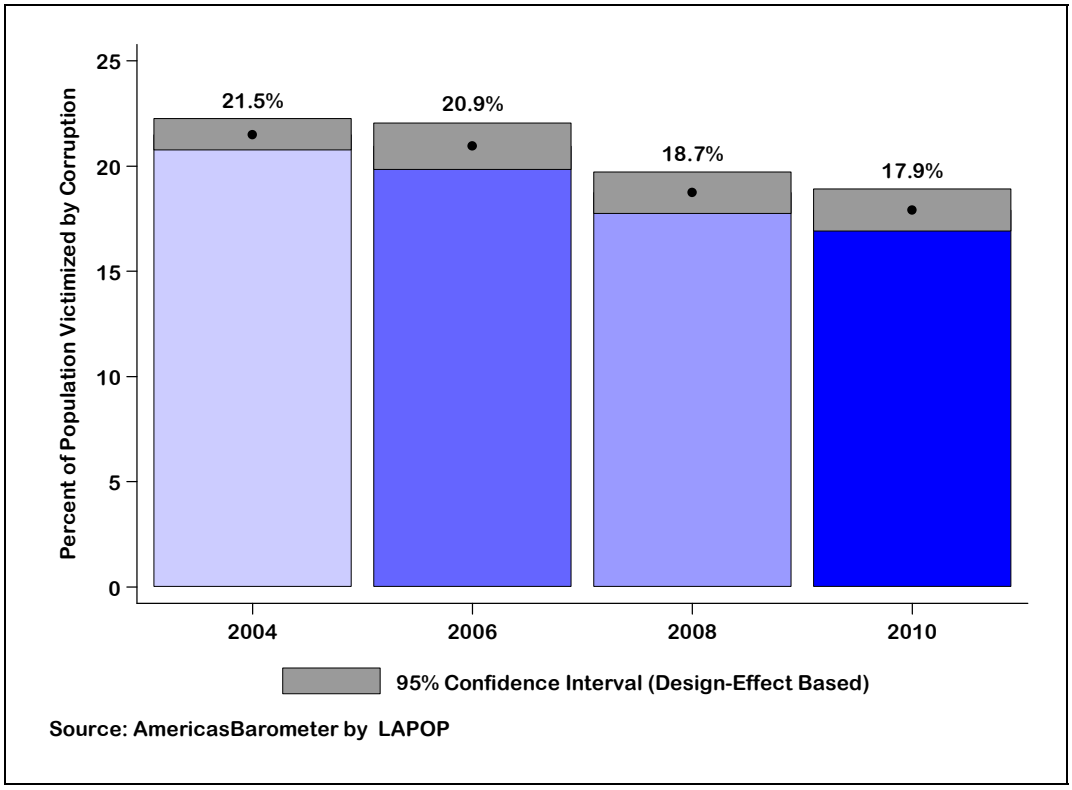

Figure IV.12. Corruption Victimization over Time in Eleven Countries of the Americas, 2004-2010

Second, we assess the frequency of corruption victimization among citizens in the Americas. Figure IV.13 presents the distribution of the number of such experiences that respondents report. We observe that for the Americas as a whole, including all of the 26 nations in the AmericasBarometer survey, 82% of respondents say that they have not been a victim of corruption, while 10.7% said that they have experienced only one incident. Experiencing more than one episode of corruption is less frequent in the region, with 4.4% saying they were victims of two incidents of corruption and 2.6% of three or more.

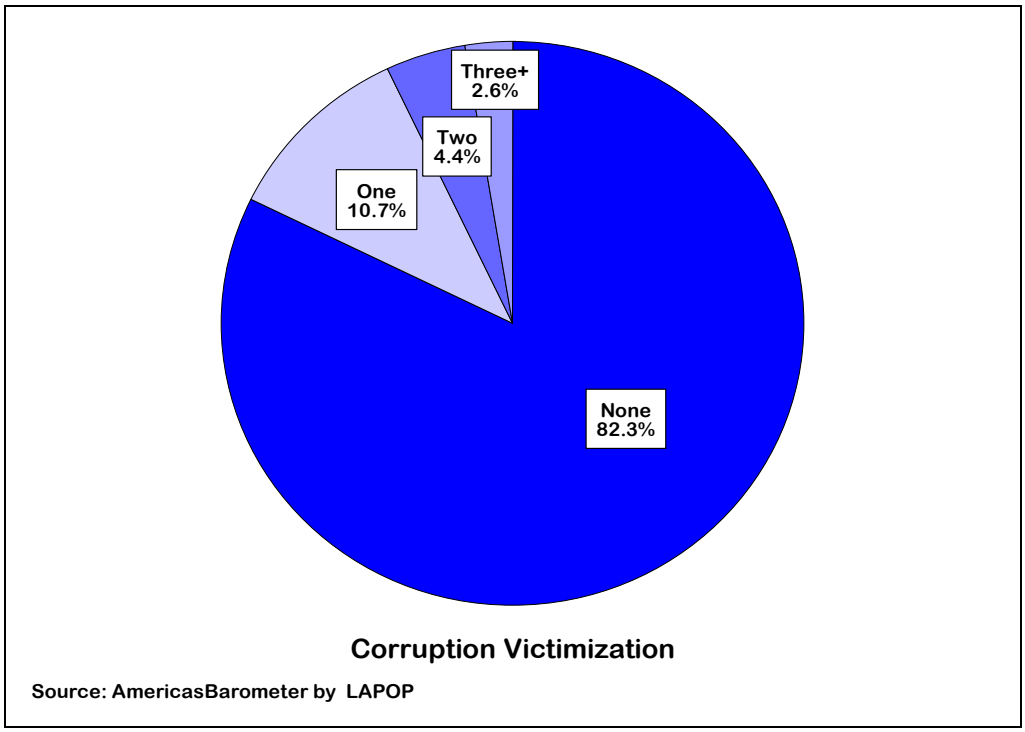

Figure IV.13. Total Index of Corruption Victimization in the Americas, 2010

Who is Likely to Be a Victim of Corruption?

In order to get a more comprehensive picture of corruption victimization, we computed a regression model with the intention of identifying those socioeconomic characteristics related to the likelihood of experiencing corruption in the Americas. Figure IV.14 graphs the results of this logistic regression. In general terms, we observe that the classic socioeconomic and demographic variables are statistically significant. Specifically, gender has one of the strongest effects, an effect similar to that we found in the analysis of crime victimization. Women in the Americas are much less likely to be victims of corruption than men. Also, corruption victimization is greater among those with higher levels of education, among the well-off, and among those with children. We expect that the education association may in part be because of the strong links between education and income, but it may also be that the more educated are open to reporting corruption attempts to the interviewers. Having more children exposes respondent to more school-based corruption, but also increases exposure to municipal corruption in the context of obtaining birth certificates and other documents related to families. Finally, older citizens and those living in small cities or rural areas are less likely to experience corruption.[7] Again, these findings make sense. Older citizens have fewer dealings with public officials than do younger ones, and government presence is lower outside of big cities.

[7] The size of city/town is coded so that higher values are assigned to smaller cities and rural areas.

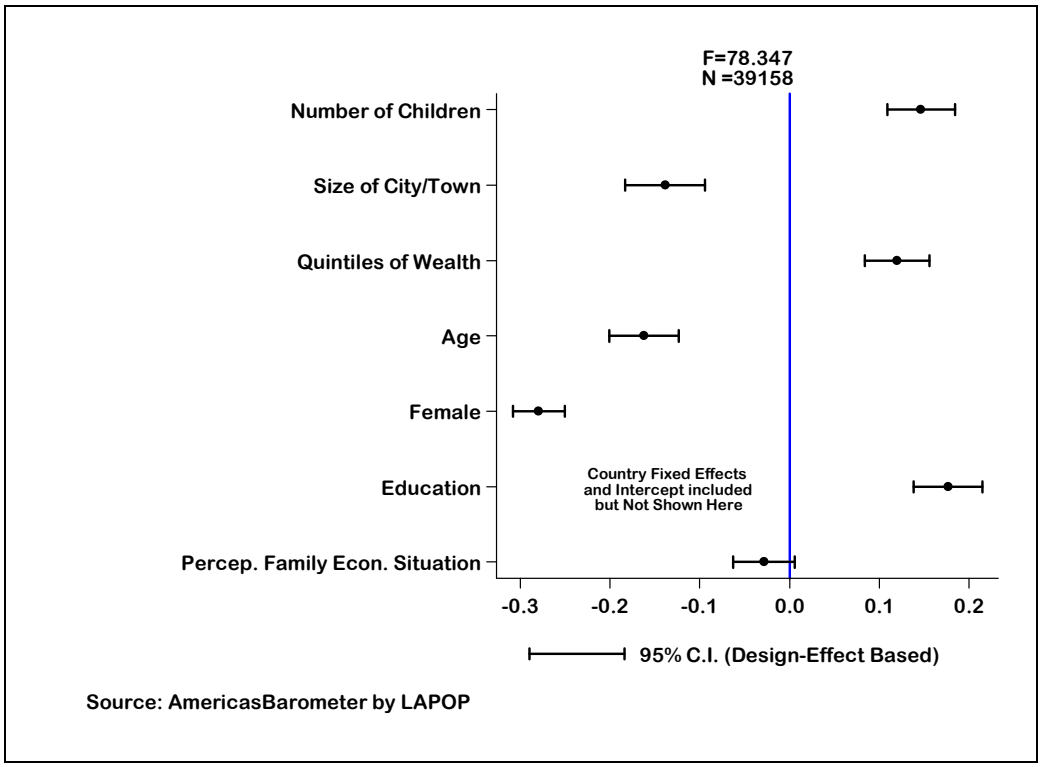

Figure IV.14. Who is Likely to Be a Victim of Corruption in the Americas in 2010?

To understand the impact of each sociodemographic variable, Figure IV.15 lays out their individual association with corruption victimization. As education increases, the likelihood of being solicited for a bribe also does so; while 21.1% of those with higher education have been victims of corruption, only 13.3% of those with no education have experienced that situation. The difference by gender is one of the most evident, with 21.5% of males reporting a request for a bribe versus 14.1% of females. Corruption victimization is quite steady across age cohorts, despite the significance of age in the multivariate model, indicating that other variables in the multivariate model cause this one to emerge as significant. The relationship between wealth and crime victimization is clear, especially when we compare the wealthiest (23.9%) and the poorest quintiles (17.9%). We also find statistically significant differences between the percentages of respondents victimized by crime who live in small cities (17.6%) and in large cities (20.4%). Finally, and surprisingly, there are no strong differences by the number of children in the bivariate analysis. Again, the controls in the multivariate model enable the true finding to emerge.

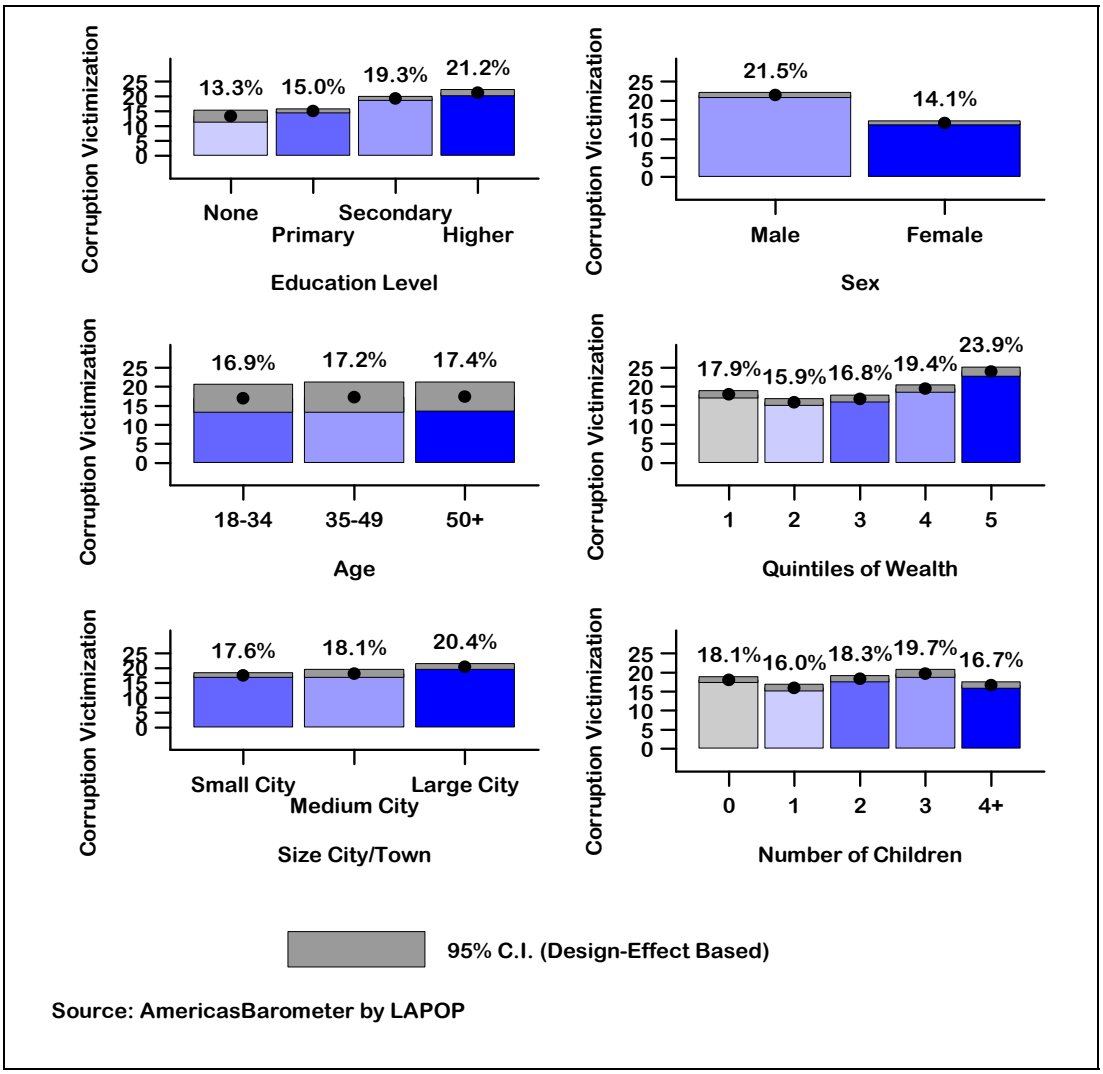

Figure IV.15. Corruption Victimization by Education, Sex, Age, Wealth, Size of City/Town, and Number of Children in the Americas, 2010

The Impact of Crime, Insecurity and Corruption on Support for the Political System

How do widespread experiences and perceptions of crime and insecurity affect democracy in the Americas? We now look at the impacts of crime victimization, perception of insecurity, perception of corruption and corruption victimization on system support. Figure IV.16 illustrates the results of a multivariate regression which includes these four variables along with a group of socio-demographic variables and some political and economic perceptions. We see that all of our variables of interest in this section have a negative and statistically significant effect on system support. Respondents who perceive high levels of insecurity or corruption tend to support the political system to a lesser extent than those who do not perceive them. The same effect is found among those who have been victims of crime or corruption.

However, the variable with the strongest impact in this model is satisfaction with the performance of the incumbent president; the higher the satisfaction, the higher the system support. A smaller positive

effect is found among those with high levels of political interest and who perceive a positive family economic situation, but unemployment (temporary or not) undermines system support. Women and those living in smaller areas are more likely to support the political system, while the highly educated tend to have lower levels of system support.[8]

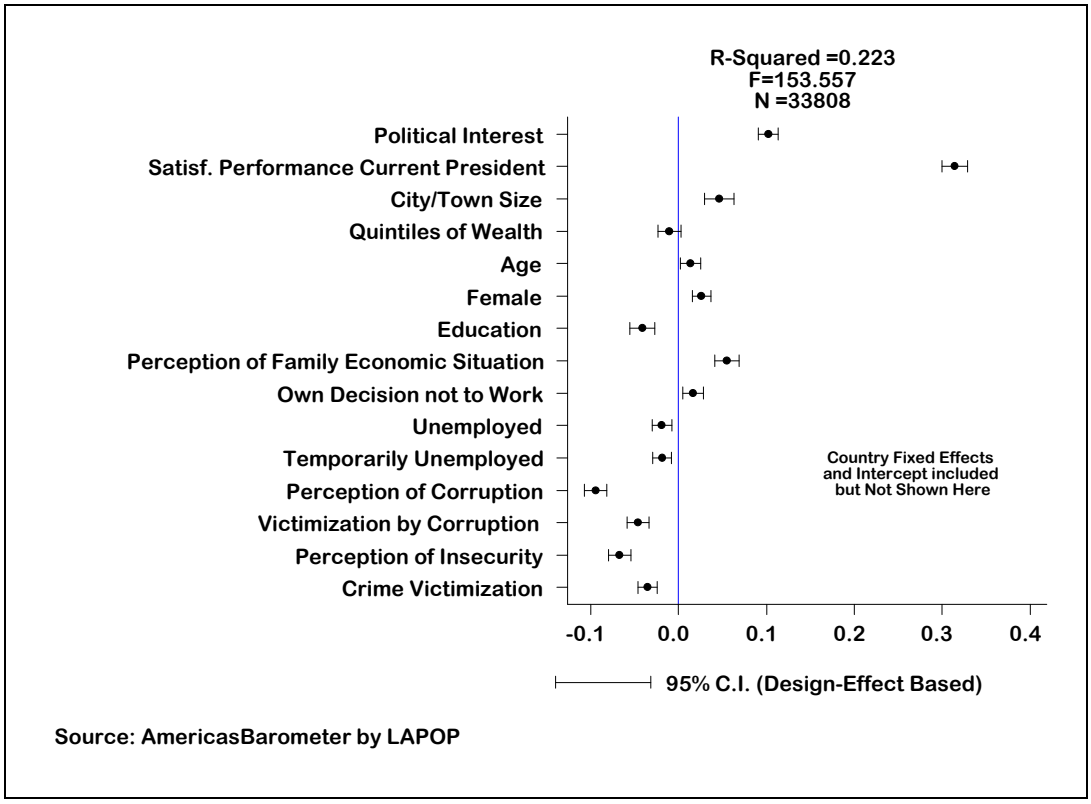

Figure IV.16. Impact of Crime, Insecurity and Corruption on System Support in the Americas, 2010

Figure IV.17 illustrates the effects of four of these key variables on system support. First, the left hand graph in the upper row shows the clear impact of political interest; respondents not interested in politics hold levels of system support below the midpoint of 50, while those with the highest levels of interest have an average of system support close to 60. The graph to its right depicts the strong effect of satisfaction with the current president. Citizens in the Americas who view the performance of their presidents as very poor report an average of 37 on the 0-100 scale, while those who view it as very good report an average of 65. The two lower graphs show the negative impacts of perceptions of insecurity and corruption. Respondents who perceive their neighborhoods as very safe and citizens who view corruption as something very uncommon hold similar levels of system support, with averages around 57. That average drops to 48 in both figures as levels of perceived insecurity and corruption reach their top values.

[8] The size of city/town is coded so that higher values are assigned to smaller cities and rural areas.

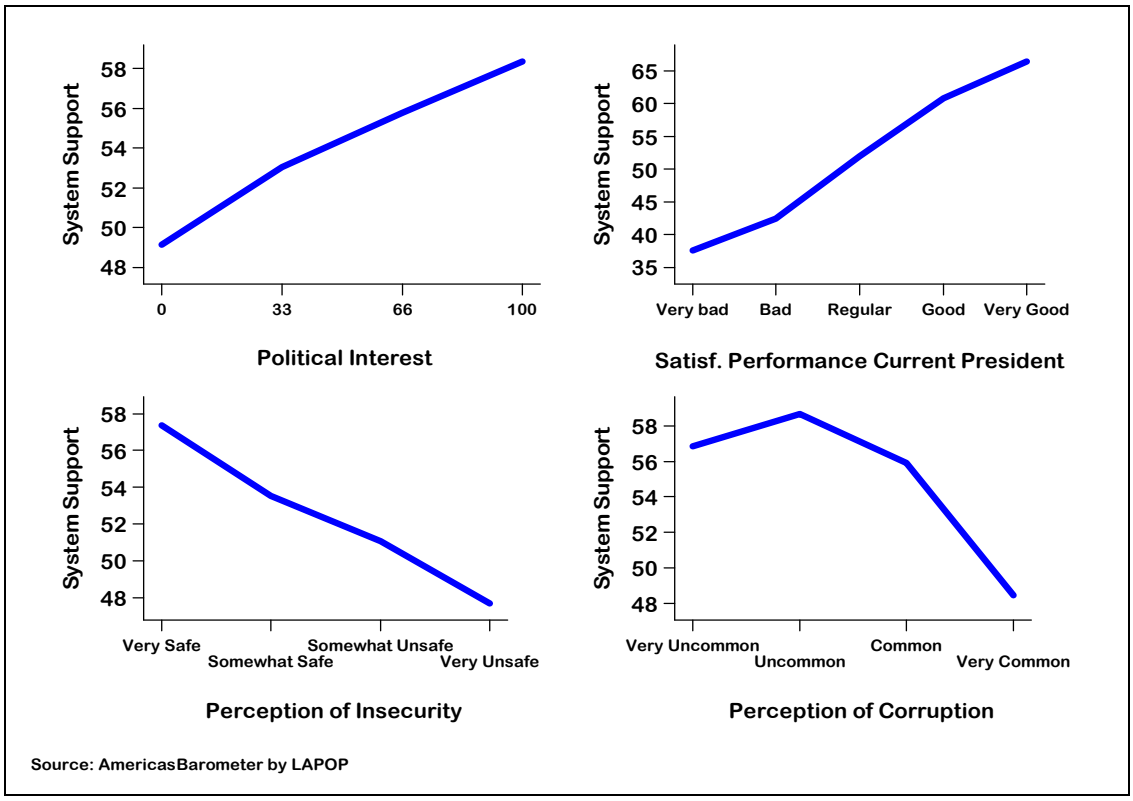

Figure IV.17. Impact of Political Interest, Satisfaction with the Performance of Current President, and Perceptions of Insecurity and Corruption on System Support in the Americas, 2010

Figure IV.18 presents further bivariate plots of the impacts of key variables. The upper row depicts the negative impacts of crime and corruption victimization on system support. Those who experienced crime have an average level of system support of 49.5 on the 0-100 scale, while respondents who were not victims of crime in the last twelve months report an average support of 54.1 on the same scale. Meanwhile, citizens who were asked for a bribe have a lower level of system support (47.3) than those who have not been victimized (54.4). We also observe that respondents who work or who chose not to work hold higher levels of system support than those who are unemployed. Finally, the last graph shows that in bivariate analysis the size of the place of residence does not have a positive linear impact, as we would expect from the regression results. Average levels of system support are very similar across sizes of cities/towns; those who live in rural areas and small towns report an average support of 54.0, versus 52 points for those in medium and large cities.

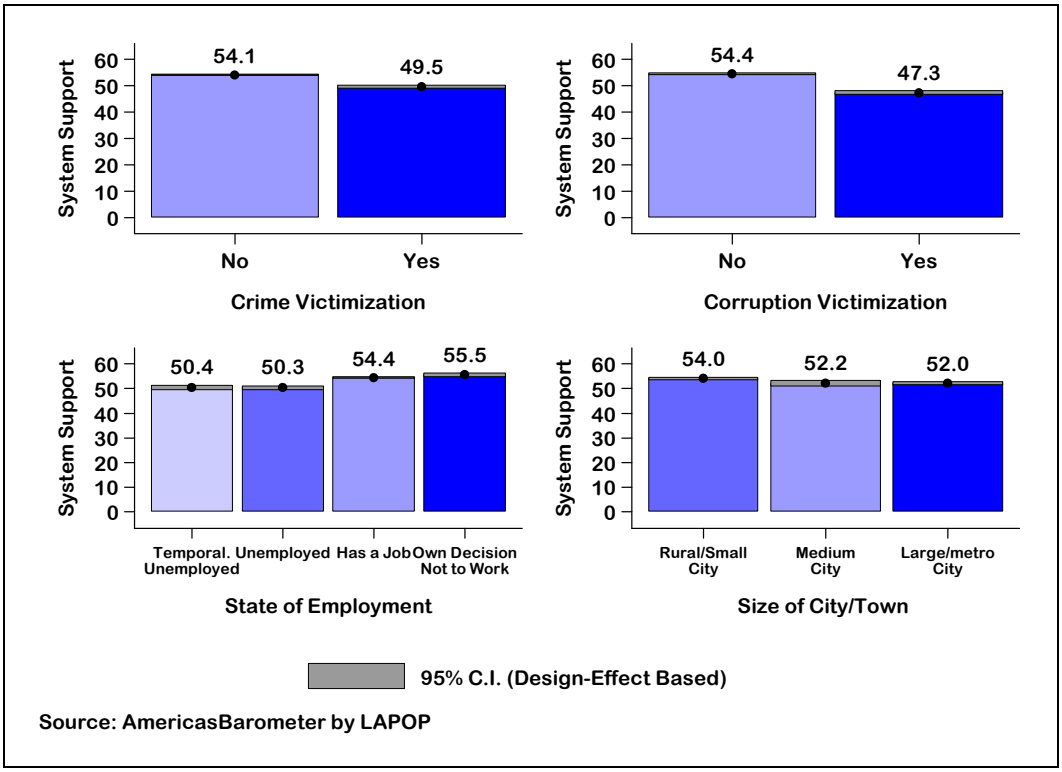

Figure IV.18. Impact of Crime and Corruption Victimization, State of Employment, and City/Town Size on System Support in the Americas, 2010

Support for the Rule of Law and the Impact of Crime and Insecurity

This section examines respect for the rule of law in the Americas. We do so using a single question tapping attitudes towards the extent to which authorities should be bound by the law in pursuing justice.

AOJ8. In order to catch criminals, do you believe that the authorities should always abide by the law or that occasionally they can cross the line?
(1) Should always abide by the law (2) Occasionally can cross the line (88)Doesn't Know
(98) Doesn't Answer

Figure IV.19 shows the percentage of citizens in the Americas who express support for the rule of law versus those who consider that authorities could cross the line occasionally. Results reveal that most citizens (60.9%) are in favor of authorities always abiding by the law.

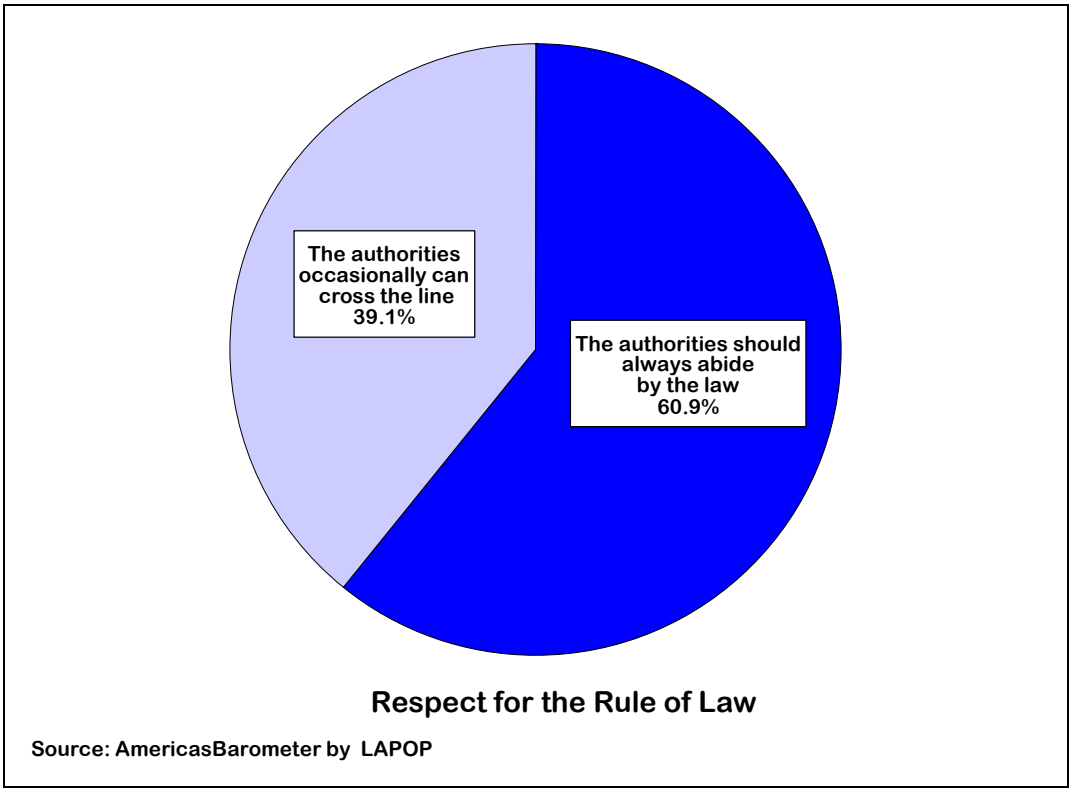

Figure IV.19. Support for the Respect of the Rule of Law in the Americas, 2010.

When we observe the trend in support for the rule of law over time for the eleven countries for which LAPOP has data since 2004 (Mexico, the countries of Central America, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, and the Dominican Republic), we see that the highest percentage of respondents in favor of the rule of law was measured in 2004, at 67% (see Figure IV.20). From that year on, support for the rule of law has suffered a statistically significant decrease. After dropping to 54% in 2006, the percentage of citizens in favor of authorities always abiding by the law remained close to 58% in the last four years.

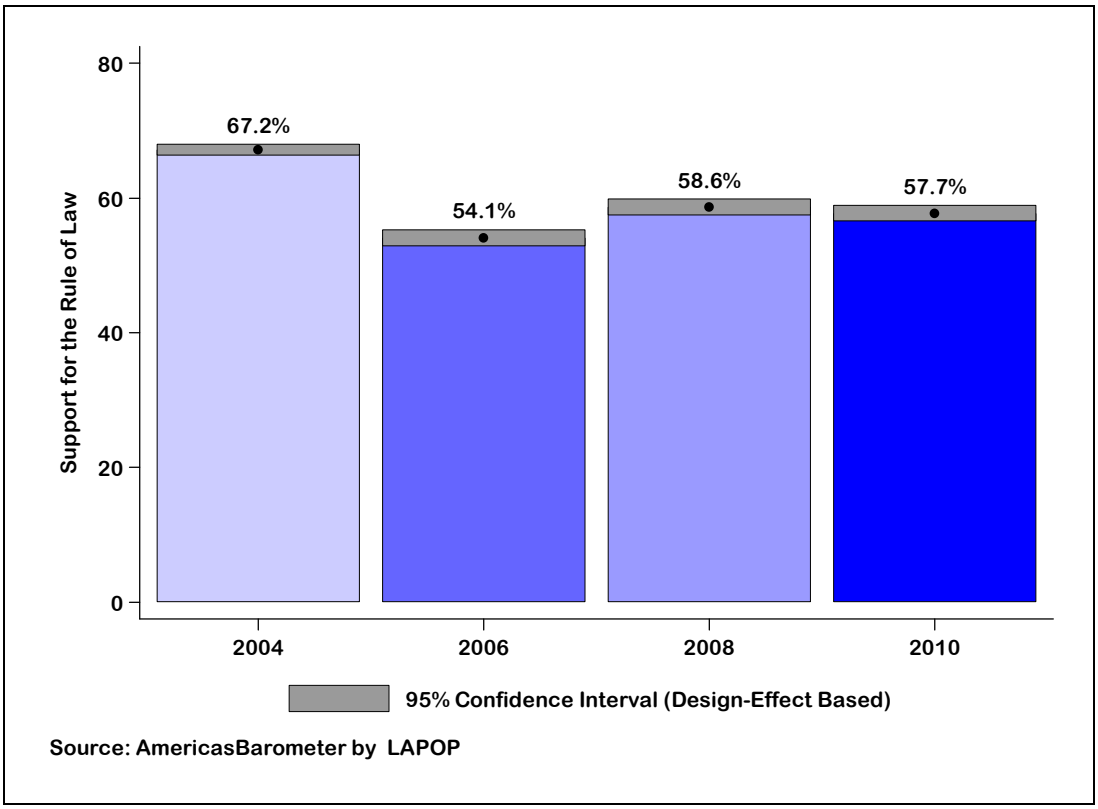

Figure IV.20. Support for the Respect of the Rule of Law by Year in Eleven Countries of the Americas, 2004-2010

Figure IV.21 displays levels of support for the rule of law in the Americas in 2010. As we observe, Belize, Jamaica, Venezuela and Brazil are the countries with the highest percentages of respondents supporting the idea that in order to catch criminals, the authorities should always abide by the law. Percentages in all these four countries rise above 70%. At the other extreme, fewer than 50% of citizens support respect for the rule of law in Peru, El Salvador and Ecuador.

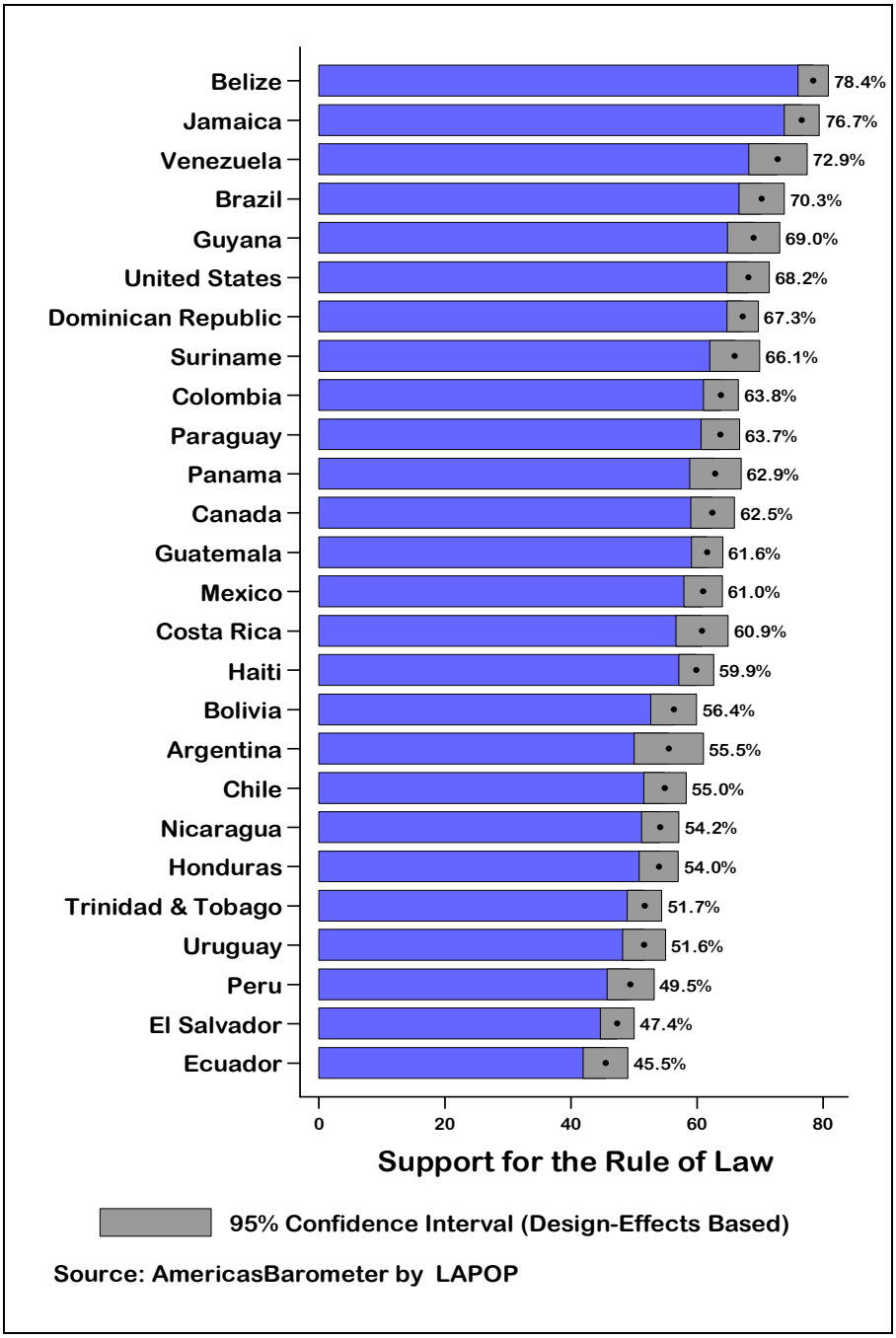

Figure IV.21. Support for the Respect of the Rule of Law in Comparative Perspective, 2010

We end this section by analyzing the determinants of support for the rule of law in the Americas. Figure IV.22 presents graphically the results of a regression model used to identify those factors.[9] The results reveal that only two socio-demographic characteristics have a statistically significant impact: older respondents are more supportive of the rule of law than younger ones, and holding other variables constant, women support the rule of law more than men. In addition, trust in the judicial system has a positive impact on our dependent variable. Those who trust the judicial system are more likely to agree

[9] The size of city/town is coded so that higher values are assigned to smaller cities and rural areas.

with the idea that authorities should stick to the law. Finally, perception of insecurity significantly reduces citizens' support for the rule of law, as does corruption victimization.

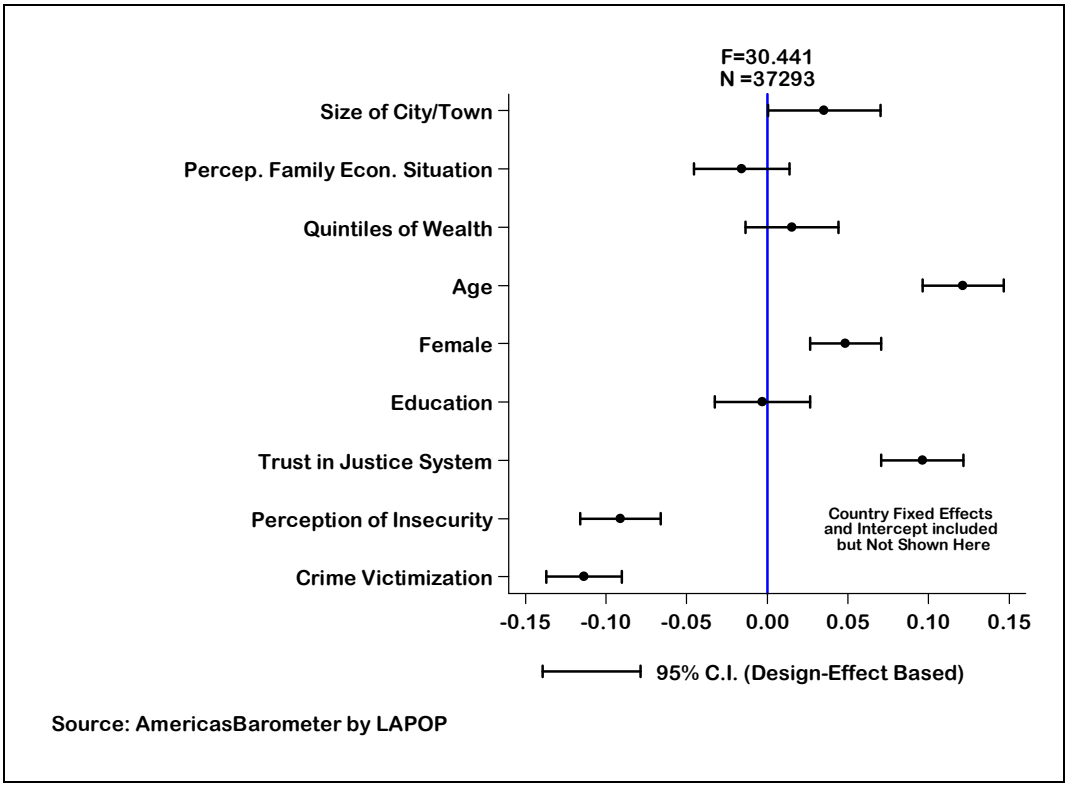

Figure IV.22. Determinants of Support for the Respect of the Rule of Law in the Americas, 2010

Figure IV.23 illustrates some of the more significant effects on support for the rule of law. The upper left hand graph shows the significant impact of crime victimization on support for the rule of law in the Americas. As we see, only 52% of crime victims support the rule of law, while 62% of those who have not experienced crime support it. This suggests that crime victimization reduces support for the rule of law by encouraging tolerance of law-breaking on the part of the police. Thus, a vicious circle is found between crime victimization and reduced support for the rule of law, which perhaps results in more criminal behavior. Perceptions of insecurity also have a negative impact; as we move from the lowest to the highest levels of perceived insecurity, support for the rule of law decreases. We also observe how opinions about the judicial system affect support for the rule of law in the Americas. Among those who do not trust the judiciary 58% support the idea that authorities should always abide by the law whereas among those who fully trust the judicial system, almost 70% are supportive of the rule of law. Finally, we find little bivariate relationship between age and support for the rule of law; around 69% of respondents across all the age cohorts support the rule of law, although the oldest cohort in the graph, those 50 and over, are more supportive. The multivariate model, which introduces controls, allows for the true effect of age to emerge.

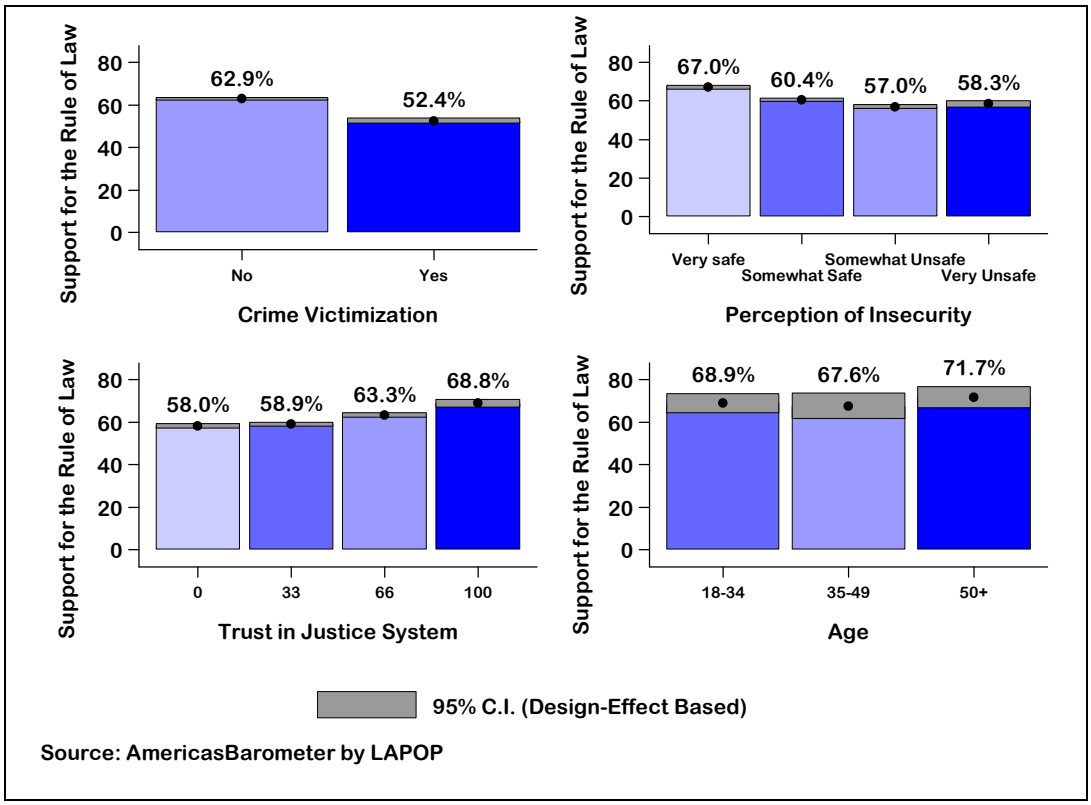

Figure IV.23. Support for the Respect of the Rule of Law by Crime Victimization, Perception of Insecurity, Trust in the Justice System, and Age in the Americas, 2010

Conclusion

This chapter has assessed the linkages between crime and corruption and democratic values in the Americas. Regarding crime, results from the AmericasBarometer survey indicate moderate levels of perceived insecurity but lower levels of victimization. Across the region, 19.3% of respondents report having been victims of crime; Peru and Ecuador are the countries with the highest victimization rates, and Guyana and Jamaica the lowest. Men, the wealthy, and the better educated are more likely to be victims of crime.

This chapter also reveals that the perception of corruption among public officials is widespread in the Americas, with averages above 50 in every country. While perception of corruption has remained high over time, the percentage of citizens victimized by corruption has declined since 2004, at least in the eleven countries in which we have enough data to compare over time. As with crime, men and well-off and educated respondents are more likely to be victims of corruption.

Finally, this chapter shows that both the perception and the experience of corruption and crime have negative impacts on system support and support for the rule of law in the region.

Chapter V. Legitimacy, System Support, and Political Tolerance

Theoretical Background

The legitimacy of the political system has long been viewed as a crucial element in democratic stability.[1] New research has emphasized the importance of legitimacy for many aspects of democratic rule.[2] In the preceding chapter, we have examined political legitimacy as an important element of democratic stability, but our focus has been narrow, as we were examining several other key elements in the stability equation. In this chapter, we deepen our understanding of political legitimacy by first returning to research that has appeared in prior studies published by LAPOP, namely those that look at the joint effect of political legitimacy and political tolerance as a predictor of future democratic stability. Second, we examine a much broader range of political institutions than are used in the analysis of political legitimacy.

The Legitimacy/Tolerance Equation

In AmericasBarometer studies in prior years, political legitimacy, defined in terms of system support, and tolerance to political opposition have been used in combination to create a kind of early warning signal that could be useful for pointing to democracies in the region that might be especially fragile. The theory is that both attitudes (support for the system and political tolerance) are needed for long-term democratic stability. Citizens must *both* believe in the legitimacy of their political institutions *and* also be willing to tolerate the political rights of others. In such a system, there can be majority rule accompanying minority rights, a combination of attributes often viewed as a quintessential definition of democracy.[3] The framework shown in Table V.1 represents all of the theoretically possible combinations of system support and tolerance when the two variables are divided between high and low.

Table V.1. Theoretical Relationship between System Support and Political Tolerance

	Tolerance	
System Support (i.e., legitimacy)	High	Low
High	Stable Democracy	Authoritarian Stability
Low	Unstable Democracy	Democracy at Risk

[1] Dictatorships, of course, like to be popular and have the support of broad sectors of the population, but when they fail at that, they have the ultimate recourse to coercion. In democracies, governments that attempt to resort to coercion usually quickly fall.

[2] James L. Gibson, Gregory A. Caldeira, and Lester Kenyatta Spence. "Why Do People Accept Public Policies They Oppose? Testing Legitimacy Theory Wth a Survey-Based Experiment." Political Research Quarterly 58, no. 2, 2005: 187-201; John A. Booth, and Mitchell A. Seligson.. *The Legitimacy Puzzle in Latin America: Democracy and Political Support in Eight Nations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009; Bruce Gilley, *The Right to Rule: How States Win and Lose Legitimacy*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009.

[3] Mitchell A. Seligson, Toward A Model of Democratic Stability: Political Culture in Central America. *Estudios interdisciplinarios de América Latina y el Caribe* 11 (2), 2000.

Let us review each cell, one-by-one. Political systems populated largely by citizens who have high system support and high political tolerance are predicted to be the most stable. This prediction is based on the logic that high support is needed in non-coercive environments for stability. If citizens do not support their political system, and they have the freedom to act, system change would appear to be the eventual inevitable outcome. Systems that are stable, however, will not necessarily be democratic unless minority rights are assured. Such assurance could, of course, come from constitutional guarantees, but unless citizens are willing to tolerate the civil liberties of minorities, there will be little opportunity for those minorities to run for and win elected office. Under those conditions, of course, majorities can always suppress the rights of minorities. Systems that are both politically legitimate, as demonstrated by positive system support, and that have citizens who are reasonably tolerant of minority rights are likely to enjoy stable democracy.[4]

When system support remains high but tolerance is low, then the system should remain stable (because of the high support), but democratic rule ultimately might be placed in jeopardy. Such systems would tend to move toward authoritarian (oligarchic) rule in which democratic rights would be restricted.

Low system support is the situation characterized by the lower two cells in the table, and should be directly linked to unstable situations. Instability, however, does not necessarily translate into the ultimate reduction of civil liberties, since the instability could serve to force the system to deepen its democracy, especially when the values tend toward political tolerance. Hence, in the situation of low support and high tolerance, it is difficult to predict if the instability will result in greater democratization or a protracted period of instability characterized perhaps by considerable violence. On the other hand, in situations of low support and low tolerance, democratic breakdown seems to be the direction of the eventual outcome. One cannot, of course, predict a breakdown on the basis of public opinion data alone, since so many other factors are crucial to this process, including the role of elites, the position of the military and the support or opposition of international players. But, systems in which the mass public supports neither the basic institutions of the nation nor the rights of minorities are vulnerable to democratic breakdown as they create an environment in which elites recognize that the public will tolerate or even support a coup.

It is important to keep in mind two caveats that apply to this scheme. First, note that the relationships discussed here only apply to systems that are already institutionally democratic. That is, they are systems in which competitive, regular elections are held and widespread participation is allowed. These same attitudes in authoritarian systems would have entirely different implications. For example, low system support and high tolerance might produce the breakdown of an authoritarian regime and its replacement by a democracy. Second, the assumption being made is that over the long run, attitudes of both elites and the mass public make a difference in regime type. Attitudes and system type may remain incongruent for many years. Indeed, as Seligson and Booth have shown for the case of Nicaragua, such incongruence might have eventually helped to bring about the overthrow of the Somoza government. But the Nicaraguan case was one in which the extant system was authoritarian and repression had long been used to maintain an authoritarian regime, perhaps in spite of the tolerant attitudes of its citizens.[5]

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[4] Robert A. Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1971).

[5] John A Booth, and Mitchell A. Seligson."Cultura política y democratización: vías alternas en Nicaragua y Costa Rica." In *Transiciones a la democracia en Europa y América Latina*, eds. Carlos E. Barba Solano, José Luis Barros Horcasitas and Javier Hurtado. México: FLACSO - Universidad de Guadalajara, 1991: 628-81; John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson. 1994. "Political Culture and Democratization: Evidence from Mexico, Nicaragua and Costa Rica." In *Political Culture and Democracy in Developing Countries*, ed. Larry Diamond. Boulder: Lynne Reinner. 107-38; Mitchell A. Seligson, and John A. Booth. 1993. Political Culture and Regime Type: Evidence from Nicaragua and Costa Rica. *Journal of Politics* 55 (3): 777-92.

System Support

The items used for creating the system support index are the following:

I am going to ask you a series of questions. I am going to ask you that you use the numbers [0-7] provided in the ladder to answer. Remember, you can use any number. **B1**. To what extent do you think the courts in (country) guarantee a fair trial? (**Read*:*** If you think the courts do not ensure justice at all, choose number 1; if you think the courts ensure justice a lot, choose number 7 or choose a point in between the two.)
B2. To what extent do you respect the political institutions of (country)?
B3. To what extent do you think that citizens' basic rights are well protected by the political system of (country)?
B4. To what extent do you feel proud of living under the political system of (country)?
B6. To what extent do you think that one should support the political system of (country)?

Figure V.1 depicts the average for each of the five components of the system support index traditionally used by LAPOP. The component with the highest average in the Americas as a whole is support (i.e., respect) for political institutions, with a score of 58.8 on the 0-100 scale. The component that captures the idea that one should support the system is close to that score (58.4), and the difference between these two variables is not statistically significant. Pride in the political system reaches an average just above the midpoint on the scale (52.8); the difference between this and the previous variables is statistically significant. Finally, trust in the courts and agreement that basic rights are protected by the political systems both fall below the midpoint, with averages around 48 out of 100.

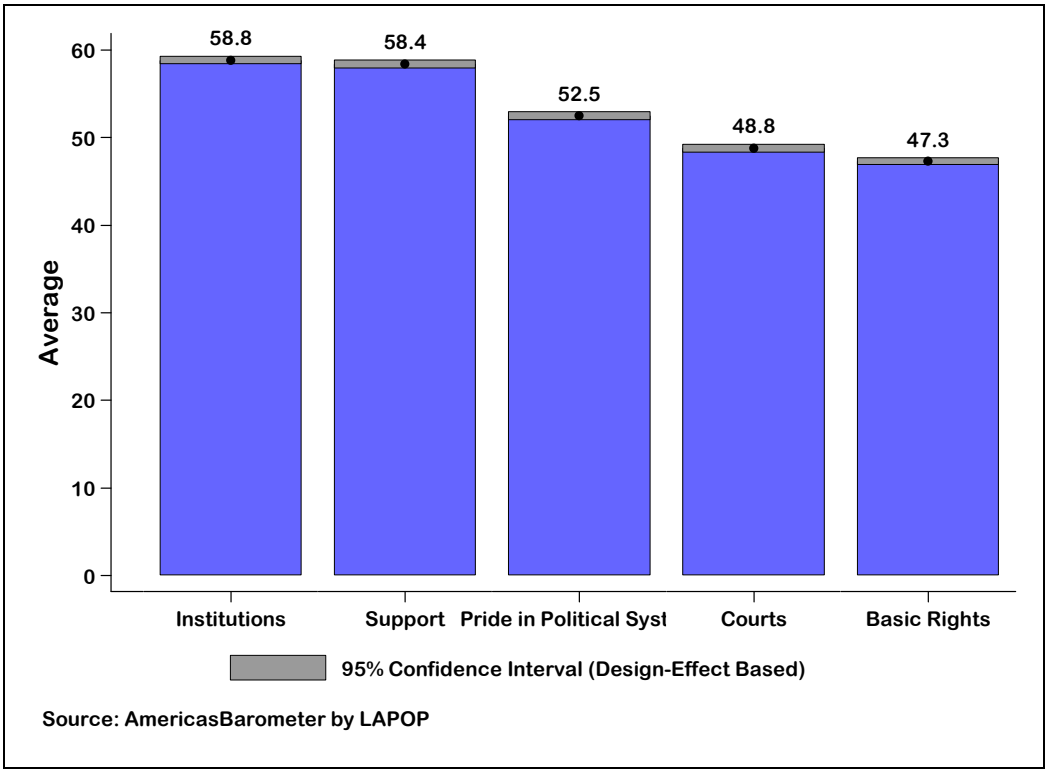

Figure V.1. Components of System Support in the Americas, 2010

When we consider all these five components in an index we can compare levels of system support across countries in the Americas. As Figure V.2 depicts, Uruguayans hold the highest average system support (68.0), followed by Costa Ricans with 63.2, and Hondurans with 60.4 points on the 0-100 scale. Conversely, at the lower end of the index range we find Haiti (32.0), Trinidad & Tobago (44.0), and Argentina (45.2). These numbers represent a moderate level of system support in the Americas as a whole.

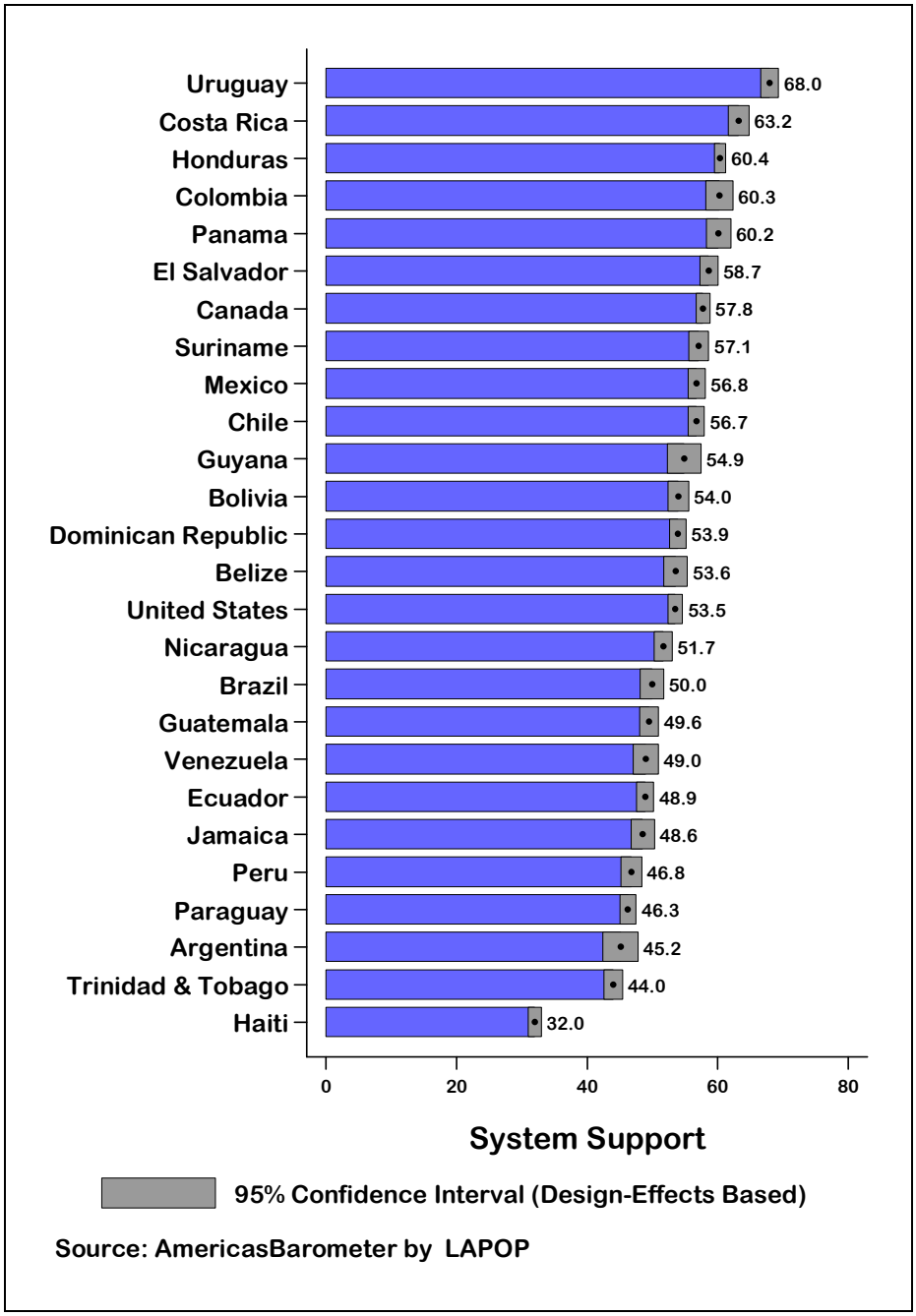

Figure V.2. System Support in Comparative Perspective, 2010

In order to get a clear idea of the evolution of system support over time, Figure V.3 shows the trends of this index for the last four survey waves, at least for the eleven countries for which there are data. We see a steady upward trend over this period, although the rise was minimal between 2004 and 2008; only between 2008 and 2010 is the increase statistically significant. This increase is likely an impact of the good governance which was discussed in Part I of this study.

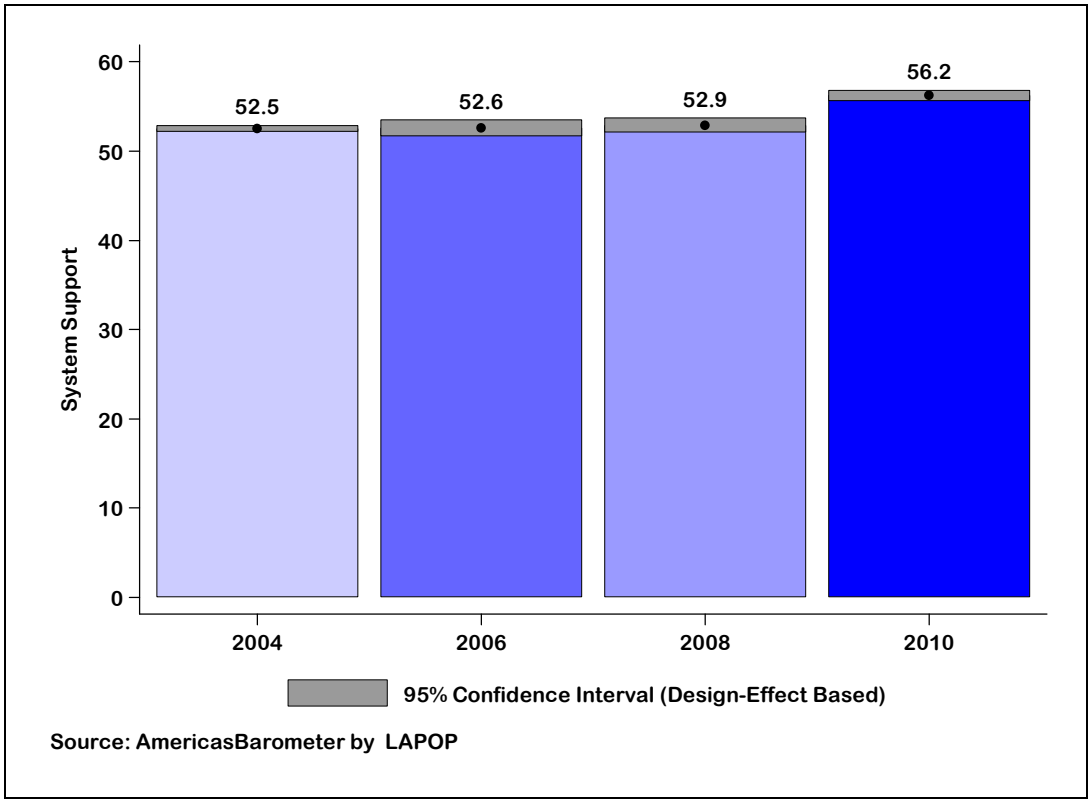

Figure V.3. System Support in Eleven Countries by Year, 2004-2010

Political Tolerance

The second component that LAPOP uses to measure support for stable democracy is political tolerance. This index is composed of the following four items in our questionnaire:

D1. There are people who only say bad things about the (country) form of government, not just the incumbent government but the system of government. How strongly do you approve or disapprove of such people's **right to vote**? Please read me the number from the scale [1-10 scale]: ***[Probe: To what degree?]***
D2. How strongly do you approve or disapprove that such people be allowed **to conduct peaceful demonstrations** in order to express their views? Please read me the number.
D3. Still thinking of those who only say bad things about the (country) form of government, how strongly do you approve or disapprove of such people being permitted **to run for public office**?
D4. How strongly do you approve or disapprove of such people appearing on television **to make speeches**?

Figure V.4 presents averages across the Americas for each component of the political tolerance index, which as usual is measured on a 0-100 scale where larger values mean higher levels of political tolerance. First, we see that there are statistically significant differences among the components. The component with the highest average support is tolerance for people conducting peaceful demonstrations (63.3). Following it with an average of 59.1 is support for the right to vote. Far below those two

components is support for the right of those who criticize the form of government to make a speech on television (51.5) and to run for office (50.2).

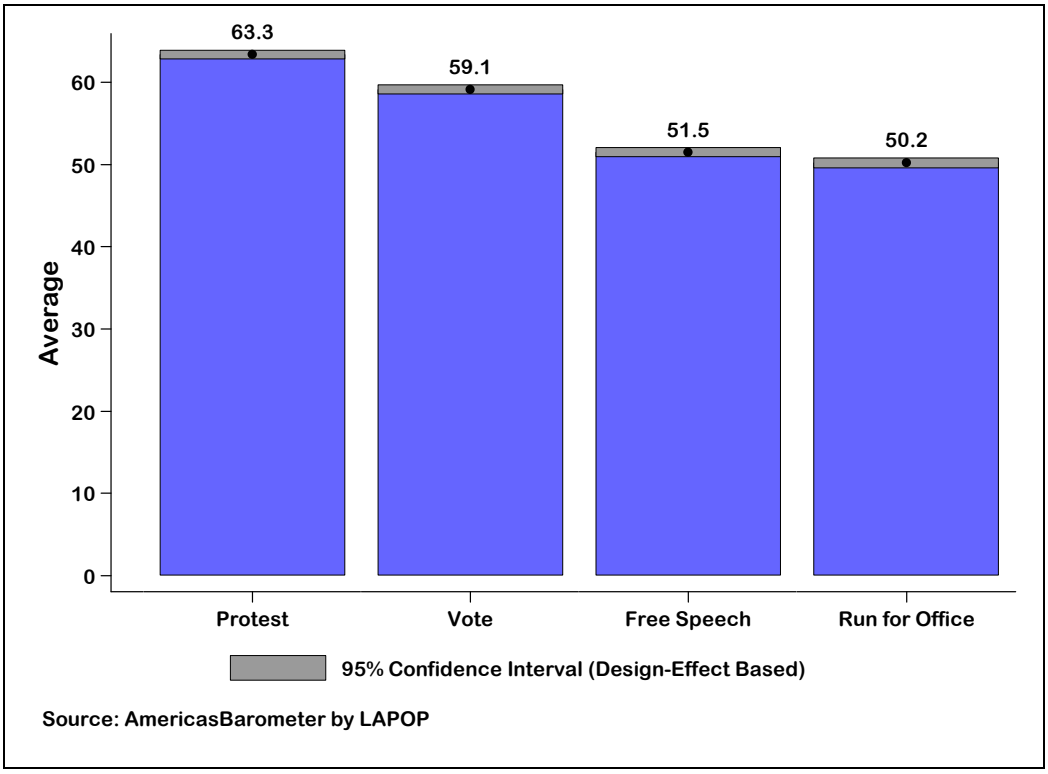

Figure V.4. Components of Political Tolerance in the Americas, 2010

Figure V.5 gives us a diverse picture of political tolerance in the Americas in 2010. Political tolerance ranges from a high of 70.4 in the United States to a low of 43.4 in Haiti. Ten of the 26 countries in the survey do not exceed the midpoint on the 0-100 scale. The remaining countries in the region fall in the 50's and 60's on that scale.

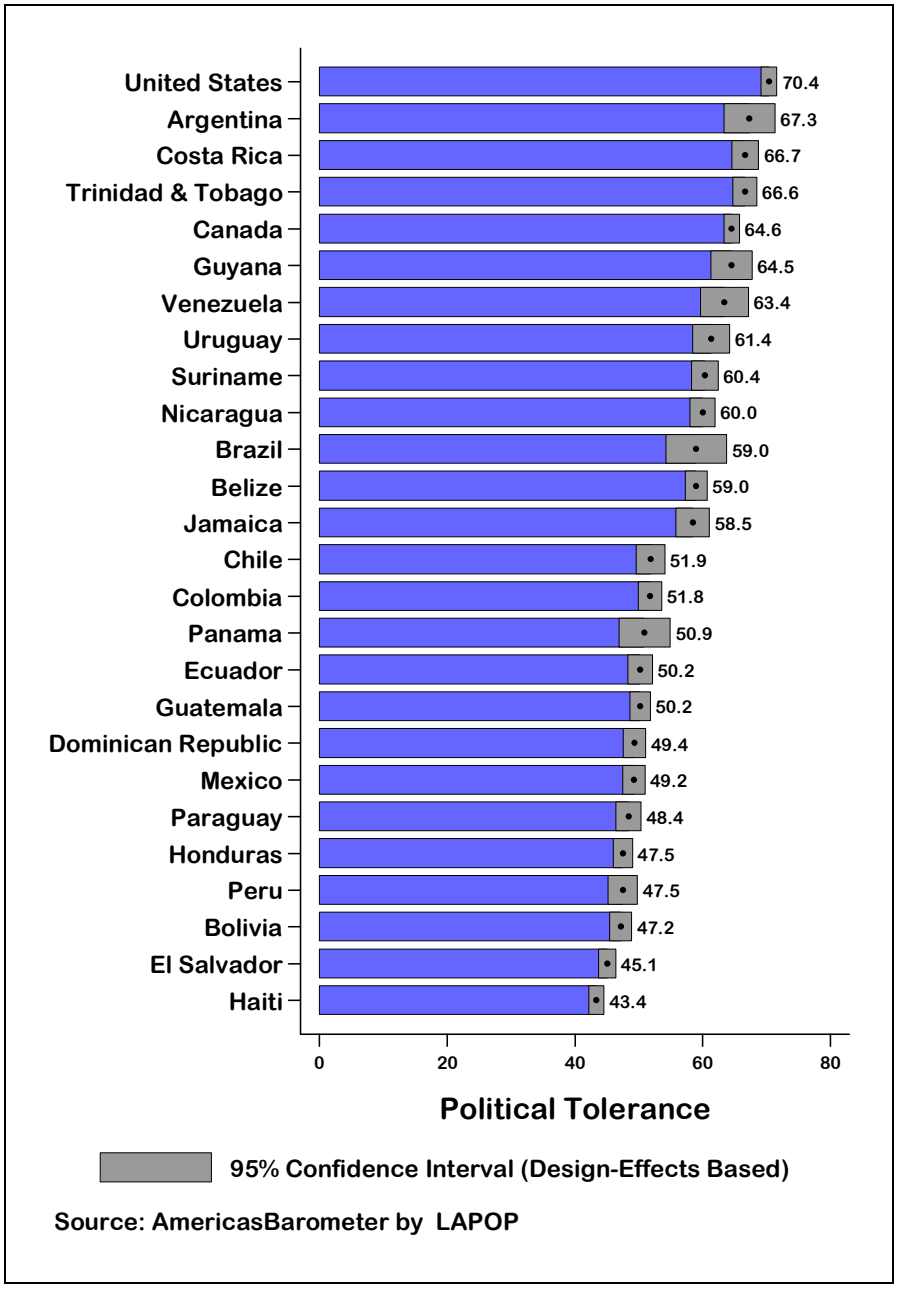

Figure V.5. Political Tolerance in Comparative Perspective, 2010

Looking at its variation over time, we see that political tolerance has remained quite stable from 2004 to 2010, at least in the eleven countries we are considering in Figure V.6, that is to say Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, and the Dominican Republic. Except for 2008 when the average dropped slightly to 49.9, levels of political tolerance have been just above the midpoint of 50 on our scale in each survey wave.

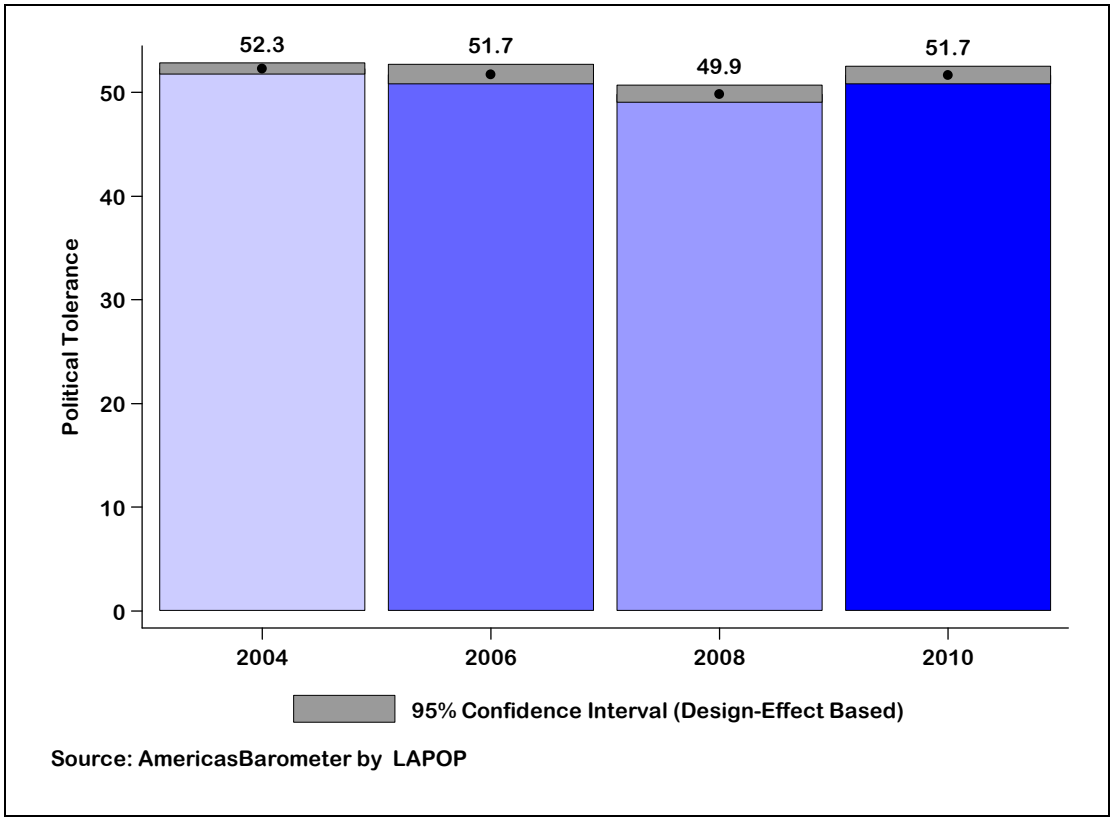

Figure V.6. Political Tolerance in Eleven Countries of the Americas by Year, 2004-2010

Support for Stable Democracy

As we mentioned before, both support for the system and political tolerance are necessary for stable democracy. Table V.2 shows the percentages of citizens in each category resulting from combining both variables. It is noteworthy that the distribution of respondents across the four categories is quite balanced. We see that 29% of citizens in the Americas as a whole fall into the category of "stable democracy," meaning they hold high levels of both tolerance and system support. Next, 26% are located under the "authoritarian stability" label, which combines high system support with low tolerance. Third, the category of "unstable democracy" (high political tolerance but low system support), holds 23% of respondents. Finally, 22% of respondents are found in "democracy at risk," combining low tolerance and system support.

Table V.2. Theoretical Relationship between System Support and Political Tolerance

	Tolerance	
System Support (i.e., legitimacy)	**High**	**Low**
High	Stable Democracy 29.1%	Authoritarian Stability 25.8%
Low	Unstable Democracy 23.2%	Democracy at Risk 21.9%

However, when we look at the individual countries, the picture is much more diverse than what we might expect from Table V.2. Figure V.7 shows that the percentage of citizens holding high levels of both political tolerance and system support (that is to say, who fall under the category of stable democracy) ranges from the 49.1% in Uruguay to an extremely low 3.7 % in Haiti. Apart from Uruguay, only four countries exceed 40%, namely Costa Rica, Suriname, Canada and the United States. Countries such as Ecuador, Peru and Paraguay, have percentages between 16% and 19%, while the remaining countries are located in the 20s and 30s.

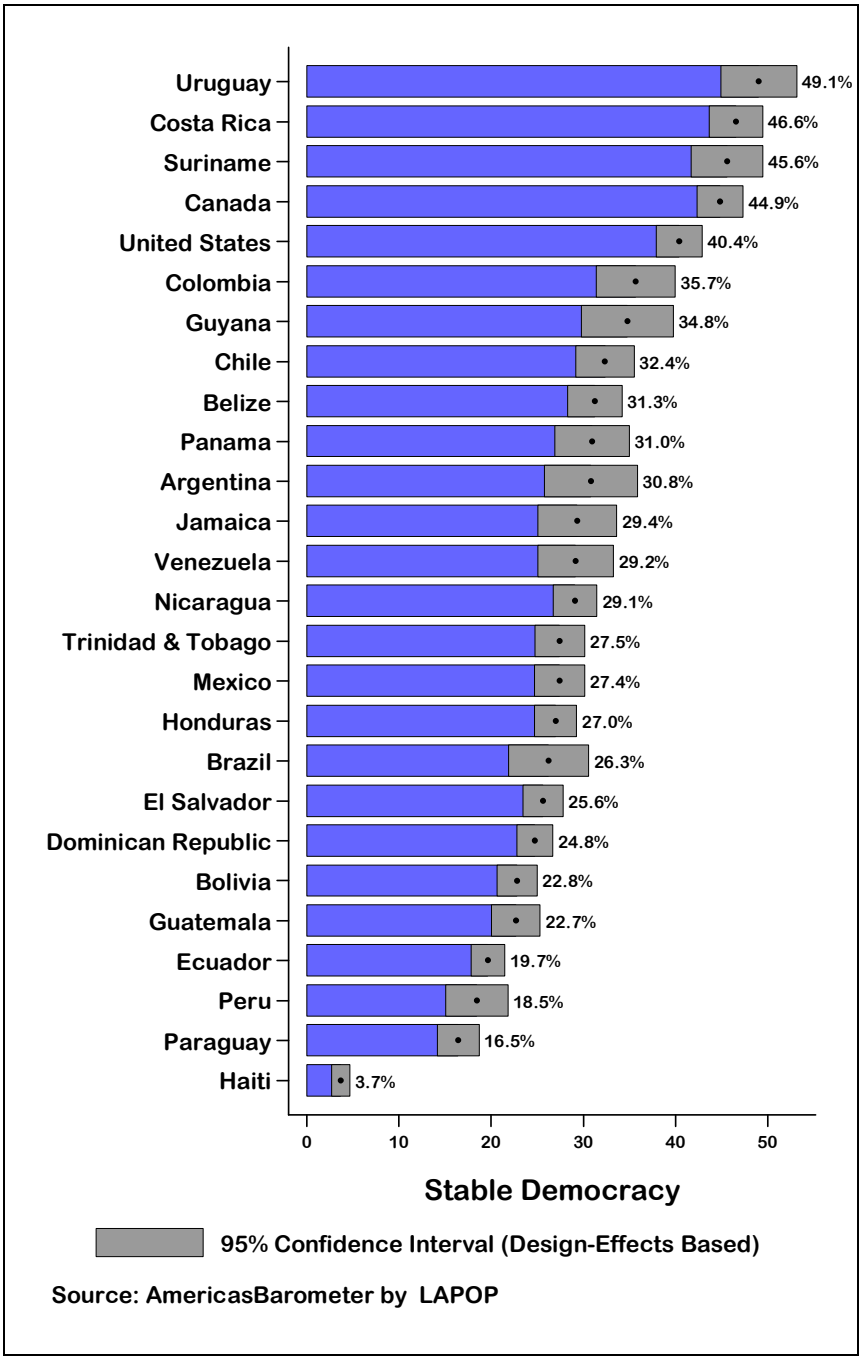

Figure V.7. Support for Stable Democracy in Comparative Perspective, 2010

When we observe the time trend in the percentage of citizens within the stable democracy category in the eleven countries for which LAPOP has data from 2004 to 2010, we see that the percentage of respondents with attitudes conducive towards stable democracy was consistently around 29% in 2004, 2006, and 2010 (see Figure V.8). Only in 2008 was there a temporary and statistically difference drop to 25.3%.

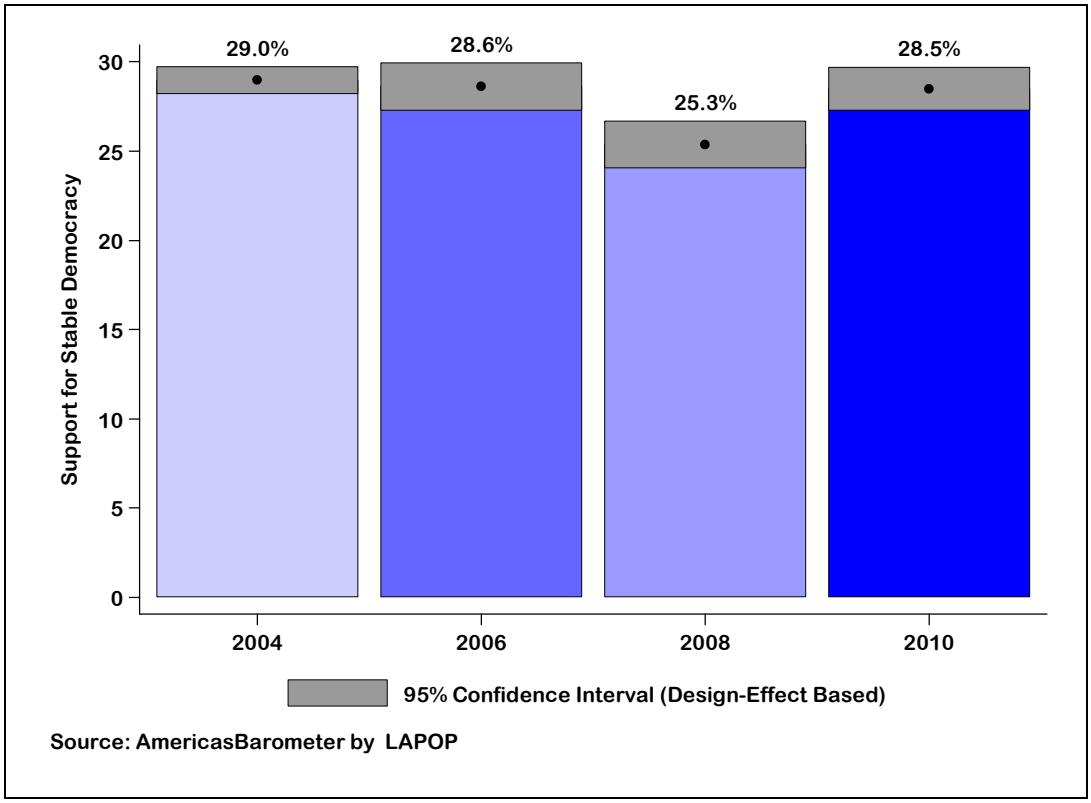

Figure V.8. Support for Stable Democracy by Year in Eleven Countries of the Americas, 2004-2010

Who is Likely to Support Stable Democracy?

This section addresses the determinants of support for stable democracy in the Americas in 2010. Figure V.9 presents results of a logistic regression model which includes socio-demographic factors and economic and political variables. We observe that the factor with the strongest effect is satisfaction with the performance of the incumbent president; the higher the satisfaction, the greater the likelihood of supporting stable democracy. Political interest and perception of a positive family economic situation also increase this likelihood. Respondents who perceive high levels of insecurity and corruption, however, are less likely to hold attitudes favorable to stable democracy, as are those who have been victims of crime or corruption. Finally, only two of the socioeconomic variables, wealth and education, have a statistically significant effect on the likelihood of supporting stable democracy. Holding constant other factors, those who are better-off and more highly educated are more likely to fall within the category of stable democracy.

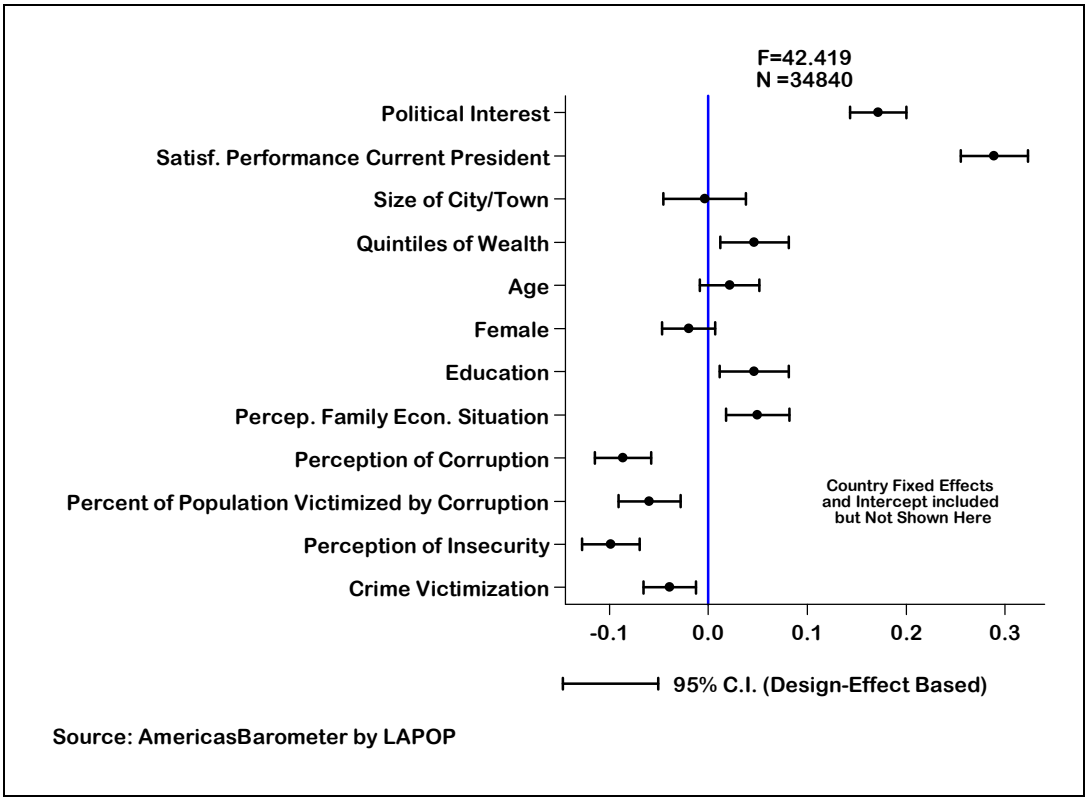

Figure V.9. Who is Likely to Support Stable Democracy in the Americas (2010)?

Figure V.10 illustrates all bivariate relationships between statistically significant factors in the regression and support for stable democracy. We observe that 27% of those victimized by crime have attitudes that fall within the stable democracy category, while 31% of those who have not experienced crime do so. Perception of insecurity also has a negative impact; as we move from the lowest levels of perceived insecurity to the highest, the percentage of citizens with high levels of system support and political tolerance decreases. The same trends are found for corruption victimization and perception of corruption. Finally, we also observe the clear relationship between satisfaction with the current president and support for stable democracy. Only 18% of respondents who do not approve of the president's performance fall within the category of stable democracy, whereas 41% of those who classify the president's performance as very good hold high levels of both political tolerance and system support. A similar pattern can be seen for political interest. All of these results suggest that crime, corruption, and insecurity erode support for the political system in the Americas.

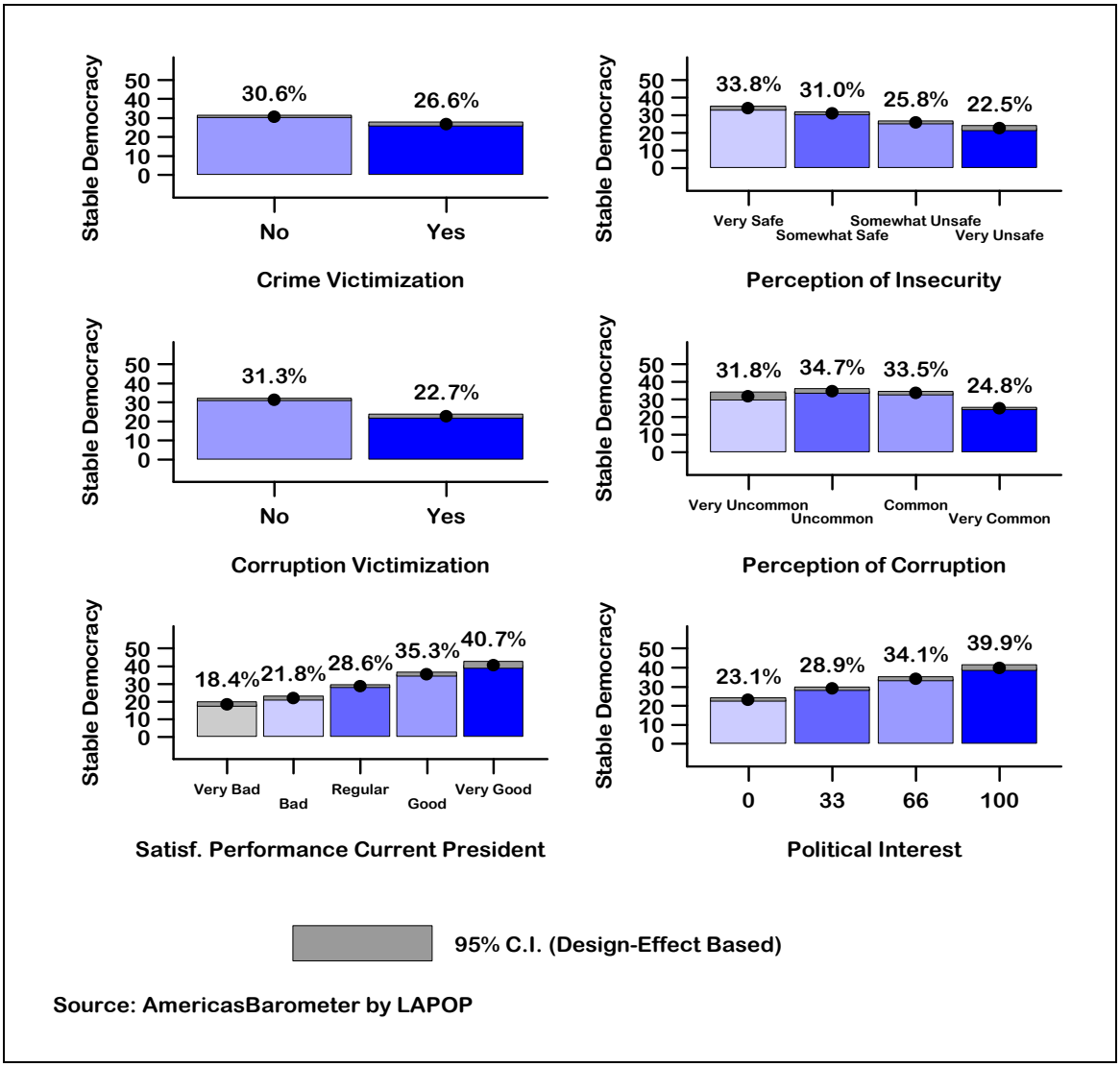

Figure V.10. Support for Stable Democracy by Crime and Corruption Victimization and Perception, Satisfaction with Performance of Current President and Political Interest in the Americas, 2010

Legitimacy of Other Democratic Institutions

In this section we turn to the analysis of the levels of trust that different political and social institutions are afforded in the Americas. Levels of confidence are presented on a 0-100 scale where higher levels mean more trust. As we see in Figure V.11 seven of the twelve institutions exceed the midpoint of 50 on this scale. Respondents in the western hemisphere express their greatest trust in the Catholic Church with an average of 62.7, followed by the Army at 61.7. In the 50's we find in descending order the media (58.8), elections (52), electoral courts (51.9), the president (51.4) and the national government (50.8). The remaining institutions are rated below the scale's midpoint. In the high to mid-40's we find the supreme court, the national police, the judicial system, and congress. Finally, the institutions that inspire the lowest level of confidence in the Americas are political parties, with an average of 35.9 on the 0-100 scale.

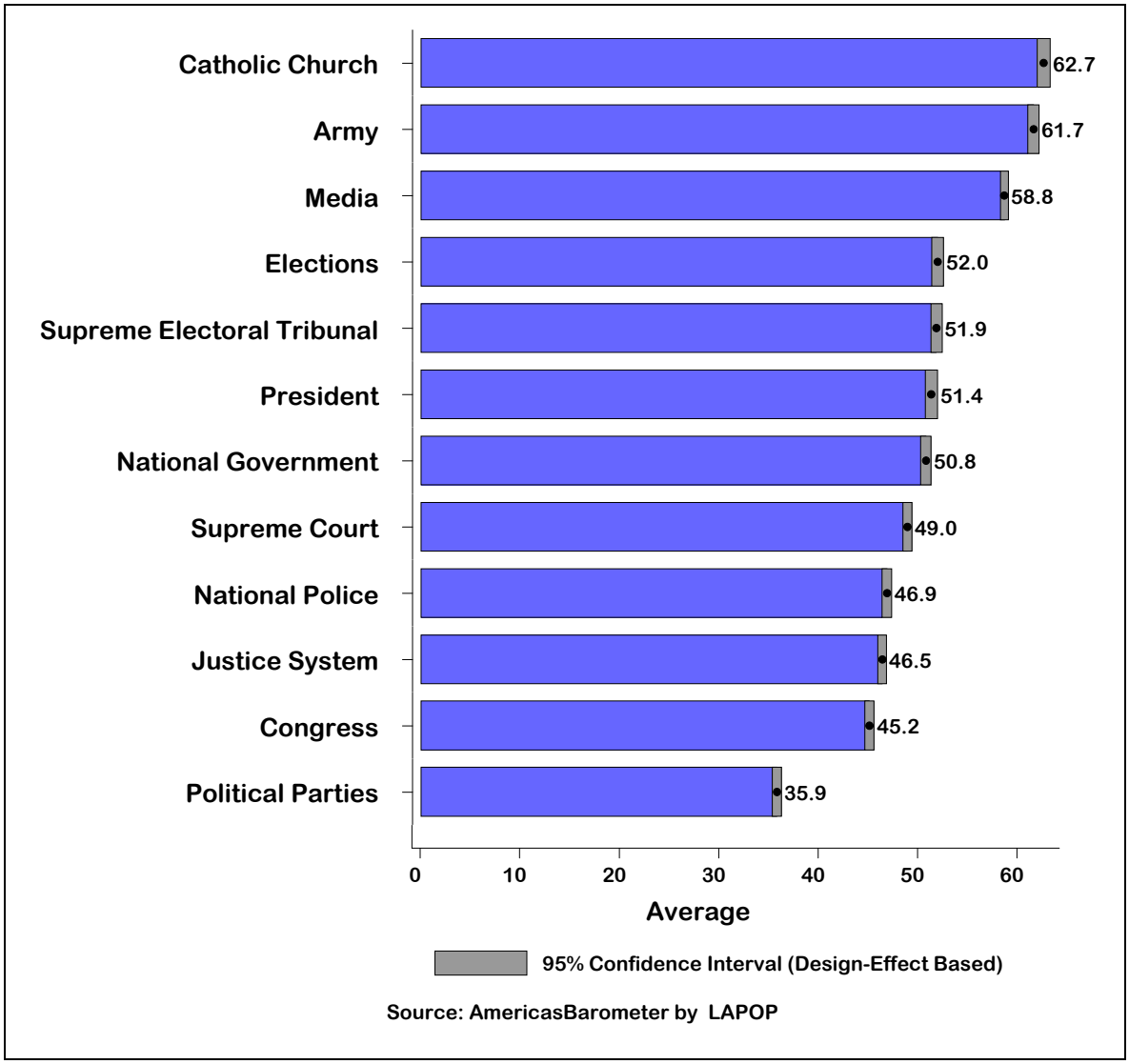

Figure V.11. Trust in Institutions in the Americas, 2010

Attitudes Toward Democracy

Support for Democracy

Winston Churchill once affirmed that democracy was the worst form of government except for all the others. Following Churchill, the AmericasBarometer asked citizens in the region the extent to which they agreed that *"Democracy may have some problems, but it is better than any other form of government."* Responses were recoded on a scale from 0 to 100 with higher scores meaning higher levels of agreement with that statement.

Figure V.11 presents the average scores on support for democracy across the Americas in 2010. Average support varies from the 86.2 in Uruguay to 60.1 in Peru, reflecting relatively high agreement across the hemisphere with the idea that democracy is the best form of government. Half of countries fall

in the 70's on the 0-100 scale. In no country in the Americas do we find average opposition to democracy, as measured by the Churchill question.

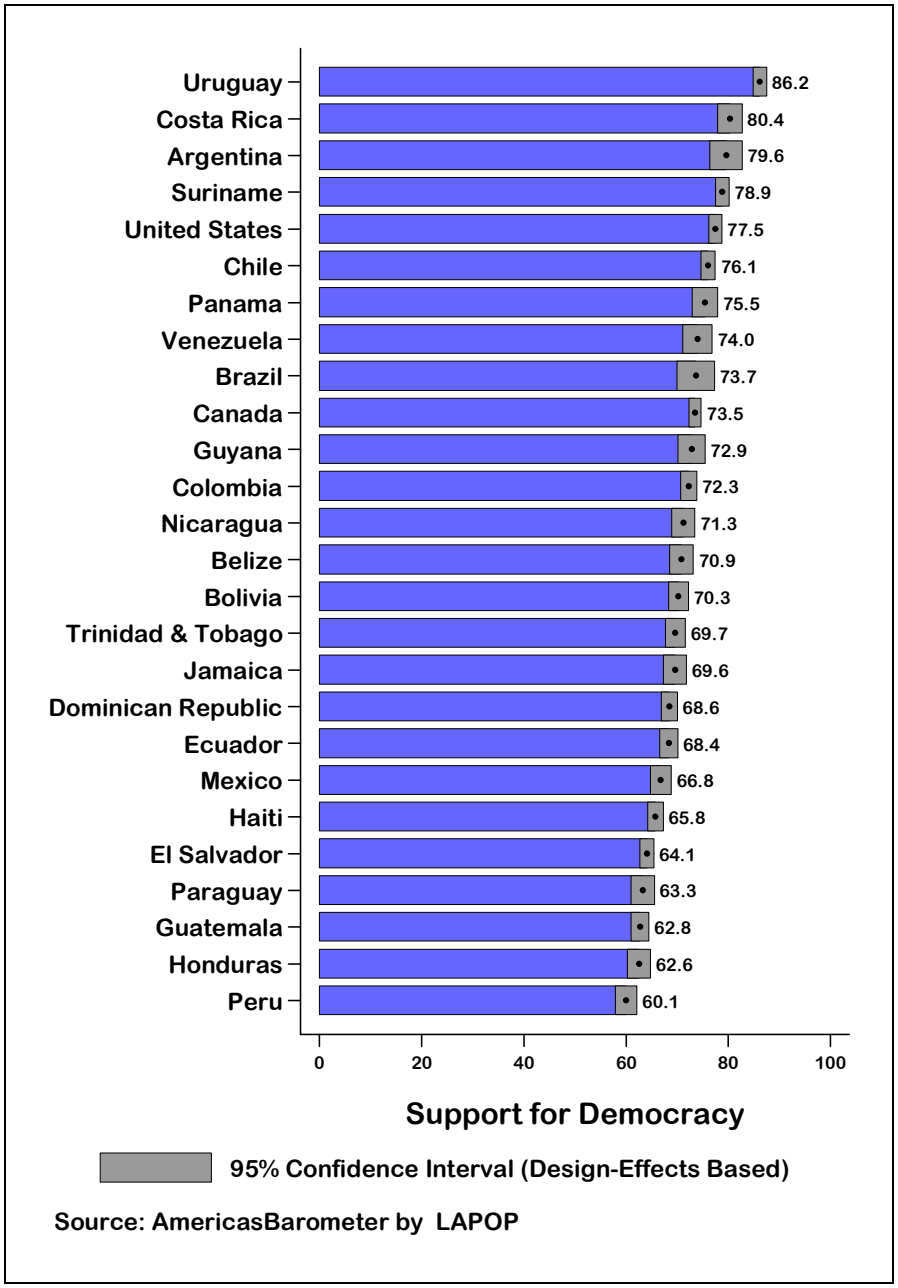

Figure V.12. Support for Democracy in Comparative Perspective, 2010

Figure V.13 shows the pattern followed by support for democracy over time in the eleven countries for which there are data from 2004 to 2010. We see that levels of support for democracy have remained quite stable from 2004 to 2010. Except for 2006, when the average dropped slightly, support for democracy has hovered around 69 points on the 0-100 scale.

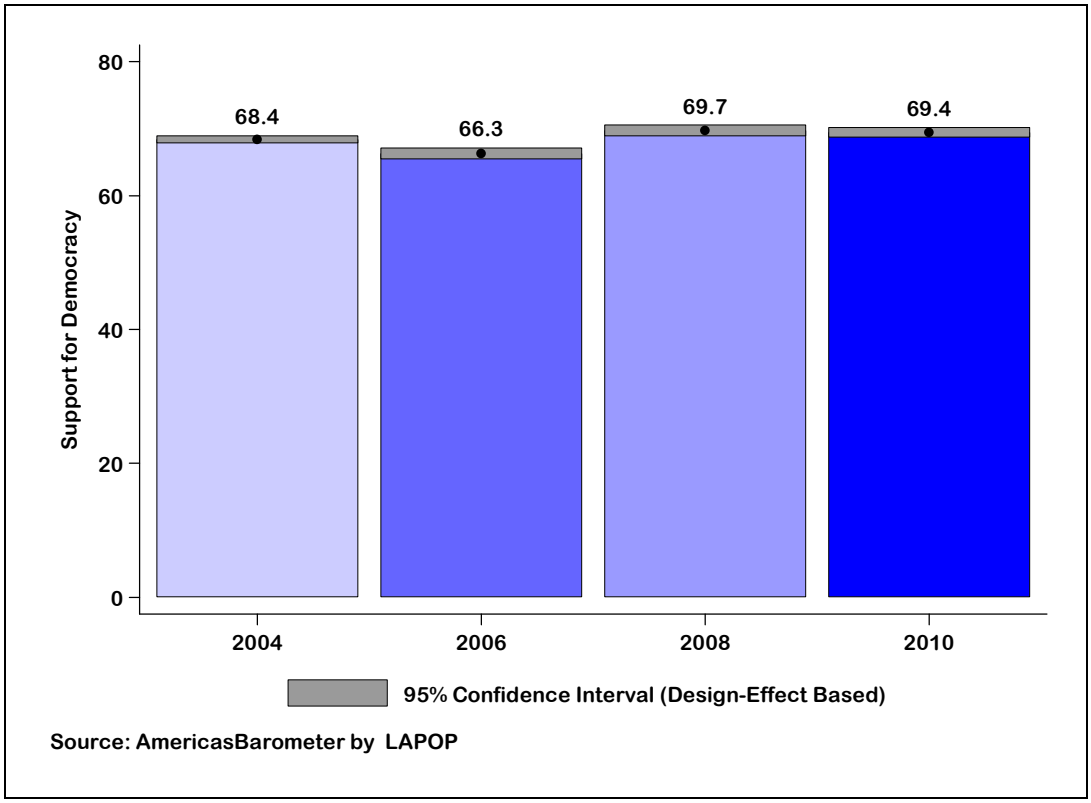

Figure V.13. Support for Democracy in Eleven Countries of the Americas by Year, 2004-2010

Satisfaction with Democracy

We now assess the extent to which citizens in the Americas are satisfied with the way democracy works in their own countries. Figure V.14 depicts levels of satisfaction. We observe that most respondents are satisfied (49.3%) or very satisfied (6.8%) with the way democracy is working in 2010. While 36.4% of respondents are dissatisfied, only 7.5% are very dissatisfied with the way democracy works.

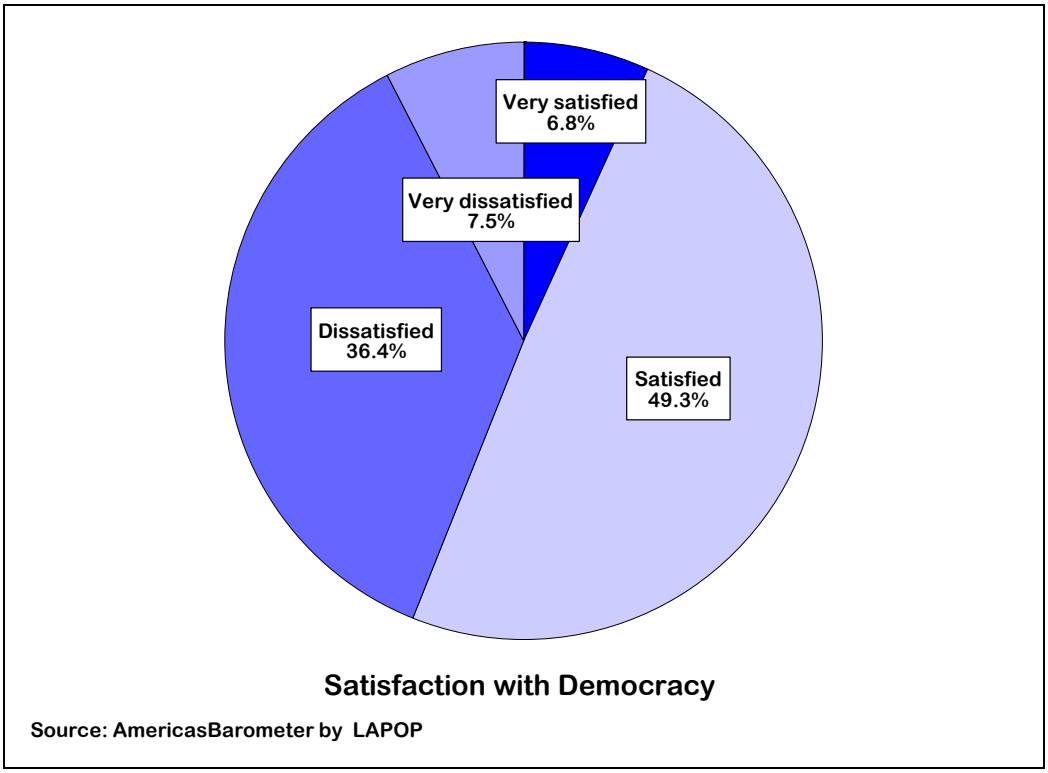

Figure V.14. Satisfaction with Democracy in the Americas, 2010

Figure V.15 presents a comparative perspective on levels of satisfaction with the way democracy works in the Americas in 2010. In general we can say that in most countries levels of satisfaction are moderate. At the high end, satisfaction exceeds 60 in Uruguay, Panama and Costa Rica; at the low end, satisfaction is 37.8 in Haiti. Eleven of the 26 countries average in the 40's, and the same number are located in the 50's. Thus, while on the previous question of general support for democracy scores are quite high, satisfaction with what democracy actually delivers is more tempered.

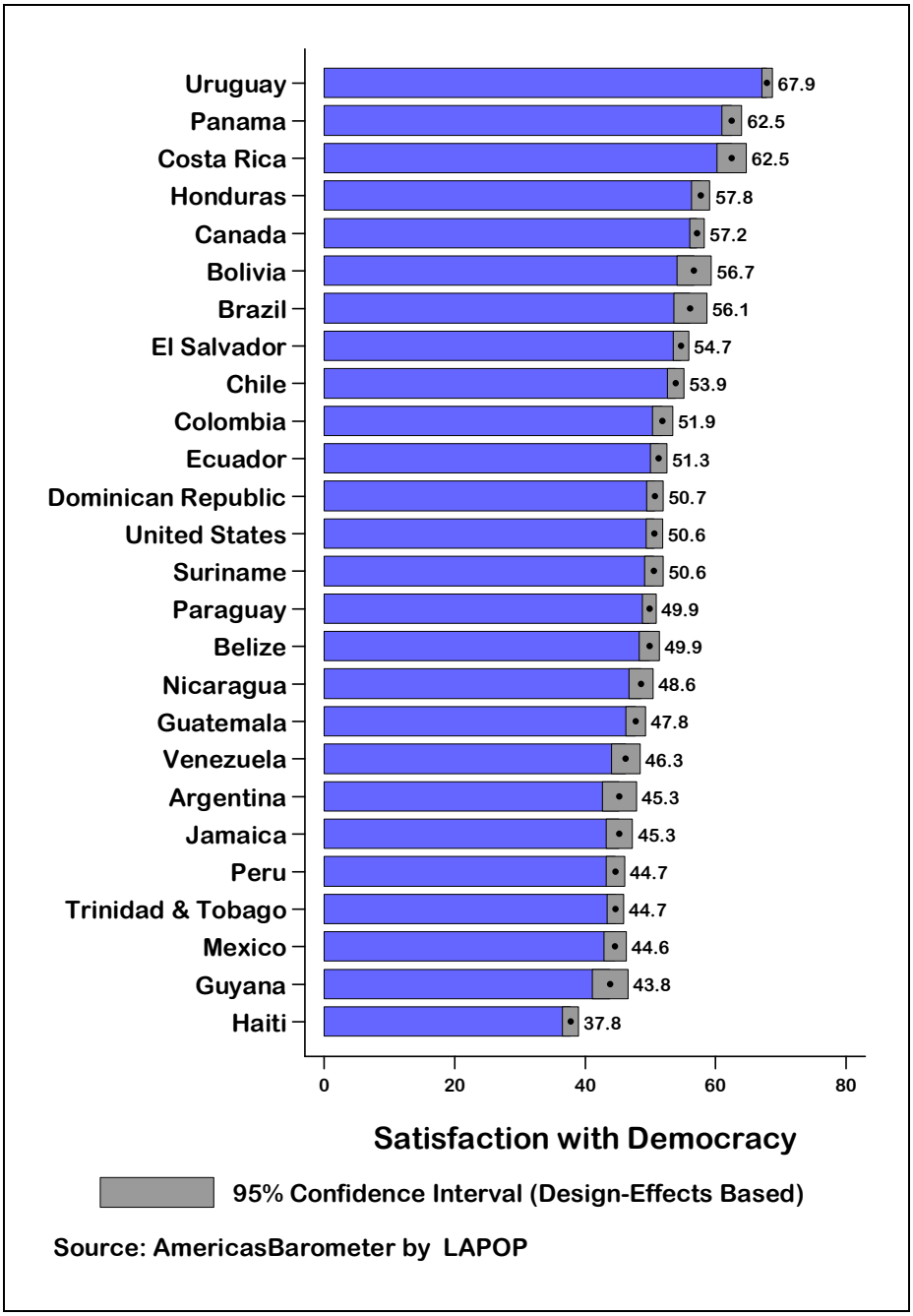

Figure V.15. Satisfaction with Democracy in Comparative Perspective, 2010

Finally, Figure V.16 illustrates trends in satisfaction with democracy in the eleven countries we are comparing from 2004 to 2010. We observe that levels of satisfaction with the way democracy works have remained quite stable from 2004 to 2010, at around the midpoint of the 0-100 scale. The lowest level of satisfaction is found in 2006, when the average dropped to 47.6, whereas the highest level is reached in 2010, when the average rose to 53.6.

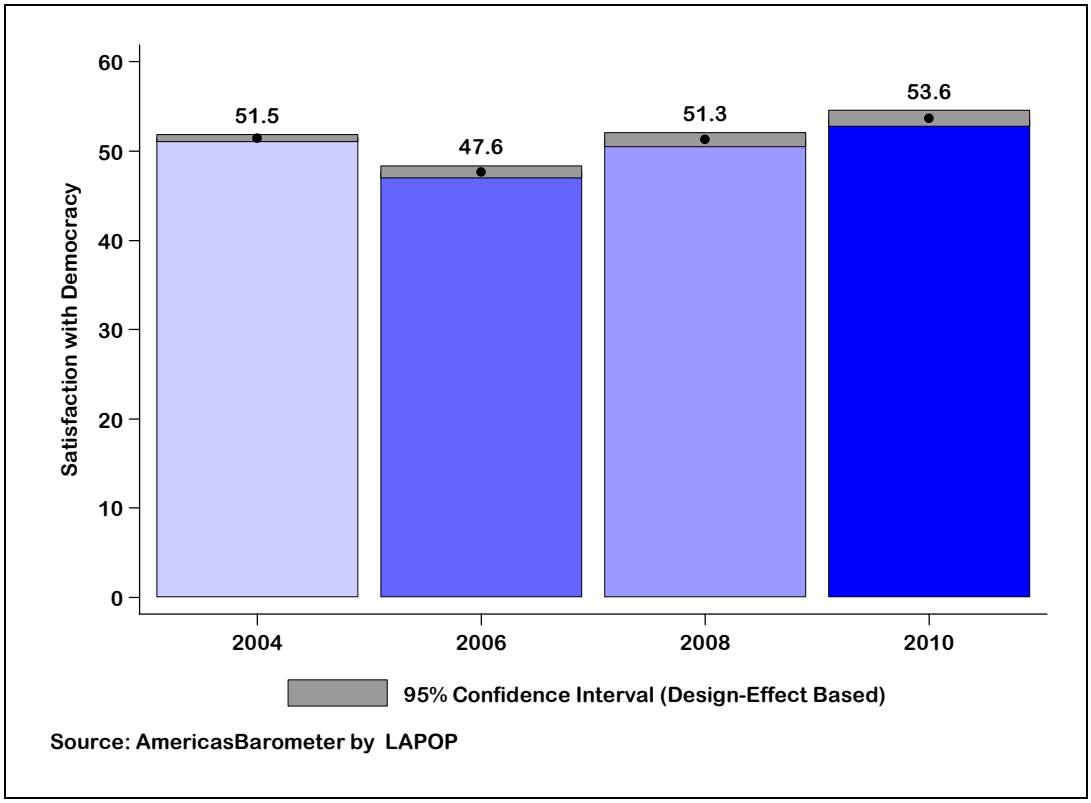

Figure V.16. Satisfaction with Democracy in Eleven Countries by Year, 2004-2010

Conclusion

This chapter has examined democratic attitudes and values across the Americas, focusing on levels of system support and political tolerance, as well as trust in the main institutions and support for and satisfaction with democracy. Stable democracy needs to be built on a political culture in which citizens hold high levels of both support for the system and political tolerance. The evidence presented here has shown that percentages of citizens with attitudes favorable to stable democracy vary from country to country in the Americas. For instance, while almost half of Uruguayans hold these attitudes, only 3.7% of Haitians fall in the category of support for stable democracy. Levels of support for stable democracy are affected by perceptions and experiences with crime and corruption and by evaluations of the economic performance of the current president.

With regards to levels of trust in institutions, citizens in the Americas have high confidence in the Catholic Church and the Army, while institutions of political representation such as congresses and political parties receive the lowest levels of confidence. Finally, the data presented in this chapter show that support for the idea of democracy as the best form of government is high and stable over time, while more than half of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the way democracy is working (although there are sharp differences across countries).

Chapter VI. Civil Society and Civic Participation

Theoretical Background

Citizen participation is the cornerstone of democratic systems of government. Without active, robust participation from a wide range of ordinary citizens, electoral democracy quickly loses vigor and elected elites may come to represent narrow segments of society. Theorists argue that several forms of citizen participation bolster democracy. First, of course, participation in politics through the voting booth is the *sine qua non* of representative democracy; the higher a country's level of voter turnout, the more truly representative are its elections. Second, citizens who participate in campaigns, attempting to persuade others or even working for candidates, democratize the electoral process and may promote more deliberative and better informed vote choices among their fellow citizens.[1] Third, for some citizens unconventional forms of participation such as protests have become part of the "repertory" of legitimate methods of influencing the political system.[2] Social movements can play an important role in ongoing processes of democratization and democratic consolidation.[3] Fourth, theorists of civil society argue that not only explicitly political forms of participation but also citizen involvement in civic groups is critical for democratic quality. Most famously, Robert Putnam, in his classic work on Italy, contends that civic participation fosters social capital, the bundle of "trust, norms, and networks" necessary for citizen cooperation to address community problems.[4]

Interpersonal trust is theorized to be at once a consequence of and a requisite for a robust civil society. Putnam argues that citizens who participate in civil society learn to work with and to trust each other.[5] At the same time, citizens with high levels of interpersonal trust may be more likely to engage in many types of public interactions, ranging from civil society participation to protests to economic exchanges.[6] Indeed, recent work shows a strong association between membership in civil society organizations and interpersonal trust.[7] While questions about causality remain, evidence and theory point to a reciprocal, cyclical relationship in which interpersonal trust breeds participation, which in turn breeds trust.

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[1] Barber, Benjamin R, The Discourse of Civility. In *Citizen Competence and Democratic Institutions*, edited by Karol Edward Sołtan and Stephen L. Elkin. University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 1999; Gutmann, Amy, and Dennis Thompson, *Democracy and Disagreement*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996.

[2] Kaase, Max, and Alan Marsh, Political Action: A Theoretical Perspective. In *Political Action: Mass Participation in Five Western Democracies*, edited by Samuel H. Barnes and Max Kaase. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1979.

[3] Cohen, Jean L., and Andrew Arato, *Civil Society and Political Theory*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1992; Markoff, John, *Waves of Democracy: Social Movements and Political Change*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, 1996; Tilly, Charles, *Social Movements, 1768-2004*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2004.

[4] Putnam, Robert D., *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press., 1993, p. 63.

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] Benson, Michelle, and Thomas R. Rochon Interpersonal Trust and the Magnitude of Protest: A Micro and Macro Level Approach. *Comparative Political Studies* 37, 4, 2004: 435-57; Neace, M. B.,The Impact of Low Trust on Economic Development: The Case of Latin America. *Review of Policy Research* 21, 5: 699-713, 2004; Sullivan, John L., and John E. Transue The Psychological Underpinnings of Democracy: A Selective Review of Research on Political Tolerance, Interpersonal Trust, and Social Capital. *Annual Review of Psychology* 50: 625-50, 1999.

[7] Brehm, John, and Wendy Rahn Individual-Level Evidence for the Causes and Consequences of Social Capital. *American Journal of Political Science* 41, 3, 1997: 999-1023; Paxton, Pamela Association Memberships and Generalized Trust: A Multilevel Model across 31 Countries. *Social Forces* 86, 2007: 47-76; Stolle, Dietlind Bowling Together, Bowling Alone: The Development of Generalized Trust in Voluntary Associations. *Political Psychology* 19, 3, 1998: 497-525.

While Almond and Verba's foundational study of comparative political culture had concluded that civil society was most active in advanced industrial democracies[8], democratic transitions and the establishment of new governments in Latin America highlighted civic participation across the hemisphere. In Latin America (and in many other regions of the world) citizens participate actively in local civil society organizations, such as parent-teacher associations and community development associations. In this chapter we seek to understand the extent of civic participation within the Americas. We expect that not all forms of participation go together – while in some polities citizens are highly participatory in electoral politics, in others citizens' participatory "repertories" give greater prominence to protest or to civil society participation. Our exploration in this chapter is founded on the assumption that citizen participation is critical for democracy. We leave for later analysis, however, the empirical question of exactly *how* political participation affects democracy in the Americas.

Interpersonal Trust

We begin by assessing levels of interpersonal trust across the Americas. We measured interpersonal trust using a single question in 2010. Following the LAPOP standard, we recoded this variable to run from 0-100.

IT1. Now, speaking of the people from around here, would you say that people in this community are very trustworthy, somewhat trustworthy, not very trustworthy or untrustworthy...? **[Read options]**
(1) Very trustworthy (2) Somewhat trustworthy (3) Not very trustworthy
(4) Untrustworthy (88) Doesn't Know (98)Doesn't Answer

Figure VI.1 presents the percentage of people of the Americas who locate themselves in each category of interpersonal trust. As the figure shows, when asked about the people in their community, 22% of respondents considered them to be very trustworthy, 42% somewhat trustworthy, 25% not very trustworthy and 10% untrustworthy.

[8] Almond, Gabriel A., and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications, 1989.

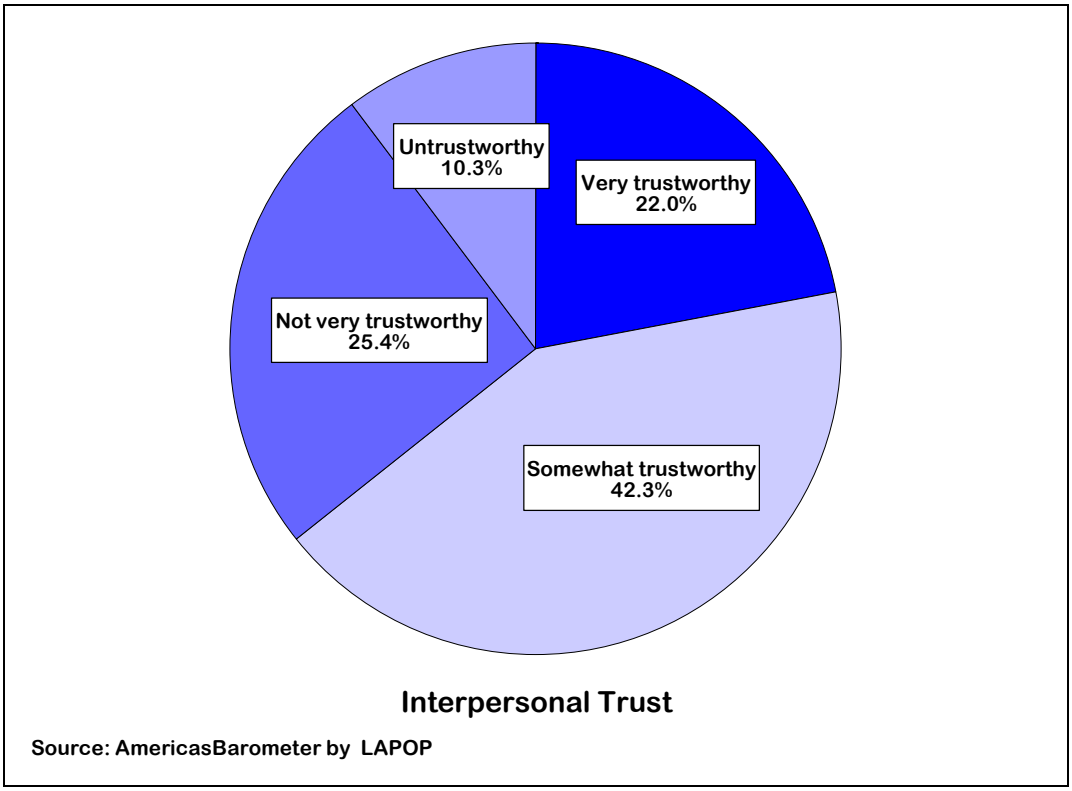

Figure VI.1. Interpersonal Trust in the Americas, 2010

Figure V1.2 shows the different mean levels of interpersonal trust in the Americas. We find great variation across countries. The country with the highest levels of interpersonal trust is Costa Rica, with a mean level of 70.2. It is followed by Canada (69 points on the 100-point scale) and the United States (68.2). Haiti, for its part, is the country with the lowest levels of interpersonal trust (32.7), followed by Peru at 46.2 points and Belize at 46.6 points.

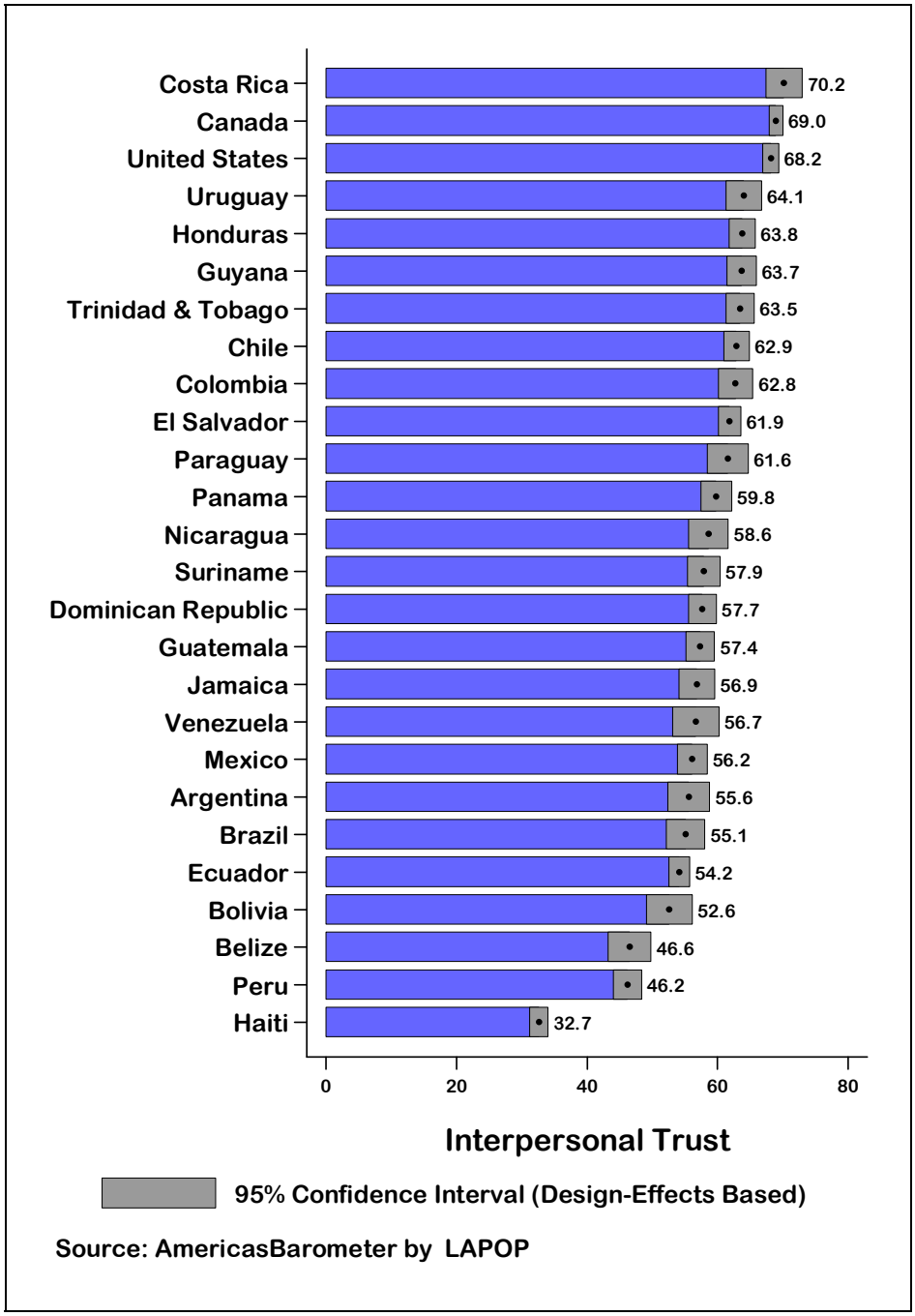

Figure VI.2. Interpersonal Trust in Comparative Perspective, 2010

We now examine trends in levels of interpersonal trust over the past four survey waves in the 11 countries for which we have data since 2004: Mexico, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, and Bolivia. As we would expect for a core culture variable, mean levels of interpersonal trust across these countries have remained very stable over time (Figure VI.3). As can be seen in the figure, the overall mean level of interpersonal trust of the Americas has experienced no statistically significant change since 2004.

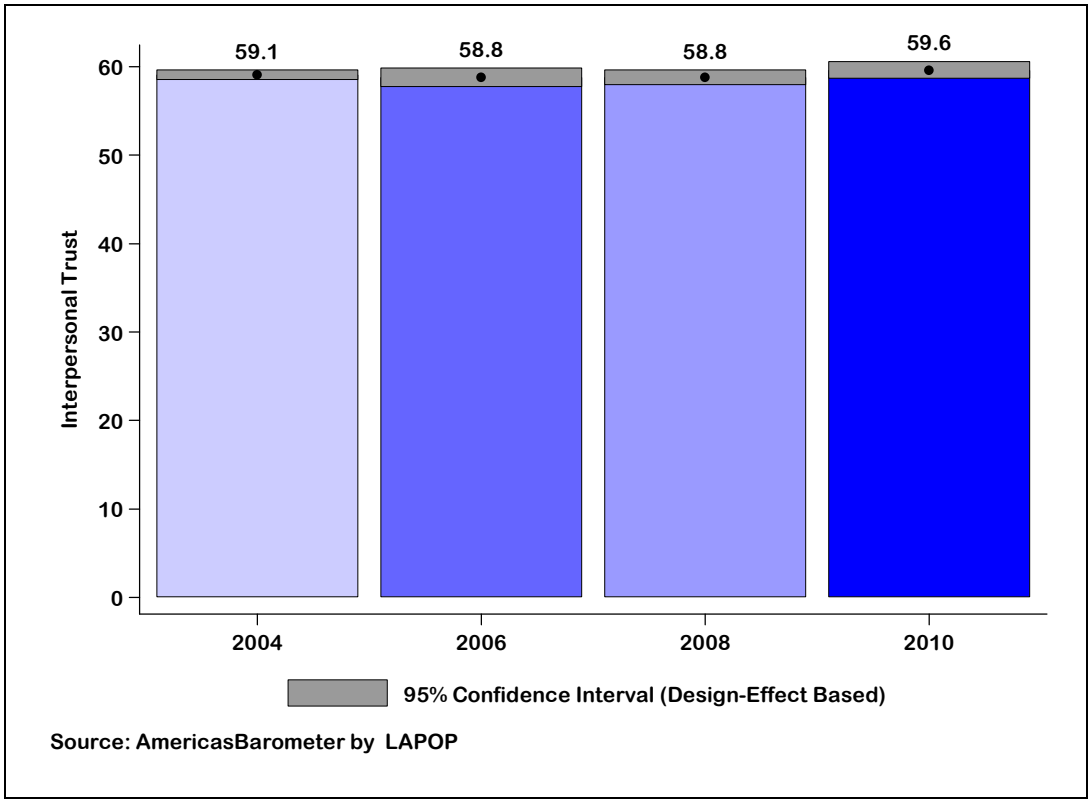

Figure VI.3. Interpersonal Trust in Eleven Countries of the Americas by Year, 2004-2010

What determines citizens' levels of interpersonal trust in the Americas? We run a linear regression model to calculate the main determinants of interpersonal trust. Results, which take into account varying levels of trust across countries (what are known as "country fixed effects"), are presented in Figure VI.4. The figure shows that older people and those who live in smaller towns, who are wealthier, and who are more educated have higher levels of interpersonal trust.[9] Conversely, women have lower mean levels of interpersonal trust than do men. Other things being equal, people who perceive higher levels of insecurity or who have been more victimized by crime have lower levels of interpersonal trust.

[9] The size of city/town is coded so that higher values are assigned to smaller cities and rural areas.

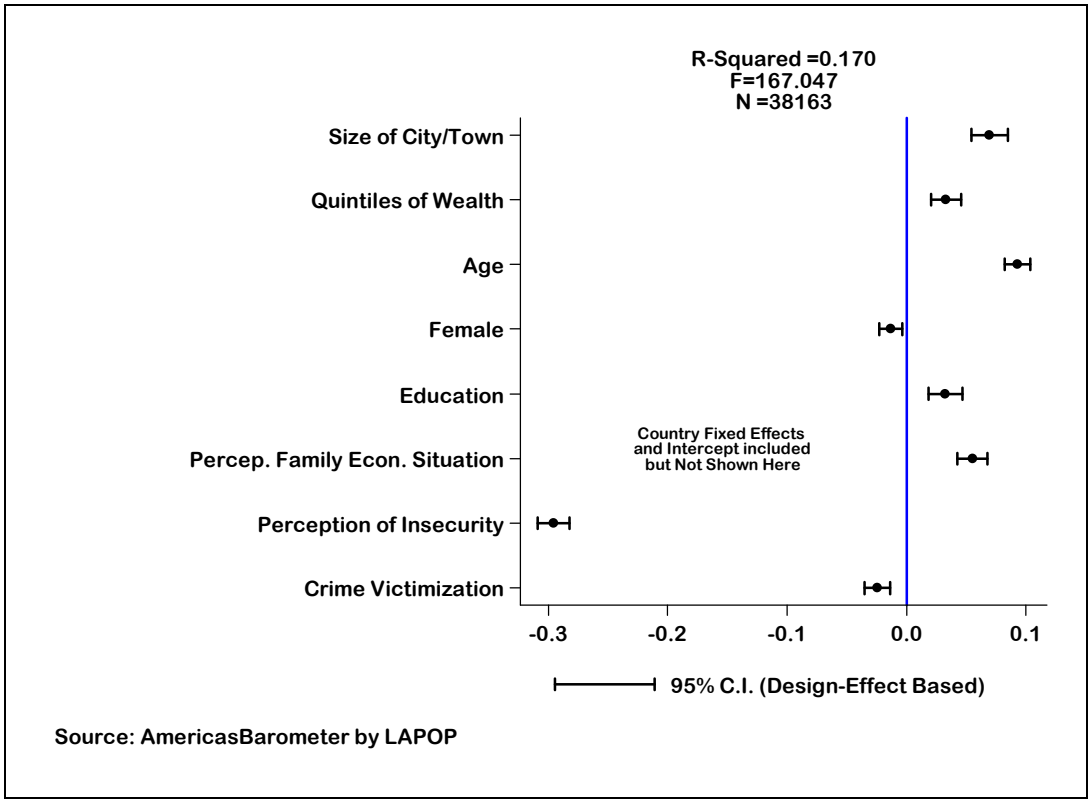

Figure VI.4. Determinants of Interpersonal Trust in the Americas, 2010

Figure VI.5 shows mean levels of interpersonal trust at different levels of its most important determinants. The figure in the upper left quadrant shows that interpersonal trust is higher among those who consider their neighborhood to be safer. Similarly, the figure in the upper right quadrant shows that people who have been victimized by corruption have significantly lower levels of interpersonal trust than people who have not been victimized. The bottom left quadrant illustrates the higher levels of interpersonal trust observed in smaller cities. The bottom right part of the figure shows that interpersonal trust does not vary across age cohorts, though the coefficient for age had been significant in the multivariate analysis.

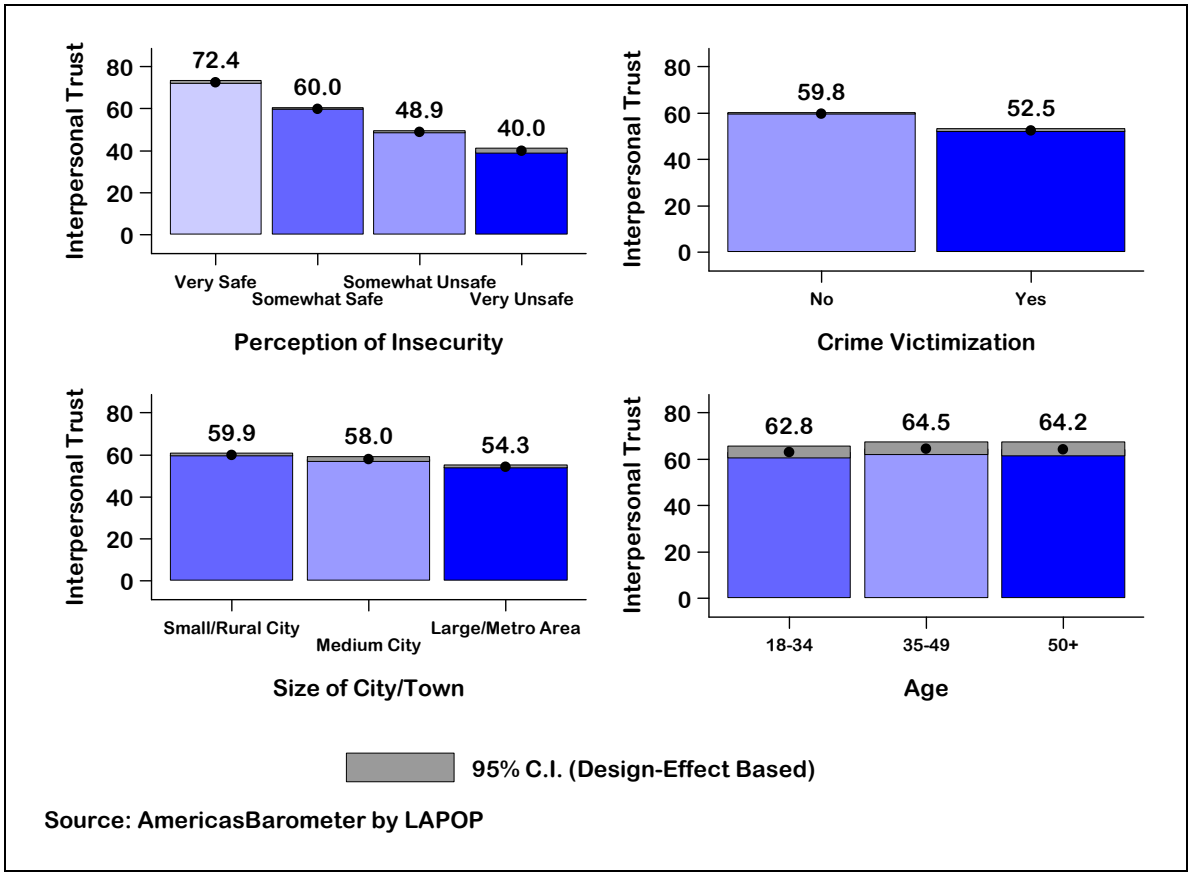

Figure VI.5. Interpersonal Trust by Perception of Insecurity, Crime Victimization, Size of City/Town and Age in the Americas, 2010

Civic Participation

As we discuss above, interpersonal trust should be strongly connected to civil society participation. We measure participation in a range of civil society organizations using a battery of six questions, which read as follows:

I am going to read a list of groups and organizations. Please tell me if you attend their meetings at least once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year, or never. **[Repeat for each question "once a week," "once or twice a month," "once or twice a year" or "never" to help the respondent]**

	Once a week	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a year	Never	Doesn't Know	Doesn't Answer
CP6. Meetings of any religious organization? Do you attend them…	1	2	3	4	88	98
CP7. Meetings of a parents' association at school? Do you attend them…	1	2	3	4	88	98
CP8. Meetings of a community improvement committee or association? Do you attend them…	1	2	3	4	88	98

CP9. Meetings of an association of professionals, merchants, manufacturers or farmers? Do you attend them…	1	2	3	4	88	98	
CP13. Meetings of a political party or political organization? Do you attend them…	1	2	3	4	88	98	
CP20. [Women only] Meetings of associations or groups of women or home makers. Do you attend them…	1	2	3	4	88	Doesn't Answer 98	N/A 99

Figure VI.6 illustrates average participation in different types of groups and associations. We recoded each variable on a scale from 0 to 100, where "0" represents never participating in such a group and "100" represents attending once a week. The figure shows that citizens of the Americas participate in religious groups much more than any other kind of group, while they participate least in professional associations.

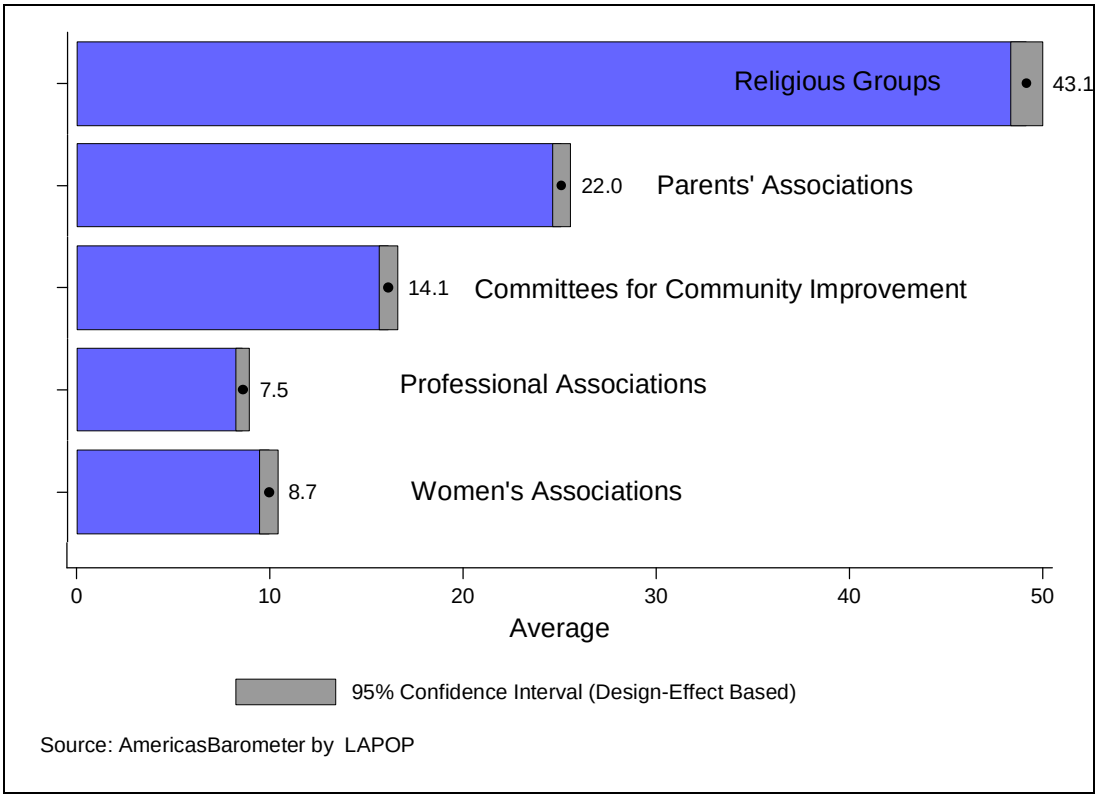

Figure VI.6. Participation in Meetings of Civic Organizations in the Americas, 2010

How does civic participation in the Americas vary? Now we examine participation in each type of civic organization by country. Figure VI.7 illustrates the wide range in levels of participation in meetings of religious groups across the countries of the Americas. On one hand, we see that in a group of four countries, Haiti, Guatemala, El Salvador and the Dominican Republic, average participation is over 60

points on the 0-100 scale. Haiti is the most participative country in this sense, with an average of 68.1. On the other hand, Uruguay is the country with least religious participation, with an average of just 14.5. After Uruguay, there is a group of four countries where average participation of this type is between 20 and 30 points on this scale: Canada, Argentina, Suriname and Chile.

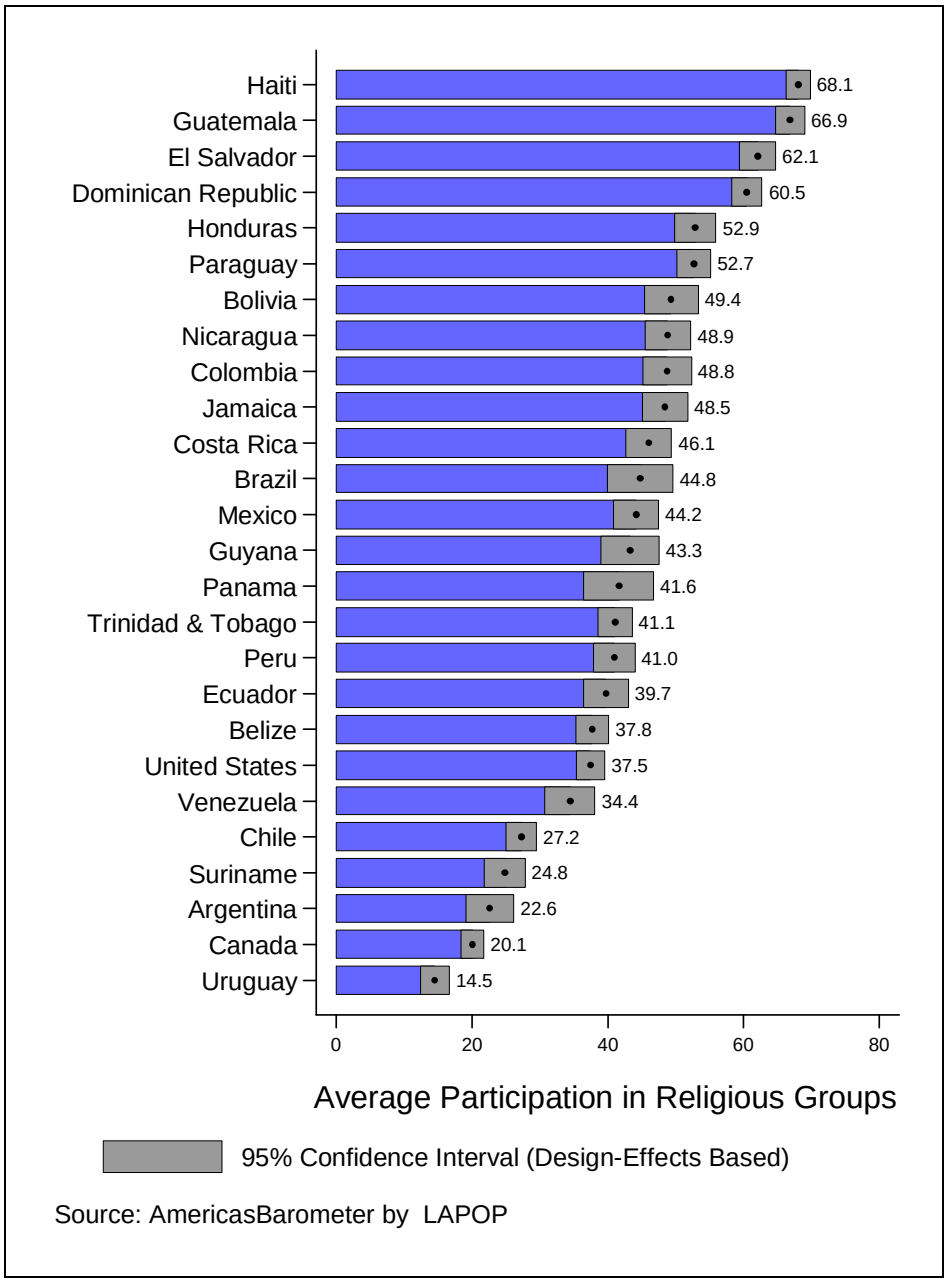

Figure VI.7. Participation in Meetings of Religious Groups in Comparative Perspective, 2010

How does participation in parents' associations vary? In Figure VI.8, which presents the levels of participation in this type of association by country, we see a pattern that is becoming familiar. Once again, Haiti and Guatemala appear on the more participative end of the distribution, whereas the United States, Canada, Suriname and Argentina are on the less participative end. At the same time, we see that

variance is much less pronounced for this variable, with a difference of just 26 points on this scale between the most participative country and the least participative country.

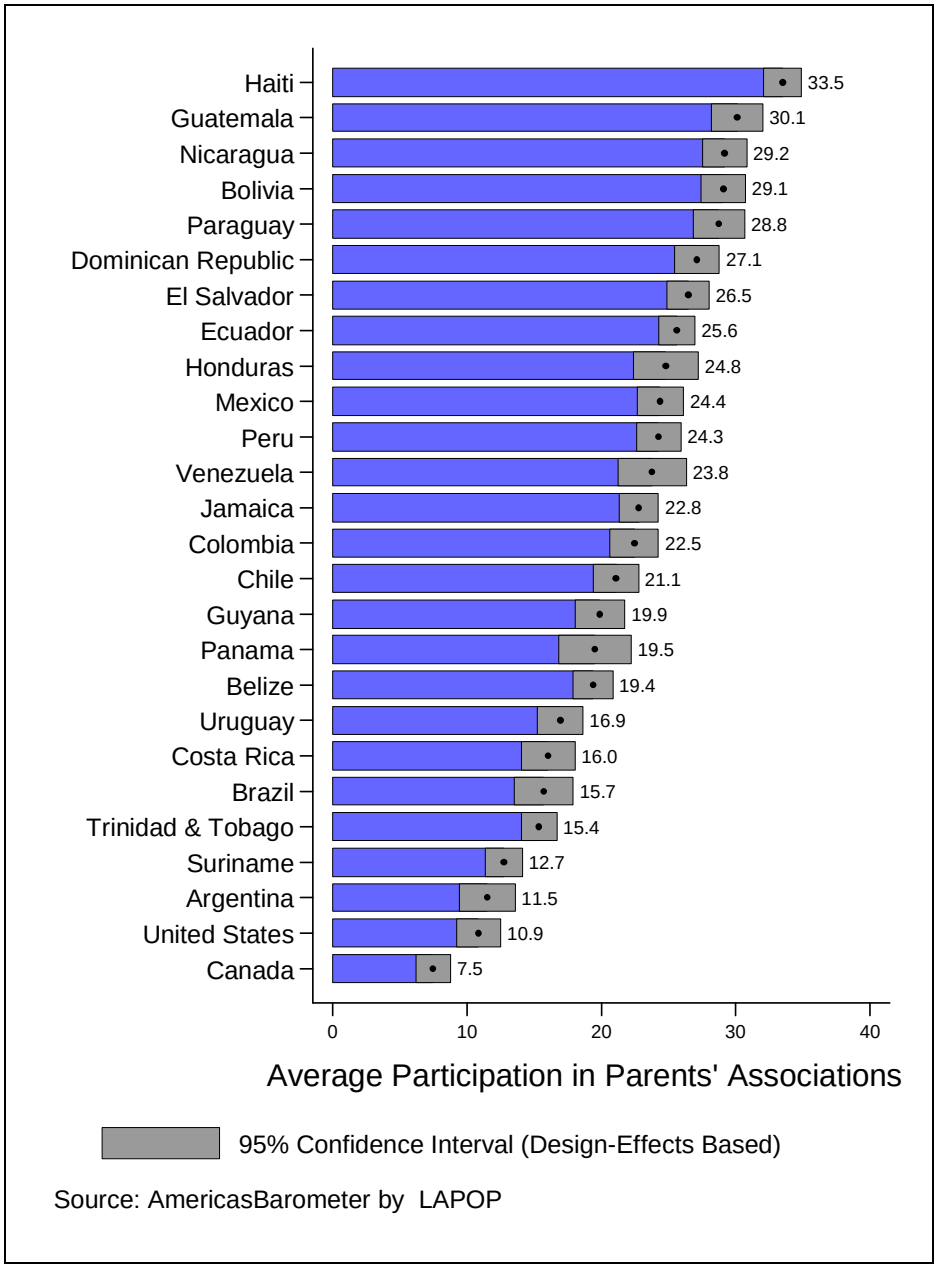

Figure VI.8. Participation in Meetings of Parents' Associations in Comparative Perspective, 2010

Community or neighborhood improvement committees or associations are the third group that we examine. Figure VI.9 shows that, again, the countries with the highest levels of self-reported participation include Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Guatemala, with participation levels of 23.0, 23.2 and 25.0. This time, Brazil is the least participative country, with an average of only 6.2. Other countries with rates of participation lower than 10 are Uruguay, Surinam, Belize and Argentina.

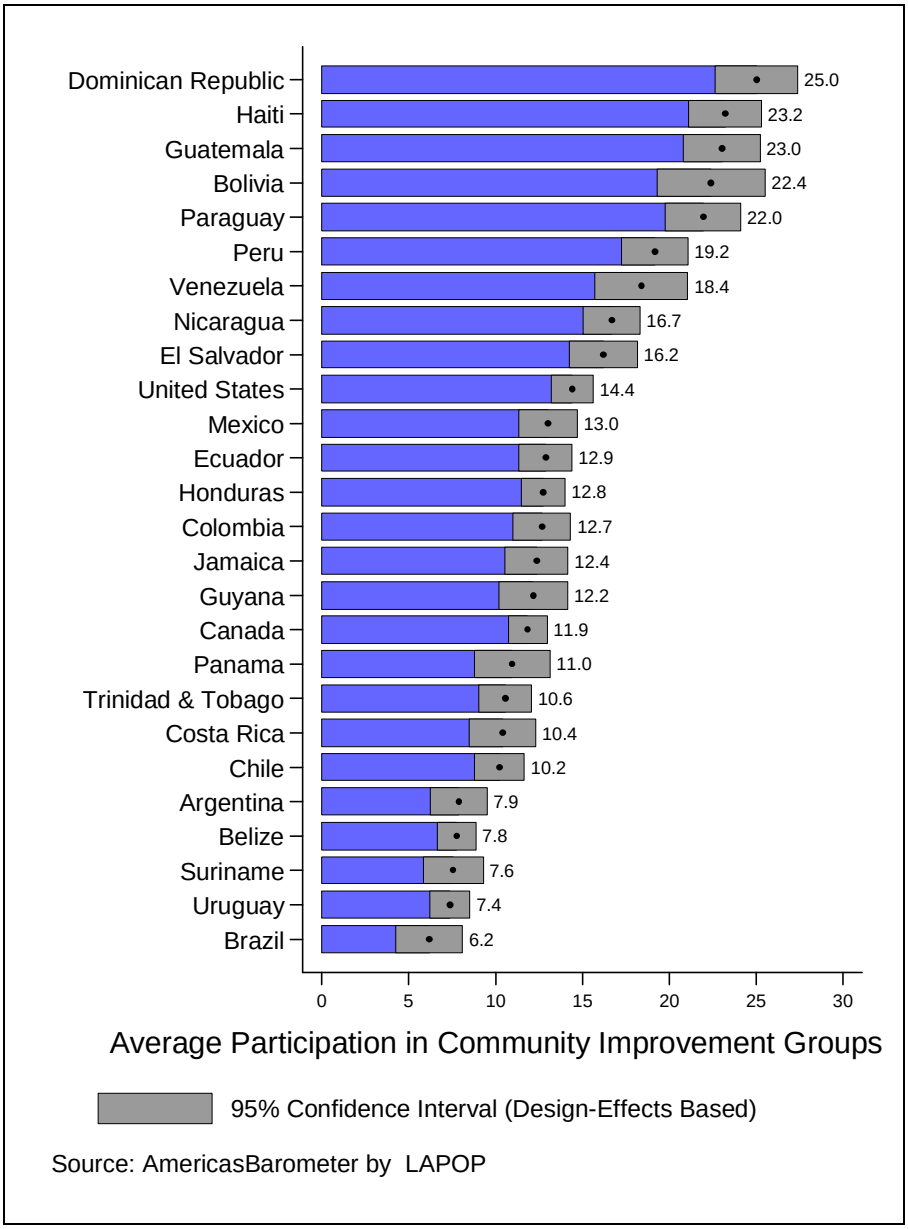

Figure VI.9. Participation in Meetings of Community Improvement Groups in Comparative Perspective, 2010

In Figure VI.10, we examine levels of participation in associations of professionals, farmers and merchants. In the vast majority of these countries the average is far less than 10 on a scale from 0-100. Nevertheless, we see that in Haiti the average reaches 19.2, while Bolivia appears in second place with an average of 14.3. Moreover, Peru, Paraguay and the United States appear in the range between 10 and 12 on the scale.

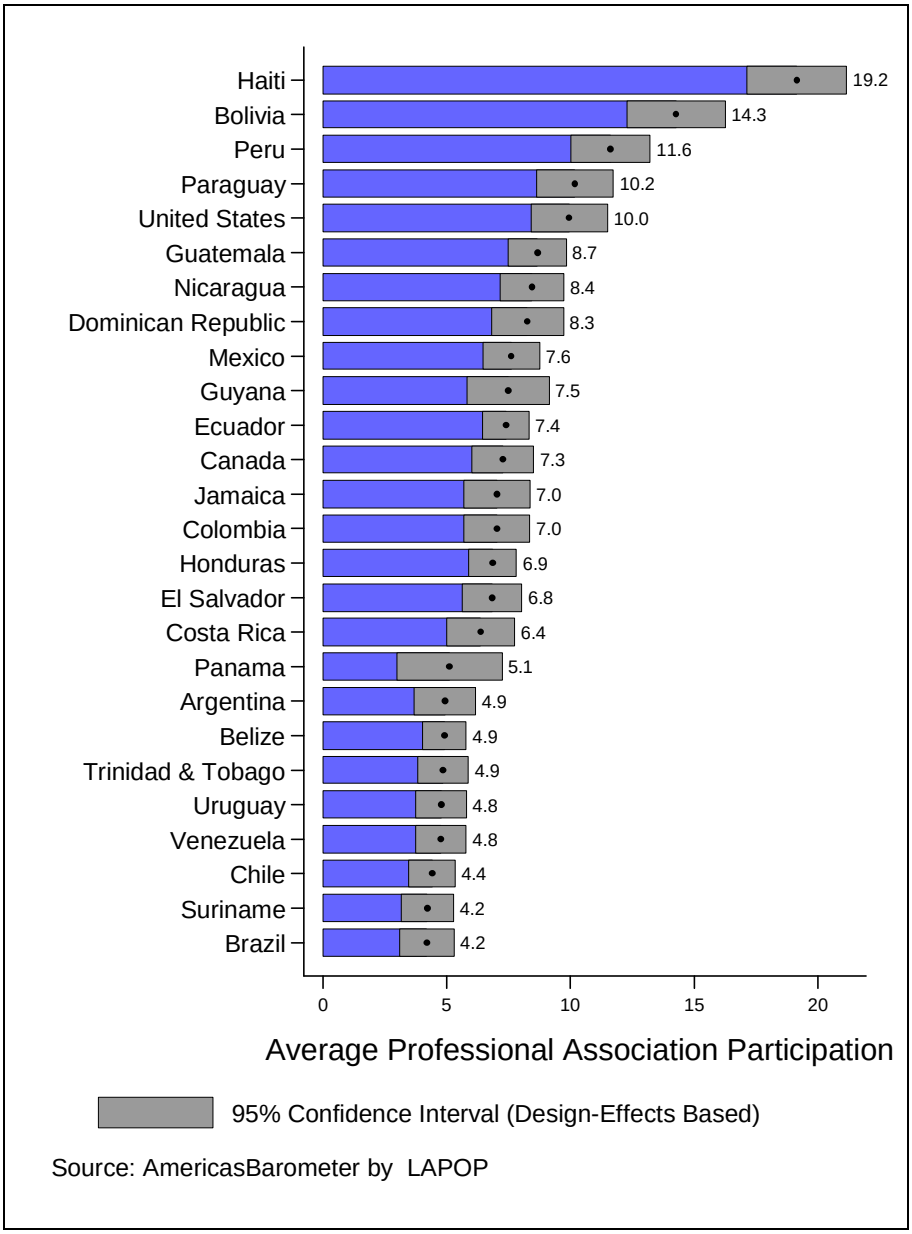

Figure VI.10. Participation in Meetings of Associations of Professionals and Farmers in Comparative Perspective, 2010

Finally, we asked female respondents if they participated in women's groups. In Figure VI.11, we see once again that Haiti stands out, such that Haitians are by far the most involved women in the Americas in this kind of group. The average in Haiti is 11 points higher than the average in any other country. In only 8 countries is the average greater than 10 points on the 0-100 scale. On the other hand, we find that there are 5 countries where the average is less than 5 points: Venezuela, Honduras, Brazil, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay.

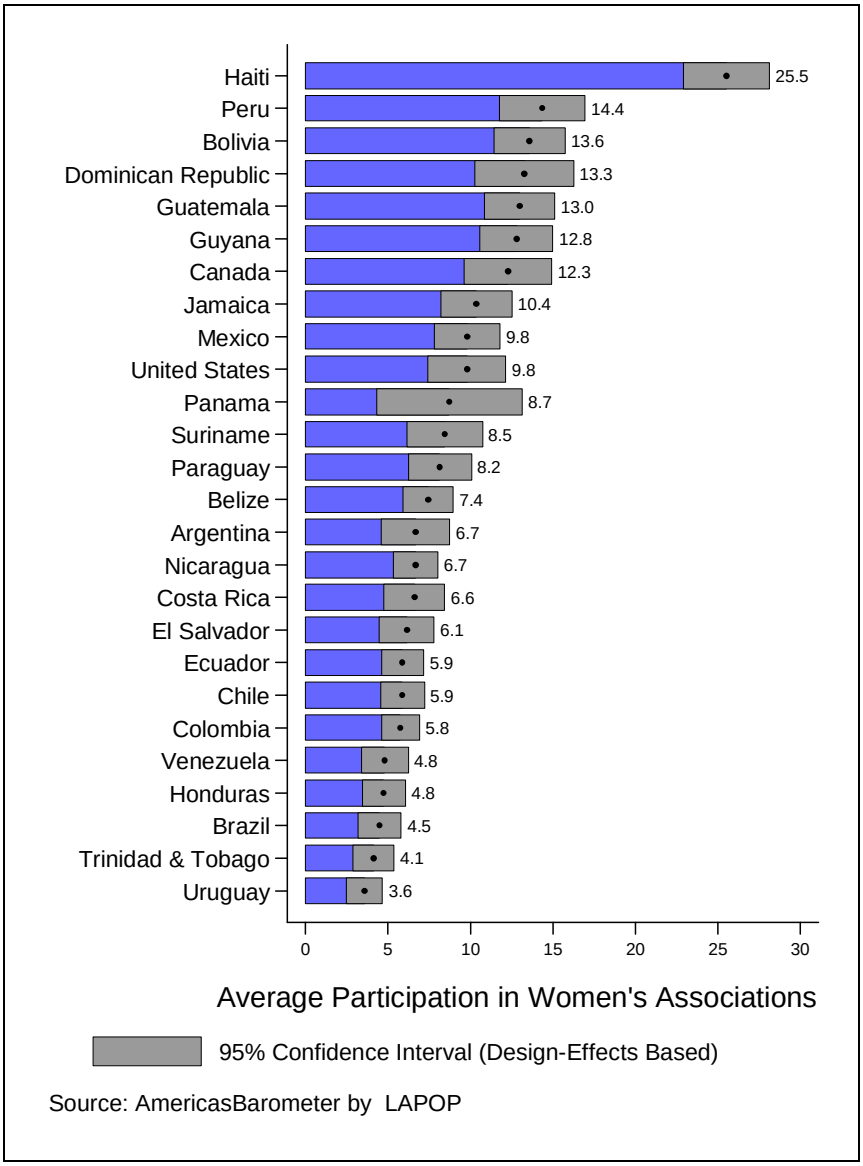

Figure VI.11. Participation in Meetings of Women's Associations in Comparative Perspective, 2010

It is worth mentioning the high level of participation recorded in Haiti, which appears in first or second place in each type of civic participation. Given the low levels of interpersonal trust and human capital in Haiti, such levels are especially significant.

Protest Participation

To what extent do citizens of the Americas participate in protests? We asked all our respondents the following question:

PROT3. In the last 12 months, have you participated in a demonstration or protest march?
(1) Yes **[Continue]** (2) No **[Go to JC1]** (88) Doesn't Know**[Go to JC1]** (98) Doesn't Answer **[Go to JC1]**

Figure VI.12 shows the percentage of people who have participated in protests in the 12 months prior to the interview. As the figure illustrates, 17% of Haitians reported having participated in a protest in the past year. Haiti was followed by Argentina and the United States as the countries with the next highest participation in demonstrations. For their part, El Salvador, Guyana and Jamaica are the countries with lowest percentages of respondents who participated in protests in the last year. Fewer than 5% of citizens in these countries had demonstrated in the past year.

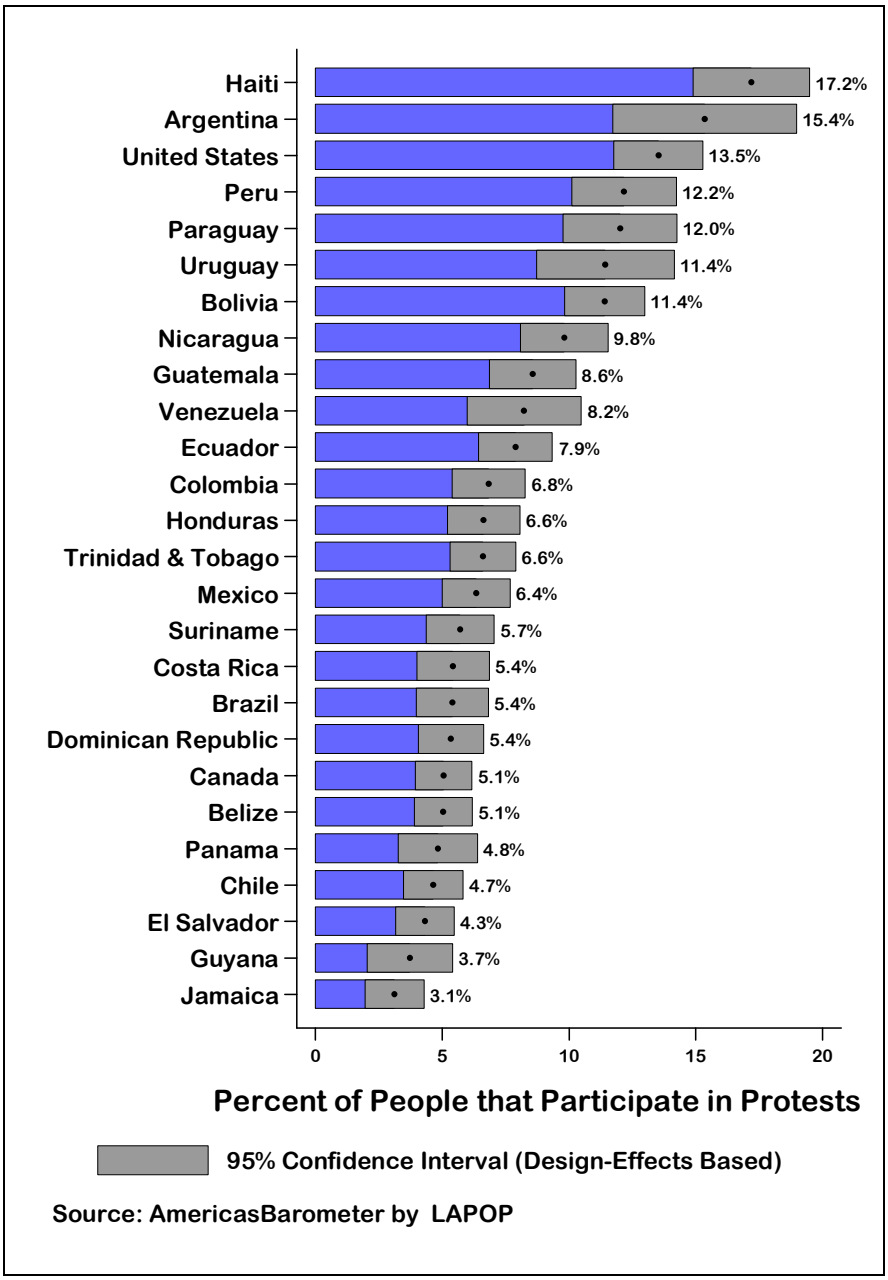

Figure VI.12. Participation in a Demonstration or Protest March in Comparative Perspective, 2010

Electoral Participation

How does turnout vary across the Americas? In each country, we asked respondents whether they had voted in the most recent presidential election. The question was as follows:

VB2. Did you vote in the last **presidential elections** of [year of the last presidential election]?
(1) Voted **[Continue]**
(2) Did not vote **[Go to VB10]**
(88) Doesn't Know**[Go to VB10]** (98) Doesn't Answer **[Go to VB10]**

Two caveats apply to the interpretation of the results. First, the time of the last presidential election varied from country to country. In some countries, respondents had to think back only a few months, while in others, they had to remember and report on behavior that had occurred several years previously. Thus, the accuracy of recall may vary across countries. Second, studies of electoral behavior across the globe have documented citizens' tendencies to overreport voting. Social desirability bias, researchers argue, leads nonvoters to report voting in order to avoid admitting to socially undesirable behavior in the survey context.[10] Furthermore, levels of overreporting may be higher in political systems where turnout is higher, namely in ones in which voting is compulsory (which is true in most countries of the Americas).[11] As a result, the results presented in this section must be approached with caution.

Figure VI.13 shows the percentage of voting age adults who reported having voted in the last presidential election. As can be seen in the figure, Chile, Uruguay and Ecuador are the countries with the highest percentage of respondents who reported having voted. Conversely, Jamaica is the country with the lowest reported turnout, closely followed by Costa Rica and Haiti. These percentages clearly reflect error of various kinds. Voting turnout in the U.S. in the election that brought Obama to power was high (about 58%), but not as high as reported here. On the other hand, turnout in Costa Rica according to official sources was 65%, but the survey understates this by about 7%.

[10] Clausen, Aage R., Response Validity: Vote Report. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 32, 4, 1968: 588-606; Traugott, Michael W., and John P. Katosh, The Consequences of Validated and Self-Reported Voting Measures. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 45, 1981: 519-35.

[11] Karp, Jeffrey A., and David Brockington Social Desirability and Response Validity: A Comparative Analysis of Overreporting Voter Turnout in Five Countries. *The Journal of Politics* 67, 03, 2005: 825-40. For information on compulsory voting in the Americas, see http://www.idea.int/vt/compulsory_voting.cfm.

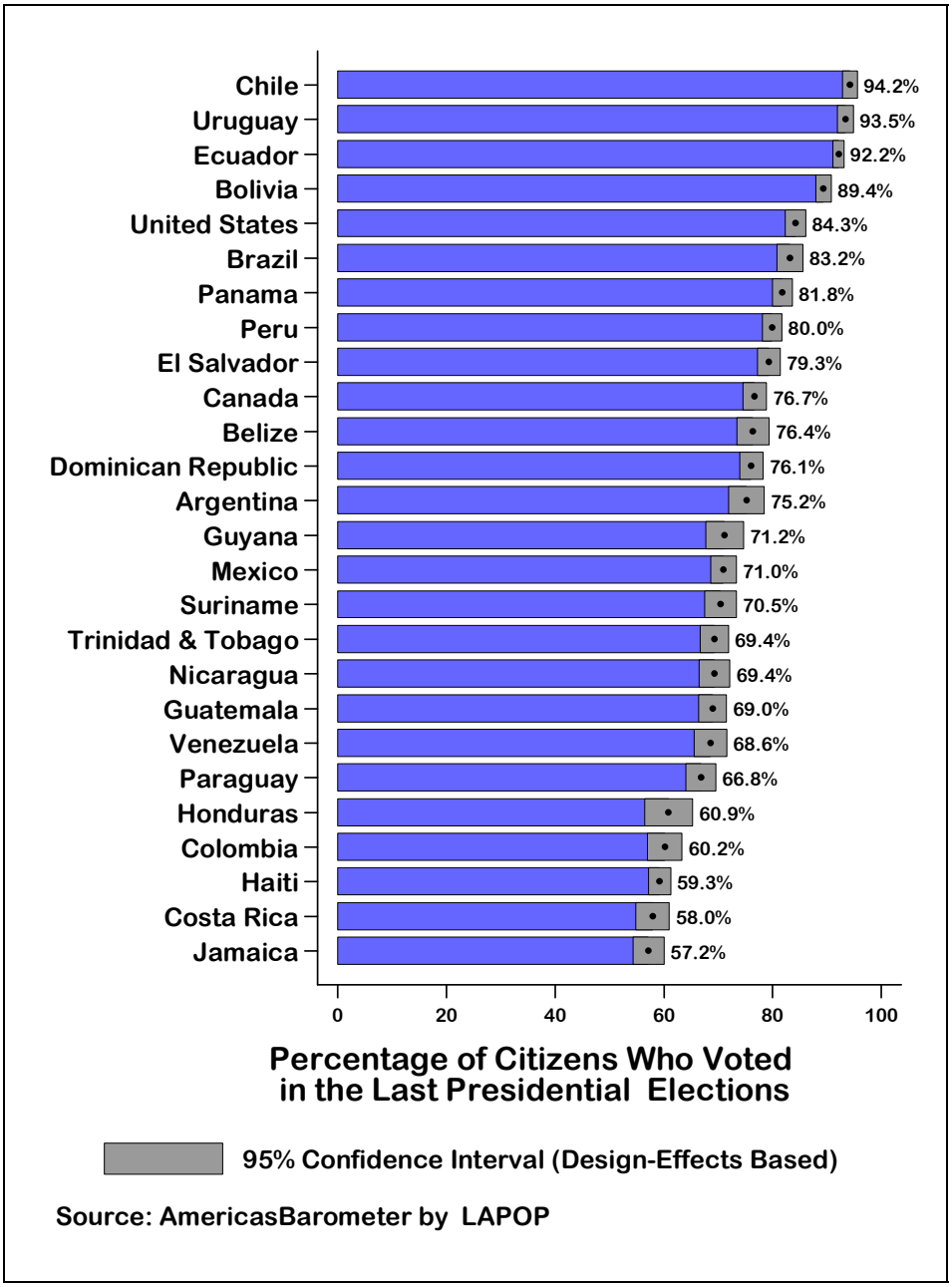

Figure VI.13. Percentage of Citizens Who Voted in Last Elections in Comparative Perspective, 2010

Figure VI.14 shows the percentage of people (in the eleven countries included in all rounds of the Americas Barometer) that reported having voted in the last presidential election in each wave of the survey. As can be seen in the figure, self-reported turnout has been relatively stable across the four rounds.

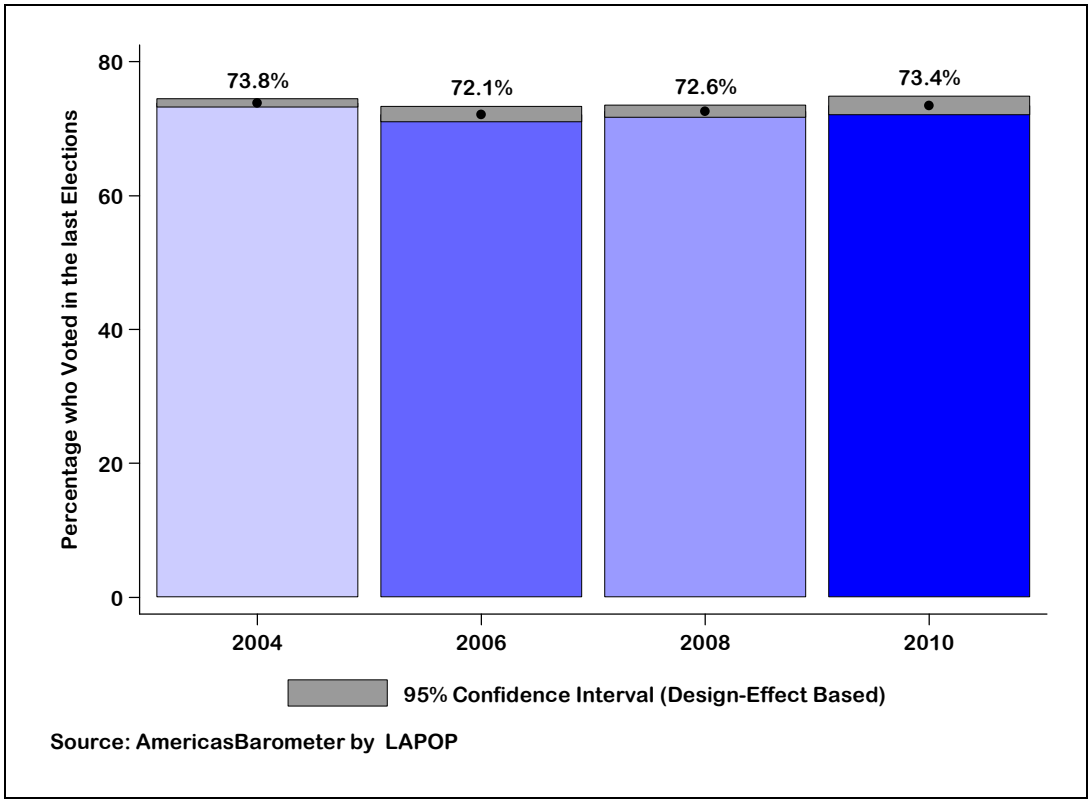

Figure VI.14. Percentage of Citizens Who Voted in Last Elections Over Time in Eleven Countries of the Americas, 2004-2010

Interest in Politics

To what extent are citizens across the Americas interested in politics? In each country, we asked respondents the following question:

POL1. How much interest do you have in politics: a lot, some, little or none?
(1) A lot (2) Some (3) Little (4) None (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer

Figure VI.15 displays our results, showing that 34% of respondents reported having little interest in politics while just 12% of interviewees reported having a lot of interest in politics.

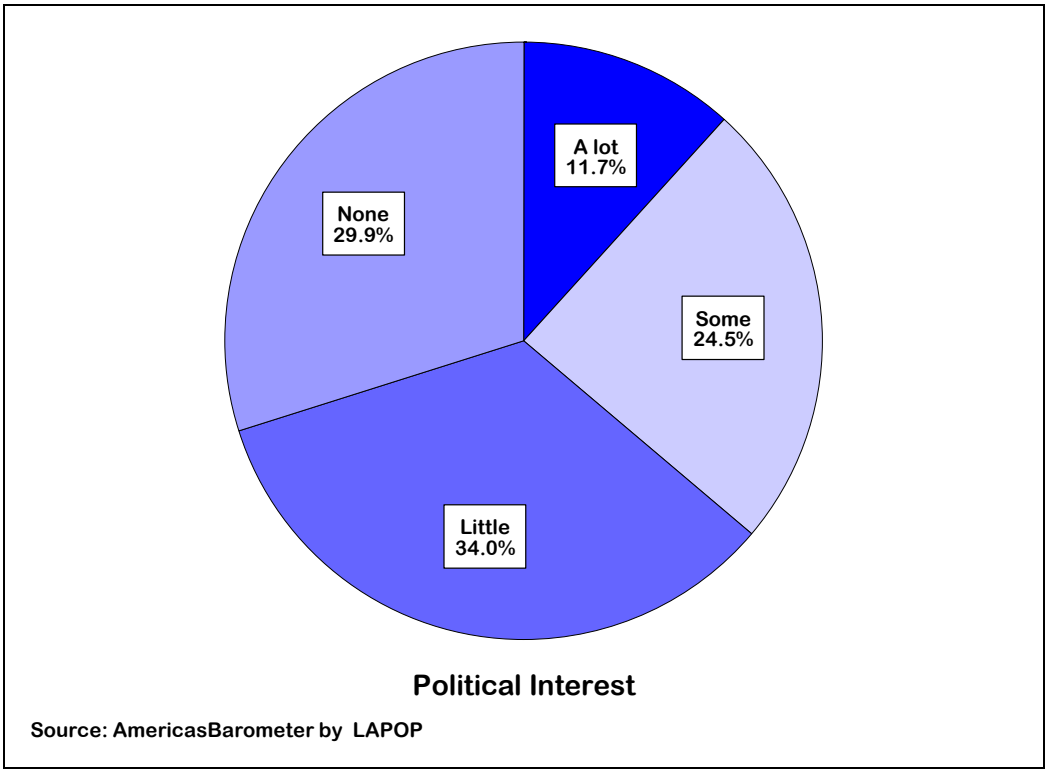

Figure VI.15. Interest in Politics in the Americas, 2010

How does interest in politics vary across the Americas? We recoded this variable on a scale from 0 to 100, where "0" represents no interest and "100" represents a lot. Figure VI.16 demonstrates that there is wide variation on this variable. The United States is by far the country with the highest level of interest in politics, with an average of 72.5 on the 0-100 scale. After the U.S., Uruguay, Canada and Suriname appear around 50 on the scale. Additionally, there are three countries with averages less than 30: Chile, Guyana and Haiti. The great majority of the countries are in the 30's and 40's on the scale.

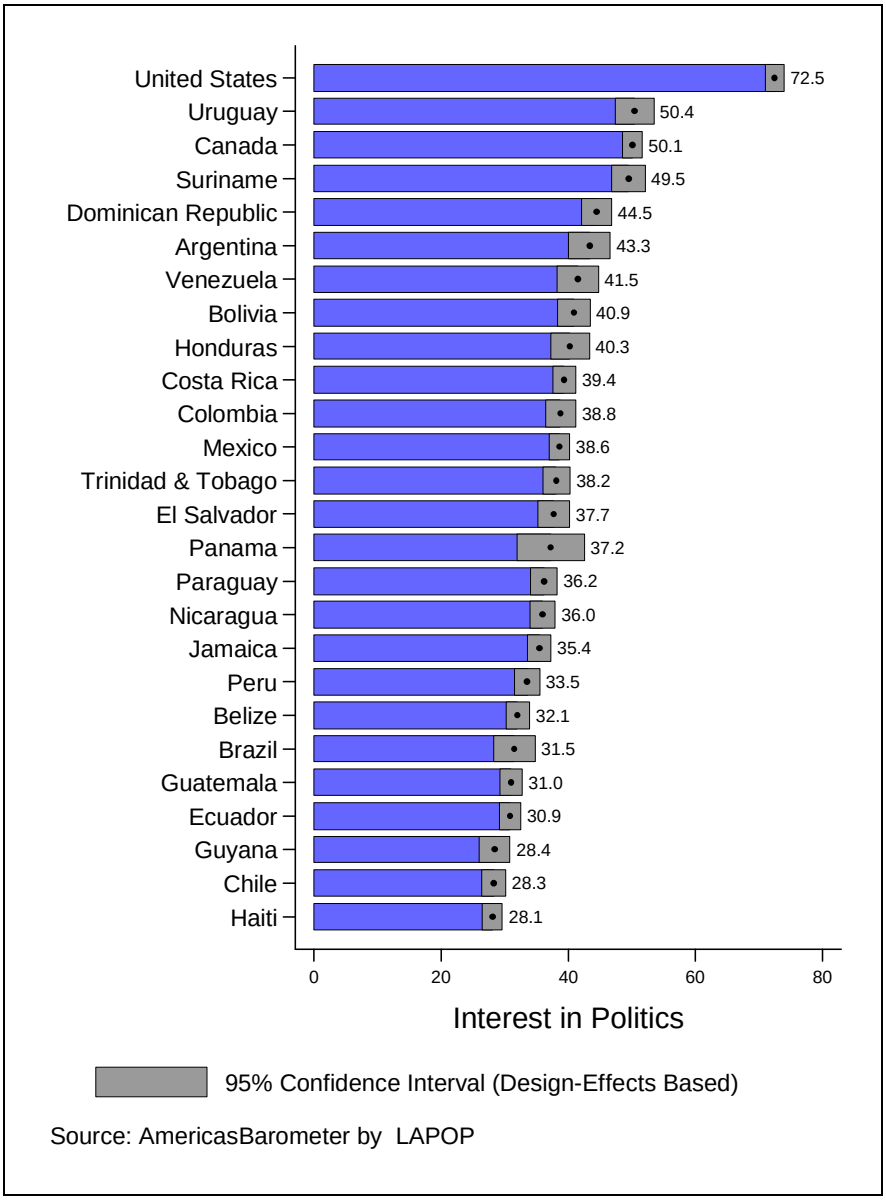

Figure VI.16. Interest in Politics in Comparative Perspective, 2010

Figure VI.17 shows the mean levels of political interest in the eleven countries included in all rounds of the AmericasBarometer across time. As can be seen in the figure, political interest has risen in a sustained, statistically significant fashion since 2006. Nonetheless, even in 2010 the average citizen in these eleven countries remains fairly uninterested in politics. It is interesting to speculate on what might have led to this rise, since as shown in this report, most other forms of political participation and democratic attitudes have remained relatively stable.

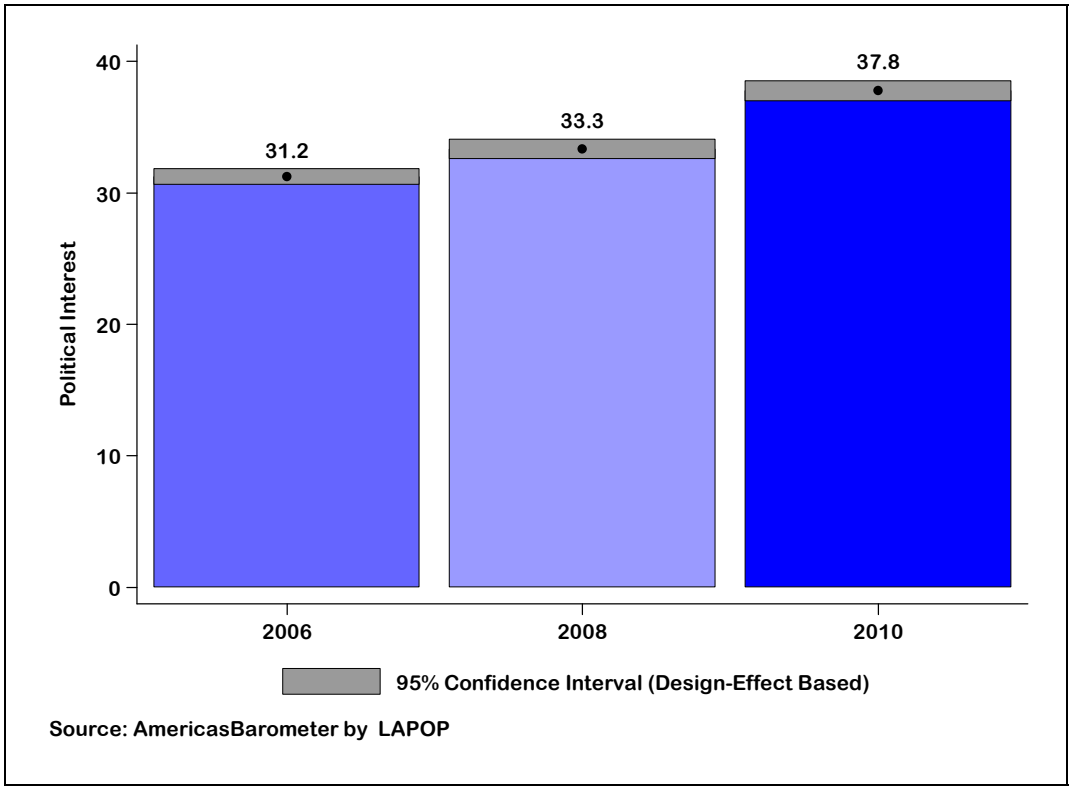

Figure VI.17. Interest in Politics in Eleven Countries of the Americas by Year, 2006-2010

Political Activism

Finally, we assess the extent to which citizens in the Americas engage in political activism using two questions, which read as follows:

PP1. During election time, some people try to convince others to vote for a party or candidate. How often have you tried to convince others to vote for a party or candidate? **[Read the options]**
(1) Frequently (2) Occasionally (3) Rarely (4) Never (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer

PP2. There are people who work for parties or candidates during electoral campaigns. Did you work for any candidate or party in the last general elections of [year]?
(1) Yes, worked (2) Did not work (88) Doesn't Know (98)Doesn't Answer

Figure VI.17 illustrates the extent of political activism in the Americas. The left section presents the percentage of people who have tried to convince others to vote for a party or candidate, while the right side presents the percentage of people who worked for a candidate in the last presidential election. We find that political activism remains fairly low in the Americas, though an important minority of citizens is active in campaigns. As the figures show, 11% of citizens had worked for a candidate, while 18% had tried to persuade others to vote for a party or candidate either "occasionally" or "frequently."

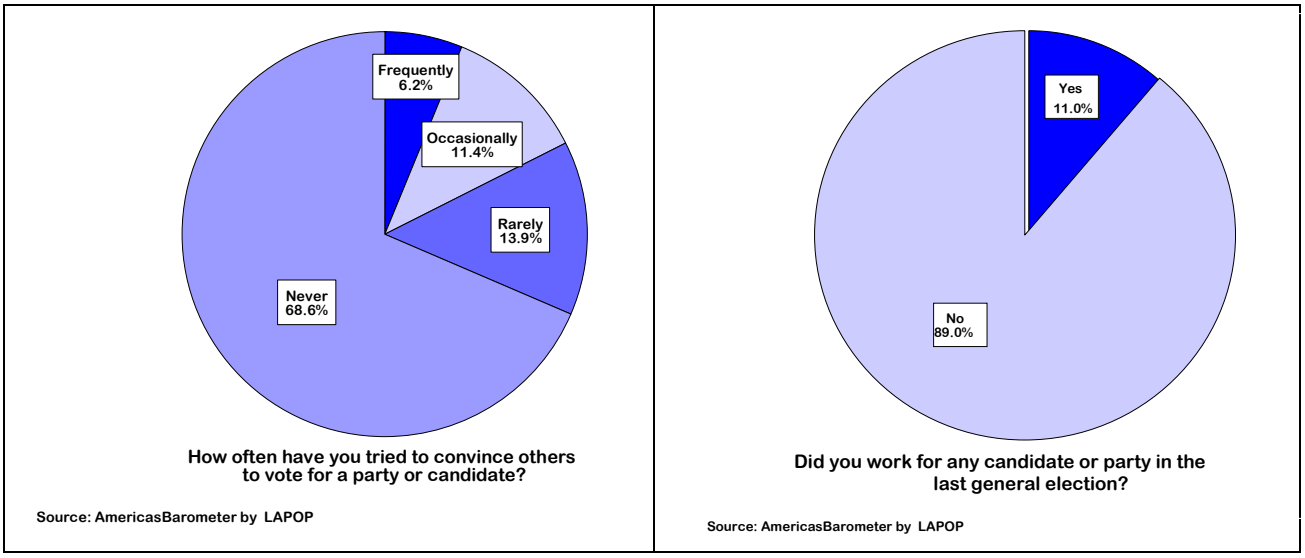

Figure VI.18. Political Activism in the Americas, 2010

To what extent do the countries of the Americas vary in terms of the political activism of their citizens? In Figure VI.19, we examine the percentage of citizens in each country who reported having tried to persuade someone else "rarely," "occasionally," or "frequently." We find that the United States is by far the most activist country in this sense, with about 70 percent of citizens reporting some attempt to convince another person. The United States is followed by Haiti, Suriname and Canada, all with percentages around 50 points. Nicaragua is the least participatory country; only16 percent of Nicaraguans say that they have tried to convince another person. In most countries in our study, between 20 and 40 percent of citizens have tried to persuade another person to vote for their candidate or party.

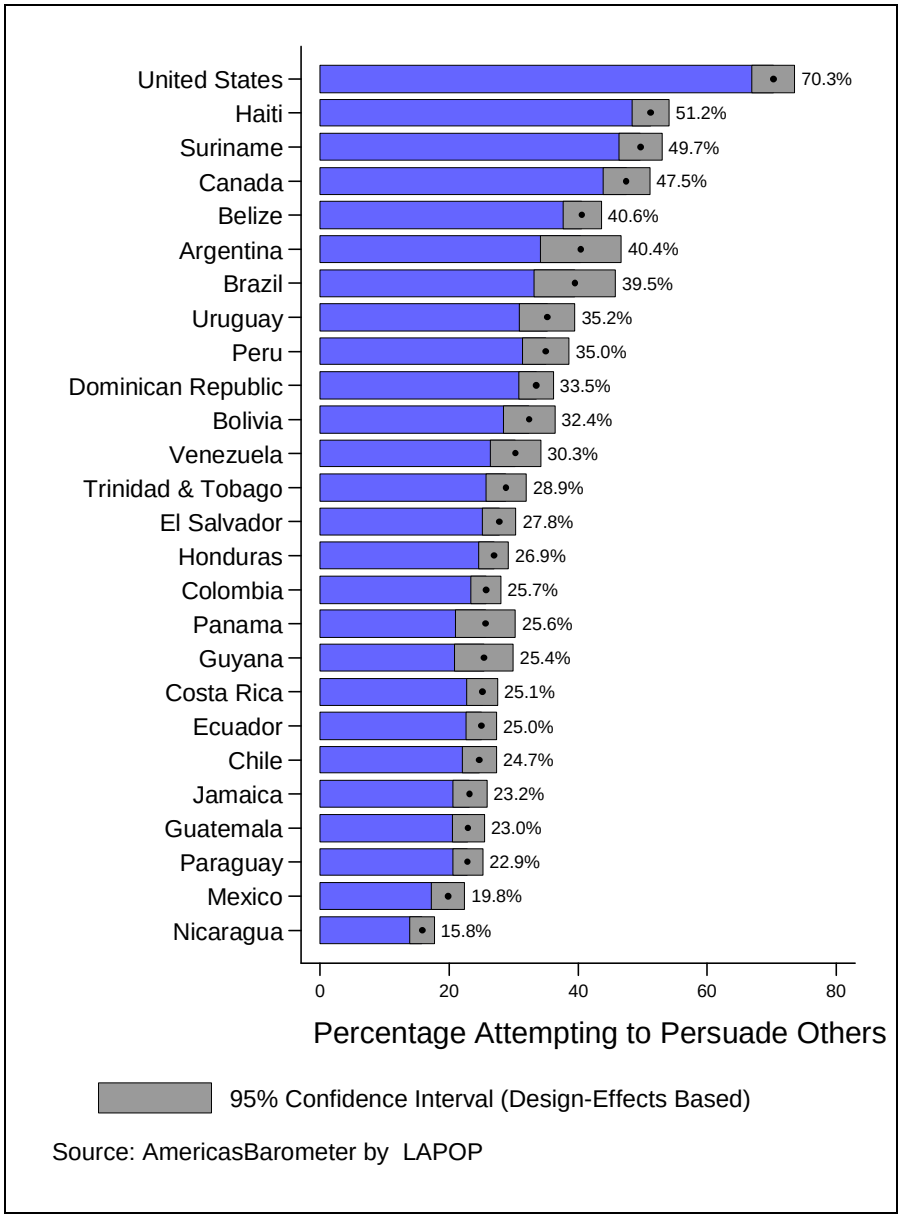

Figure VI.19. Political Persuasion in a Comparative Perspective, 2010

Finally, Figure VI.20 presents the percentage of citizens of each country that report having worked for a party or candidate. Here the pattern of results is very different to that found for political persuasion. Here we find two highly activist countries, the Dominican Republic and Surinam, where almost one out of every five citizens has done campaign work. After these two countries, we find 13 countries where more than 10% of the citizens have done campaign work. On the other hand, in Peru, Canada and Chile, less than 6% of citizens have worked on a campaign.

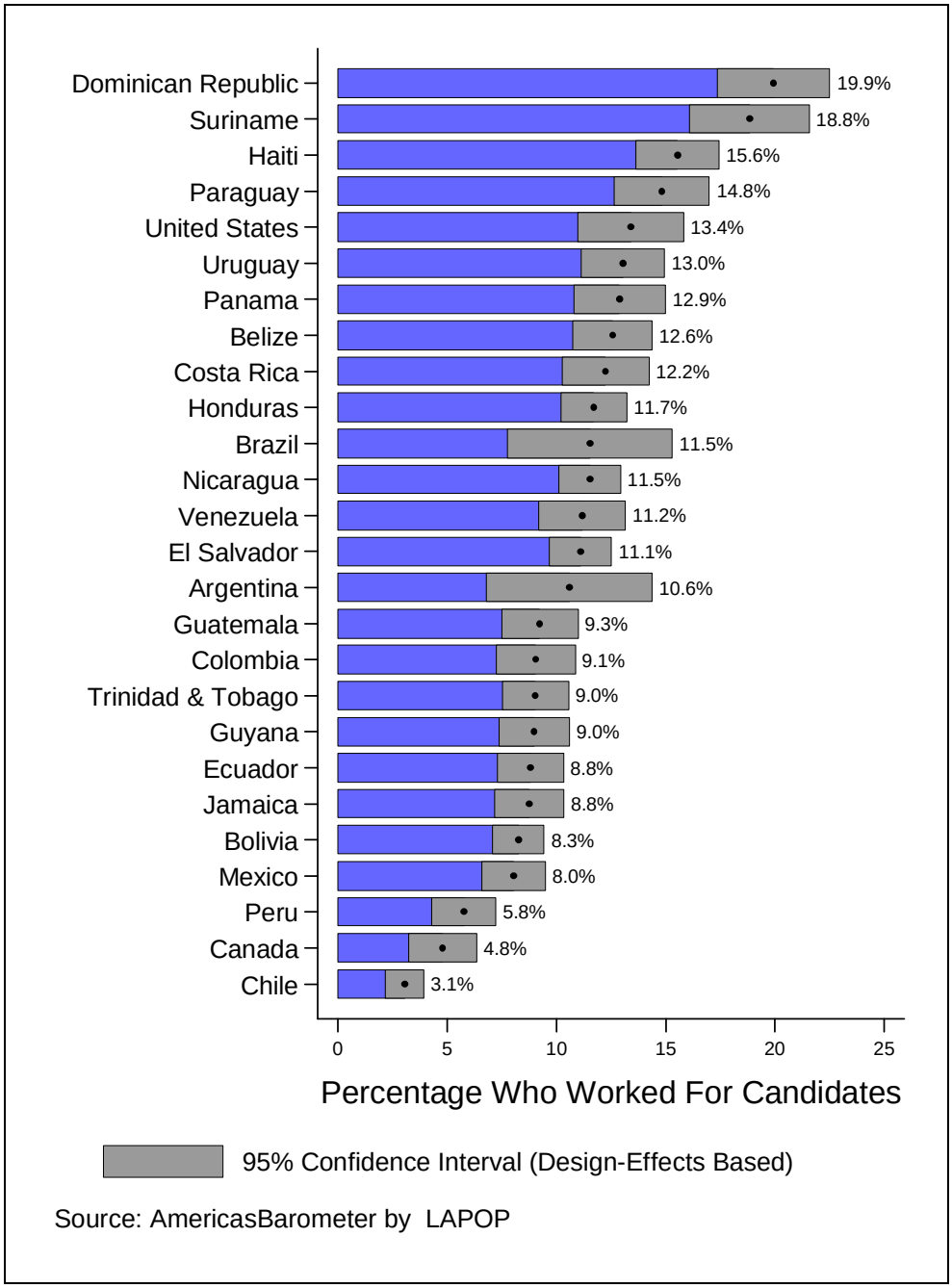

Figure VI.20. Work for Candidates or Parties in a Comparative Perspective, 2010

Conclusion

This chapter shows that, on average, most people in the Americas find the members of their communities to be either somewhat or very trustworthy, but that levels of interpersonal trust vary greatly from one country to another. Costa Rica is the country with highest trust, while Haiti is the country where people consider their neighbors to be least trustworthy. Interpersonal trust is affected by perceptions of insecurity and crime victimization as well as family economic situations.

Regarding civic participation, this chapter shows that people participate in religious meetings more than in any other type of meeting. We find evidence that in some countries citizens specialize in one type of participation, and that in other countries they specialize in another. Thus, Haiti has the highest level of participation in protests; Chile is the country with the highest reported electoral participation; and Jamaica is the country where people participate least frequently in both of these activities. In addition, we find that most people report little or no interest in politics, but that political interest has increased significantly since 2006. A little over 10% of citizens worked for a candidate or party in the last election, while 18% frequently or occasionally try to persuade others to vote for a specific candidate or party during the last election cycle.

Chapter VII. Local Government

Theoretical Background

What role, if any, do local level politics play in the democratization process? Worldwide, few citizens have contact with any level of government above that of their local authorities; in contrast, it is not at all uncommon for citizens to have direct, personal and sometimes frequent contact with their local elected officials. In this chapter, we examine how citizens' perceptions of local government affect system support.

For those who live at a distance from their nation's capital, which is, of course the case of most citizens in the Americas (with the exception perhaps of Uruguayans), access to their national legislators and cabinet officers require long, costly trips. Local officials, in contrast, are readily accessible. The U.S. experience suggests that citizens shape their views of government based on what they see and experience first-hand; the classic comment that "all politics is local" emerges directly from that experience. The U.S. has over 10,000 local governments; many of them control and determine key resources related to the provision of public services, beginning with the public school system, but also including the police, local courts, hospitals, roads, sanitation, water and a wide variety of other key services that determine the quality of life that many citizens experience.

In contrast, most of Spanish/Portuguese speaking Latin America has a long history of governmental centralization and historically, local governments have been starved for funding and largely ignored politically. For much of the 19th and 20th centuries, most local governments in the region suffered from a severe scarcity of income, as well as authority to deal with local problems.[1] It is not surprising, therefore, that the quality of local services generally has been poor.

Citizen contact with their states has traditionally been limited to local governments that have little power and highly constricted resources. If citizens of the region express concerns about the legitimacy of their governments and have doubts about democracy in general, the problem may begin with their experiences with local government.

Participation in Local Government Meetings

To what extent do citizens across the Americas participate in local government? In every country in the Americas, we asked the following question:

NP1. Have you attended a town meeting, city council meeting or village meeting in the past 12 months?
(1) Yes (2) No (88) Doesn't know (98) Doesn't answer

Figure VII.1 shows the percentage of the people that report having attended a town, city council, or village meeting in each of the countries of the Americas. As shown in the figure, the Dominican

[1] Nickson, R. Andrew. 1995. *Local Government in Latin America*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Republic and the United States are the countries with by far the highest levels of participation in meetings of the local government. A quarter of respondents in the United States report having done so, and the percentage is two points higher in the Dominican Republic. Beyond these two countries, a group of fourteen countries in the Americas have rates of participation in local meetings that hover between 11 and 16 percent. At the other end of the spectrum, Panama, Chile, and Argentina have the lowest percentages of participation in this kind of meeting, with rates below 5%.

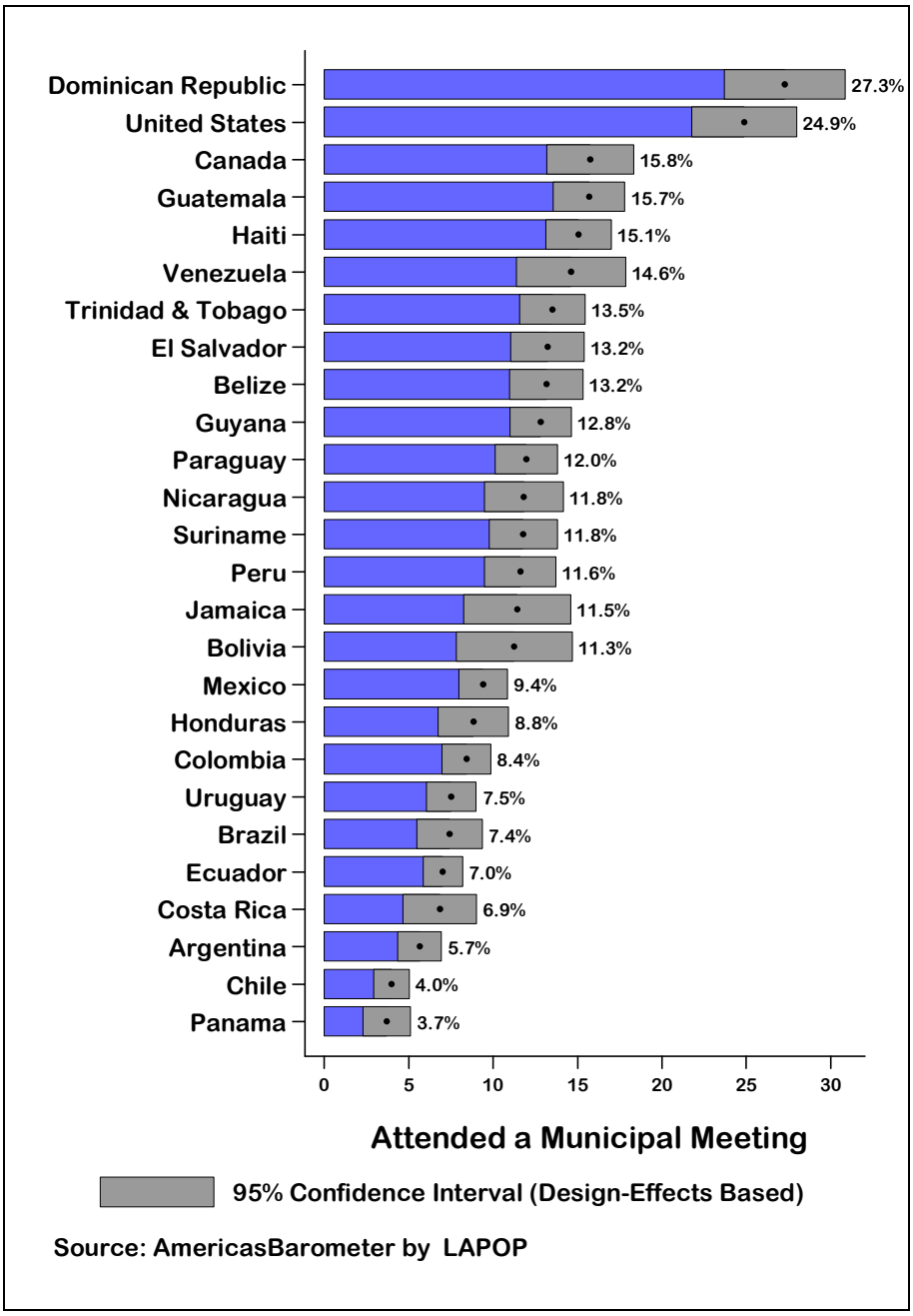

Figure VII.1. Participation in Local Meetings in Comparative Perspective, 2010

Figure VII.2 shows fluctuation over time in overall levels of participation in local meetings in the eleven countries of the Americas surveyed in each round of the survey: Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, and the Dominican Republic. As illustrated in the figure, there was a marked decrease in participation after 2004, with a gradual recovery in the two following rounds.

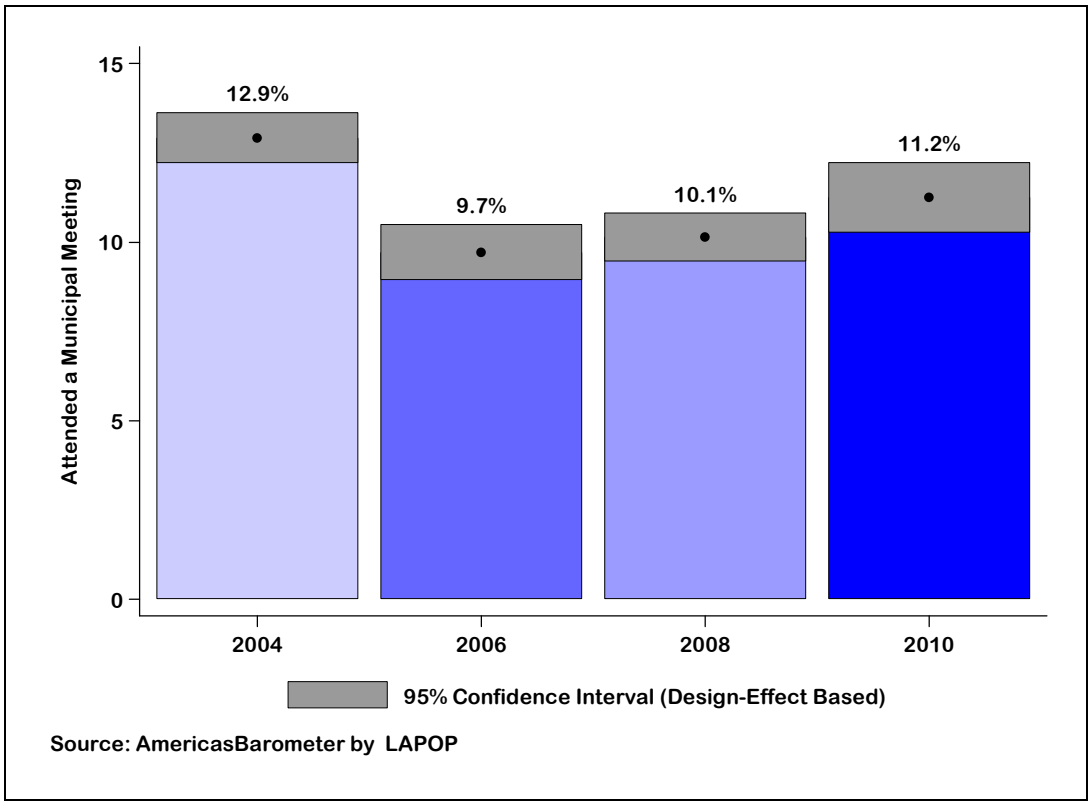

Figure VII.2. Participation in Local Meetings in Eleven Countries of the Americas by Year, 2004-2010

Demand-Making on Municipal Government

Contact with local government is not limited simply to attending municipal meetings. Many citizens in the Americas may also make requests or demands of local government officials. Often, such interactions may be citizens' most intensive form of involvement with any level of government. To measure this type of contact, in every country of the Americas we asked the following two questions:

NP2. Have you sought assistance from or presented a request to any office, official or councilman of the city/town/village within the past 12 months?
(1) Yes **[Continue]** (2) No **[Go to SGL1]** (88) Doesn't know **[Go to SGL1]**
(98) Doesn't answer **[Go to SGL1]**

MUNI10. Did they resolve your issue or request?
(1) Yes (0) No (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) N/A

Figure VII.3 shows the extent of demand-making to local governments in the Americas in two graphs. The first pie chart shows that 13% of respondents reported having sought assistance or presented a request to a local level office in the year preceding the interview. Most of these demands were unmet, however. The second pie chart shows that 61.6% of requests were not solved.

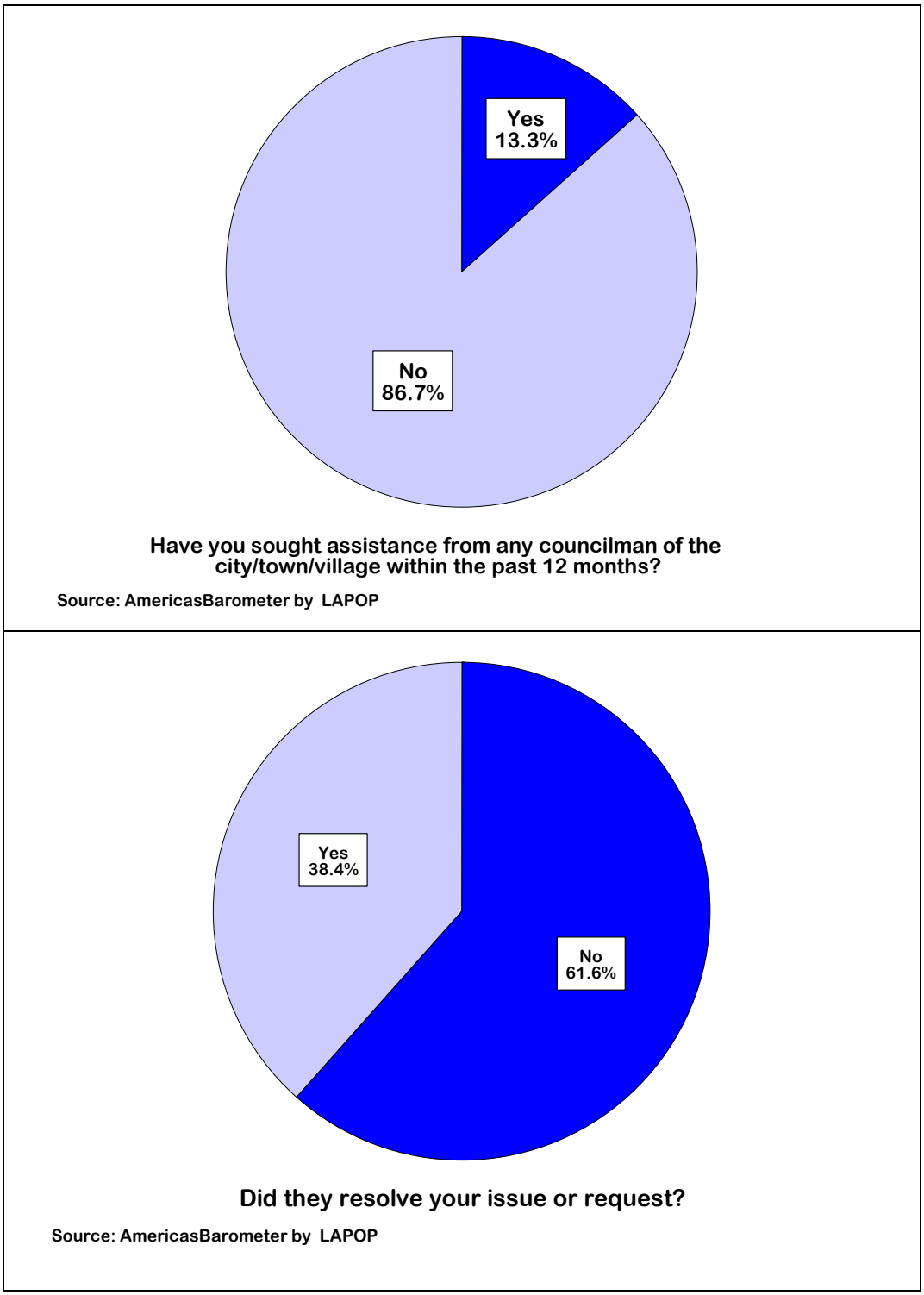

Figure VII.3. Demand-Making on Municipal Government in the Americas, 2010

How does demand-making vary across countries? Figure VII.4 presents the percentage of the people in each country of the Americas who sought assistance from or presented a request to any office, official or councilman of their city, town, or village within the past 12 months. The figure shows that Uruguay, Canada and Suriname are the countries with the highest percentages of people who made demands at the local level. Conversely, Panama, Honduras and Costa Rica were the countries with the lowest levels of demand-making from local government.

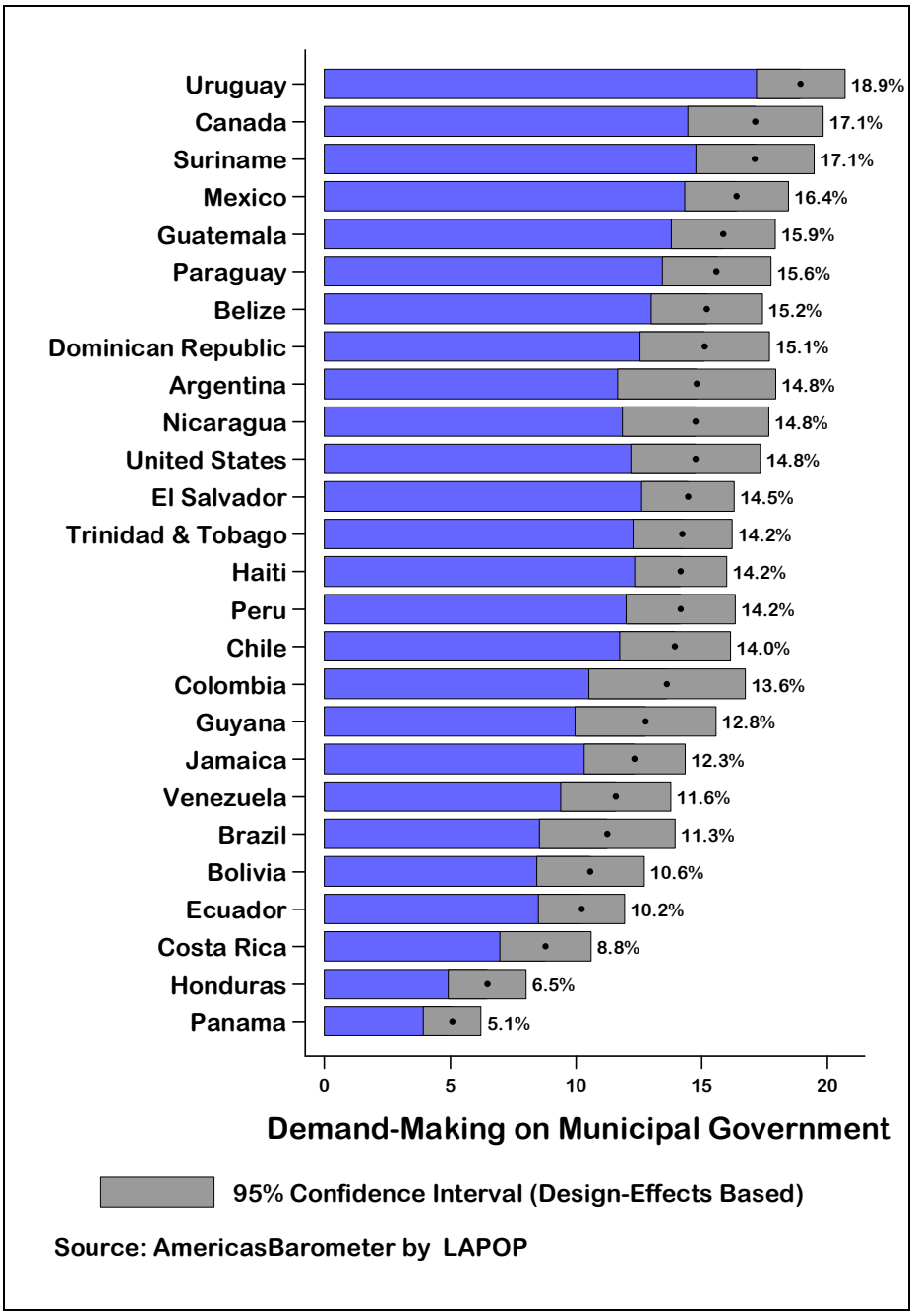

Figure VII.4. Demand-Making on Municipal Government in Comparative Perspective, 2010

Figure VII.5 illustrates changes over time in the percentage of people who sought assistance from a local level office in the eleven countries of the Americas included in all rounds of the survey. The figure

shows that there has been a decline in demand-making in the last three rounds of the AmericasBarometer in these countries.

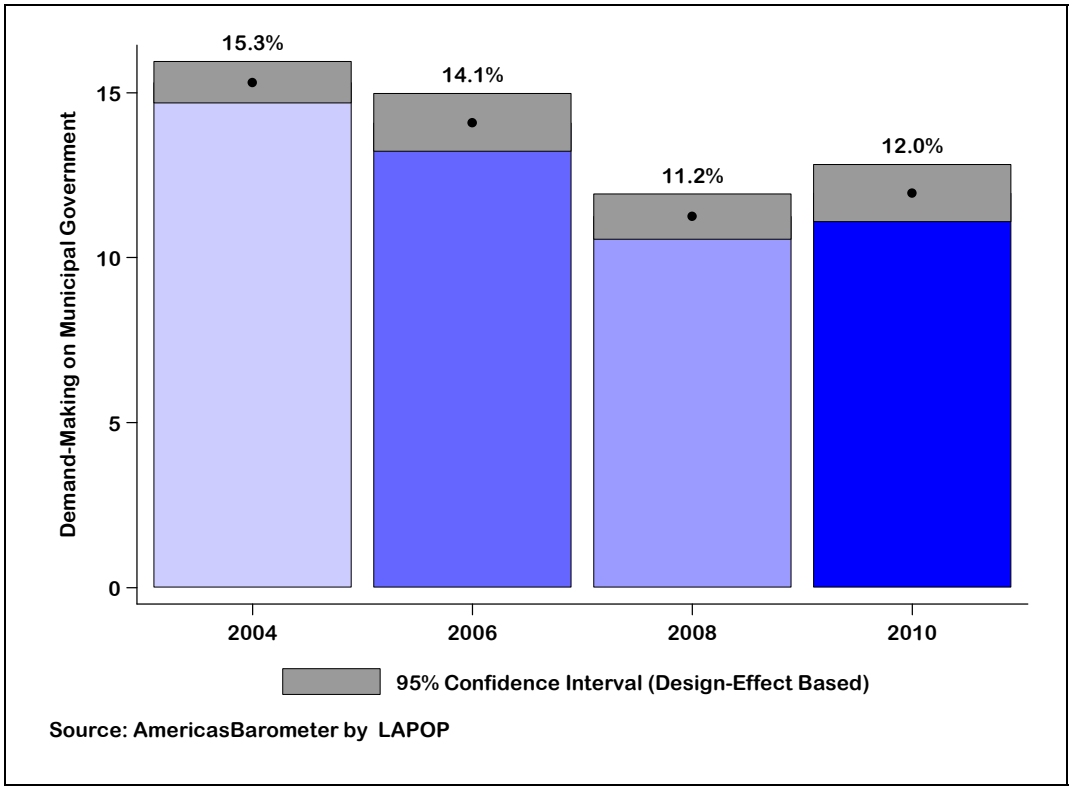

Figure VII.5. Demand-Making on Municipal Government in Eleven Countries of the Americas by Year, 2004-2010

Which citizens in the Americas are most likely to make requests of their local governments? In a logistic regression model for which we present results in Figure VII.6, we examine the determinants of demand-making across the Americas. The regression model takes into account variation across countries by including "country fixed effects." As in prior chapters, coefficients for each variable listed on the Y-axis are represented by the dots; dots to the right of the line at "0" indicate that the variable has a positive impact on demand-making, while ones to the left of the line indicate that the variable has a negative impact. The horizontal lines surrounding the dots represent 95% confidence intervals. When the horizontal lines do not intersect the axis at "0," we can be at least 95% confident that their coefficients are statistically significant.

The figure shows that the most important factors determining the likelihood of seeking assistance or presenting a request to the local government are the size of the city, such that respondents living in smaller areas are more likely to present requests to government;[2] respondents' education and age; and their attendance of municipal meetings. Similarly, people with a negative perception of their family's economic situation are also more likely to seek assistance from the local government.

[2] The size of city/town is coded so that higher values are assigned to small cities and rural areas.

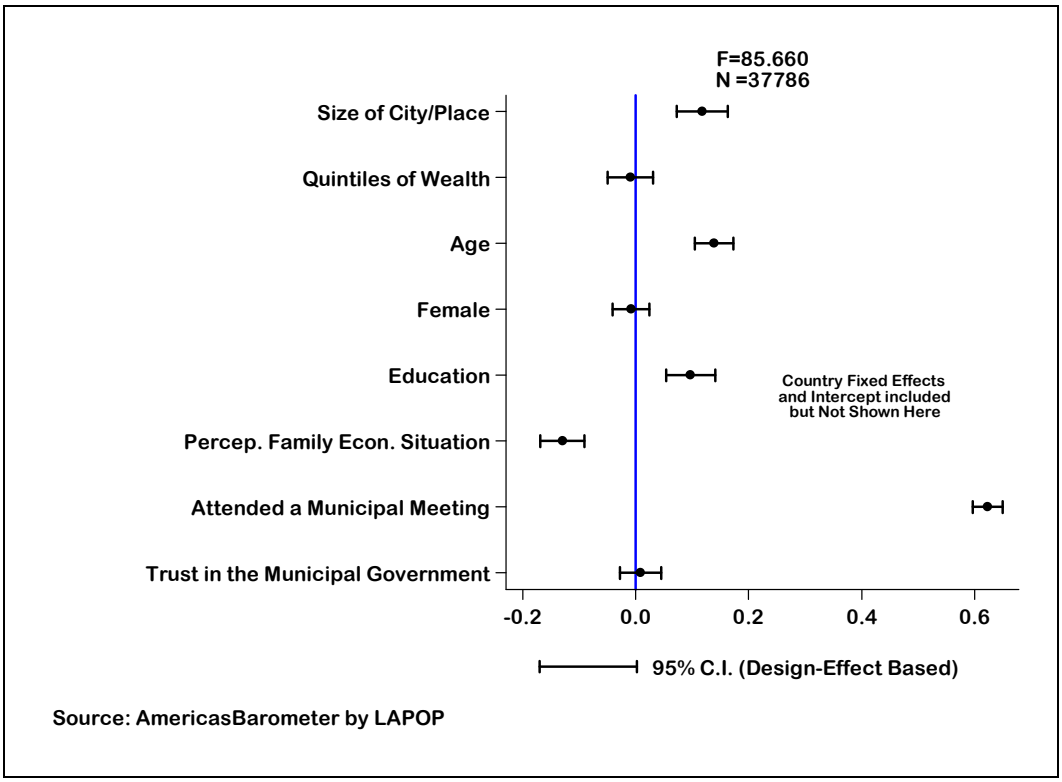

Figure VII.6. Who is Likely to Seek Assistance or Present a Request to the Local Government (2010)?

Figure VII.7 presents a series of graphs describing how each variable affects local demand-making. The upper left graph shows that the percentage of people who make demands at the local level is more than four times higher among those who also attend municipal meetings than among those who do not. The upper right section of the figure shows the percentage of people who presented a demand to local government at each level of education. Here we find no clear trend in demand-making across the range of education, though in the multivariate analysis education had a positive impact on the likelihood of seeking local government assistance.

The lower left graph shows the percentage of people who presented a demand to local government across three age cohorts. While 16% of citizens over the age of 50 in the Americas report having made a demand of local government in the past year, only 10% of citizens under the age of 34 do so. Finally, the bottom right graph presents the percentage of the citizens making demands in cities of different sizes. This figure shows that there are higher percentages of demand making in smaller towns.

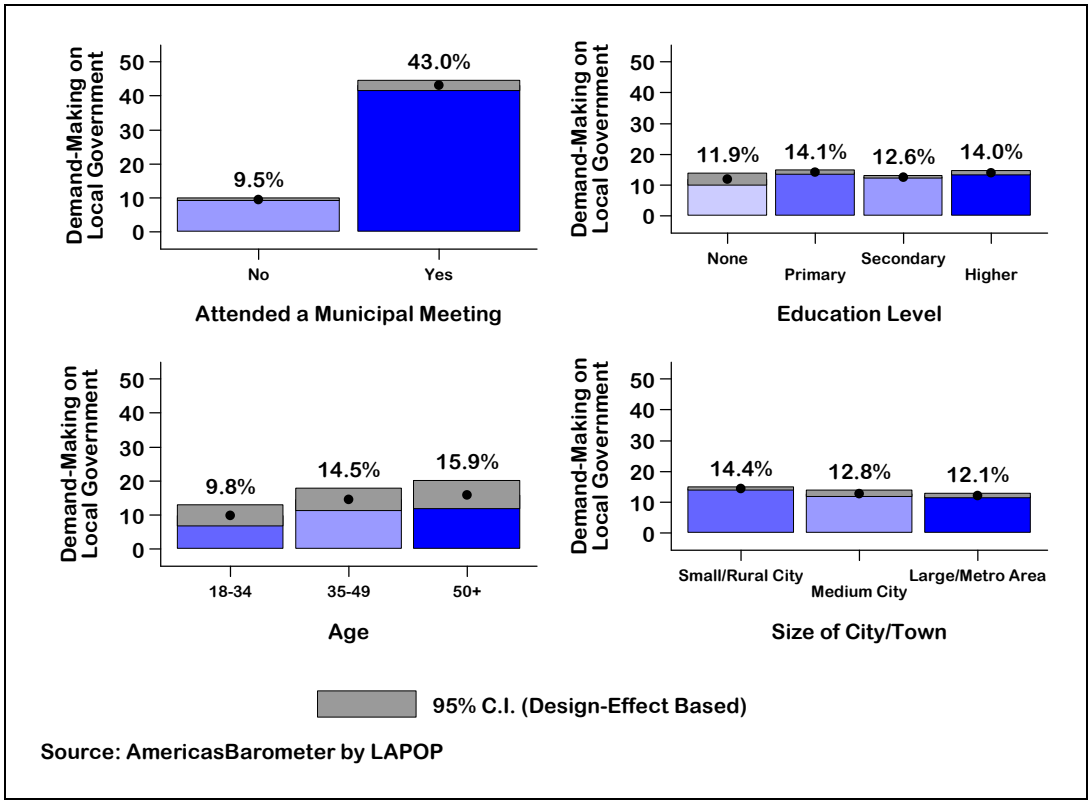

Figure VII.7. Demand-Making on Local Government by Municipal Meeting Attendance, Education, Age, and Size of City/Town in the Americas, 2010

Satisfaction with Local Government Services

To what extent are citizens satisfied with the services their local governments provide? In every country surveyed, we asked the following question:

SGL1. Would you say that the services the city/town/village is providing to the people are…? **[Read options]**
(1) Very good (2) Good (3) Neither good nor bad (fair) (4) Bad (5) Very bad (88) Doesn't know (98) Doesn't answer

Figure VII.8 shows levels of satisfaction with local government services in the Americas. We find that citizens across the Americas are, on balance, somewhere between neutral and positive towards their local governments. As can be seen, 43% of respondents think that services are neither good nor bad, while 27% give them positive ratings and 19% give them negative ones.

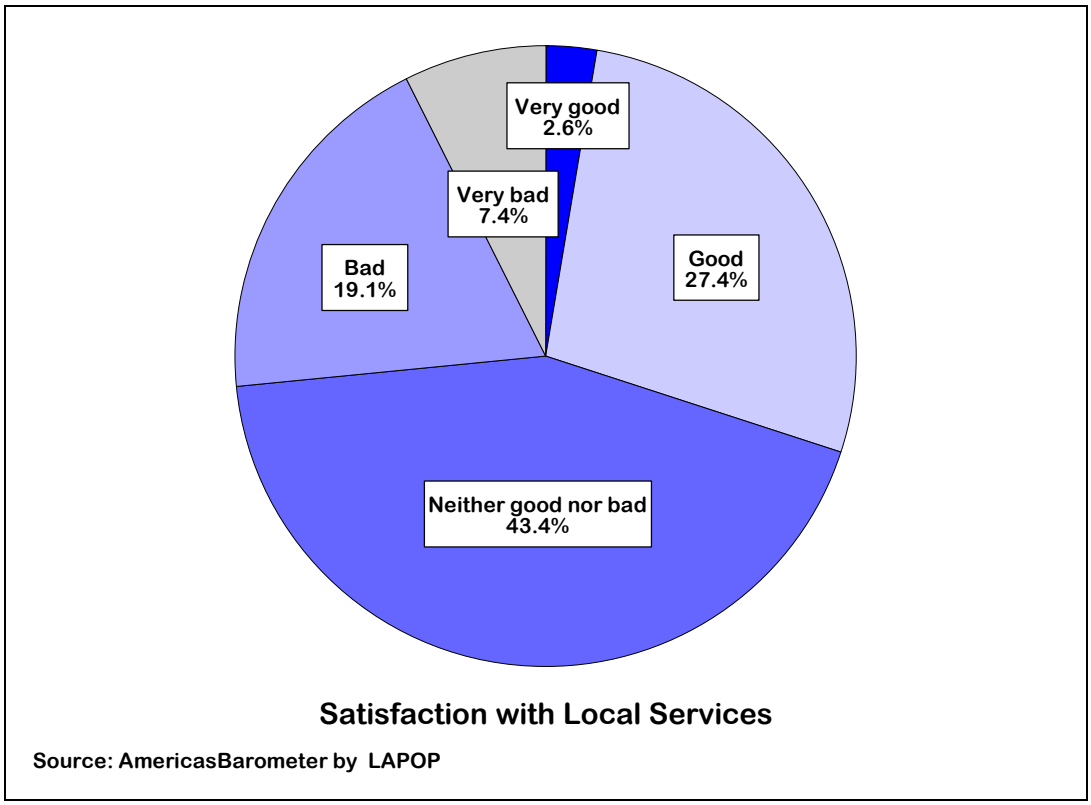

Figure VII.8. Satisfaction with Local Government Services in the Americas, 2010

Does satisfaction vary across countries? Given the great variation in local governments' fiscal and administrative capacity across the region, we suspect that the answer is yes. Figure VII.9 shows levels of satisfaction with local government services in each country of the Americas. Following the LAPOP standard, responses have been recoded on a 0-100 scale, where "0" represents perception that local government services are very bad, and "100" the perception that they are very good. The figure shows that citizens of Colombia, Canada, and Uruguay are most satisfied with their local governments. Meanwhile, there is a group of four Caribbean nations in which citizens are on balance quite dissatisfied with the performance of their local governments: Jamaica, Suriname, Haiti, and Belize.

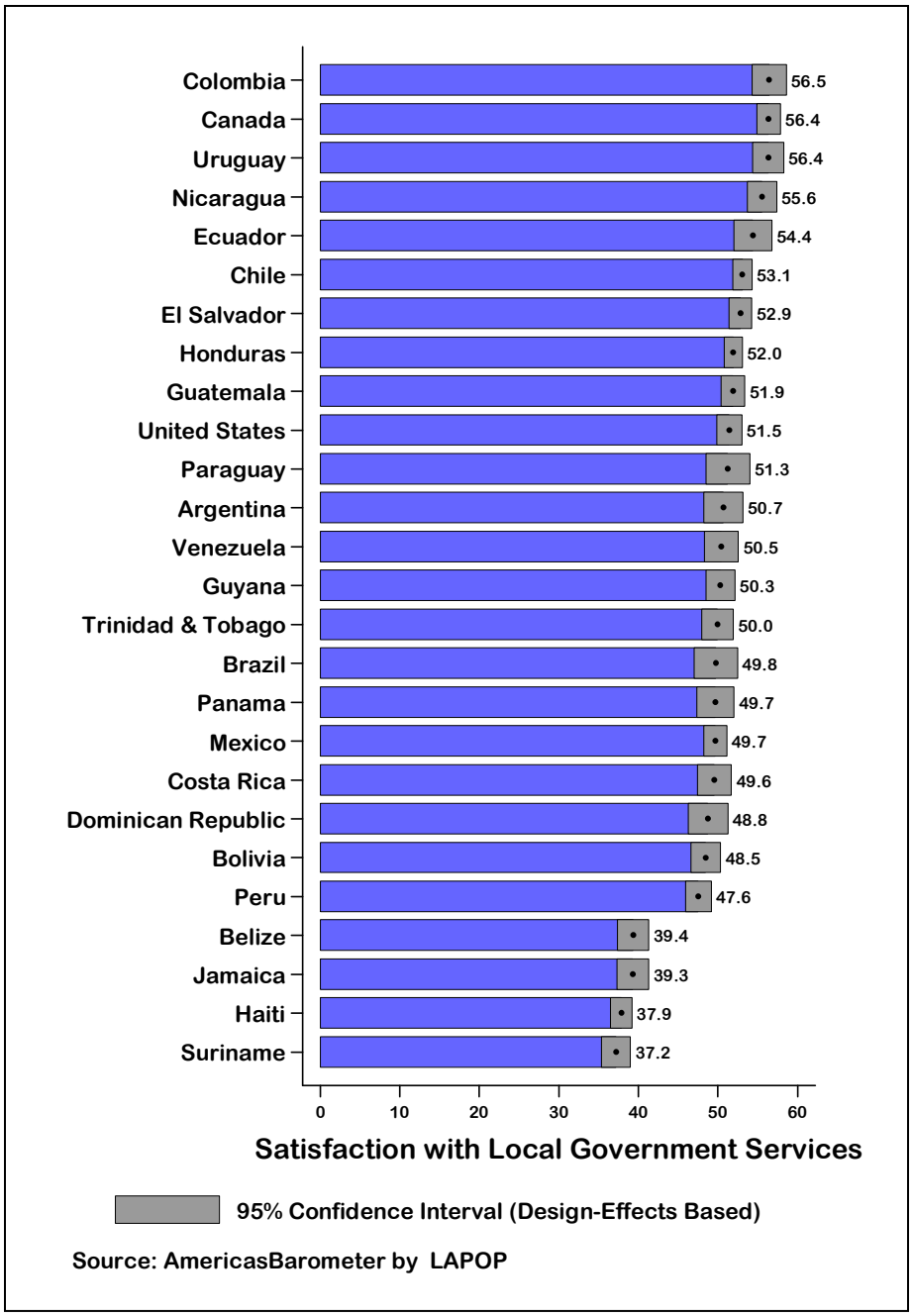

Figure VII.9. Satisfaction with Local Government Services in Comparative Perspective, 2010

How has satisfaction with local government services changed over time? Figure VII.10 shows trends in average levels of satisfaction with local government in the eleven countries surveyed in all four waves of the AmericasBarometer. The figure shows relatively stable levels of satisfaction with the local service in these countries, fluctuating around 51 points on the 0-100 scale across the four rounds.

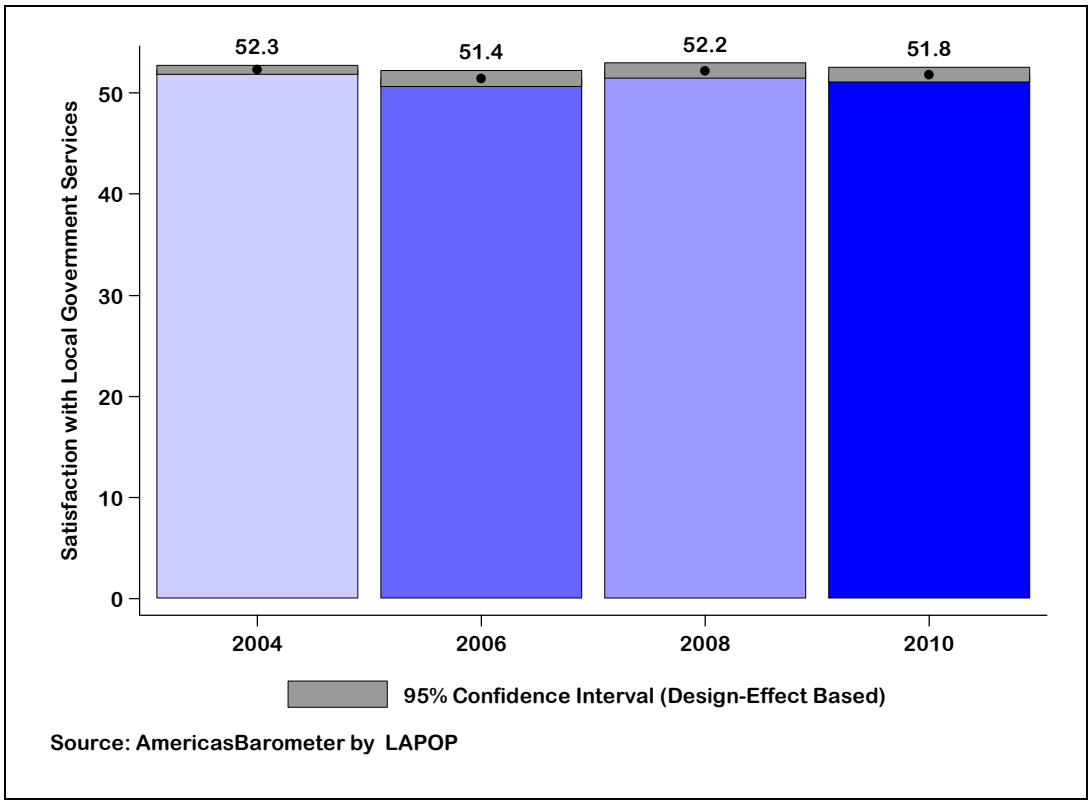

Figure VII.10. Satisfaction with Local Government Services in Eleven Countries, 2004-2010

Impact of Satisfaction with Local Government Services on System Support

As discussed above, most citizens in the Americas have much more contact with their local governments than with any other level of government. As a result, these experiences at the local level may affect citizens' attitudes towards their country's entire political system. We now assess how attitudes towards local government spill over, affecting support for the political system as a whole. In Figure VII.11 we present the results of a multiple regression analysis assessing the determinants of system support in the Americas. This model is estimated using country fixed effects (not shown in the graph) to take into account the great variation in satisfaction with local government across the hemisphere. As in the previous regression figure, the horizontal lines represent 95% confidence intervals constructed taking into account the effect of the sample design, while the dots represent estimated impacts.

As we found in previous chapters, residence in smaller cities, age, gender, perceptions of the economy, political interest, and satisfaction with the administration of the current president have a positive effect on system support, while education and wealth have negative effects.[3] Importantly, satisfaction with the services of the local government is a highly important determinant of system support. This confirms that experiences with local government do affect attitudes towards the broader political system.

[3] The size of city/town is coded so that higher values are assigned to small cities and rural areas.

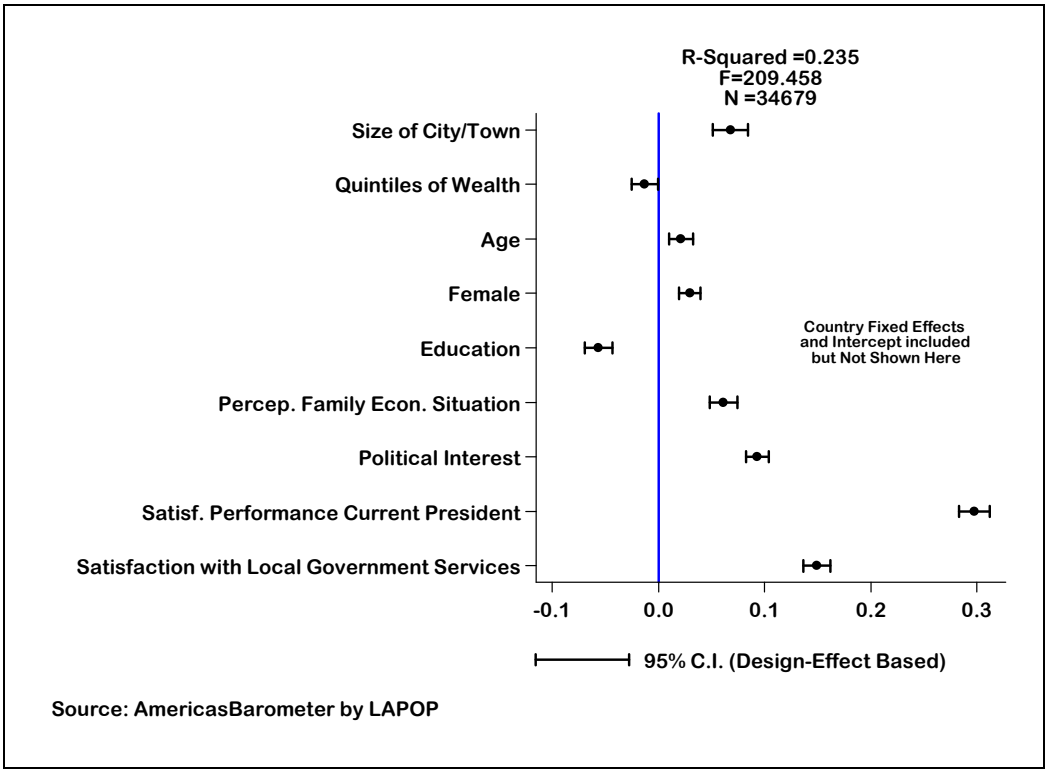

Figure VII.11. Impact of Satisfaction with Local Government Services on System Support in the Americas, 2010

Figure VII.12 illustrates how system support varies across the range of values of its most important determinants. The upper left graph shows that people who are most satisfied with the services provided by their local governments have levels of system support that are more than 20 points higher than those of the least satisfied citizens, using a 0-100 scale. The top right graph shows that system support varies by 30 points across the range of satisfaction with the current president. In the lower left panel, we see that people with greater interest in politics are also more supportive of the political system. Finally, the bottom right panel illustrates that it is the least educated who have highest levels of support for the political system.

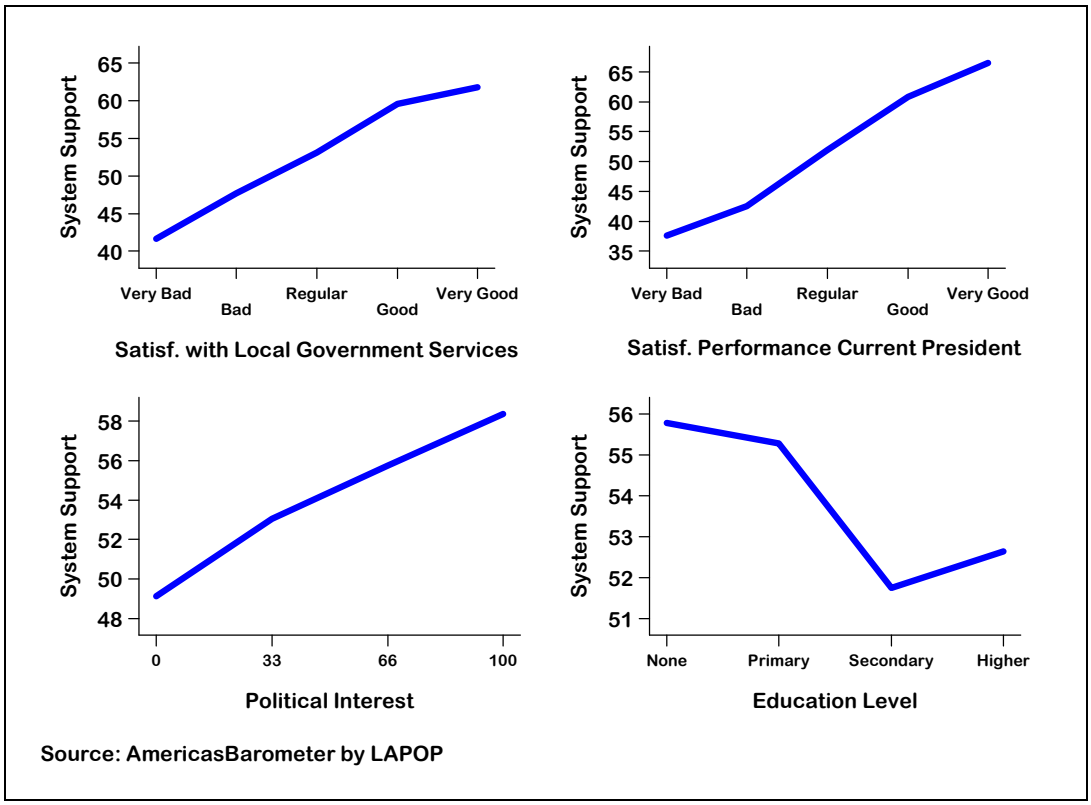

Figure VII.12. System Support by Satisfaction with Local Government Services and Satisfaction with the Performance of the Current President, Political Interest and Education Level in the Americas, 2010

Conclusion

This chapter has examined experiences with and perceptions of local government across the Americas. It has shown that the Dominican Republic is the country where attendance of municipal meetings is the highest, while Panama and Chile are the countries with the lowest attendance. The chapter also shows that there was a decrease in participation in local meetings after 2004 for the 11 countries being studied across time, with a gradual recovery in the following survey waves.

This chapter also shows that 13% of citizens have made demands on or requests of local government in the past year, and that the majority of them reported that their demand or request was not resolved. Further, there has been a significant and steady decrease in the percentage of people that made requests or demands to local offices. It is the people who attend municipal meetings and who perceive their family economic situations to be the worst who are most likely to make a demand or request of the local government.

On the subject of satisfaction with local government services, the chapter shows that many citizens are neutral, although on balance views toward these services are slightly positive. Colombia and Canada are the countries with highest mean levels of satisfaction with local level services, while citizens in Haiti and Suriname are the most dissatisfied. Mean levels of satisfaction have been relatively stable at around 52 on the 0-100 scale across the four rounds of the AmericasBarometer. Finally, satisfaction with the local government services turns out to be quite important for democracy across the Americas. We find that it is one of the most important determinants of support for the political system, following only satisfaction with the performance of the current president.

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Appendixes

Appendix I: Design Effects

Accuracy of the Findings

Two types of errors affect all surveys: non-sampling errors and sampling ones. Non-sampling errors are those that are committed during the data collection and processing. These can be controlled using a good measuring instrument, adequately training the surveyors, supervising the fieldwork, and with appropriate data collection programs. These errors can be controlled but not quantified. However, comparing the sample results with those of the population gives us an idea of whether these errors have generated biases that reduce the representativeness of the sample. The use of handheld computers (palm pilots) probably reduced these errors by carrying out consistency checks of the responses and flow of the interview at the same time and place that it was done. Additionally, by eliminating the process of data entry, we eliminated the errors that this activity generates. With the traditional procedures of paper-based questionnaires, processes of coding and critiquing the data must be carried out in the office (eliminated by using palm pilots), which can also generate errors. With paper questionnaires, computer-based consistency checks can only be run several weeks after the data was collected. Correcting errors detected in the office during the critique or by programs that detect inconsistencies is difficult or impossible given the separation in time and space between the moment of the interview on paper and the detection of these errors.

Sampling errors are a product of chance and from surveying a sample and not the entire population. When a sample is selected, this sample is one of many possible samples that could be selected from the population. The variability that exists between all these possible samples is the sampling error, which we could measure if all these samples were available, obviously an impossible situation. In practice, what is done is to estimate this over the variance obtained from the sample itself.

To estimate the sampling error of a statistic (average, percentage, or ratio), we calculate the standard error, which is the square root of the population variance of the statistic. This allows us to measure how close the statistic is to the result that would have been obtained if the entire population were interviewed under the same conditions. To calculate this error, it is very important to consider the design with which the sample was selected. The design effect (DEF – above is DEF) indicates the efficiency of the design used in relation to a unrestricted random sampling design (URS). A value of 1 indicates that the standard error (SE) obtained for both designs (the complex and the URS) is equal; that is, the complex sampling is as efficient as the URS with the same-sized sample. If the value is greater than 1, the complex sampling produces a SE greater than that obtained with a URS.

$$DEF = SE_{complex} / SE_{URS}$$

The tables show the 95% confidence intervals (1.96 times the SE) and the design effects (DEF). The tables also show the value of the statistic in question (average or percentage). The SE were estimated with the Stata 10 computational package. Extreme values come from a high degree of homogeneity within each cluster. In other words, in these cases there is an important spatial segregation of people according to their socioeconomic condition, which reduces the efficiency of cluster sampling to measure these characteristics.

It is worth stating that sampling error is usually 10% to 40% greater than that which would have been obtained with unrestricted random sampling. For example, in the case of Costa Rica, the important index of support for democracy (PSA5) has a sampling error of 0.84. This means that the 95% confidence interval (1.96 times the SE) for the average of this index (63.23) goes from 61.58 to 64.88. According to the DEF of the table, this interval is 56% greater than that which would have been obtained with a URS.

Country	Average	Std. Error	DEF	Average	Std. Error.	DEF	Average	Std. Error	DEF
	Ing4r			it1r			corvic		
Mexico	66.84	1.08	1.59	56.15	1.20	1.54	35.02	1.55	1.33
Guatemala	62.78	0.92	1.29	57.37	1.13	1.46	21.21	1.18	1.19
El Salvador	64.12	0.73	1.15	61.88	0.91	1.13	11.42	0.91	1.18
Honduras	62.58	1.17	1.79	63.81	1.03	1.39	16.23	2.15	2.40
Nicaragua	71.25	1.18	1.46	58.65	1.56	1.93	12.08	1.14	1.44
Costa Rica	80.39	1.24	1.61	70.22	1.45	1.85	10.07	0.97	1.33
Panama	75.48	1.30	1.93	59.83	1.23	1.81	9.44	2.41	3.39
Colombia	72.29	0.84	1.29	62.79	1.37	1.92	10.42	1.00	1.35
Ecuador	68.42	0.92	1.36	54.17	0.83	1.07	21.13	1.13	1.14
Bolivia	70.32	1.01	1.71	52.64	1.82	2.59	32.34	2.05	1.80
Peru	60.08	1.09	1.58	46.23	1.13	1.63	32.00	1.44	1.27
Paraguay	63.31	1.18	1.55	61.59	1.63	2.15	27.10	1.49	1.38
Chile	76.10	0.74	1.20	62.94	1.03	1.42	5.15	0.57	1.06
Uruguay	86.24	0.71	1.29	64.08	1.41	1.95	7.33	0.73	1.15
Brazil	73.69	1.90	2.66	55.13	1.53	2.07	23.60	2.72	2.64
Venezuela	74.01	1.50	1.91	56.69	1.84	2.41	18.47	1.23	1.30
Argentina	79.63	1.63	2.31	55.62	1.65	2.43	23.48	2.26	2.20
Dominican R.	68.55	0.83	1.09	57.72	1.11	1.37	17.53	1.28	1.39
Haiti	65.80	0.80	1.22	32.66	0.73	1.22	53.61	1.46	1.20
Jamaica	69.63	1.18	1.58	56.88	1.41	1.99	7.78	0.78	1.19
Guyana	72.89	1.38	1.72	63.73	1.15	1.69	17.08	1.44	1.57
Trinidad & Tobago	69.69	1.03	1.38	63.49	1.11	1.65	9.05	0.81	1.16
Belize	70.88	1.22	1.37	46.56	1.69	2.14	17.15	1.10	1.20
Suriname	78.88	0.71	1.27	57.94	1.29	1.97	11.78	0.80	1.02
United States	77.50	0.68	1.09	68.20	0.64	1.08	6.26	0.65	1.10
Canada	73.52	0.64	1.08	68.98	0.56	1.07	4.23	0.54	1.10

Country	Average	Std. Error	DEF	Average	Std. Error.	DEF	Average	Std. Error	DEF
	PSA5			tol			m1r		
Mexico	56.79	0.69	1.31	49.25	0.93	1.53	54.11	0.77	1.36
Guatemala	49.55	0.75	1.38	50.24	0.84	1.31	48.18	0.73	1.39
El Salvador	58.70	0.72	1.55	45.10	0.71	1.32	67.13	0.64	1.25
Honduras	60.42	0.46	1.11	47.52	0.79	1.64	66.18	0.58	1.13
Nicaragua	51.69	0.72	1.26	60.02	1.01	1.44	50.15	0.98	1.51
Costa Rica	63.23	0.84	1.56	66.67	1.10	1.40	58.47	0.90	1.64
Panama	60.17	0.97	2.16	50.93	2.08	3.53	61.59	0.62	1.39
Colombia	60.30	1.08	2.23	51.79	0.96	1.46	68.01	0.58	1.07
Ecuador	48.92	0.69	1.41	50.24	0.99	1.61	61.24	0.72	1.32
Bolivia	53.98	0.84	1.93	47.18	0.90	1.67	60.99	1.64	3.33
Peru	46.82	0.83	1.74	47.52	1.19	2.04	44.74	0.69	1.42
Paraguay	46.28	0.66	1.24	48.42	1.03	1.51	62.45	0.71	1.33
Chile	56.75	0.66	1.30	51.86	1.18	1.63	58.77	0.57	1.17
Uruguay	68.01	0.70	1.43	61.36	1.50	2.00	72.83	0.58	1.10
Brazil	49.96	0.94	1.62	59.03	2.45	3.34	70.26	1.40	2.58
Venezuela	49.03	1.00	1.52	63.44	1.92	2.79	48.85	1.15	1.70
Argentina	45.15	1.39	2.22	67.35	2.06	2.94	42.46	1.08	1.81
Dominican R.	53.91	0.67	1.19	49.36	0.93	1.38	57.96	0.78	1.29
Haiti	31.99	0.54	1.32	43.41	0.63	1.27	27.57	0.77	1.43
Jamaica	48.57	0.92	1.70	58.48	1.37	2.14	37.07	1.10	1.72
Guyana	54.87	1.34	2.44	64.53	1.67	2.48	54.88	1.41	2.21
Trinidad & Tobago	44.02	0.75	1.27	66.64	0.98	1.53	39.57	0.87	1.32
Belize	53.58	0.94	1.74	59.02	0.89	1.29	43.74	1.07	1.84
Suriname	57.14	0.80	1.64	60.39	1.08	1.85	45.61	1.14	1.94
United States	53.54	0.58	1.08	70.41	0.66	1.07	45.73	0.96	1.06
Canada	57.78	0.57	1.08	64.58	0.64	1.07	47.22	0.72	1.06

Appendix II: The IRB "informed consent" document

This is the standard informed consent letter, which was modified by research teams within each country.

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

January 2010

Dear Sir/Madam:

You are being asked to participate in a research study. This research involves a survey of public opinion on behalf of Vanderbilt University and funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development. The goal of the study is for us to learn of the opinions of people about different aspects of the local and national situation. The study is being conducted so that we can better understand what people think about their country, although we cannot offer you any specific benefit. We plan to conduct a series of lectures based on the results of what people say. We will never disclose your individual opinion, not even the opinion of the people of this neighborhood. Rather, we will talk about national trends and patterns.

You have been randomly selected to participate in this survey in a kind of lottery system. You will not be paid for your participation, but your participation will not cause you to incur any expenses.

This survey is completely voluntary and it will take 30 to 40 minutes to complete.

Your answers will be kept confidential. Your address will not be recorded. We will not ask for your name and nobody will ever be able to learn how you responded. You can leave any questions unanswered, and you may stop the interviews at any time.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact XXX whose phone number is XXX-XXXX.

We are leaving this sheet with you in case you want to refer to it.

Do you wish to participate?

Appendix III: The Core Questionnaire

NOTE: Additional, country-specific questions were included in each country. Text in [brackets] denotes text which was tailored for each country.

LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2010 Master Core Version # 10.2 IRB ***Approval:*** **# 090103**

USAID FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE	***[LOGO OF LOCAL PARTNER INSTITUTION TO BE INSERTED HERE]***

Latin American Public Opinion Project LAPOP Proyecto de Opinión Pública de América Latina	AmericasBarometer by LAPOP Barómetro de las Américas www.AmericasBarometer.org	VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

AmericasBarometer: [Country], 2010

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PAIS. Country:

01. Mexico	02. Guatemala	03. El Salvador	04. Honduras	05. Nicaragua
06. Costa Rica	07. Panama	08. Colombia	09. Ecuador	10. Bolivia
11. Peru	12. Paraguay	13. Chile	14. Uruguay	15. Brazil
16. Venezuela	17. Argentina	21. Dom. Rep.	22. Haiti	23. Jamaica
24.Guyana	25. Trinidad & Tobago	26. Belize	40. United States	41. Canada
27. Suriname				

|__|__|

IDNUM. Questionnaire number [**assigned at the office**] |__|__|__|__|

ESTRATOPRI: [Insert the names of the strata here] |__|__|

UPM (Primary Sampling Unit)_____ |__|__|__|

PROV. Province [or department] :_____ |__|__|

MUNICIPIO. County [or municipality]: _____ |__|__|

XXXDISTRITO. District [or parish, etc.]: _____ |__|__|

XXXSEGMENTO. **Census Segment** _____ |__|__|__|

XXXSEC. Sector_____ |__|__|__|

CLUSTER. [CLUSTER, Final sampling unit, or sampling point]:

_____

[A cluster cannot be larger than 8 interviews in urban towns, and 12 in rural areas]

UR (1) Urban (2) Rural (Use country's definition)

TAMANO. Size of place: (1) National Capital (Metropolitan area) (2) Large City (3) Medium City (4) Small City (5) Rural Area

IDIOMAQ. Questionnaire language: (11) English [INSERT OTHER LANGUAGES]

Start time: _____:_____ |__|__|__|__|

FECHA. Date Day: ____ **Month:**_____ Year: 2010 |__|__|__|__|

NOTE: IT IS COMPULSORY TO READ THE STATEMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT BEFORE STARTING THE INTERVIEW.

Q1. **[Note down; do not ask]** Sex: (1) Male (2) Female	

LS3. To begin, in general how satisfied are you with your life? Would you say that you are... **[Read options]**? (1) Very satisfied (2) Somewhat satisfied (3) Somewhat dissatisfied (4) Very dissatisfied (88) Doesn't know (98) Doesn't Answer	

A4. In your opinion, what is **the most serious** problem faced by the country? **[DO NOT READ THE RESPONSE OPTIONS; ONLY A SINGLE OPTION]**	**|___|___|**

Water, lack of	19	Impunity	61
Roads in poor condition	18	Inflation, high prices	02
Armed conflict	30	Politicians	59
Corruption	13	Bad government	15
Credit, lack of	09	Environment	10
Delinquency, crime	05	Migration	16
Human rights, violations of	56	Drug trafficking	12
Unemployment	03	Gangs	14
Inequality	58	Poverty	04
Malnutrition	23	Popular protests (strikes, road blockages, work stoppages, etc.)	06
Forced displacement of persons	32	Health services, lack of	22
External debt	26	Kidnappings	31
Discrimination	25	Security (lack of)	27
Drug addiction	11	Terrorism	33
Economy, problems with, crisis of	01	Land to farm, lack of	07
Education, lack of, poor quality	21	Transportation, problems of	60
Electricity, lack of	24	Violence	57
Population explosion	20	Housing	55
War against terrorism	17	Other	70
Doesn't know	88	Doesn't answer	98

SOCT1. How would you describe **the country's** economic situation? Would you say that it is very good, good, neither good nor bad, bad or very bad? (1) Very good (2) Good (3) Neither good nor bad (fair) (4) Bad (5) Very bad (88) Doesn't know (98)Doesn't Answer	
SOCT2. Do you think that **the country's** current economic situation is better than, the same as or worse than it was 12 months ago? (1) Better (2) Same (3) Worse (88) Doesn't know (98)Doesn't Answer	
SOCT3. Do you think that in 12 months the economic situation of **the country** will be better, the same or worse than it is now? (1) Better (2) Same (3) Worse (88) Doesn't know (98)Doesn't answer	
[Question to be included only in the 4 federal countries: Venezuela, Argentina, Mexico y Brazil] **RESP6**. Speaking of the current economic situation of your **[province/state],** do you consider it to be better, the same, or worse than the economic situation of the country? (1) Better (2) Same (3) Worse (88) DK (98) DA	
IDIO1. How would you describe **your** overall economic situation? Would you say that it is very good, good, neither good nor bad, bad or very bad? (1) Very good (2) Good (3) Neither good nor bad (fair) (4) Bad (5) Very bad (88) Don't know (98) Doesn't answer	

IDIO2. Do you think that **your** economic situation is better than, the same as, or worse than it was 12 months ago? (1) Better (2) Same (3) Worse (88) Doesn't know (98)Doesn't Answer	
IDIO3. Do you think that in 12 months **your** economic situation will be better than, the same as, or worse than it is now? (1) Better (2) Same (3) Worse (88) Doesn't know (98) Doesn't Answer	

Now, moving on to a different subject, sometimes people and communities have problems that they cannot solve by themselves, and so in order to solve them they request help from a government official or agency.

In order to solve your problems have you ever requested help or cooperation from...? **[Read the options and mark the response]**	**Yes**	**No**	**Doesn't Know**	**Doesn't Answer**	
CP2. A member of [Congress/Parliament]	1	2	88	98	
CP4A. A local public official or local government for example, [a mayor, municipal council, councilman, provincial official, civil governor or governor]	1	2	88	98	
CP4. Any ministry or minister (federal), state agency or public agency or institution	1	2	88	98	

Now let's talk about your local [municipality]...	
NP1. Have you attended a town meeting, city [council meeting] or other meeting in the past 12 months? (1) Yes (2) No (88) Doesn't know (98) Doesn't answer	
NP2. Have you sought assistance from or presented a request to any office, official or [councilperson] of the [municipality] within the past 12 months? (1) Yes **[Continue]** (2) No **[Go to SGL1]** (88) Doesn't know **[Go to SGL1]** (98) Doesn't answer **[Go to SGL1]**	
MUNI10. Did they resolve your issue or request? (1) Yes (0) No (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) N/A	
SGL1. Would you say that the services the [municipality] is providing to the people are…? **[Read options]**(1) Very good (2) Good (3) Neither good nor bad (fair) (4) Bad (5) Very bad (88) Doesn't know (98) Doesn't answer	

	Once a week	**Once or twice a month**	**Once or twice a year**	**Never**	**Doesn't Know**	**Doesn't Answer**	
CP5. Now, changing the subject. In the last 12 months have you tried to help to solve a problem in your community or in your neighborhood? Please, tell me if you did it at least once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year or never in last 12 months.	1	2	3	4	88	98	

I am going to read a list of groups and organizations. Please tell me if you attend their meetings at least once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year, or never. **[Repeat for each question "once a week," "once or twice a month," "once or twice a year" or "never" to help the respondent]**

	Once a week	**Once or twice a month**	**Once or twice a year**	**Never**	**Doesn't Know**	**Doesn't Answer**	
CP6. Meetings of any religious organization? Do you attend them…	1	2	3	4	88	98	
CP7. Meetings of a parents' association at school? Do you attend them…	1	2	3	4	88	98	

CP8. Meetings of a community improvement committee or association? Do you attend them…	1	2	3	4	88	98		
CP9. Meetings of an association of professionals, merchants, manufacturers or farmers? Do you attend them…	1	2	3	4	88	98		
CP13. Meetings of a political party or political organization? Do you attend them…	1	2	3	4	88	98		
CP20. [Women only] Meetings of associations or groups of women or home makers. Do you attend them…	1	2	3	4	88	DA 98	N/A 99	

[GIVE CARD "A"]
LS6. On this card there is a ladder with steps numbered 0 to 10. 0 is the lowest step and represents the worst life possible for you. 10 is the highest step and represents the best life possible for you.
On what step of the ladder do you feel **at this moment**? **Please choose the ladder that represents best your opinion.**
[Point out the number on the card that represents "the worst life possible" and the number that represents "the best life possible". Indicate to the interviewee that he/she can choose an intermediate score].

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	88	98
Worst life possible										**Best life possible**	**Doesn't Know**	**Doesn't Answer**

LS6A. On which step would you say you stood two years ago, that is to say in 2008?	

[TAKE BACK CARD "A"]

IT1. Now, speaking of the people from around here, would you say that people in this community are very trustworthy, somewhat trustworthy, not very trustworthy or untrustworthy...? **[Read options]** (1) Very trustworthy (2) Somewhat trustworthy (3) Not very trustworthy (4) Untrustworthy (88) Doesn't Know (98)Doesn't Answer	

[GIVE CARD "B"]

L1. [Use L1B in United States, Canada, Guyana, Jamaica and Haiti] Now, to change the subject.... On this card there is a 1-10 scale that goes from left to right. One means left and 10 means right. Nowadays, when we speak of political leanings, we talk of those on the left and those on the right. In other words, some people sympathize more with the left and others with the right. According to the meaning that the terms "left" and "right" have for you, and thinking of your own political leanings, where would you place yourself on this scale?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	**Doesn't Know 88**	**Doesn't Answer 98**	
Left									**Right**			

[TAKE BACK CARD "B"]

[Give Card "B"]

L1B. [For the United States, Canada, Guyana, Jamaica, and Haiti] (Liberal-Conservative Scale) Now, to change the subject.... On this card there is a 1-10 scale that goes from liberal to conservative. One means liberal and 10 means conservative. Nowadays, when we speak of political leanings, we talk of liberals and conservatives. In other words, some people sympathize more with the liberals and others with the conservatives. According to the meaning that the terms "liberals" and "conservatives" have for you, and thinking of your own political leanings, where would you place yourself on this scale?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	**Doesn't Know 88**	**Doesn't Answer 98**
Liberal									**Conservative**		

[Take back Card "B"]

PROT3. In the last 12 months, have you participated in a demonstration or protest march? (1) Yes **[Continue]** (2) No **[Go to JC1]** (88) Doesn't Know**[Go to JC1]** (98)Doesn't Answer **[Go to JC1]**	
PROT4. ¿How many times have you participated in a demonstration or protest march in **the last 12 months**? _____ (88) Doesn't Know (98)Doesn't Answer (99) N/A	
Y4. What was the purpose of the demonstration or protest? **[Don't read options. ONLY MARK ONE ANSWER. If the respondent participated in more than one, ask about the most recent protest. If the protest had more than one purpose, ask for the most important.]** (1) Economic factors (work, prices, inflation, lack of opportunities) (2) Education (lack of opportunities, high tuition, poor quality, education policy) (3) Political topics (protest against laws, parties or political candidates, exclusion, corruption) (4) Security problems (crime, militias, gangs) (5) Human rights (6) Environmental themes (7) Lack of public services (8) Other (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) N/A	

Now, changing the subject. Some people say that under some circumstances it would be justified for the [military] of this country to take power by a coup d'état (military coup). In your opinion would a [military] coup be justified under the following circumstances? **[Read the options after each question]**: **[Customize** for Costa Rica (Fuerza Pública) and Panama (Fuerza Pública de Panamá)]

JC1. When there is high unemployment.	(1) A [military] take-over of the state would be justified	(2) A [military] take-over of the state would not be justified	(88) Doesn't Know	(98) Doesn't Answer	
JC10. When there is a lot of crime.	(1) A [military] take-over of the state would be justified	(2) A [military] take-over of the state would not be justified	(88) Doesn't Know	(98) Doesn't Answer	

JC13. When there is a lot of corruption.	(1) A [military] take-over of the state would be justified	(2) A [military] take-over of the state would not be justified	(88) Doesn't Know	(98) Doesn't Answer	

JC15A. Do you believe that when the country is facing very difficult times it is justifiable for the president of the country to close the [Congress/Parliament] and govern without [Congress/Parliament]?	(1) Yes, it is justified	(2) No, it is not justified	(88) Doesn't Know	(98) Doesn't Answer	
JC16A. Do you believe that when the country is facing very difficult times it is justifiable for the president of the country to dissolve the [Supreme Court/Constitutional Tribunal] and govern without the [Supreme Court/Constitutional Tribunal]?	(1) Yes, it is justified	(2) No, it is not justified	(88) Doesn't Know	(98) Doesn't Answer	

VIC1EXT. Now, changing the subject, have you been a victim of any type of crime in the past 12 months? That is, have you been a victim of robbery, burglary, assault, fraud, blackmail, extortion, violent threats or **any other type** of crime in the past 12 months? (1) Yes **[Continue]** (2) No **[Skip to VIC1HOGAR]** (88) Doesn't Know **[Skip to VIC1HOGAR]** (98) Doesn't Answer **[Skip to VIC1HOGAR]**	
VIC1EXTA. How many times have you been a crime victim during the last 12 months? ____ [fill in number] (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) N/A	
VIC2. Thinking of that the last crime of which you were a victim, from the list I am going to read to you, what kind of crime was it? **[Read the options]** (01) Unarmed robbery, **no** assault or physical threats (02) Unarmed robbery **with** assault or physical threats (03) Armed robbery (04) Assault but not robbery (05) Rape or sexual assault (06) Kidnapping (07) Vandalism (08) Burglary of your home (10) Extortion (11) Other (88) Doesn't Know (98)Doesn't Answer (99) N/A (was not a victim)	
VIC2AA. ¿Could you tell me, in what place that last crime occurred? **[Read options]** (1) In your home (2) In this [neighborhood] (3) In this [municipality/canton] (4) In another [municipality/canton[(5) In another country (88) Doesn't Know (98)Doesn't Answer (99) N/A	
VIC1HOGAR. Has any other person living in your household been a victim of any type of crime in the past 12 months? That is, has any other person living in your household been a victim of robbery, burglary, assault, fraud, blackmail, extortion, violent threats or **any other type** of crime in the past 12 months? (1) Yes (2) No (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	

AOJ8. In order to catch criminals, do you believe that the authorities should always abide by the law or that occasionally they can cross the line? (1) Should always abide by the law (2) Occasionally can cross the line (88)Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	
AOJ11. Speaking of the neighborhood where you live and thinking of the possibility of being assaulted or robbed, do you feel very safe, somewhat safe, somewhat unsafe or very **un**safe? (1) Very safe (2) Somewhat safe (3) Somewhat unsafe (4) Very unsafe (88) Doesn't Know (98)DR	

AOJ11A. And speaking of the country in general, how much do you think that the level of crime that we have now represents a threat to our future well-being? **[Read the options]** (1) Very much (2) Somewhat (3) Little (4) None (88) Doesn't Know (98)Doesn't Answer	
AOJ12. If you were a victim of a robbery or assault how much faith do you have that the judicial system would punish the guilty? **[Read the options]** (1) A lot (2) Some (3) Little (4) None (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	
AOJ17. To what extent do you think your neighborhood is affected by gangs? Would you say a lot, somewhat, a little or none? (1) A lot (2) Somewhat (3) Little (4) None (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	

[GIVE CARD "C" TO THE RESPONDENT]

On this card there is a ladder with steps numbered 1 to 7, where 1 is the lowest step and means NOT AT ALL and 7 the highest and means A LOT. For example, if I asked you to what extent do you like watching television, if you don't like watching it at all, you would choose a score of 1, and if, in contrast, you like watching television a lot, you would indicate the number 7 to me. If your opinion is between not at all and a lot, you would choose an intermediate score. So, to what extent do you like watching television? Read me the number. **[Make sure that the respondent understands correctly]**.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	88	98
Not at all						**A lot**	**Doesn't know**	**Doesn't Answer**

	Note down a number 1-7, or 88 Doesn't Know and 98 Doesn't Answer
I am going to ask you a series of questions. I am going to ask you that you use the numbers provided in the ladder to answer. Remember, you can use any number. **B1**. To what extent do you think the courts in (country) guarantee a fair trial? (**Read*:*** If you think the courts do not ensure justice at all, choose number 1; if you think the courts ensure justice a lot, choose number 7 or choose a point in between the two.)	
B2. To what extent do you respect the political institutions of (country)?	
B3. To what extent do you think that citizens' basic rights are well protected by the political system of (country)?	
B4. To what extent do you feel proud of living under the political system of (country)?	
B6. To what extent do you think that one should support the political system of (country)?	
B10A. To what extent do you trust the justice system?	
B11. To what extent do you trust the [Supreme Electoral Tribunal]?	
B12. To what extent do you trust the Armed Forces? [Not in Costa Rica, Panama or Haiti]	
B13. To what extent do you trust [the National Congress]?	
B14. To what extent do you trust the national government?	
B18. To what extent do you trust the [National Police]?	
B20. To what extent do you trust the Catholic Church?	

	Note down a number 1-7, or 88 Doesn't Know and 98 Doesn't Answer
B20A. To what extent do you trust the [Evangelical/Protestant Church] [use the most common name in your country]?	
B21. To what extent do you trust the political parties?	
B21A. To what extent do you trust the [President/Prime Minister]?	
B31. To what extent do you trust the [Supreme Court]?	
B32. To what extent do you trust the [local or municipal government]?	
B43. To what extent are you proud of being (nationality corresponding to country)?	
B16. To what extent do you trust the State Attorney General?	
B17. To what extent do you trust the [Public] Defender's Office?	
B37. To what extent do you trust the mass media?	
B46 [b45]. To what extent do you trust the [anti-corruption commission]?	
B47. To what extent do you trust elections?	
B48. To what extent do you believe that free trade agreements help to improve the economy?	

[Battery of questions (RESP*) to be included only in the 4 federal countries: Venezuela, Argentina, Mexico, and Brazil] Now, using the same scale ***[continue with card C: scale 1-7]*** **NOT AT ALL 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A LOT**	**Note down 1-7, 88 = Doesn't Know; 98 = Doesn't Answer**
RESP0. To what extent is the **president** responsible for the country's economy?	
RESP1. To what extent are the **representatives** of the [National Assembly] responsible for the country's economy?	
RESP2. To what extent is the **governor** of your [province/state] responsible for the country's economy? **[Only for the District Capital, substitute "governor of your state" with "mayor of the District Capital"]**	
RESP3. To what extent are **private companies** responsible for the country's economy?	
RESP4. To what extent do the changes in the **international economy** influence the country's economy?	
RESP5. To what extent are the **citizens** responsible for the country's economy?	

Now, using the same ladder, ***[continue with card C: 1-7 point scale]*** **NOT ALL 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A LOT**	
N1. To what extent would you say the current administration fights poverty?	
N3. To what extent would you say the current administration promotes and protects democratic principles?	
N9. To what extent would you say the current administration combats government corruption?	
N11. To what extent would you say the current administration improves citizen safety?	
N12. To what extent would you say the current administration combats unemployment?	
N15. To what extent would you say that the current administration is managing the economy well?	

[Take Back Card C]

WT1. How worried are you that there will be a violent attack by terrorists in (country) in the next 12 months? Are you very, somewhat, a little, or not at all worried, or would you say that you have not thought much about this? (1) Very worried (2) Somewhat worried (3) A little worried (4) Not at all worried (5) Haven't thought much about this (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	

WT2. How worried are you that you or someone in your family will become a victim of a violent attack by terrorists? Are you very, somewhat, a little, or not at all worried, or would you say that you have not thought much about this? (1) Very worried (2) Somewhat worried (3) A little worried (4) Not at all worried (5) Haven't thought much about this (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	

M1. Speaking in general of the current administration, how would you rate the job performance of President [NAME CURRENT PRESIDENT]? **[Read the options]** (1) Very good (2) Good (3) Neither good nor bad (fair) (4) Bad (5) Very bad (88) Doesn't Know (98)Doesn't Answer	
M2. Now speaking of [Congress/Parliament], and thinking of [members/senators and representatives] as a whole, without considering the political parties to which they belong, do you believe that the [members/senators and representatives] of [Congress/Parliament] are performing their jobs: very well, well, neither well nor poorly, poorly, or very poorly? (1) Very well (2) Well (3) Neither well nor poorly (fair) (4) Poorly (5) Very poorly (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	

[Questions M10 and M11 to be included only in the 4 federal countries: Argentina, Venezuela, México, and Brazil]

M10. Speaking in general of the current GOVERNOR of your **[province/state]**, would you rate his/her job performance? **[Read alternatives]** (1) Very good (2) Good (3) Neither good nor bad (fair) (4) Bad (5) Very bad (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	
M11. Speaking of the REPRESENTATIVES **[of the legislature/the congress]** of your **[province/state]**, without thinking about what parties they belong to, how would you rate their job performance? **[Read alternatives]** (1) Very good (2) Good (3) Neither good nor bad (fair) (4) Bad (5) Very bad (88) Doesn't Know (98)Doesn't Answer	

[GIVE CARD "D"]: Now we will use a similar ladder, but this time 1 means "strongly disagree" and 7 means "strongly agree." A number in between 1 and 7 represents an intermediate score.

Write a number 1-7, or 88 = Doesn't Know, 98 = Doesn't Answer

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	88	98
Strongly disagree					**Strongly agree**		**Doesn't know**	**Doesn't answer**

Note down 1-7, 88 = Doesn't Know 98=Doesn't Answer

Taking into account the current situation of this country, and using that card, I would like you to tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statements **POP101.** It is necessary for the progress of this country that our [presidents/prime ministers] limit the voice and vote of opposition parties, how much do you agree or disagree with that view? (88) Doesn't Know (98)Doesn't Answer	
POP102. When the [Congress] hinders the work of our government, our [presidents/prime ministers] should govern without the [Congress]. How much do you agree or dis[agree with that view? (88) Doesn't Know (98)Doesn't Answer	
POP103. When the [Supreme Court] blocks the work of our government, the Court should be disregarded by our [presidents/prime ministers]. How much do you agree or disagree with that view? (88) Doesn't Know (98)Doesn't Answer	
POP107. The people should govern directly **rather than** through elected representatives. How much do you agree or disagree? (88) Doesn't Know (98)Doesn't Answer	
POP113. Those who disagree with the majority represent a threat to the country. How much do you agree or disagree with that view? (88) Doesn't Know (98)Doesn't Answer	

We continue using the same ladder. Please, could you tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statements?

EFF1. Those who govern this country are interested in what people like you think. How much do you agree or disagree with this statement?	
EFF2. You feel that you understand the most important political issues of this country. How much do you agree or disagree with this statement?	

Write a number 1-7, or 88=Doesn't Know and 98=Doesn't Answer	
ING4. Democracy may have problems, but it is better than any other form of government. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?	
DEM23. Democracy can exist without political parties. How much do you agree or disagree with this statement?	

Now I am going to read some items about the role of the national government. Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements. We will continue using the same ladder from 1 to 7. **(88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer**	
ROS1. The (Country) government, instead of the private sector, should own the most important enterprises and industries of the country. How much do you agree or disagree with this statement?	
ROS2. The (Country) government, more than individuals, should be primarily responsible for ensuring the well-being of the people. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?	
ROS3. The (Country) government, more than the private sector, should be primarily responsible for creating jobs. To what extent to do you agree or disagree with this statement?	
ROS4. The (Country) government should implement strong policies to reduce income inequality between the rich and the poor. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?	
ROS5. The (Country) government, more than the private sector, should be primarily responsible for providing retirement pensions. How much do you agree or disagree with this statement?	
ROS6. The (Country) government, more than the private sector should be primarily responsible for providing health care services. How much do you agree or disagree with this statement?	

[Questions RAC3A, RAC3B y RAC3C to be included in: Bolivia, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Colombia, Brazil, Ecuador, and Dominican Republic]

Now I'm going to read some statements and I would like for you to answer to what extent you agree or disagree with them, using this 7-point scale, where 1 means *strongly disagree* and 7 means *strongly agree*	**Mark 1-7 88=Doesn't Know, 98=Doesn't Answer**	
RAC3A. The mixture of races is good for the (country). To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?		
[In RAC3B, use "Indigenous" in: Bolivia, Guatemala, Mexico, and Peru, "Black" in Colombia, Brazil, and Ecuador y "darker colored" in the Dominican Republic] **RAC3B.** You would agree to one of your daughters or sons marrying a(n) [indigenous/black/darker colored] person. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?		
RAC3C. You would like your skin to be of lighter color. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?		

[TAKE BACK CARD "D"]

PN4. In general, would you say that you are very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the way democracy works in [country]? (1) Very satisfied (2) Satisfied (3) Dissatisfied (4) Very dissatisfied (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	

PN5. In your opinion, is [country] very democratic, somewhat democratic, not very democratic or not at all democratic? (1) Very democratic (2) Somewhat democratic (3) Not very democratic (4) Not at all democratic (88) Doesn't Know (98)Doesn't Answer	

[Give the respondent card "E"]
Now we are going to use another card. The new card has a 10-point ladder, which goes from 1 to 10, where 1 means that you strongly disapprove and 10 means that you strongly approve. I am going to read you a list of some actions that people can take to achieve their political goals and objectives. Please tell me how strongly you would approve or disapprove of people taking the following actions.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	88 **Doesn't know**	98 **Doesn't Answer**
Strongly disapprove								**Strongly approve**			

	1-10, 88=Doesn't Know, 98=Doesn't Answer
E5. Of people participating in legal demonstrations. How much do you approve or disapprove?	
E8. Of people participating in an organization or group to try to solve community problems. How much do you approve or disapprove?	
E11. Of people working for campaigns for a political party or candidate. How much do you approve or disapprove?	
E15. Of people participating in the blocking of roads to protest. Using the same scale, how much do you approve or disapprove?	
E14. Of people seizing private property or land in order to protest. How much do you approve or disapprove?	
E3. Of people participating in a group working to violently overthrow an elected government. How much do you approve or disapprove?	
E16. Of people taking the law into their own hands when the government does not punish criminals. How much do you approve or disapprove?	

[Don't take back card "E"]

The following questions are to find out about the different ideas of the people who live in [country]. Please continue using the 10 point ladder.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	88 **Doesn't know**	98 **Doesn't answer**
Strongly disapprove								**Strongly approve**			

	1-10, 88=Doesn't

	Know, 98=Doesn't Answer
D1. There are people who only say bad things about the (country) form of government, not just the incumbent government but the system of government. How strongly do you approve or disapprove of such people's **right to vote**? Please read me the number from the scale: ***[Probe: To what degree?]***	
D2. How strongly do you approve or disapprove that such people be allowed **to conduct peaceful demonstrations** in order to express their views? Please read me the number.	
D3. Still thinking of those who only say bad things about the (country) form of government, how strongly do you approve or disapprove of such people being permitted **to run for public office**?	
D4. How strongly do you approve or disapprove of such people appearing on television **to make speeches**?	
D5. And now, changing the topic and thinking of homosexuals, how strongly do you approve or disapprove of such people being permitted to **run for public office**?	
D6. How strongly do you approve or disapprove of same-sex couples having the right to marry?	

[Take back card "E"]

Now changing the subject**…**

DEM2. Which of the following statements do you agree with the most: (1) For people like me it doesn't matter whether a government is democratic or non-democratic, **OR** (2) Democracy is preferable to any other form of government, **OR** (3) Under some circumstances an authoritarian government may be preferable to a democratic one. (88) Doesn't Know (98)Doesn't Answer	
DEM11. Do you think that our country needs a government with an iron fist, or that problems can be resolved with everyone's participation? (1) Iron fist (2) Everyone's participation (88) Doesn't Know (98)Doesn't Answer	

AUT1. There are people who say that we need a strong leader who does not have to be elected by the vote of the people. Others say that although things may not work, electoral democracy, or the popular vote, is always best. What do you think? **[Read the options]** (1) We need a strong leader who does not have to be elected (2) Electoral democracy is the best (88) Doesn't Know (98)Doesn't Answer	
PP1. During election times, some people try to convince others to vote for a party or candidate. How often have you tried to persuade others to vote for a party or candidate? **[Read the options]** (1) Frequently (2) Occasionally (3) Rarely (4) Never (88) Doesn't Know (98)Doesn't Answer	
PP2. There are people who work for parties or candidates during electoral campaigns. Did you work for any candidate or party in the last presidential [prime minister] elections of [2002]? (1) Yes, worked (2) Did not work (88) Doesn't Know (98)Doesn't Answer	

	N/A Did not try or did not have contact	No	Yes	Doesn't Know	Doesn't Answer	
Now we want to talk about your personal experience with things that happen in everyday life...						
EXC2. Has a police officer asked you for a bribe in the last twelve months?		0	1	88	98	
EXC6. In the last twelve months, did any government employee ask you for a bribe?		0	1	88	98	
EXC11. In the last twelve months, did you have any official dealings in the [municipality/local government]? **If the answer is No → mark 99** **If it is Yes→ ask the following:** In the last twelve months, to process any kind of document in your municipal government, like a permit for example, did you have to pay any money above that required by law?	99	0	1	88	98	

EXC13. Do you work? **If the answer is No → mark 99** **If it is Yes→ ask the following:** In your work, have you been asked to pay a bribe in the last twelve months?	99	0	1	88	98	
EXC14. In the last twelve months, have you had any dealings with the courts? **If the answer is No → mark 99** **If it is Yes→ ask the following:** Did you have to pay a bribe to the courts in the last twelve months?	99	0	1	88	98	
EXC15. Have you used any public health services in the last twelve months? **If the answer is No → mark 99** **If it is Yes→ ask the following:** In order to be seen in a hospital or a clinic in the last twelve months, did you have to pay a bribe?	99	0	1	88	98	
EXC16. Have you had a child in school in the last twelve months? **If the answer is No → mark 99** **If it is Yes→ ask the following:** Have you had to pay a bribe at school in the last twelve months?	99	0	1	88	98	
EXC18. Do you think given the way things are, sometimes paying a bribe is justified?		0	1	88	98	

EXC7. Taking into account your own experience or what you have heard, corruption among public officials is **[Read]** (1) Very common (2) Common (3) Uncommon or (4) Very uncommon? (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	

[Give card "D" again]: Here are a series of personality traits that may or may not apply to you. Using the 1-7 ladder, where 1 means "strongly disagree" and 7 means "strongly agree," please tell me the number that indicates the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement. You should rate the extent to which the pair of traits applies to you, even if one characteristic applies more strongly than the other**.**

Write a number 1-7, or 88=Doesn't Know AND 98=Doesn't Answer

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	88	98
Strongly disagree					**Strongly agree**		**Doesn't know**	**Doesn't answer**

You see yourself as a:

PER1. Sociable and active person.	
PER2. Critical and quarrelsome person.	
PER3. Dependable and self-disciplined person.	
PER4. Anxious and easily upset person.	
PER5. Open to new experiences and intellectual person.	
PER6. Quiet and shy person.	
PER7. Generous and warm person.	
PER8. Disorganized and careless person.	
PER9. Calm and emotionally stable person.	
PER10. Uncreative and unimaginative person.	

[Take back Card "D"]

CRISIS1. Some say that our country is suffering a very serious economic crisis; others say that we are suffering a crisis but it is not very serious, while others say that there isn't any economic crisis. What do you think? **[Read options]**
(1) We are suffering a very serious economic crisis
(2) We are suffering a crisis but it is not very serious, or
(3) No economic crisis **[Go to VB1]**
(88) Doesn't Know **[Go to VB1]** (98) Doesn't Answer **[Go to VB1]**

CRISIS2. Who is the most to blame for the current economic crisis in our country from among the following: **[READ LIST, MARK ONLY ONE RESPONSE]**
(01) The previous administration
(02) The current administration
(03) Ourselves, the [Mexicans, etc.]
(04) The rich people of our country
(05) The problems of democracy
(06) The rich countries **[Accept also Unites States, England, France, Germany, and Japan]**
(07) The economic system of the country, or
(08) Never have thought about it
(77) **[Don't read]** Other
(88) **[Don't read]** Doesn't Know (98) **[Don't read]** DR (99) N/A

VB1. Are you registered to vote? [El Salvador, Costa Rica, Panama, Peru: Do you have an Identity Card?]
(1) Yes (2) No (3) Being processed (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer

VB2. Did you vote in the last [**presidential elections]** of [(year of last presidential elections)]?
(1) Voted **[Continue]**
(2) Did not vote **[Go to VB10]**
(88) Doesn't Know**[Go to VB10]** (98) Doesn't Answer**[Go to VB10]**

VB3. Who did you vote for in the last presidential elections of [2008]? **[DON'T READ THE LIST]** (00) none (Blank ballot or spoiled or null ballot) [(X01) INSERT NAMES AND PARTIES (X02) (X03) **Replace X with Country Code]** (77) Other (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) N/A (Did not vote)	
[Question to be included only in the 4 federal countries: Venezuela, Argentina, Mexico, and Brazil] **VB60.** And in the last gubernatorial elections of [your state]…Which candidate did you vote for? **[Read alternatives]** (1) For the current [Governor/head of government] (2) For another candidate (3) Did not vote (4) Blank ballot or null ballot (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	

VB10. Do you currently identify with a political party? (1) Yes **[Continue]** (2) No **[Go to POL1]** (88) Doesn't Know **[Skip to POL1]** (98) Doesn't Answer **[Skip to POL1]**	
VB11. Which political party do you identify with? **[DON'T READ THE LIST]** **[(X01) WRITE DOWN THE NAMES OF CURRENT POLITICAL PARTIES** **(X02)** **(X03) Replace X with Country Code]** (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) NA	

POL1. How much interest do you have in politics: a lot, some, little or none? (1) A lot (2) Some (3) Little (4) None (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	

VB20. If the next presidential elections were being held this week, what would you do? **[Read options]** (1) Wouldn't vote (2) Would vote for the incumbent candidate or party (3) Would vote for a candidate or party different from the current administration (4) Would go to vote but would leave the ballot blank or would purposely cancel my vote (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	
[Question to be included only in the 4 federal countries: Venezuela, Argentina, Mexico, and Brazil] **VB61.** If the next elections for GOVERNER of your state were this Sunday, who would you vote for? **[Read alternatives]** (1) I would vote for the candidate of the current governor (2) I would vote for an opposition candidate to the current governor (3) I would not vote (4) I would go vote but would leave the ballot blank or null (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	

CLIEN1. In recent years and thinking about election campaigns, has a candidate or someone from a political party offered you something, like a favor, food, or any other benefit or object in return for your vote or support? Has this happened often, sometimes or never? (1) Often **[Continue with CLIEN2]** (2) Sometimes **[Continue with CLIEN2]** (3) Never **[Skip to ED]** (88) Doesn't Know **[Skip to ED]** (98) Doesn't Answer **[Skip to ED]**	

CLIEN2. And thinking of the last time this happened; did what they offer make you more likely or less likely to vote for the candidate or party that offered you those goods? (1) More likely (2) Less likely (3) Equally likely (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) N/A	

RAC1C. [Question to be included in: Bolivia, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Colombia, Brazil, Ecuador, and the Dominican Republic] **[Use "Indigenous" en: Bolivia, Guatemala, Mexico, and Peru; "Black" in Colombia, Brazil, and Ecuador y "darker color" in the Dominican Republic]** According to the data from the Population Census, [indigenous/black/darker colored] people are poorer, in general, than the rest of the population. What do you think is the principal reason for this? **[Read options] [Allow only one answer]** (1) Because [indigenous/black/darker colored] people do not work enough (2) Because [indigenous/black/darker colored] people are less intelligent (3) Because [indigenous/black/darker colored] people are treated in an unjust manner (4) Because [indigenous/black/darker colored] people have a lower education level (5) Because [indigenous/black/darker colored] people do not want to change their culture (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	

[ECON* questions should only be included in the 4 federal countries: Venezuela, Argentina, México, and Brazil]

Continuing with the economic them:

Could you order the following economic issues according to their degree of importance to the country: unemployment, decline of international trade, inflation, and economic recession? **[Read alternatives, do not mention in ECON1B, ECON1C, and ECON1D the alternatives that have been previously selected by the respondents]**

	Unemployment	Decline of international trade	Inflation	Economic recession	Doesn't Know	Doesn't Answer	N/A	
ECON1A Which is the most important?	1	2	3	4	88 **[Go to ECON2]**	98 **[Go to ECON2]**		
ECON1B And the second most important?	1	2	3	4	88 **[Go to ECON2]**	98 **[Go to ECON2]**	99	
ECON1C And the third?	1	2	3	4	88 **[Go to ECON2]**	98 **[Go to ECON2]**	99	
ECON1D And the least?	1	2	3	4	88 **[Go to ECON2]**	98 **[Go to ECON2]**	99	

ECON2. Suppose that a rich person has 1 [unit of the national currency] and a poor person has 1 [unit of the national currency] In your opinion, how much tax should each person pay? **[Read Alternatives]** (1) the rich person 60 cents; the poor person 10 cents (2) the rich person 50 cents; the poor person 20 cents (3) the rich person 40 cents; the poor person 30 cents (4) the rich person 30 cents; the poor person 30 cents (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	

RAC4. [Question to be included in: Bolivia, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Colombia, Brazil, Ecuador, and the Dominican Republic] **[[Use "Indigenous" en: Bolivia, Guatemala, Mexico, and Peru; "Black" in Colombia, Brazil, and Ecuador y "darker color" in the Dominican Republic]** Do you believe that [indigenous/black/darker colored] persons are treated much better, better, the same, worse, or much worse than white people? (1) Much better (2) Better (3) Same (4) Worse (5) Much worse (88) Doesn't Know (98)Doesn't Answer	

[DIS* questions to be included in: Bolivia, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Colombia, Brazil, Ecuador, and the Dominican Republic]
And now, changing the subject…

And thinking about the last **five** years, have you felt discriminated against or have you been badly or unjustly treated: **[Repeat after each question: many times, sometimes, a few times, or never]**

	Many times	Sometimes	A Few times	Never	Doesn't Know	Doesn't Answer	
DIS11. Because of your skin color? Would you say this has happened many times, sometimes, a few times, or never?	1	2	3	4	88	98	
DIS17. [Ask only in Bolivia, Guatemala, Mexico . and Peru] Have you felt discriminated against because of the way you speak or because of your accent?	1	2	3	4	88	98	
DIS13. Because of your economic situation?	1	2	3	4	88	98	
DIS12. Because of your gender or sex?	1	2	3	4	88	98	

[RAC* questions to be included in: Bolivia, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Colombia, Brazil, Ecuador, and the Dominican Republic]

Now thinking about what could have happened to another person, have you experienced or witnessed situations in which another person has been discriminated against, badly or unjustly treated?: **[Repeat after each question: many times, sometimes, a few times, or never]**

	Many times	Sometimes	A few times	Never	Doesn't Know	Doesn't Answer	
RAC1A. Because of his/her skin color? Would you say this has happened many times, sometimes, a few times, or never?	1	2	3	4	88	98	
RAC1B. Ask only in Bolivia, Guatemala, Mexico. and Peru] Have you seen another person being discriminated against because of the way he/she speaks or for his/her accent?	1	2	3	4	88	98	
RAC1D. Because of his/her economic situation?	1	2	3	4	88	98	
RAC1E. Because of his/her gender or sex?	1	2	3	4	88	98	

[Question CCT1 to be included in: Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, Mexico, Peru, Venezuela, Chile, Argentina and Uruguay]
On a different subject…

CCT1. Do you or someone in your household receive monthly assistance in the form of money or products from the government, like for example: **[List the largest or most well-known (up to three) programs of your country's government]**? (1) Yes (2) No (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	

ED. How many years of schooling have you completed?
_____ Year _____ (primary, secondary, university, post-secondary not university) = _____ total number of years **[Use the table below for the code]**

[	**1⁰**	**2⁰**	**3⁰**	**4⁰**	**5⁰**	**6⁰**	
None	0						
Primary	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Secondary	7	8	9	10	11	12	
University	13	14	15	16	17	18+	
Post-secondary, not university	13	14	15				
Doesn't know	88						
Doesn't respond	98					]	

Q2. How old are you? _____ years (888=Doesn't Know) (988=DR)	|_|_|

Y1. [Ask all respondents 25 years of age or younger] [If the interviewee is older than 25 years old, go to Q3C] Within five years, do you see yourself playing some role in the country's politics, for example…[**Read options, only mark one answer]** (1) Participating in a non-governmental organization (NGO), community association or political party (2) Running for some public office in elections (3) Participating in a revolutionary movement (4) None of the above (5) **[Do not Read]** Other (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) N/A	

Y2. [Ask all respondents 25 years of age or younger] What issues or problems frequently worry you? **[Don't read options, only mark one answer] [If the respondent answers "the future" ask: "What things about the future worry you?]** (1) Work, employment, salary, income, economic or workforce stability (2) Having a good time, parties, sports, clubs, dates, girlfriend/boyfriend, starting a family, girls or boys (3) Material possessions (clothes and shoes, cell phones, ipods, computers) (4) Getting or finishing education, paying for education (5) Security, crime, gangs (6) Interpersonal relationships (relationships with parents, family, friends, and others) (7) Health (8) Environment (9) Situation of the country (10) Nothing, not worried about anything (11) Other response (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) N/A	
Y3. [Ask all respondents 25 years of age or younger] In your opinion, generally speaking, is the country moving in the right direction or in the wrong direction? (1) Correct (2) Wrong (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) N/A	
[Ask all respondents 25 years of age or younger] **HAICR1.** Could you tell me, what is your main source of information about the country's situation? **[Don't read options, only mark one answer]** (01) TV (02) Newspaper (03) Radio (04) Church (05) Community center (06) School (07) Family members (08) Coworkers or school colleagues (09) Friends (10) Neighbors (11) Internet outlets (excluding newspapers) (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) N/A	

Q3C. What is your religion, if any? **[Do not read options]** **[If the respondent says that he/she has no religion, probe to see if he/she should be located in option 4 or 11]**(1) Catholic (2) Protestant, Mainline Protestant or Protestant non-Evangelical (Christian; Calvinist; Lutheran; Methodist; Presbyterian; Disciple of Christ; Anglican; Episcopalian; Moravian). (3) Non-Christian Eastern Religions (Islam; Buddhist; Hinduism; Taoist; Confucianism; Baha'i). (4) None (Believes in a Supreme Entity but does not belong to any religion) (5) Evangelical and Pentecostal (Evangelical; Pentecostals; Church of God; Assemblies of God; Universal Church of the Kingdom of God; International Church of the Foursquare Gospel; Christ Pentecostal Church; Christian Congregation; Mennonite; Brethren; Christian Reformed Church; Charismatic non-Catholic; Light of World; Baptist; Nazarene; Salvation Army; Adventist; Seventh-Day Adventist; Sara Nossa Terra). (6) LDS (Mormon). (7) Traditional Religions or Native Religions (Candomblé, Voodoo, Rastafarian, Mayan Traditional Religion; Umbanda; Maria Lonza; Inti; Kardecista, Santo Daime, Esoterica). (10) Jewish (Orthodox; Conservative; Reform). (11) Agnostic, atheist (Does not believe in God). (12) Jehovah's Witness. (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	
Q5A. How often do you attend religious services? **[Read options]** (1) More than once per week (2) Once per week (3) Once a month (4) Once or twice a year (5) Never or almost never (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	
Q5B. Please, could you tell me how important is religion in your life? **[Read options]** (1) Very important (2) Rather important (3) Not very important (4) Not at all important (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	
[GIVE CARD "F"] **Q10**. Into which of the following income ranges does the total monthly income of this household fit, including remittances from abroad and the income of all the working adults and children? **[If the interviewee does not get it, ask: "Which is the total monthly income in your household?]** [10 deciles based on the currency and distribution of the country] [(00) No income (01) Less than $25 (02) $26- $50 (03) $51-$100 (04) $101-$150 (05) $151-$200 (06) $201-$300 (07) $301-$400 (08) $401-500 (09) $501-$750 (10) More than $751 (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer **]** **[TAKE BACK CARD "F"]**	
Q10A. Do you or someone else living in your household receive remittances, that is, economic assistance from abroad? (1) Yes **[Continue]** (2) No **[Go to Q10C]** (88) Doesn't Know**[Go to Q10C]** (98) Doesn't Answer **[Go to Q10C]**	
Q10B. [Only if respondent receives remittances] To what extent does the income of this household depend on remittances from abroad? **[Read Options]** (1) A lot (2) Some (3) Little (4) Nothing (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) N/A	

Q10A3. [Only if respondent receives remittances] In the last twelve months, has the amount of money that you receive from abroad decreased, increased, stayed the same, or you did not receive remittances from abroad in the last twelve months? (1) Increased (2) Stayed the same (3) Decreased (4) did not receive remittances from abroad in the last twelve months (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) Inap	
Q10C. [Ask to everybody] Do you have close relatives who used to live in this household and are now living abroad? **[If answer "Yes", Ask where]** **[Don't Read]** (1) Yes, in the United States only (2) Yes, in the United States and in other countries (3) Yes, in other countries (not in the United States) (4) No **[Skip to Q14]** (88) Doesn't Know **[Skip to Q14]** (98) Doesn't Answer **[Skip to Q14]**	
Q16. [Only for those who answered Yes to Q10C] How often do you communicate with them? (1) Everyday (2) Once or twice a week (3) Once or twice a month (4) Rarely (5) Never (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) N/A	
Q14. [Ask to everyone] Do you have any intention of going to live or work in another country in the next three years? (1) Yes (2) No (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	
Q10D. The salary that you receive and total household income: **[Read the options]** (1) Is good enough for you and you can save from it (2) Is just enough for you, so that you do not have major problems (3) Is not enough for you and you are stretched (4) Is not enough for you and you are having a hard time (88) **[Don't read]** Doesn't Know (98) **[Don't read]** Doesn't Answer	
Q10E. Over the past two years, has the income of your household: **[Read options]** (1) Increased? **[Go to Q11]** (2) Remained the same? **[Go to Q11]** (3) Decreased? **[Go to Q10F]** (88) Doesn't Know**[Go to Q11]** (98) Doesn't Answer **[Go to Q11]**	
Q10F. What was the main reason why the income of your household decreased in the past two years? **[Do not read options]** (1) Reduction in hours of work or salary (2) A member of the household lost his or her job (3) Reduction in sales/Business not good (4) A family business went into bankruptcy (5) Remittances from abroad decreased or stopped (6) A member of the household who received income was sick, died, or left the household (7) Natural disaster /lost of crops (9) Everything is more expensive/income is not enough (8) Other (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) N/A ("increased", "remained the same" or Doesn't Know/DR in Q10E)	
Q11. What is your marital status? **[Don't read options]** (1) Single (2) Married (3) Common law marriage (4) Divorced (5) Separated (6) Widowed (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	
Q12. Do you have children? How many children do you have? _____ **(00 = none → Skip to ETID)** (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	

Q12A. [If has children] How many children live with you at the present time? **_____ (00) = none** (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer **(99) N/A (doesn't have children)**.	
ETID. Do you consider yourself white, mestizo, indigenous, black, mulatto, or of another race? **[If respondent says Afro-[country], mark (4) Black]** (1) White (2) Mestizo (3) Indigenous (4) Black (5) Mulatto (7) Other (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	
[NB; WRITE THE FIRST THREE LETTERS OF THE COUNTRY IN THE CODE OF THIS QUESTION. For example, for Costa Rica, it should be COSETIDA] **ETIDA.** Do you think your mother is or was white, mestizo, indigenous, black or mulatto? (1) White (2) Mestizo (3) Indigenous (4) Black (5) Mulatto (7) Other (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	
LENG1. What is your mother tongue, that is the language you spoke first at home when you were a child? **[Mark only one answer] [Do not read the options]** [Coding: the 'X' is replaced by the country code as found in variable "PAIS"] [(X01) Spanish (X02) Indigenous language [NB; list the name of the most common indigenous languages] (X04) Other (indigenous) (X05) Other foreign] (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	
[Use only in Mexico, Guatemala, Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru] **LENG4.** Speaking about the language that your parents knew, your parents speak or spoke: *[Interviewer: if one of the parents spoke only one language and the other two, mark 2.]* **[Read the options]** (1) Spanish only (2) Spanish and indigenous language (3) Indigenous language only (4) Spanish and foreign language (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	

[The following battery of questions (IND*) should only be included in the following countries: Mexico, Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia, Peru, and Guatemala]

IND1. Do you believe that indigenous groups are helping our country become more democratic, less democratic, or they are having no impact on our democracy? (1) More democratic (2) Less democratic (3) They do not have an impact (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	
IND2. How much influence do you believe indigenous groups have had on the passage or approval of new laws in this country? **[Read Alternatives]** (1) A lot (2) some (3) Little **[Go to IND4]** (4) None **[Go to IND4]** (88) Doesn't Know **[Go to IND4]** (98) Doesn't Answer **[Go to IND4]**	
[Only ask this question to those who answered "A lot" or "Some" in a IND2] **IND3.** In your opinion, why have some indigenous groups been effective in influencing the political debates of this country? **[Read alternatives]** (1) Because they have more money/resources (2) Because they can work well with non-indigenous groups (3) Because they represent the indigenous population (4) Because they have good ideas (5) Because they have good leaders (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) N/A	
[Ask everyone in Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia, Peru, Guatemala, and Mexico] **IND4.** How effective are indigenous groups in persuading people that indigenous issues are important? **[Read alternatives]** (1) Very effective (2) Somewhat effective (3) Slightly effective (4) Not effective (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	

WWW1. Talking about other things, how often do you use the internet? **[Read options]** (1) Daily (2) A few times a week (3) A few times a month (4) Rarely (5) Never (88) **[Don't read]**Doesn't Know (98) **[Don't read]** Doesn't Answer	

For statistical purposes, we would like to know how much information about politics and the country is known by the people… **GI0.** About how often do you pay attention to the news, whether on TV, the radio, newspapers or the internet? **[Read alternatives]:** (1) Daily (2) A few times a week (3) A few times a month (4) Rarely (5) Never (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	
GI1. What is the name of the current president of the United States? **[Don't read:** Barack Obama, accept "Obama"**]** (1) Correct (2) Incorrect (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	
GI3. How many [provinces/departments/states] does [the country] have? **[Don't read:** insert number of provinces**]** (1) Correct (2) Incorrect (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer **[NICARAGUA AND PANAMA ACCEPT WITH OR WITHOUT COMARCAS]**	
GI4. How long is the [presidential/prime ministerial] term of office in [country]? **[Don't read:** insert number of years] (1) Correct (2) Incorrect (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	
[Question to be included only in the 4 federal countries: Venezuela, Argentina, Mexico, and Brazil] **GI6.** What is the current unemployment rate in the country? [Rates change according to country] **[Read alternatives]** (1) 4% (2) 8% (3) 12% (4) 16% (8) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	

To conclude, could you tell me if you have the following in your house: ***[read out all items]***

R1. Television	(0) No			(1) Yes	
R3. Refrigerator	(0) No			(1) Yes	
R4. Landline telephone (not cellular)	(0) No			(1) Yes	
R4A. Cellular telephone	(0) No			(1) Yes	
R5. Vehicle/car How many?	(0) No	(1) One	(2) Two	(3) Three or more	
R6. Washing machine	(0) No			(1) Yes	
R7. Microwave oven	(0) No			(1) Yes	
R8. Motorcycle	(0) No			(1) Yes	
R12. Indoor plumbing	(0) No			(1) Yes	
R14. Indoor bathroom	(0) No			(1) Yes	
R15. Computer	(0) No			(1) Yes	
R16. Flat panel TV	(0) No			(1) Yes	
R18. Internet	(0) No			(1) Yes	

[(R*) questions to be included only in the 4 federal countries: Venezuela, Argentina, Mexico, and Brazil]

Certain people have properties and investments. Could you tell me if you have (a):			
R20. House or apartment	(0) No	(1) Yes	
R21. Vacation home	(0) No	(1) Yes	
R22 A company, a piece of land or farm	(0) No	(1) Yes	
R23. Shares of stocks	(0) No	(1) Yes	

R24. Savings in the bank	(0) No	(1) Yes	
R25. Apartment or house for rent	(0) No	(1) Yes	

OCUP4A. How do you mainly spend your time? Are you currently…**[Read the options]** (1) Working? **[Continue]** (2) Not working, but have a job? **[Continue]** (3) Actively looking for a job? **[Go to OCUP1B1]** (4) A student? **[Go to OCUP1B1]** (5) Taking care of the home? **[Go to OCUP1B1]** (6) Retired, a pensioner or permanently disabled to work **[Go to OCUP1B1]** (7) Not working and not looking for a job? **[Go to OCUP1B1]** (88) Doesn't Know **[Go to OCUP1B1]** (98) Doesn't Answer**[Go to OCUP1B1]**	
OCUP1A. In this job are you: **[Read the options]** (1) A salaried employee of the government or an independent state-owned enterprise? (2) A salaried employee in the private sector? (3) Owner or partner in a business (4) Self-employed (5) Unpaid worker (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) N/A	

[Question to be included in: Bolivia, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Colombia, Brazil, Ecuador, and the Dominican Republic]

OCUP1. What is your occupation or type of work you do? **[Try: What does your job consist of doing?] [Do not read alternatives]** (1) Professional, intellectual, and scientist (lawyer, university professor, doctor, accountant, arquitect, engineer, etc.) (2) Director (manager, head of the department, supervisor) (3) Technician or mid-level professional (computer technician, elementary or secondary school teacher, artist, athlete, etc.) (4) Specialized worker (machinery operator, mason, mechanic, carpenter, electricist, etc.) (5) Public official (member of the legislature, executive, judge, and managerial public administration staff) (6) Office worker (secretary, office equipment operator, cashier, receptionist, customer service, etc.) (7) Merchant (street vendor, owner of commercial establishment or market stand, etc.) (8) Warehouse or market salesperson (9) Employed, outside an office, in the service sector (hotel or restaurant worker, taxi driver, etc.) (10) Farm laborer, farmer, o agriculture and livestock producer, and fisherman (owner of land) (11) Agricultural worker (works on land for others) (12) Artisan, craftsperson (13) Domestic service (14) Laborer (15) Member of the armed forces or protection and security services (the police, fireman, watchman, etc.) (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) N/A	

OCUP1B1. Have you lost your job in the past two years? **[Read options]** (2) Yes, you lost your job but found a new one. (3) Yes, you lost your job and have not found a new one (3) No, did not lose your job (4) Did not work because you decided not to work or disabilities (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	

OCUP1B2. Besides you, has anyone in your household lost his or her job in the past two years? **[Read options**] (1) Yes (2) No (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer	

[Question to be included in: Bolivia, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Colombia, Brazil, Ecuador, and the Dominican Republic]

OCUP1ANC. What was the occupation or the type of work that the head of household did when you were 15 years old? **[Do not read alternatives]** (1) Professional, intellectual and scientist (lawyer, university professor, doctor, accountant, arquitect, engineer, etc.) (2) Director (manager, head of the department, supervisor) (3) Technician or mid-level professional (computer technician, elementary or secondary school teacher, artist, athlete, etc.) (4) Specialized worker (machinery operator, mason, mechanic, carpenter, electricist, etc.) (5) Public official (member of the legislature, executive, judge and managerial, public administration staff) (6) Office worker (secretary, office equipment operator, cashier, receptionist, customer service, etc.) (7) Merchant (street vendor, owner of commercial establishment or market stand, etc.) (8) Warehouse or market salesperson (9) Employed, outside an office, in the service sector (hotel or restaurant worker, taxi driver, etc.) (10) Farm laborer, farmer, o agriculture and livestock producer, and fisherman (owner of land) (11) Agricultural worker (works on land for others) (12) Artisan, craftsperson (13) Domestic service (14) Laborer (15) Member of the armed forces or protection and security services (the police, fireman, watchman, etc.) (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) N/A	

PEN1. Do you have a pension plan? (1) Yes **[Continue]** (2) No**[Skip to SAL1]** (88) Doesn't Know**[Skip to SAL1]** (98) Doesn't Answer **[Skip to SAL1]**	
PEN3. Which pension plan do you have? **[Read Options]** (1) Individual accounts, meaning an [IRA (use local name)] (2) Public or state plan or social security (3) [Insert other options according to each country's context] (7) Other (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) N/A	
PEN4. During the past 12 months, have you made any payment to your [retirement/pension] account? **[Read Options]:** (1) Every month (2) At least once or twice a year, or (3) Has not contributed (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) N/A	

[Ask to all respondents]

SAL1. Do you have [medical insurance]? [Pre-test wording in each country] (1) Yes **[Continue]** (2) No **[END]** (88) Doesn't Know**[END]** (98) Doesn't Answer **[END]**	
SAL2. Is the [medical insurance] **[Read options]** (1) From the government, as part of [social security] (2) Another government plan, or (3) Is it a private plan **[Don't read]:** (4) Have both, from the government and private plan (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) N/A (no medical insurance)	
SAL4. In your [medical insurance plan], are you the principal or beneficiary? (1) Principal (2) Beneficiary (88) Doesn't Know (98) Doesn't Answer (99) N/A	

These are all the questions I have. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

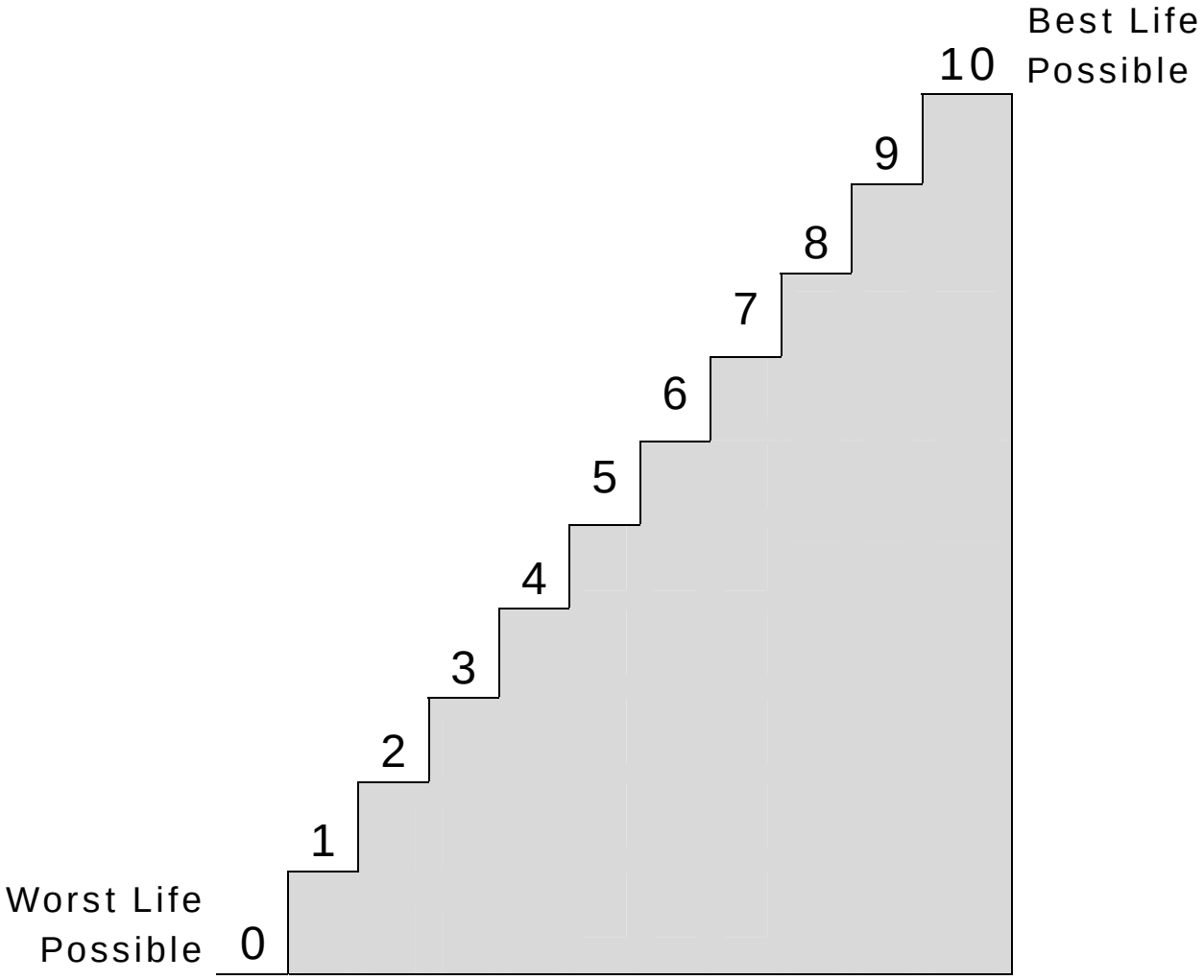
COLORR. [When the interview is complete, WITHOUT asking, please use the color chart and circle the number that most closely corresponds to the color of the face of the respondent] _____ (97) Could not be classified **[Mark (97) only if, for some reason, you could not see the face of the respondent]**	**|___|___|**
Time interview ended _____ : _____ **TI**. Duration of interview ***[minutes, see page # 1]*** _____	|__|__|__|
INTID. Interviewer ID number: _____	|__|__|__|
SEXI. Note your own sex: (**1**) **Male** (**2**) **Female**	
COLORI. Using the color chart, note the color that comes closest to your own color.	**|___|___|**

I swear that this interview was carried out with the person indicated above.
*Interviewer's signature*_____ *Date* ____ /_____ /_____

Field supervisor's signature _____
Comments:
_____
_____
[Not for PDA use] Signature of the person who entered the data _____
[Not for PDA use]Signature of the person who verified the data _____

Card "A"

On what step of the ladder do you feel at this moment?



Card "B"

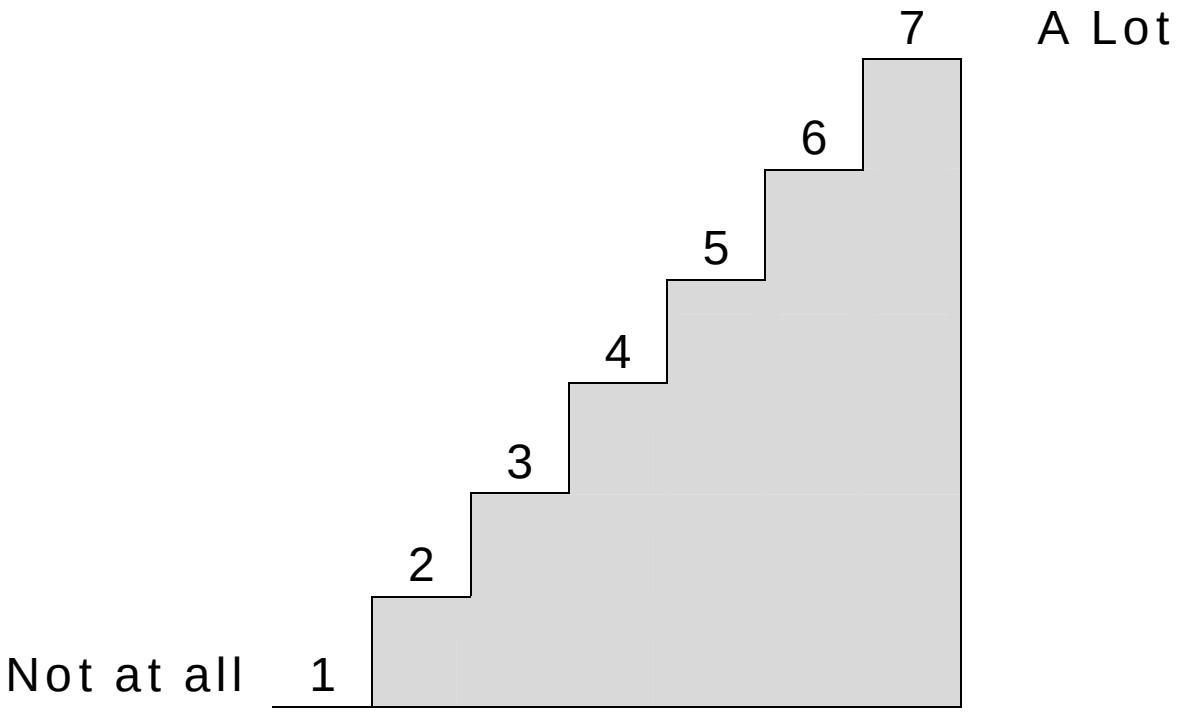
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Left **Right**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Liberal **Conservative**

Card "C"



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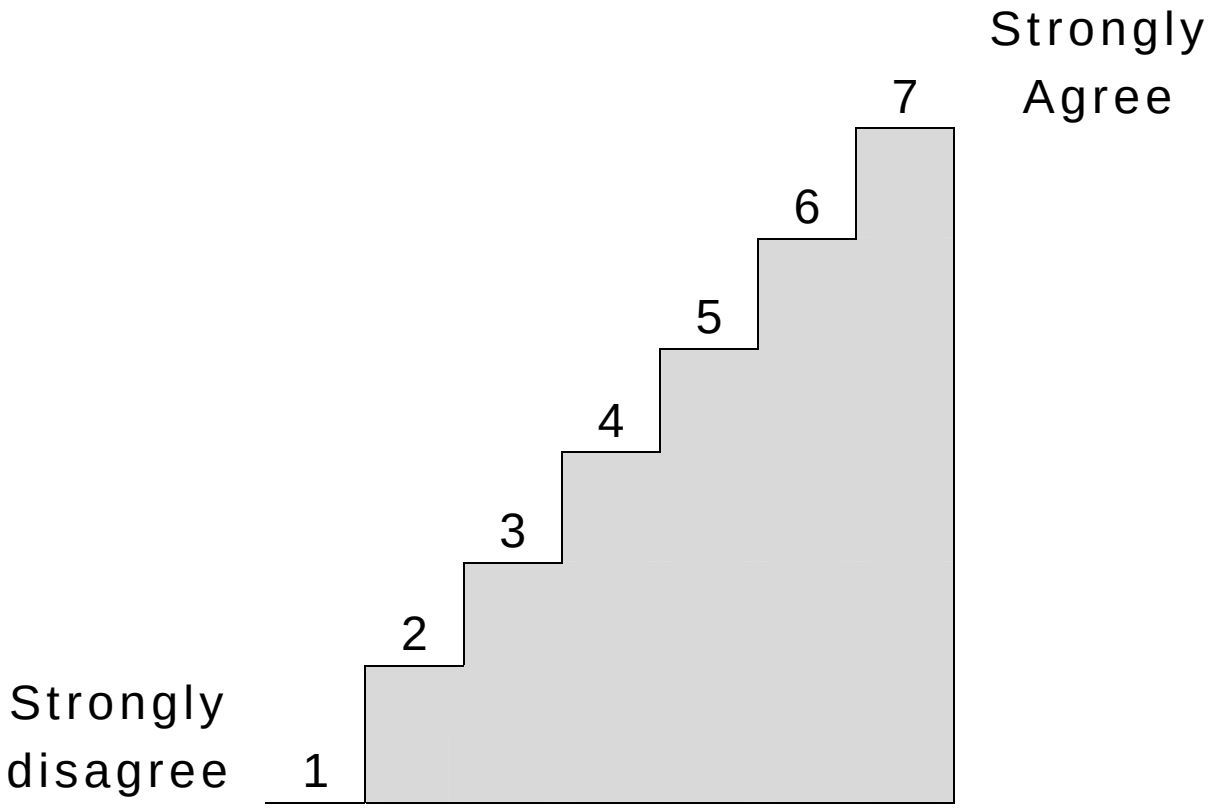

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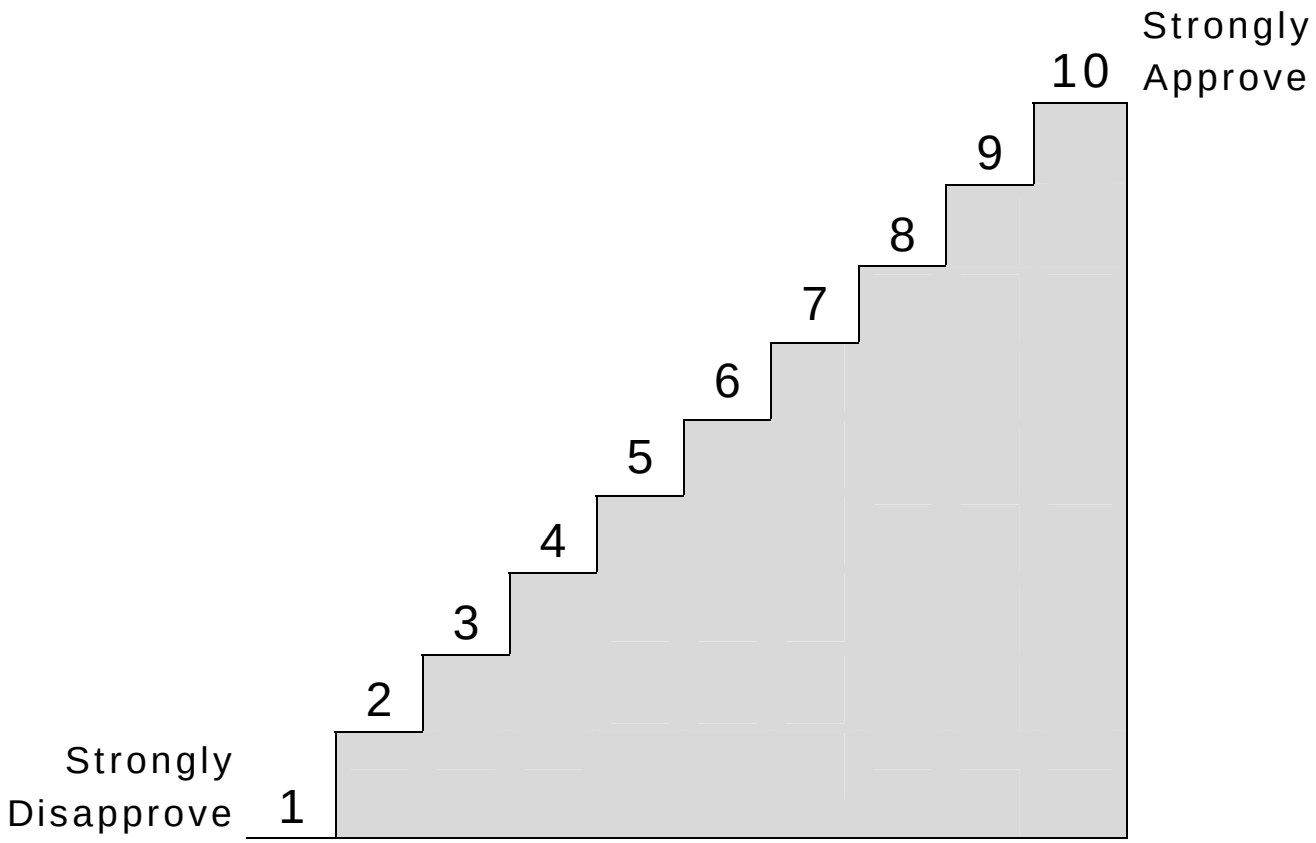

Card "F"

(00) No income
(01) [Less than $25]
(02) [$26- $50]
(03) [$51-$100]
(04) [$101-$150]
(05) [$151-$200]
(06) [$201-$300]
(07) [$301-$400]
(08) [$401-500]
(09) [$501-$750]
(10) [More than $751]

Color Palette

The AmericasBarometer

This study forms part of a research program that the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) of Vanderbilt University has been carrying out for more than two decades. LAPOP is a consortium of academic institutions spread throughout the Americas, with its headquarters in Vanderbilt University in the United States. More than 30 institutions throughout the region participate in LAPOP, whose efforts are directed at producing objective, non-partisan, and scientifically sound studies of public opinion. Those studies focus primarily on the measurement of attitudes and behavior related to democracy. The Project has received generous support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Department of Political Science of Vanderbilt University, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), as well as the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile and the Kellogg Institute of Notre Dame University. LAPOP also maintains linkages with the World Bank, the Organization of American States and others.

The most recent surveys, whose results are analyzed and discussed in this publication, were carried out in 2010, using a nationally representative sample in both urban and rural areas. The 2010 round of studies included 26 countries in the Americas, which allows for comparison of the results of each individual country with other countries in the region.

The public can access the data at no charge via our web page: www.lapopsurveys.org. The data, reports, articles and books that the Latin American Public Opinion Project produces are free and available to the public. This research and the data can also be accessed at our "data repositories" and subscribers at such universities as Columbia, Duke, Harvard, Notre Dame, Oxford University, Princeton, Stanford, the University of Texas, the University of North Carolina, Yale, and the Brookings Institution; and at institutions in Latin America such the University of Costa Rica and Pontifical Catholic University of Chile. With these initiatives, LAPOP continues to collaborate with the development of academic and policy excellence throughout the Americas.

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