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# The Political Culture of Democracy in the Americas, 2014: Democratic Governance across 10 Years of the AmericasBarometer

Report Editor:  
Elizabeth J. Zechmeister, Ph.D.  
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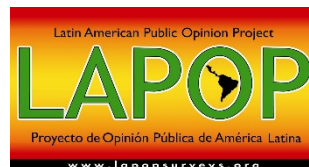
# The Political Culture of Democracy in the Americas, 2014:

## Democratic Governance across 10 Years of the AmericasBarometer

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This study was performed with support from the Program in Democracy and Governance of the United States Agency for International Development. The opinions expressed in this study are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the point of view of the United States Agency for International Development.

April 2016





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## Preface

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) takes pride in its support of the *AmericasBarometer*. While the surveys' primary goal is to give citizens a voice on a broad range of important issues, they 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 and the new evaluation policy put in place by USAID in 2011. The *AmericasBarometer* also alerts policymakers and international assistance agencies to potential problem areas, and informs citizens about democratic values and experiences in their countries relative to regional trends.

The *AmericasBarometer* builds local capacity by working through academic institutions in each country by training local researchers and their students. The analytical team at Vanderbilt University, what we call “LAPOP Central,” first develops a core questionnaire after careful consultation with our country team partners, USAID, and other donors. It then sends the draft instrument to its partner institutions, getting feedback to improve the instrument. An extensive process of pretesting then goes on in many countries until a near final questionnaire is settled upon. At this point it is then distributed to our country partners for the addition of modules of country-specific questions that are of special interest to the team and/or USAID and other donors. Final pretesting of each country questionnaire then proceeds, followed by training conducted by the faculty and staff of LAPOP Central as well as our country partners. In countries with important components of the population who do not speak the majoritarian language, translation into other languages is carried out, and different versions of the questionnaire are prepared. Only at that point do the local interview teams conduct house-to-house surveys following the exacting requirements of the sample design common to all countries. Interviewers in many countries enter the replies directly into smartphones in order to make the process less error-prone, avoiding skipped questions or illegible responses. Once the data is collected, Vanderbilt's team reviews it for accuracy. Meanwhile, Vanderbilt researchers also devise the theoretical framework for the country and comparative reports. Country-specific analyses are carried out by local teams.

While USAID has been the largest supporter of the surveys that form the core of the *AmericasBarometer*, Vanderbilt University provides important ongoing support. In addition, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Tinker Foundation, Environics, Florida International University, and the Embassy of Sweden supported the project as well. Thanks to this unusually broad and generous support, the fieldwork in all countries was conducted as close in time as possible, allowing for greater accuracy and speed in generating comparative analyses.



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

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## Prologue: Background to the Study

Elizabeth Zechmeister, Ph.D.  
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The AmericasBarometer by the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) is a unique tool for assessing and comparing citizens' experiences with democratic governance across individuals within countries, across sub-national regions and countries, and over time. This report presents one set of those assessments, focused around the latest year of data collection: 2014. This year marks a milestone for the project: LAPOP began the AmericasBarometer project in 2004 and we can today look back at a decade of change in public opinion within and across the Americas. The 2014 AmericasBarometer is the largest and most sophisticated survey of the Americas to date. It includes 28 countries and over 50,000 interviews, the majority of which were collected using sophisticated computer software that adds yet another layer to LAPOP's meticulous quality control efforts. This prologue presents a brief background of the study and places it in the context of the larger LAPOP effort.

While LAPOP has decades of experience researching public opinion, Vanderbilt University has housed and supported the research institute and the AmericasBarometer since 2004. LAPOP's foundations date to the 1970s, with the study of democratic values in Costa Rica by LAPOP founder Mitchell Seligson. LAPOP's studies of public opinion expanded as electoral democracies diffused across the region in the intervening decades and have continued to grow in number as these governments have taken new forms and today's administrations face new challenges. The AmericasBarometer measures democratic values, experiences, evaluations, and actions among citizens in the Americas and places these in a comparative context.

The AmericasBarometer project consists of a series of country surveys based on national probability samples of voting-age adults and containing a common core set of questions. The first set of surveys was conducted in 2004 in eleven countries; the second took place in 2006 and represented opinions from 22 countries across the region. In 2008, the project grew to include 24 countries and in 2010 and 2012 it included 26 countries from across the hemisphere. In 2014, the AmericasBarometer is based on national surveys from 28 countries in the Americas. LAPOP makes all reports from the project, as well as all country datasets, available free of charge for download from its website, [www.LapopSurveys.org](http://www.LapopSurveys.org). The availability of these reports and datasets is made possible by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Vanderbilt University, the Tinker Foundation,

and a number of other supporters of the project, who are acknowledged in a separate section at the end of this prologue.

Our key objective is to provide a dataset that advances accurate descriptions and understandings of public opinion and behavior across the Americas. We succeed in this effort to the extent that the AmericasBarometer is of interest and relevance to citizens; NGOs; public officials and their governments; the international donor and development communities; and academics. We strive to create datasets and reports that meet the rigorous standards to which we are held by our fellow academics while also being accessible and valuable to those evaluating and shaping democratic governance across the Americas. Our progress in producing the 2014 AmericasBarometer and this particular report can be categorized into four areas: questionnaire construction; sample design; data collection and processing; and reporting.

With respect to *questionnaire construction*, our first step in developing the 2014 AmericasBarometer was to develop a new core questionnaire. We believe that democracy is best understood by taking into account multiple indicators and placing those in comparative perspective. For this reason, we have maintained a common core set of questions across time and countries. This shared content focuses on themes that have become viewed as standard for the project: 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. To make room for new questions, we eliminated some previously-core items in the 2014 survey. To do so, we solicited input on a long list of questions we proposed for deletion from our partners across the region and, after complying with requests to restore some items, we settled on a reduced set of common modules to which we then added two types of questions: new common content and country-specific questions.

To develop new common content, we invited input from our partners across the Americas and then developed and led a series of three, multi-day questionnaire construction workshops in Miami, FL in the spring of 2013. Country team members, experts from academia, individuals from the international donor and development communities, faculty affiliates, and students attended and contributed to these workshops. Based on the discussions at these workshops we identified a series of modules that were piloted in pre-tests across the Americas. Some of these items received widespread support for inclusion from our partners and were refined and included as common content – such as a new set of questions related to state capacity and an extended module on crime and violence – while others were placed onto a menu of optional country-specific questions. At the same time, our country teams worked with us to identify new topics of relevance to their given countries and this process produced a new set of country-specific questions included within the AmericasBarometer. Questionnaires from the project can be found online at [www.LapopSurveys.org](http://www.LapopSurveys.org), and at the conclusion of each country report.

LAPOP adheres to best practices in survey methodology as well as with respect to the treatment of human subjects. Thus, as another part of our process of developing study materials, we developed a common “informed consent” form and each study was reviewed and approved by the Vanderbilt University Institutional Review Board (IRB). All investigators involved in the project studied the human subjects protection materials utilized by Vanderbilt and took and passed certifying tests. All publicly available data for this project are de-identified, thus protecting the right of anonymity guaranteed to each respondent. The informed consent form appears in the questionnaire appendix of each study.

With respect to *sample design*, we continued our approach of applying a common sample design to facilitate comparison. LAPOP national studies are based on stratified probability samples of a minimum of approximately 1,500 voting-age non-institutionalized adults in each country. In most countries our practice is to use quotas at the household level to ensure that the surveys are both nationally representative and cost effective. Detailed descriptions of the samples are available online and contained in the annexes of each country publication.

In 2013 LAPOP entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the premier Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan and one of the world's leading experts in survey methodology, Dr. Jim Lepkowski. Over the course of the year we worked with Dr. Lepkowski and his team of graduate students to review each previously developed sample design and to secure their input and advice on new designs.

Sample design typically relies on census information and maps. However, up-to-date information is not always available. To respond to this challenge, between 2013 and 2014, LAPOP developed a new software suite, which we call LASSO<sup>®</sup> (LAPOP Survey Sample Optimizer). This proprietary software allows us to estimate the number of dwellings in a given region using satellite images in the public domain, and then use a probabilistic method to locate sample segments (i.e., clusters) to draw a sample. While most of our sample designs are based on census data, we were able to successfully field test LASSO while working on the 2014 AmericasBarometer.

With respect to *data collection*, we have continued to innovate and increase the sophistication of our approach. The 2014 AmericasBarometer represented our most expansive use of handheld electronic devices for data collection to date. At the core of this approach is our use of the “Adgys”<sup>®</sup> questionnaire app designed by our partners in Cochabamba, Bolivia. The use of electronic devices for interviews and data entry in the field reduces data entry errors, supports the use of multiple languages, and permits LAPOP to track, on a daily basis, the progress of the survey, down to the location of interviews (which are monitored in real time but not recorded into the public datasets in order to preserve respondents' privacy) and the timing of the interviews. The team in Bolivia worked long hours to program the samples and questionnaires into the Adgys platform for the 18 countries in which we used this technology. In 2 other countries we continued our use of PDAs and a Windows Mobile-based software application supported by our hardworking partners at the University of Costa Rica.

Throughout the process of collecting the survey data, we worked in multiple ways to minimize error and maximize quality. We continued the process of pilot testing all questionnaires and training all interviewers in each country in accordance with the standards of LAPOP. In the process of collecting the data we monitored fieldwork in real time, when possible, and worked with local partners to replace (a small number of) low quality interviews while the study was in the field. For the few countries that still used paper questionnaires, all data files were entered in their respective countries, and verified (i.e., double entered), after which the electronic files were sent to LAPOP at Vanderbilt for review. At that point, a random list of 50 questionnaire identification numbers was sent back to each team, who then shipped those 50 surveys via express courier to LAPOP for auditing to ensure that the data transferred from the paper to the dataset was as close to error free as possible. In the case of some countries using electronic handheld devices for data entry in the field, a small subset of interviews were conducted with paper questionnaires due to security concerns; in these cases we followed a similar process by which the data were entered by the local team and audited for quality control by LAPOP at Vanderbilt. For all electronic databases, we checked the files for duplicates and consistency between the coding in the

questionnaire and the database. We also verified that the sample was implemented according to the design. In the few cases where we detected issues in the 2014 round, we worked with our local partners to resolve the problem, for example via the re-entry of a small set of paper questionnaires.

Finally, with respect to *reporting*, we have continued our practice of making reports based on survey data accessible and readable to the layperson. This means that our reports make use of easy-to-comprehend charts to the maximum extent that is possible. And, where the analysis is more complex, such as in the case of ordinary least squares (OLS) or logistic regression analysis, we present results in standardized, easy-to-read graphs. Authors working with LAPOP on reports for the 2014 AmericasBarometer were provided a new set of code files generated by our exceptionally skilled data analyst, Carole Wilson, which allows them to create these graphs using Stata 12.0 or higher. The analyses presented in our reports are sophisticated and accurate: they take into account the complex sample design (i.e., stratified and clustered) and reporting on confidence intervals around estimates and statistical significance. Yet our approach to presenting these results is to make them as reader-friendly as possible. To that end we also include elsewhere in this report a note on how to interpret the data analyses.

We worked hard this round to turn around individual country results as quickly as possible. In a number of countries, this effort took the form of our newly developed “Rapid Response Report,” based in a MS PowerPoint template, which provided a mechanism for country teams to organize and present key preliminary findings in a matter of weeks following the completion of fieldwork and data processing. A number of these rapid reports formed the basis of government and public presentations and, given the level of interest and engagement in these sessions, we hope to see use of our rapid reports increase in years to come.









As another mechanism intended to increase the speed with which country-specific findings are disseminated, we changed the format of our country studies this year. In the past we asked country team authors to wait for the processing of the entire multi-country dataset, an effort that takes many months due to variation in timing of fieldwork and the effort involved in carefully auditing, cleaning, labeling, and merging the many datasets. For this year we asked our country team authors to develop a minimum of three chapters that focus specifically on topics of relevance to their countries. When a given country report was commissioned by USAID, the content of these chapters was based on input from the mission officers in that country. In other countries it was based on the local team’s or donor’s priorities.

Once fieldwork and data processing was complete for a particular country, we sent the 2014 national study dataset and a time-series dataset containing all data for that country for each round of the AmericasBarometer to our country team who then used these datasets to prepare their contributions. The resulting chapters are rich in detail, providing comparisons and contrasts across time, across sub-regions within the country, and across individuals by sub-group. To complement these chapters, we assigned ourselves the task of using the comparative dataset, once it was ready for analysis, to develop a set of chapters on key topics related to crime and violence; democratic governance (including corruption and economic management); local participation; and democratic values. The writing of these chapters was divided between the LAPOP group at Vanderbilt and a set of scholars of public opinion and political behavior with expertise in the Latin American and Caribbean region and who have worked with LAPOP on such reports in the past. In contrast to the country-specific chapters, the objective of these chapters is to place topics and countries within the region in a comparative context.

This report that you have before you is one of a series of reports produced by LAPOP and our team to showcase key findings from the 2014 AmericasBarometer. It is the result of many drafts. Once a draft was completed and submitted to the LAPOP team at Vanderbilt, it was reviewed and returned to the authors for improvements. Revised studies were then submitted and reviewed again, and then returned to the country teams for final corrections and edits. In the case of country reports commissioned by USAID, we delivered the penultimate chapter drafts to USAID for their critiques. The country teams and LAPOP Central then worked to incorporate this feedback, and produced the final formatted version for print and online publication.

This report and the data on which it is based are the end products of a multi-year process involving the effort of and input by thousands of individuals across the Americas. We hope that our reports and data reach a broad range of individuals interested in and working on topics related to democracy, governance, and development. Given variation in preferences over the timeline for publishing and reporting on results from the 2014 AmericasBarometer, some printed reports contain only country-specific chapters, while others contain both country-specific and comparative chapters. All reports, and the data on which they are based, can be found available for free download on our website: [www.LapopSurveys.org](http://www.LapopSurveys.org).

The AmericasBarometer is a region-wide effort. LAPOP is proud to have developed and coordinated with a network of excellent research institutions across the Americas. The following tables list the institutions that supported and participated in the data collection effort in each country.

Country	Institutions	
Mexico and Central America		
Costa Rica		 
El Salvador		
Guatemala	 <p> <b>Universidad Rafael Landívar</b>                      Tradición Jesuita en Guatemala                 </p>	
Honduras	 <p> <b>FOPRIDEH</b>                      Federación de Organizaciones                      No Gubernamentales                      para el Desarrollo de Honduras                 </p>	
Mexico	 <p>                     Opinión Pública y Mercados                 </p>	 <p>                     INSTITUTO TECNOLÓGICO AUTÓNOMO DE MÉXICO                 </p>
Nicaragua		
Panama	 <p>                     Centro de Iniciativas                      Democráticas                 </p>	



Andean/Southern Cone	
<b>Argentina</b>	
<b>Bolivia</b>	 
<b>Brazil</b>	
<b>Chile</b>	 
<b>Colombia</b>	 
<b>Ecuador</b>	 
<b>Paraguay</b>	
<b>Peru</b>	<p><i><b>IEP Instituto de Estudios Peruanos</b></i></p>
<b>Uruguay</b>	 
<b>Venezuela</b>	



Caribbean	
<b>Bahamas</b>	
<b>Belize</b>	
<b>Dominican Republic</b>	 
<b>Guyana</b>	
<b>Haiti</b>	
<b>Jamaica</b>	
<b>Suriname</b>	
<b>Trinidad &amp; Tobago</b>	



<b>Canada and United States</b>	
<b>Canada</b>	
<b>United States</b>	



## Acknowledgements

Conducting national surveys across every independent country in mainland North, Central, and South America, and all of the larger (and some of the smaller) countries in the Caribbean, requires extensive planning, coordination, and effort. The most important effort is that donated by individual citizens across 28 countries in the Americas, who as survey respondents either patiently worked with us as we pre-tested each country survey, or took the time to respond to the final questionnaire. It is due to their generosity that we are able to present this study and so we begin with a heartfelt note of gratitude to each respondent to the AmericasBarometer survey.

Each stage of the project has involved countless hours of work by our faculty, graduate students, national team partners, field personnel, and donors. We thank all these individuals for their commitment to high quality public opinion research. Let us also make some specific acknowledgments.

The AmericasBarometer project has been made possible by core support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Vanderbilt University. We owe a debt of gratitude to both of these institutions. At USAID Vanessa Reilly and Eric Kite have consistently contributed constructive insights to the project and facilitated its use as a tool for policymakers. At Vanderbilt John Geer has been a tireless advocate of the project, which is fortunate to be housed within and benefit from a department that is brimming with talent. We gratefully acknowledge the interest and support of the staff, students, and faculty in the department of political science, in other research units such as the Center for Latin American Studies, in the Office of Contract and Research Administration, and in the leadership at Vanderbilt. Support for selected data collection efforts associated with the 2014 AmericasBarometer came from USAID, Vanderbilt, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Tinker Foundation, Environics, Florida International University, and the Embassy of Sweden. We thank the individuals that we have worked with at each of these institutions for their important contributions.

We take special note of the LAPOP staff members who collectively put in tens of thousands of hours of work into this project, adroitly employing new skills and conscientiously keeping an eye on the smallest of details. These exceptional staffers are, in alphabetical order, Rubí Arana, Nicole Hinton, Daniel Montalvo, Ana María Montoya, Diana Orcés (now at Oakland University), Georgina Pizzolitto, Mariana Rodríguez, Emily Saunders, and Carole Wilson. We remain grateful as always to Tonya Mills, who generously shares her time with us and the department of political science as she works to manage a large and complex set of contracts and requirements. We thank Fernanda Boidi, who works with LAPOP out of an office in Montevideo, Uruguay, for her superb work on so many different aspects of our project. We also thank Eduardo Marengo, working from his home in Nicaragua, for his assistance in our efforts to disseminate our studies to diverse audiences in clear and informative ways. In addition, we thank Dr. Mary Malone for her expert advice on our development of the comparative discussion and analyses regarding crime, violence, and insecurity in the Americas within this report.

We take seriously the development of new research capacities and scholars in the field of public opinion research and we find LAPOP provides a highly effective mechanism for these efforts. Yet we in turn benefit immensely from the intellect and efforts contributed by our students. Supporting the 2014 AmericasBarometer was an exceptional group of young scholars. This includes our undergraduate research assistants John Clinkscales, Christina Folds, and Maya Prakash. It also includes several individuals who successfully completed their dissertations in the course of its development: Margarita

Corral, Alejandro Díaz-Domínguez, Brian Faughnan, Mason Moseley, Mariana Rodríguez, and Vivian Schwartz-Blum. Others among our graduate students continue to work energetically on courses and dissertations while engaging in discussions and work related to the project: Fred Batista, Gabriel Camargo, Kaitlen Cassell, Oscar Castorena, Mollie Cohen, Claire Evans, Adrienne Girone, Matthew Layton, Whitney Lopez-Hardin, Trevor Lyons, Arturo Maldonado, Juan Camilo Plata, Gui Russo, Facundo Salles Kobilanski, Laura Sellers, Bryce Williams-Tuggle, and Daniel Zizumbo-Colunga. We especially want thank those graduate students who worked alongside us as research assistants over the past two years on activities related to the development, implementation, auditing, analysis, and reporting of the 2014 AmericasBarometer.

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.

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<b>Mexico and Central America Group</b>	
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Guatemala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Dr. Dinorah Azpuru, Associate Professor of Political Science at Wichita State University, USA</li> </ul>
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We thank all of these people and institutions for their wonderful support.

Liz and Mitch  
Nashville, Tennessee  
April, 2016



## Introduction

The 2014 AmericasBarometer and this report mark an important milestone for the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP): we are now able to assess over a decade of values, assessments, and experiences that have been reported to us in first-hand accounts by citizens across the region. The AmericasBarometer surveys, spanning from 2004 to 2014, allow us to capture both change and continuity in the region on indicators that are vital to the quality and health of democracy across the Americas.

In looking back over the decade, one trend is clear: *citizens of the Americas are more concerned today about issues of crime and violence than they were a decade ago.* We take this fact as a cornerstone for this report, and devote the first three chapters to an assessment of citizens' experiences with, evaluations of, and reactions to issues of crime and insecurity. We then proceed in the subsequent four chapters to address topics that are considered "core" to the AmericasBarometer project: citizens' assessments of the economy and corruption; their interactions with and evaluations of local government; and, their democratic support and attitudes. In each of these cases we identify key trends, developments, and sources of variation on these dimensions and examine links between these core issues and crime and insecurity. Thus, the goal of this report is to provide a comparative perspective – across time, across countries, and across individuals – on issues that are central to democratic governance in the Americas, with a particular focus on how countries, governments, and citizens are faring in the face of the heightened insecurity that characterizes the region.

The first three chapters demonstrate a number of ways in which the AmericasBarometer provides a unique tool for policymakers, academics, and others interested in issues related to crime, violence, and insecurity in the Americas. Data from police reports on crime can suffer from problems that make comparisons across countries and over time difficult; these include under-reporting by citizens, political pressures to adjust reports, and other problems. Data on homicides, in contrast, are sometimes viewed as more reliable, but in fact often obscure information such as where the crime took place and ultimately provide an overly narrow portrait of citizens' experiences, which can range across distinct types of crime: for example, from burglaries to extortion and from drug sales in the neighborhood to murders. The AmericasBarometer in general, and in particular with the addition of several new modules on crime and insecurity in the 2014 survey, provides a reliable and comprehensive database on citizens' experiences and evaluations of issues of crime and violence. Standardization of questionnaires that are administered by professional survey teams increases our ability to make comparisons across time, countries, and individuals and, as well, to investigate the correlates, causes, and consequences of crime, violence, and insecurity in the region.

Chapter 1 of the report documents change over time in the region with respect to citizens' perceptions of and experience with crime and violence. As noted above, citizens of the Americas are comparatively more concerned with issues related to security in 2014 than they have been since 2004. In 2014, on average across the Americas, approximately 1 out of every 3 adults reports that the most important problem facing their country is one related to crime, violence, or insecurity.



Interestingly, average overall crime victimization rates have held steady for the region for the last decade, with the exception of a notable spike in 2010.<sup>1</sup> As with just about any measure we examine in this report, we find important differences within and across countries. For example, with respect to crime victimization, Chapter 1 affirms that urban locations are more affected by crime than rural areas and notes significant variation in general rates of crime victimization across countries in 2014, with Peru, Ecuador, Argentina, and Venezuela topping the list. Yet, *types* of crime experienced also vary across countries, which is another nuance examined in Chapter 1. For example, in Argentina burglaries are reported as quite common but extortion (blackmail) and murders are not. Brazil, as another example, ranks toward the top of the list of countries in terms of percentages of individuals reporting problems with burglaries, drug sales, extortion, and murder in their neighborhoods. Nicaragua ranks in the top half of countries on burglaries but registers the lowest reported extortion rates in the region, and El Salvador shows the reverse to be the case, ranking in the top half on extortion rates but at the low end on reported burglaries. While crime victimization in general matters, it is important to keep in mind that the types of crimes individuals experience and witness vary significantly according to the contexts in which they live.

One persistent theme in this report is that perceptions of insecurity matter independently from crime victimization. Perceptions of insecurity and assessments of violence in the neighborhood are fueled by personal experiences *and* by the diffusions of news about the broader context; thus, being the victim of a crime is associated with higher levels of reported insecurity, and so is paying more attention to the media. In the 2014 AmericasBarometer we added to our standard module questions asking about safety concerns in locations close to the home and daily routines (given that our data affirm, as noted in Chapter 1, that most crime is experienced in proximity to where the individual lives). Specifically, the new questions asked how worried individuals are about safety on public transportation and in schools. Slightly more than 1 out of every 3 individuals across the Americas, on average, reports either a high level of fear for the likelihood of a family member being assaulted on public transportation and/or a high level of concern for the safety of children in school.

Chapter 2 makes the point that negative experiences with crime and heightened insecurities alter individuals' daily behaviors, interactions, and satisfaction with their lives under the status quo. We find overwhelming evidence that crime victimization and concerns about violence and gangs in the neighborhood increase the likelihood that individuals avoid certain routes that are perceived to be dangerous and, as well, increase the likelihood that individuals organize with neighbors in response to a fear of crime. Across the region on average, 2 out of every 5 individuals avoids walking through certain parts of their neighborhood for fear of crime. On the one hand this set of findings demonstrates that individuals proactively seek out solutions to security challenges facing their countries; on the other hand, acts such as changing one's route and organizing with neighbors can be taxing on individuals, both with respect to the effort they require and the psychological toll they exert as one adapts to life under a cloud of crime and insecurity. We indeed find, in the last analyses in Chapter 2, that many factors related to crime victimization and insecurity depress life satisfaction and increase individuals' motivations to leave the country.

What about the effect of crime and insecurity on individuals' political evaluations and preferences? Chapter 3 takes up this topic, focusing on the extent to which citizens of the Americas

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<sup>1</sup> The trend over time with respect to perceptions of gangs affecting the neighborhood mirrors that we find for crime victimization: it peaked in 2010 and has receded somewhat in recent years, though still the average individual in the region believe his/her neighborhood is affected to some degree or more by gangs.

perceive the state as effectively upholding its charge to provide citizen safety and the rule of law. The chapter begins with a focus on law enforcement efforts at the local level. We find that poor assessments of police effectiveness in the neighborhood are quite common: nearly 1 out of 2 individuals on average expresses dissatisfaction with local police performance and more than 1 out of 3 individuals report that the police would take more than an hour to respond to an average home burglary or not respond at all. Turning to evaluations at the national level, we find that in 2014, trust in courts and in the justice system have decreased to their lowest points in the past decade. Perceptions of neighborhood insecurity matter significantly for satisfaction with local police efforts and, as well, for evaluations of national government capacity to effectively provide for citizen safety and maintain the rule of law. Concerns with impunity also increased in 2014, reversing a trend by which confidence that the justice system punishes the guilty had been increasing since 2006 for the region on average. Our findings show that insecurity and lack of confidence in the judicial system have important costs for incumbent political leaders.

In the face of rising insecurity and deficits in the perceived effectiveness of law enforcement, courts, and the broader justice system, we find that a majority viewpoint in the region is one that prefers a punitive approach to deter crime. This preference for “hardline” techniques to confront issues of crime and violence increased significantly on average in the region between 2012 and 2014. The importance of confidence in the justice system to punish the guilty (that is, to assure against impunity) is highlighted in several analyses in chapter 3, which document that crime victims with no or little confidence in the justice system are more supportive of punitive policies (as well as more military involvement in the fight against crime) than those who express higher evaluations of the justice system. We look not only at support for government policies to combat crime, but also at citizen support for circumventing the law and taking matters into their “own hands.” Responses to this question give us insight into support for vigilante justice. We find that support for “taking the law into one’s own hands” remains low on average for the Latin American and Caribbean region, but nonetheless increased significantly in 2014 compared to previous years.

Chapter 3 concludes by highlighting a number of factors that individuals should take into consideration when anticipating, developing, or attempting to steer government responses to issues of crime and violence in the region. In particular, we note that despite the considerable rethinking by academics and policymakers of some hardline approaches to crime and violence, support for such tactics remains high among the mass public and in particular among those who are more insecure, are younger, and have lower levels of education.

As indicated, Chapters 4 through 7 focus on the broader set of standard dimensions of democratic governance typically considered part of the core thematic focus of the AmericasBarometer project: the economy, corruption, local government, and democratic values and support. In our analyses of these topics we considered not only major developments and notable findings for the region as a whole and over time, but we also considered the relevance of crime and violence to these dimensions.

Chapter 4 focuses on economic trends in the region and notes divergence between objective indicators of household wealth and subjective perceptions of households’ financial situations. Objectively, the 2014 AmericasBarometer shows that citizens in the Americas own more basic household goods than they have at any other time in the last decade. That said, gaps in wealth do continue to exist across groups, such that single individuals, those who are less educated, individuals with darker skin tones, and those who live in rural areas have comparatively lower wealth. Yet when citizens of the Americas are asked about their household financial situation, the proportion of people who say they are

struggling to make ends meet has not improved noticeably in comparison to previous waves of the survey. Households may own more things, but they do not feel more financially secure.

Chapter 4 also looks beyond citizens' personal finances and details how they assess national economic trends. On average, the national economy is viewed less positively than it was in recent waves of the survey. Citizen evaluations of the national economy are correlated with fluctuations in economic outcomes, but they also reflect differences in economic opportunity at the individual level as citizens who belong to economically and socially marginalized groups tend to have more negative opinions of national economic trends. Citizen views of the national economy are also weighed down by the security situation in their country. Individuals who live in high crime areas judge national economic performance more harshly.

Corruption is also frequent in many countries in the Americas. Chapter 5 shows that 1 in 5 people in an average country was asked to pay a bribe in the past year. While several countries saw corruption levels decrease significantly, these improvements are balanced out by corruption victimization levels increasing in other countries, leaving the overall average frequency of bribery in the Americas essentially the same as in most previous waves of the AmericasBarometer. This corruption is occurring in many different locations, including interactions with the police, local government officials, the courts, and in schools, health clinics, and workplaces. Moreover, individuals who live in areas where crime is common are more likely to report that they were asked for a bribe; while we cannot use these data to determine the reason for this association, there is a general correlation between insecurity and reported experience with poor governance.

Given the frequency with which individuals are asked to pay bribes, it is not surprising that many individuals consider corruption to be common among government officials. In fact, levels of perceived government corruption have changed relatively little since the AmericasBarometer first started surveying. The one bright spot in Chapter 5 is found in the fact that, despite the prevalence of corruption in many places in the region, a large majority rejects the idea that paying a bribe can occasionally be justified. This is true even among those individuals who were asked for a bribe in the last year. So while the high levels of corruption are likely to have political and economic costs for the region, the AmericasBarometer data suggest that many citizens continue to reject the notion that these bribes are simply the cost of doing business.

It is typically the case that the level at which most citizens interact with their government is local. In Chapter 6 we examine political participation in municipal government, evaluations of local services, and citizens' trust in local government. In 2014, the AmericasBarometer registered a new low in the rate of municipal meeting attendance in the Americas, with only 1 in 10 attending a meeting in the past 12 months. However, this low degree of engagement was balanced by an increase in citizens making demands of local officials. We find that those individuals with the greatest and least satisfaction with local services are the most likely to make demands, potentially indicating people engage with local governments when they are either successful in attaining services or when they are most in need of them.

Paralleling the increase in demand-making on local governments in the Americas, we find a small increase from 2012 in citizens' evaluations of general local services. Overall, citizens in nearly all countries in the region give their local government middling scores on local services. On average local governments appear to be neither completely failing their citizens nor providing services that can be deemed outstanding in quality. Among a set of specific local services we find a small decrease from

2012 in evaluations of public schools and a slight increase in evaluations of public health care services; however, in both cases the average scores are in the middle of the scale.

With regard to trust in local governments the 2014 AmericasBarometer finds a more pessimistic pattern. The 2014 survey registered the lowest level of trust in local governments since 2004. Andean and Caribbean countries along with Brazil have some of the lowest levels of trust in local governments in the region, while Venezuela saw the largest drop in trust between 2012 and 2014 (59.4 to 50.2). The factors that most strongly predict an individual's trust in local government are experiences with corruption, physical insecurity, and satisfaction with local services, indicating a link between institutional trust and institutional performance. We found no differences in trust among people often more marginalized in the Americas, women and people with darker skin tones (in comparison to men and those with lighter skin tones, respectively).

Our comparative report concludes with an assessment of the state of democratic legitimacy and democratic values in the Americas. Under this rubric, Chapter 7 considers support for democracy in the abstract, trust in a range of state institutions, support for the political system, political tolerance, and the attitudinal profiles that result from combining the latter two. In addition to regional comparisons for 2014, AmericasBarometer data now permit the assessment of a decade-long trend for each of these measures of democratic legitimacy. Of special emphasis in this chapter is on the institutions tasked with maintaining law and order – the armed forces, the national police, and the justice system – and how crime and violence may affect their legitimacy and, indeed, democratic support and values more broadly. Altogether, this chapter permits an inspection of the attitudinal foundations of democracy with an eye to one of its potential weak spots.

Our initial look at democracy's legitimacy in the Americas finds citizens strongly support democracy as form of government. While fairly stable over time, 2014 saw abstract support for democracy regress to one of its lowest levels in a decade. Going from this abstract notion of democracy to more particular political and social institutions changes the picture only somewhat. The armed forces and the Catholic Church maintain their pride of place as the most trusted institutions in the region; legislatures and, especially parties, continue to garner the least trust. But since 2012, trust has not increased in any major social, political, or state institution and, in most cases, it has decreased. Intriguingly, the ascent of the first Pope from the Americas in 2013 could not halt the slide in trust in the Catholic Church. The most precipitous drop was in trust in elections, a worrisome finding considering that roughly half of the countries in the 2014 AmericasBarometer held a national election in the time since our 2012 study. Among law-and-order institutions – armed forces, national police, the justice system – public trust in the latter is lowest and has declined the most since 2012. Levels of trust in the armed forces and national police institutions appear most volatile where these institutions have recently played highly visible roles in maintaining public order. Individuals whose neighborhoods are increasingly insecure are losing trust in the police and courts. Law and order institutions, it seems, must earn the public's trust by successfully providing the key public goods of safety and justice.

System support – the inherent value citizens place in the political system – fell in 2014. Beliefs about the legitimacy of courts and the system's ability to protect basic rights deteriorated the most. Even within the two-year window between 2012 and 2014, several cases exhibit wide swings in support. The results of our analyses suggest system support in the Americas reflects how citizens evaluate and interact with the national and local governments. Specifically democratic legitimacy hinges on the system's ability to deliver public goods in the areas of the economy, corruption, and security. These same factors

do not, however, increase tolerance of political dissidents, a key democratic value. Rather, the happier citizens are with the performance of national and local governments, the less politically tolerant they are. These contradictory results may signal a desire to insulate a high-performing system from those who denounce it. They nevertheless imply a Catch-22: improving governance may at once enhance the political system's legitimacy but lower political tolerance. Lastly, we observe a decline in the percentage of citizens in the Americas who hold the combination of attitudes most conducive to democratic stability (high system support and high political tolerance) and a marked increase in the attitudes that can put democracy at risk (low system support and low political tolerance).

## Technical Note

The 2014 AmericasBarometer study is based on interviews with 53,456 respondents in 28 countries. Nationally representative surveys of voting age adults were conducted in all major languages, using face-to-face interviews in Latin America and the Caribbean and internet surveys in the United States and Canada.

**Table TN.1. Sample sizes and sampling errors in the 2014 AmericasBarometer**

Country	Sample Size	Sampling Error
<b>Mexico/ Central America</b>		
Mexico	1,535	±2.5%
Guatemala	1,506	±2.5%
El Salvador	1,512	±2.5%
Honduras	1,561	±2.4%
Nicaragua	1,546	±2.4%
Costa Rica	1,537	±2.5%
Panama	1,508	±2.4%
<b>Andean/Southern Cone</b>		
Colombia	1,496	±2.5%
Ecuador	1,489	±2.5%
Peru	1,500	±2.5%
Bolivia	3,066	±1.8%
Paraguay	1,503	±2.5%
Chile	1,571	±2.5%
Uruguay	1,512	±2.5%
Brazil	1,500	±2.5%
Venezuela	1,500	±2.5%
Argentina	1,512	±2.5%
<b>Caribbean</b>		
Bahamas	3,429	±1.8%
Barbados	3,828	±1.8%
Belize	1,533	±2.5%
Dominican Republic	1,520	±2.5%
Guyana	1,557	±2.5%
Haiti	1,512	±2.3%
Jamaica	1,503	±2.5%
Suriname	4,000	±1.6%
Trinidad & Tobago	4,203	±1.6%
<b>United States and Canada</b>		
Canada	1,517	±2.5%
United States	1,500	±2.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>53,456</b>	
<p>*Confidence intervals based on unweighted sample sizes. For cross-national analysis purposes, LAPOP weights each sample to 1,500. These sampling errors are based on SRS and not adjusted for stratification and clustering. For information on the impact of the complex sample design on confidence intervals, see section VII of this document.</p>		

Samples in each country were developed using a multi-stage probabilistic design (with quotas at the household level for most countries), and were stratified by major regions of the country, size of municipality and by urban and rural areas within municipalities.

In its effort to collect the best quality data possible and therefore produce the highest quality studies, the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) adopted a new sample design for the AmericasBarometer 2012 round of surveys, which was also employed in 2014. The two main reasons for this decision to change the sample design from that which was used in the 2004-2010 period were: (1) updating the sample designs to reflect the population changes as revealed by recent census information, and (2) standardizing the sample sizes at the level of the municipality in order to both reduce the variance and provide a basis for using multi-level analysis drawing on municipal data. This change in the sample design makes the sample representative by municipality type<sup>1</sup>, to enable the use of the municipality as a unit of analysis for multilevel statistical analysis. Details of the revisions are found in the description of the 2012 AmericasBarometer surveys.

In 2013 LAPOP entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan for assistance in and advice on the AmericasBarometer. One of the world's leading experts in sample design methodology, Dr. Jim Lepkowski, and his graduate students, advised us throughout the process. Over the course of a year we worked with Dr. Lepkowski and his team of graduate students to review each previously developed sample design and to secure their input and advice on new designs. Our colleagues at the University of Michigan, confirmed that LAPOP had already been following the best practices, within the limits of resources at our disposal, in sample design. Our own review of the major update we carried out in 2012 sample design left us pleased in almost every respect. The effort to obtain a standard sample size per municipality/canton/parish did not have any adverse impact on intra-class correlation levels, yet has given us a basis for calculating context effects at the local level. In some particular cases, however, in the 2014 round we requested country teams to conduct specific alterations, like updating their sampling frame to take into consideration (if available) the new 2010-2011 national census information. We also asked teams to verify that the 2012 sample design continues to reflect and represent each country population structure and distribution.

Finally, after several rounds of consultations and technical discussions with experts at the ISR at the University of Michigan on how to update the 2012 samples for the 2014 round of surveys, LAPOP requested that countries update their samples at the block level while retaining the same primary and sub-stratification units (i.e., *Estratopri, Municipalities and Census Segments*) that were included in the 2012 sample. This means that users of prior AmericasBarometer surveys can do so knowing that the designs across time remain very similar, if not identical. Countries that had new population census available and did not experience significant population shifts or changes in their population distribution were asked to replicate the 2012 sample using the latest census information available and to replace the sampling points at the block level.

With respect to *data collection*, in the 2014 round of the AmericasBarometer we expanded the use of handheld electronic devices. For the first time, we employed for data collection the “Adgys”<sup>©</sup> questionnaire app designed by our partners in Cochabamba, Bolivia. The use of electronic devices for

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<sup>1</sup> The new sample design included three different strata of municipalities classified according to their size. Municipalities were grouped in sizes appropriate for the country. One common grouping was (1) Municipalities with less than 25,000 inhabitants, (2) Municipalities with between 25,000 and 100,000 inhabitants, (3) Municipalities with more than 100,000 inhabitants.

interviews and data entry in the field reduces data entry errors, supports the use of multiple languages, and permits LAPOP to track on a daily basis the progress of the survey, down to the location of interviews (which are monitored in real time, or nearly real time, but not recorded into the public datasets in order to preserve respondents' privacy) and the timing of the interviews. The team in Bolivia worked long hours to program the samples and questionnaires into the Adgys platform for the 18 countries in which we used this technology. In 2 other countries we continued our use of PDAs and a Windows Mobile-based software application supported by our hardworking partners at the University of Costa Rica.

The remaining pages of this technical note describe the sample design of the AmericasBarometer 2012-2014 survey.

### **Universe, Population, Unit of Observation**

**Universe:** The surveys provide national coverage of voting age adults. The universe is comprised of the population living in urban and rural areas and it is representative at the national and regional level.

**Population:** The survey is designed to collect information from a nationally representative sample of the entire voting age population. Only non-institutionalized voting age adults are eligible to participate in the survey. Therefore, the sample excludes people in boarding schools, hospitals, police academies, military barracks, and inmates of the country's jails.

**Unit of Observation:** Only one respondent is interviewed per household. The questionnaire almost exclusively includes topics focused on that single respondent, but also does include some questions related to other members of the household and the condition of the household itself. Thus, the statistical unit of observation is the household. However, some respondents live in dwellings that are shared with other households. For this reason, it is more appropriate to consider the dwelling as the final unit of analysis. Additionally, the dwelling is an easily identifiable unit in the field, with relative permanence over time, a characteristic that allows it to be considered as the final unit of selection.

### **Sample frame**

The sampling frame covers 100% of the eligible, non-institutionalized voting age population in the surveyed country. This means that every eligible person in the country has an equal and known chance of being included in the survey sample. It also means that no particular ethnic group or geographical areas are excluded from the sampling frame unless the country sample design indicates otherwise. For example, certain Island areas and territories might be excluded. See the country study sample descriptions for such exceptions.

### **Sampling Method**

The sampling method chosen takes into consideration a series of elements pre-established by LAPOP.

On the basis of these requirements, the method that is used corresponds to a **stratified multi-stage cluster sampling**. The sample is stratified based on three factors:



- 1) Size of the Municipalities
- 2) Urban/Rural areas
- 3) Regions

The stratified sampling ensures a greater reliability in our sample by reducing the variance of the estimates. Stratification improves the quality of estimates, with the sole condition that the whole sample unit belongs to only one stratum, and the strata in combination cover the total population. Stratification also enables us to ensure the inclusion in the sample of the most important geographic regions in the country while requiring geographic sample dispersion.

### **Stratification**

Stratification is the process by which the population is divided into subgroups. Sampling is then conducted separately in each subgroup. Stratification allows subgroups of interest to be included in the sample whereas in a non-stratified sample some key subgroups may have been left out due to the random nature of the selection process. In an extreme case, samples that are not stratified can, by chance, exclude the nation's capital or largest city. Stratification helps us increase the precision of the sample. It reduces the sampling error. In a stratified sample, the sampling error depends on population variance within strata and not between them.

### **Weighting of individual country datasets**

Most of the 2014 AmericasBarometer samples are self-weighted except for the Bahamas, Bolivia, Chile, Trinidad & Tobago, Suriname, the United States, and Canada. Each country data set contains a variable called WT which is the "country weight" variable. In countries in which the sample is self-weighted, the value of each case = 1. In addition, in order to give each country in the study an identical weight in the pooled sample, LAPOP reweights each country data set in the merged files so that each country has an N of 1,500. The variable "WEIGHT1500" should be activated to produce representative national results. In SPSS this is done via the "weight" command.



## Fieldwork dates

Fieldwork dates for each country for the 2014 round are reported in Table TN.2.

**Table TN.2. Fieldwork dates by country, 2014 AmericasBarometer**

Country	Fieldwork start date	Fieldwork end date
<b>Mexico/ Central America</b>		
Mexico	January 24 <sup>th</sup>	February 24 <sup>th</sup>
Guatemala	April 1 <sup>st</sup>	May 10 <sup>th</sup>
El Salvador	March 28 <sup>th</sup>	April 30 <sup>th</sup>
Honduras	March 18 <sup>th</sup>	May 9 <sup>th</sup>
Nicaragua	February 25 <sup>th</sup>	March 22 <sup>nd</sup>
Costa Rica	March 4 <sup>th</sup>	May 6 <sup>th</sup>
Panama	March 13 <sup>th</sup>	May 3 <sup>rd</sup>
<b>Andean/Southern Cone</b>		
Colombia	March 28 <sup>th</sup>	May 5 <sup>th</sup>
Ecuador	January 21 <sup>st</sup>	February 15 <sup>th</sup>
Peru	January 23 <sup>rd</sup>	February 8 <sup>th</sup>
Bolivia	March 26 <sup>th</sup>	May 18 <sup>th</sup>
Paraguay	January 18 <sup>th</sup>	February 8 <sup>th</sup>
Chile	April 16 <sup>th</sup>	May 22 <sup>nd</sup>
Uruguay	March 8 <sup>th</sup>	April 23 <sup>rd</sup>
Brazil	March 21 <sup>st</sup>	April 27 <sup>th</sup>
Venezuela	March 24 <sup>th</sup>	April 26 <sup>th</sup>
Argentina	February 28 <sup>th</sup>	March 22 <sup>nd</sup>
<b>Caribbean</b>		
Bahamas	June 17 <sup>th</sup>	October 7 <sup>th</sup>
Barbados (2015)	February 27 <sup>th</sup>	July 27 <sup>th</sup>
Belize	May 2 <sup>nd</sup>	May 28 <sup>th</sup>
Dominican Republic	March 11 <sup>th</sup>	March 25 <sup>th</sup>
Guyana	June 4 <sup>th</sup>	July 12 <sup>th</sup>
Haiti	February 18 <sup>th</sup>	March 8 <sup>th</sup>
Jamaica	February 25 <sup>th</sup>	March 20 <sup>th</sup>
Suriname	June 21 <sup>st</sup>	August 25 <sup>th</sup>
Trinidad & Tobago	March 15 <sup>th</sup>	June 6 <sup>th</sup>
<b>United States and Canada</b>		
Canada	June 22 <sup>nd</sup>	July 1 <sup>st</sup>
United States	June 26 <sup>th</sup>	July 6 <sup>th</sup>

Please see the appendix for detail on the design effects.





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## Understanding Figures in this Study

AmericasBarometer data are based on national probability samples 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 estimated mean values (the dots). When two estimated points have confidence intervals that overlap to a large degree, the difference between the two values is typically *not statistically significant*; conversely, where two confidence intervals in bar graphs do not overlap, the reader can be very confident that those differences are *statistically significant* at the 95% confidence level. To help interpret bar graphs, chapter authors will sometimes indicate the results of difference of means/proportion tests in footnotes or in the text.

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

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**Part I:  
Crime, Violence and Perceptions  
of State Capacity in the Americas**



## Chapter 1. Crime and Violence across the Americas

*Nicole Hinton and Daniel Montalvo*

*with*

*Arturo Maldonado, Mason Moseley, and Daniel Zizumbo-Colunga*

### I. Introduction

The pervasiveness of crime and violence in Latin America and the Caribbean raises serious concerns regarding the quality and stability of democracy in the region. Where regimes fail to adequately protect their citizens from violence and crime, not only are those citizens likely to become dissatisfied and less trusting of the institutions and public officials charged with providing security to citizens, but under some conditions they might also cast some blame on democracy itself for their perilous circumstances. Or, under conditions of rampant crime, they might become less committed to the key principles of the rule of law that allow democracy to thrive. Bailey (2009) warns against a vicious cycle in which countries find themselves in a “security trap,” where inefficient state bureaucracies and rampant corruption weaken the ability of states to provide public security and maintain the rule of law, invoking distrust in the legitimacy of democracy that in turn weakens the state. Having a strong state that can effectively respond to and deter crime and violence is critical to the flourishing of democracy in any context. As Karstedt and LaFree (p.6, 2006) eloquently state, “The connection between democracy and criminal justice is so fundamental as to be self-evident: the rule of law guarantees due process, and the observation of human rights is an integral part of the emergence and institutionalization of democracy.”

Scholars have provided consistent evidence that crime victimization and widespread insecurity can pose serious challenges to democracy in the Americas (Lipset 1994; Booth and Seligson 2009; Bateson 2010; Ceobanu, Wood et al. 2010; Malone 2010; Carreras 2013). According to the rich scholarship on the subject, there are at least three ways in which crime, violence, and threat can evoke reactions among the mass public that present a challenge to democratic quality and governance.<sup>1</sup> First, people concerned with insecurity can have increased authoritarian tendencies and preferences for centralization of power in executives who might then act with disregard for checks and balances (Merolla and Zechmeister 2009). When individuals feel threatened or insecure they are more likely to tolerate, and even support, governments that restrict some core political rights and civil liberties.

A second threat to democratic quality and governance arises when citizens lose faith in the regime’s ability to provide adequate public security, and instead support less democratic alternatives to enhance security. The most obvious example of this scenario involves individuals taking matters into their own hands to fight crime in extralegal ways, or transferring authority to groups that pursue vigilante justice (Zizumbo-Colunga 2010). At the extreme, these groups include destabilizing and violent entities

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<sup>1</sup> Such high rates of violent crime carry economic costs as well. High levels of violent crime can monopolize the resources of the state and siphon off funds from other vital public services. Rather than investing in public infrastructure and social services, democratic governments often find their resources dominated by rising levels of public insecurity. The World Bank noted that in addition to the pain and trauma crime brings to victims and their families, “crime and violence carry staggering economic costs” that consume approximately 8% of the region’s GDP, taking into account the costs of law enforcement, citizen security and health care” (World Bank 2011, 5). On both political and economic fronts, current murder rates threaten sustainable community development. We thank Mary Malone for these insights and for additional advising over the content of Chapters 1-3 of this report.



such as para-military groups, hit men, and lynching mobs. Unfortunately, these groups are increasingly present in various locations throughout the Americas today and they may be gaining heightened support from dissatisfied citizens, a dynamic that has the potential to threaten the monopoly of the use of force that is supposed to belong to the state.

Lastly, crime and insecurity can be detrimental to democratic quality by directly undermining interpersonal trust, and hence the development of social capital. Since the classic work of Alexis de Tocqueville, through the innovative work of Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, to the multi-method research of Robert Putnam, scholars in various fields of the social sciences have devoted enormous effort to explain how the social fabric shapes democracy (Tocqueville 1835, Almond and Verba 1963, Putnam 1993). The strength of such social fabric is threatened when security crises cause individuals to experience a drop in interpersonal trust (Merolla and Zechmeister 2009) and those dynamics can fuel or be aggravated by additional erosion in trust in political institutions and state law enforcement (Corbacho et al. 2012).

What is the state of crime and violence in the Americas? Given the importance of this topic to democracy, this is an imperative question to answer. This chapter provides an assessment of the state of security in the Americas, drawing on secondary research and results from the Latin American Public Opinion Project's (LAPOP's) AmericasBarometer regional survey, which provides an unprecedented collection of public opinion data from over 25 countries for the last decade, 2004 to 2014.<sup>2</sup> Some of the key points that we document in this chapter are the following:

- The Latin America and Caribbean region has the highest homicide rate compared to any other region on earth (23 intentional homicides per 100,000 inhabitants), per the latest data from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).
- Central America stands out as the most violent region on the planet; in 2012, it had an average of nearly 34 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants.<sup>3</sup>
- Issues related to crime and violence are consistently perceived as top concerns among citizens of the Americas. According to the 2014 AmericasBarometer, just about 1 out of every 3 citizens identifies security as the most important problem facing their country.
- On average across the region, 16.41% of respondents to the 2014 AmericasBarometer report being the victim of a crime, a rate that has stayed fairly constant since 2004.
- The 2014 AmericasBarometer documents important ways that rates of burglaries, the sale of illegal drugs, extortion, and murders vary across countries of the Americas.
- Urban residents, those who are more educated, and wealthier individuals are the most likely to report being victims of a crime in the Americas in 2014.

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<sup>2</sup> The 2014 AmericasBarometer includes surveys in 28 countries in total. Given that not all years of the AmericasBarometer contain all 28 countries, we report in footnotes on robustness checks for comparisons across time to analyses that contain only the subset of countries consistently represented in a given time-series.

<sup>3</sup> In the most recent report UNODC (2013) notes that Southern Africa is tied with Central America in terms of highest number of average homicides for the region. The Central American region contains heterogeneity within it, with the homicide rates highest in the so-called Northern Triangle countries of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras.



This chapter is organized as follows. Section II provides an overview of the state of affairs in terms of the prevalence of crime and violence in the Americas, based on cross-national homicide indicators, as reported by UNODC. This section also discusses the advantages of using survey data to measure and analyze crime and insecurity. Section III examines data from LAPOP's AmericasBarometer to provide an overview of how citizens of the Americas perceive crime and violence in their countries. This section examines the extent to which security tops the list of most important problems in the AmericasBarometer countries across time and space. In the fourth section, we take a deeper look at the 2014 AmericasBarometer data by examining the frequency and types of crime victimization most commonly experienced by individuals in the region. We also examine the demographic factors that make some individuals more vulnerable to crime.

## II. Background: The Prevalence of Crime and Violence in the Americas

Despite differences among the ways in which crime is defined and measured,<sup>4</sup> Latin America and the Caribbean is widely regarded as a region with notoriously high crime incidents. In this section, we examine how this region fares in comparison to the rest of the world in terms of homicide, robbery, and burglary rates,<sup>5</sup> some of the most commonly collected and referenced crime statistics by institutions such as the UNODC.<sup>6</sup> We then turn to a discussion of the usefulness of this type of official crime data in comparison to self-reporting of crime victimization using surveys like the AmericasBarometer.

### *Official Rates of Intentional Homicide, Robberies and Burglaries*

In terms of homicide rates, UNODC ranks the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region as one of the deadliest places on earth. As Figure 1.1 shows, the LAC region had a higher homicide rate in 2012 than any other region represented in the UNODC study. The 2012 LAC average rate of 23.0 intentional homicides per 100,000 inhabitants is more than double the second highest regional mean, held by Sub-Saharan Africa<sup>7</sup> (11.2 intentional homicides per 100,000 inhabitants), five times the rate in South Asia (4.4) and East Asia and the Pacific (3.9), seven times larger than the rate in the U.S. and Canada (3.2) and the Middle East and North Africa (2.9), and about 10 times greater than the rate found in Europe and Central Asia (2.5).

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<sup>4</sup> The most current conceptualizations of crime see it as part of the broader concept of citizen security, which is the personal condition of being free from violence and intentional dispossession. This condition includes not only victimization, but also perceptions of crime (Casas-Zamora 2013).

<sup>5</sup> Other dimensions and measurements of the concept of crime include, but are not limited to assault, fraud, blackmail, extortion and violent threats.

<sup>6</sup> Other key organizations such as the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the World Bank (WB), and the World Health Organization (WHO) are also important sources for aggregate crime statistics. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) serves as a good source particularly in Central America.

<sup>7</sup> In the most recent report UNODC (2013) provides sub-regional averages for Southern Africa (31), Middle Africa (18), and Western Africa (14), all of which are higher than the regional average for Africa and are more comparable to the Latin American and the Caribbean average.

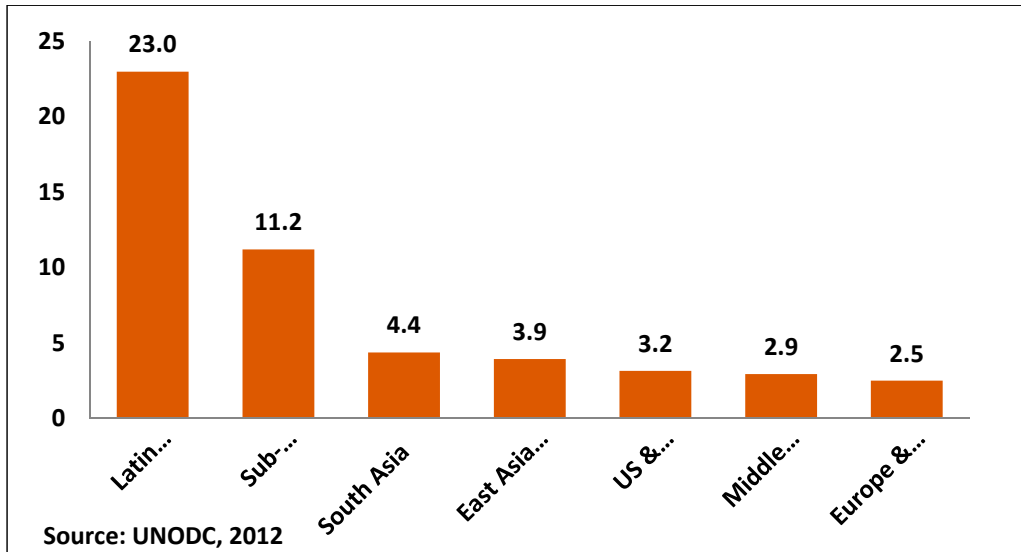


Figure 1.1. Intentional Homicide Rate (per 100,000 inhabitants), 2012<sup>8</sup>

As Figure 1.2 demonstrates, differences in intentional homicide rates exist across sub-regions within Latin America and the Caribbean and over time. As depicted in the figure, the Central American sub-region has the highest murder rates within the LAC region, with nearly 34 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants.<sup>9</sup> Homicide rates in this sub-region have increased at a concerning pace in recent years, reaching a peak in 2011. Within Central America, the most violent country is Honduras, which according to the UNODC had an intentional homicide rate of 90.4 per 100,000 inhabitants in 2012. In sharp contrast, Costa Rica is the least violent with a rate of 8.5 per 100,000 inhabitants.<sup>10</sup>

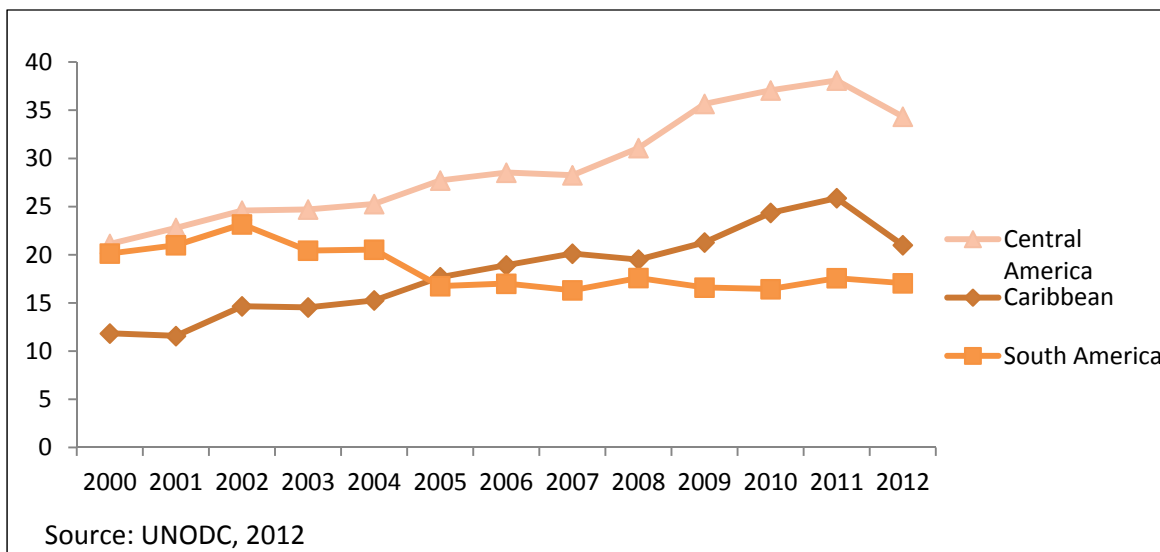


Figure 1.2. Intentional Homicide Rate (per 100,000 inhabitants) across Time

<sup>8</sup> Rates are for 2012 or latest year available.

<sup>9</sup> The UNODC analysis includes Mexico as part of the Central American sub-region. The rate of this particular country in 2012 was 21.5 per 100,000 persons.

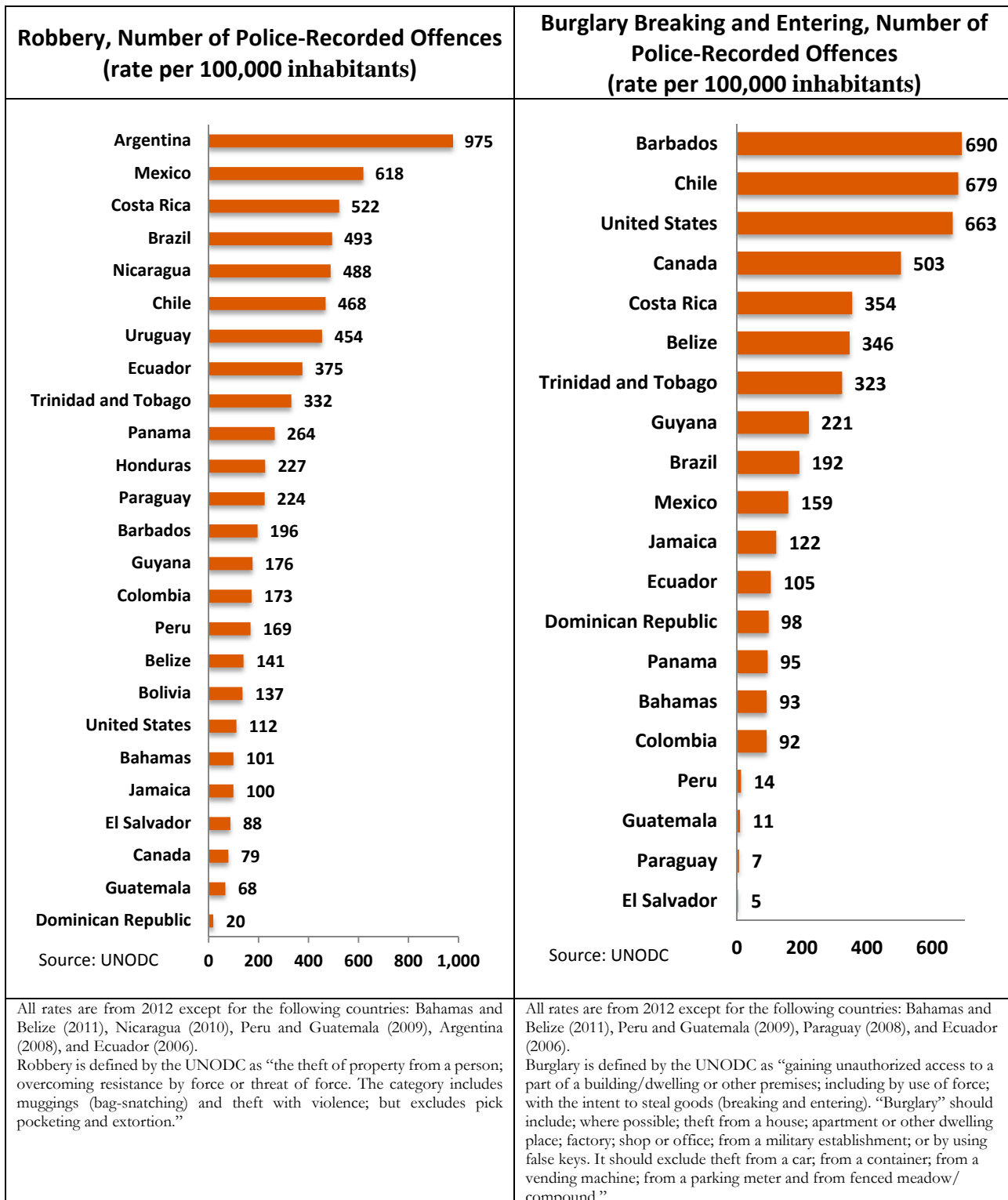
<sup>10</sup> Data on country rates are not presented here, but are available at: <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/statistics/>. Last accessed on October 24, 2014.



Trending in a way that is somewhat comparable to Central America, the Caribbean sub-region has also experienced an upward trend in homicide rates between 2000 and 2011 before dropping in 2012. Within this time period, the Caribbean's homicide rates increased from 12 to 21 per 100,000 inhabitants. The Caribbean country with the highest rate in 2012, per UNODC, is Jamaica (39.3) and the one with the lowest is Cuba (4.2).

South America, on the other hand, has seen a lower and more stable cross-time trend in homicides in recent years. On average in that region, homicide rates have not reached more than 21 per 100,000 inhabitants since 2002. In 2012 (the latest year for which these data are available), this sub-region experienced a mean murder rate of nearly 17 per 100,000 inhabitants. Yet, the homicide rate disparity in the South American sub-region is rather large. Among the most dangerous countries, Venezuela, Colombia, and Brazil have intentional homicide rates of 53.7, 30.8, and 25.2 (per 100,000), respectively, according to the UNODC. Among the least dangerous, we find countries like Chile, Uruguay, and Peru, with murder rates of 3.1, 7.9, and 9.6, in that order.

We continue to see important differences across countries in the LAC region when we turn to other crime statistics available from the UNODC, such as aggregate rates of reported robberies and burglaries per 100,000 inhabitants. Figure 1.3 displays rates for 2012 (the latest available) for most countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. Argentina, Mexico, and Costa Rica are the countries in which robberies are the most prevalent (975, 618, and 522 per 100,000 inhabitants, respectively) and the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, and Canada where they were the least (20, 68, 79, in that order). Interestingly, Guatemala ranks low on both robbery and burglary rates. Paraguay and El Salvador join Guatemala at the bottom of the chart for burglary rates. At the top of the burglary chart, we find both Canada and the United States (503 and 663 per 100,000 inhabitants) just below Barbados and Chile (690 and 679 per 100,000 inhabitants, respectively).



**Figure 1.3. Robbery and Burglary Rates (per 100,000 inhabitants), 2012**

A few points are worth noting regarding the data reported in Figure 1.3. First, although examining crime trends beyond homicides may be informative, the UNODC and others warn that comparisons across countries should be examined with caution as definitions and ways of recording incidents of robbery and burglary differ across state legal systems. Second, the ranking of countries like Guatemala

and El Salvador at the bottom for rates of robberies and burglaries, while Argentina, Costa Rica, the United States, and Canada are at the top may actually be a reflection of differences in the quality of crime reporting mechanisms, policing, or even trust in the system of law enforcement.<sup>11</sup> The reliability of such crime data is dependent on victims reporting incidents at all or accurately and the police recording the offense accordingly. Reported rates of crime other than homicides are shaped by trust in police (e.g., willingness to go to the police when there is a problem). Crime tends to be underreported in areas where trust in the police or institutions responsible for the rule of law is low (Skogan 1975).

Official crime statistics are also prone to errors in police, agency, and government recording processes (UNODC and UNECE 2010). To the degree that error rates in these processes are correlated with factors such as decentralization, corruption, economic development, etc. or with the levels of crime and violence themselves, these types of data may suffer important systematic biases. Even in terms of homicide rates, the variation in the definitions of crime, even among trusted institutions like the World Bank, the United Nations Development Program, and UNODC, and the consequent variation in the measurement of this phenomenon, can pose an important threat to the ability to make valid comparisons of levels of crime across time and space (Maxfield and Babbie 2010; Pepper, Petrie, and Sullivan 2010; Pepper and Petrie 2002).

### *Public Opinion Data as an Important Source for Crime Statistics*

Survey research provides an important alternative technique by which to measure not only perceptions of but also experiences with crime and violence. The use of survey data for measuring crime victimization has a number of advantages over official statistics. First, it produces data free of accidental or intentional omission or misrepresentation of crime by government officials. Second, public opinion surveys administered by non-governmental firms can alleviate some of the non-reporting bias associated with citizens' distrust in law enforcement (Levitt 1998; Tyler and Huo 2002). Third, survey research allows us to access a first-hand account of the situation suffered by the interviewee rather than the situation as interpreted or registered by law enforcement. Fourth, it allows for differentiation between perceptions of and experiences with crime and violence. Fifth, it allows us to standardize the wording of questions about crime incidents across countries so that we are assessing similar phenomena and thus making valid comparisons. Finally, it allows us to collect and assess a more nuanced database of crime victimization than those often provided by general statistics referenced in official reports (Piquero, Macintosh, and Hickman 2002).<sup>12</sup>

The AmericasBarometer survey, conducted by the Latin American Public Opinion Project, provides us with an extensive database on crime victimization and perceptions of insecurity. It is the only multi-country comparative project in the hemisphere to collect data on all of North, Central, and South America, plus a number of Caribbean countries. The AmericasBarometer survey records first-

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<sup>11</sup> There is also a greater incentive to report property crimes (e.g., burglaries) in wealthier countries with better established insurance industries in which a police report is required to make a claim.

<sup>12</sup> An early example of the use of surveys to collect data on crime victimization is the effort by the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) research consortium to conduct The International Crime Victim Survey (ICVS). The surveys collected six waves of cross-national individual level data in many European countries. However, Latin America was only been peripherally represented (Kennedy, 2014). ICVS data did also report Latin America to be one of the most dangerous regions in the world (Soares & Naritomi, 2010). However, because data from countries in this region were collected exclusively during the 1996/1997 wave and only in the cities of San Juan (Costa Rica), Panama City (Panama), Asunción (Paraguay), Buenos Aires (Argentina), La Paz (Bolivia), Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) and Bogota (Colombia), the portrayal of crime and violence of the region coming from this source is not only outdated but incomplete.

hand accounts of the state of crime and violence in the region, and also incorporates a range of standardized crime and security survey measures (e.g., experiences and perceptions) that are comparable across time and space. Crime victimization data from the 2014 AmericasBarometer is particularly valuable because the project relies on large national samples of voting age adults in 28 countries across the Americas, with a survey instrument that included an extensive series of modules on the topics of crime, violence, and insecurity. The result is an unprecedented dataset in terms of its quality and scope.

Due to their advantages, crime victimization surveys are widely regarded as at least a complementary, and in some ways a superior, source of data in comparison to official aggregate crime statistics. That said, some scholars (e.g., Bergman 2006) maintain that although surveys can provide a better picture of crime *trends* they can say little about actual crime *rates*. According to Bergman (2006), even when crime is defined and measured in similar ways, cross-sectional survey data on victimization can suffer inaccuracies due to, among other reasons, variations in tendencies to under-report violence or over-report property theft within and across countries. The AmericasBarometer overcomes some potential problems in cross-national and cross-time comparisons by standardizing wording across its surveys. Further, each question in the survey is carefully considered and pre-tested within each country prior to inclusion in the AmericasBarometer, in order to ensure that the wording comports with local norms and is as likely as possible to elicit truthful answers. Be that as it may, Bergman's caveat that differences in motivations and inclinations to over- or under-report crime incidents may vary across countries in ways that warrant further consideration. For this reason, the AmericasBarometer asks multiple questions<sup>13</sup> not only about incidents of crime victimization but also about concerns surrounding violence and perceptions of insecurity in order to achieve as holistic an account of citizen security in the region as possible.

The remainder of this chapter presents a relatively brief overview of concerns about crime and crime victimization across the Americas. We note that the description and discussion only begin to scratch the surface of the extensive database on this topic available via the AmericasBarometer survey. While our analyses indicate important variation in rates of certain types of crime victimization incidents across the Americas, we do not focus here on the extent to which crime and insecurity are directly traceable to decentralized ordinary criminals or organized crime in particular. Organized crime is a notably pernicious problem in many Latin American countries given that, not only do criminal organizations engage in illegal activities, but they also seek to influence the state in order to attain certain political objectives (Bailey and Taylor 2009). The empirical evidence shows that organized crime puts the states' monopoly of the use of force at stake, since many governments have to constantly negotiate with criminal organizations in order to preserve an appearance of peace. In the Americas, criminal organizations vary widely in terms of size and scope. Those at the least organized end of the spectrum are domestic organizations arranged around fluid market transactions, such as small mafias, usurers, and extortionists. At the other end of the spectrum are transnational criminal organizations that engage in serious crimes or offenses across borders, such as drugs and arms trafficking, money laundering, gang activity, and human trafficking (Manrique 2006, Bailey and Taylor 2009, Farah 2012). Our look at crime concerns and victimization in this chapter does not trace these perspectives and experiences back to these

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<sup>13</sup> In addition, the AmericasBarometer crime victimization question has been developed to assist recall by providing a list of types of crimes; a follow-up question asking about what type of crime was experienced provides those using the AmericasBarometer dataset a second measure of victimization and, therefore, an additional means to assess and increase reliability of analyses of the data.

varying criminal elements in the LAC region, but we are cognizant that indeed this variation in the nature of crime syndicates and criminals is important for a comprehensive understanding of the region.<sup>14</sup>

### III. An Overview of Crime and Violence in the Minds of Citizens of the Americas

As a first step to examining the 2014 AmericasBarometer data on crime, we take a look at what citizens of the Americas view as the most important problem within their country. Respondents in all countries are asked the following open-ended question:<sup>15</sup>

**A4.** In your opinion, what is **the most serious** problem faced by the country?

Responses to the question in the field are coded into one of approximately forty general categories, which are then recoded in our analysis into five general baskets: economy, security, basic services, politics, and other.<sup>16</sup> Figure 1.4 displays the distribution of responses for these five main categories, as provided by citizens across six waves of the AmericasBarometer survey project. Since 2004,<sup>17</sup> the economy and security rank as two principle concerns expressed on average by the public

<sup>14</sup> InSightCrime, a foundation that studies organized crime, lists 9 countries with the highest prevalence of organized crime in the region. In North America, Mexico is the largest and most sophisticated home for criminal organizations. Drug trafficking organizations, such as Zetas, Sinaloa Cartel, Gulf Cartel, Familia Michoacana, Juarez Cartel, Beltran Leyva Organization and the Knights Templar dominate Mexico's criminal activities. In Central America, countries within the so-called Northern Triangle (Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador) host some of the most violent crime organizations on earth. Particularly relevant organizations are Mendozas, Lorenzanas and Leones in Guatemala, MS13, Barrio 18, Cachiros and Valles in Honduras, and Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13), Barrio 18, Perrones and Taxis Cartel in El Salvador. InSightCrime points to the problem of organized crime in Nicaragua, particularly the influence of drug traffickers on judicial rulings but compared to the countries in the Northern Triangle, this impact is on a completely different (smaller) magnitude. South America includes four countries on this list of countries with comparatively strong and prevalent criminal syndicates: Venezuela, Brazil, Colombia, and Peru. While Peru and Colombia are the world's two largest cocaine producers, Brazil and Venezuela are drug transit hubs with important money laundering centers and human trafficking activities. The most salient groups in Colombia are FARC and ELN; Shining Path in Peru; Cartel of the Suns and Bolivarian Liberation Forces in Venezuela; and Red Command and First Capital Command in Brazil.

<sup>15</sup> Though respondents may consider that many problems are worthy of mentioning, they are asked to state only one problem they think is the most important facing their country.

<sup>16</sup> Responses included in Economy: unemployment; problems with or crisis of economy; poverty; inflation or high prices; credit, lack of; lack of land to farm; external debt. Responses included in Security: crime; gangs; security (lack of); kidnappings; war against terrorism; terrorism; violence. Responses included in Basic Services: roads in poor condition; health services, lack of; education, lack of, poor quality; water, lack of; electricity, lack of; housing; malnutrition; transportation, problems of; human rights, violations of. Responses included in Politics: armed conflict; impunity; corruption; bad government; politicians. Responses included in Other: population explosion; discrimination; popular protests (strikes, road blockades); drug addiction; drug trafficking; forced displacement of persons; environment; migration; and "other" which comprises of less than 3% of responses.

<sup>17</sup> It is important to note that in 2004, we asked this question in 11 countries of the Americas only. These countries are: Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia and the Dominican Republic. In 2006, Peru, Paraguay, Chile, Haiti, Jamaica, Guyana, the United States and Canada were incorporated to this list. In 2008, the AmericasBarometer included Uruguay, Brazil, Argentina, and Belize, and since 2010 we have included Trinidad & Tobago, Suriname, and Venezuela. Later, in 2014 Bahamas and Barbados were included. These are the same 28 countries analyzed in this chapter. Figure 1.4 would look roughly the same if we examine only the 11 countries that were surveyed since 2004 or the 22 countries that were surveyed since 2006. We exclude these figures from the text for brevity and conciseness.



across the Americas.<sup>18</sup> The economy still leads as the most salient concern in 2014, with a regional average of 36% of respondents declaring that the economy is the most important problem in their country.<sup>19</sup> However, the economy as the most important problem has also experienced the biggest change across time: it decreased in public concern by approximately 25 percentage points from the first wave of the AmericasBarometer in 2004 to the most recent wave in 2014.

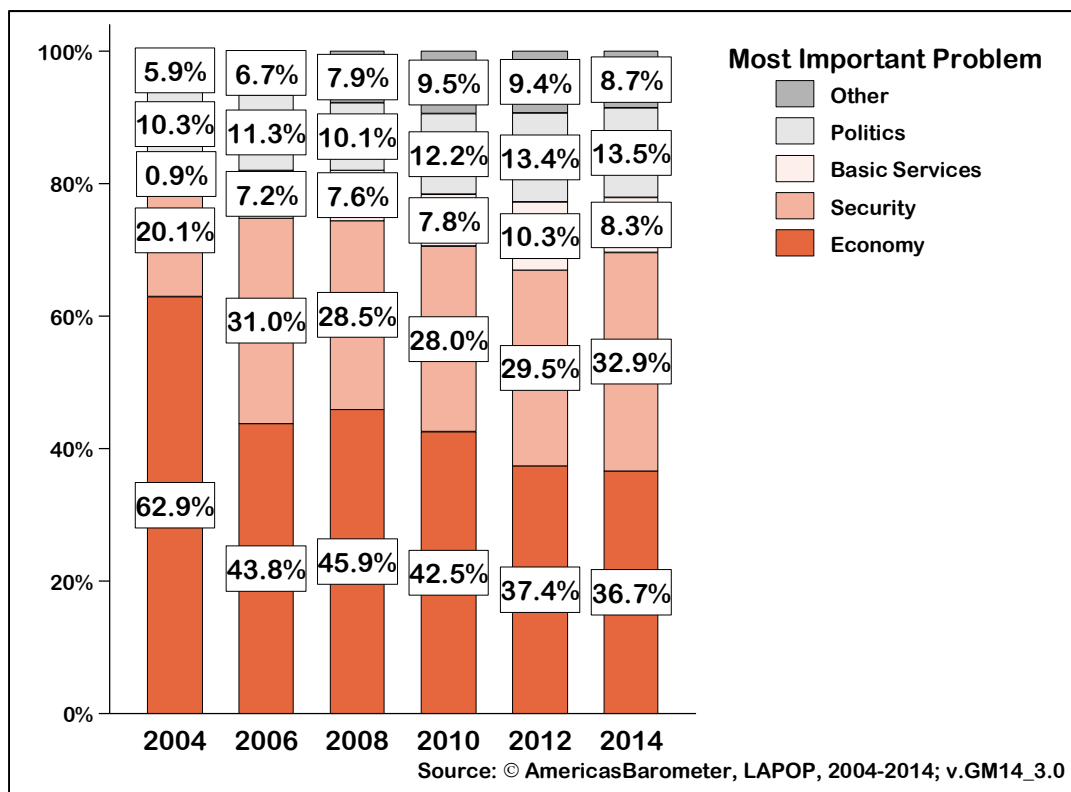


Figure 1.4. Most Important Problem Facing the Country over Time

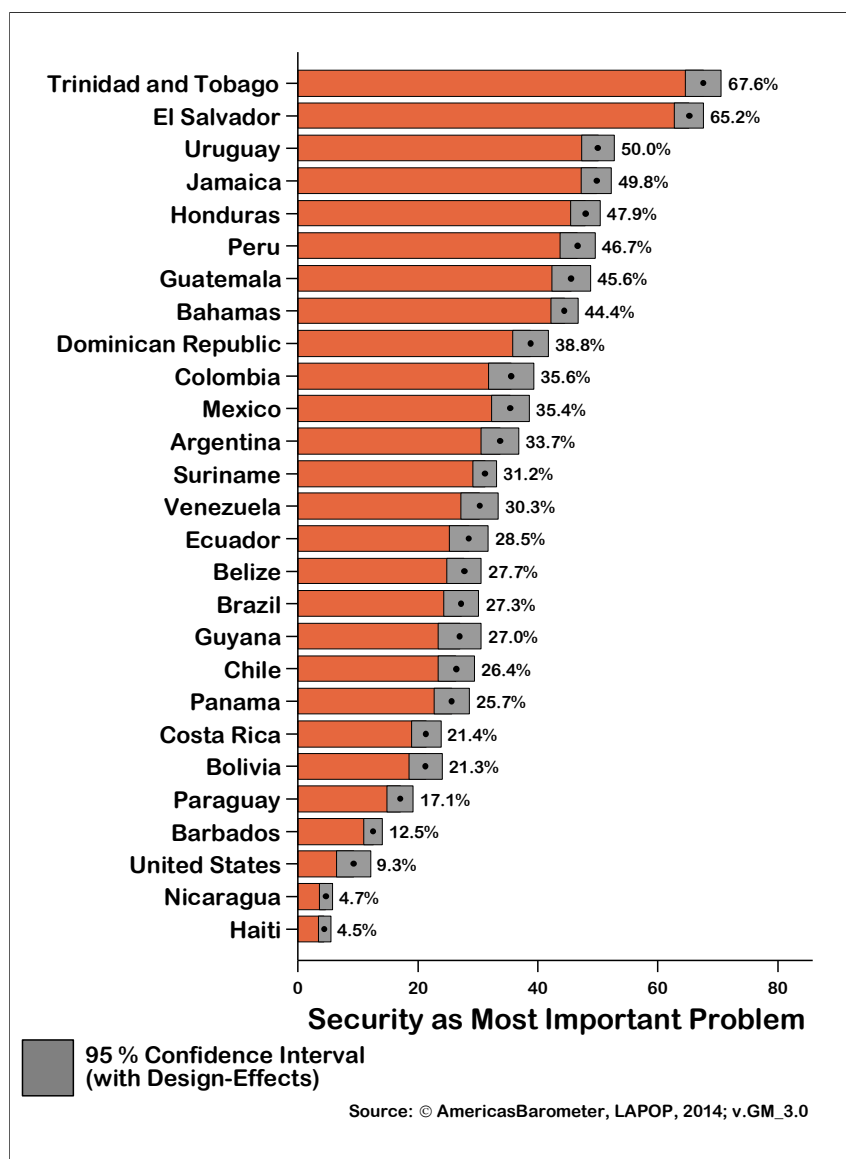
Security has consistently registered as the second most important problem in the Americas, as self-reported by citizens since 2004. Narrowing our focus to the two most recent years of the AmericasBarometer, 2012 and 2014, we see only minor changes over time in all five main categories. That said, we do see evidence that security concerns increased in recent years: in 2012, 29.5% cited an issue related to security as the most important problem and in 2014 that figure is 29.5%. In short, in 2014, on average across the Americas, essentially 1 out of 3 respondents report an issue related to crime, violence, or insecurity as the most important problem facing their country.

How much variation is there in concerns about security across countries in the Americas? To answer this question, we turn our attention to country-level data on the identification of security (crime and violence) as the most important problem. Figure 1.5 presents these data. According to the 2014 AmericasBarometer, in two countries, Trinidad & Tobago and El Salvador, 2 out of 3 citizens identify security as the most important problem facing their country. In Uruguay, this rate is 1 out of 2 citizens

<sup>18</sup> Using other survey data, Singer (2013) shows that the economy has consistently been cited as the most important problem in the hemisphere going back to the mid-1990s, although crime and security has increased in importance as the economy has strengthened and crime has gotten worse in many countries in recent years.

<sup>19</sup> As is standard LAPOP practice, in all analyses of regional averages in this chapter and this report more generally, we calculate regional means via a process that weights each country equally rather than proportional to population.

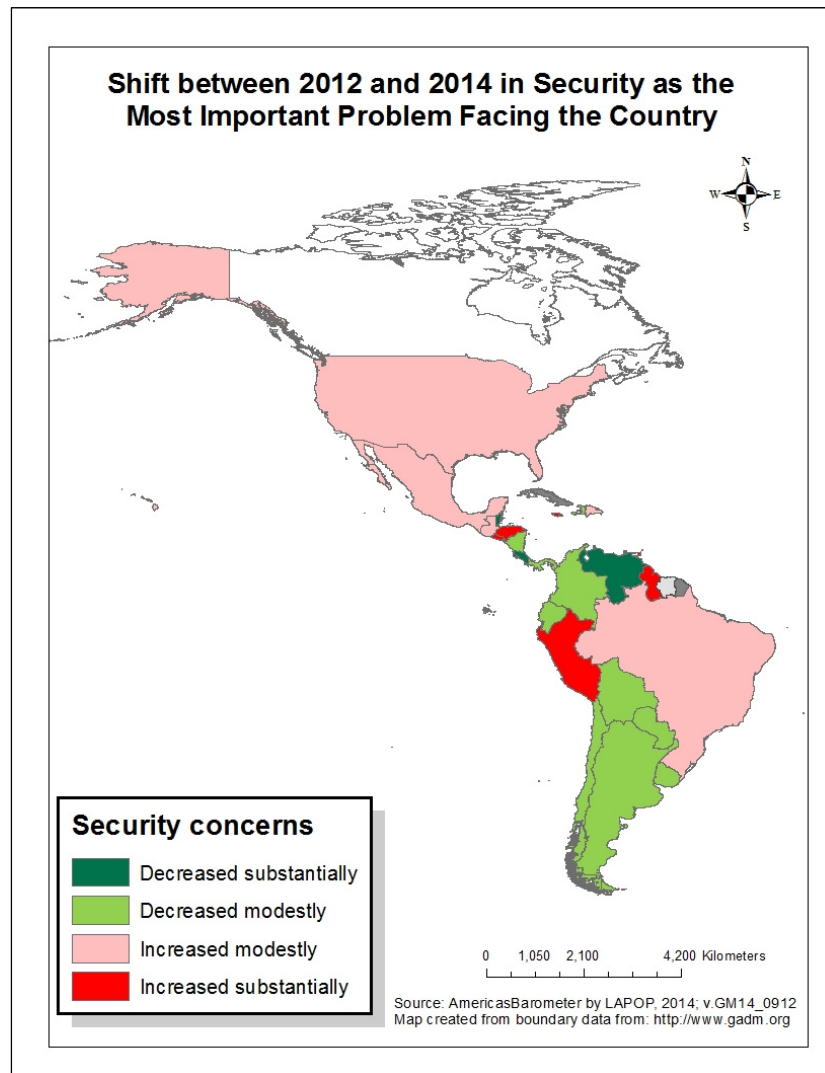
or 50% of the adult population. Security concerns are elevated in a number of other countries in the Americas as well, including Jamaica, Honduras, Peru, and Guatemala. In sharp contrast, few citizens in Haiti and Nicaragua identify security as the most important issue facing the country: in each case, fewer than 5% of individuals respond to the most important problem question with an issue related to security. In fact, though not shown here, we note that these two countries rank the highest in number of people surveyed stating economy as the most important problem in 2014.



**Figure 1.5. Percentage Identifying Security as the Most Important Problem Facing the Country, 2014**

Variation in concerns about security exists not only across countries in the Americas, but also across time. And, in fact, we also see cross-national variation in change across time: that is, the extent to which security concerns are increasing or decreasing in a country, on average, differs throughout the region. Map 1.1 shows how security as the most important problem has shifted from 2012 to 2014 across countries in the region by graphing the change in percentage that identify security as the most important

problem. Guyana (shown in red in Map 1.1<sup>20</sup>) is a country in which we find the second largest increase in security being identified as the most important problem; yet, as Figure 1.5 demonstrates, it still ranks low in comparison to other countries in the Americas in the percentage of respondents that report security as the most important. Costa Ricans decreased in their tendency to identify security as the most important problem, when comparing 2012 to 2014, a shift that helps account for their fairly low ranking in Figure 1.5. On the other hand, Venezuela also experienced a significant decrease in the percentage of respondents indicating security as the most important problem, but the country still ranks at about the regional mean for the Americas in 2014.<sup>21</sup>



**Map 1.1. Shift between 2012 and 2014 in Security as the Most Important Problem Facing the Country<sup>22</sup>**

<sup>20</sup> Maps in this report do not include data for Barbados, Bahamas and Suriname.

<sup>21</sup> It should be noted that this significant change in the percentage of Venezuelans that identifies security as the main problem is driven in large part by a significant increase in concerns over scarcity of basic products. Scarcity of food and basic necessities became a serious and salient problem in Venezuela in 2014. Thus, it may not be that security concerns diminished in Venezuela in 2014 so much as concerns about basic goods increased.

<sup>22</sup> Countries are categorized as having *decreased substantially* if the percentage of individuals reporting a security issue as the most important problem shifted downward between 10 and 40 percentage points between 2012 and 2014. They are

## IV. Experiences with Crime and Violence in the Americas: A View from the AmericasBarometer

On average across the Americas, as described in the previous section, issues related to crime, violence, and security rank high on the minds of citizens across the Americas when they consider the most important problem facing their country. But, what types of experiences with crime victimizations, and at what rates, do citizens in the Americas report? In this section, using data collected for the 2014 AmericasBarometer, we first examine the frequency and types of crime victimization across the Americas, including analysis from new questions asked in 2014. Then we discuss the factors that may be associated with the likelihood of falling victim to crime and use the AmericasBarometer data to explore the individual-level characteristics of those most likely to report being victims of crime.

### *Trends in Crime Victimization across the Americas*

The AmericasBarometer has included several questions pertaining to crime victimization since 2004. One of these questions asks the individual whether he or she has been the victim of any type of crime over the past year. The specific wording is as follows:<sup>23</sup>

**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) DK [**Skip to VIC1HOGAR**]            (98) DA [**Skip to VIC1HOGAR**]

Figure 1.6 displays reported crime victimization rates since 2004 for the Americas. That is, the figure shows the percentage of individuals, on average across the region, who answer that they were the victim of (at least one) crime over the past 12 months.<sup>24</sup> We see that crime victimization has hovered around 17% in most years except 2010, when there was a small spike in reported crime victimization. These findings suggest that the frequency of crime victimization has remained rather constant across time, on average for the region. In a separate analysis, not shown here, we find that the cross-time pattern of mostly stable rates shown in Figure 1.6 is fairly consistent for both the rural vs. urban populations of the Americas. That said, those who live in urban areas are more likely to report having been victimized by crime: on average across the Americas, approximately 1 out of every 5 adults living in an urban area reports having been victimized by crime, while approximately just 1 out of 10 rural residents reports the same phenomenon (a statistically significant difference).<sup>25</sup>

categorized as *decreased modestly* if this downward shift is between 0 and 10 percentage points; *increased modestly* if the percentage of respondents selecting security shifted upward between 0 and 10; and *increased substantially* if that upward shift was over 10 percentage points.

<sup>23</sup> LAPOP has conducted a set of experiments in Belize and in the United States to assess whether the change in question wording results in a higher rate of response. The results are mixed, such that - for example - in a study conducted by LAPOP in Belize in 2008 in which the questions were placed into a split-sample design, there was no statistically distinguishable difference in responses to the original versus the modified question. On the other hand, in an online study conducted in the United States in 2013, LAPOP found that those who received the modified question wording were more likely to indicate having been the victim of a crime. Therefore, we can say that it is possible that some variation between crime victimization rates recorded by the AmericasBarometer pre-2009 compared to post-2009 are due to question wording differences; rates within the periods 2004-2008 and 2010-2014 cannot be affected by question wording differences because no changes were introduced within those periods.

<sup>24</sup> Figure 1.6 would look roughly the same if we examine only the 11 countries that were surveyed since 2004 or the 22 countries that were surveyed since 2006. Though when looking only at the 11 countries surveyed in 2004, we find the spike from 2008 to 2010 to be greater (a 5-point difference) and the trend after 2010 to decline at a slower rate. We exclude these figures from the text for brevity and conciseness.

<sup>25</sup> See also Figure 1.15.

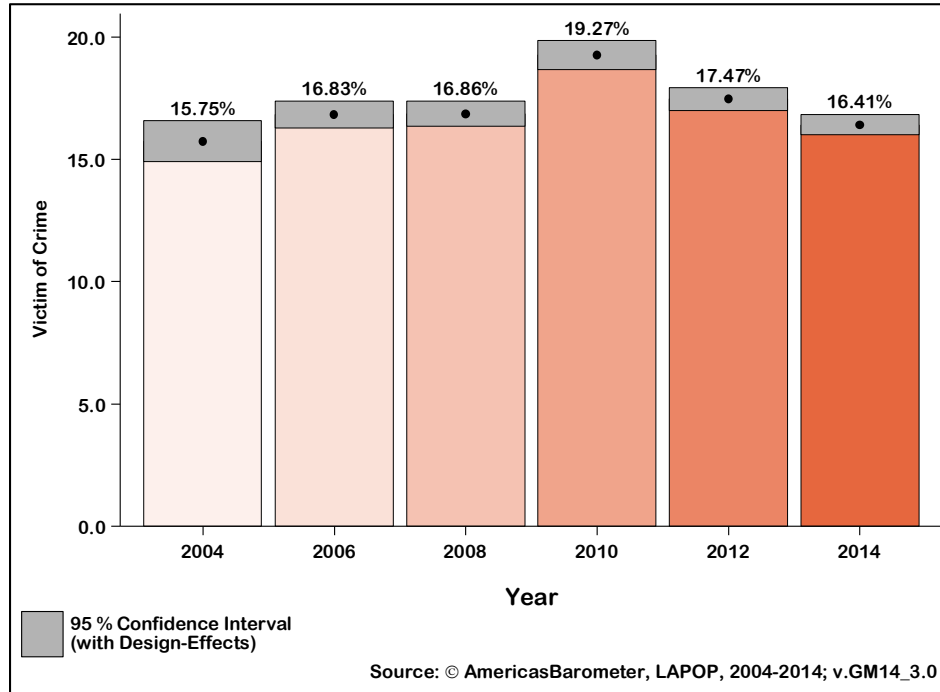


Figure 1.6. Crime Victimization over Time

Figure 1.7 compares the percentage of citizens who have been victims of at least one crime in 2014, and documents important variation across countries. The top four spots in the chart are taken by South American countries: Peru (30.6%) is at the top, followed by Ecuador (27.8%), Argentina (24.4%), and Venezuela (24.4%). Five Caribbean countries rank at the bottom of the chart: Trinidad & Tobago (9.5%), Suriname (9.4%), Guyana (7.4%), Barbados (6.8%) and Jamaica (6.7%). The presence of Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago at the low end of Figure 1.7 is notable given that high percentages of individuals in these countries rate “security” as the most important problem facing their country in 2014 (see Figure 1.5).

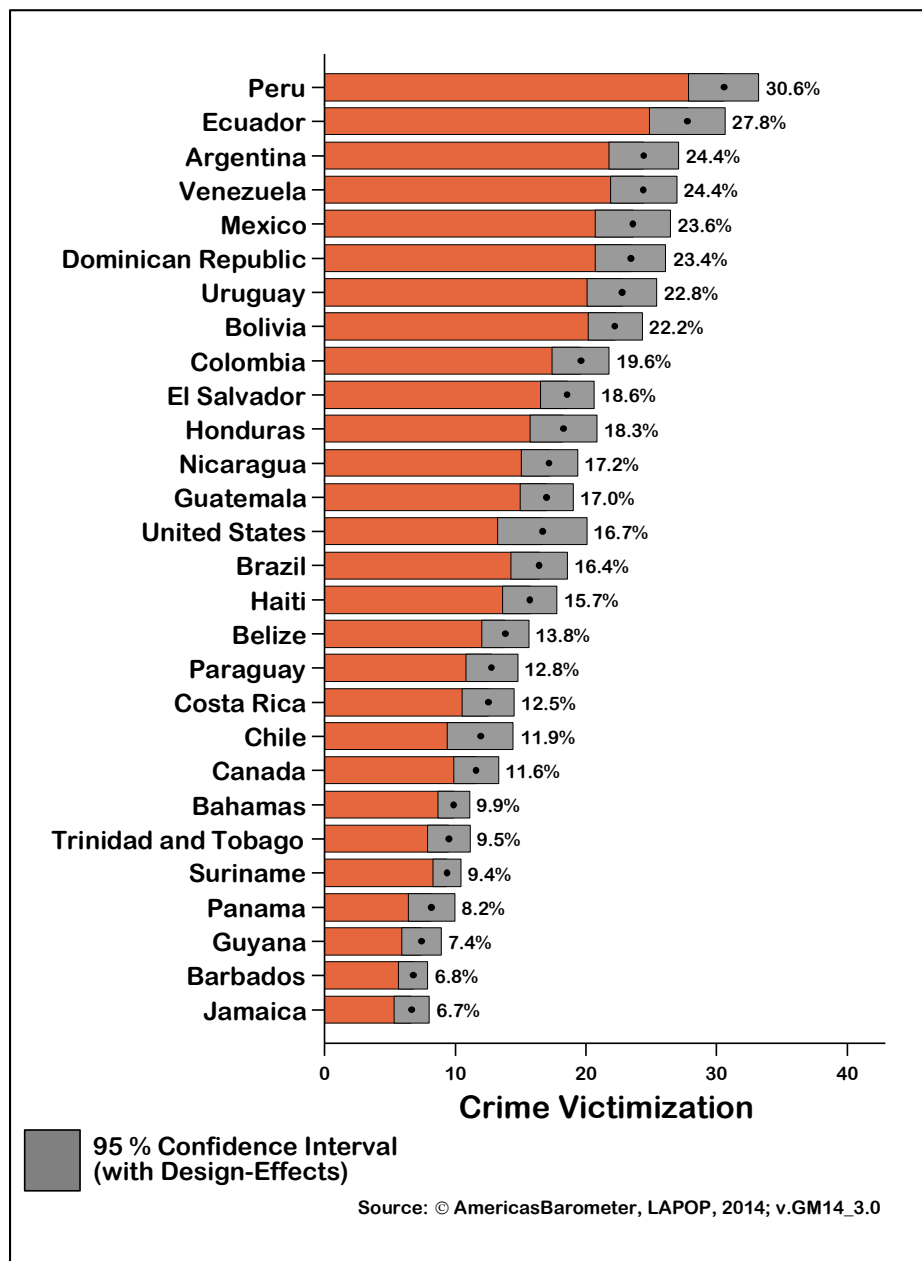


Figure 1.7. Crime Victimization Rates, 2014

The 2014 AmericasBarometer allows us to examine the number of times that victimized individuals have experienced crime in the last 12 months. For this purpose, the survey asks:

**VIC1EXTA.** How many times have you been a crime victim during the last 12 months?  
 [fill in number] \_\_\_\_\_ (88) DK (98) DA (99) N/A

As we can see in Figure 1.8, in 2014, on average for the Americas, a majority of crime victims (56.4%) report being victimized one time. One in four crime victims reports being victimized two times. One in ten crime victims has been victimized three or more times in the past year, and very small percentages are found in the higher bins in the figure.

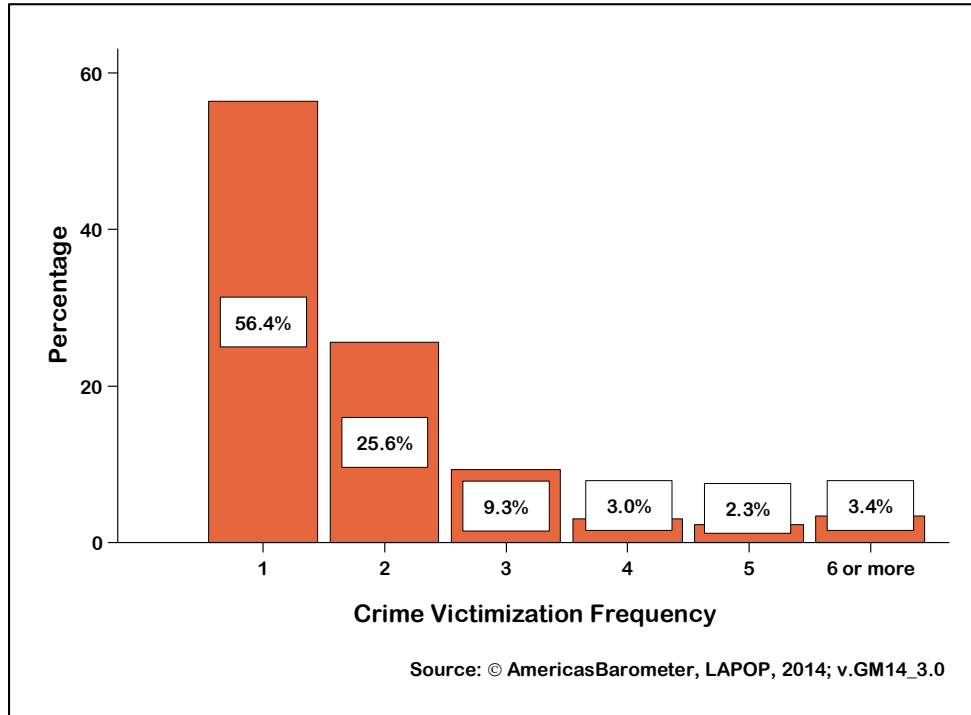


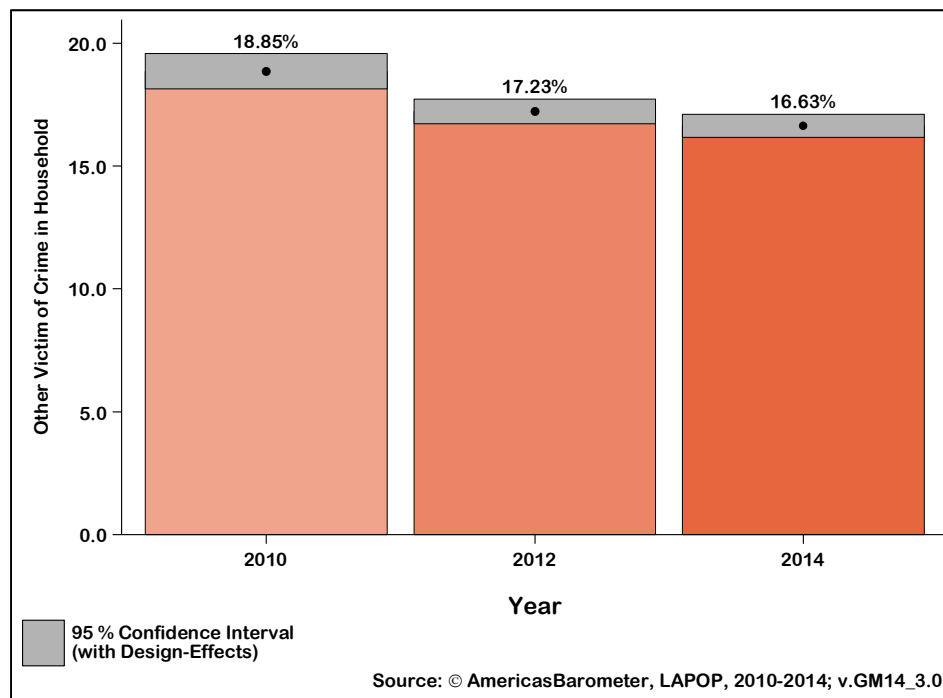
Figure 1.8. Crime Victimization Frequency, 2014

The AmericasBarometer not only records the levels of crime experienced by each of the survey respondents, but it also evaluates if other members of the respondent’s household were victimized by any type of crime during the 12 months prior to the interview. To do so, between 2010 and 2014 the AmericasBarometer included the following question:

**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) DK (98) DA (99) N/A (Lives alone)

In Figure 1.9 we look at the region-wide levels of crime victimization within the household of the respondent since 2010.<sup>26</sup> We see a similar trend as we do with individual crime victimization; across time, levels of crime victimization within the household remain stable at about 17%, except for in 2010 when reports almost reach 19%. When examining crime victimization within the household in urban areas only, the trend remains the same though reports of crime victimization within the household are three percentage points higher than the general levels shown in the figure here.

<sup>26</sup> This question was not included in earlier rounds of the survey.



**Figure 1.9. Crime Victimization within Household over Time**

The AmericasBarometer also provides information on where the crime took place. Knowing the location of the crime can be useful in understanding differences in patterns of crime victimization within and across countries. Further, it may serve as information citizens can consider in taking precautionary measures to avoid crime, or may help local policy makers and law officers identify areas that need particular attention in order to increase citizen security. In 2014, the AmericasBarometer included the following item, which was asked of those who indicated that they had been victim of a crime during the 12 months prior to the survey:

**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/parish
- (4) In another municipality/canton/parish
- (5) In another country
- (88) DK
- (98) DA
- (99) N/A

Figure 1.10 shows the distribution of the location of crime victimization as reported by respondents across the Americas in 2014. We find a relatively equal distribution of respondents across categories. However, the most common locations where respondents report having been victimized are their homes (28.1%), in their neighborhood (26.5%), and in their municipality (26.0%). Victimization in other municipalities is less frequent (18.8%) and very few crime victims report the incident as having taken place outside of their country (0.6%).



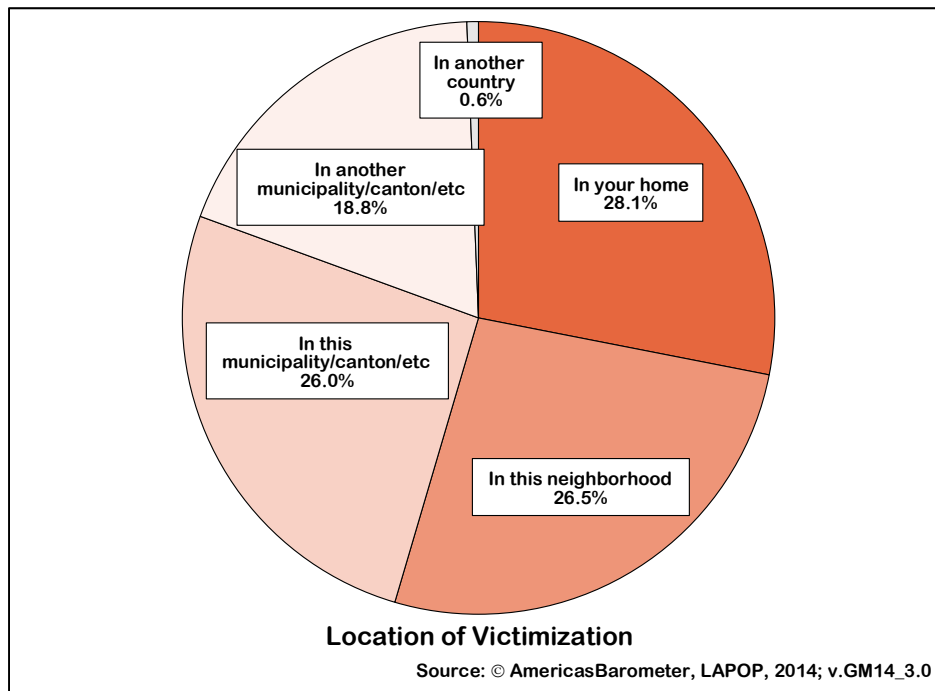


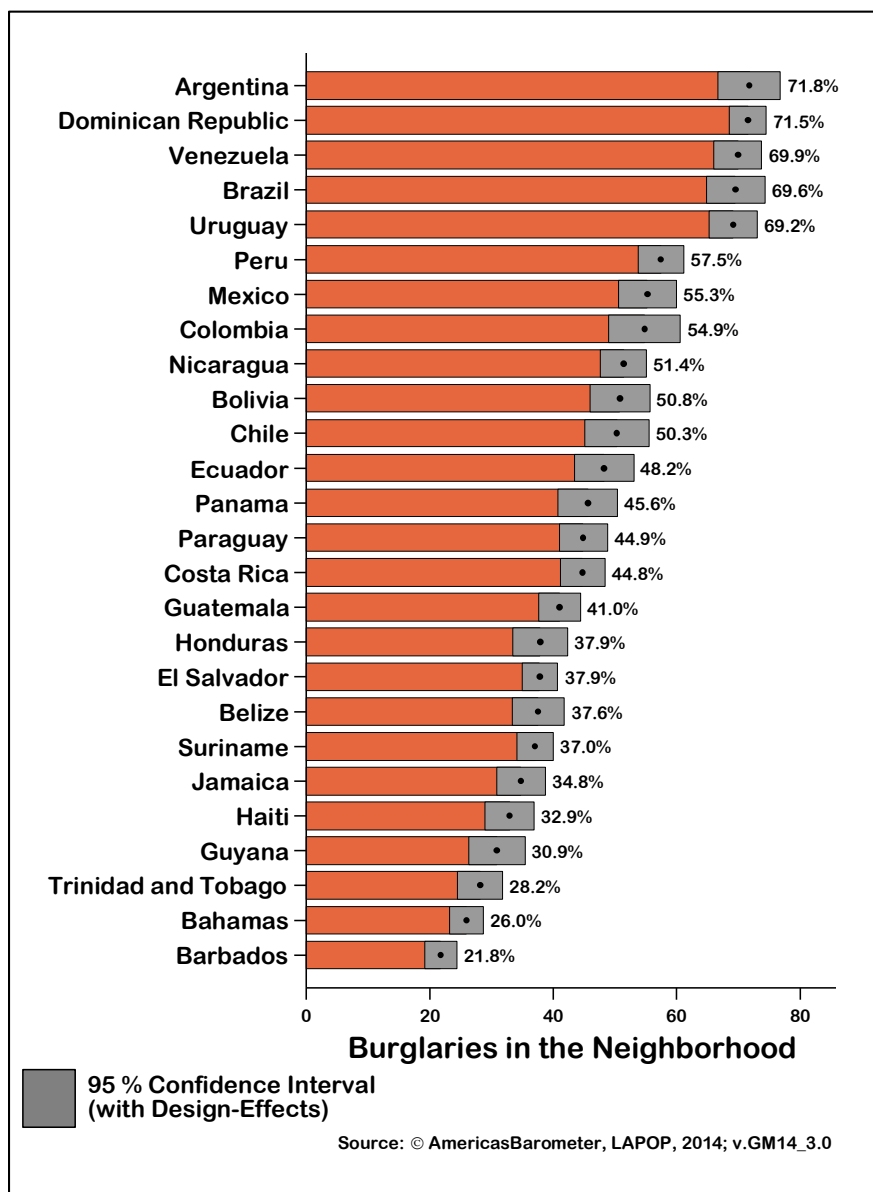
Figure 1.10. Location of Crime Victimization, 2014

In 2014, the AmericasBarometer included an expanded series of survey items in order to obtain a sense of criminal activity within the neighborhood of the respondent. The new battery refers to the last 12 months, just as the crime victimization questions, and covers the following incidents: burglaries, sales of illegal drugs, extortion or blackmail, and murders. In the remainder of this section, we examine responses to these “VICBAR” questions:

Given your experience or what you have heard, which of following criminal acts have happened in the last 12 months in your neighborhood.
<b>VICBAR1.</b> Were there burglaries in the last 12 months in your neighborhood? [yes/no]
<b>VICBAR3.</b> Have there been sales of illegal drugs in the past 12 months in your neighborhood? [yes/no]
<b>VICBAR4.</b> Has there been any extortion or blackmail in the past 12 months in your neighborhood? [yes/no]
<b>VICBAR7.</b> Have there been any murders in that last 12 months in your neighborhood? [yes/no]

Figure 1.11 displays, by country, the percentage of respondents who answered yes to having experienced or heard of burglaries in their neighborhood. We see a great deal of variation across countries, from rates of affirmative responses of nearly 72% in Argentina, to 21.8% of respondents reporting such incidents in their neighborhood in Barbados. South American countries, like Argentina, Venezuela (69.9%), Brazil (69.6%), and Uruguay (69.2%), are grouped towards the top of those with the highest rates of burglaries, while Central American countries like Belize (37.6%), El Salvador (37.9%), Honduras (37.9%), Guatemala (41.0%), and Costa Rica (44.8%) are grouped somewhere in the middle of the figure. With the exception of the Dominican Republic, all of the Caribbean countries included in this report (Barbados, 21.8%, Bahamas, 26.0%, Trinidad & Tobago, 28.2%; Guyana, 30.9%;

Haiti, 32.9%; and Jamaica, 34.8%) rank at the bottom in rates of witnessing or having heard about neighborhood burglaries.<sup>27</sup>



**Figure 1.11. Burglaries in the Neighborhood, 2014**

Figure 1.12 examines the percentage of respondents across countries in 2014 that witnessed or heard of sales of illegal drugs in their neighborhood. Once again we see substantial cross-national variation in crime rates. More than half of the respondents of Brazil (64.6%), Costa Rica (58.2%), the Dominican Republic (56.1%), and Argentina (50.5%) report illegal drugs sales in their neighborhood in the 2014 AmericasBarometer study, whereas less than 10% of the respondents in Haiti make a similar report. Jamaica and Bolivia also show low rates, at 20.5% and 17.0%, respectively. When comparing the two occurrences, sales of illegal drugs and burglaries, in the neighborhood of the respondent most countries have similar positioning within the region in each chart; but Costa Rica (58.2%), Chile (48%)

<sup>27</sup> When examining only urban areas throughout the Americas, a similar ranking is found, but with increased percentage points per country across the board (about a 5-8 increase in percentage points per country).

and Trinidad & Tobago (44.7%) see substantial moves in placement toward the top of the chart in sales of illegal drugs, when comparing their ranking here to their ranking in the chart related to burglaries.<sup>28</sup>

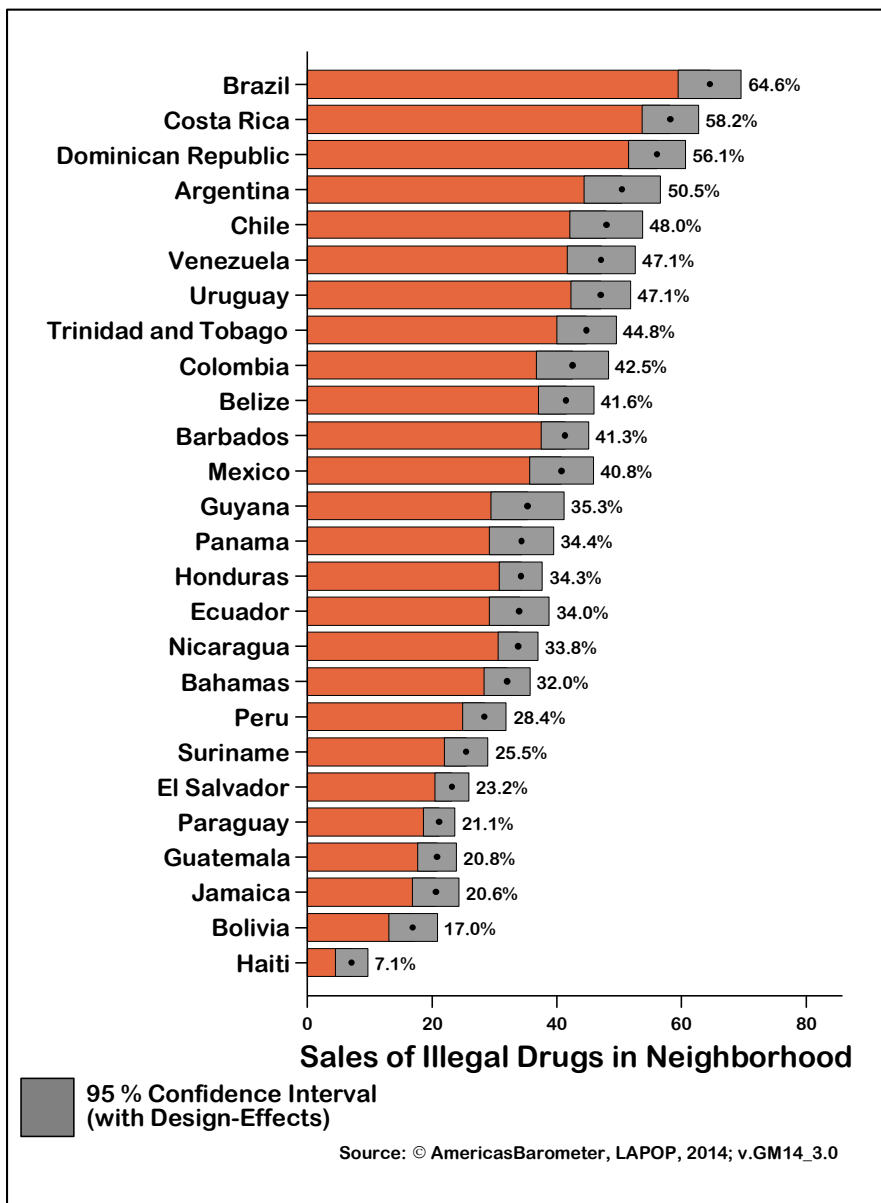


Figure 1.12. Sales of Illegal Drugs in the Neighborhood, 2014

Next, Figure 1.13 displays the percentage of respondents across countries that report having witnessed or heard of extortion or blackmail within their neighborhood. The cross-national variation reveals a 23 point spread between the highest and lowest rate, which is so far the smallest variation and yet still substantial. On average, rates of reported extortion/blackmail in the neighborhood are among the lowest percentages reported in the VICBAR series (that is, the series of reported criminal incidents in the neighborhood). We continue to see the Dominican Republic (24.4%) at the top of the charts for crime victimization within respondent's neighborhoods. However, overall we see a slightly different

<sup>28</sup> Trends in urban areas reflect the national trends, but with increased percentage points (about a 3-8 increase in percentage points per country).

distribution of countries than we saw for burglaries and sales of illegal drugs. With the same percentage we find Haiti (24.2%), which has ranked lower on the two previous charts, comparatively. Guatemala (23.3%) and El Salvador (22.9%) are within the top five countries reporting extortion or blackmail, and again ranked much lower, comparatively, on the two previous measures. At the other end of the scale we find Uruguay, Guyana, and Nicaragua with a frequency of only 3.1%; 2.0%; and 1.4%, respectively.<sup>29</sup>

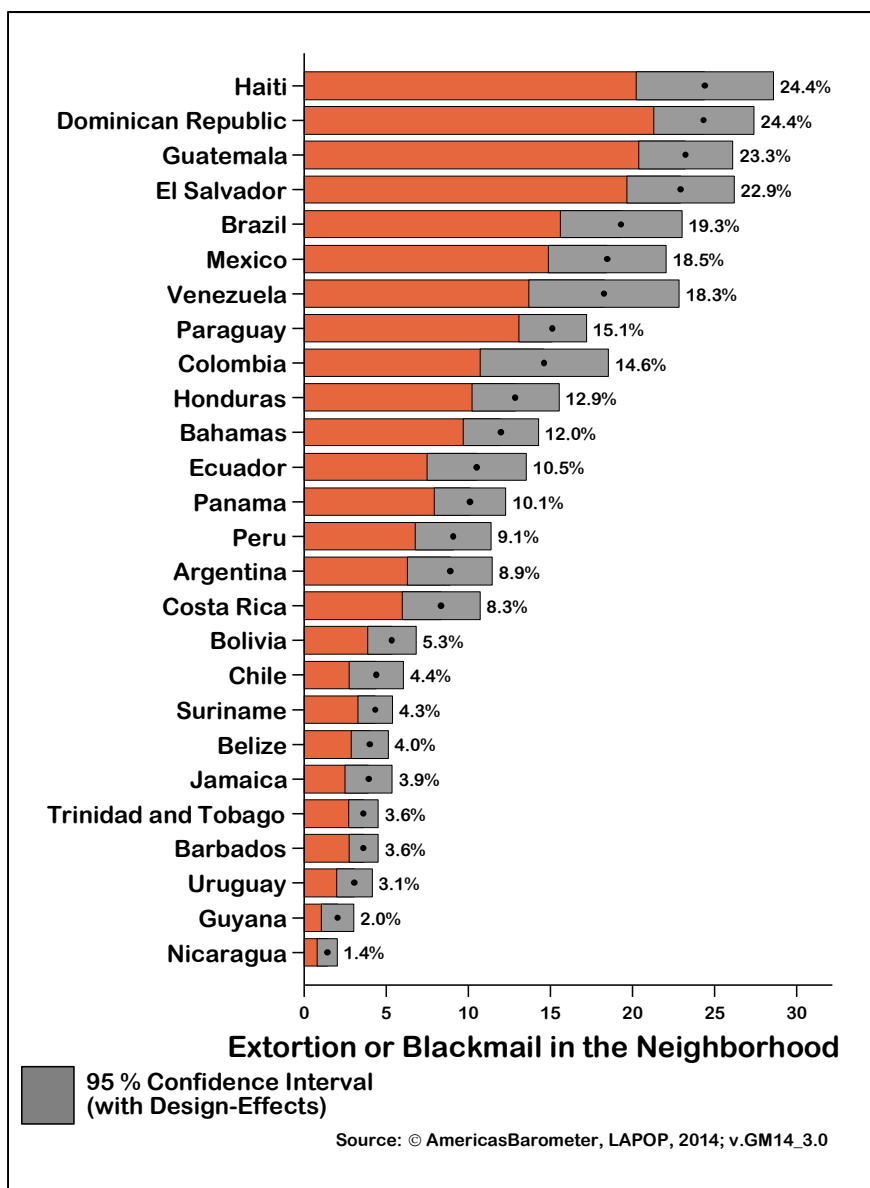


Figure 1.13. Extortion or Blackmail in the Neighborhood, 2014

Finally, Figure 1.14 examines the percentage of respondents that reported having known of a murder occurring in their neighborhood. We see Brazil (51.1%) at the top of the chart with the highest percentage, where over half of respondents report being aware of a murder in their neighborhood in the 12 months prior to the survey. Venezuela is in the second position with 42.7%, followed by the Dominican Republic, which we find at the top of all figures examining the VICBAR series – burglaries,

<sup>29</sup> When examining urban areas only for reports of extortion or blackmail within the neighborhood, we find a similar country ranking with a few more percentage points reported per country.

sales of illegal drugs, extortion or blackmail, and now murders (33.9%). Suriname lies at the bottom of the chart (6.4%), just below Barbados (8.3%) and Costa Rica (10.7%). The differences among those countries are not statistically significant.<sup>30</sup>

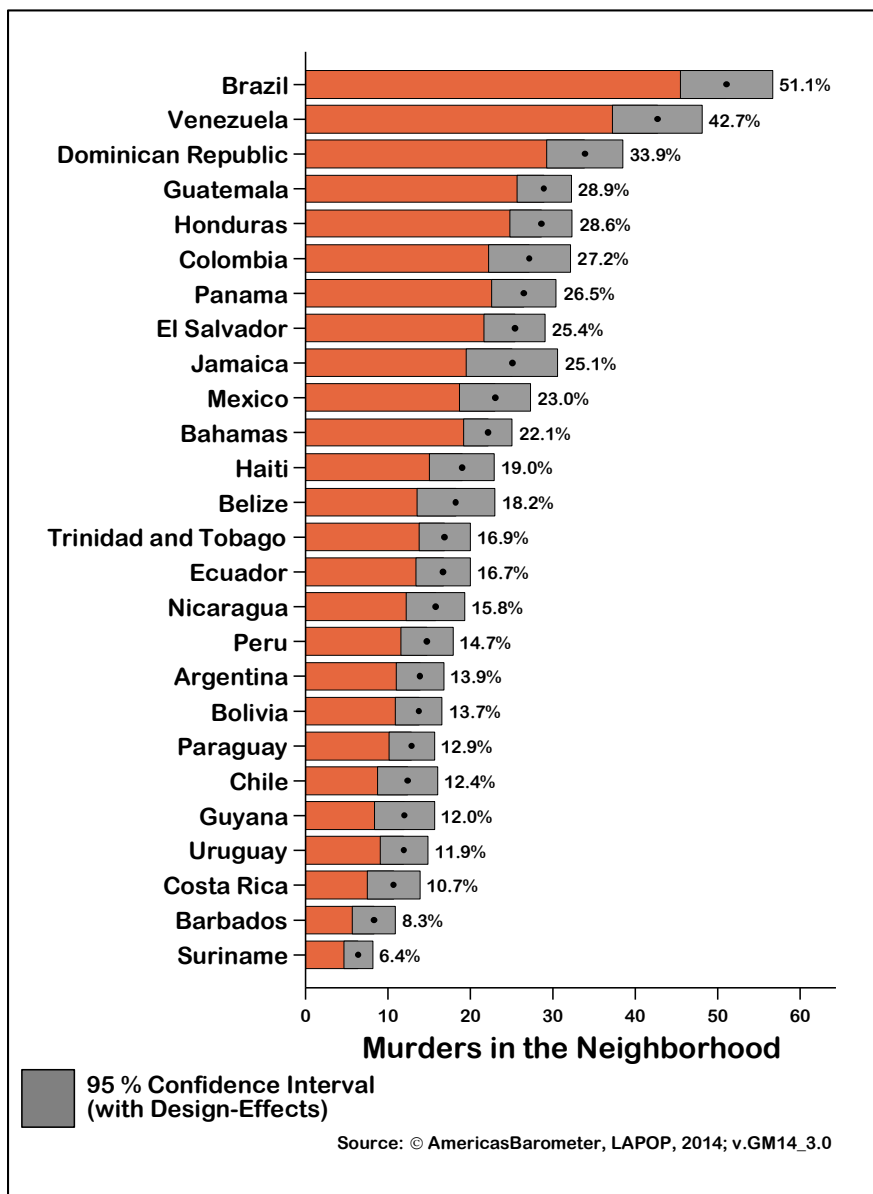


Figure 1.14. Murders in the Neighborhood, 2014

### Who is Likely to Be a Victim of a Crime?

Now that we have provided a broad picture of the frequency and nature of crime across the Americas as reported by the 2014 AmericasBarometer, we ask *who is most likely to report having been the victim of a crime?* Crime does not affect all population groups in the same way. Differences exist by

<sup>30</sup> When examining urban areas only, the positioning of the countries remains, with less than a five percentage point increase per country.



place of residence, economic status, gender, age, and education.<sup>31</sup> In general terms, the scholarly literature suggests that crime is more often an urban phenomenon in Latin America. Living in large, urbanized cities makes citizens more likely to be victims of crime than residing in less populated and less developed areas (Gaviria and Pagés 2002; Heinemann and Verner 2006; Carvalho and Lavor 2008; Gomes and Paz 2008; Cole and Gramajo 2009; Cotte Poveda 2012; Muggah 2012).

Increasing attention has also been given to the role of wealth in crime victimization; however, the relationship is less straightforward than between crime and urban settings. On the one hand, wealthier individuals can be more attractive to criminals and therefore wealth could be positively correlated with risk of crime victimization (Anderson 2009). On the other hand, wealth implies the motivation and capability to have more resources with which to protect one's person and/or property, which reduces the risk of becoming a victim of crime (Gaviria and Pagés 2002; Barslund, Rand, Tarp, and Chiconela 2007; Gomes and Paz 2008; Justus and Kassouf 2013). Most recently, evidence indicates that wealth does indeed increase the probability of crime victimization, but the relationship is not linear, or non-monotonic. Once an individual has attained a certain level of wealth, the probability of falling victim to crime seems to diminish, likely because of the ability to guarantee self-protection (Justus and Kassouf 2013). This means that citizens belonging to the middle class may be more likely to be a victim of a crime than those that belong to the lowest or highest socioeconomic strata.

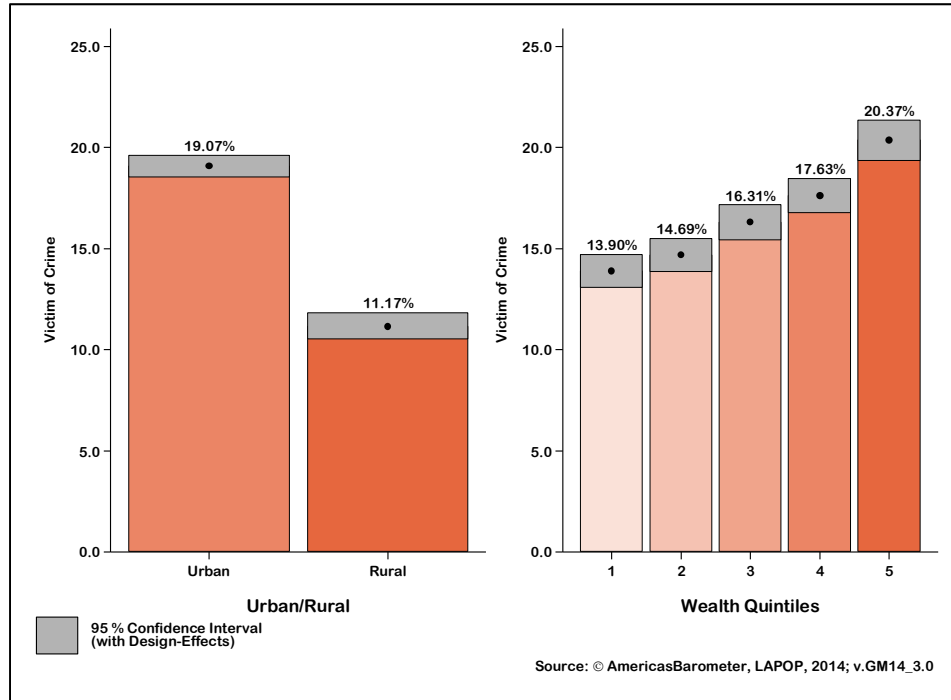
Scholars have also identified young adult males as those most susceptible to crime victimization (Beato, Peixoto, and Andrade 2004; Carvalho and Lavor 2008; Cole and Gramajo 2009; Muggah 2012). Those most vulnerable to violent crime in particular, are young male adults, especially those that are unemployed and have poor education. Victims of property crime, on the other hand, tend to also be young males, but are more likely to be those who have more education and frequently use public transportation (Bergman 2006).

Using the 2014 AmericasBarometer data, we first examine crime victims by location of their residence – whether an urban or rural location – and by their level of wealth.<sup>32</sup> The results in Figure 1.15 show that respondents living in urban locations are almost twice as likely to be victims of crime as respondents living in rural locations (19.07% vs. 11.17%), which is in line with conventional views and expectations. Also, as quintiles of wealth increase, the likelihood of reporting having been the victim of a crime increases. The results display a linear relationship rather than a tapering off effect or a diminishing return once wealth reaches a certain point. Thus, on average across the Americas, wealth is simply and positively related to reported crime victimization.

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<sup>31</sup> Differences also emerge when considering whether victimization is violent or non-violent, or involves property; our analyses here focus on crime victimization in general.

<sup>32</sup> Wealth quintiles is a standard LAPOP variable created using the R-series questions about capital goods ownership to create a five-point index of quintiles of wealth, which is standardized across urban and rural areas in each country. For more information on the variable, see Córdova, Abby. 2009. "Methodological Note: Measuring Relative Wealth Using Household Asset Indicators." AmericasBarometer Insights 6. Vanderbilt University: Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP).



**Figure 1.15. Crime Victimization by Resident Location and Wealth, 2014**

To further examine what factors predict crime victimization in the Americas, Figure 1.16 presents the results of a logistic regression analysis intended to examine determinants of self-reported crime victimization within the Americas in 2014.<sup>33</sup> The figure displays the standardized regression coefficients as dots, with confidence intervals indicated by the horizontal lines. The figure shows that the most consequential factors associated with crime victimization are urban residence and education. Those living within an urban setting and having higher education levels are more likely to report being a victim of crime. Wealthy individuals are also more likely to report being a crime victim. On the other hand, women and those from higher age cohorts (the comparison category in the analysis is those of 36 to 45 years of age) are less likely to report being a victim of crime. We included a measure of respondent skin tone in the analysis, and see that it is not a significant factor in predicting crime victimization on average across the Americas. This result for skin tone and those that we report here for gender, education, and wealth are consistent with analyses of predictors of crime victimization using the 2012 AmericasBarometer survey, as presented in our last report (Seligson, Smith, and Zechmeister2012), which gives us confidence in the robustness of these findings for the Latin American and Caribbean region.

<sup>33</sup> The analysis excludes the United States and Canada. Country fixed effects are included but not shown with Mexico as the base country. See corresponding table with the numerical results for the standardized coefficients in the Appendix.

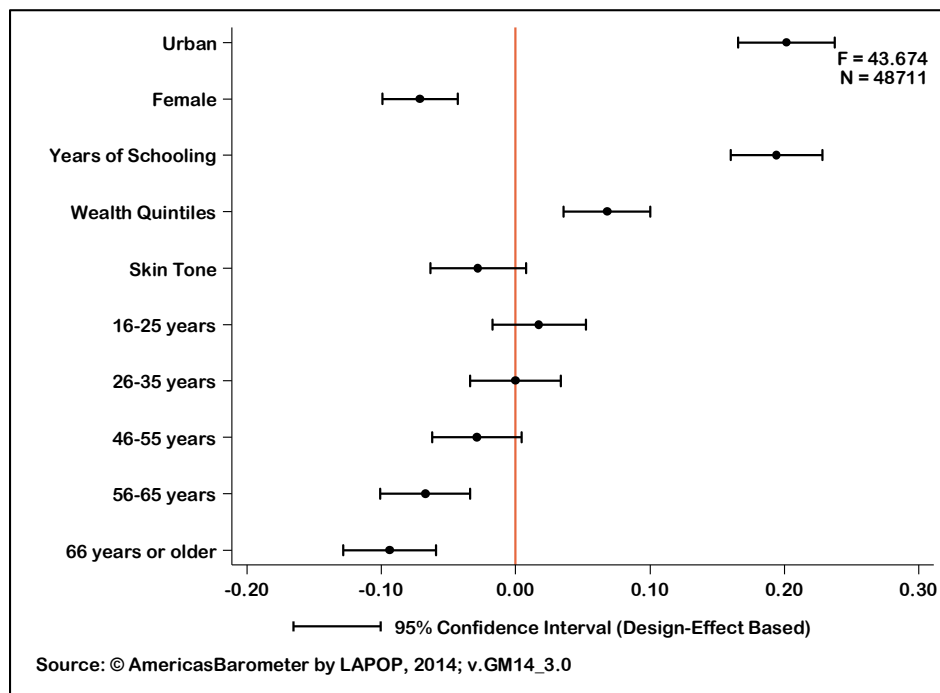


Figure 1.16. Determinants of Self-Reported Crime Victimization, 2014

## V. Conclusions

Issues related to crime, violence, and security are a serious challenge for democratic governance in the Americas. The AmericasBarometer has consistently recorded citizens' experiences with crime and violence in the region, and their concerns about these issues. In 2014, we expanded the study to include several new modules related to crime in order to allow even more detailed analysis of this topic. This chapter presents only a glimpse at this broader dataset, which we encourage those interested in the topic to explore in greater detail by accessing the survey data directly via LAPOP's website ([www.lapopsurveys.org](http://www.lapopsurveys.org)).

Among the key findings in this chapter is the fact that concerns about crime as the most important problem have been steadily increasing over recent years in the Americas. And at the same time that regional average crime rates have remained fairly constant, significant variation exists across countries with respect to crime rates in general and with respect to reported incidents of particular types of crime in the neighborhood.

We concluded the chapter with an assessment of which individuals are more likely to report having been the victim of a crime in the Americas. We find that those living in urban settings, those with more years of education, and those with higher levels of wealth are more likely to report being the victim of a crime.



## Appendix

**Appendix 1.1: Determinants of Self-reported Crime Victimization, 2014**

	Standardized Coefficient	(t)
66 years or older	-0.094*	(-5.33)
56-65 years	-0.067*	(-3.92)
46-55 years	-0.029	(-1.70)
26-35 years	0.000	(0.00)
16-25 years	0.017	(0.99)
Skin Tone	-0.028	(-1.53)
Wealth Quintiles	0.068*	(4.12)
Years of Schooling	0.194*	(11.17)
Woman	-0.071*	(-4.95)
Urban	0.202*	(10.99)
Guatemala	-0.032	(-1.42)
El Salvador	-0.042*	(-2.07)
Honduras	-0.029	(-1.27)
Nicaragua	-0.051*	(-2.36)
Costa Rica	-0.133*	(-5.68)
Panama	-0.264*	(-8.74)
Colombia	-0.055*	(-2.78)
Ecuador	0.054*	(2.02)
Bolivia	-0.027	(-1.05)
Peru	0.050*	(2.82)
Paraguay	-0.122*	(-6.10)
Chile	-0.179*	(-6.86)
Uruguay	-0.016	(-0.80)
Brazil	-0.082*	(-3.99)
Venezuela	-0.018	(-0.97)
Argentina	-0.005	(-0.28)
Dominican Republic	0.001	(0.03)
Haiti	-0.068*	(-3.09)
Jamaica	-0.249*	(-10.19)
Guyana	-0.224*	(-8.41)
Trinidad & Tobago	-0.205*	(-9.00)
Belize	-0.074*	(-4.08)
Suriname	-0.164*	(-9.19)
Bahamas	-0.139*	(-10.50)
Barbados	-0.188*	(-11.93)
Constant	-1.618*	(-89.12)
F	43.67	
No. of cases	48711	
Regression-Standardized Coefficients with t-Statistics based on Standard Errors Adjusted for the Survey Design. * p<0.05		

## Chapter 2. Safety and Security as Influences on Everyday Life

*Arturo Maldonado and Mariana Rodríguez*

### I. Introduction

Fear of crime and crime victimization can have transformative effects on citizens' routines, plans, and senses of well-being. Citizens who are victims of a crime and/or fear being assaulted or robbed are likely to change some of their daily life habits in response to these experiences and concerns. To avoid falling victim to crime, people may change the places they frequent or the routes they use for transportation. Fear of crime may motivate some people to become more proactive in finding ways to combat crime and violence in their neighborhoods.<sup>1</sup> Ultimately, the fear of crime and violence can take a toll on a person's degree of satisfaction with his or her life. This chapter explores these possibilities by examining evidence of the impact that fear of crime and violence have on citizens' everyday lives across the Americas.

Considering average patterns across the Americas, some key findings in this chapter include:

- Fear of crime has increased across the region. The average perception of insecurity has increased across the Americas to one of its highest points in a decade of the AmericasBarometer.
- Over 35% of respondents to the 2014 AmericasBarometer indicate that they avoid walking through certain areas of their neighborhood out of fear of crime. Further, almost 30% of respondents worry a lot about insecurity on public transportation and over 35% also worry a lot about insecurity in schools.
- However, average perceived levels of gang activity in neighborhoods reached its lowest point in 2014, and the majority of respondents think their neighborhood is safer in comparison to others.
- Crime victimization (whether personal or of another household member) is a positive predictor of individual fear of crime (across all the survey measures employed). Fear of crime increases the likelihood of citizens' organizing with neighbors.
- Urban residents and those who pay a lot of attention to news media also tend to have heightened feelings of insecurity (a relationship observed across nearly all the measures of fear of crime examined).
- Experiences with crime and the fear of falling victim to crime are associated with lower levels of life satisfaction and a higher probability of intending to emigrate from one's home country.

This chapter documents who across the Americas is most concerned about crime. To measure fear of crime, we employ a number of survey items from the AmericasBarometer, including a set of questions on respondents' perceptions of insecurity and levels of crime and violence in their neighborhood. We also examine respondents' reported changes in behavior as a consequence of fear of

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<sup>1</sup> This may include individual or collective efforts to secure private security (see Ungar 2007; Malone 2012).

crime. These measures allow us to grasp the extent to which citizens perceive crime to be a concern in their lives independent of whether they have or have not been a recent victim of crime.

Scholars have typically linked propensities to feel insecure about safety and fearful of crime to a number of individual-level factors, including poverty, gender, age, urban residence, and prior victimization, although differences exist across different regions of the world (Elchardus, Groof, and Smits 2008; McGarh and Chananie-Hill 2011; Doran and Burgess 2012; Vieno, Rocato, and Russo 2013; Bonner 2014). This chapter examines the extent to which these factors predict concerns about crime in the Americas in 2014. In addition, we look at the influence of paying attention to the media. Across the Americas, news on crime and violence is grim and quite often alarming. Research has shown that media sensationalization of crime can increase fear of crime for those that experience a high level of media exposure (Dammert and Malone 2003, 2006; Elchardus et al. 2008; Perdomo 2010; Doran and Burgess 2012). Since the media has the ability to set the agenda for its viewers by giving cues or “framing” issues of importance for society, news coverage of crime has the potential to influence perceptions of personal risk of crime (Krause 2014). Using a measure for popular media preference as a proxy for media exposure, Elchardus et al. (2008) indeed find that preference for media outlets that focused on local crime increases fear of crime. In analyzing this relationship using the 2014 AmericasBarometer data, we also find an important link between attention paid to the news and concerns about crime, gangs, and violence.

This chapter also assesses the consequences that fear of crime and crime victimization may have for citizens’ everyday lives and outlooks. We investigate this topic in three core ways. First, we examine the extent to which crime victimization, feelings of insecurity, and the fear of being a victim of a crime incentivize people to avoid areas that are known for the prevalence of assaults or robberies. Prior research suggests that individuals who feel insecure or fear falling victim to crime are likely to avoid certain areas of the city or streets, particularly at night (Bonner 2014). Caldeira (2001) examines how middle and upper class residents of Sao Paulo, motivated by fear of crime and mistrust of their fellow citizens, have self-segregated into gated communities with private security, literally placing walls between themselves and other Brazilians. Similarly, Smulovitz (2003) finds that fear of crime in Argentina leads citizens to leave their homes less frequently, migrate to gated communities, acquire weapons, and hire private security services. Such changes in the types of places citizens frequent and/or the areas in which they live, and the changes in their behavior as a consequence of fear of crime, can isolate citizens from their broader society, which can result in fragmented communities with depressed levels of interpersonal trust (Frühling, Tulchin, and Golding 2003; Bateson 2012).

Second, we explore the relationship between fear of crime and the intention to emigrate. Prior work, including by scholars affiliated with the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP), provides compelling evidence that in the face of extreme insecurity, many Latin Americans might be inclined to “exit” unsafe living conditions in their countries (Hirschman 1970; Arnold, Hamilton, and Moore 2011; Hiskey, Malone and Díaz-Domínguez 2014; Hiskey, Malone, and Orcés 2014; Hiskey, Montalvo, and Orcés 2014;). Although scholars have traditionally focused on the economic or family-related motivations for emigrating, this recent research demonstrates that high levels of crime and violence, as well as fear of falling victim to such crime, can shape migration patterns in Latin America. In this chapter we assess this connection between crime and intent to emigrate among Latin Americans with data from the 2014 AmericasBarometer.

Third, in addition to the social fragmentation costs of crime, we use the 2014 AmericasBarometer to test the relationship between crime victimization and insecurity measures, on the one hand, and life satisfaction on the other. Extant scholarship shows that being a victim of a crime or fear of such can depreciate a person's perception of his or her quality of life or, as it is conceptualized by studies of public opinion, life satisfaction (Michalos and Zumbo 2000; Powdthavee 2005; Di Tella MacCulloch, and Ñopo 2008; Graham and Chaparro 2011; Medina and Tamayo 2014; Romero 2014; for contrasting views see Cohen 2008; Di Tella and Schargrotsky 2009). Experiences with crime can affect one's quality of life by triggering negative emotions such as pain, worry, sadness, depression, and anger (Stafford, Chandola, and Marmot 2007; Di Tella et al. 2008; Jackson and Stafford 2009). However, these effects may vary by level of security at the neighborhood level.<sup>2</sup> To foreshadow the results of our analyses, we indeed find that perceptions of security in one's neighborhood strongly predict individuals' life satisfaction.

## II. Measures of Perception of Insecurity and Fear of Crime and Violence

As indicated in the previous chapter, crime is considered the second most important problem among citizens of the Americas. Across the region, just how widespread is insecurity and fear of falling victim to crime among citizens? To answer this question, this section presents the results of a series of survey questions on this topic that were included in the 2014 AmericasBarometer. In addition, we present analyses of the characteristics of those most likely to feel insecure and/or fear crime and violence.

### *Perceptions of Insecurity*

The 2014 AmericasBarometer survey included a number of measures for perceived feelings of insecurity. As in past rounds, the regional survey included these two questions that ask individuals to assess issues of safety and gangs in their neighborhood:

<p><b>AOJ11.</b> 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 unsafe?          (1) Very safe (2) Somewhat safe (3) Somewhat unsafe (4) Very unsafe</p>
<p><b>AOJ17.</b> 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</p>

Between 2004 and 2012, based on question AOJ11, the regional average on perceptions of *insecurity* decreased across the Americas from 43.8 points on a 0-100 scale in 2004 to 37.8 points in 2012.<sup>3</sup> In 2014, however, the AmericasBarometer records that concerns about safety increased, reaching an average of 42.1 points on a 0-100 scale. As Figure 2.1 shows, the 2014 regional average on concerns about safety in the neighborhood mirrors that found in 2004. Thus, after a decade of slight but steady

<sup>2</sup> Some scholars examining this relationship (see, e.g., Powdthavee 2005; Graham 2009; Graham, Chattopadhyay, and Picon 2010) suggest an interactive relationship: repeated exposure to crime may mitigate the effects of crime on happiness by conditioning citizens to adapt to conditions of high crime.

<sup>3</sup> Following LAPOP practices, responses to these questions have been recoded on a 100 point scale, with high values representing negative evaluations of the security in their neighborhood and a higher perception of gang activity in their neighborhoods. In all analyses, regional averages are based on computations that weight each country equally.

improvement, in 2014 the average level of insecurity in the region has returned to its previous peak.<sup>4</sup> If we look at the percentages who select different response options to this question, we see that, in 2014, 65.6% of respondents say they are either very or somewhat unsafe. The distribution of responses for the region is presented in Map 2.1.

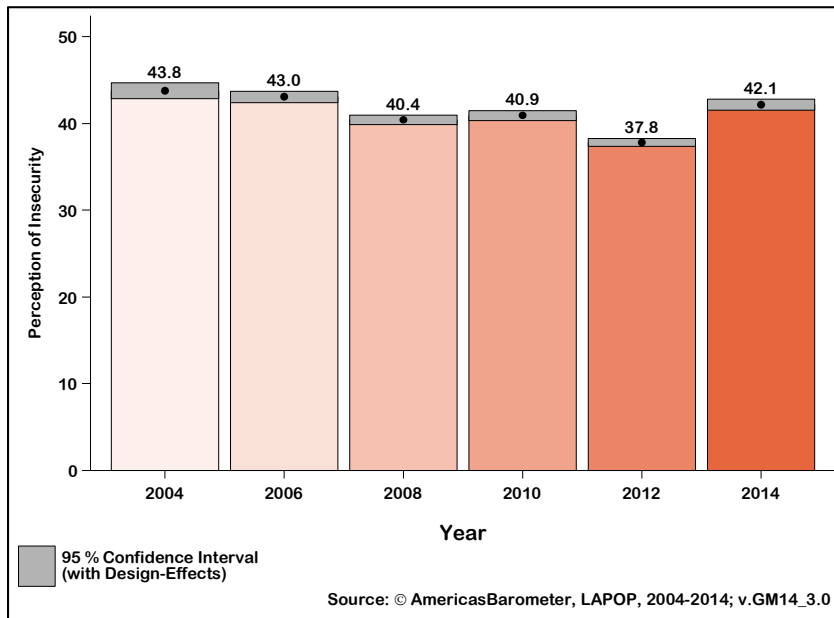


Figure 2.1. Levels of Insecurity over Time

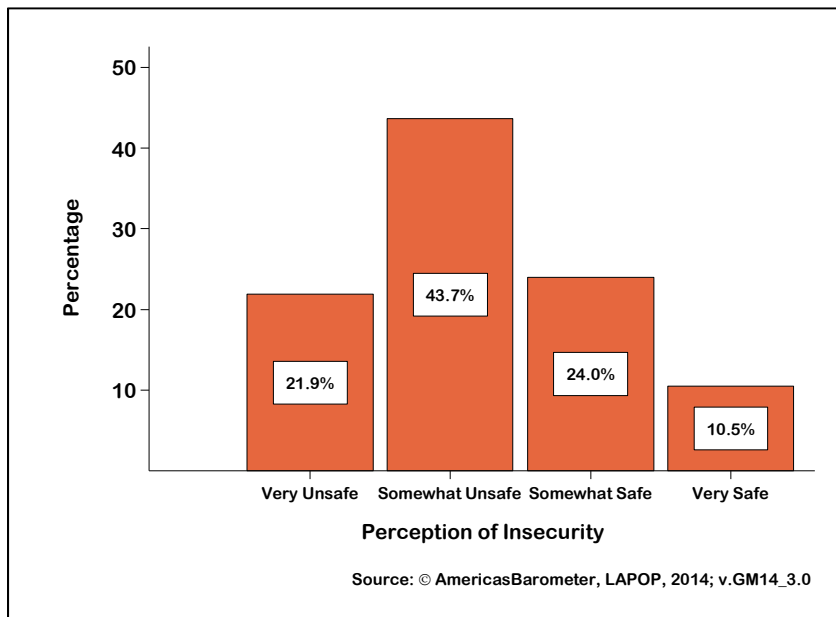
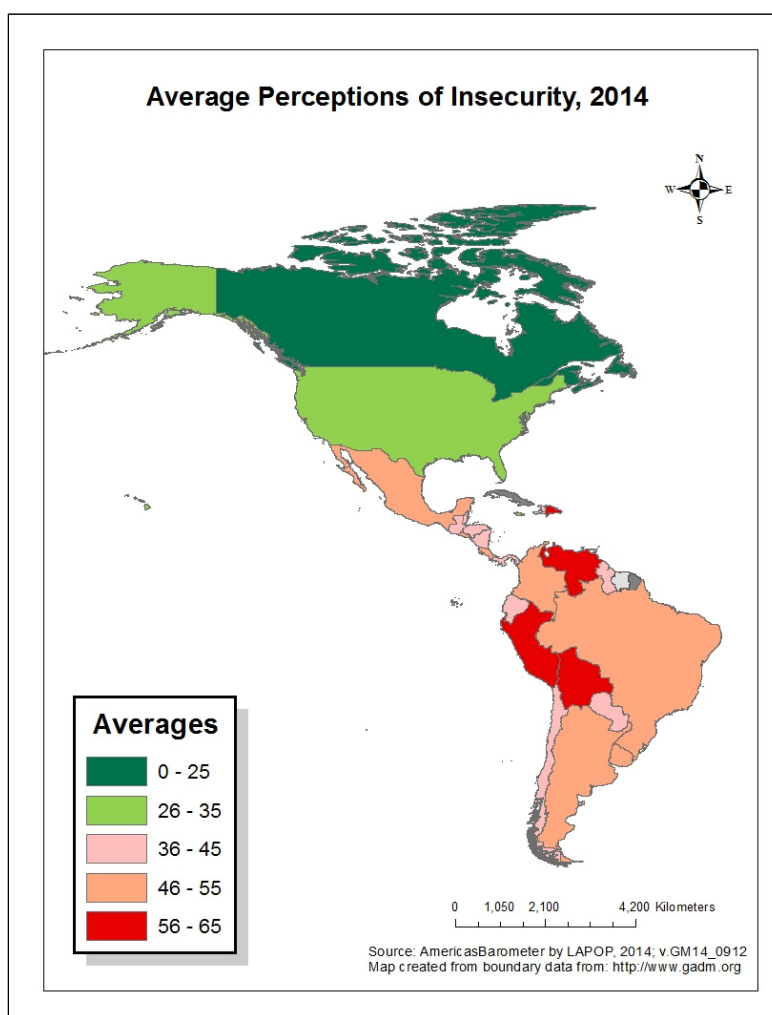


Figure 2.2. Levels of Insecurity in the Americas, 2014

<sup>4</sup> The analysis includes the full sample of countries for which the question was asked in each round. However, patterns look roughly the same when analyzing only the subset of countries included in the AmericasBarometer since 2004 or 2006. We exclude these figures from the text for brevity and conciseness.

Map 2.1 presents a portrait of mean country levels of insecurity in 2014 for the region.<sup>5</sup> Feelings of insecurity are especially high in Venezuela, Peru, the Dominican Republic, and Bolivia; in each case, the average country score on insecurity is above the mid-point of 50 on the 0-100 scale. Conversely, feelings of insecurity are low in Trinidad & Tobago, Bahamas, the U.S., Jamaica, Canada, and Barbados all with mean scores below 30 on the insecurity scale. Comparing these levels to those found in the 2012 AmericasBarometer (data not presented here, but assessed by the authors), we find that Peru, Venezuela and Bolivia are consistently at the top of the chart on insecurity across these two years. Venezuela shows a striking increase from a score 47.9 in 2012 to a score of 63.5 in 2014. Insecurity also increased in Andean countries between 2012 and 2014, from 48.9 to 57.0 in Peru and from 45.2 to 55.5 in Bolivia. At the same time, insecurity decreased in some countries. Trinidad & Tobago's average score fell from 30.8 in 2012 to 28.8 in 2014; Jamaica from 28.3 to 27.4; and Canada from 25.2 to 22.2 points.<sup>6</sup>



**Map 2.1. Feelings of Insecurity by Countries, 2014**

A noteworthy pattern in Map 2.1 is the position of many South American countries at the higher end of the insecurity scale (such as Venezuela, Peru, and Bolivia) and the presence of many Central

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix 2.1 for a more detailed account of averages by country.

<sup>6</sup> This is based on analysis not shown here, but available from authors. Further information and results from the 2012 AmericasBarometer dataset and findings can be found in the 2012 regional report.

American countries at the middle or the bottom (such as El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Honduras). For some, this will be puzzling given that the latter group of countries is infamous for their high levels of crime relative to the rest of the region. We note that LAPOP’s report on the 2012 AmericasBarometer also finds this pattern (Seligson, Smith, and Zechmeister 2012). Two potential explanations could account for this reality. First, according to official statistics compiled by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, homicides rates are higher in Central America, but levels of assault, robbery, and sexual assault are higher in South America.<sup>7</sup> Second, research suggests that individuals can become acclimated to threats, such that consistently high levels of crime and violence may result in individuals reporting comparatively lower levels than in cases in which individuals have not become as desensitized to threats (Barker and Crawford 2006).<sup>8</sup>

To extend our analysis of insecurity that citizens face, the AmericasBarometer also includes a question (AOJ17) about the incidence of gang activity in neighborhoods. As Figure 2.3 shows, the perception of gang activity remained stable between 2004 and 2008, at approximately 33 points on a 0-100 scale.<sup>9</sup> In 2010, the regional average on this measure climbed to 37.0 points. Since that year, this variable shows a steady decline from 37.0 in 2010, to 34.6 in 2012 and to 30.3 in 2014, when it is at its lowest point. When we look at the percentages that respond to each option on this question, Figure 2.4 shows that 53.1% of respondents to the 2014 AmericasBarometer report that their neighborhoods are affected by gangs to some degree. Thus, while perceptions of gang activity in the neighborhood have been decreasing somewhat over time, the majority of individuals in the Americas believe their neighborhoods are affected, to at least some degree, by gangs.

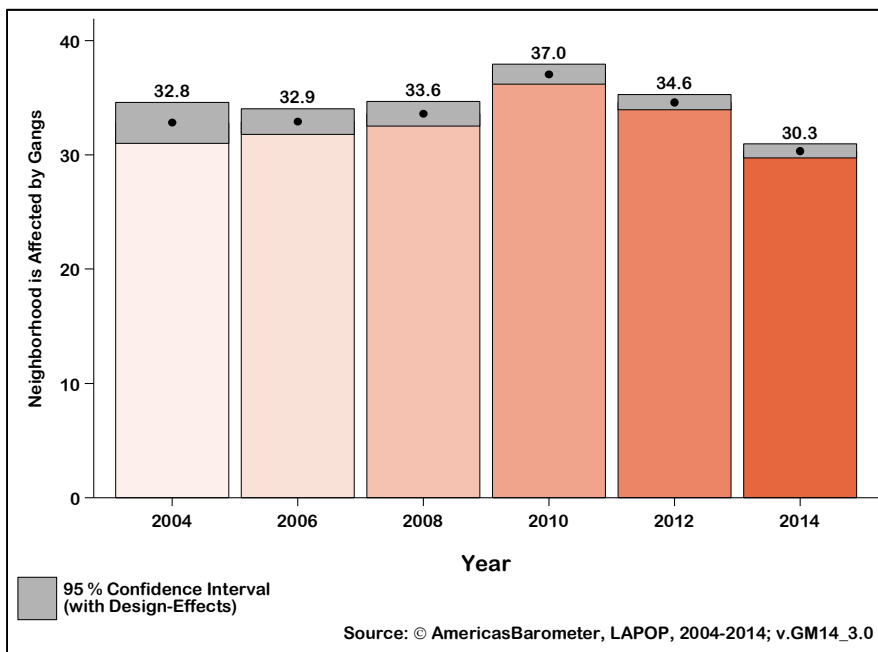
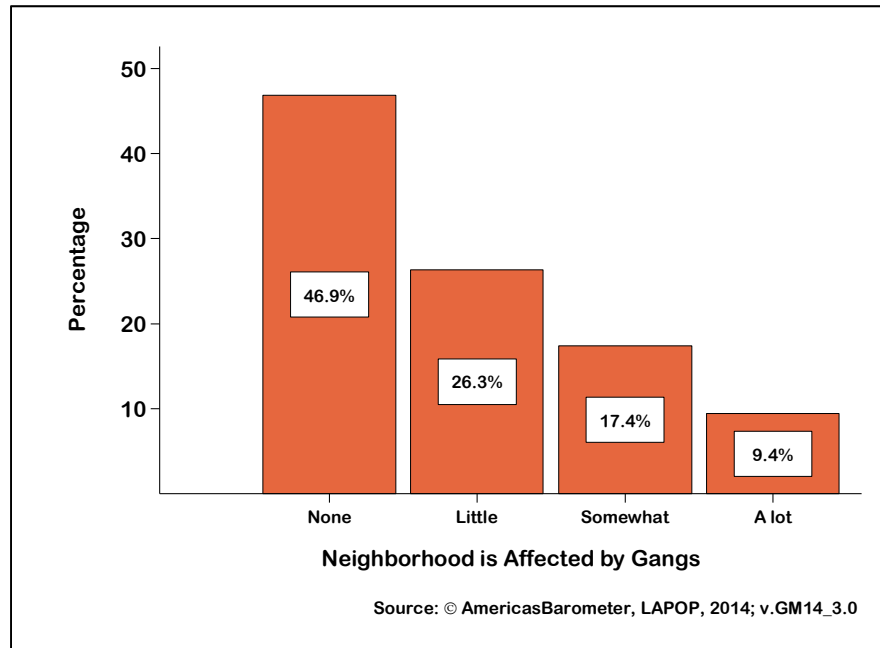


Figure 2.3. Levels of Perceived Gang Activity over Time

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/statistics/data.html>

<sup>8</sup> For this reason, change in crime rates is as important as levels of crime, in determining perceptions of insecurity and with respect to other outcome variables of interest as well.

<sup>9</sup> The analysis includes the full sample of countries for which the question was asked in each round. However, patterns look roughly the same when analyzing only the subset of countries included in the AmericasBarometer since 2004 or 2006. We exclude these figures from the text for brevity and conciseness.



**Figure 2.4. Levels of Perceived Gang Activity in the Americas, 2014**

Figure 2.5 shows that reports on gang activity vary significantly across countries. Based on the 2014 AmericasBarometer data, the comparative chart shows that Panama and Venezuela rank highest in terms of perceptions of gang activity affecting respondents' neighborhoods, with mean scores of over 50 points on the 0-100 scale. In comparison with 2012 (again, the 2012 data were analyzed but not presented here), we find that Panama's score increased from 42.5 to 51.5 and Venezuela's from 45.8 to 50 points. Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago, and Barbados are countries with scores lower than 20 points. All three first countries exhibit lower levels of perceived gang activity in 2014 in comparison with 2012 levels. Guyana's score decreased 3.8 points, Jamaica 6.6 points, and Trinidad & Tobago 14.3 points.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> This is based on analysis not shown here, but available from authors.



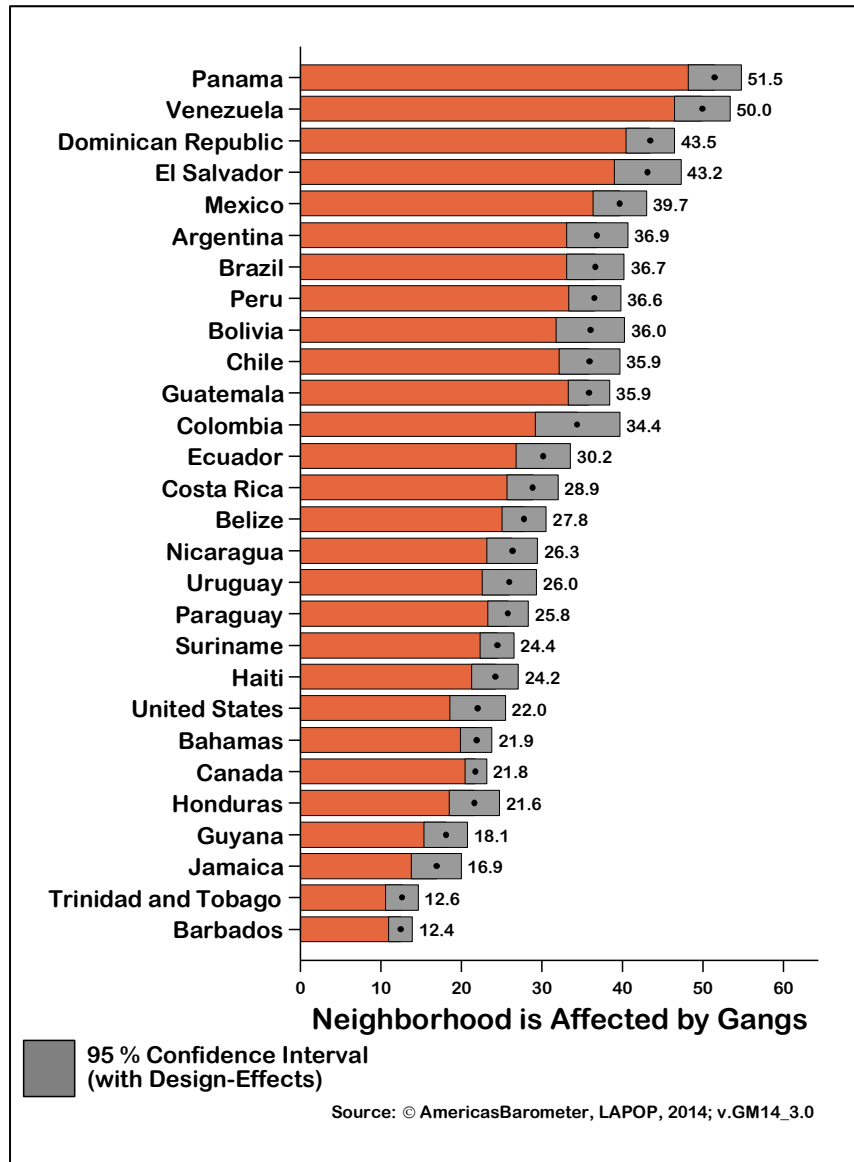


Figure 2.5. Levels of Perceived Gang Activity by Countries, 2014

Just as cross-national variations exist for perceptions of insecurity and gangs, differences also exist across individuals. Figure 2.6 presents the results of an individual-level ordinary least squares regression model analyzing correlates of perceptions of insecurity.<sup>11</sup> Per LAPOP standards, the figure represents standardized coefficients with dots and confidence intervals with horizontal bars around those dots; if the horizontal line crosses the vertical 0 line, we conclude the measure is not statistically

<sup>11</sup> The linear regression model includes country fixed effects not shown here, but available upon request. See corresponding table with the results for standardized coefficients in the Appendix. The U.S. and Canada are not included in these or other regression analyses in this chapter, in order to focus on the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region. Age is measured in cohorts. Skin tone ranges from 1 (lightest) to 11 (darkest). Wealth quintiles is a standard LAPOP control created using the R-series questions about capital goods ownership to create a five-point index of quintiles of wealth, which is standardized across urban and rural areas in each country. For more information on the variable, see Córdova, Abby. 2009. "Methodological Note: Measuring Relative Wealth Using Household Asset Indicators." AmericasBarometer Insights 6. Vanderbilt University: Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP). Education is measured by respondents' years of schooling. Female (versus male) and urban (versus rural) are dummy variables. Attention to news is a variable that measures how often the respondent pays attention to news and ranges from never to daily.

significant. The analysis reveals that two factors emerge as the most important predictors of levels of insecurity: crime victimization and urban residence. Those who have been a victim of a crime report greater feelings of insecurity in the Americas and those who live in urban settings show higher levels of insecurity. Women express higher levels of insecurity than men, on average, in the Americas. Also, the wealthier tend to express lower levels of insecurity. Interestingly, attention to the news and level of education are not associated with levels of insecurity on average across the Americas in 2014. Finally, we find little differences across age cohorts, with the exception that those who are 66 years or older report tend to report comparatively lower levels of insecurity.

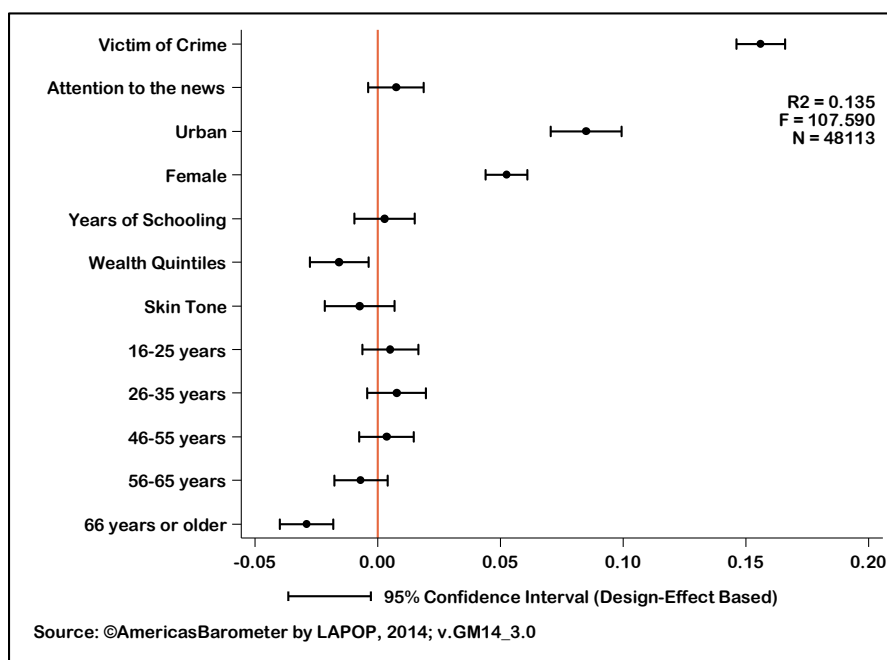
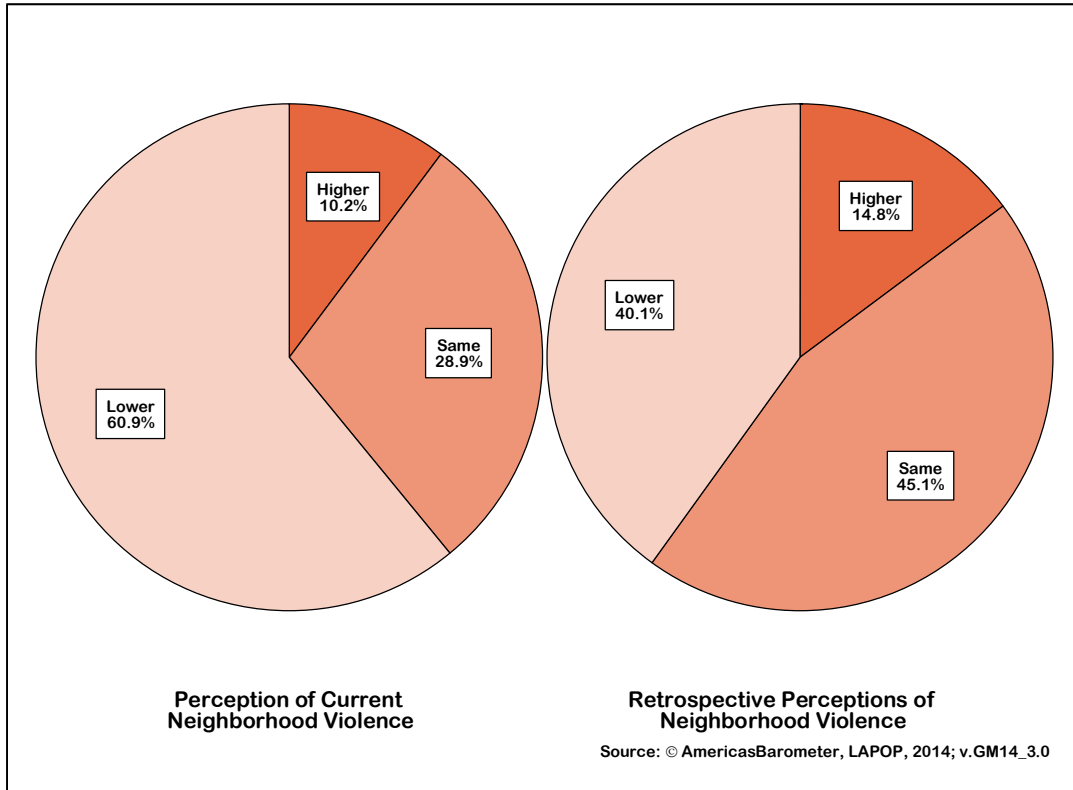


Figure 2.6. Factors Associated with Feelings of Insecurity, 2014

The 2014 AmericasBarometer provides an opportunity to extend this assessment of insecurity in the Americas. In this year the AmericasBarometer included two new measures that ask respondents to assess the level of violence in their neighborhood compared to other neighborhoods and compared to previous years:

<b>PESE1.</b> Do you think that the current level of violence in your neighborhood is higher, about the same, or lower than in other neighborhoods?	(1) Higher	(2) About the same	(3) Lower
<b>PESE2.</b> Do you think that the current level of violence in your neighborhood is higher, about the same, or lower than 12 months ago?	(1) Higher	(2) About the same	(3) Lower

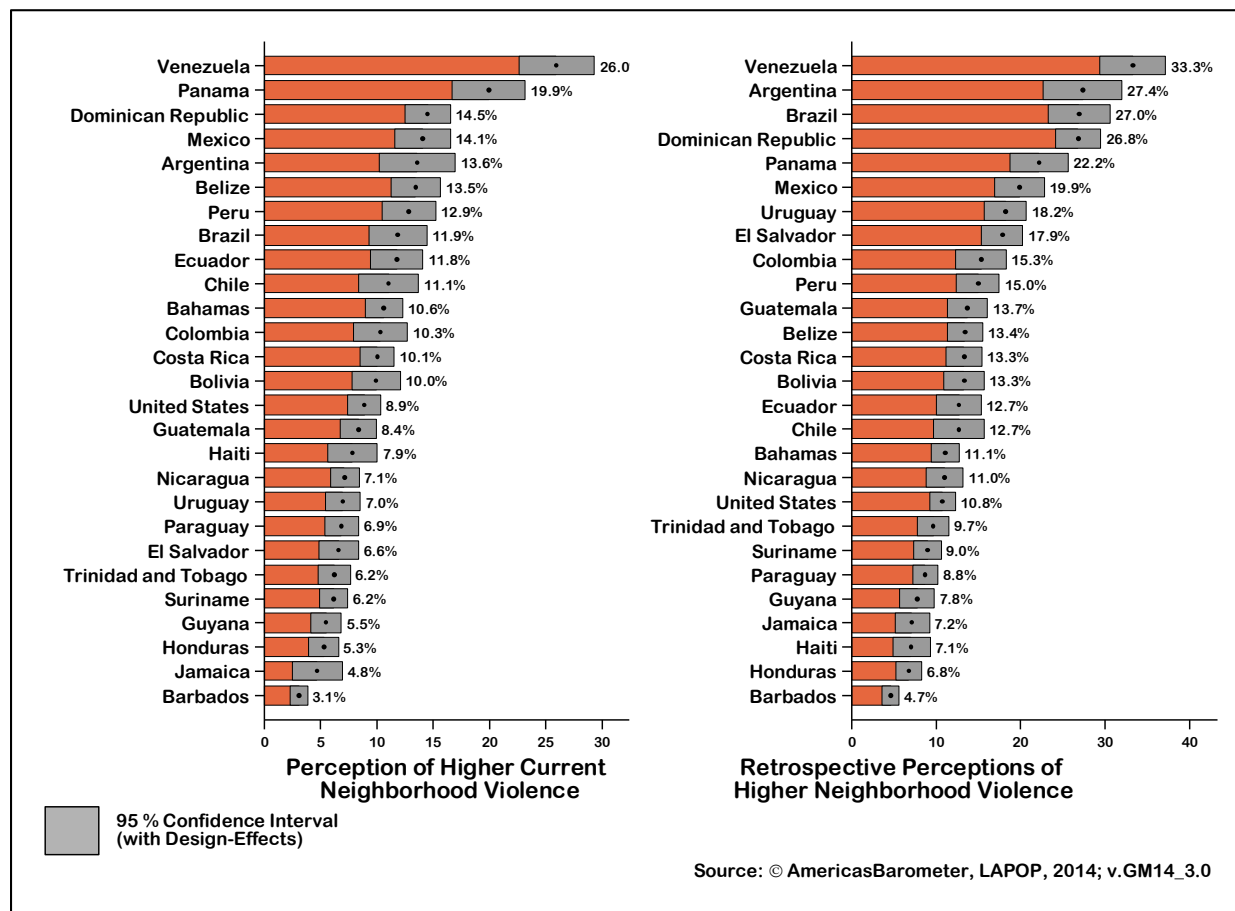
As Figure 2.7 shows, a plurality of citizens in the Americas (60.9%) reports that violence in their neighborhood is lower than in other neighborhoods. When they answer whether levels of violence are higher, about the same, or lower than a year ago, however, 59.9% respond that the current level of violence is the same (45.1%) or higher (14.8%).



**Figure 2.7. Perception of Current Neighborhood Violence and Retrospective Neighborhood Violence, 2014**

The left side of Figure 2.8 presents the percentage of respondents who say the level of violence in their neighborhood is higher than in other neighborhoods and, on the right side, the percentage that reports levels of violence in their neighborhood are higher than one year prior to the survey. This allows us to assess in which countries citizens are particularly pessimistic about the level of relative violence in their own neighborhoods and the extent to which they see this as a declining situation. Venezuela is consistently at the top in both measures, with 26% selecting “higher” on the perception for current neighborhood violence measure and 33.3% for retrospective neighborhood violence. Panama also scores high in perceptions of neighborhood violence, with nearly 20%, whereas the rest of countries show percentages lower than 15%. When examining retrospective evaluations of neighborhood violence, Argentina, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, and Panama accompany Venezuela as countries that score higher than 20%. On the other side of the scale, Trinidad & Tobago, Suriname, Paraguay, Guyana, Jamaica, Haiti, Honduras, and Barbados show levels of retrospective violence lower than 10%.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> It may be surprising to some readers to find Honduras and other countries experiencing significant problems with security in the lower half of the comparative chart, but recall the earlier discussion in this chapter on the notion that persistent threat and experiences with violence can have a desensitizing effect.

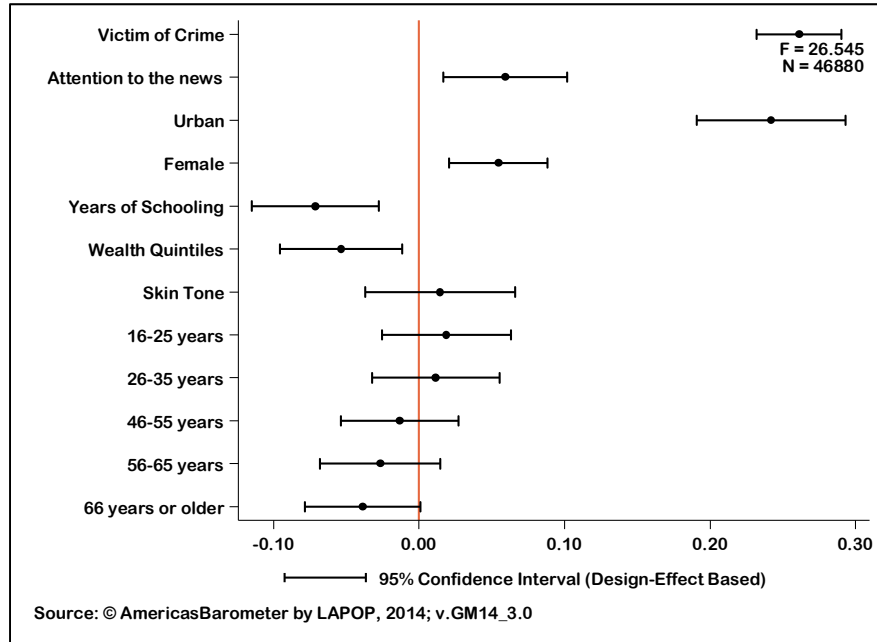


**Figure 2.8. Perception of Higher Neighborhood Violence and Retrospective Neighborhood Violence Across Countries, 2014**

What individual-level factors predict responses to the questions about relative neighborhood violence? Figures 2.9 and 2.10 present the results of regression analyses that show correlates of higher current and retrospective neighborhood violence.<sup>13</sup> These figures use the same factors as Figure 2.6 to assess the determinants of feelings of insecurity: crime victimization, news attention, wealth, gender, education, age, skin tone, and urban residence.<sup>14</sup> Crime victimization, attention to news, urban residence, and female are all associated with perceiving higher current neighborhood violence (that is, higher than in other neighborhoods) in 2014 (see Figure 2.9). Education is negatively correlated, indicating that more educated people are less likely to report higher levels of neighborhood violence in comparison with other neighborhoods. Wealth is also negatively correlated, with wealthier respondents being less likely to express comparatively higher levels of violence in their neighborhoods.

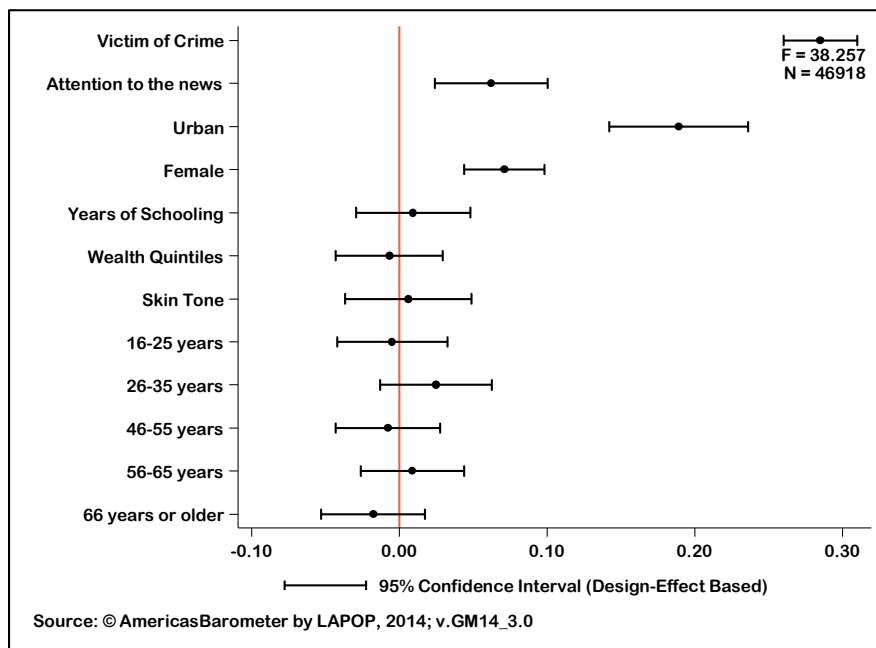
<sup>13</sup> In keeping with our approach in the chapters thus far, focusing on factors associated with heightened perceptions of insecurity, the models estimate logit regressions for retrospective and current perceptions of higher neighborhood violence. Country fixed effects to adjust for clustering at the country level and differences across countries are included but not shown. See corresponding tables with the results for standardized coefficients in the Appendix. The U.S. and Canada are not included in these or other regression analyses in this chapter, in order to focus on the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region.

<sup>14</sup> The analyses do not include Argentina because at the time of the writing of this report, data for “attention to the news” (GIO) was not available for this country. However, if we impute the regional mean of this variable to keep Argentina in the analyses, results are robust.



**Figure 2.9. Factors Associated with Higher Current Neighborhood Violence, 2014**

With respect to retrospective neighborhood violence, the results indicate that crime victimization is a powerful factor: those who have been the victim of a crime are more likely to express a belief that violence in their neighborhood has increased over the past 12 months (see Figure 2.10). Attention to news has a positive effect: those who are more attentive to news are more likely to report that current levels of neighborhood violence are higher than a year ago. Finally, among the socio-demographic variables, urban residence stands out as an important factor: those who live in an urban setting are more likely to report a current deterioration of neighborhood safety in comparison to a year ago. We also see that women are more likely to report higher levels of retrospective neighborhood violence than men. Education, wealth, skin tone, and age are not statistically significant predictors in the model of retrospective assessments of neighborhood violence.



**Figure 2.10. Factors Associated with Higher Retrospective Neighborhood Violence, 2014**

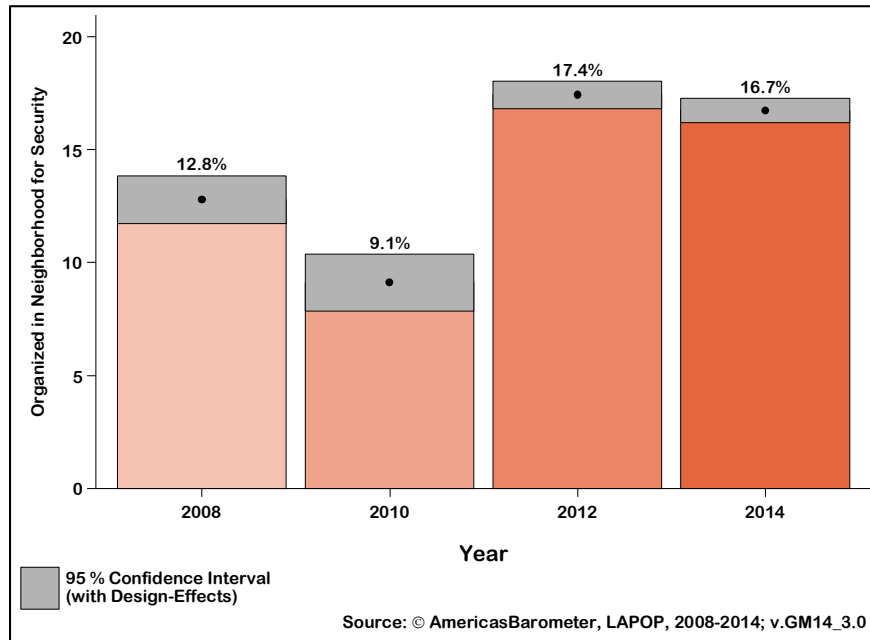
*Other Measures of Fear of Crime and Violence*

The AmericasBarometer includes other survey items related to fear of crime and violence, particularly within respondents’ neighborhoods. Since 2008, the survey has included the following measure of reported behavioral response to fear of crime in the neighborhood:

	Yes	No
<b>VIC44.</b> In the last 12 months, out of fear of crime, have you organized with the neighbors of your community?	1	0

Figure 2.11 shows results for this measure in the AmericasBarometer survey across time.<sup>15</sup> The 2014 assessment of the regional average shows that just under 1 out of every 5 citizens across the Americas (16.7%) indicates having organized with neighbors in their community out of fear of crime. This result is very similar to the number for 2012 (17.4%) and, looking at the results over time, we see a significant difference between these latter two periods (2012 and 2014) compared to the previous two periods (2008 and 2010). Although the region experienced a significant increase in this type of organizational response to insecurity after 2010, levels of participation have remained stable in the last two survey rounds.

<sup>15</sup> The analysis includes the full sample of countries for which the question was asked in each round. However, patterns look roughly the same when analyzing only the subset of countries included in the AmericasBarometer since 2008. We exclude this figure from the text for brevity and conciseness.



**Figure 2.11. Percentage that Have Organized with Neighbors in Their Community out of Fear of Crime, 2008-2014**

Once again, we find important differences across countries in the 2014 AmericasBarometer. As Figure 2.12 shows, Bolivians are most active in their neighborhood as a response to feeling insecure (32.8% participation rate), followed by Peru (28.2%). Respondents in Suriname and Barbados are the least active (5.2% and 3.7% participation rate, respectively). Worth noting is that citizens in Andean countries (Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Venezuela, and Chile) are among the most motivated by fear of crime to organize with their neighbors, with Peru and Venezuela showing increases in participation rates in the 2014 survey.<sup>16</sup> Variation is more widespread among Central American countries, among the most violent in the region.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> This is based on analysis not shown here, but available from authors.

<sup>17</sup> Some countries experienced significant changes between 2012 and 2014. Rates of organization with neighbors as a response to insecurity increased in Panama (6.0 to 19.5%), Peru (22.9 to 28.2%), Chile (13.7 to 23.7%), Brazil (7.8 to 16.2%), Venezuela (13.6 to 25.8%), and Argentina (13.3 to 18.5%), but decreased in El Salvador (11.7 to 8.5%), Colombia (17.8 to 13.0%), the Dominican Republic (34.4 to 28.1%), Jamaica (14.6 to 10.1%), Guyana (14.8 to 9.7%), and Trinidad & Tobago (13.0 to 7.6%).

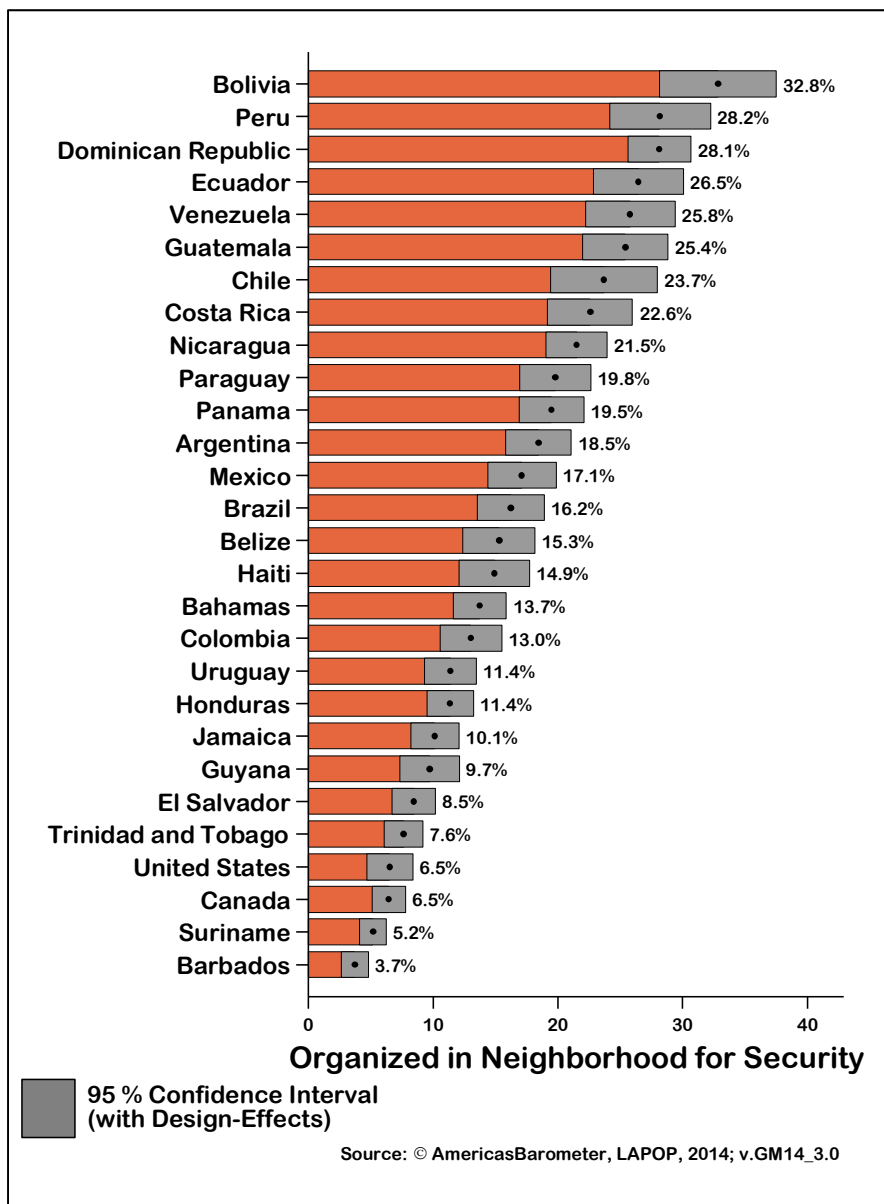


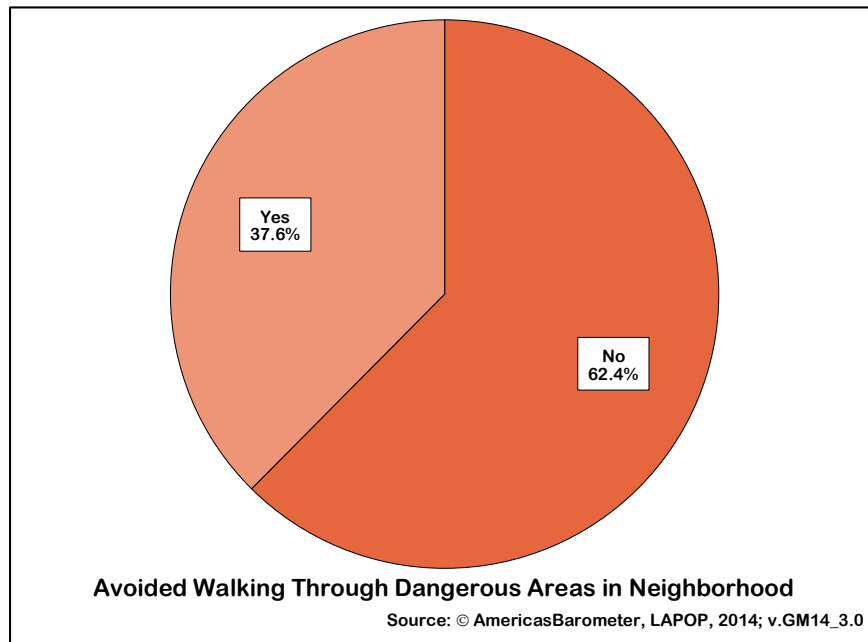
Figure 2.12. Percentage that Have Organized with Neighbors in Their Community out of Fear of Crime across the Americas in 2014

While the previous analysis focused on reported behaviors involving group organization, the 2014 AmericasBarometer also asked about reported individual behaviors in response to fear of crime in the neighborhood:

	Yes	No
<b>FEAR10.</b> In order to protect yourself from crime, in the last 12 months, have you taken any measures such as avoiding walking through some areas in your neighborhood because they are dangerous?	1	0



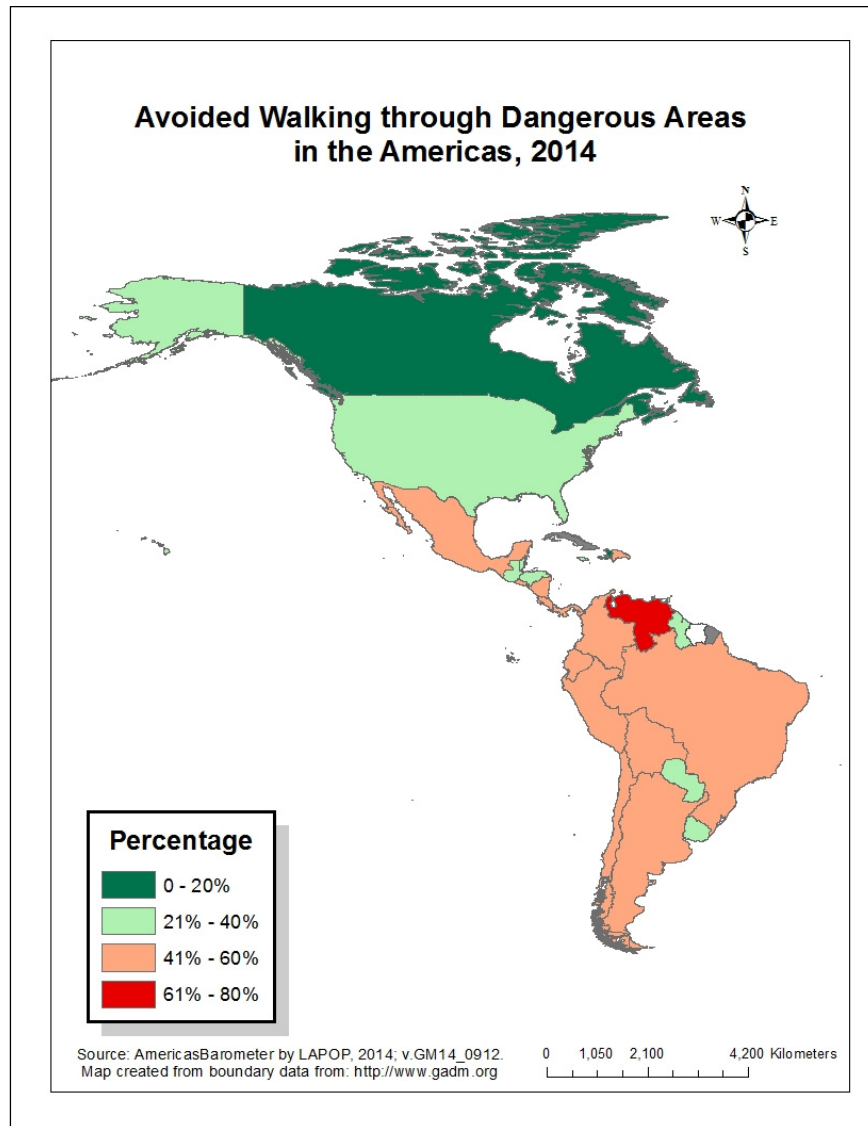
Analysis of this question reveals that avoiding walking through dangerous areas in the neighborhood is a much more common response to fear of crime than organizing with neighbors. As seen in Figure 2.13, when looking at the regional average, approximately 40% of respondents in 2014 indicate taking this type of precaution. Organizing with neighbors to combat insecurity certainly requires more effort (or cost) than simply avoiding certain neighborhood areas. This new survey item sheds important light on how consequential widespread fear of crime is across the Americas: 2 out of every 5 individuals in the Americas have modified their behavior to avoid walking through areas that are perceived to be dangerous.



**Figure 2.13. Percentage that Avoided Certain areas of Their Neighborhood out of Fear of Crime in 2014**

Yet cross-national differences exist in the degree to which citizens in each country resort to avoiding dangerous areas in their neighborhood to evade crime. Map 2.2 presents a portrait of this variation by mapping mean values on the variable across the region using the 2014 AmericasBarometer dataset.<sup>18</sup> Venezuela stands out quite distinctly on this map; 70% of Venezuelan respondents report that they avoided dangerous areas of their neighborhoods out of fear of crime, a percentage that surpasses all other countries in the 2014 AmericasBarometer by over 10 percentage points. Haitians and Canadians, on the other hand, express relatively high levels of security in their neighborhoods on this measure, with only about 19% in each country indicating that they avoided certain areas.

<sup>18</sup> See Appendix 2.5 for a more detailed account of average rates by country.



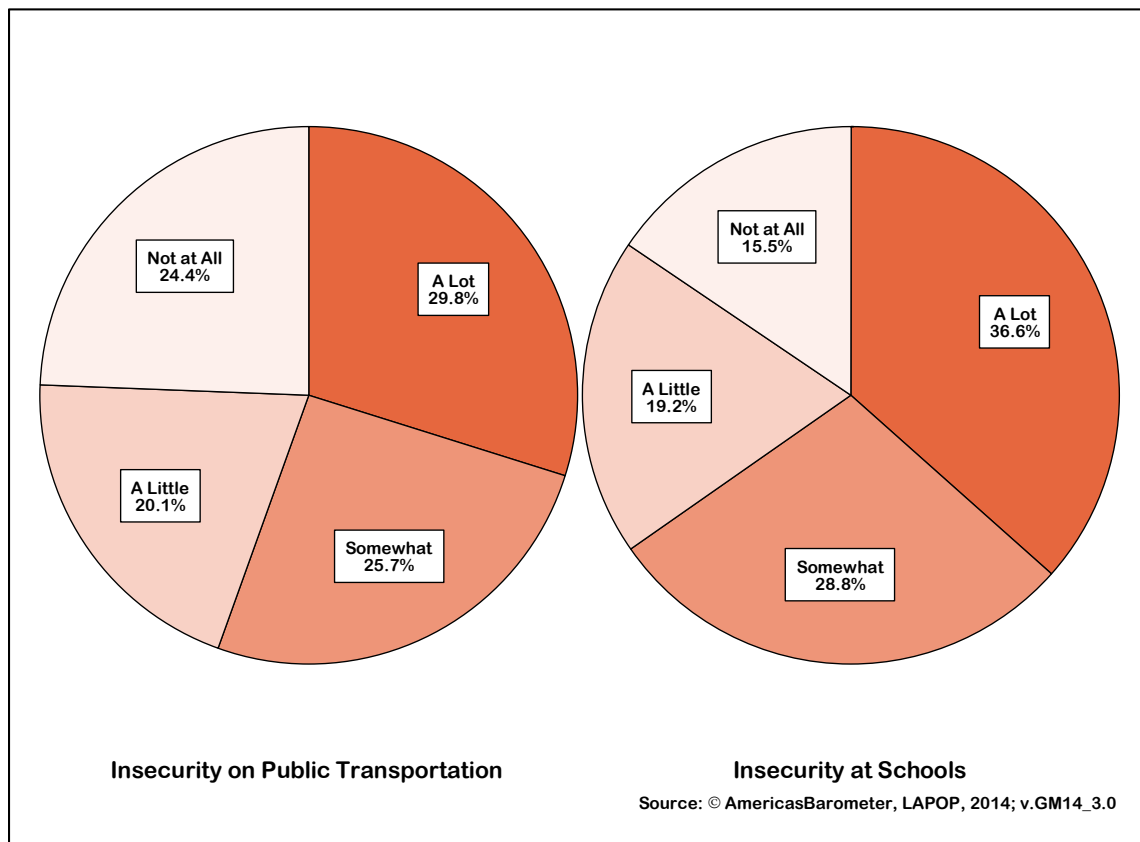
**Map 2.2. Percentage That Avoided Certain Areas of their  
Neighborhood Out of Fear of Crime Across the Americas in 2014**

We gain additional perspective on safety in the Americas by focusing in on particular modes of travel and places that are part of many individuals' daily routines. Specifically, the 2014 AmericasBarometer asked respondents to evaluate how worried they are with respect to using public transportation and children's safety in schools:<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> FEAR6e was only included in the questionnaires of following subset of countries: Belize, Guatemala, Guyana, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Trinidad & Tobago, the United States, and Venezuela. FEAR6f was only included in the questionnaires of following subset of countries: Belize, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Trinidad & Tobago, the United States, and Venezuela.

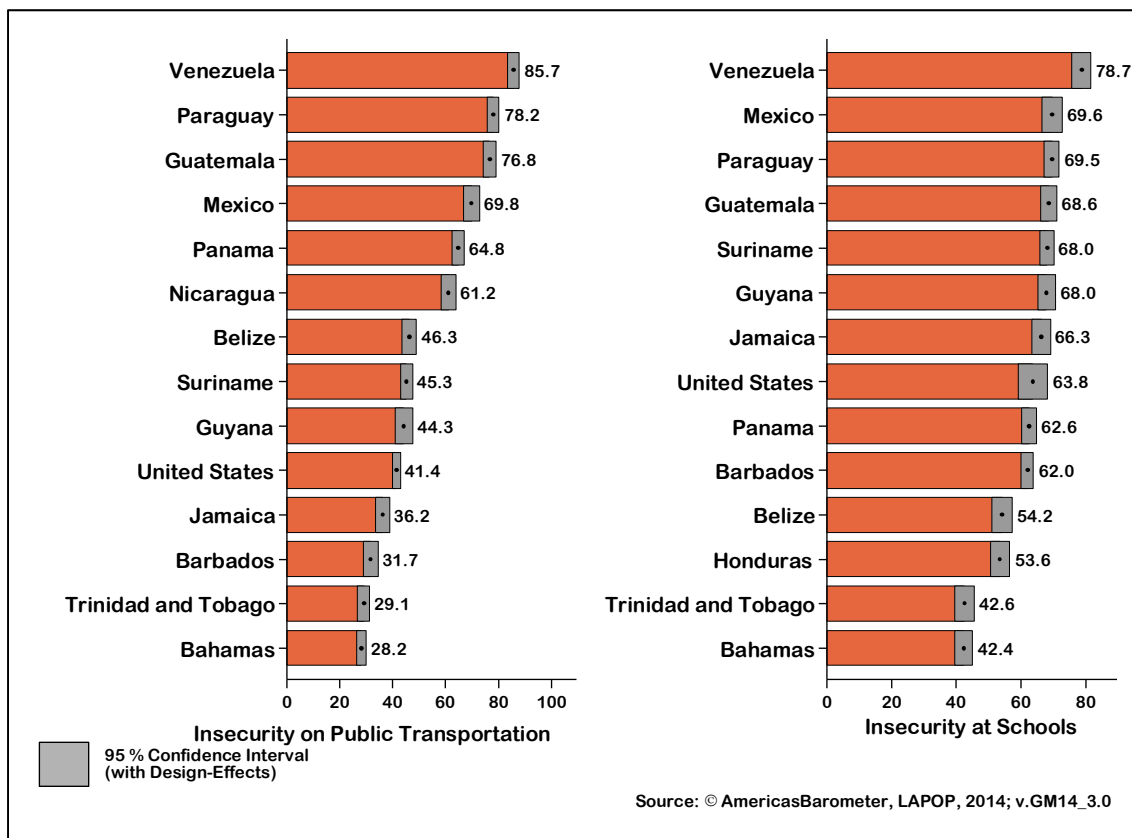
	A lot	Somewhat	A little	Not at all
<b>FEAR6e.</b> And in general, how worried are you that someone in your family will be assaulted on public transportation? Would you say a lot, somewhat, a little, or not at all?	1	2	3	4
<b>FEAR6f.</b> And how worried are you about the safety of children in school? Would you say a lot, somewhat, a little, or not at all?	1	2	3	4

Considering the region as a whole, Figure 2.14 shows that 29.8% of respondents to the 2014 AmericasBarometer indicate “a lot” of fear for a family member being assaulted on public transportation, and 25.7% report feeling “somewhat” fearful. These numbers are equally high with respect to indications of level of concern for the safety of children in school, in which case 36.6% report feeling “a lot” of fear and 28.8% are “somewhat” fearful.



**Figure 2.14. Fear of Insecurity on Public Transportation and Schools in 2014**

Figure 2.15 displays the average level of fear across countries on 0 to 100 scales (created based on the above measures, which have been reversed and recoded such that 100 represents the highest degree of fear). Data is only presented for those countries in which these particular survey items were included in 2014. Once again, Venezuela ranks at the top. Venezuelans in 2014 express by far the highest degree of fear of crime in terms of worrying about family members on public transportation and children in school. On the other hand, respondents from Bahamas are the least fearful of crime on these measures.



**Figure 2.15. Fear of Insecurity on Public Transportation and Schools across the Americas in 2014**

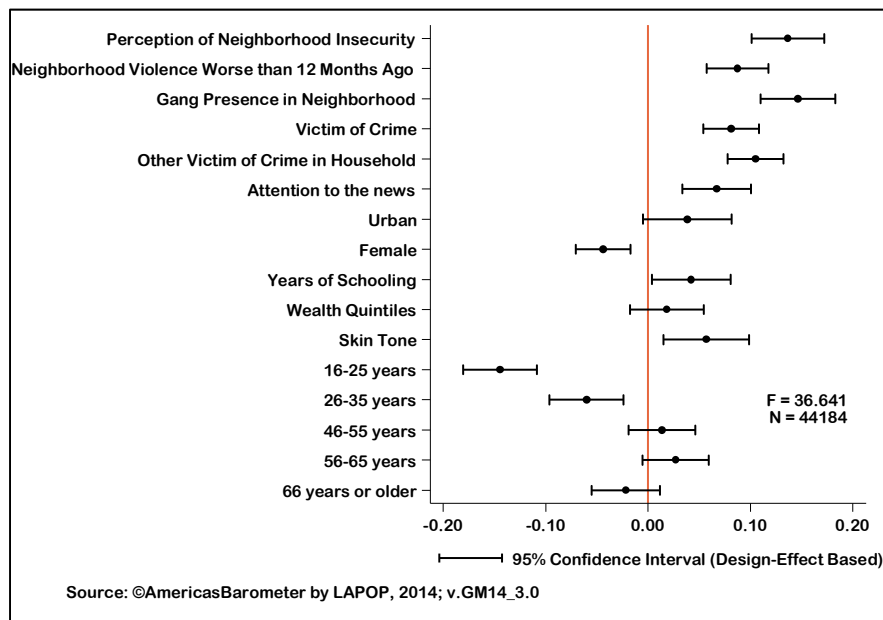
We now turn to individual level analyses of the four measures discussed above: organizing with neighbors out of fear of crime; avoiding certain areas for fear of crime; expressing concern for safety on public transportation; and, expressing concern for the safety of children at school. In each case, we assess the same basket of potential predictors that were included in previous analyses in this chapter; for details on the coding of these variables, see the earlier discussion (and related footnote). In addition, we also include perceptions of insecurity, fear of crime, and reports on gangs affecting the neighborhood.<sup>20</sup>

To begin, as Figure 2.16 shows, we find that those who are more educated, men, and those with darker skin tones are more likely to report organizing with neighbors to address concerns with crime.<sup>21</sup> The coefficient on urban is positive, but not quite statistically significant. We find that younger respondents, in comparison to those between ages 36 and 45 (the baseline comparison category), are less

<sup>20</sup> Crime victimization and victimization of another household member are binary variables measured using the survey items VIC1EXT and VIC1HOGAR, respectively. Perceptions of insecurity is measured using the question AOJ11, with response categories that range from “very safe” to “very unsafe”. Retrospective evaluations of neighborhood violence are measured as a dummy variable using the survey item PESE2. Perceptions of gang presence in the neighborhood is measured using the survey item AOJ17, with response categories that range from “none” to “a lot”. Attention to the news is measured with the question GI0, with answer categories that range from “never” to “daily”.

<sup>21</sup> The model estimates a binary logit regression model for whether a respondent organized with neighbors in fear of crime (1) or not (0); country fixed effects to adjust for clustering at the country level and differences across countries are included but not shown. The U.S. and Canada are not included in these or other regression analyses in this chapter, in order to focus on the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region. See corresponding table with the results for standardized coefficients in the Appendix.

likely to react with such actions when feeling insecure.<sup>22</sup> We once again see an important effect connected to the media: increased attention to the news is associated with a greater likelihood of reporting having organized with neighbors in response to crime. In addition, experiences with crime and concerns about crime matter: crime victimization (personal and of another household member), heightened perceptions of insecurity, elevated concerns about gang activity in the neighborhood, and negative retrospective evaluations of neighborhood violence all are positive predictors of the likelihood of individuals joining with their neighbors in response to crime.<sup>23</sup>



**Figure 2.16. Determinants of Responding to Fear of Crime by Organizing with Neighbors, 2014**

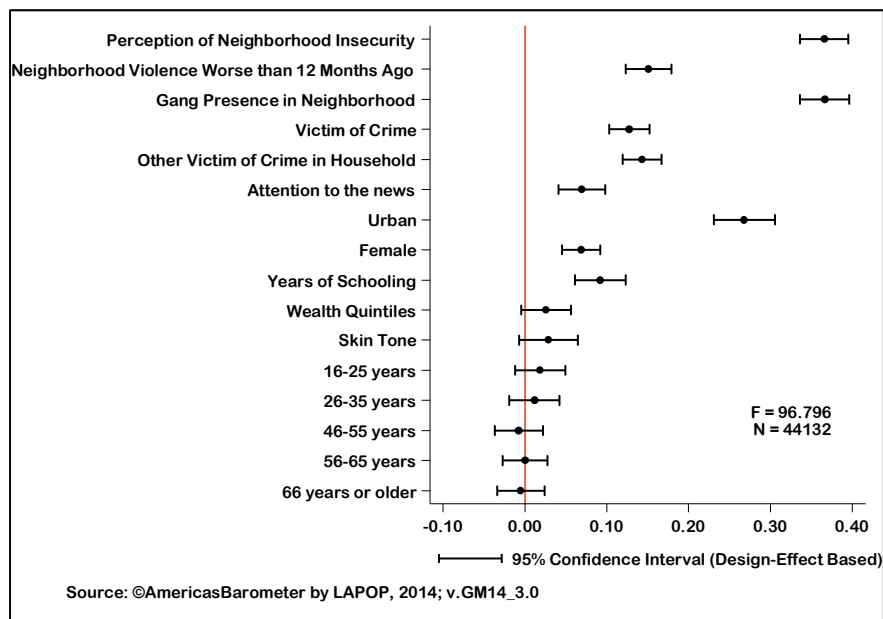
Next, Figure 2.17 displays the logistical regression results for factors that influence the likelihood that a respondent reports having avoided certain neighborhood areas due to fear of crime.<sup>24</sup> In contrast to the analysis of factors that influence the likelihood of organizing with neighbors because of fear of crime, skin tone and age have no effect on the avoidance of dangerous neighborhood areas.<sup>25</sup> Increased perceptions of insecurity and perceiving a high degree of gang presence in the neighborhood, again, have the strongest associations with the likelihood of avoiding dangerous areas of the neighborhood. Similarly, having been a victim of a crime; having had another household member fall victim to crime; and perceiving that neighborhood violence has increased are all positive predictors. Once again, exposure to news media matters: in this case, it is associated with avoiding certain areas of the neighborhood out of fear of crime.

<sup>22</sup> It should be noted that the p-value for those of 66 years or older is .13, indicating that there is a tendency toward a curvilinear relationship between age and organizing with neighbors out of fear of crime, where the youngest and oldest cohorts have a lower likelihood of responding to insecurity in such a way.

<sup>23</sup> To avoid problems of multicollinearity with perceptions of *current* level of neighborhood violence (PESE1), only a measure for retrospective evaluations of neighborhood violence (PESE2) is included in the model.

<sup>24</sup> The model estimates a binary logit regression model for whether a respondent avoided dangerous areas out of fear of crime (1) or not (0); country fixed effects to adjust for clustering at the country level and differences across countries are included but not shown. The U.S. and Canada are not included in these or other regression analyses in this chapter, in order to focus on the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region. See corresponding table with the results for standardized coefficients in the Appendix.

<sup>25</sup> Results for age are in comparison to those of 36 to 45 years.



**Figure 2.17. Determinants of Responding to Fear of Crime by Avoiding Dangerous Areas in Neighborhood, 2014**

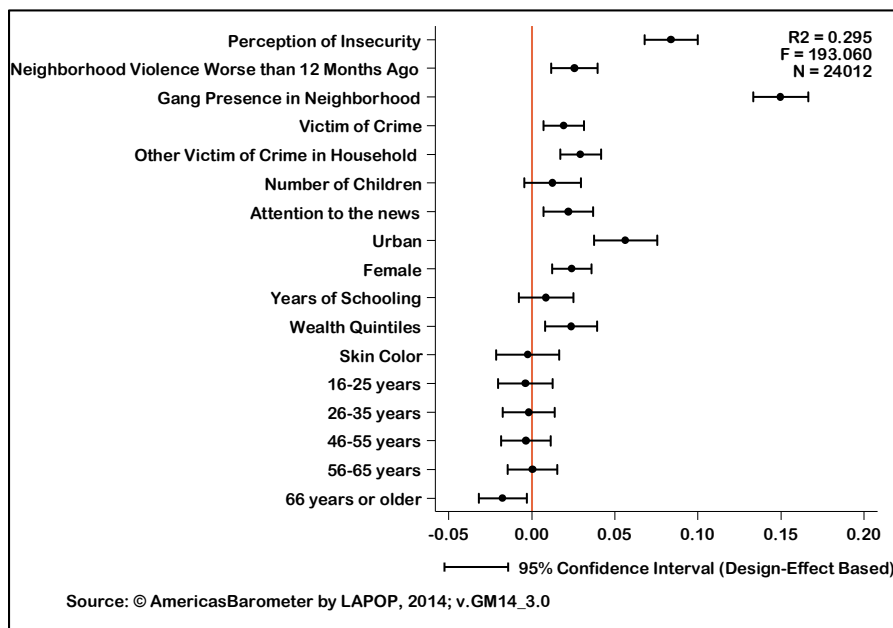
To assess the factors that influence additional variables related to concerns about crime addressed in this chapter, Figures 2.19 and 2.20 display the regression results for the determinants of worry about family members on public transportation and worry about the safety of children in schools, respectively.<sup>26</sup> The same set of demographic measures (age, skin tone, wealth, education, gender, and urban residence) included in the previous models are taken into account. The analyses also include the previously-discussed measures of perceptions of insecurity, crime victimization, retrospective evaluations of neighborhood violence, perceptions of gang presence in the neighborhood, and attention to the news. In addition, the model in Figure 2.19 includes two factors that could be associated with the fear of having a family member assaulted on public transportation: whether there was another victim of crime in the respondent's household and the number of people that live in the household.<sup>27</sup> Since the dependent variable is a measure of fear of having a family member be assaulted on public transportation, one could expect that such fear would increase when having had a household member (who would likely have been a family member) fall victim of crime. It also seems possible that fear for the safety of household members increases with the number of total household members.

Indeed, these expectations are borne out in the results of the linear regression analysis presented in Figure 2.18. Perceptions of insecurity; personal or household-member victimization; retrospective evaluations of neighborhood violence; perceptions of gang presence in the neighborhood; and the number of household members all increase the degree of concern expressed for the safety of a family member on public transportation. Consistent with previous findings in this chapter, similar effects are

<sup>26</sup> These analyses only include the subset of 13 countries for which FEAR6e and FEAR6f were included. The models estimates OLS regressions for a respondent's level of fear for the safety of a family member on public transportation or fear for the safety of children in school, both on a 0 to 100 scale; country fixed effects to adjust for clustering at the country level and differences across countries are included but not shown. See corresponding tables with the results for standardized coefficients in the Appendix.

<sup>27</sup> Another crime victim in the household is a dichotomous variable measured with the survey item VIC1HOGAR. The number of people in the household of the respondent is a continuous variable that ranges from 1 to 72 (the average is 4.4 and the median is 4).

found for those who pay a lot of attention to the news, live in urban areas, or are female. Older respondents are less likely to express fear compared to those between ages 36 and 45. Skin tone, and education are not consequential for fear of crime on public transportation.<sup>28</sup>



**Figure 2.18. Determinants of Fear that a Family Member is Assaulted on Public Transportation, 2014**

We find similar results in an analysis of the determinants of fear for children’s safety in school. As displayed in Figure 2.19, high perceptions of insecurity; crime victimization (of another household member); retrospective evaluations of neighborhood violence; perceptions of gang presence in the neighborhood; and attention to the news are all associated with greater feelings of insecurity. It is noteworthy that perceptions of gang presence in the neighborhood in particular seem to have the strongest association with the fear of children’s safety. Once again, females and urban residents are more likely to express concerns, this time with respect to fear for the safety of children in school, while wealth is unrelated to this worry. Like the findings for the determinants of fear of family members’ safety on public transportation, education and darker skin tone are not associated with a greater likelihood of fear for children in school. Additionally, age has a curvilinear relationship with insecurity, where the youngest and oldest cohorts are the least worried about school safety.<sup>29</sup> The number of children that the respondent has is not a significant predictor; it may be that it matters more what age those children are, a dimension we do not assess in this analysis.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Results for age are in comparison to those of 36 to 45 years.

<sup>29</sup> Statistically significant results when coefficients have a  $p < .05$ . Results for age are in comparison to those of 36 to 45 years.

<sup>30</sup> The measure is a continuous variable for the number of children indicated by the respondent. The average number of children for 2014 is 2.1 and the median is 2).

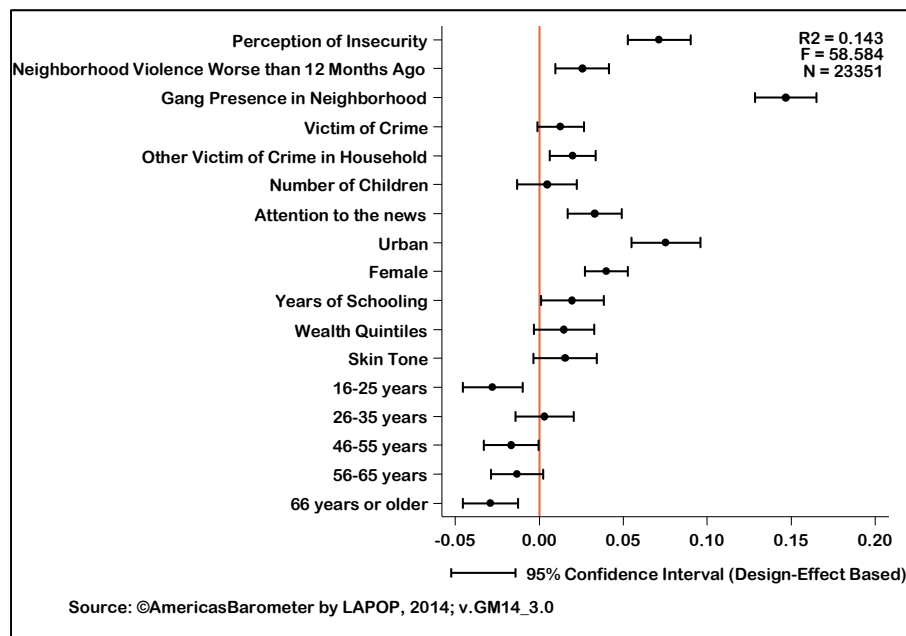


Figure 2.19. Determinants of Fear for Children's Safety in Schools. 2014

### III. The Impact of Crime on Life Satisfaction

Research has consistently found that crime and feelings of insecurity can have negative consequences for personal well-being, life satisfaction, and happiness. Certainly crime and delinquency are not the sole factors that affect life satisfaction, but these nonetheless can reasonably have a significant impact on people's everyday lives.<sup>31</sup> In this section, we explore this relationship in the Americas using the 2014 round of the AmericasBarometer.

Since 2004, the AmericasBarometer has asked respondents to report on their level of life satisfaction using the following question:

**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

This measure is recoded on a 0-100 scale with higher values indicating greater satisfaction. Looking across years of the AmericasBarometer survey in Figure 2.20, we see a decline in overall levels of life satisfaction between 2004 and 2008 for both the full sample of countries included in all survey rounds, as well as for the sub-set of countries included since 2004 (though the result is significantly less

<sup>31</sup> Research has also shown that an individual's perceptions of his or her economic, social, and political "insecurities" (Dammert and Malone 2003, 2006) or "diffuse anxieties" (Britto 2011), which may all reflect on a person's level of life satisfaction, are also related to fear of crime. Constructing a scale using measures for insecurities due to employment, child education, quality of life, economic stability, and human rights protection, Dammert and Malone find that the economic, social, and political insecurities beyond crime are significantly correlated with fear of crime. Britto (2011) also finds a positive effect of economic insecurities on fear of crime in the United States. And, along these same theoretical lines, Elchardus et al. (2008) find that "general malaise" measured by perceptions of future quality of life also increases fear of crime.



substantial in that latter dataset). Yet, interestingly, the last two rounds of the AmericasBarometer show a reversal of that trend. In 2014, the region-average score is 74.5 points on a 0-100 scale for the full sample of countries in the survey.

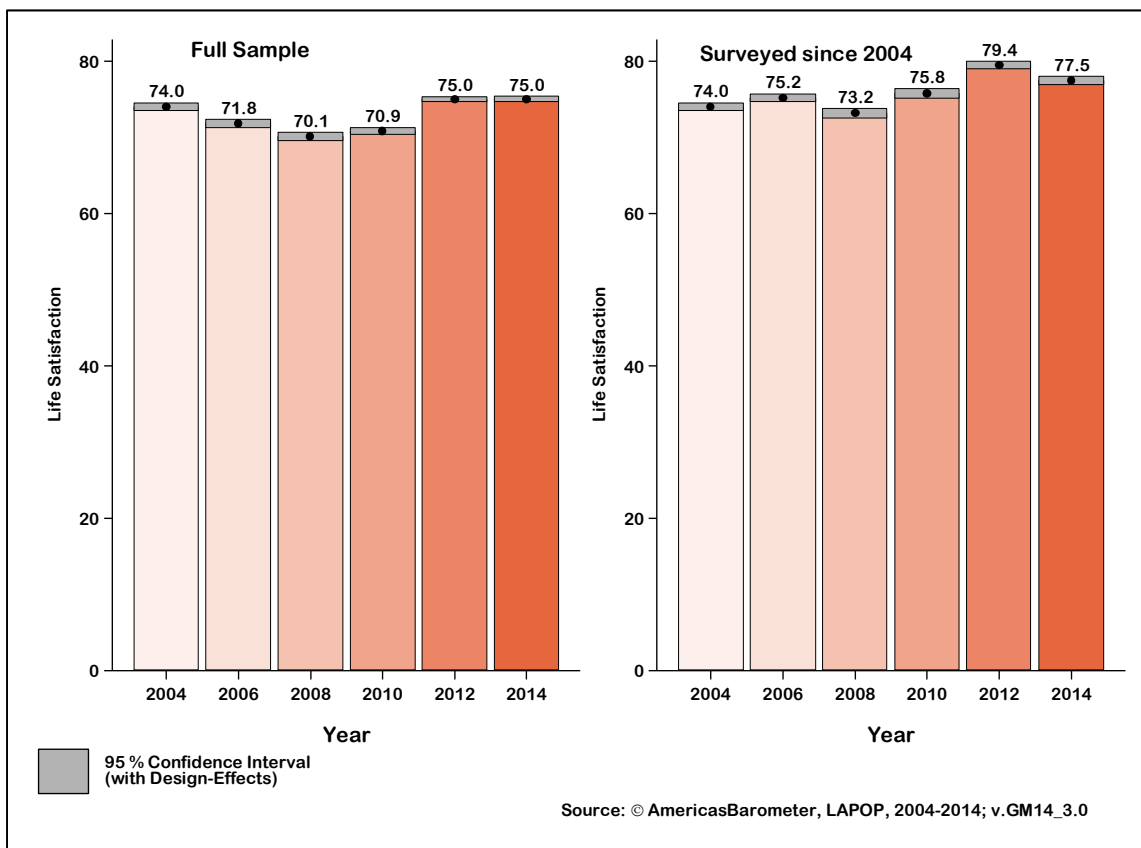
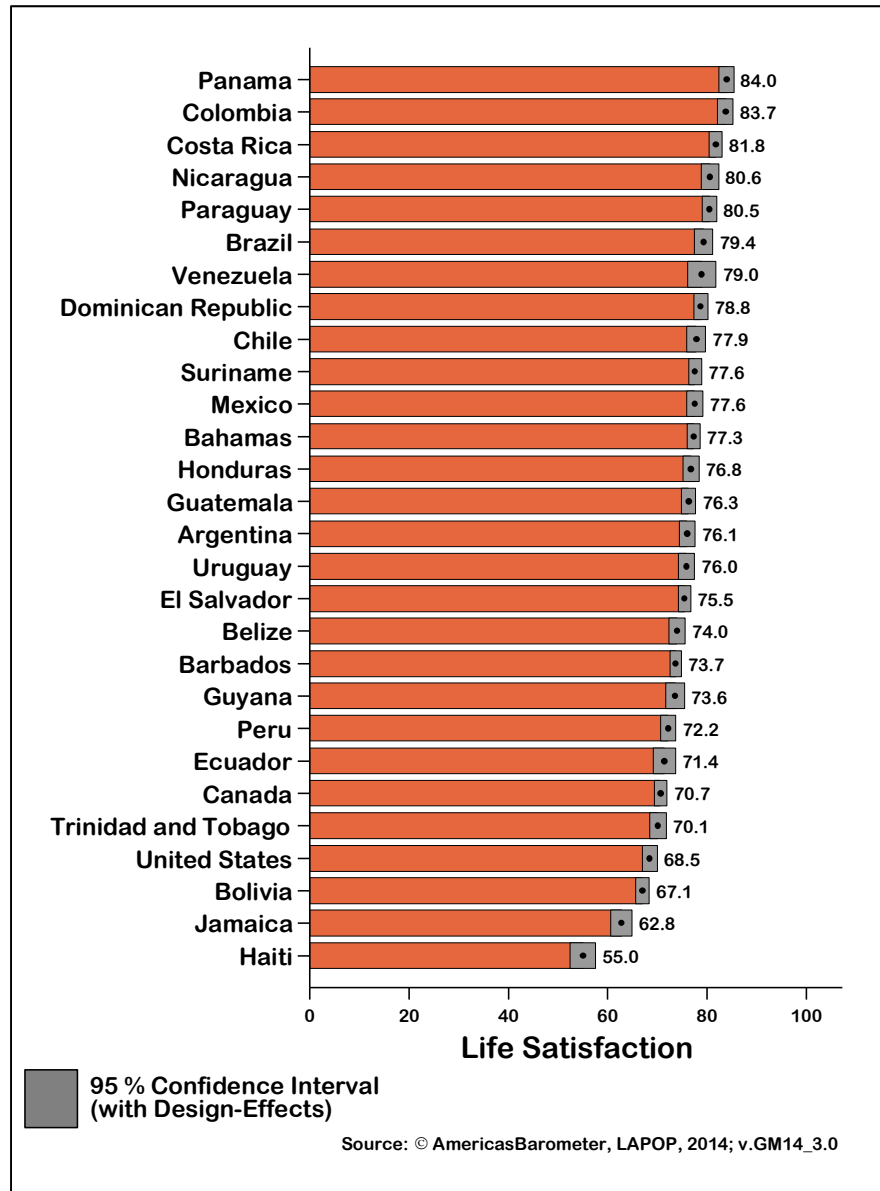


Figure 2.20. Levels of Life Satisfaction over Time

However, as Figure 2.21 shows, there are significant differences in life satisfaction across countries. All countries have scores higher than the mid-point of 50 on the 0-100 scale, but a group of countries are well above that level. Panama, Colombia, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Paraguay are all at the top of the chart with scores higher than 80 points. Within this group, we note that Costa Rica, Panama, and Colombia also were at the top of the chart in the 2012 AmericasBarometer. Also with respect to movement across the two-year period, Nicaragua and Paraguay experienced a slight increase from scores below 80 to scores above 80 points. On the other end, Trinidad & Tobago, the United States, Bolivia, Jamaica, and Haiti have scores lower than 70 points in 2014. These same set of countries, in that same order, were also at the bottom of the chart in 2012.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>32</sup> The comparison to 2012 is based on analysis not shown here, but available from authors.



**Figure 2.21. Levels of Life Satisfaction by Country, 2014**

How much of variation in individual levels of life satisfaction is explained by experiences and concerns related to crime in the Americas? First, we find that life satisfaction varies between respondents who have been victims of a crime and those who have not, and across levels of perception of neighborhood security. The left-hand side of Figure 2.22 shows those who have been victims of a crime display lower levels of life satisfaction. The difference is small (2.1 points on a 0-100 scale), but statistically significant. Perceptions of insecurity are also related to life satisfaction. The right-hand side of Figure 2.23 shows that levels of life satisfaction decrease as respondents report more insecurity. The difference between those reporting being very safe and those reporting being very unsafe is 5.9 points, a difference that is statistically significant.

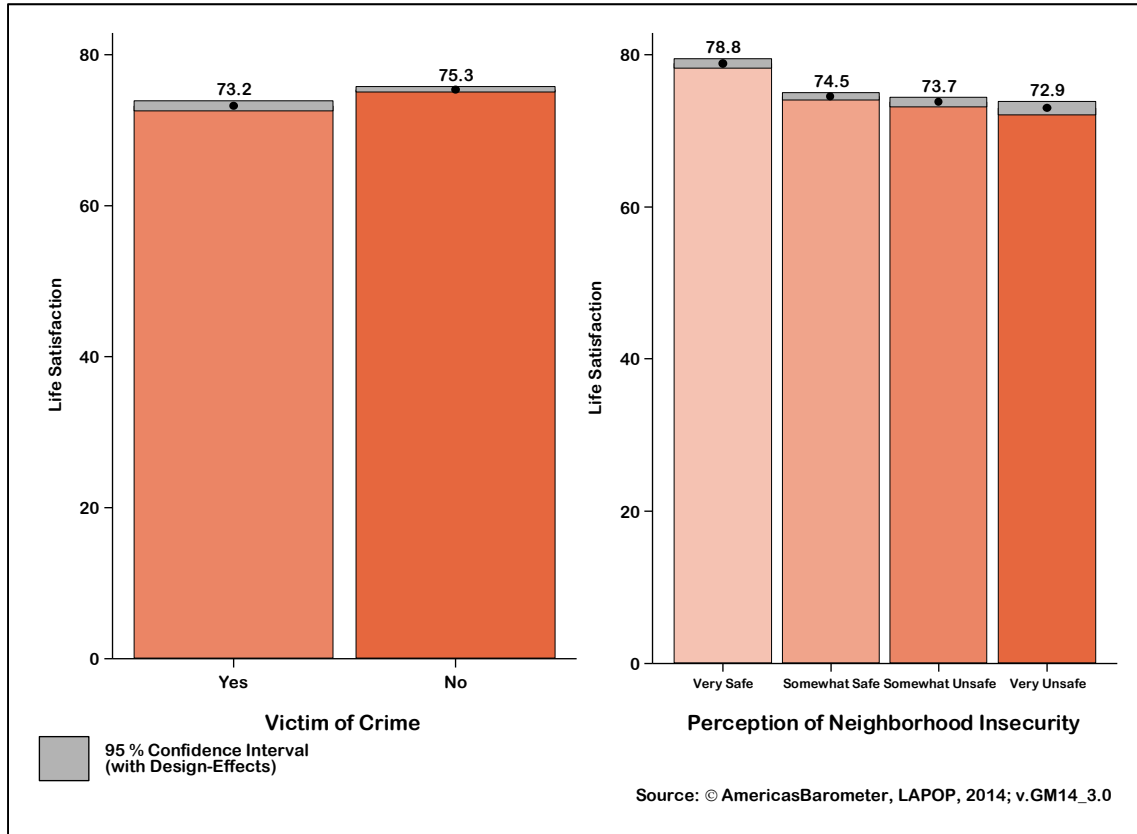
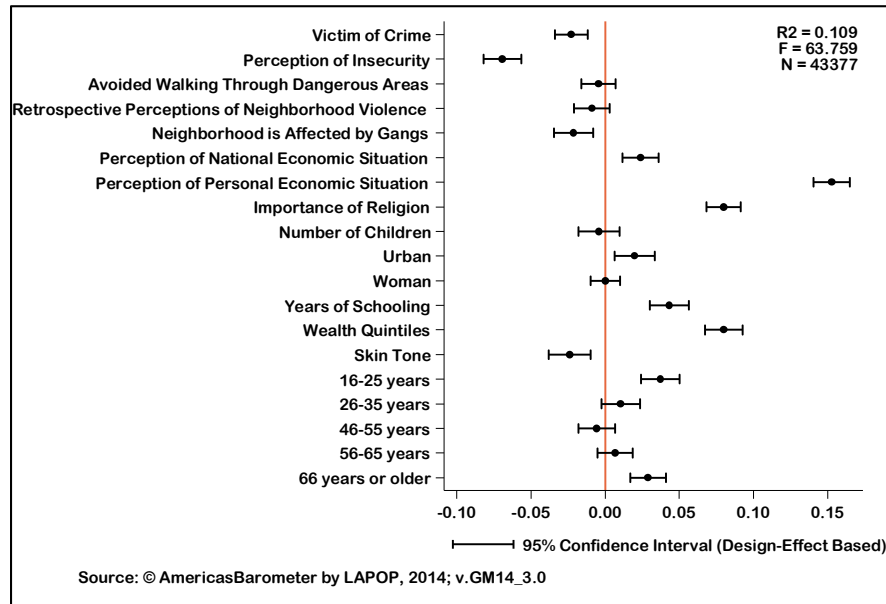


Figure 2.22. Life Satisfaction by Crime Victimization and Feelings of Insecurity, 2014

These results document that experiences with crime and concerns about safety are correlated with lower levels of life satisfaction. However, some other factors could also be related to how satisfied a person is with his or her life. For instance, scholarship suggests that life satisfaction is correlated with evaluations of government performance (particularly with respect to how people evaluate the government’s handling of the economy and corruption) and personal wealth.<sup>33</sup> To test whether crime victimization and perception of insecurity indeed predict life satisfaction once these other presumed correlates are taken into account, Figure 2.23 presents the results of a multivariate regression analysis in which life satisfaction is predicted with the following: perception of personal and national economic situation, gang activity, retrospective perceptions of higher neighborhood violence, fear of walking through dangerous areas, importance of religion, and socio-demographic variables, in addition to crime victimization and perception of neighborhood insecurity.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> See Margarita Corral’s (2011) LAPOP *Insight* report on the economics of happiness in which she provides evidence that economic factors at the individual and national level are important factors for determining life satisfaction in the Americas (<http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/insights/I0858en.pdf>).

<sup>34</sup> Model estimates linear OLS regression for life satisfaction (very dissatisfied to very satisfied). Importance of religion was gauged from not important at all to very important. Perception of corruption was measured from very uncommon to very common. Perception of national economic situation was measured from worse to the same and better. Country fixed effects to adjust for clustering at the country level and differences across countries are included but not shown. The U.S. and Canada are not included in these or other regression analyses in this chapter, in order to focus on the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region. See corresponding table with the results for standardized coefficients in the Appendix. See corresponding table with the results for standardized coefficients in the Appendix.



**Figure 2.23. Factors Associated with Life Satisfaction, 2014**

Results indicate that, even when controlling for other important covariates, crime victimization and feelings of insecurity are negatively and significantly related to levels of life satisfaction. This means that when respondents have been victims of crime or feel more insecure, they tend to be less satisfied with their lives. Gang activity in the neighborhood also negatively affects life satisfaction. However, retrospective neighborhood violence and fear of walking through dangerous areas are not significantly associated with life satisfaction.

Scholars who have explored the relationship between crime and life satisfaction have consistently found evidence that experiences with crime and feelings of insecurity have a negative effect on how survey respondents perceive their personal well-being.<sup>35</sup> However, it is important to keep in mind how the relationship between fear of crime and life satisfaction might be reciprocal. When life satisfaction is low, or when citizens feel malaise or insecurity about the socio-economic or political context in which they live, it could lead citizens to be more fearful of crime.

The literature has shown that life satisfaction deteriorates when people experience economic insecurity. Hence, measures of perceptions of both personal and national economic situations are also included as proxies for feelings of economic insecurity. Results corroborate expectations about the positive impact of personal and national economic situations on life satisfaction. However, the variable for perceptions of one's personal economic situation shows the strongest effect on life satisfaction in the

<sup>35</sup> Although these studies determine a relationship between crime and quality of life, they vary in the measurement of life satisfaction, or happiness. While some use survey items that ask respondents specifically about their level of happiness (Graham and Chaparro 2011), others, including the 2014 AmericasBarometer, use survey items that ask respondents about their perceived satisfaction with their current living circumstances (Medina and Tamayo 2014) or ask respondents to rank their life in comparison to the best possible life they can imagine (Graham and Chaparro 2011). Michalos and Zumbo (2000) employ a combination of these concepts and measures. Another way scholars measure perceptions of quality of life is through perceptions of "well-being". Di Tella et al. (2008) use a survey measure of "subjective well-being" based on the Cantril ladder that asks respondents if they want to have more days like yesterday. These differences in approaches to means perceptions of quality of life are a testament to widespread interest among economists and political scientists in the study of happiness and life satisfaction.

model in Figure 2.23. Respondents who report a better perception of their personal economic situation, meaning a lower economic insecurity, express significantly higher levels of life satisfaction.

As a proxy for security in the social/personal realm, we have included a measure of the importance of religion in one’s life. The results indicate that importance of religion is a relevant factor that explains life satisfaction. From the socio-demographic variables, urban residence, education, and wealth show positive coefficients, indicating that urban dwellers, the more educated, and the wealthy report higher levels of life satisfaction on average. Skin tone, in turn, displays a negative coefficient, indicating that darker people are less satisfied with life in the Americas. Finally, age presents a curvilinear relation with life satisfaction. Middle-aged citizens from 46 to 55 years old are less satisfied with life in comparison with younger and older cohorts.

#### IV. The Impact of Crime on Intent to Emigrate

Fear of crime and experiences with crime can not only hurt a person’s level of satisfaction with life, but they can potentially affect a person’s intention to leave their current place of residence. As previously shown in this chapter, crime, and fear of it, trigger other behavioral responses by individuals seeking to avoid falling victim to crime at the neighborhood and individual levels, so it makes sense to consider whether they also matter for an individual’s desire to “exit” entirely from their community. This section investigates whether fear of and actual experiences with crime can influence people’s everyday lives beyond organizing with neighbors or avoiding dangerous neighborhood areas, to the extent that people choose to emigrate from their countries.

Emigration intentions and trends in Latin America have received a great deal of attention by scholars and policymakers, alike.<sup>36</sup> A recent surge in the number of people, especially children and young adults, crossing the U.S. border has shined a spotlight on this topic. A standard hypothesis presented in the media and in analyses by researchers is that many of these individuals are motivated by a desire to flee from crime and gang violence in Central America.

To explore the connection between crime and intent to emigrate among those in the Latin American and Caribbean region, on average, we analyze responses to the following survey question included once again in the 2014 AmericasBarometer:<sup>37</sup>

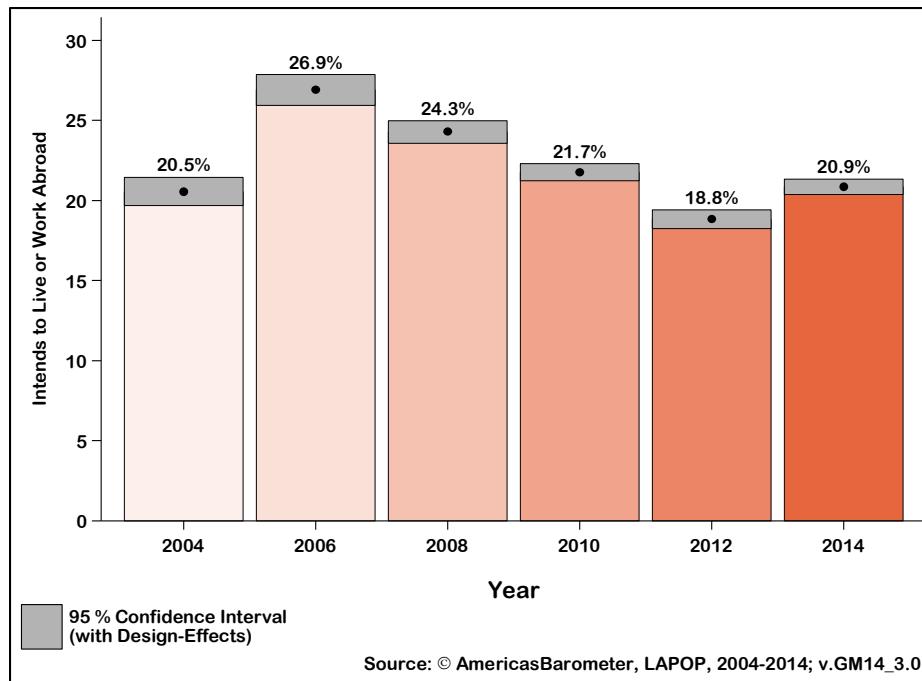
**Q14.** Do you have any intention of going to live or work in another country in the next three years?  
 (1) Yes                      (2) No                      (88) DK                      (98) DA

The percent of respondents who expressed an intention to emigrate increased significantly from 2012, when it was 18.8%, to over 20% in 2014. As shown in Figure 2.24, the data from the AmericasBarometer shows that intention to emigrate rates were on a steady decline between 2006 and

<sup>36</sup> For previous a LAPOP publication on the topic of migration see Hiskey, Malone and Orcé’s (2014) *Insights* report on violence and migration in Central America (<http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/insights/IO901en.pdf>). Also see LAPOP Research Affiliate, Dinorah Azpuru’s (2014) recent piece on factors related to the migration of unaccompanied minors out of Central America (<http://www.americasquarterly.org/content/beyond-blame-game-visualizing-complexity-border-crisis>).

<sup>37</sup> This question was not included in the United States or Canada.

2012.<sup>38</sup> This trend was reversed in 2014 when the percent of respondents who express intent to emigrate increased significantly to over 20%. Given that perceptions of insecurity have also increased in the region, as documented in the first part of this chapter, there is all the more reason to suspect that these two factors are connected. This relationship between experiences with and fear of crime is examined in more detail later in this section.



**Figure 2.24. Percentage Intending to Emigrate over Time**

Before turning to how the intent to emigrate may be linked to crime victimization and perceptions of insecurity, Figure 2.25 provides further context to regional trends in intention to migrate by showing the percentage that report an intention to emigrate by country. Haiti (61.1%) and Jamaica (58%) occupy the top of the chart in rates of intention to emigrate, with a majority of respondents in both of these countries expressing a desire to live or work abroad in the next three years. Haiti and Jamaica also had the highest percentage of those intending to emigrate in 2012 (based on AmericasBarometer data from that round assessed by the authors but not shown in detail here). In 2014, Honduras joined these two countries with the greatest increase across the Americas in those who intend to emigrate, shifting from 11.4% in 2012 to 31.8% in 2014. This dramatic jump in intention to emigrate from Honduras speaks directly to the immigration crisis at the U.S. border noted above, suggesting that the surge in individuals attempting to cross the U.S. border in 2014 could very well be related to the high rates of crime and gang activity experienced in the Central American region, in particular in a country such as Honduras. Unsurprisingly, Southern Cone countries like Uruguay, Chile, and Argentina have the lowest number of respondents who express an intention to emigrate.

<sup>38</sup> The analysis includes the full sample of countries for which the question was asked in each round. However, patterns look roughly the same when analyzing only the subset of countries included in the AmericasBarometer since 2004 or 2006, which the exception of a significantly lower percentage of respondents (19.3%) expressing an intent to emigrate in 2006 among the 11 countries included since 2004.

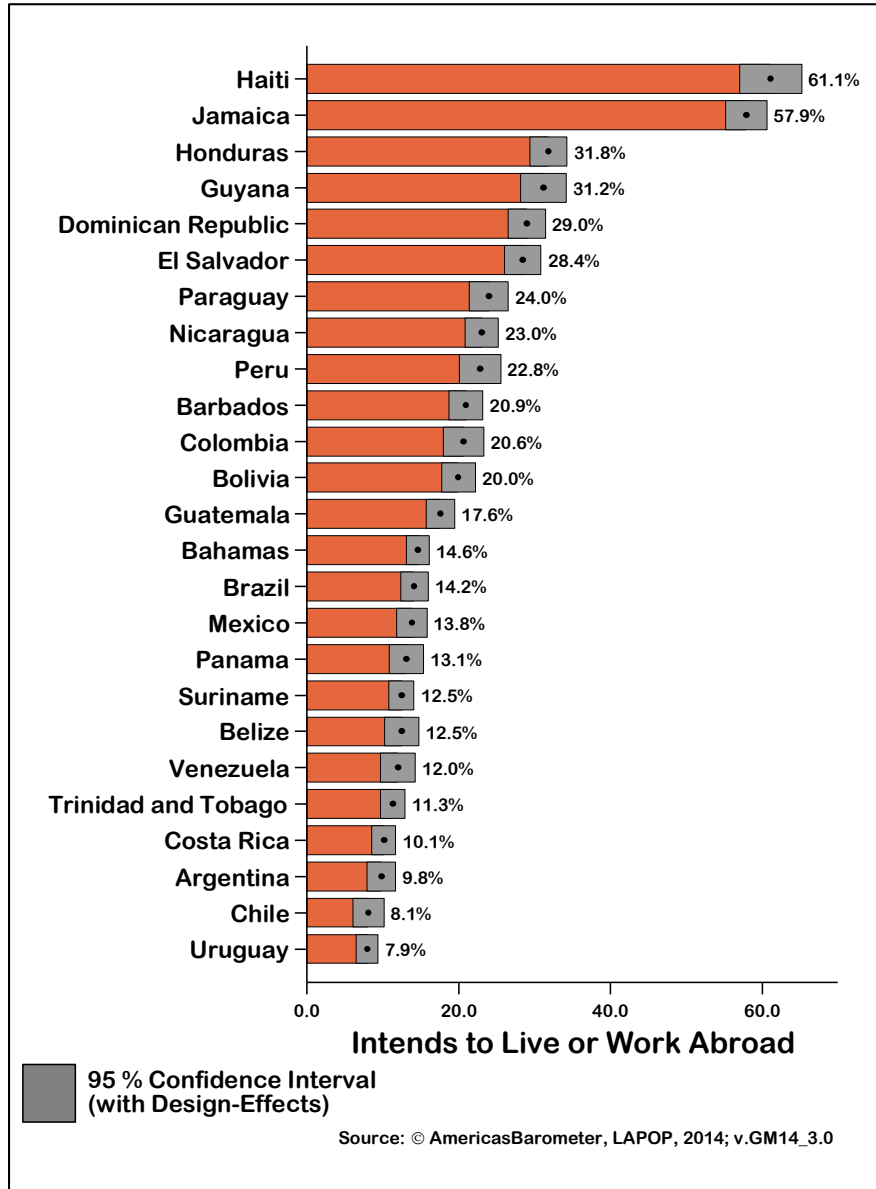


Figure 2.25. Percentage that Intends to Emigrate Across the Americas, 2014

To determine the extent to which fear of and experiences with crime shape the intention to emigrate for those in the Latin American and Caribbean region in 2014, Figure 2.26 displays the results of a multivariate logistical regression model.<sup>39</sup> The model includes the demographic controls accounted for in previous regression models in this chapter.<sup>40</sup> Similarly, measures for perceptions of insecurity,

<sup>39</sup> The model estimates a binary logit regression model for whether a respondent intends to emigrate (1) or not (0); country fixed effects to adjust for clustering at the country level and differences across countries are included but not shown. The U.S. and Canada are not included in these or other regression analyses in this chapter, in order to focus on the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region. Costa Rica, Chile, and Argentina are also omitted from the analysis because the survey item about remittances was not asked in the 2014 country surveys. See corresponding table with the results for standardized coefficients in the Appendix.

<sup>40</sup> Argentina, Chile, and Costa Rica are not included in the analysis because question Q10a regarding the receipt remittances was not asked as part of the 2014 AmericasBarometer in these countries. Ecuador is also excluded for the analysis because

crime victimization, retrospective evaluations of neighborhood violence, and perceptions of gang presence in the neighborhood are included to assess whether these factors indeed are associated with a greater intent to emigrate. Two dichotomous measures of fear of crime are also included: organizing with neighbors for security and avoiding dangerous areas in the neighborhood. Since those who have connections with relatives or friends abroad, through the receipt of remittances, can be expected to be more inclined to emigrate, a dichotomous variable to measure remittances is also included.

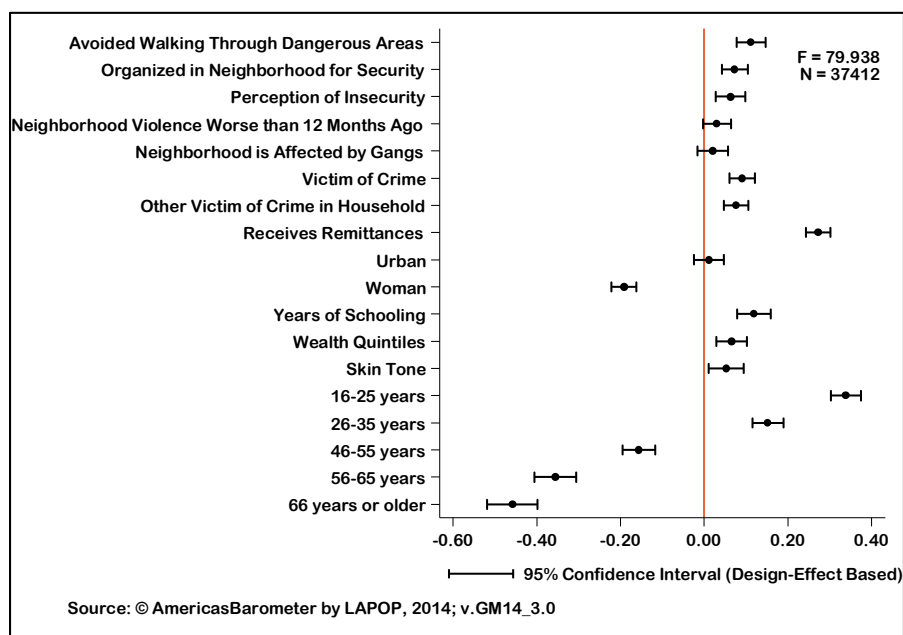


Figure 2.26. The Impact of Crime on Intention to Emigrate, 2014

According to the results in Figure 2.26, those most likely to express an intention to emigrate are respondents who are young, of darker skin tone, wealthier, more educated, and male.<sup>41</sup> Place of residence is unrelated to the intention to emigrate. As suspected, those who receive remittances are more likely to want to leave their countries. Importantly, we find clear evidence that measures of fear of and experiences with crime increase the likelihood of this intention to emigrate. Crime victimization (whether personal or of another household member), perceiving a lot of insecurity, and having taken actions in the neighborhood out of fear of crime are all significantly associated with a desire to leave one's country of residence.<sup>42</sup> Finally, while perceiving that neighborhood violence has increased in the last 12 months is also associated with the intent to emigrate, the statistical significance of this result is relatively weak. Perceptions of gang presence do not seem to influence the desire to leave the country above and beyond the other measures related to crime and insecurity in the model.

Figures 2.27 and 2.28 provide further detail about the relationship between various measures of fear of crime and crime victimization with intention to emigrate. Respondents in the 2014 AmericasBarometer who indicate having organized with neighbors or avoided certain neighborhood areas out of fear of crime also express a significantly higher rate of intent to emigrate than those who did not take either type of action in the face of insecurity (see Figure 2.27). A similar percentage of

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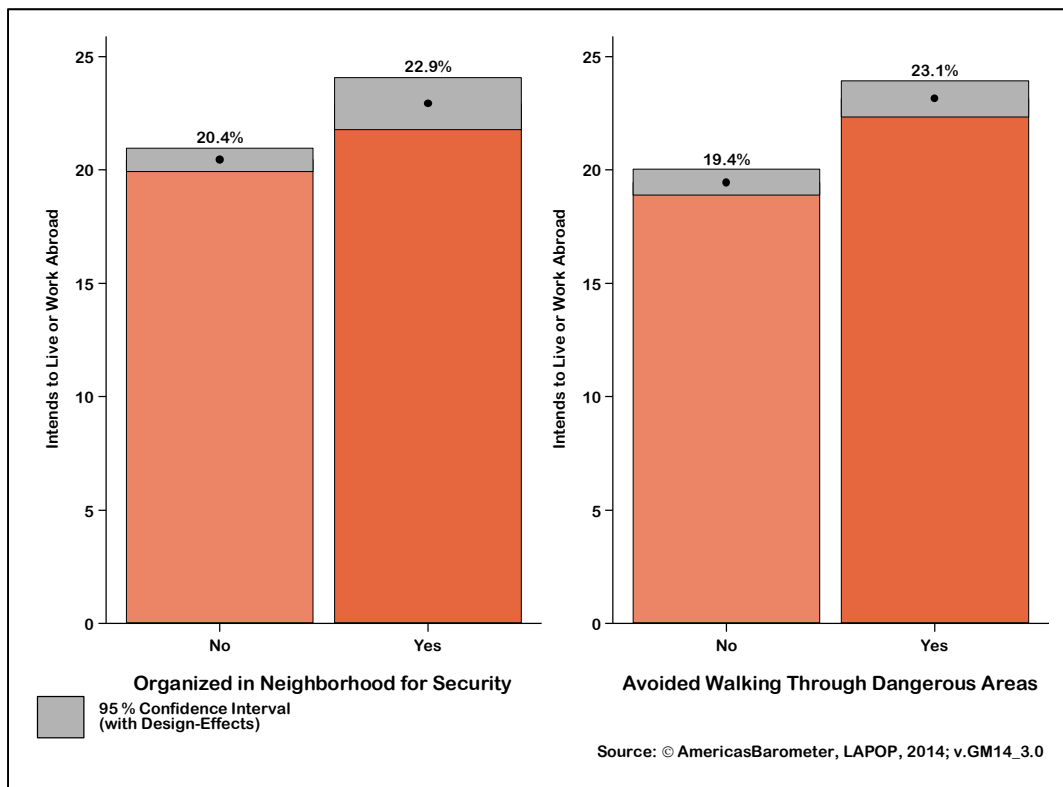
at the time of the writing of this report, data for "intention to emigrate" (Q14) was not available for this country. However, if we impute the regional mean of this variable to keep Ecuador in the analysis, results are robust.

<sup>41</sup> Results for age are in comparison to those of 36 to 45 years.

<sup>42</sup> Statistically significant results when coefficients have a  $p < .05$ .



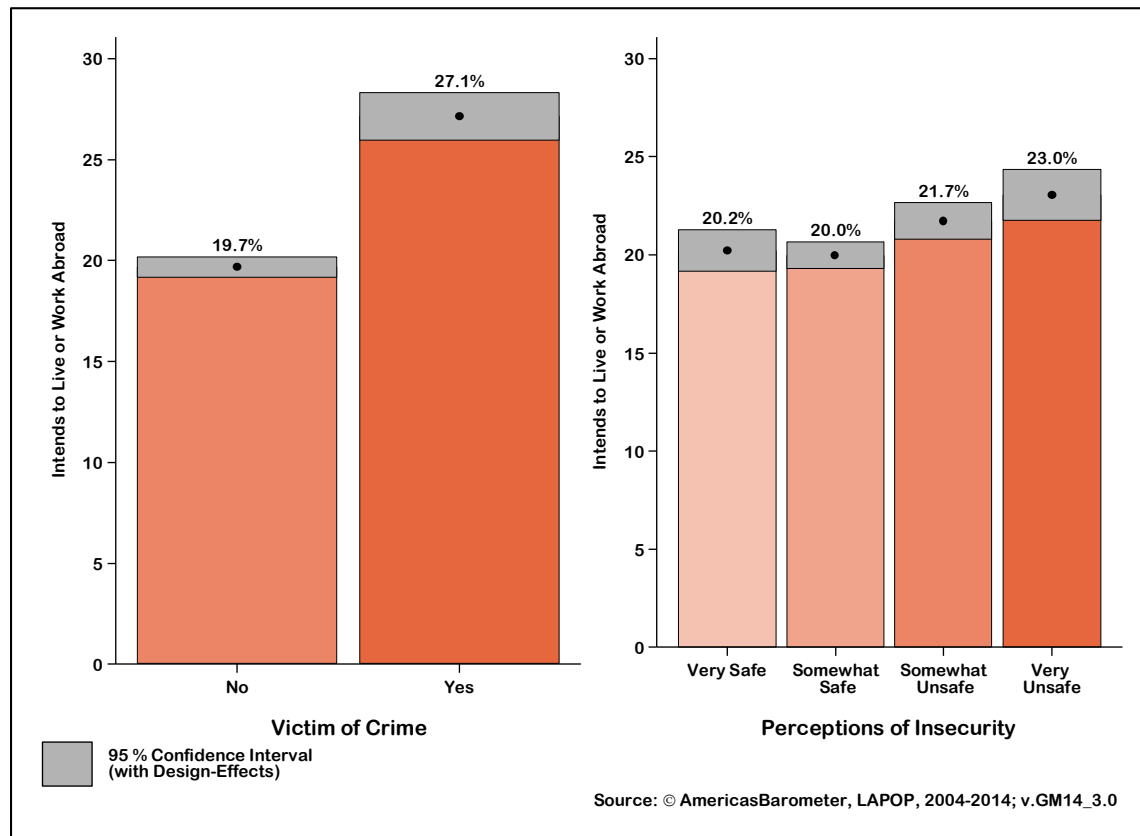
respondents (22.9%) who organized in their neighborhood to increase security or avoided walking through dangerous areas of their neighborhood express intent to emigrate, while around 20 to 21% who did not resort to one or the other measure to avoid crime also report intentions to leave their country. Although the differences are not large, they are statistically significant ( $p < .00$ ).



**Figure 2.27. Percentage that Intends to Emigrate by Behavioral Responses to Fear of Crime in 2014**

The differences in the percentage of respondents with an intention to emigrate are much greater when comparing those who had been victimized by crime in the last 12 months and those who had not (see Figure 2.28). Nearly 28% of crime victims report they plan to go live or work in another country in the next three years, while only about 20% of non-victims express the same intent. Similarly, a larger percentage of those with feelings of insecurity also express intention to emigrate in comparison to those who felt safe.<sup>43</sup> Those that felt “very unsafe” express a comparatively high degree of intention to emigrate, registering in at over 23%. In short, crime and insecurity are significant factors in explaining intentions to emigrate.

<sup>43</sup> Statistically significant differences exist between those that feel somewhat “unsafe” and “somewhat safe” ( $p = .01$ ), those that feel “very unsafe” and “somewhat safe” ( $p = .00$ ), and those that feel “very unsafe” and “somewhat safe” ( $p = .04$ ).



**Figure 2.28. Percentage that Intends to Emigrate by Crime Victimization and Perceptions of Insecurity in 2014**

## V. Conclusions

Crime is a top concern among citizens in the Americas. As we document in this chapter, this concern is based on a reality in which many citizens across the regions have experienced crime victimization or have elevated concerns about crime, gangs, and violence in their neighborhoods. Living with such concern can reasonably have negative consequences for quality of life, as many citizens change their life habits, plans, and even perceptions of their well-being in response to experiences with and fear of crime. In the Americas, considering the regional average assessed in this chapter for the 2014 AmericasBarometer survey, 2 out of every 5 individuals reports having avoided walking through certain areas of their neighborhood because they thought they were dangerous. Two additional measures of fear of crime, new to the AmericasBarometer in 2014, show that almost 30% of respondents worry a lot about insecurity on public transportation and almost 37% also worry a lot about insecurity at schools.

The results in this chapter show that the fear of crime has generally increased across the region. The average perception of neighborhood insecurity has increased across the Americas to one of its highest points in 2014. Moreover, 59.9% of respondents in 2014 indicated that the current level of violence in their neighborhood is the same or higher than 12 months ago. These concerns represent worries about a range of criminal activities and do not seem to be grounded entirely in gang activity, as in fact average perceived levels of gang activity in neighborhoods declined somewhat in 2014.

Cross-national differences are important to consider when assessing experiences with and fear of crime in the Americas and, as well, we find important individual-level differences in analyses related to fear of crime. As can be expected, crime victimization (whether personal or of another household member) consistently predicts greater levels of insecurity among respondents (and, as well, has similar effects on other measures related to crime concerns assessed in this chapter). Unsurprisingly, varying measures of fear of crime are mutually reinforcing in how much and the types of insecurity respondents perceive.

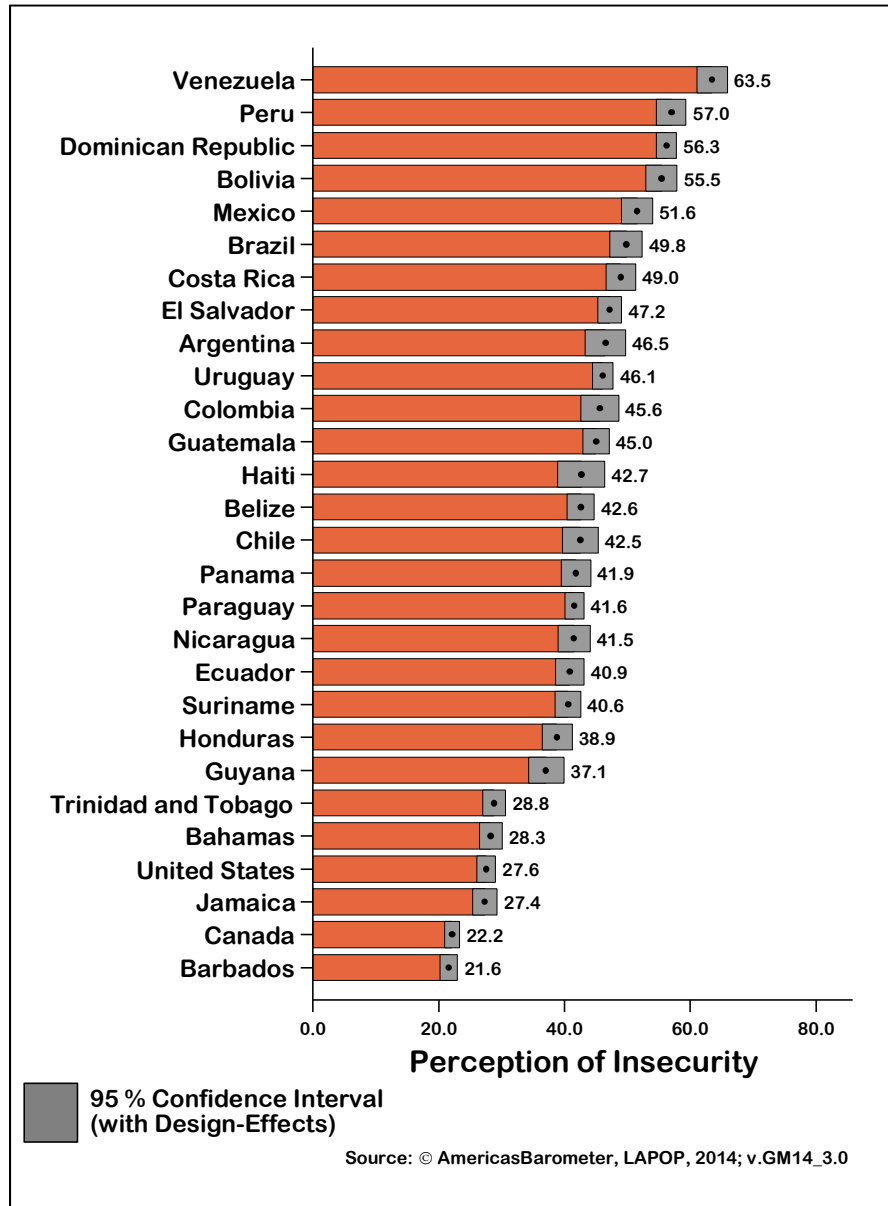
This chapter also finds that urban residents tend to feel the most insecure, a fact that is consistent with a tendency for crime rates to be higher in urban as opposed to rural areas in the Americas. Similarly, there is a relationship between paying a lot of attention to news media almost of the measures of fear of crime examined. This seems to indicate that the tendency for the media to sensationalize crime, whether intentionally or unintentionally, indeed stokes fears of crime across the Americas.

Citizens in the Americas are not passive in the face of crime and violence: rather, fear of crime and violence increases the likelihood of citizens acting to organize with neighbors to fight crime and to avoid dangerous neighborhood areas. In addition, crime victimization and concerns about safety undermine levels of life satisfaction and, at the same time, motivate a desire to emigrate from one's home country.



## Appendix

Appendix 2.1: Average Perceptions of Insecurity across Countries, 2014



**Appendix 2.2: Factors Associated with Feelings of Insecurity, 2014  
(Regression Results for Figure 2.6)**

	Standardized Coefficients	(t)
66 years or older	-0.029*	(-5.24)
56-65 years	-0.007	(-1.24)
46-55 years	0.004	(0.63)
26-35 years	0.008	(1.25)
16-25 years	0.005	(0.87)
Skin Tone	-0.007	(-1.02)
Wealth Quintiles	-0.016*	(-2.59)
Years of Schooling	0.003	(0.45)
Female	0.052*	(11.95)
Urban	0.085*	(11.52)
Attention to the news	0.007	(1.29)
Victim of Crime	0.156*	(31.04)
Guatemala	-0.024*	(-2.35)
El Salvador	-0.018	(-1.89)
Honduras	-0.068*	(-6.49)
Nicaragua	-0.052*	(-4.49)
Costa Rica	-0.001	(-0.13)
Panama	-0.047*	(-4.23)
Colombia	-0.035*	(-3.04)
Ecuador	-0.086*	(-6.60)
Bolivia	0.040*	(2.65)
Peru	0.025*	(2.63)
Paraguay	-0.042*	(-5.40)
Chile	-0.050*	(-4.56)
Uruguay	-0.034*	(-4.07)
Brazil	-0.007	(-0.71)
Venezuela	0.063*	(6.54)
Argentina	-0.034*	(-3.39)
Dominican Republic	0.036*	(3.34)
Haiti	-0.036*	(-2.59)
Jamaica	-0.121*	(-13.02)
Guyana	-0.060*	(-5.18)
Trinidad & Tobago	-0.119*	(-13.86)
Belize	-0.028*	(-3.17)
Suriname	-0.039*	(-4.30)
Bahamas	-0.090*	(-14.86)
Barbados	-0.111*	(-18.32)
Constant	0.106*	(12.51)
F	107.59	
No. of cases	48113	
R-Squared	0.13	
Regression-Standardized Coefficients with t-Statistics based on Standard Errors Adjusted for the Survey Design. * p<0.05		

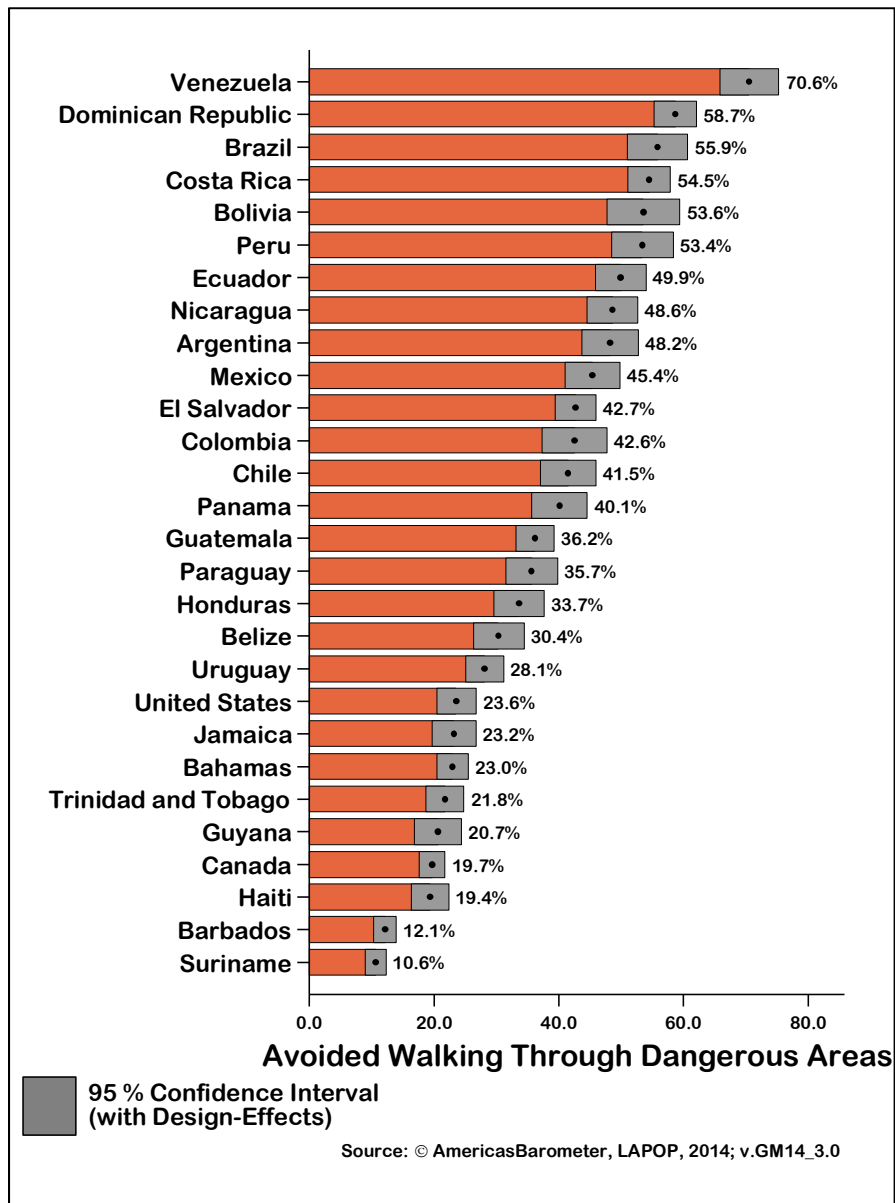
**Appendix 2.3: Factors Associated with Higher Current Neighborhood Violence, 2014 (Regression Results for Figure 2.9)**

	Standardized Coefficients	(t)
66 years or older	-0.039	(-1.91)
56-65 years	-0.027	(-1.26)
46-55 years	-0.013	(-0.64)
26-35 years	0.011	(0.51)
16-25 years	0.019	(0.83)
Skin Tone	0.014	(0.55)
Wealth Quintiles	-0.054*	(-2.50)
Years of Schooling	-0.071*	(-3.21)
Female	0.054*	(3.17)
Urban	0.242*	(9.26)
Attention to the news	0.059*	(2.73)
Victim of Crime	0.261*	(17.50)
Guatemala	-0.084*	(-2.87)
El Salvador	-0.147*	(-4.24)
Honduras	-0.193*	(-5.73)
Nicaragua	-0.131*	(-4.55)
Costa Rica	-0.044	(-1.64)
Panama	0.123*	(4.05)
Colombia	-0.063*	(-1.97)
Ecuador	-0.043	(-1.12)
Bolivia	-0.091*	(-2.16)
Peru	-0.035	(-1.31)
Paraguay	-0.100*	(-3.67)
Chile	-0.035	(-1.08)
Uruguay	-0.144*	(-5.24)
Brazil	-0.037	(-1.26)
Venezuela	0.129*	(5.16)
Argentina	-0.016	(-0.52)
Dominican Republic	0.012	(0.38)
Haiti	-0.096*	(-2.51)
Jamaica	-0.179*	(-3.83)
Guyana	-0.128*	(-3.88)
Trinidad & Tobago	-0.137*	(-4.72)
Belize	0.032	(1.33)
Suriname	-0.112*	(-4.14)
Bahamas	-0.025	(-1.41)
Barbados	-0.181*	(-8.13)
Constant	-2.281*	(-84.27)
F	26.55	
No. of cases	46880	
Regression-Standardized Coefficients with t-Statistics based on Standard Errors Adjusted for the Survey Design. * p<0.05		

**Appendix 2.4: Factors Associated with Higher Retrospective Neighborhood Violence, 2014 (Regression Results for Figure 2.10)**

	Standardized Coefficients	(t)
66 years or older	-0.018	(-1.00)
56-65 years	0.009	(0.50)
46-55 years	-0.008	(-0.43)
26-35 years	0.025	(1.29)
16-25 years	-0.005	(-0.26)
Skin Tone	0.006	(0.28)
Wealth Quintiles	-0.007	(-0.38)
Years of Schooling	0.009	(0.47)
Female	0.071*	(5.11)
Urban	0.189*	(7.89)
Attention to the news	0.062*	(3.20)
Victim of Crime	0.285*	(22.34)
Guatemala	-0.047	(-1.67)
El Salvador	-0.006	(-0.26)
Honduras	-0.216*	(-7.06)
Nicaragua	-0.112*	(-3.84)
Costa Rica	-0.063*	(-2.35)
Panama	0.064*	(2.28)
Colombia	-0.053	(-1.92)
Ecuador	-0.131*	(-3.41)
Bolivia	-0.119*	(-3.20)
Peru	-0.081*	(-3.31)
Paraguay	-0.134*	(-5.93)
Chile	-0.086*	(-2.76)
Uruguay	-0.027	(-1.25)
Brazil	0.080*	(3.33)
Venezuela	0.117*	(5.13)
Argentina	0.060*	(2.37)
Dominican Republic	0.092*	(3.39)
Haiti	-0.191*	(-5.52)
Jamaica	-0.174*	(-5.60)
Guyana	-0.142*	(-4.24)
Trinidad & Tobago	-0.127*	(-4.94)
Belize	-0.036	(-1.67)
Suriname	-0.115*	(-4.70)
Bahamas	-0.072*	(-4.50)
Barbados	-0.186*	(-9.59)
Constant	-1.852*	(-76.71)
F	38.26	
No. of cases	46918	
Regression-Standardized Coefficients with t-Statistics based on Standard Errors Adjusted for the Survey Design. * p<0.05		

### Appendix 2.5: Percentage Avoided Certain areas of their Neighborhood out of fear of Crime across the Americas in 2014





**Appendix 2.6: Determinants of Responding to Fear of Crime by Organizing with Neighbors, 2014 (Regression Results for Figure 2.16)**

	Standardized Coefficients	(t)
66 years or older	-0.022	(-1.28)
56-65 years	0.027	(1.63)
46-55 years	0.013	(0.81)
26-35 years	-0.060*	(-3.25)
16-25 years	-0.145*	(-7.92)
Skin Tone	0.057*	(2.67)
Wealth Quintiles	0.018	(1.00)
Years of Schooling	0.042*	(2.16)
Female	-0.044*	(-3.22)
Urban	0.038	(1.73)
Attention to the News	0.067*	(3.90)
Other Victim of Crime in Household	0.105*	(7.57)
Victim of Crime	0.081*	(5.85)
Gang Presence in Neighborhood	0.146*	(7.88)
Neighborhood Violence Worse than 12 Months Ago	0.087*	(5.72)
Perception of Insecurity	0.137*	(7.53)
Guatemala	0.125*	(4.42)
El Salvador	-0.153*	(-4.97)
Honduras	-0.057*	(-2.07)
Nicaragua	0.094*	(3.80)
Costa Rica	0.092*	(3.38)
Panama	0.034	(1.25)
Colombia	-0.049	(-1.67)
Ecuador	0.144*	(4.18)
Bolivia	0.229*	(5.99)
Peru	0.100*	(3.96)
Paraguay	0.059*	(2.57)
Chile	0.095*	(3.25)
Uruguay	-0.072*	(-2.83)
Brazil	-0.008	(-0.29)
Venezuela	0.059*	(2.39)
Argentina	0.004	(0.16)
Dominican Republic	0.131*	(5.03)
Haiti	-0.001	(-0.03)
Jamaica	-0.050	(-1.89)
Guyana	-0.073*	(-2.14)
Trinidad & Tobago	-0.109*	(-4.12)
Belize	0.001	(0.05)
Suriname	-0.165*	(-6.32)
Bahamas	-0.003	(-0.14)
Barbados	-0.169*	(-6.65)
Constant	-1.625*	(-69.15)
F	36.64	
No. of cases	44184	
Regression-Standardized Coefficients with t-Statistics based on Standard Errors Adjusted for the Survey Design. * p<0.05		

**Appendix 2.7: Determinants of Responding to Fear of Crime by Avoiding Dangerous Areas in Neighborhood, 2014 (Regression Results for Figure 2.17)**

	Standardized Coefficients	(t)
66 years or older	-0.005	(-0.34)
56-65 years	0.000	(0.03)
46-55 years	-0.007	(-0.49)
26-35 years	0.012	(0.74)
16-25 years	0.019	(1.18)
Skin Tone	0.029	(1.57)
Wealth Quintiles	0.026	(1.68)
Years of Schooling	0.092*	(5.85)
Female	0.069*	(5.73)
Urban	0.268*	(14.04)
Attention to the News	0.070*	(4.78)
Other Victim of Crime in Household	0.143*	(11.94)
Victim of Crime	0.128*	(10.23)
Gang Presence in Neighborhood	0.366*	(23.77)
Neighborhood Violence Worse than 12 Months Ago	0.151*	(10.67)
Perception of Insecurity	0.366*	(24.17)
Guatemala	0.008	(0.38)
El Salvador	0.003	(0.15)
Honduras	0.013	(0.54)
Nicaragua	0.128*	(5.96)
Costa Rica	0.156*	(7.55)
Panama	-0.035	(-1.36)
Colombia	-0.002	(-0.07)
Ecuador	0.121*	(4.33)
Bolivia	0.106*	(2.96)
Peru	0.052*	(2.24)
Paraguay	0.008	(0.40)
Chile	-0.002	(-0.07)
Uruguay	-0.127*	(-6.78)
Brazil	0.097*	(4.20)
Venezuela	0.127*	(5.10)
Argentina	0.006	(0.32)
Dominican Republic	0.112*	(4.69)
Haiti	-0.158*	(-5.64)
Jamaica	-0.059*	(-2.58)
Guyana	-0.081*	(-2.83)
Trinidad & Tobago	-0.086*	(-4.14)
Belize	-0.023	(-1.16)
Suriname	-0.249*	(-10.91)
Bahamas	-0.066*	(-4.96)
Barbados	-0.131*	(-8.12)
Constant	-0.483*	(-23.86)
F	96.80	
No. of cases	44132	
Regression-Standardized Coefficients with t-Statistics based on Standard Errors Adjusted for the Survey Design. * p<0.05		

**Appendix 2.8: Factors Associated with Life Satisfaction, 2014  
(Regression Results for Figure 2.23)**

	Standardized Coefficients	(t)
66 years or older	0.029*	(4.76)
56-65 years	0.007	(1.11)
46-55 years	-0.006	(-0.90)
26-35 years	0.010	(1.60)
16-25 years	0.037*	(5.64)
Skin Tone	-0.024*	(-3.29)
Wealth Quintiles	0.080*	(12.37)
Years of Schooling	0.043*	(6.50)
Female	-0.000	(-0.00)
Urban	0.020*	(2.87)
Number of Children	-0.004	(-0.59)
Importance of Religion	0.080*	(13.68)
Perception of Personal Economic Situation	0.153*	(24.36)
Perception of National Economic Situation	0.024*	(3.82)
Neighborhood is Affected by Gangs	-0.021*	(-3.14)
Retrospective Perceptions of Higher Neighborhood Violence	-0.009	(-1.44)
Avoided Walking Through Dangerous Areas	-0.005	(-0.79)
Perception of Insecurity	-0.069*	(-10.69)
Victim of Crime	-0.023*	(-4.03)
Guatemala	-0.013	(-1.49)
El Salvador	-0.033*	(-4.06)
Honduras	-0.014	(-1.45)
Nicaragua	-0.003	(-0.26)
Costa Rica	0.019*	(2.12)
Panama	0.023*	(2.54)
Colombia	0.015	(1.64)
Ecuador	-0.093*	(-6.84)
Bolivia	-0.147*	(-12.89)
Peru	-0.054*	(-6.28)
Paraguay	-0.007	(-0.89)
Chile	-0.024*	(-2.52)
Uruguay	-0.027*	(-3.19)
Brazil	-0.017	(-1.82)
Venezuela	0.019	(1.51)
Argentina	-0.011	(-1.54)
Dominican Republic	-0.006	(-0.60)
Haiti	-0.172*	(-12.34)
Jamaica	-0.124*	(-11.53)
Guyana	-0.054*	(-5.48)
Trinidad & Tobago	-0.074*	(-9.61)
Belize	-0.029*	(-3.71)
Suriname	-0.038*	(-4.72)
Bahamas	-0.018*	(-3.27)
Barbados	-0.037*	(-6.66)
Constant	0.016*	(2.02)
F	63.76	
No. of cases	43377	
R-Squared	0.11	
Regression-Standardized Coefficients with t-Statistics based on Standard Errors Adjusted for the Survey Design. * p<0.05		

**Appendix 2.9: The Impact of Crime on Intention to Emigrate, 2014  
(Regression Results for Figure 2.26)**

	Standardized Coefficients	(t)
66 years or older	-0.458*	(-14.95)
56-65 years	-0.356*	(-13.88)
46-55 years	-0.156*	(-7.85)
26-35 years	0.152*	(8.10)
16-25 years	0.338*	(18.54)
Skin Tone	0.053*	(2.47)
Wealth Quintiles	0.065*	(3.53)
Years of Schooling	0.119*	(5.84)
Female	-0.192*	(-12.52)
Urban	0.011	(0.60)
Receives Remittances	0.272*	(18.04)
Other Victim of Crime in Household	0.076*	(5.09)
Victim of Crime	0.091*	(5.90)
Gang Presence in Neighborhood	0.020	(1.08)
Neighborhood Violence Worse than 12 Months Ago	0.030	(1.79)
Perception of Insecurity	0.063*	(3.52)
Organized in Neighborhood for Security	0.073*	(4.63)
Avoided Walking Through Dangerous Areas	0.112*	(6.27)
Guatemala	0.081*	(3.52)
El Salvador	0.189*	(8.01)
Honduras	0.229*	(9.74)
Nicaragua	0.126*	(5.30)
Costa Rica	0.000	(.)
Panama	-0.014	(-0.51)
Colombia	0.090*	(3.61)
Ecuador	0.000	(.)
Bolivia	0.097*	(2.92)
Peru	0.100*	(4.47)
Paraguay	0.119*	(5.67)
Chile	0.000	(.)
Uruguay	-0.052*	(-2.05)
Brazil	0.020	(0.88)
Venezuela	-0.047	(-1.69)
Argentina	0.000	(.)
Dominican Republic	0.168*	(6.56)
Haiti	0.386*	(12.86)
Jamaica	0.391*	(17.33)
Guyana	0.195*	(7.93)
Trinidad & Tobago	-0.024	(-1.00)
Belize	-0.001	(-0.06)
Suriname	-0.009	(-0.39)
Bahamas	0.012	(0.79)
Barbados	0.096*	(6.04)
Constant	-1.653*	(-53.33)
F	79.94	
No. of cases	37412	
Regression-Standardized Coefficients with t-Statistics based on Standard Errors Adjusted for the Survey Design. * p<0.05		



## Chapter 3. Citizen Security, Evaluations of the State, and Policy Preferences

*Matthew Layton and Mariana Rodríguez  
with  
Mason Moseley and Daniel Zizumbo-Colunga*

### I. Introduction

In modern times, the state is charged with providing for public security by controlling criminal violence within its boundaries (Bailey 2009). In fact, perhaps the most famous definition of the modern state describes it first and foremost as having “a monopoly of the legitimate use of force within a given territory” (Weber 1965). While Weber was under no illusion that violence perpetrated by non-state actors would cease to exist in modern states, the staggering rise of crime in many parts of the developing world raises serious concerns regarding the governability and stability of the democratic state. In fact, one of the more pivotal challenges to democratic legitimacy and consolidation in the Americas has been the region’s continued struggle in providing public security for its citizens (see Diamond 1999; Whitehead 2002). In this chapter, we explore what the AmericasBarometer can tell us about citizens’ evaluations of state capacity to fight crime and violence; perceptions of performance and responsiveness of the police and judicial system; as well as evaluations of the current administration’s performance in providing citizen security. This chapter also addresses the implications for crime victimization and insecurity on citizens’ policy positions towards the fight against crime.

Key findings in this chapter include:

- Poor evaluations of the police are fairly commonplace in the Americas: nearly 1 out of 2 individuals expresses dissatisfaction with police performance and more than 1 out of 3 individuals reports that the police would take more than an hour to respond to an average home burglary or not respond at all.
- Those who feel more insecure in their neighborhood and that the police response time is slow are less satisfied with police efforts in their community.
- Trust in the courts and in the justice system fell to their lowest points in 2014, referencing over a decade of AmericasBarometer surveys.
- Confidence that the judicial system punishes the guilty had been increasing across the region on average since 2006, but 2014 saw an interruption to that trend; the average citizen in the Americas was less confident in 2014 than in 2012.
- Perceptions and experiences with respect to insecurity, gangs, and crime are important factors in explaining evaluations of national government capacity for citizen security and the rule of law; feelings of insecurity in one’s neighborhood are a particularly strong predictor.
- Incumbent executives face significant costs in terms of popular support and vote intentions when citizens feel insecure in their neighborhoods.
- 55.3% of respondents to the 2014 AmericasBarometer indicate a preference for a punitive approach to deter crime, a preference that has increased significantly since 2012.

- Confidence in the justice system to punish the guilty conditions the relationship between crime victimization and preferences for punitive anti-crime policy (and for military involvement in combating crime): crime victims with no or little confidence in the justice system tend to lean toward punitive policy (and more military involvement), while those with more confidence tend to lean toward preventative policy.
- Support for "taking the law into one's own hands" remains low on average for the region, but increased significantly in 2014 compared to previous years.
- Support for military involvement in combatting crime and violence remains high on average for the region, but decreased significantly in 2014 compared to 2012.
- Crime victimization and citizen insecurity promote citizen preferences for punitive criminal justice policy, vigilante justice, and the militarization of criminal justice efforts.

This chapter seeks to contribute to the literature that examines how high levels of crime influence attitudes and political behavior in the Americas. Among the foremost concerns has been that high levels of victimization and/or fear of crime lead individuals to lose faith in the current regime's ability to ensure public security. Indeed, feeling insecure has been linked to lower levels of trust in and satisfaction with crime-fighting institutions like the police (Dammert and Malone 2003, 2006; Scheider, Rowell and Bezdikian 2003; Perdomo 2010; Corbacho et al. 2012). Many Latin Americans even believe that the police themselves are involved in criminal activities, a belief that casts serious doubt on the legitimacy of the public servants that are supposed to protect them (Cruz 2010).

We also assess the implications that crime victimization and insecurity can have for citizens' support for incumbent governments. Like poor economic performance, high levels of insecurity and violence can result in citizens punishing incumbents and looking for alternative candidates and parties that might better combat crime (Arce 2003; Cummins 2009; Holmes and Gutierrez 2012; Gómez Vilchis 2012; Malone 2013). When crime becomes a salient issue, it can have a deleterious effect on presidential approval (Romero 2013; Gómez Vilchis 2013). Of course, conditions of security can also make individuals prone to project charisma onto potential "saviors," and even grant them comparatively unchecked powers that can undermine democratic political institutions and erode the political rights of minorities (Merolla and Zechmeister 2009). In all of these ways, individuals might seek redress of violence in the political realm; through changing participation patterns; voting out seemingly ineffective politicians; and/or casting support in favor of heavy-handed tactics by leaders charged with decreasing the threat of crime.

In addition to high crime rates, dissatisfaction in and distrust of law enforcement institutions may also push citizens to take undemocratic, and potentially extralegal, measures to boost their personal security (Malone 2013). In the cases of El Salvador and Guatemala, Pérez (2003) finds that higher perceptions of insecurity and crime victimization amplify support for military coups, as citizens' faith in the democratic regime's crime-fighting credentials erode. In the context of an increasingly violent conflict between the Mexican government and drug cartels, Malone (2013) finds that victimization and fear of crime negatively impact respect for the rule of law and confidence in specific law enforcement institutions. Just prior to the turn of the century, Diamond (1999) expressed concern that individuals might turn to vigilante-style justice in the face of insecurity. Vigilante justice is a complex subject that has been investigated over decades of scholarship (e.g., Black 1976; Tolnay and Beck 1995; Senechal de la Roche 2001), with some research suggesting a connection between citizens' perception of law

enforcement and support for vigilante justice (Alvarado-Mendoza 2007; Goldstein 2012; Silke 2001; Zizumbo-Colunga 2010). Recent experimental evidence points to (lack of) police responsiveness and trustworthiness as key factors increasing support for vigilante justice (see, e.g., Haas, de Keijser, and Bruinsma 2013). Moreover, trust in one's neighbors and law enforcement officials seems to have an interactive effect both for citizens' support for vigilante justice and in their likelihood to join with their neighbors to defend themselves from crime (Zizumbo-Colunga 2012). All of these findings suggest that in crime-stricken countries, trust in and willingness to cooperate with law enforcement may erode to the degree that citizens have lost faith in the regime's ability to provide adequate public security.

## II. Evaluations of State Capacity and Performance in the Fight against Crime and Violence

This section discusses results from the 2014 AmericasBarometer concerning evaluations of state capacity to ensure citizen safety and the rule of law, both at the local and national level. Additionally, it analyzes the consequences that experiences with and fear of crime can have for evaluations of the government's domestic security performance.

### *Evaluations of Local State Capacity: Perception of Police Performance and Responsiveness*

Police are the principal representation of state capacity to ensure citizen security and rule of law at the local level. They are also the government actors with whom citizens have the most frequent and immediate interaction on issues related to crime and violence. Hence, assessing satisfaction with police performance and evaluations of their responsiveness is essential to understand how citizens evaluate their governments' ability to ensure their security and the enforcement of the rule of law. With this in mind, the 2014 AmericasBarometer included two new survey items regarding local police:

**POLE2N.** In general, are you very satisfied, satisfied, **dissatisfied**, or very **dissatisfied** with the performance of the police in your neighborhood?  
 [If respondent says there is no police, mark 4 "Very dissatisfied"]  
 (1) Very satisfied (2) Satisfied (3) Dissatisfied (4) Very dissatisfied (88) DK (98) DA

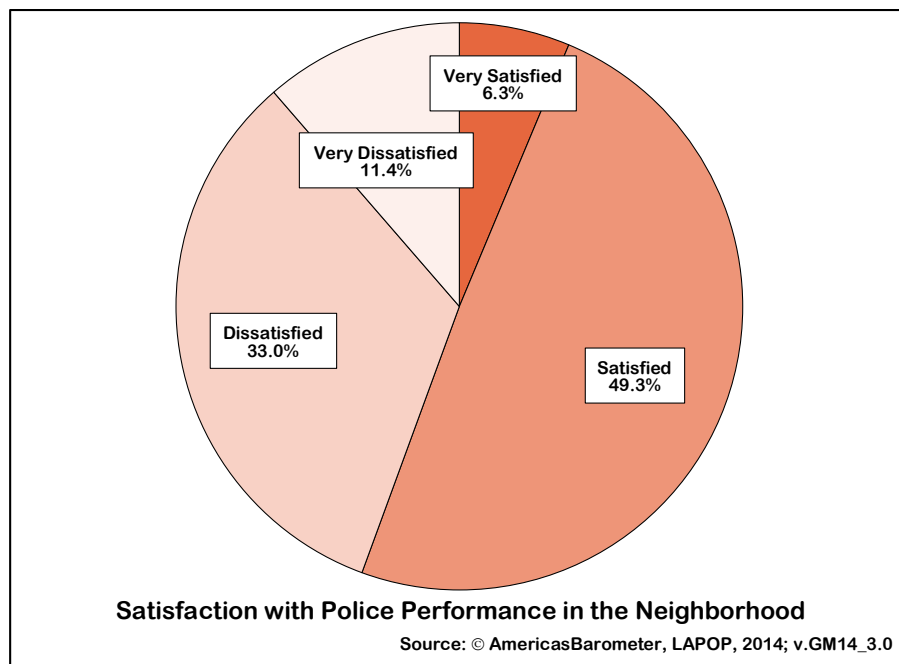
**INFRA X.** Suppose someone enters your home to burglarize it and you call the police. How long do you think it would take the police to arrive at your house on a typical day around noon? **[READ ALTERNATIVES]**  
 (1) Less than 10 minutes  
 (2) Between 10 and 30 minutes  
 (3) More than 30 minutes and up to an hour  
 (4) More than an hour and up to three hours  
 (5) More than three hours  
 (6) **[DON'T READ]** There are no police/they would never arrive  
 (88) DK  
 (98) DA

Figure 3.1 shows the distribution of responses to the question about satisfaction with the performance of police in the neighborhood for the region in 2014.<sup>1</sup> The numbers indicate that on average there is almost an even split across the Americas between those with some level of satisfaction and

<sup>1</sup> As is standard LAPOP practice, in all analyses of regional averages in this chapter and this report more generally, we calculate regional means via a process that weights each country equally rather than proportional to population.



dissatisfaction with the performance of their local police.<sup>2</sup> While 49.3% indicate being “satisfied,” 6.3% say they were “very satisfied” with police performance. On the other hand, 33.0% of respondents are “dissatisfied” and 11.4% are “very dissatisfied” with their local police. While on balance individuals are marginally more satisfied than unsatisfied, it is noteworthy that nearly 1 out of every 2 individuals reports some level of dissatisfaction with the police in the Americas.



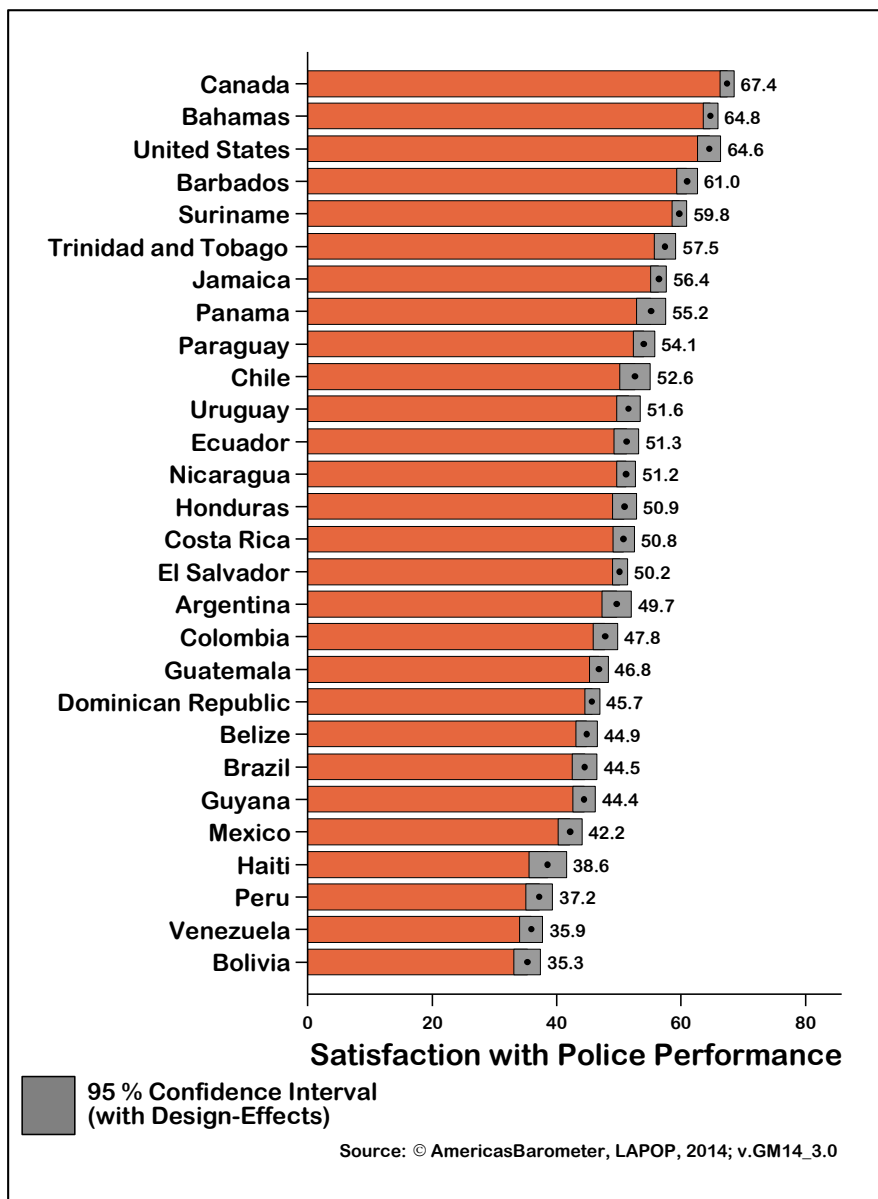
**Figure 3.1. Satisfaction with the Police Performance in the Neighborhood, 2014**

Figure 3.2 displays, by country, the average levels of satisfaction with neighborhood police based on a recoded version of the POLE2N variable, which has been transformed to range from 0 to 100, where 100 is the highest level of satisfaction possible. The figure shows wide-ranging cross-national differences in how much citizens across the Americas are satisfied with the work of their local police. These cross-national variations roughly tend to correspond with trends in feelings of insecurity discussed in the previous chapters: countries in which citizens feel most insecure in their neighborhoods (Venezuela, Peru, the Dominican Republic, Bolivia, and Mexico)<sup>3</sup> are found among those on the lower end of the police satisfaction scale.<sup>4</sup> Along the same lines, countries in which citizens feel the safest in their neighborhoods (Barbados, Canada, Jamaica, the United States, Bahamas, and Trinidad & Tobago) also have the highest mean levels of satisfaction with local police in 2014.

<sup>2</sup> Figure 3.1 includes 25 countries surveyed in the 2014 AmericasBarometer.

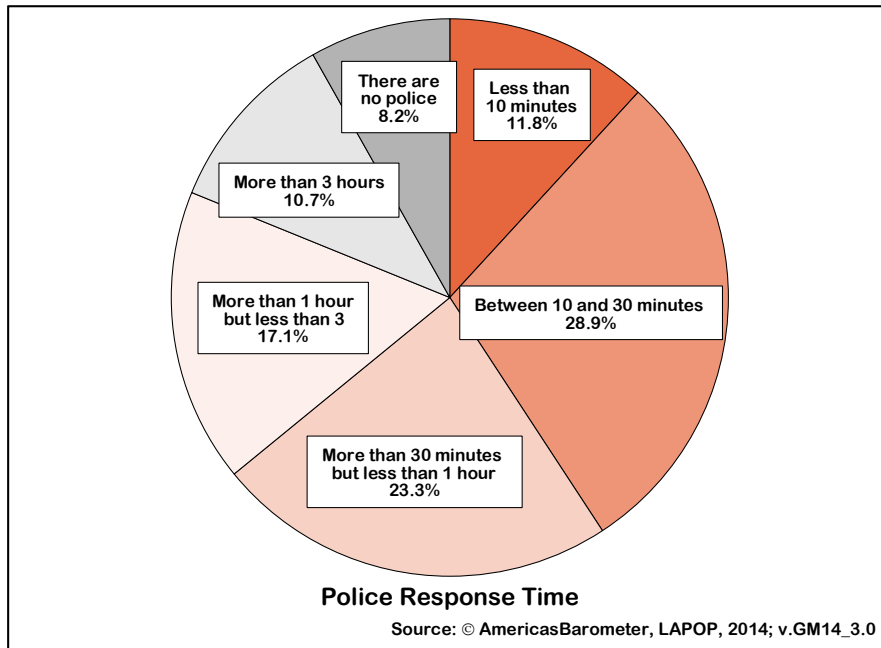
<sup>3</sup> See Map 2.1 from the previous chapter.

<sup>4</sup> Though there are some exceptions (e.g., Haiti).



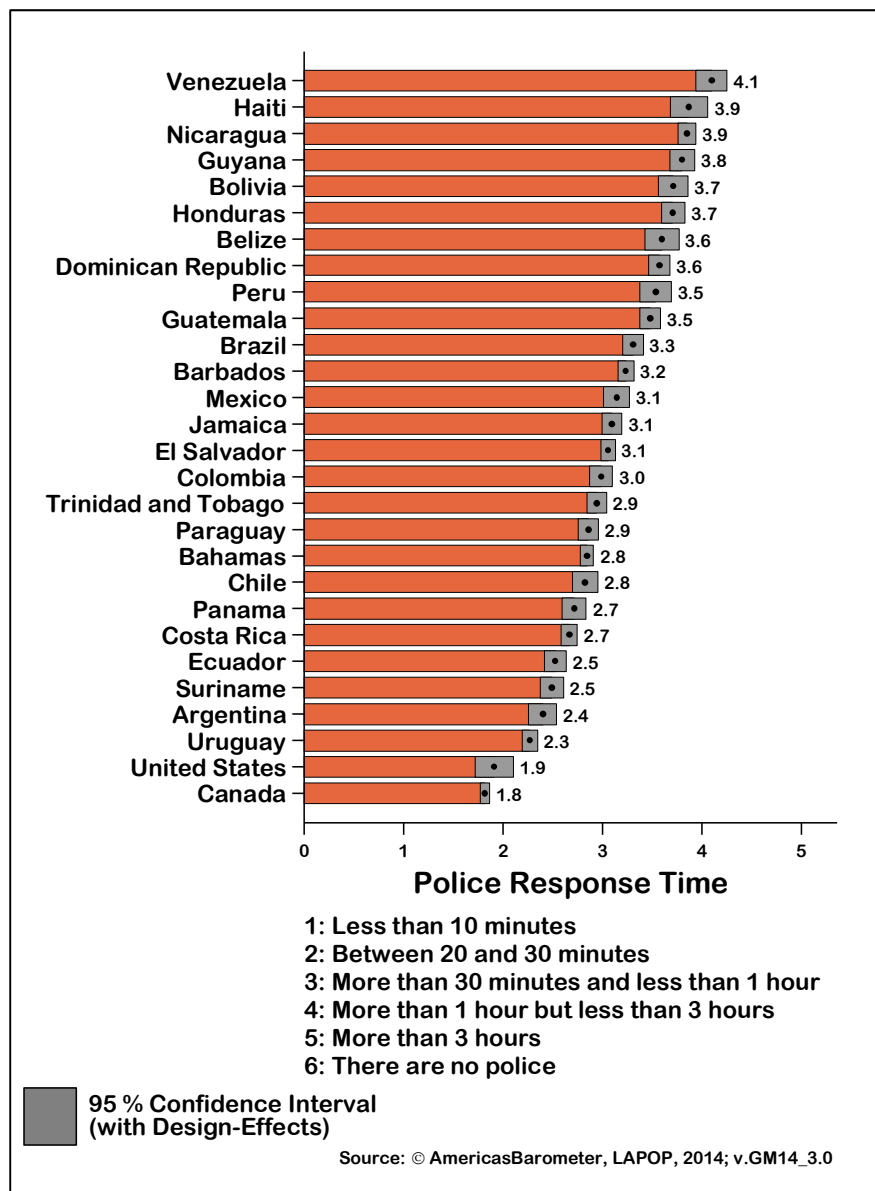
**Figure 3.2. Average Satisfaction with Police Performance in the Neighborhood across the Americas, 2014**

We turn next to our second measure of local police performance: evaluations of average response times in the event of a home burglary. On average across the Americas, the majority of respondents indicate that the police would respond in less than an hour, with the most common response among interviewees being between 10 and 30 minutes, followed by a response time between 30 minutes to an hour. Only 11.8% say the police would show up within 10 minutes. On the other hand, just over a quarter of respondents think it would take the police more than an hour to respond to their home being robbed (27.8%), and almost 9% report that the police would not even show up at all. In other words, more than 1 out of every 3 individuals on average in the region believes that the police would take over an hour to respond to an average home burglary or not show at all.



**Figure 3.3. Perceived Police Response Times in the Event of Home Burglary, 2014**

Figure 3.4 displays the mean of the police response time variable for each country in 2014. Running counter to the LAPOP standard in this one case, we keep the variable on its original 1 to 6 scale. Citizens in the United States, Canada, Argentina, Uruguay, Ecuador, and Costa Rica provide comparatively high evaluations of police responsiveness. In these countries the average response to the question is equivalent to a response of between 10 and 30 minutes. On the other hand, police response to home burglaries is perceived to take the longest in Venezuela, Haiti, Nicaragua, Guyana, Bolivia, and Honduras, where the average response among respondents in these countries is closest to the option of between one and three hours.



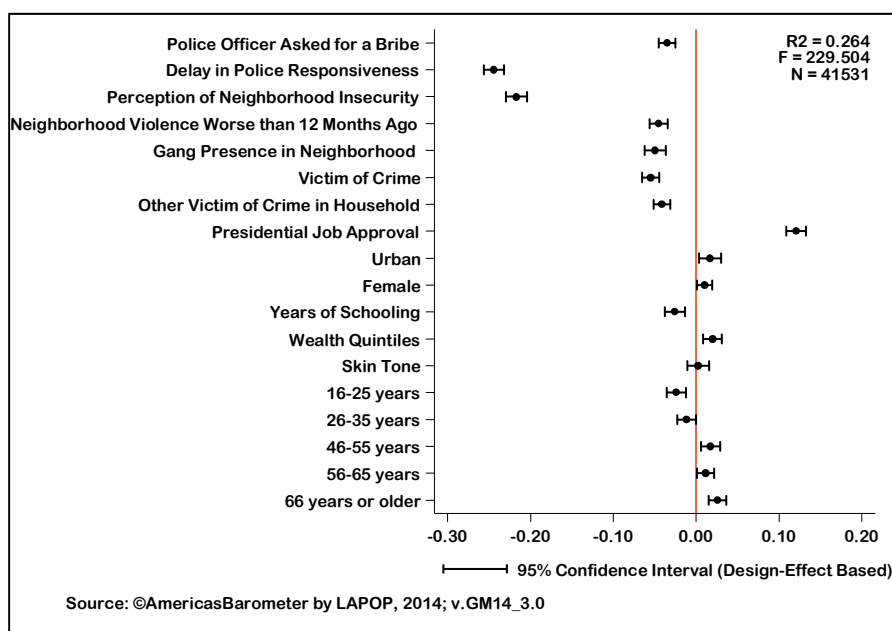
**Figure 3.4. Perceptions of Average Police Response Times across the Americas, 2014**

While national averages are important, what explains variations across individuals in answers to the questions asking for evaluations of the police? To answer this question we conduct a multiple variable regression analysis to identify key determinants of satisfaction with police performance in the neighborhood.<sup>5</sup> The model includes a number of standard demographic variables<sup>6</sup> in addition to

<sup>5</sup> The model estimates an OLS regression model for satisfaction with the performance of neighborhood police, which is coded so that higher values mean more satisfaction; country fixed effects to account for differences across countries are included but not shown. See corresponding table with the results for standardized coefficients in the Appendix. The U.S. and Canada are not included in these or other regression analyses in this chapter, in order to focus on the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region.

<sup>6</sup> Skin tone ranges from 1(lightest) to 10(darkest). Wealth quintiles is a standard LAPOP control created using the R-series questions about capital goods ownership to create a five-point index of quintiles of wealth, which is standardized across urban and rural areas in each country. For more information on the variable, see Córdova, Abby. 2009. "Methodological Note:

measures of individuals' experiences with crime and interactions with the police. Under the assumption that experiencing crime and insecurity tends to affirm for individuals that the state and, specifically, law enforcement is not providing for citizen security, we expect that respondents who have been victims of crime or have had another member of their household victimized, as well as those that feel generally insecure, will have a more negative view of the police. We carry over the same expectation for those who believe the violence in their neighborhood to be worse than 12 months ago and those who perceive a high degree of gang presence in their neighborhood. Those who have been asked for a bribe by a police officer are also expected to be less satisfied with the police.<sup>7</sup> We also include an additional variable that reflects the respondent's level of satisfaction with the performance of the president; as such evaluations may also influence how a respondent evaluates state capacity more generally, including the performance of the local police.<sup>8</sup>



**Figure 3.5. Determinants of Satisfaction with Police Performance in the Neighborhood, 2014**

The results of the regression analysis are presented in Figure 3.5, which displays standardized regression coefficients with dots surrounded by horizontal lines indicating the 95% confidence interval. As expected, those who feel more insecure, have been victims of crime (or in the same household as crime victims), perceive more violence in their neighborhood than 12 months ago, report more gang activity, and who believe the police would be comparatively delayed in responding to a home burglary are less satisfied with police performance.<sup>9</sup> Among these factors, the most important (in terms of

Measuring Relative Wealth Using Household Asset Indicators.” AmericasBarometer Insights 6. Vanderbilt University: Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP).

<sup>7</sup> Crime victimization and victimization of another household member are binary variables measured using the survey items VIC1EXT and VIC1HOGAR, respectively. Perceptions of insecurity is a recoded variable corresponding to the question AOJ11 with four response categories that range from “very safe” to “very unsafe”. Retrospective evaluations of neighborhood violence are measured as a dummy variable using the survey item PESE2. Perceptions of gang presence in the neighborhood is measured using the survey item AOJ17; it is coded so that higher values mean worse evaluations of gang presence. Having been asked for a bribe by a police officer is a binary variable measured using EXC2.

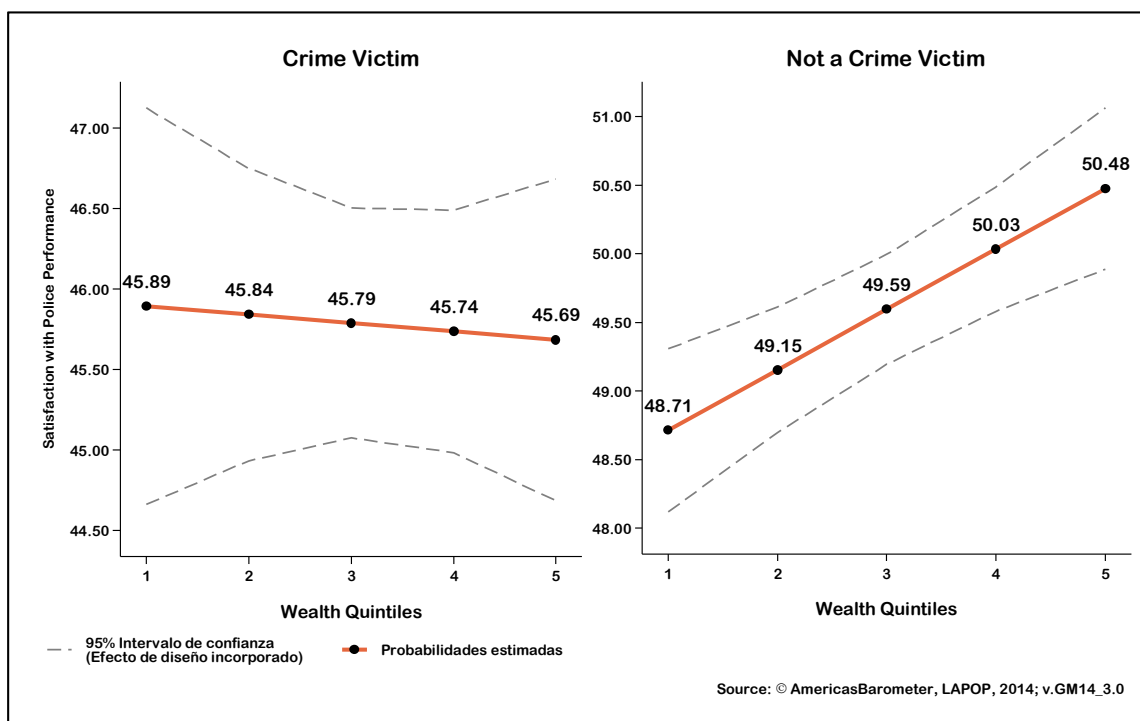
<sup>8</sup> Presidential approval is measured using the survey item M1; it is coded so that higher values mean more satisfaction.

<sup>9</sup> To avoid problems of multicollinearity with perceptions of *current* level of neighborhood violence (PESE1), only a measure for retrospective evaluations of neighborhood violence (PESE2) are included in the model.

magnitude of association with the dependent variable) are perceptions of insecurity and police response time to a home robbery. That is, the longer an individual believes the police will take to respond and the more insecure an individual feels, the less satisfied individuals in the Americas are with police performance in their neighborhood.

Additionally (yet still unsurprisingly), we find that negative personal experiences with the police, such as being asked for a bribe, significantly decrease the level of satisfaction an individual has with police performance. On the other hand, more positive evaluations of the president's job performance significantly improve evaluations of the police. In terms of demographics, urban residence is associated with greater satisfaction with police performance, but gender and skin tone are not related to how individuals evaluate the performance of local police. More educated and younger respondents tend to be less satisfied with the performance of the police in their neighborhoods.

Wealth appears associated with a higher level of satisfaction in local police performance. On closer inspection, we found that this positive association is conditional on whether the respondent was a victim of crime (see Figure 3.6). Regardless of wealth, having been a victim of crime is related to decreased satisfaction with the performance of police in the neighborhood. However, among those who have not been victims, wealth is positively associated with evaluations of police performance.



**Figure 3.6. Conditional Impact of Wealth on Satisfaction with Police Performance in the Neighborhood by Crime Victimization, 2014**

Having assessed citizens' views on the performance of police in individuals' communities, we now turn in the next section to evaluations of the capacity of the state at the national level to provide for citizen security and the rule of law.

### Evaluations of National State Capacity for the Provision of Citizen Security and the Rule of Law

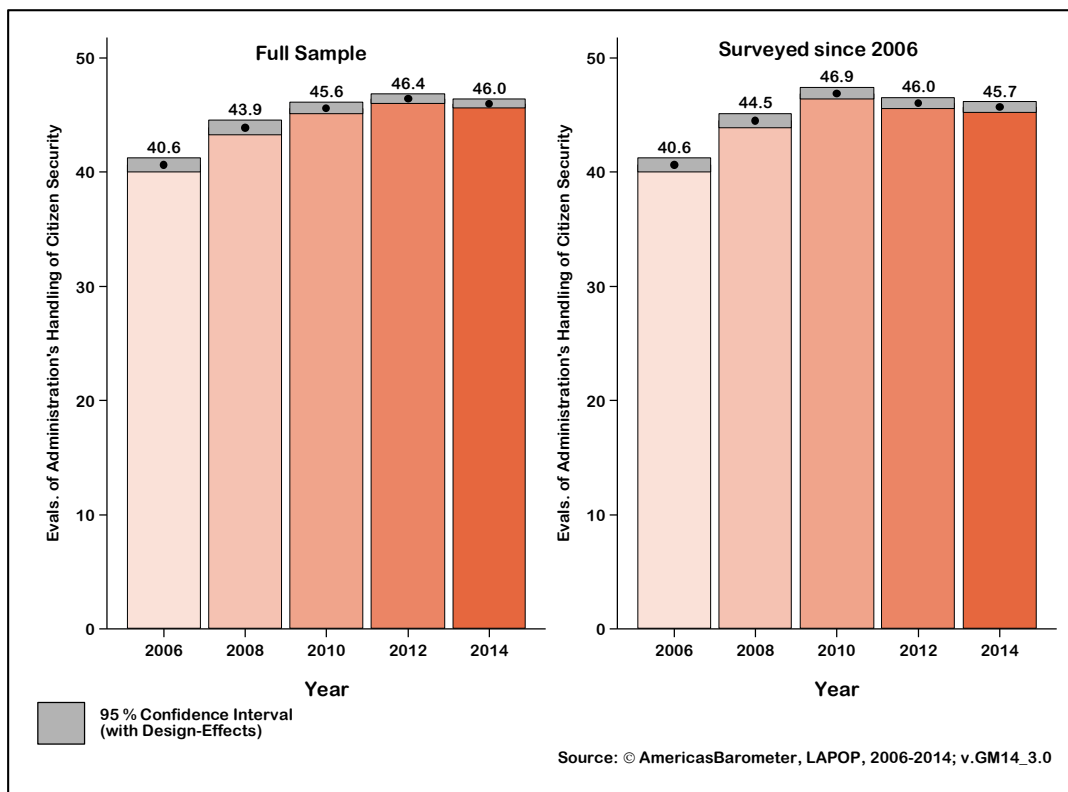
Beyond evaluations of local state capacity, understanding citizens' level of satisfaction and trust in national government institutions that are supposed to protect them from crime and violence is also essential for understanding how citizens evaluate their governments' ability to fulfill its responsibility to provide for citizen security. The 2014 AmericasBarometer includes a number of survey questions to measure such evaluations. Since 2006, the survey has included the following measure with which to record evaluations of the incumbent administration's performance on issues related to general citizen security:

<p>Now, using the same ladder, <b>[continue with Card B: 1-7 point scale]</b>  <b>NOT AT ALL 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A LOT</b></p>
<p><b>N11.</b> To what extent would you say the current administration improves citizen safety?</p>

We recode this measure to run from 0 to 100 (where 100 represents the best evaluation possible), in accord with standard LAPOP practices. Figure 3.7 displays the region-average for this variable for two sets of countries: all countries included in the AmericasBarometer study to date on the left-hand side and only that subset of countries that has been continuously surveyed since 2006 on the right-hand side. Both graphs affirm that the region experienced an upward trend in average evaluations of current administrations' handling of citizen security between 2006 and 2010. Slightly different patterns emerge between 2012 and 2014 when comparing evaluations of the full sample of countries to the subset of those in which the survey question N11 was asked since 2006. On the one hand, when we consider all countries, citizens across the Americas seem to be somewhat less satisfied in 2014 (46.0) with their governments' efforts to improve citizen security compared to 2012, but the magnitude of this change is small.<sup>10</sup> However, if we confine the analysis to those countries the AmericasBarometer has included since 2006,<sup>11</sup> average evaluations of the government security performance dropped somewhat in 2012 and have been stable since that time. In either case, the figure shows that citizens of the Americas remain comparatively slightly more satisfied with their government's performance on issues of security in current times compared to nearly a decade ago, which is interesting given the general increase in crime and violence that the region has experienced in recent years.

<sup>10</sup> The 2014 regional average for evaluations of the current administration's efforts in improving citizen security were actually higher than averages for two similar measures of the current administrations' performance in fighting corruption (N9; average 41.44) and handling the economy (N15; average 42.51). Only evaluations of the government's economic performance also experienced a significant decline between 2012 and 2014, from 46.33 to 42.51. Average evaluations of the government's fight against corruption remained the same.

<sup>11</sup> Among the Latin American countries, only Argentina is excluded since it was first surveyed in 2008.



**Figure 3.7. Average Evaluations of the Incumbent Administration's Handling of Citizen Security, 2006-2014**

Looking only at data from the 2014 AmericasBarometer, Figure 3.8 displays the differences across countries in average evaluations of national governments' performance in ensuring citizen security. Similar to results regarding satisfaction with the performance of the local police, Venezuela and Peru are among the countries with the worst evaluations of the national government's state capacity for citizen security. Argentina and Brazil are also countries at the bottom of this evaluation scale. Interestingly, though, evaluations of the national government's handling of citizen security are highest in Honduras, a country traditionally plagued by high crime rates. Respondents in Nicaragua, Suriname, Ecuador, Bahamas, and the Dominican Republic also top the list in their evaluations of their governments' security performance. This provides further evidence that assessments of the current administration's performance with respect to security issues does not necessarily track with aggregate shifts in or levels of crime and violence.



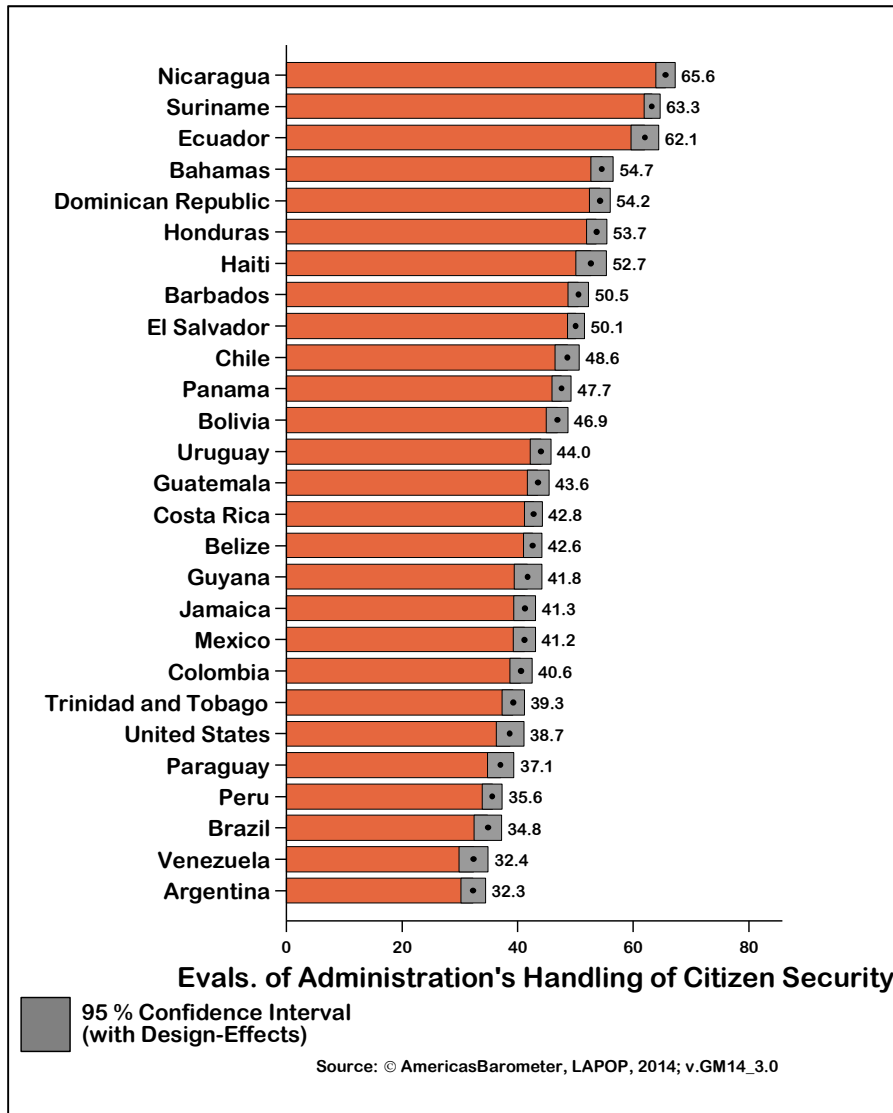


Figure 3.8. Average Evaluations of the Incumbent Administration’s Handling of Citizen Security across the Americas in 2014

The 2014 AmericasBarometer includes another set of questions that are part of a long-standing series of survey items for measuring trust in institutions responsible for citizen security and the rule of law. These questions, included since 2004, are worded as follows:

I am going to ask you a series of questions. I am going to ask 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.)

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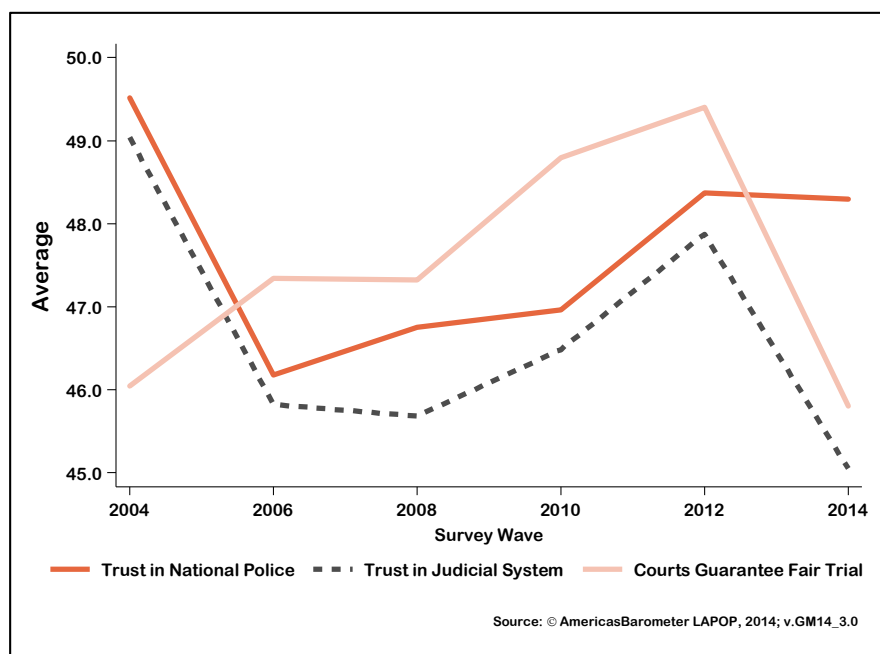
**B10A.** To what extent do you trust the justice system?

---

**B18.** To what extent do you trust the National Police?

Looking at region-averages over time for these measures, we see that trust in the National Police, the courts, and the justice system decreased across the Americas between 2012 and 2014 (see Figure

3.9).<sup>12</sup> The largest decline occurred for average trust in the courts, which in 2012 was 49, on a 0-100 scale, and fell to its lowest value of the decade in 2014: 45.80 units on the 0-100 scale.<sup>13</sup> Trust in the justice system also fell to its lowest value over the course of the decade that the AmericasBarometer has been recording evaluations, falling from 47.3 in 2012 to 45.04 in 2014. The decline for average trust in the National Police between 2012 and 2014 was smaller and, generally speaking, levels of trust in the National Police have remained fairly steady for the region since 2006.<sup>14</sup>



**Figure 3.9. Average Trust in the National Police, Courts, and Justice System over Time**

For readers interested in the mean values across countries, Figure 3.10 displays the averages in trust in the National Police, the courts, and the judicial system for each country based on the 2014 AmericasBarometer data. Canada tops the list for average trust in all three measures of trust, while Venezuela is consistently among the bottom two countries with the lowest trust in institutions responsible for citizen security and the rule of law.

<sup>12</sup> The analysis includes the full sample of countries for which the questions were asked in each round. However, patterns look roughly the same when analyzing either only the subset of countries included in the AmericasBarometer since 2004 or 2006, with the exception of average trust in courts in 2012 or the 2004 subset, which is noticeably lower (46.2).

<sup>13</sup> B1, B10A and B18 are rescaled from 0 to 100, where 100 represents the greatest level of trust possible.

<sup>14</sup> In analyses not presented here in figures, we examined differences by country across the 2012 and 2014 AmericasBarometer surveys. Some countries experienced particularly noticeable changes between 2012 and 2014. Brazil, Belize Jamaica, and Guyana all experienced the largest declines in averages for all three measures of institutional trust assessed here. Chile and Venezuela also experienced among the highest declines in trust in both the courts and the justice system, while Colombia saw a relatively noticeable decline for average trust in courts. On the other hand, Ecuador saw an improvement in average trust in the National Police, the courts, and the justice system between 2012 and 2014. Honduras, Trinidad & Tobago, and Canada also experienced increases in trust in the National Police. Honduras also saw a significant increase in trust in the justice system, along with Costa Rica and Panama. Costa Rica and Trinidad & Tobago also experiences a significant increase in average trust in the courts.

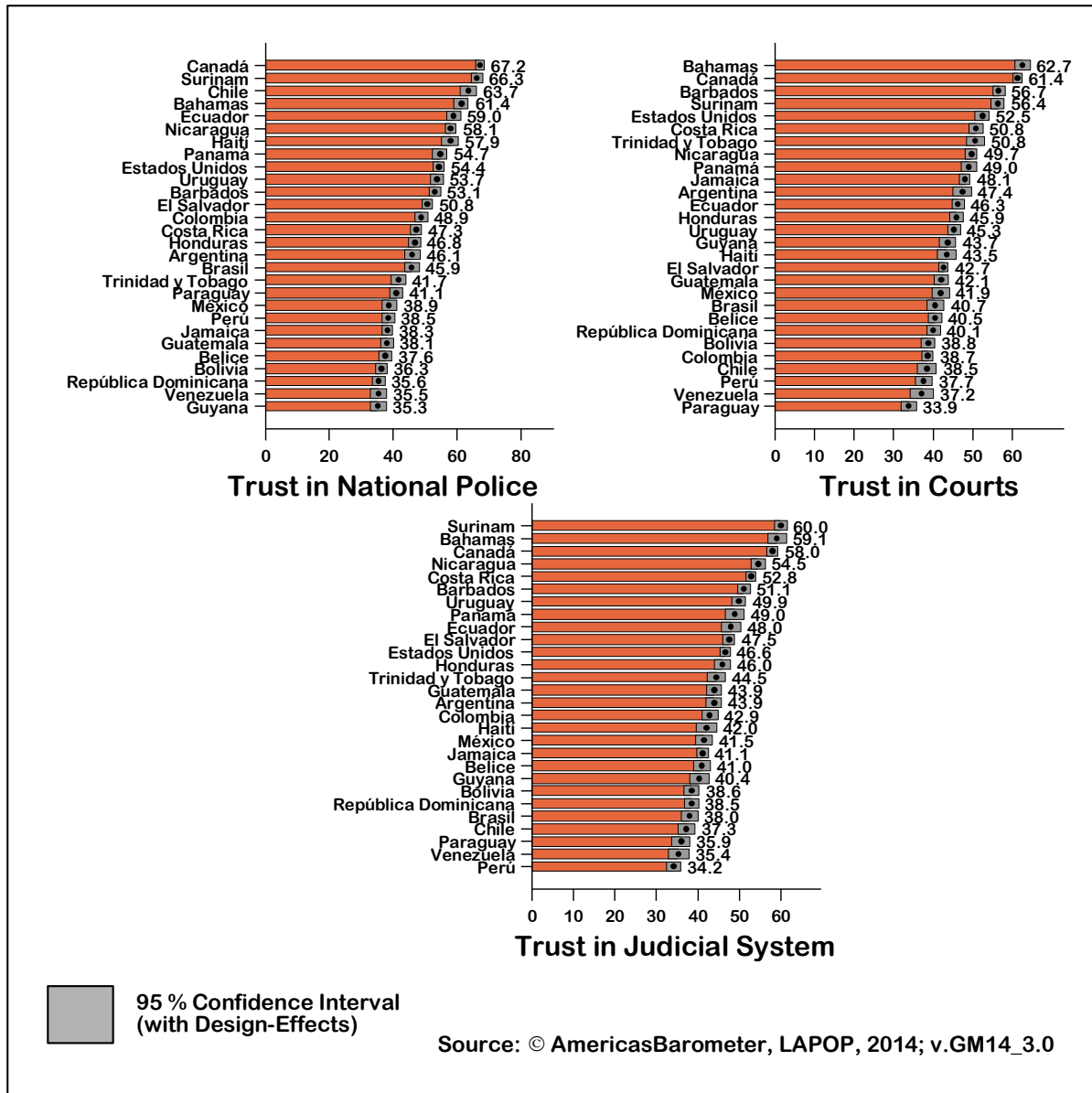


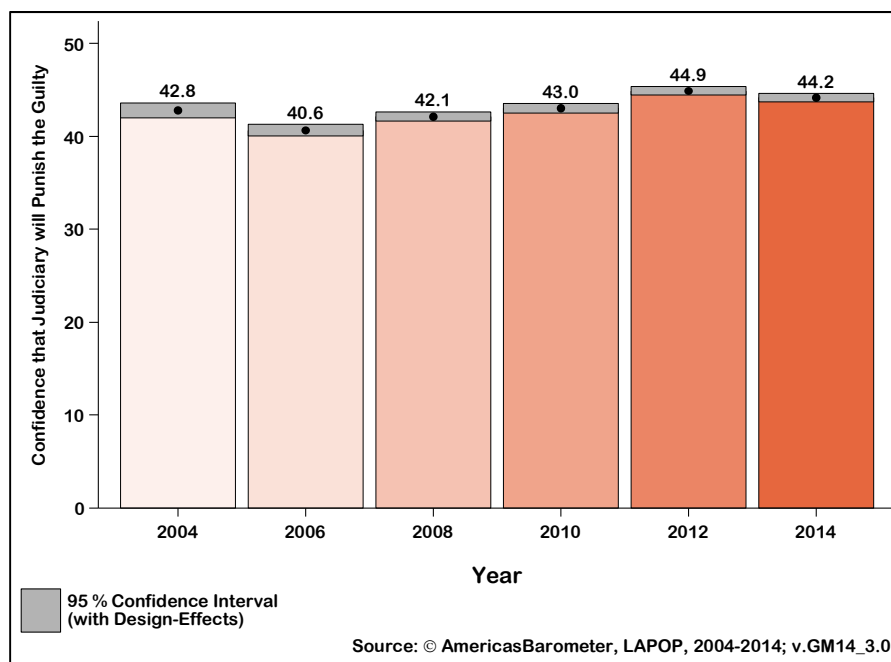
Figure 3.10. Average Trust in the National Police, Courts, and Justice System across the Americans in 2014

To further assess citizens’ evaluations of the national government’s state capacity to ensure citizen security and the enforcement of the rule of law, we make use of a question from the AmericasBarometer that taps opinions on a critical issue for the region: impunity. Specifically, the question asks about confidence in the judicial system punishing those guilty of committing a personal crime:

**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) DK (98) DA

This question (AOJ12) has been included in the AmericasBarometer since 2004 and, per the LAPOP standard, has been recoded to range from 0 to 100, where higher values indicate more confidence in the judicial system’s capacity and willingness to punish those who are guilty of crime. Similar to the

trends observed for trust in the National Police, courts, and judicial system as a whole, average confidence on a 0 to 100 scale that the judicial system will punish the guilty of robbery or assault declined significantly in 2014 compared to 2012 (see Figure 3.11).<sup>15</sup> On average across the Americas, the average confidence in the punishment of the guilty fell two points from 44.9 in 2012 to 44.2 in 2014, breaking the upwards trend that existed since 2006.<sup>16</sup>



**Figure 3.11. Average Confidence that the Judicial System will punish the Guilty of Robbery or Assault, 2004-2014**

Figure 3.12 takes a closer look at the AmericasBarometer results for 2014 by showing the average confidence that the judicial system will punish the guilty across individual countries. Similar to country averages in trust in institutions responsible for citizen security and the enforcement of the rule of law, Canada (55.8) is among the countries with the most confidence in the judicial system, while Brazil (27) displays the lowest average confidence. Citizens in Suriname (67.7), Panama (60.5), Barbados (57.7) and the United States (56.1) are also among those with the highest average confidence in the capacity of the judicial system to punish the guilty. Chile (28.7) and Venezuela (32) on the other hand, join Brazil at the bottom of this confidence scale. In fact, in separate cross-temporal analyses, we found that Venezuela, Brazil, and Chile, along with El Salvador, Guyana, and Belize, are the countries that experienced the greatest declines in confidence in their judicial systems between 2012 and 2014.<sup>17</sup> In contrast, countries like Canada, Ecuador, Haiti, and Panama broke from the regional trend of declining

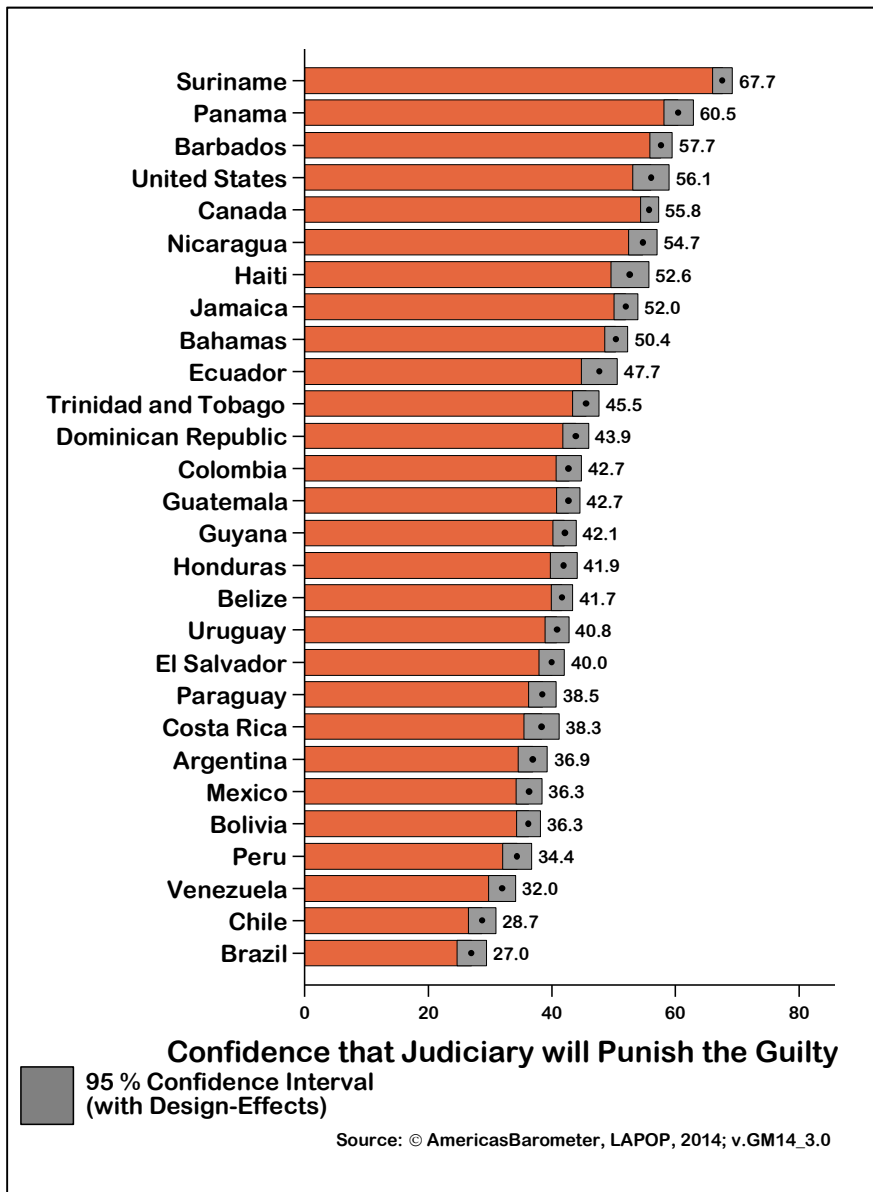
<sup>15</sup> AOJ12 is rescaled from 0 to 100, where 100 represents the highest degree of faith that the judicial system will punish the guilty.

<sup>16</sup> The analysis includes the full sample of countries for which the question was asked in each round. However, patterns look roughly the same when analyzing either only the subset of countries included in the AmericasBarometer since 2004 or 2006, which the exception of a non-significant difference between 2012 and 2014 for the subset of countries included in 2004.

<sup>17</sup> This is based on analysis not shown here, but available from authors.

Declines between 2012 and 2014 in average confidence in the judiciary to punish the guilty: Belize, 49.7 to 41.7; Brazil, 37.6 to 27; Chile, 40.2 to 28.7; El Salvador, 46.9 to 40; Guyana, 53.1 to 42.1; Venezuela, 40.3 to 32.

trust and, instead, experienced significant improvements in how much faith citizens have in the ability of the judiciary to punish the guilty in 2014.<sup>18</sup>



**Figure 3.12. Average Confidence that the Judicial System will punish the Guilty of Robbery or Assault across the Americas in 2014**

As we did with evaluations of performance of police in neighborhoods, we turn here to an analysis of individual-level predictors of national performance with respect to citizen safety and the rule of law. To do so, we first created an additive index that takes into account evaluations of the current administration’s improvement of citizen security; trust in the National Police; the courts and the judicial system; and confidence in the ability of the judiciary to punish those guilty for committing a personal

<sup>18</sup> This is based on analysis not shown here, but available from authors. Increases between 2012 and 2014 in average confidence in the judiciary to punish the guilty: Canada, 52.5 to 55.8; Ecuador, 41.6 to 47.7; Haiti, 37.5 to 52.6; Panama, 52.9 to 60.5.

crime.<sup>19</sup> Our model predicting this additive index includes the same standard demographic variables considered earlier in this chapter, as well as measures for experiences with crime; perceptions of insecurity; retrospective evaluations of neighborhood violence; and perceptions of gang presence in the neighborhood.<sup>20</sup> Respondents who have been victims of crime or have had another member of their household victimized, as well as those that feel generally insecure, are expected to have a more negative view of the capacity of the national government to ensure citizen security and the rule of law. The regression model once again controls for level of satisfaction with the performance of the president, as such evaluations may also influence how a respondent evaluates state capacity more generally.

Figure 3.13 displays the standardized coefficients from the regression analysis, which show that urban residents, and those with lower levels of education and wealth tend to have more negative evaluations of national state capacity and performance for the provision of citizen security and the rule of law. Skin tone is not consequential for these evaluations. The influence of age is not entirely clear from the results, though there is some evidence that those who are youngest and those who are oldest, compared to those 36 to 45, have comparatively more positive evaluations of national state capacity. Females also tend to have better evaluations in comparison to males. Presidential approval exerts the largest influence on the index of evaluations of national state capacity for citizen security and the rule of law: those who are more satisfied with the performance of the president are significantly more positive in their views of government security performance.

Experiences with and fear of crime are strongly associated with evaluations of national state capacity. As expected, and similar to the findings associated with the determinants of evaluations of local state capacity, those who have experienced crime (personally or indirectly through another household member), feel unsafe, perceive an increase of violence in their neighborhood, and report increasing gang activity all tend to have more negative evaluations of the national government's capacity and efforts with respect to fighting crime and enforcing the rule of law. It is notable, in comparing the results here to those we found for the earlier analysis of factors predicting satisfaction with police in the neighborhood, that insecurity once again exerts a comparatively strong effect: those who are more insecure about the possibility of crime in their neighborhoods express significantly lower evaluations of national government capacity for citizen safety and the rule of law.

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<sup>19</sup> The index was created after performing an exploratory factor analysis showing that all five variables converged on one dimension, or factor, with an eigenvalue of 2.48 that accounts for 49% of the variance of among these variables. The Cronbach's alpha for the variables in the index is 0.73. Separate regression models run for each of the index's components yield similar results.

<sup>20</sup> The model estimates an OLS regression model for the index of evaluations of national state capacity for the provision of citizen security and rule of law; country fixed effects to account for differences across countries are included but not shown. See corresponding table with the results for standardized coefficients in the Appendix. The U.S. and Canada are not included in these or other regression analyses in this chapter, in order to focus on the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region.

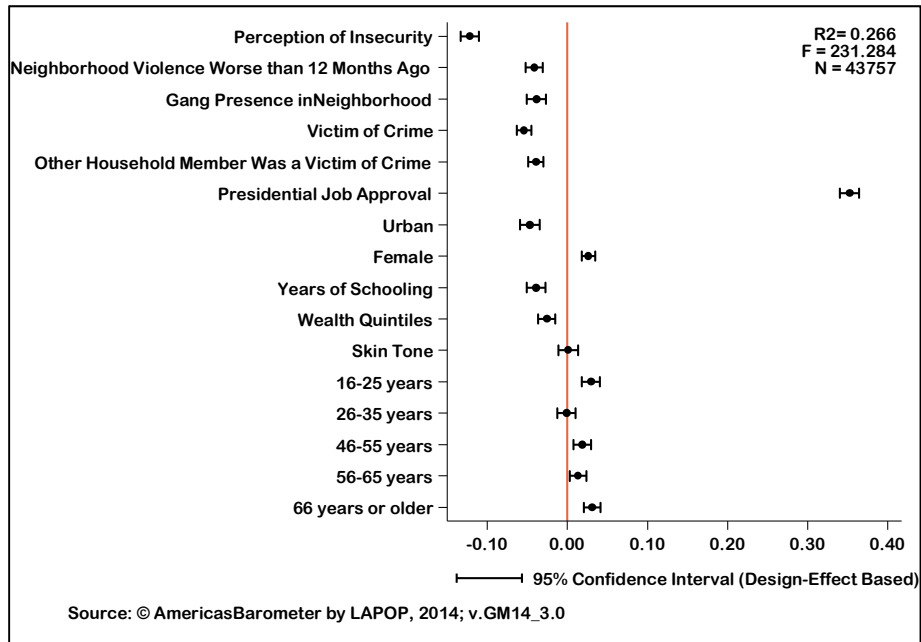


Figure 3.13. Determinants of Index of Evaluations of National State Capacity for the Provision of Citizen Security and the Rule of Law, 2014

### III. Implications of Crime Victimization and Insecurity for Incumbent Government Support and Public Opinion on Criminal Justice Policy

This section broadens the discussion in the chapter thus far to now examine what the 2014 AmericasBarometer can tell us about the possible impact that crime victimization and perceptions of insecurity have on citizens’ support for the incumbent government and on their policy stances on ways to combat crime and violence.

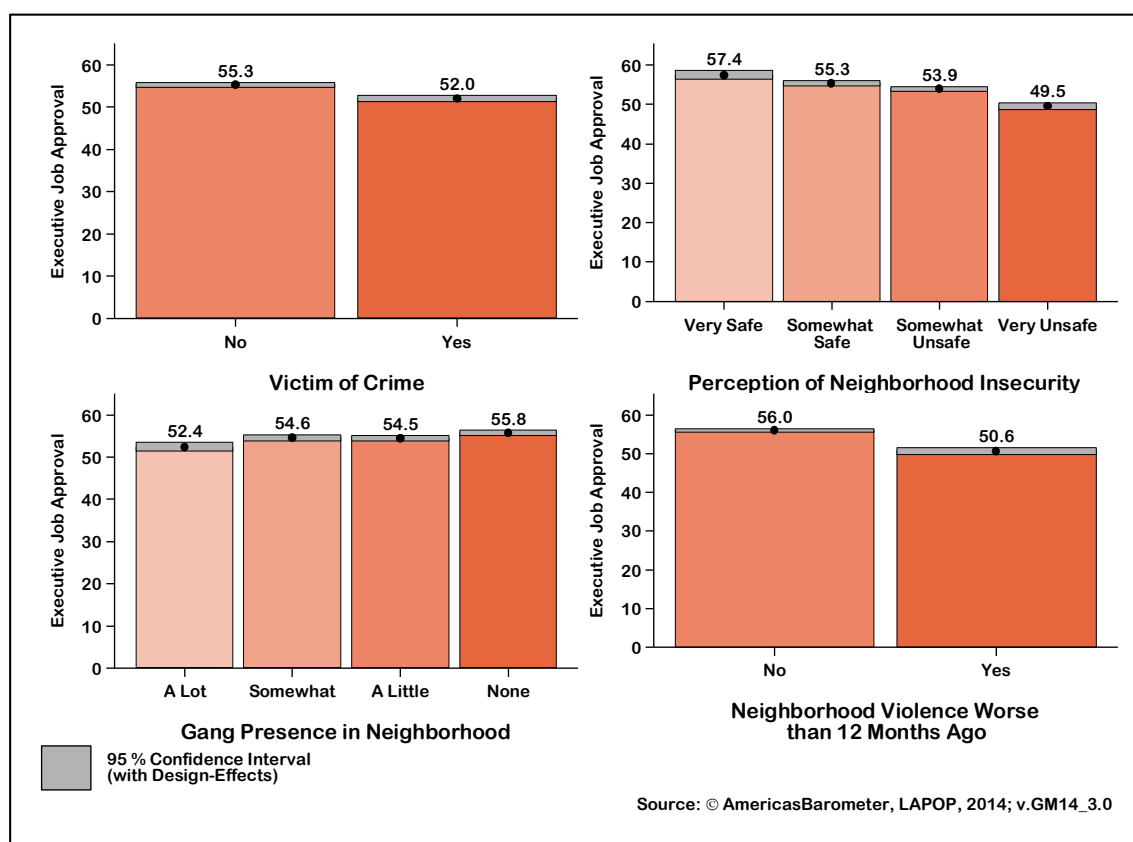
#### *Impact of Crime Victimization and Insecurity on Support for the Incumbent Government*

Experiences with and fear of crime can also be consequential for the incumbent government’s popular support. As explained earlier in the chapter, high levels of insecurity and violence, like poor economic performance, could lead citizens to grow dissatisfied with political leaders, and even punish incumbents at the polls and seek out politicians they deem would better combat crime. In previous analyses in this chapter, we considered presidential approval as a control measure but here we consider the relevance of issues related to crime and insecurity for citizens’ approval and support of the incumbent. Specifically, this section tests the correlations between indicators of crime victimization and citizen insecurity and, respectively, presidential/prime ministerial approval and vote intention for the next election of the national executive.

In Figure 3.14 we first illustrate bivariate relationships between crime-related measures and executive approval.<sup>21</sup> Crime victimization and various measures of perceptions of insecurity are

<sup>21</sup> Presidential approval is measured using the AmericasBarometer variable M1, which asks respondents to rate the performance of the president. Originally on a scale from 1 to 5, the variable is rescaled from 0 (very bad) to 100 (very good).

negatively associated with ratings of the president or prime minister's performance. That is, crime victims and those who feel less safe in their neighborhood perceive more gang activity, and those who think that the level of violence in their communities is higher than 12 months ago tend to display lower levels of approval of the current executive than non-victims and those who feel safer. To test whether these patterns hold when controlling for other factors that may also influence presidential/prime ministerial approval,<sup>22</sup> Figure 3.15 displays the results of an ordered logit regression model for the determinants of respondents' performance evaluations of the executive.<sup>23</sup>



**Figure 3.14. Average Presidential/Prime Ministerial Approval on a 0-100 Scale, by Experiences with and Perceptions of Insecurity, 2014**

Trust in judicial institutions<sup>24</sup> and retrospective national economic evaluations are the strongest predictors of presidential/prime ministerial approval. Respondents who trust judicial institutions express greater levels of approval of the incumbent, while respondents who have negative evaluations of the national economy are less likely to approve of the incumbent. In addition, respondents who believe in the capacity of the judicial system to punish the guilty are more likely to approve of the president or

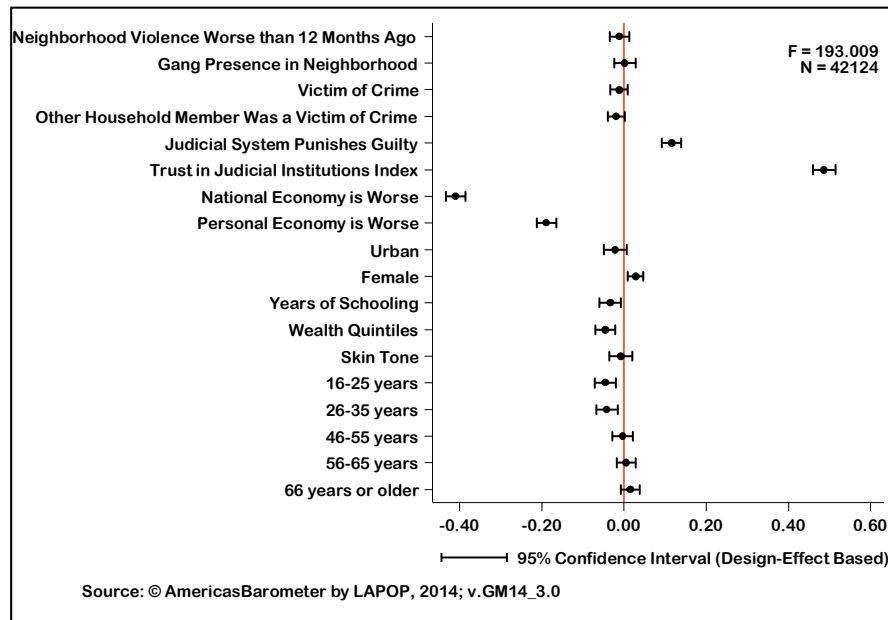
<sup>22</sup> Unlike other chapters, perceptions of personal and national economic situations in this chapter are coded as binary variables using IDIO2 and SOCT2, respectively. Those who think that economic circumstances are worse than in the previous 12 months are compared to those who think that circumstances are the same or better.

<sup>23</sup> The model estimates an ordered logit regression model; country fixed effects to account for differences across countries are included but not shown. See corresponding table with the results for standardized coefficients in the Appendix. The U.S. and Canada are not included in these or other regression analyses in this chapter, in order to focus on the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region.

<sup>24</sup> This indicator is the average of three variables: B1 (belief that the courts guarantee a fair trial), B10A (trust in the judicial system), B18 (trust in the national police). The Cronbach alpha on these three items in the 2014 wave is 0.70, excluding the United States and Canada.



prime minister whereas those who have negative evaluations of their personal economic situation are less likely to approve of the executive. Moreover, respondents' perceptions of insecurity in their neighborhood are negatively correlated with support for the executive. Likewise, younger respondents and wealthier and more educated respondents are less likely to support the incumbent. Finally, women are more likely to support the incumbent. Crime victimization, retrospective evaluations of neighborhood violence, gang presence in the neighborhood, skin tone of the respondent, and urban/rural residence are not significant predictors of support for the national executive.



**Figure 3.15. Implications of Crime Victimization and Insecurity for Presidential/Prime Ministerial Approval, 2014**

An alternative means of testing the political effect of crime and violence for incumbent executives is to model the likelihood of a respondent voting for the incumbent in a hypothetical election. Figure 3.16 shows the bivariate relationship between crime-related measures and respondents' reported choice of the incumbent in a hypothetical election held a week after the survey. The patterns are identical to those seen in the previous analysis of approval of the president/prime minister. Figure 3.17 confirms the similarity of the patterns in a multivariate logit regression,<sup>25</sup> with the exception of a significant and negative correlation between years of education and incumbent vote intention, all other independent variables have the same substantive effect on incumbent vote intention as they have for approval of the executive.

<sup>25</sup> The model estimates a logit regression model; country fixed effects to account for differences across countries are included but not shown. See corresponding table with the results for standardized coefficients in the Appendix. The U.S. and Canada are not included in these or other regression analyses in this chapter, in order to focus on the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region.

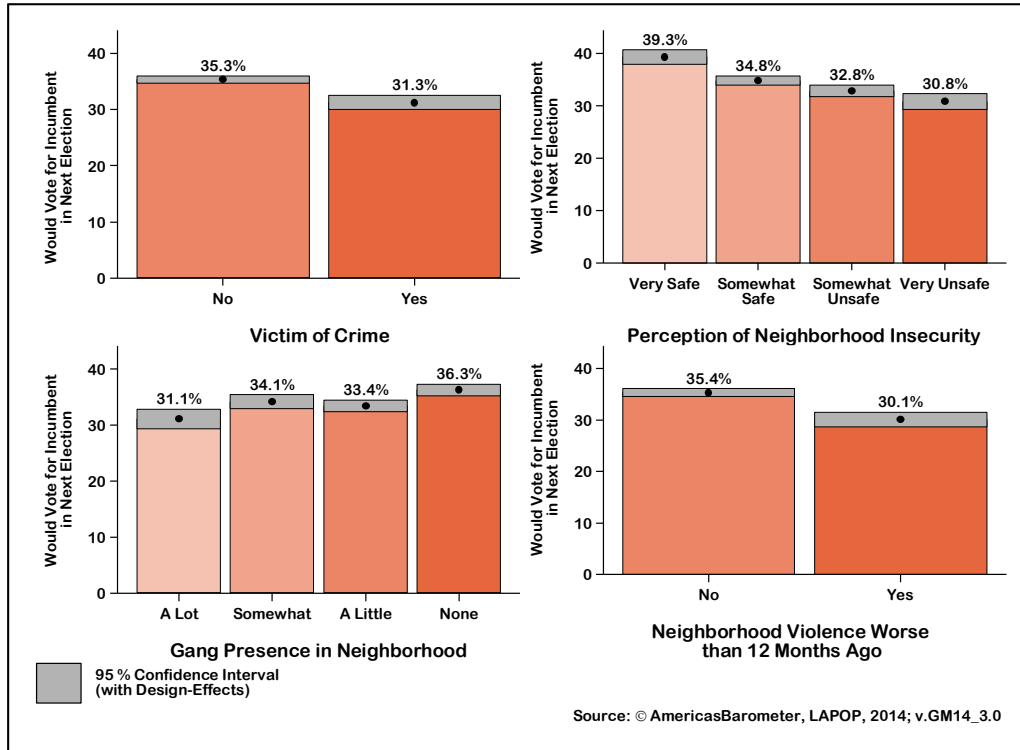


Figure 3.16. Percentage who would vote for incumbent executive by experiences with and perceptions of crime

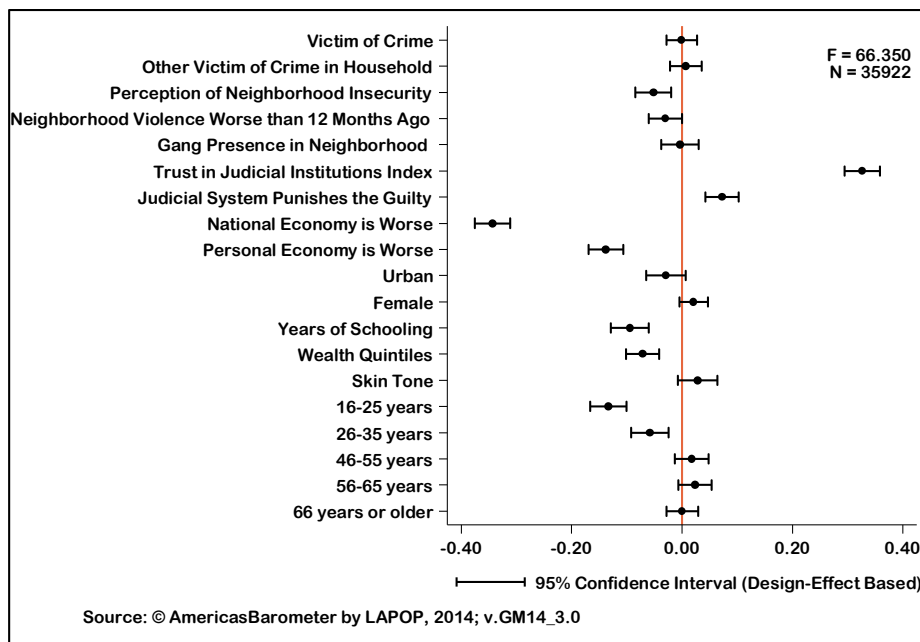


Figure 3.17. Implications of Crime Victimization and Insecurity for Incumbent Executive Electoral Support, 2014

These findings highlight the costs of insecurity for incumbent presidents and prime ministers. All else equal, citizens who feel insecure in their neighborhoods and who lack confidence in the judicial system are less likely to support or vote for the incumbent executive, independent of actual crime

victimization. The next section will address the policy implications of crime and insecurity in Latin America and the Caribbean.

### *Implications of Crime Victimization and Insecurity for Public Opinion on Public Policy to Combat Crime and Violence*

This section addresses the implications of crime victimization and the fear of crime in terms of the criminal justice policy preferences of Latin American and Caribbean citizens. Are citizens of the Americas who have been victimized or who feel a sense of insecurity supportive of more punitive policies for criminals? What factors predict support for vigilante justice? Who supports giving the military a more active role in domestic security? Even though public opinion is seldom perfectly translated into public policy, public opinion matters to elected officials and, in a responsive political system, undoubtedly channels their policy efforts towards actions that will best ensure electoral success. In the case of public support for punitive or extra-legal measures to ensure citizen security, at the extreme some public officials could lean on public opinion to legitimize abuses of power, disregard for civil liberties, or act on the margins of the law, all in the name of fighting crime. Thus, the answers to these questions can provide a sense of what direction anti-crime policy may take in the years to come as Latin American and Caribbean governments address insecurity in their societies.

### **Public Opinion on Solving Crime and Insecurity through Formal Institutions: Punitive or Preventive Measures?**

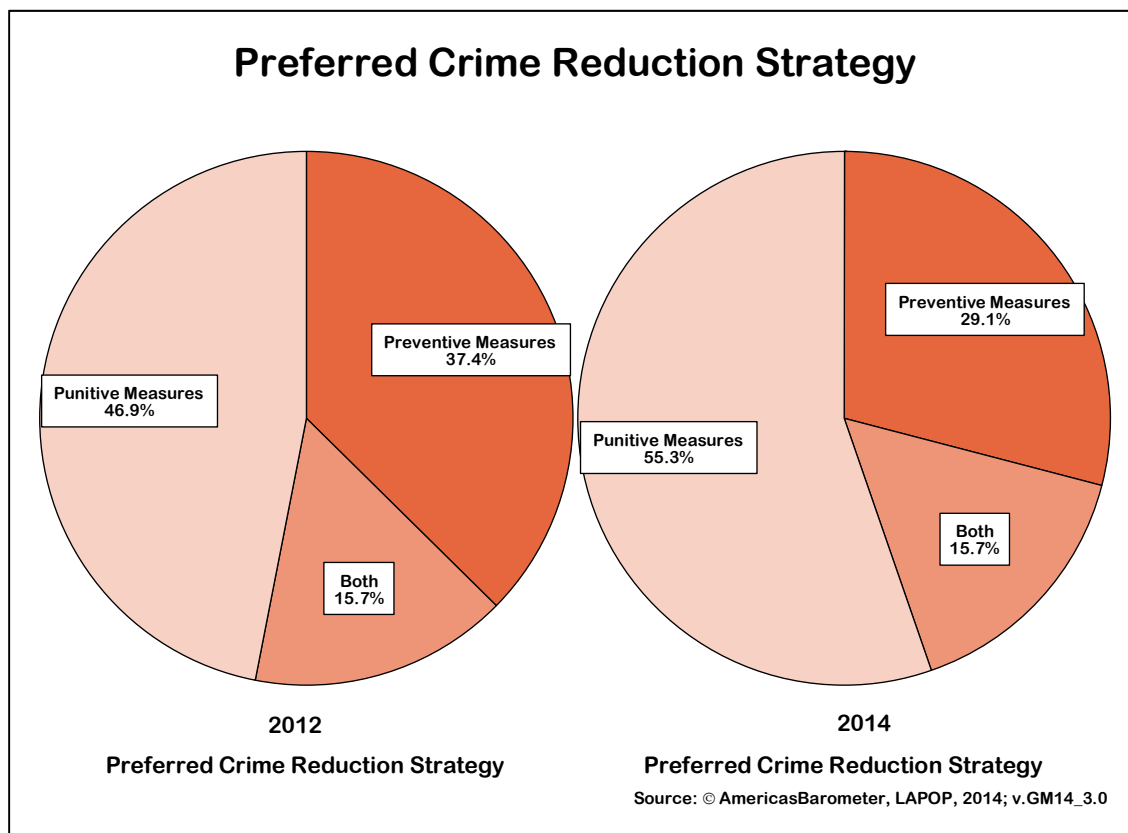
There are two primary policy approaches to resolving insecurity in society: crime prevention and harsher punishment of criminals. Crime prevention policy includes actions taken to incentivize pro-social behaviors for at-risk individuals, integrate prior offenders, and reduce the likelihood of individuals engaging in criminal activity by addressing underlying risk factors like poverty, substance abuse, dysfunctional family life, low academic achievement, and gang membership (Currie 1998; Shader 2004). The alternative is to attempt to dissuade individuals from committing crime either by implementing harsher and less flexible sentencing policies or by lowering living standards at correctional facilities (Roberts et al. 2003). The punitive approach relies on the ability of the criminal justice system to be able to identify criminals and mete out the punishment stipulated by law and is based on the assumption that harsher punishments have a dissuasive effect on rational would-be criminals. Over the last two rounds, the AmericasBarometer survey has asked respondents in Latin America and the Caribbean which of these two approaches they favor:

**AOJ22.** In your opinion, what should be done to reduce crime in a country like ours: Implement preventive measures or Increase punishment of criminals?  
 (1) Implement preventive measures  
 (2) Increase punishment of criminals  
 (3) **[Don't read]** Both  
 (88) DK  
 (98) DA

Figure 3.18 shows the distribution of responses on this item across the region. In the 2014 survey, 55.3% of respondents prefer a punitive approach whereas 29.1% of respondents prefer a preventive approach, and 15.7% of respondents answer “both.”<sup>26</sup> In 2012, 46.9% of respondents preferred a punitive

<sup>26</sup> The question was not asked in the United States or Canada. The total non-response rate on this item was 2.23% in 2014. Total non-response was 1.87% in 2012.

approach, whereas 37.4% preferred preventive measures and 15.7% spontaneously answered “both.” Thus, between 2012 and 2014 there was a statistically significant, 8.4 percentage point shift of opinion towards approval of more punitive crime prevention measures ( $p < 0.001$ ). There was a corresponding 8.3 percentage point drop in support for preventive measures over the same period ( $p < 0.001$ ). There are no changes in the percentage of respondents who prefer both approaches. Still, across both years, there is a clear modal preference for a punitive approach as a solution to crime in the region.



**Figure 3.18. Preference for Punitive or Preventive Crime Policy in the Americas, 2012-2014**

Figure 3.19 illustrates the distribution of preferences for punitive or preventive measures by country in the 2014 round. In this latest round, respondents in Paraguay (66.7%), Belize (65.9%), and Brazil (62.8%) have the highest rates of preference for punitive crime prevention measures whereas respondents from Uruguay (43.1%), El Salvador (43.0%), and Nicaragua (41.9%) have the highest rates of preference for employing preventive measures. Indeed, Uruguay and El Salvador are the only countries where there is no strictly statistically distinguishable difference among respondents in terms of their respective rates of preference for punitive and preventive measures although in El Salvador the difference nearly reaches standard levels of statistical significance ( $p = 0.057$ ; for Uruguay, the difference across the years is not significant (with  $p = 0.142$ ); in all other countries there are substantial and statistically significant differences between the two groups and those differences always favor punitive policies. What is more, Uruguay (with 46.8% preferring a punitive approach) is the only country in the region where the rate of support for punitive policies is significantly below 50% ( $p = 0.020$ ). Thus, the results here serve to confirm that, with the exception of Uruguay, residents of Latin America and the Caribbean largely prefer a punitive policy approach to crime and insecurity.

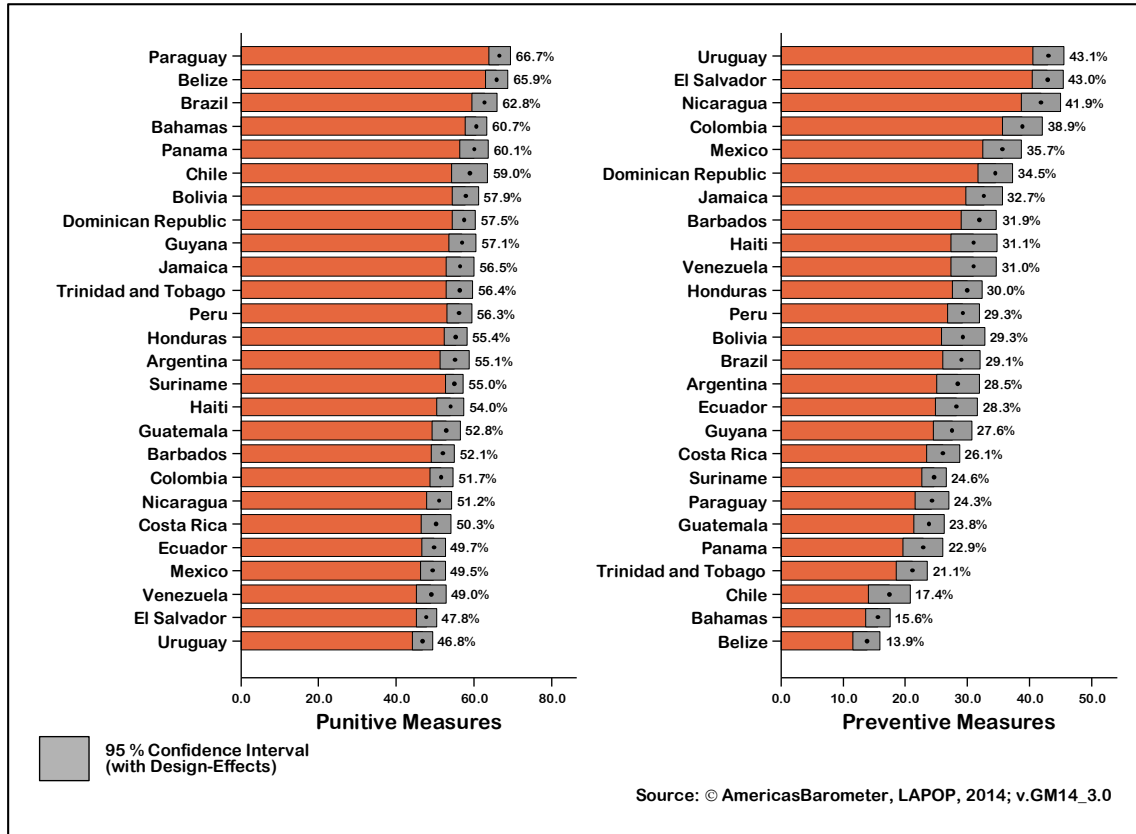


Figure 3.19. Preference for Punitive or Preventive Crime Policy in the Americas, 2014

This finding is consistent with prior criminal justice research in the United States and other English-speaking developed countries that has shown that “people answer a general question...punitively because they have the worst kinds of offenders and the most serious crimes in mind; people recall particularly lenient sentences and do not consider whether the crimes and sentences that come to mind are representative of most cases; people fail to consider the alternatives to incarceration; [and] people fail to consider the limitations on the sentencing process to affect crime rates” (Roberts et al. 2003, 29). Indeed, the literature suggests that it is often a *lack* of knowledge about crime and the processes involved in the criminal justice system that best predicts punitive attitudes rather than the *salience* of crime as measured by fear, victimization, or local crime rates (Stinchcombe et al. 1980).

Does this hold for the Americas? Generally speaking, what factors predict a punitive preference in Latin America and the Caribbean? We answer this with an analysis in which the dependent variable is modeled using ordered logistic regression where respondents who prefer punitive policies are at the high end of the scale and respondents who spontaneously answered “both” are coded between punitive and preventive respondents. The model tests which factors best correlate with the likelihood of holding more punitive attitudes towards criminal justice policy in the 2014 round of the AmericasBarometer.

In addition to the standard set of socio-demographic control variables included in all of the models in this chapter, the model in this section includes indicators of crime victimization (both of the respondent and of other members of the respondent’s household), perception of insecurity in the respondent’s neighborhood, a retrospective evaluation of violence in the respondent’s neighborhood, and gang presence in the respondent’s neighborhood. These variables provide a test of the correlation of the salience of crime with punitive attitudes. The model also includes an index of trust in judicial



institutions,<sup>27</sup> an indicator variable for respondents who reported that there is no police presence in their neighborhood or that the police would never respond to a criminal complaint, and a measure of the extent to which the respondent believes that the judicial system would punish a criminal guilty of robbing them. These variables add another element to the analysis by testing the relationship between perceptions of the institutions responsible for implementing criminal justice and preferences for the policies those institutions should enact. The final indicators in the model include retrospective measures of the state of the national economy and the state of the respondent's personal economic situation and a measure of the current government's performance in terms of improving security. A sense of economic threat may lead individuals to be more punitive of social deviants as may the belief that the current administration is not performing well in terms of security.

Figure 3.20 presents the results of the statistical model.<sup>28</sup> The variable with the strongest effect, by far, is years of education. This is consistent with a classic argument that education leads to more tolerance, and it also is consistent with the aforementioned perspective that more informed citizens are less punitive in terms of their criminal justice policy preferences. In terms of the other socio-demographic control variables, urban residents tend to be less punitive, women are more punitive, the wealthy are less punitive, and younger cohorts are more punitive while older cohorts are less punitive, all else equal. These findings are striking to the extent that they suggest that persons with potentially powerful socio-demographic characteristics tend to have less punitive policy preferences than individuals who are more likely to be socially, economically, or politically weak. Skin tone has no statistically significant effect on punitive policy preference. Furthermore, on average, respondents who give a more positive evaluation of the incumbent president are less likely to endorse punitive measures.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> This indicator is the average of three variables: B1 (belief that the courts guarantee a fair trial), B10A (trust in the judicial system), B18 (trust in the national police). The Cronbach alpha on these three items in the 2014 wave is 0.73, excluding the United States and Canada.

<sup>28</sup> The model estimates an ordered logit regression model; country fixed effects to account for differences across countries are included but not shown. See corresponding table with the results for standardized coefficients in the Appendix. The U.S. and Canada are not included in these or other regression analyses in this chapter, in order to focus on the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region.

<sup>29</sup> This relationship may vary by country, but exploring that conditional relationship was outside the scope of our analyses in this chapter. We hope future research might examine that possibility.

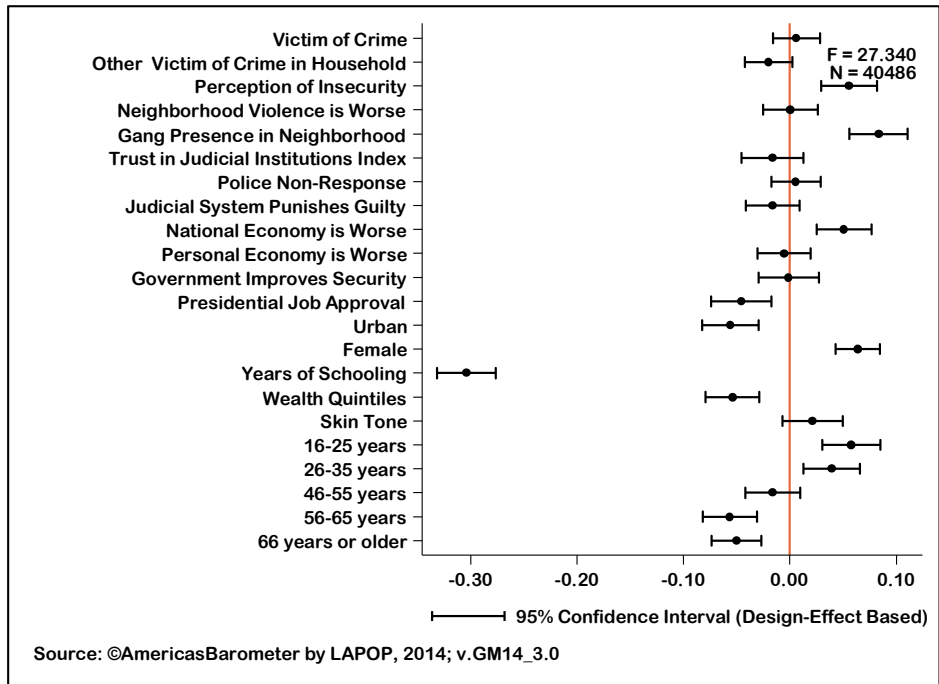


Figure 3.20. Predictors of Preference for Punitive Criminal Justice Policy, 2014

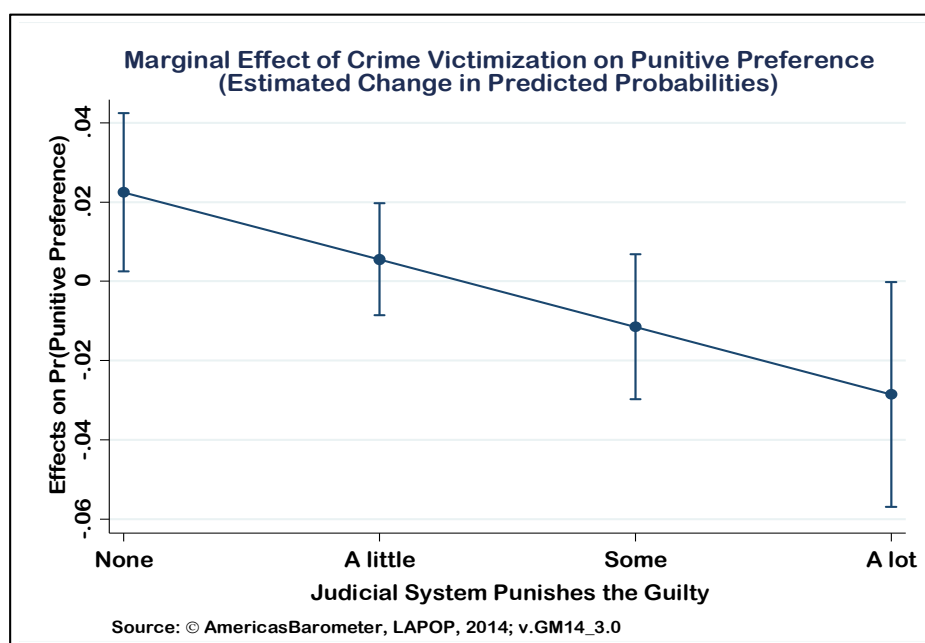
In terms of crime salience, the results show that both direct and household victimization are insignificant predictors of punitive attitudes as is a retrospective evaluation that violence is worse in the neighborhood; however, perceptions of current neighborhood insecurity and a gang presence in the neighborhood are positively correlated with punitive inclinations. In addition, higher trust in the institutions of the criminal justice system, perceptions that government improves security and police responsiveness or belief that the judicial system will punish the guilty are not significant variables. More positive evaluations of the president’s job performance decrease the likelihood of support for punitive policies. Finally, retrospective sociotropic economic evaluations are significantly correlated with punitive attitudes: when people perceive that the economy is doing worse, they are more likely to support punitive solutions to the problem of crime. “Pocketbook” economic evaluations and perceptions of government performance in the realm of security are not significant predictors of punitive policy preferences.

The results presented here appear to be consistent with the criminal justice literature that has studied the relationship between crime victimization and punitive policy attitudes, including the lack of a relationship between crime victimization and punitive policy preferences; even so, it is curious that crime victimization has no effect on preferences over policy aimed at crime reduction.

In reflecting on this initial set of findings, we considered that the effect of crime victimization on policy preferences may depend on preexisting attitudes towards the institutions of social justice. In other words, perhaps there is a *conditional* relationship between crime salience and policy preferences, which is determined by the beliefs that crime victims hold in the capacity of the justice system to punish the actual guilty party and thereby serve justice. Rerunning the model with an interaction term between the crime victim indicator and the variable measuring belief in the ability of the judicial system to punish

the guilty provides a test of this hypothesis and, in fact, produces a statistically significant conditional effect.<sup>30</sup>

Figure 3.21 illustrates the joint impact of the measures of the perceived institutional capacity of the judicial system and crime victimization on the predicted probability of reporting a punitive preference. All else equal, crime victims who have no confidence in the ability of the judicial system to punish the guilty are 2.2 percentage points *more* likely to prefer punitive policies than similar non-victims, which is a statistically significant difference. What is more, the results also show that crime victims who have “a lot” of confidence in the judicial system are 3.2 percentage points *less* likely to prefer punitive policies than similar non-victims, which is also a statistically significant difference. Therefore, the effects of crime salience and attitudes towards the institutions of the criminal justice system on public policy preferences are co-dependent.



**Figure 3.21. Marginal Effect of Crime Victimization on Punitive Policy Preference as Conditioned by Belief in the Ability of the Judicial System to Punish the Guilty, 2014**

These findings speak to the formal crime policy initiatives that citizens of the Americas prefer. Both the salience of crime and perceptions of the capacity of state institutions of criminal justice in society shape those opinions. Still, these analyses are only concerned with the policies citizens expect from their *formal* institutions of criminal justice. The next section looks at the question of citizen support for extralegal forms of justice.

### Support for Extralegal Collective Criminal Justice: Vigilantism and Lynching in the Americas

Vigilantism and lynching are two forms of nongovernmental collective violence directed towards “deviant” individuals (Senechal de la Roche 1996). By definition, these forms of popular justice circumvent formal judicial policies and institutions and they provide few, if any, formal mechanisms of

<sup>30</sup> The other variables are substantively unchanged in their estimated effects when the interaction term is included in the model.



accountability for actions taken; as such they present a challenge to the rule of law and the state's monopoly on the use of force (Weber 1965). Over the last several years, reports of lynching or the attempted lynching of suspected criminals, from petty thieves to alleged rapists, have appeared with some frequency in the news across the Latin American region. Moreover, communities in Mexico have recently gained international notoriety as they have resorted to vigilantism ostensibly to defend their communities from drug traffickers and kidnappers.<sup>31</sup> The AmericasBarometer survey includes a question that gauges popular support for these kinds of actions by asking:<sup>32</sup>

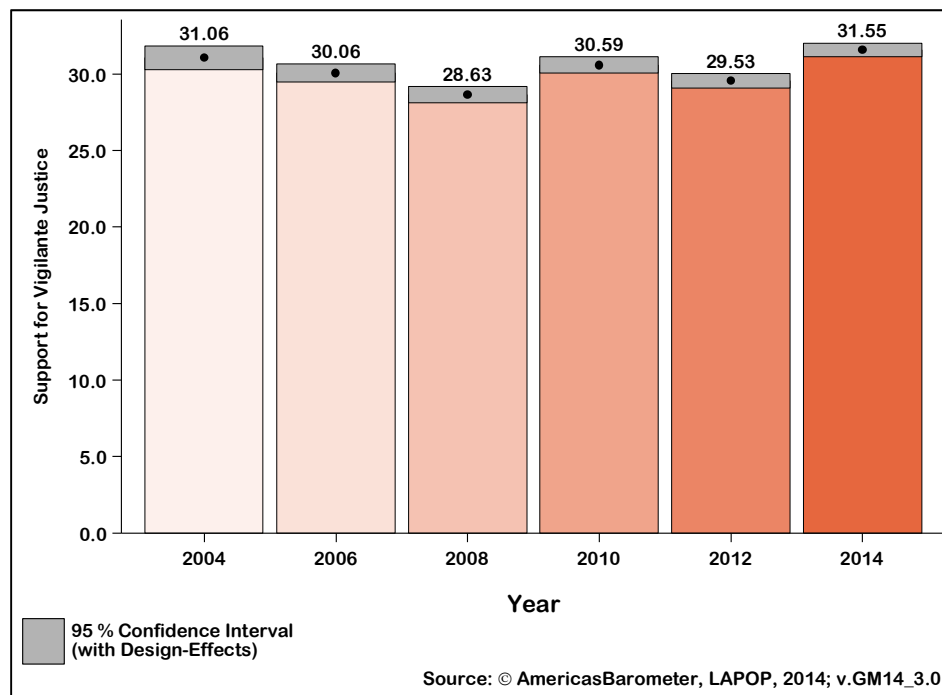
**E16.** Of people taking the law into their own hands when the government does not punish criminals. How much do you approve or disapprove?  
**[1-10, recoded 0-100, strongly disapprove to strongly approve]**

Figure 3.22 illustrates the average response to this question across the region for all waves of the AmericasBarometer.<sup>33</sup> On average, support for extralegal collective criminal justice in Latin America and the Caribbean is fairly low, scoring between 28.63 and 31.55 on a 100 point scale. There is no clear trend in public opinion on this item over time, but the score in 2014 is significantly higher than in any other round between 2004 and 2014. Nevertheless, the 2014 score still shows that the average respondent in the region disagrees with people taking the law into their own hands.

<sup>31</sup> See Daniel Zizumbo-Colunga's (2010) LAPOP *Insights* report on support for vigilante justice in Mexico (<http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/insights/I0839en.pdf>).

<sup>32</sup> While we will refer to this as support for vigilante justice, we note that – strictly speaking – the measure does not ask specifically about lynching or other violent behavior and, instead, asks about general support for circumventing the government in response to crime. It is generally understood that such actions include violent responses, but may not be limited to these.

<sup>33</sup> The analysis includes the full sample of countries for which the question was asked in each round. However, patterns look roughly the same when analyzing either only the subset of countries included in the AmericasBarometer since 2004 or 2006, which the exception of a significantly higher average (33.9) in 2006 for the subset of 11 countries included since 2004.



**Figure 3.22. Average Support for Vigilante Justice in the Americas, 2004-2014**

Figure 3.23 presents the average score on the item by country in 2014. Respondents in the Dominican Republic (42.8), Paraguay (42.1), and Peru (40.6) report the highest average approval of people taking the law into their own hands, whereas respondents in Panama (25.1), Brazil (23.5), Barbados (22.7), Bahamas (22.5) and Trinidad & Tobago (19.2) report the lowest average approval. Still, without exception, the average respondent in each of the countries included in the survey falls on the side of the scale that indicates disapproval of people taking the law into their own hands. This finding is important because it suggests that representatives of formal judicial systems across the region would meet with some measure of popular approval were they to prosecute individuals who engage in vigilantism or lynching, thereby defending the prerogative of the state to be the ultimate arbiter of justice in society.

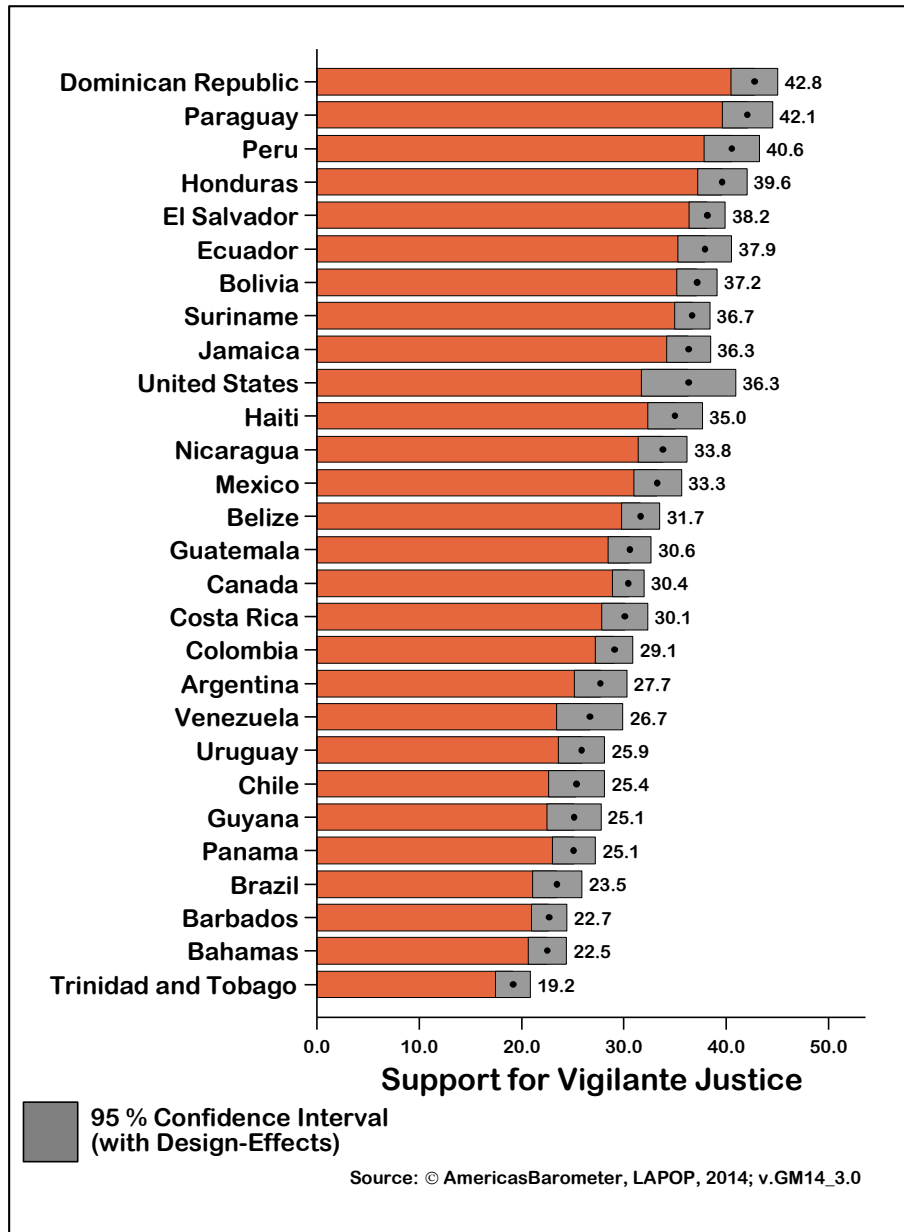


Figure 3.23. Average Support for Vigilante Justice in the Americas, 2014

Given that the average respondent in Latin America and the Caribbean disapproves of people taking the law into their own hands, what predicts support for such actions? After all, despite what the averages show, many respondents are willing to admit that they approve of people taking the law into their own hands when the government does not punish criminals. In this section, the dependent variable is modeled using ordered logistic regression to test which factors best correlate with a higher likelihood of approval of vigilante justice.

In addition to the standard set of socio-demographic control variables, the model in this section includes the same indicators of crime salience and evaluations of the country's criminal justice institutions as in the previous section. Additionally, the model includes an indicator of whether the respondent has organized with their neighbors because of a fear of crime over the last 12 months. Even

though there are many other forms of crime-based collective action that do not involve lynching or vigilantism, collective action is fundamental to both forms of extralegal popular justice and may be related to an attitude supporting such actions. The model also includes an indicator of whether a police officer ever solicited a bribe from the respondent and police non-response, given that such factors might lead respondents to be more willing to search for justice outside the formal criminal justice apparatus.

The results of the analysis are shown in Figure 3.24.<sup>34</sup> The strongest determinant of support for vigilante justice is respondent age. Younger respondents are significantly more likely to approve of people taking the law into their own hands than older respondents. Indeed, each successive age cohort is significantly less approving of vigilante justice than the cohort younger than it. Women, more educated respondents, and respondents who approve of the current president are less likely to approve of vigilante justice. Respondents with darker skin tones are more likely to approve of vigilante justice. Respondent wealth and urban/rural residence are uncorrelated with approval of vigilante justice, all else equal.

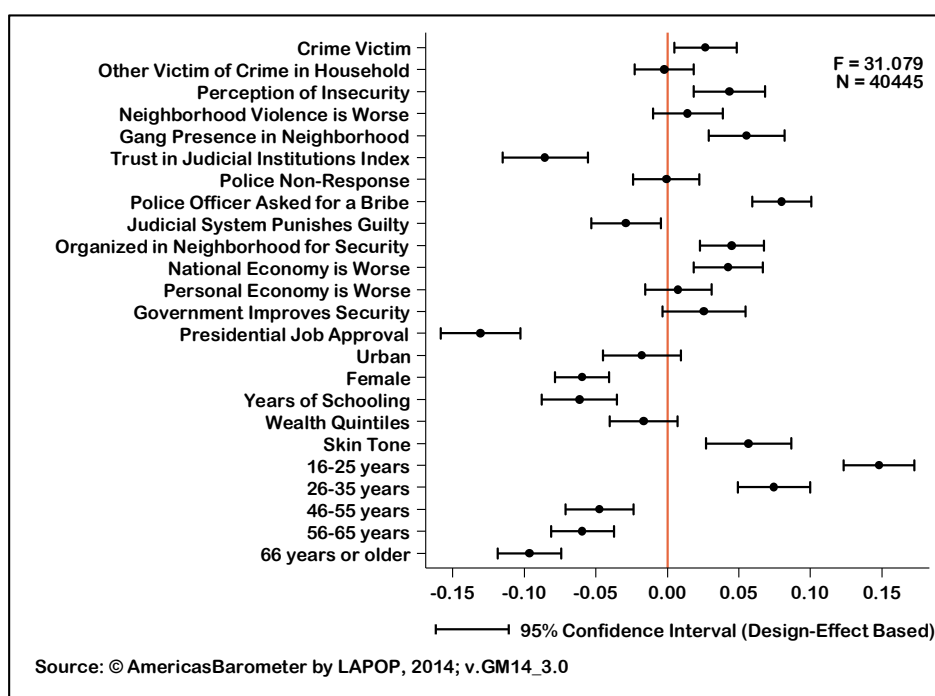


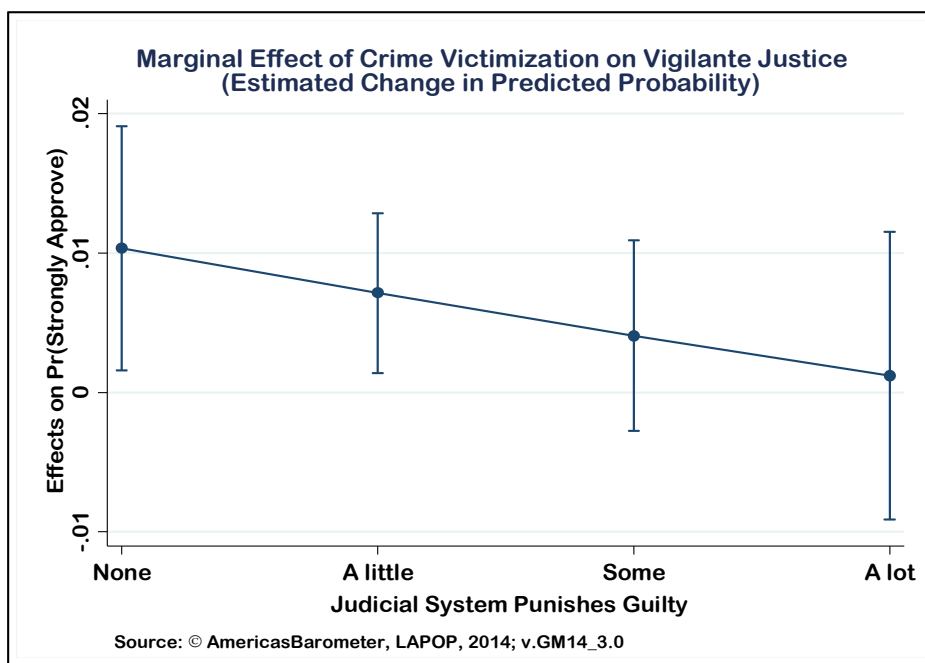
Figure 3.24. Predictors of Approval of Vigilante Justice, 2014

In terms of crime salience, crime victims, those who feel more insecure in their neighborhoods, and those who report more gang activity in their neighborhoods are more likely to approve of vigilante justice. Retrospective evaluations of neighborhood violence and having other crime victims in the household are not correlated with such approval, all else equal. In terms of judicial institutions, those who have higher levels of trust in the national judicial institutions and those who believe that the judicial system will punish the guilty are less likely to approve of vigilante justice, whereas victims of police corruption are significantly more likely to approve of vigilante justice. Similarly, all else equal, those who have organized with their neighbors because of a fear of crime are more approving of vigilante

<sup>34</sup> The model estimates an ordered logit regression model; country fixed effects to account for differences across countries are included but not shown. See corresponding table with the results for standardized coefficients in the Appendix. The U.S. and Canada are not included in these or other regression analyses in this chapter, in order to focus on the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region.

justice, as are those who give negative evaluations of the national economic situation and the government’s performance on security issues. Independent of these other findings, police non-response and retrospective evaluations of personal economic situation are not significantly correlated with approval of people taking the law into their own hands.

Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, the co-dependent relationship uncovered between crime victimization and perceptions of the capacity of the judicial system to punish the guilty in the last section does not hold as strongly here when predicting support for vigilante justice.<sup>35</sup> Figure 3.25 shows the marginal effect of crime victimization as a predictor of strongly approving of vigilante justice by the respondent’s perception of the capacity of the judicial system to punish the guilty. The figure shows that at lower levels of perceived judicial system capacity, crime victims are significantly more likely than non-victims to strongly approve of vigilante justice (an estimated effect of 0.9 percentage points when respondents have no belief in the capacity of the judicial system to punish the guilty and 0.7 percentage points when respondents have a little belief in judicial system capacity). The effect of crime victimization is no longer statistically significant at higher levels of perceived judicial system capacity; however, because of the small substantive effect and the large confidence intervals, there is not a statistically significant difference between the estimated marginal effects at the lowest and highest perceived capacities of the judicial system. Thus, there is not a significant interaction between the two variables and there is not sufficient evidence to suggest that the variables are co-dependent in this model.



**Figure 3.25. Marginal Effect of Crime Victimization on Approval of Vigilante Justice as Conditioned by Belief in the Ability of the Judicial System to Punish the Guilty, 2014**

Overall, the findings in the analysis of predictors of support for vigilante justice point to the crucial role that trust in the formal public institutions of criminal justice plays in ensuring that citizens do not turn to popular justice to resolve their security concerns. Still, as citizens and governments across the Latin American and Caribbean region have found, some criminal groups have become so well

<sup>35</sup> Again, the other estimates in the model remain substantively unchanged when including the interaction term in the model.

organized, so heavily armed, and so fully entrenched in corrupted security forces that police forces and vigilante groups have been incapable of directly confronting them. The next section addresses public opinion towards bringing in the military to supplement beleaguered domestic security forces in their efforts to contain crime and violence in the region.

### Bringing in the Heavy Guns: Public Opinion on the Militarization of Criminal Justice

Organized crime groups are daunting foes for police forces in many Latin American and Caribbean countries. In the face of the proven firepower of criminal organizations and concerns with widespread police corruption, many countries have turned to their militaries to conduct domestic security operations, sometimes in a supporting role and other times supplanting the police entirely. Other than the Catholic Church, no other institution is as widely trusted among the public as the militaries of the Latin American and Caribbean countries. Over the last two rounds the AmericasBarometer has asked respondents what they think about giving the military a role in ensuring domestic security using the following question:<sup>36</sup>

**[DON'T ASK IN COSTA RICA, HAITI, OR PANAMA]**

**MIL7.** The Armed Forces ought to participate in combating crime and violence in [country]. How much do you agree or disagree?

**[1-7, recoded to 0-100, strongly disagree to strongly agree]**

In 2012, the mean score on this item at regional the level was 77.48. In 2014, the mean score is 71.71, a statistically significant loss in support, but still reflective of the fact that the average respondent in the region is supportive of a military role in providing domestic security. What is perhaps more interesting is the within country changes between the two waves. Figure 3.26 provides the comparison. Honduras is the only country to make a significant gain (10.0 points,  $p < 0.001$ ) in the average level of support for the military's role between 2012 and 2014. All other countries either have no significant change or lost significant support for a military role in domestic security. Most notably, respondents in Trinidad & Tobago (19.8 points lost), Venezuela (14.5 points lost), and Colombia (12.1 points lost) are much less supportive of a military role in crime prevention efforts in 2014 than in 2012 (in all cases,  $p < 0.001$ ). Nonetheless, even after the significant loss of support between the two waves, the average respondent in all countries still falls on the supportive side of the scale.

<sup>36</sup> This question is not asked in Costa Rica, Panama, and Haiti because these countries do not have militaries.

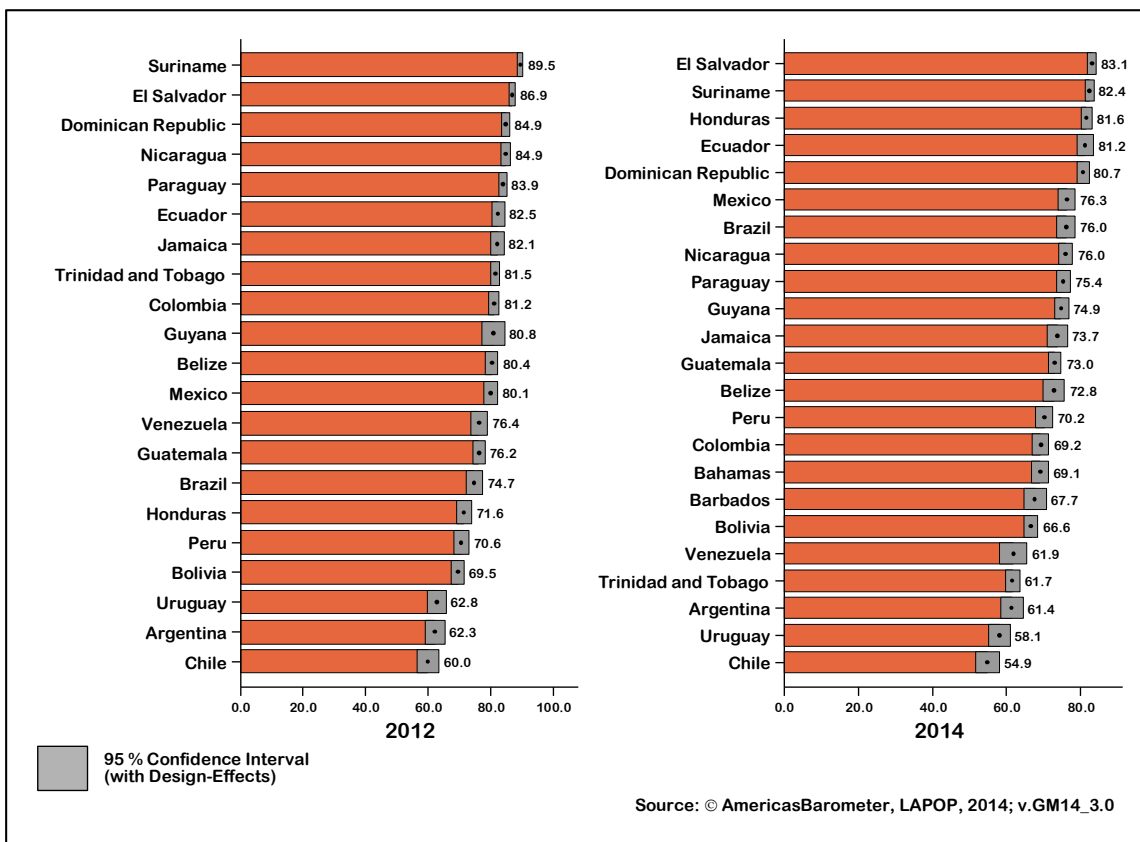


Figure 3.26. Support for Military Role in Domestic Security in the Americas, 2012-2014

What individual-level factors predict support for the military’s role in domestic security? Once again, the dependent variable is modeled using ordered logistic regression to test which factors best correlate with a higher likelihood of approval for the militarization of criminal justice efforts in the country. In addition to the standard set of socio-demographic control variables, the model in this section includes the same indicators of crime salience and perceptions of judicial institutions as in the previous two models. This includes the measure of police bribe victimization and police non-response. Additionally, the model includes a measure of trust in the Armed Forces. Presumably, generalized trust in the military will be strongly correlated with a policy preference for military involvement in combating crime and insecurity in society.

Figure 3.27 presents the results of the model.<sup>37</sup> Unsurprisingly, the most important variable for predicting approval of the militarization of the criminal justice system, by far, is trust in the armed forces. Respondents who trust the military are significantly more likely to support the militarization of efforts to combat crime and violence. Independent of this effect of respondent trust in the armed forces, people who are *more* trusting of the judicial institutions (courts, judicial system, and national police), are *less* approving of the military having a role in the fight against crime.<sup>38</sup> Additionally, those who perceive that

<sup>37</sup> The model estimates an ordered logit regression model; country fixed effects to account for differences across countries are included but not shown. See corresponding table with the results for standardized coefficients in the Appendix. The U.S. and Canada are not included in these or other regression analyses in this chapter, in order to focus on the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region.

<sup>38</sup> Trust in the armed forces and trust in judicial institutions are highly and positively correlated, so these results need to be interpreted with some caution. Indeed, running the model excluding respondent trust in the military suggests that trust in judicial institutions is significantly and *positively* correlated with support for a military role in combating crime and violence.

the government has performed well in providing security are more likely to support giving the military a role in domestic security. Moreover, the indicators of police non-response and police corruption are significantly and positively correlated with approval for a military role in providing domestic security. The last measure of institutional capacity, belief in the capacity of the judicial system to punish the guilty, is not significantly correlated with approval of a military role in combating crime and violence.

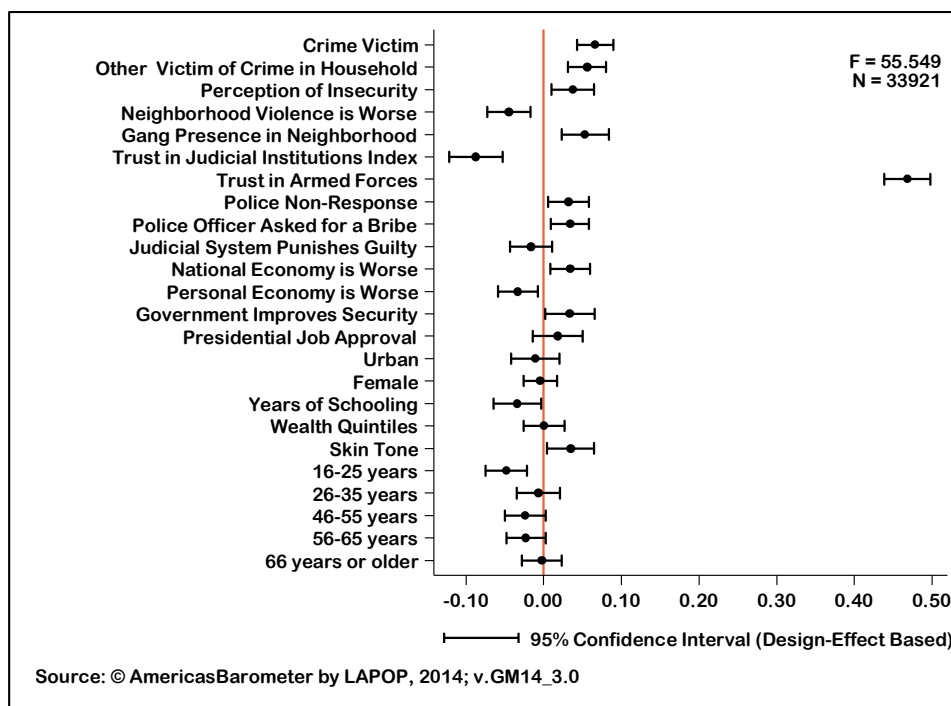


Figure 3.27. Predictors of Support for a Military Role in Domestic Security, 2014

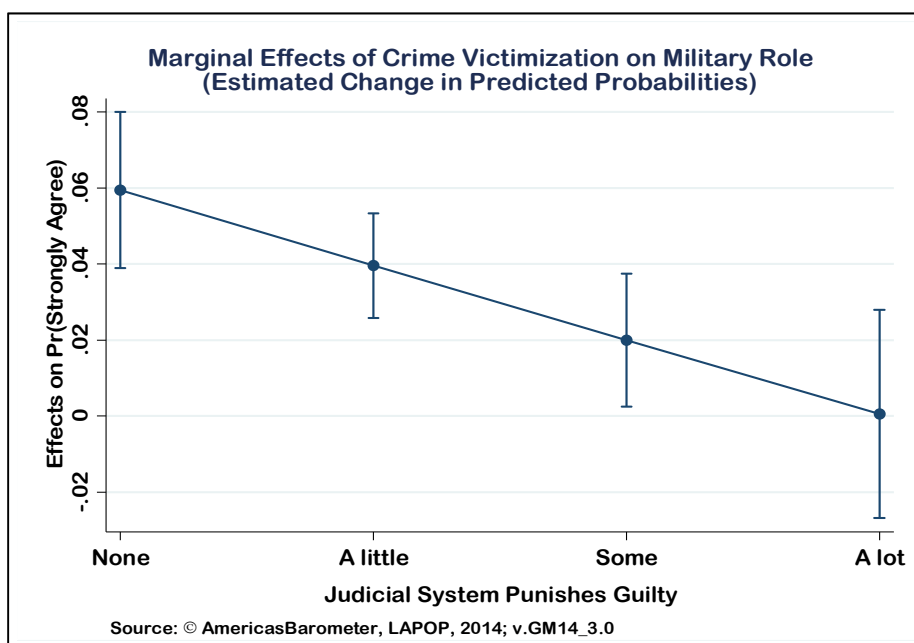
The salience of crime is another important factor that predicts support for military involvement in domestic security. Crime victimization (both for the respondent and for members of the respondent's household), perceived insecurity in the respondent's neighborhood, and a gang presence in the respondent's neighborhood are all significant predictors of support for a policy that would allow military involvement in crime prevention. Once again, the respondent's retrospective evaluation of neighborhood violence is not a significant predictor of the respondent's policy preference. Thus, both citizens' direct experience with crime and a generalized sense of insecurity provide important openings for the region's militaries to gain more popular support for a domestic security mission.

Finally, respondents with more education, respondents who believe that their personal economic situation has worsened, and the youngest respondents in the sample are less likely to support military intervention in domestic security. Respondents who believe that the national economic situation has worsened and respondents with darker skin tone are more likely to support the use of the military to combat crime. All else equal, urban/rural residence, gender, approval of the incumbent president, and respondent wealth are not significant predictors of approval of the military playing a role in fighting crime and insecurity in Latin America and the Caribbean.

For this reason, we stress that the finding for the judicial institutions index holds *independent* of trust in the military and all else equal.



As in the previous analyses, we test whether there is an interactive effect between belief in the capacity of the judicial system to punish the guilty and crime victimization in terms of these variables' predictive relationship with support for a military role in combating crime and insecurity.<sup>39</sup> Figure 3.28 provides evidence that the effect of crime victimization on strongly agreeing with giving the military a role in providing domestic security falls significantly as respondents increase in their belief that the formal mechanisms of the judicial system will ensure that the guilty are punished for their crimes. Indeed, when people have no faith in the judicial system, crime victims are 5.6 percentage points more likely to strongly agree with giving the military a role in domestic security than similar non-victims. Conversely, when people have a lot of faith in the capacity of the judicial system, crime victims are only 0.1 percentage points more likely than non-victims to support the militarization of crime policy and the difference between victims and non-victims is not statistically significant. Thus, the effect of crime victimization on attitudes towards the military's role in combating crime and insecurity is highly dependent on the respondent's perception of the capacity of the formal judicial system to provide justice.



**Figure 3.28. Marginal Effect of Crime Victimization on Agreement with Militarization of Domestic Security Operations as Conditioned by Belief in the Ability of the Judicial System to Punish the Guilty, 2014**

These findings illustrate how strong an impulse there is in the region in terms of supporting the militarization of domestic security. Turning to the military would seem to be an easy, and popular, solution to the problem of crime and violence in the region; however, there are substantial risks associated with the militarization of domestic security. The alternative approach, which requires strengthening the formal institutions of the judicial system, involves considerable complexity and uncertainty; however, the results in this section also suggest that they would ultimately pay off in terms of popular support. When people believe that the judicial system is capable of performing its proper functions, they are less likely to look for alternative sources of justice. Ultimately, the people are looking to the state to capably exercise its monopoly on the use of force on their behalf. Whether through the judicial system or through the military, people just want to feel safe.

<sup>39</sup> The estimated effects of other variables are substantively unchanged.



## IV. Criminal Justice Policy in the Americas: The Way Forward

This chapter has considered citizens' evaluations of the state's local and national capacity for providing for citizen security and the rule of law. The findings point to some concerning trends, in that dissatisfaction with the police is fairly widespread and confidence in institutions related to the rule of law has decreased in recent years in the Latin American and Caribbean region. Generally speaking, we see a decrease in citizen confidence in the ability of the state to fulfill its expected function with respect to bolstering against threats to individuals' safety. The extent to which individuals feel insecure in their own neighborhoods, among other factors, matters for evaluations of the police in one's neighborhood, national government capacity for rule of law, and support for the incumbent. A positive perspective on this set of findings is that these relationships provide incentive for government officials at all levels to work to bolster citizen security, in the hope of being rewarded with more favorable evaluations.

In the latter part of the chapter, we turned to a discussion of policy preferences and we concluded the chapter with an extended reflection on the findings presented in those sections. Taken together, these results suggest that if policy makers in Latin America and the Caribbean were to blindly follow public opinion, the next several years might witness the consolidation of punitive criminal justice policies with the military playing a key role in their implementation while battling to reign in young vigilantes who are mistrustful of formal institutions. Yet politics is not so straightforward and thus this is not necessarily what the future holds, which may be good news for an international policy community that seems to be converging on more multi-faceted crime prevention policies than hardline policies alone. However, these results point to three key takeaways for policy-makers to consider. First, it is important to be attentive to the age cohort effects illustrated here. Young people, in particular, seem to have very low levels of trust in the formal institutions of justice, which is reflected in their policy preferences: young people want more punitive policies and strongly support vigilantism, but disagree with giving the military a stronger role in fighting crime and violence. Over time, these younger cohorts may become socialized into less violent cultural norms, but policy-makers may want to focus their attention on accelerating that process of socialization through community outreach programs between the formal institutions of justice and younger members of society.

Second, the presence of gangs in neighborhoods and communities throughout the region is shaping not only citizens' experiences with crime and their sense of insecurity, but also citizens' policy preferences. People react to the presence of gangs by moving towards greater acceptance of more punitive policies, vigilantism, and a more active role for the military in domestic affairs. Each of these policy actions, if implemented and taken to the extreme, could threaten the democratic political stability of a country: a stronger military might find it tempting to govern in place of an elected government. Vigilantism, by definition, acts outside the rule of law, and if sufficiently widespread could result in the breakdown of law and order, perhaps further justifying military intervention. Yet, an increase in the military's role in domestic security could also lead to human rights violations, given that these forces are typically not trained to interact with domestic, civilian populations. On the other hand, relying on punitive policies, because they have a limited capacity to dissuade criminals, may simply reinforce popular perceptions that judicial institutions are corrupt and dysfunctional when those policies fail to stem the tide of criminal activity. Thus, policy makers need to consider how to undercut the allurements of gang membership and look to preventive policies that provide alternative opportunities for at-risk individuals.

The final point of emphasis is education. The number of years of education attained by each citizen is strongly predictive of policy preferences, independent of all other factors considered in this section. On average, more educated citizens in the region are much less punitive, less accepting of vigilantism, and less supportive of turning over security responsibilities to the military. What is left unresolved from the models considered here is what effect investments in education might have not only on the policy attitudes of citizens, but on the opportunities available to them and on the social and economic alternatives those investments might provide to at-risk youth. It is worth considering whether the budgetary funds spent on punitive criminal justice policies and large-scale domestic military interventions would be more productively used if invested in social and education policies where they might produce a more targeted and less variable long-term payoff in terms of reducing crime and violence in the region.

## Appendix

**Appendix 3.1: Determinants of Satisfaction with Police Performance in the Neighborhood, 2014  
(Regression Results for Figure 3.5)**

	Standardized Coefficients	(t)
66 years or older	2.431*	(4.46)
56-65 years	0.859	(1.83)
46-55 years	1.725*	(3.93)
26-35 years	-0.619	(-1.64)
16-25 years	-1.279*	(-3.26)
Skin Tone	0.064	(0.74)
Wealth Quintiles	0.469*	(4.28)
Years of Schooling	-0.170*	(-4.15)
Female	0.628*	(2.51)
Urban	0.502	(1.24)
Presidential Job Approval	0.004	(0.99)
Other Victim of Crime in Household	0.126*	(20.00)
Victim of Crime	-0.032*	(-7.59)
Gang Presence in Neighborhood	-0.196*	(-35.05)
Neighborhood Violence Worse than 12 Months Ago	-0.223*	(-36.27)
Perception of Insecurity	-0.028*	(-5.34)
Delay in Police Responsiveness	2.431*	(4.46)
Police Officer Asked for a Bribe	0.859	(1.83)
Guatemala	3.411*	(2.82)
El Salvador	3.640*	(3.37)
Honduras	5.389*	(4.26)
Nicaragua	6.579*	(5.72)
Costa Rica	6.157*	(5.08)
Panama	6.040*	(4.44)
Colombia	2.865*	(2.39)
Ecuador	1.594	(1.19)
Bolivia	-5.657*	(-4.52)
Peru	-1.995	(-1.35)
Paraguay	7.222*	(5.80)
Chile	3.653*	(2.71)
Uruguay	2.315	(1.81)
Brazil	1.321	(1.07)
Venezuela	2.332	(1.90)
Argentina	2.820*	(2.19)
Dominican Republic	2.914*	(2.62)
Haiti	-5.807*	(-3.56)
Jamaica	7.381*	(6.14)
Guyana	0.641	(0.52)
Trinidad and Tobago	9.454*	(8.43)
Belize	1.404	(1.02)
Suriname	8.807*	(7.85)
Bahamas	14.290*	(13.01)
Barbados	12.435*	(9.94)
Constant	57.094*	(46.14)
F		172.84
No. of cases		44684
R-Squared		0.24
Regression-Standardized Coefficients with t-Statistics based on Standard Errors Adjusted for the Survey Design. * p<0.05		

**Appendix 3.2: Determinants of Index of Evaluations of National State Capacity for the Provision of Citizen Security and the Rule of Law, 2014 (Regression Results for Figure 3.13)**

	Standardized Coefficients	(t)
66 years or older	0.031*	(6.00)
56-65 years	0.014*	(2.56)
46-55 years	0.018*	(3.26)
26-35 years	-0.001	(-0.20)
16-25 years	0.029*	(5.18)
Skin Tone	0.001	(0.15)
Wealth Quintiles	-0.026*	(-4.77)
Years of Schooling	-0.039*	(-6.53)
Female	0.026*	(6.11)
Urban	-0.047*	(-7.31)
Presidential Job Approval	0.352*	(58.37)
Other Victim of Crime in Household	-0.039*	(-8.28)
Victim of Crime	-0.054*	(-11.51)
Gang Presence in Neighborhood	-0.039*	(-6.29)
Neighborhood Violence Worse than 12 Months Ago	-0.041*	(-7.52)
Perception of Insecurity	-0.122*	(-21.36)
Guatemala	-0.031*	(-3.52)
El Salvador	-0.018*	(-2.23)
Honduras	-0.024*	(-2.77)
Nicaragua	0.065*	(7.69)
Costa Rica	0.056*	(6.55)
Panama	0.047*	(4.89)
Colombia	-0.001	(-0.12)
Ecuador	0.041*	(3.20)
Bolivia	-0.076*	(-6.31)
Peru	-0.033*	(-4.21)
Paraguay	-0.064*	(-7.71)
Chile	-0.026*	(-2.81)
Uruguay	0.005	(0.64)
Brazil	-0.049*	(-5.63)
Venezuela	0.003	(0.32)
Argentina	0.004	(0.54)
Dominican Republic	-0.060*	(-5.87)
Haiti	0.010	(1.02)
Jamaica	-0.016	(-1.93)
Guyana	-0.043*	(-4.86)
Trinidad and Tobago	0.000	(0.01)
Belize	-0.032*	(-4.46)
Suriname	0.107*	(14.09)
Bahamas	0.060*	(9.66)
Barbados	0.059*	(9.97)
Constant	-0.078*	(-11.05)
F	231.28	
No. of cases	43757	
R-Squared	0.27	
Regression-Standardized Coefficients with t-Statistics based on Standard Errors Adjusted for the Survey Design. * p<0.05		

**Appendix 3.3: Implications of Crime Victimization and Insecurity for Presidential/Prime Ministerial Approval, 2014 (Regression Results for Figure 3.15)**

	Standardized Coefficients	(t)
66 years or older	0.016	(1.30)
56-65 years	0.005	(0.44)
46-55 years	-0.003	(-0.25)
26-35 years	-0.041*	(-3.06)
16-25 years	-0.045*	(-3.47)
Skin Tone	-0.008	(-0.52)
Wealth Quintiles	-0.045*	(-3.66)
Years of Schooling	-0.034*	(-2.50)
Woman	0.028*	(2.92)
Urban	-0.021	(-1.48)
Personal Economy is Worse	-0.188*	(-15.61)
National Economy is Worse	-0.409*	(-33.39)
Trust in Judicial Institutions Index	0.487*	(35.45)
Confidence that Judiciary will Punish the Guilty	0.116*	(9.43)
Other Victim of Crime in Household	-0.018	(-1.74)
Crime Victim	-0.012	(-1.11)
Neighborhood is Affected by Gangs	0.003	(0.19)
Neighborhood Violence Worse than 12 Months Ago	-0.011	(-0.92)
Perception of Insecurity	-0.093*	(-7.26)
Guatemala	0.125*	(7.15)
El Salvador	0.321*	(19.80)
Honduras	0.301*	(17.75)
Nicaragua	0.245*	(14.72)
Costa Rica	-0.180*	(-10.50)
Panama	0.142*	(7.79)
Colombia	0.033*	(2.01)
Ecuador	0.403*	(16.65)
Bolivia	0.301*	(11.71)
Peru	-0.009	(-0.64)
Paraguay	0.128*	(8.32)
Chile	0.134*	(7.15)
Uruguay	0.149*	(9.80)
Brazil	0.078*	(4.18)
Venezuela	-0.078*	(-4.46)
Argentina	0.015	(0.94)
Dominican Republic	0.532*	(26.14)
Haiti	0.330*	(13.65)
Jamaica	0.033	(1.59)
Guyana	0.069*	(3.24)
Trinidad and Tobago	-0.100*	(-5.19)
Belize	0.077*	(5.08)
Suriname	0.136*	(9.17)
Bahamas	0.047*	(3.99)
Barbados	-0.126*	(-9.67)
cut1	-3.128*	(-121.66)
cut2	-1.825*	(-92.44)
cut3	0.318*	(18.07)
cut4	2.705*	(107.45)
F	193.01	
No. of cases	42124	
Regression-Standardized Coefficients with t-Statistics based on Standard Errors Adjusted for the Survey Design. * p<0.05		

**Appendix 3.4: Implications of Crime Victimization and Insecurity for Incumbent Executive Electoral Support, 2014 (Regression Results for Figure 3.17)**

	Standardized Coefficients	(t)
66 years or older	0.001	(0.04)
56-65 years	0.024	(1.54)
46-55 years	0.018	(1.14)
26-35 years	-0.058*	(-3.39)
16-25 years	-0.134*	(-7.99)
Skin Tone	0.029	(1.57)
Wealth Quintiles	-0.071*	(-4.60)
Years of Schooling	-0.094*	(-5.41)
Woman	0.021	(1.61)
Urban	-0.029	(-1.61)
Personal Economy is Worse	-0.138*	(-8.47)
National Economy is Worse	-0.343*	(-21.16)
Confidence that Judiciary will Punish the Guilty	0.072*	(4.68)
Trust in Judicial Institutions Index	0.326*	(20.13)
Neighborhood is Affected by Gangs	-0.003	(-0.19)
Neighborhood Violence Worse than 12 Months Ago	-0.030*	(-1.97)
Perception of Insecurity	-0.052*	(-3.16)
Other Victim of Crime in Household	0.007	(0.47)
Crime Victim	-0.000	(-0.02)
Guatemala	-0.237*	(-8.32)
El Salvador	0.104*	(5.04)
Honduras	0.007	(0.31)
Nicaragua	0.131*	(6.62)
Costa Rica	-0.139*	(-6.29)
Panama	-0.016	(-0.73)
Colombia	-0.151*	(-6.33)
Ecuador	0.205*	(7.33)
Bolivia	0.191*	(6.57)
Peru	-0.276*	(-10.27)
Paraguay	0.015	(0.88)
Chile	0.025	(1.07)
Uruguay	0.085*	(4.58)
Brazil	0.042*	(1.98)
Venezuela	0.060*	(3.32)
Argentina	0.010	(0.60)
Dominican Republic	0.278*	(12.57)
Haiti	0.048*	(2.07)
Jamaica	-0.058*	(-2.49)
Guyana	0.024	(0.90)
Trinidad and Tobago	-0.106*	(-4.01)
Belize	0.011	(0.59)
Suriname	0.097*	(5.48)
Bahamas	-0.060*	(-4.62)
Barbados	-0.124*	(-7.74)
Constant	-0.644*	(-34.55)
F	66.35	
No. of cases	35922	
Regression-Standardized Coefficients with t-Statistics based on Standard Errors Adjusted for the Survey Design. * p<0.05		

**Appendix 3.5: Predictors of Preference for Punitive Criminal Justice Policy, 2014  
(Regression Results for Figure 3.20)**

	Standardized Coefficients	(t)
66 years or older	-0.050*	(-4.18)
56-65 years	-0.057*	(-4.36)
46-55 years	-0.016	(-1.23)
26-35 years	0.039*	(2.93)
16-25 years	0.058*	(4.15)
Skin Tone	0.021	(1.48)
Wealth Quintiles	-0.054*	(-4.17)
Years of Schooling	-0.304*	(-21.59)
Woman	0.064*	(5.95)
Urban	-0.056*	(-4.10)
Executive Job Approval	-0.046*	(-3.16)
Government Improves Security	-0.001	(-0.07)
Personal Economy is Worse	-0.006	(-0.44)
National Economy is Worse	0.051*	(3.90)
Confidence that Judiciary will Punish the Guilty	-0.016	(-1.25)
Police Non-Response	0.006	(0.48)
Trust in Judicial Institutions Index	-0.016	(-1.11)
Neighborhood is Affected by Gangs	0.083*	(5.97)
Perception of Current Neighborhood Violence	0.001	(0.04)
Perception of Insecurity	0.056*	(4.16)
Other Victim of Crime in Household	-0.020	(-1.76)
Crime Victim	0.006	(0.54)
Guatemala	0.002	(0.14)
El Salvador	-0.045*	(-2.64)
Honduras	0.030	(1.76)
Nicaragua	-0.035	(-1.82)
Costa Rica	0.027	(1.63)
Panama	0.130*	(5.93)
Colombia	0.003	(0.18)
Ecuador	0.074*	(3.25)
Bolivia	0.108*	(4.14)
Peru	0.071*	(4.36)
Paraguay	0.128*	(7.61)
Chile	0.144*	(6.39)
Uruguay	0.003	(0.24)
Brazil	0.081*	(4.40)
Venezuela	0.015	(0.82)
Argentina	0.057*	(3.57)
Dominican Republic	0.058*	(2.84)
Haiti	0.032	(1.55)
Jamaica	0.051*	(2.61)
Guyana	0.055*	(2.90)
Trinidad and Tobago	0.118*	(7.20)
Belize	0.119*	(8.07)
Suriname	0.072*	(5.17)
Bahamas	0.111*	(10.05)
Barbados	0.050*	(4.05)
cut1	-0.836*	(-49.42)
cut2	-0.170*	(-10.65)
F		27.34
No. of cases		40486
Regression-Standardized Coefficients with t-Statistics based on Standard Errors Adjusted for the Survey Design. * p<0.05		



**Appendix 3.6: Predictors of Approval of Vigilante Justice, 2014  
(Regression Results for Figure 3.24)**

	Standardized Coefficients	(t)
66 years or older	-0.096*	(-8.49)
56-65 years	-0.059*	(-5.27)
46-55 years	-0.047*	(-3.91)
26-35 years	0.075*	(5.77)
16-25 years	0.148*	(11.71)
Skin Tone	0.057*	(3.74)
Wealth Quintiles	-0.017	(-1.36)
Years of Schooling	-0.061*	(-4.57)
Female	-0.059*	(-6.18)
Urban	-0.018	(-1.29)
Presidential Job Approval	-0.130*	(-9.15)
Government Improves Security	0.026	(1.72)
Personal Economy is Worse	0.008	(0.66)
National Economy is Worse	0.043*	(3.47)
Organized in Neighborhood for Security	0.045*	(3.97)
Judicial System Punishes Guilty	-0.029*	(-2.32)
Police Officer Asked for a Bribe	0.080*	(7.64)
Police Non-Response	-0.001	(-0.07)
Trust in Judicial Institutions Index	-0.085*	(-5.60)
Gang Presence in Neighborhood	0.056*	(4.13)
Neighborhood Violence is Worse	0.014	(1.15)
Perception of Insecurity	0.043*	(3.42)
Other Victim of Crime in Household	-0.002	(-0.22)
Crime Victim	-0.096*	(-8.49)
Guatemala	-0.056*	(-2.96)
El Salvador	0.077*	(4.79)
Honduras	0.072*	(3.74)
Nicaragua	0.016	(0.88)
Costa Rica	-0.022	(-1.24)
Panama	-0.040*	(-2.20)
Colombia	-0.029	(-1.74)
Ecuador	0.112*	(4.74)
Bolivia	0.096*	(4.40)
Peru	0.074*	(4.48)
Paraguay	0.067*	(4.11)
Chile	-0.010	(-0.48)
Uruguay	-0.030	(-1.67)
Brazil	-0.104*	(-5.37)
Venezuela	-0.068*	(-3.23)
Argentina	-0.033	(-1.90)
Dominican Republic	0.127*	(6.33)
Haiti	0.056*	(2.48)
Jamaica	0.032	(1.91)
Guyana	-0.088*	(-4.23)
Trinidad and Tobago	-0.123*	(-7.19)
Belize	-0.021	(-1.42)
Suriname	0.076*	(5.13)
Bahamas	-0.042*	(-3.78)
Guatemala	-0.056*	(-2.96)
cut1	-0.639*	(-36.25)
cut2	-0.247*	(-14.84)
cut3	0.139*	(8.40)
cut4	0.527*	(31.42)
cut5	1.011*	(57.87)
cut6	1.313*	(73.59)
cut7	1.616*	(86.98)
cut8	1.931*	(98.23)
cut9	2.186*	(101.99)
F		31.08
No. of cases		40445
Regression-Standardized Coefficients with t-Statistics based on Standard Errors Adjusted for the Survey Design. * p<0.05		

**Appendix 3.7: Predictors of Support for a Military Role in Domestic Security,  
2014 (Regression Results for Figure 3.27)**

	Standardized Coefficients	(t)
66 years or older	-0.002	(-0.18)
56-65 years	-0.023	(-1.74)
46-55 years	-0.024	(-1.79)
26-35 years	-0.007	(-0.51)
16-25 years	-0.048*	(-3.54)
Skin Tone	0.035*	(2.25)
Wealth Quintiles	0.001	(0.05)
Years of Schooling	-0.034*	(-2.18)
Woman	-0.004	(-0.40)
Urban	-0.011	(-0.68)
Presidential Job Approval	0.018	(1.10)
Government Improves Security	0.034*	(2.09)
Personal Economy is Worse	-0.034*	(-2.58)
National Economy is Worse	0.034*	(2.59)
Confidence that Judiciary will Punish the Guilty	-0.017	(-1.21)
Police Officer Asked for a Bribe	0.034*	(2.69)
Police Non-Response	0.032*	(2.38)
Trust in Armed Forces	0.468*	(30.95)
Trust in Judicial Institutions Index	-0.087*	(-4.95)
Gang Presence in Neighborhood	0.053*	(3.43)
Neighborhood Violence is Worse	-0.045*	(-3.18)
Perception of Insecurity	0.037*	(2.67)
Other Victim of Crime in Household	0.056*	(4.49)
Crime Victim	0.066*	(5.49)
Guatemala	-0.056*	(-2.98)
El Salvador	0.090*	(5.07)
Honduras	0.082*	(4.26)
Nicaragua	0.010	(0.52)
Costa Rica	0.000	(.)
Panama	0.000	(.)
Colombia	-0.055*	(-2.76)
Ecuador	0.094*	(3.32)
Bolivia	-0.140*	(-5.55)
Peru	-0.046*	(-2.61)
Paraguay	0.045*	(2.53)
Chile	-0.184*	(-8.68)
Uruguay	-0.136*	(-6.74)
Brazil	0.023	(1.09)
Venezuela	-0.088*	(-3.60)
Argentina	-0.088*	(-4.57)
Dominican Republic	0.108*	(4.85)
Haiti	0.000	(.)
Jamaica	0.008	(0.38)
Guyana	0.014	(0.71)
Trinidad and Tobago	-0.117*	(-7.12)
Belize	-0.011	(-0.52)
Suriname	0.099*	(6.04)
Barbados	-0.052*	(-3.79)
cut1	-2.931*	(-83.40)
cut2	-2.401*	(-79.82)
cut3	-1.774*	(-68.42)
cut4	-1.015*	(-42.36)
cut5	-0.254*	(-10.87)
cut6	0.500*	(21.33)
F	55.55	
No. of cases	33921	
Regression-Standardized Coefficients with t-Statistics based on Standard Errors Adjusted for the Survey Design. * p<0.05		



**Part II:  
Governance, Political Engagement  
and Civil Society in the Americas**



## Chapter 4. Economic Development and Perceived Economic Performance in the Americas

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### I. Introduction

The last decade has seen dramatic economic improvements throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. Thanks to rising commodity prices, several countries enjoyed economic booms and, in turn, the region quickly recovered from the global economic slowdown. Improved education has narrowed skills gaps within the workforce (Kahhat 2010) and has boosted wages, particularly for low income workers (World Bank 2013). Many governments also launched ambitious social programs that helped provide more effective safety nets against poverty (Haggard and Kaufman 2008; McGuire 2012; Huber and Stephens 2012). As a result, aggregate poverty rates in Latin America have fallen (Lopez-Calva and Lustig 2010).<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the number of people in Latin America living in extreme poverty (less than \$2.50 a day) has dropped by 50% since 2000. In 2011, the number of people classified by the World Bank as middle class, measured as living on \$10-50 a day, surpassed the number of people in Latin America classified as poor (Ferreira et al 2013). Inequality in the hemisphere remains high but has also decreased in recent years (Lopez-Calva and Lustig 2010; Ferreira et al 2013).

These gains notwithstanding, the region's economies still face multiple challenges. Over 80 million people live in extreme poverty (World Bank 2013) and 40% of Latin Americans live on a precarious \$4-10 a day. The heralded growth of the middle class has been uneven—more pronounced in the Southern Cone than in the other places in the region. Moreover, as commodity prices have stabilized over the last two years, Latin America has seen its growth rates decrease. This development has led some observers to voice concerns over whether the region's economies are strong enough to continue raising people out of poverty.<sup>2</sup> Persistent inefficiencies in education systems and stubbornly large informal sectors in many countries hamper worker productivity.<sup>3</sup> So despite some recent signs of economic resilience, the quest for economic development continues across much of the Americas.

While these economic trends are important in and of themselves, a large literature links political participation and democratic attitudes to economic development and performance (e.g. Lipset 1959; Easton 1975; Carlin 2006; Bratton et al 2005; see discussion in Booth and Seligson 2009). Rising living standards and a growing middle class may ultimately be good for democracy if they result in growing demands for political inclusion (Inglehart and Welzel 2005). Yet if democratic values have not become fully dispersed within the hemisphere, economic weakening may create discontent with democratic institutions and practices if citizens become convinced that democracy cannot fully deliver (Duch 1995; Evans and Whitefield 1995; Booth and Seligson 2009). Moreover, high levels of poverty and inequality may create opportunities for leaders who promise to fix those problems if delegated sufficient political

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<sup>1</sup> Data on poverty rates in the Caribbean are much more limited than are data on Latin America, thus while many reports speak of “Latin America and the Caribbean” in discussing the recent trends most of the data in them draws exclusively on Latin America. For a summary of some recent poverty data in the Caribbean, see Downes (2010).

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.worldbank.org/en/region/lac/overview>; <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2014/aug/27/inequality-latin-america-undp>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.economist.com/news/americas/21599782-instead-crises-past-mediocre-growth-big-riskunless-productivity-rises-life>

authority to change the current status quo, perhaps at the cost of democratic checks and balances (Weyland 2013).

The 2014 AmericasBarometer provides a window into both the real improvements many citizens of the hemisphere experience as well as some lingering economic weaknesses. In particular, these data allow us to examine how the region's citizens view their current financial situation and the current state of the national economy. In doing so, we can see that while the average respondent is objectively better off than he or she was in the recent past, many people continue to report significant financial hardships. AmericasBarometer respondents also are tuned into the weakening macroeconomic situation; descriptions of the national economic situation are significantly lower in 2014 than they were in 2012 or 2010. In all of these trends, substantial differences in economic perceptions and household wealth within society reflect historic inequalities regarding access to education and the market that continue to shape patterns of inequality in the hemisphere.

## **II. Main Findings**

In this chapter, we use the AmericasBarometer to track household access to basic services, ownership of common appliances, and other forms of household wealth along with subjective evaluations of whether one's income is sufficient to meet economic needs and subjective evaluations of recent economic trends. The main findings we document are as follows:

- The regional average level of household wealth is increasing, in particular, ownership of many household appliances.
- Access to household services like running water and sewage has increased more slowly, but continues to increase in the hemisphere.
- When asked subjectively about their financial situations and whether their income is sufficient to meet their needs, many respondents report that they are struggling. In fact, the number of households that cannot make ends meet in an average country remains almost unchanged from previous waves of the survey.
- Evaluations of national economic trends are generally negative, although they vary substantially across countries in ways that reflect recent macroeconomic trends; respondents in countries whose economies are growing the most slowly tend to have the least positive views of the economy.

Yet we consistently find that both objective levels of wealth and subjective perceptions of household finances and the national economy differ within countries in ways that reflect structural inequalities within society as well as non-economic factors.

- Education is a particularly strong predictor of both objective household wealth and subjective reports of being financially secure.
- Individuals who live in urban areas, are married, are middle age, have lighter colored skin, and are male tend to report owning more household items.

- Household wealth is strongly correlated with reporting the ability to make ends meet, but even among the wealthiest quintile in the sample, 29% of respondents report that their income is not enough to make ends meet.
- Those who are poor, indigenous, and/or female tend to have the most negative views of the national economy.
- Individuals who live in high crime areas or who experienced corruption in the past year tend to be more negative about their country's economic trajectory.

### III. The Evolution of Household Wealth

One way we can track Latin America's economic evolution is by looking at trends in household ownership of various consumer items. Specifically, the AmericasBarometer survey asks respondents if they own the following:

<b>R3.</b> Refrigerator	(0) No			(1) Yes	<b>DK</b> 88	<b>DA</b> 98
<b>R4.</b> Landline/residential telephone (not cellular)	(0) No			(1) Yes	88	98
<b>R4A.</b> Cellular telephone	(0) No			(1) Yes	88	98
<b>R5.</b> Vehicle/car. How many? <b>[If the interviewee does not say how many, mark "one."]</b>	(0) No	(1) One	(2) Two	(3) Three or more	88	98
<b>R6.</b> Washing machine	(0) No			(1) Yes	88	98
<b>R7.</b> Microwave oven	(0) No			(1) Yes	88	98
<b>R8.</b> Motorcycle	(0) No			(1) Yes	88	98
<b>R12.</b> Indoor plumbing	(0) No			(1) Yes	88	98
<b>R14.</b> Indoor bathroom	(0) No			(1) Yes	88	98
<b>R15.</b> Computer	(0) No			(1) Yes	88	98
<b>R18.</b> Internet	(0) No			(1) Yes	88	98
<b>R1.</b> Television	(0) No <b>[Skip to R26]</b>			(1) Yes <b>[Continue]</b>	88	98
<b>R16.</b> Flat panel TV	(0) No			(1) Yes	88	98
						<b>99</b> <b>INAP</b>

The list of household goods that the AmericasBarometer asks about has expanded over time, reflecting the advent of new technologies and the greater availability of other household items. The survey does not ask about the quality of the goods nor whether the respondent owns multiple versions of an appliance. Nevertheless, these measures allow us to break down some of the basic differences in household wealth in the hemisphere.

Figure 4.1 graphs the percentage of households in 2014 that claim to have each item. As with all other figures in this report that display the regional average, countries are weighted equally and thus the numbers represent the percentages in an average country in the hemisphere. According to these AmericasBarometer data, some household goods have become nearly ubiquitous in the Americas. For example, over 92% of households surveyed have a television. That number has grown slightly since



2006 (when it was 89%).<sup>4</sup> Of course this does not mean all homes are equal with regards to this one measure of wealth. Households will differ in the number and types of TV's they own. In fact, the 2014 AmericasBarometer added a question asking specifically about whether the respondent has a flat screen TV—less than 43% of respondents do. But at a basic level, access to television is high throughout the continent.

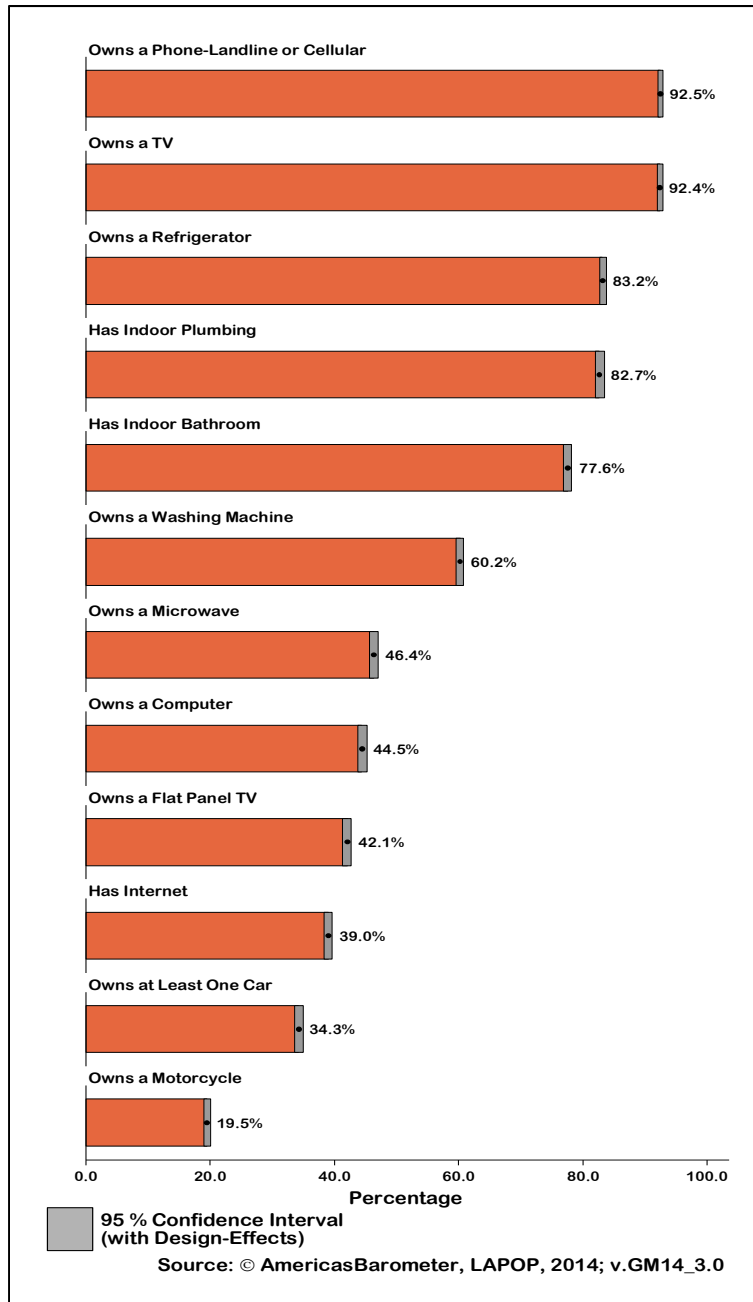


Figure 4.1. Ownership of Household Goods in the Americas, 2014<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> In discussing trends in household wealth we focus on comparisons to 2006 because that was the year the AmericasBarometer expanded within South America and the Caribbean. If we restrict our attention to the countries in Central America and the Andes that were included in the 2004 wave and look at trends until the present day, the gains are even larger.

<sup>5</sup> This figure excludes the United States and Canada because several of the household wealth questions were not asked there.



Telephone access is also high throughout the Americas. Over 95% of individuals have either a cell phone or a landline phone in their home. Of the two types, cellular phones are far more common; roughly 89% of respondents have a cell phone while 39.5% have a landline phone. And while the share of houses with at least one television has remained relatively constant over the last 8 years of the AmericasBarometer survey, telephone penetration has increased markedly. In 2006 only 72% of households had access to a phone of any kind, with 60% of households having cell phones and 43% landlines. Thus in 8 years reported access to telephones in the household has increased by 16 percentage points and reported cell phone ownership has gone up by 23 percentage points.

In general, access to electronic appliances has been on a significant upward trend in recent years. Refrigerator ownership was fairly common in 2006 but increased 13 percentage points in the last eight years, such that nearly 83.2% of households in the average country report owning one. Ownership of washing machines and microwaves is more limited, but both have grown in recent years. Since 2006, the proportion of respondents in an average country who report owning a washing machine has increased by 23 percentage points and microwave ownership is now 20 percentage points higher. We observe a large increase – 24.5 percentage points since 2006 – in computer ownership. Concurrently, household access to the internet also grew by 20 percentage points since the AmericasBarometer first asked about it in 2008.

Other forms of household wealth changed more slowly. Though most homes in the Americas have access to indoor plumbing and an indoor bathroom, the percentage of homes that do not has only fallen 4 percentage points since 2006 in the average country. The average number of homes with an indoor bathroom has also only increased by 6 percentage points over the same period of time. These major gains in wealth are, perhaps, the most difficult to achieve. Not only are they expensive, they often require local governments and utilities to provide reliable forms of infrastructure, access, and services. Yet we might also consider that while a 4 percentage-point gain in access does not sound like much compared to the large increases in ownership of other goods and services, it does mean that in the past eight years the number of homes without access to indoor plumbing or an indoor bathroom have been reduced by 18 and 14 percent respectively. Car ownership also remains relatively rare; about 34% of respondents own at least one car, although that is an increase over the 23% that reported owning cars in 2006.

To summarize these overall trends, in Figure 4.2 we create a simple index of household ownership that keeps track of the number of goods households in an average country own.<sup>6</sup> We focus on the 12 items that were asked about in every survey since 2006 and count the number owned by each household.<sup>7</sup> For simplicity we weight each item equally and take the average number of owned items

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<sup>6</sup> This index is a very simple index of wealth and differs from the one used elsewhere in the report that breaks wealth into quintiles. In most analyses in this report we use an index of household wealth that uses factor analysis to identify which goods distinguish the most well-off households from other households and which also incorporates differences in the kinds of wealth that are possible in urban and rural areas given differences in infrastructure (a well-to-do person in rural areas where electricity is scarce may own fewer electronic appliances, for example, than does a poor person living in an urban center). See Córdova, Abby. 2009. Methodological Note: Measuring Relative Wealth using Household Asset Indicators. *AmericasBarometer Insight Report* 2008, no. 6. <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/insights/I0806en.pdf>. The index of household wealth used in the rest of the report breaks houses down into their quintiles by country but, by design, does not allow for comparisons across countries or within them over time in the number of goods that households actually own. Thus, here we look at a raw count of household goods.

<sup>7</sup> Television of any kind, a flat screen television, refrigerator, telephone, car, washing machine, microwave, motorcycle, indoor plumbing, indoor bathroom, a computer, and the internet.

across the sample. The data show household access to these basic services and appliances increased in every wave of the AmericasBarometer.<sup>8</sup>

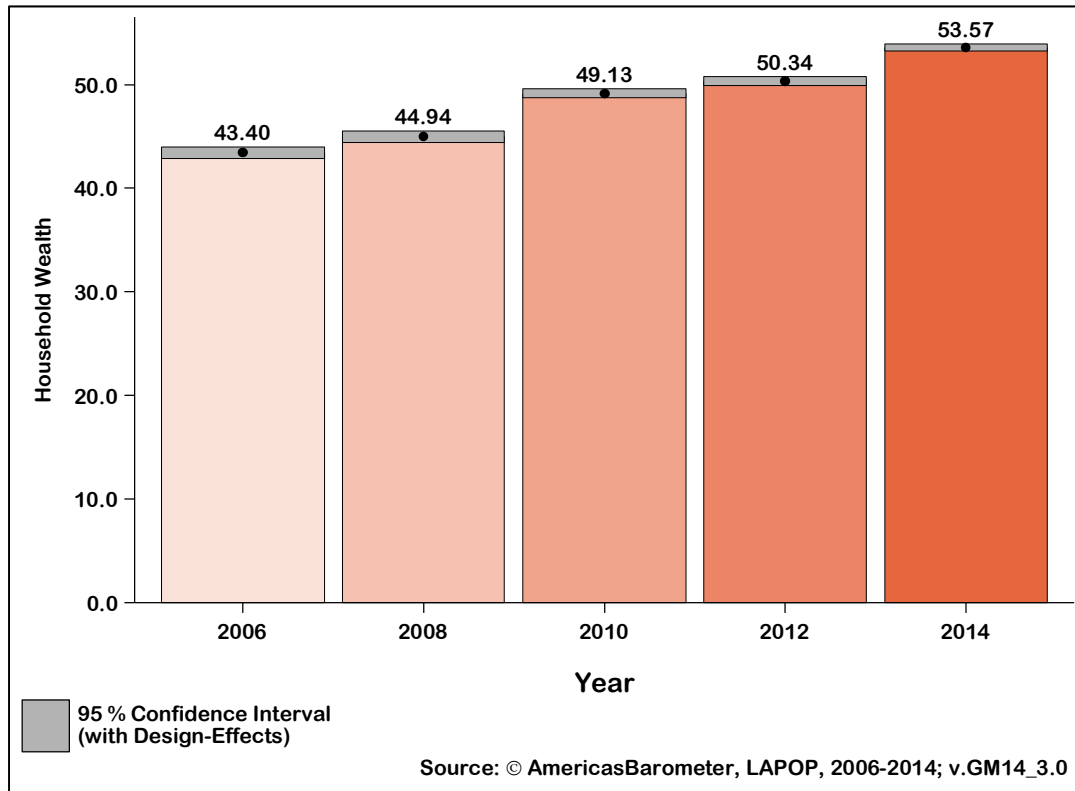


Figure 4.2. Average Wealth over Time, 12-Item Additive Index

While household wealth has increased on average, large disparities continue to exist within the Americas. We explore differences within and across societies using data from the 2014 AmericasBarometer. In Figure 4.3 we model a slightly modified version of the household wealth index presented in Figure 4.2 that adds ownership of a flat screen TV and internet access (questions added to the AmericasBarometer battery since 2006) to the set of household goods and examine how they differ within societies. We control for country fixed effects to account for unmeasured differences across countries, thus the results in Figure 4.3 reflect average within-country differences in household wealth.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> If we compare wealth within only those countries that are included in every survey since 2004, the same pattern of increasing wealth over time also occurs.

<sup>9</sup> As in prior regression plots reported in this study, coefficients measuring each variable’s effect are indicated by dots, and confidence intervals by whiskers (the horizontal lines extending to the right and left of each dot). If a confidence interval does not intersect the vertical 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. The coefficients are all standardized. The estimated coefficients are available in Appendix 4.1 at the end of the chapter.

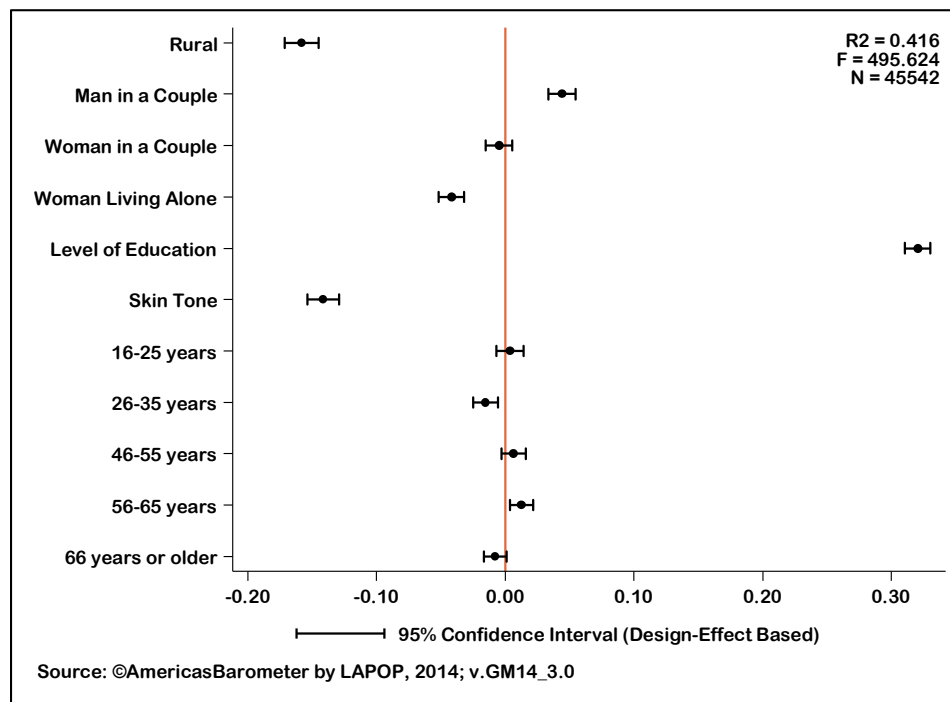


Figure 4.3. Correlates of Household Wealth, 2014<sup>10</sup>

Average levels of household wealth vary significantly across socio-demographic groups. The largest correlate of household wealth is education. The more schooling an individual obtains, the more of these household items he or she tends to own. This pattern may exist for several reasons. It could be that as education levels continue to increase, opportunities to obtain household wealth also increase.<sup>11</sup> Yet inequalities with regards to access to education remain and these gaps in opportunities for children of different class and ethnic backgrounds and genders are likely to help further perpetuate inequalities in adulthood (Cruces et al. 2014).<sup>12</sup> It could also be that wealthy individuals are able to keep their children in school longer and that this correlation at the individual-level reflects differences in initial levels of wealth.

Other groups have systematically lower levels of wealth. Households in rural areas report having fewer household items than urban ones. Individuals with darker-toned skin tend to own fewer household goods than light-toned skinned individuals, even when holding the level of education and place of residence constant. Asset ownership varies with age in a non-linear way:<sup>13</sup> the youngest age category reports owning many of the household goods, perhaps due to a lack of family responsibilities, being

<sup>10</sup> The analyses in this figure do not include the United States, Canada, or Uruguay because of missing values on some variables.

<sup>11</sup> In analyses not reported here we find that the average level of education among AmericasBarometer respondents has increased significantly since 2006, with the average respondent in 2014 reporting nearly half a year more schooling than did the average respondent in 2006, which reflects the expansion of education in recent decades (Cruces et al 2014) and the generational replacement as the younger, more educated generations come of age while the less educated generations drop out of the sample.

<sup>12</sup> In an analysis not reported here, we find that the largest correlates of respondents' educational attainment are their mother's education (which has by far the largest marginal effect-educated parents tend to have educated children), living in urban areas (rural areas tend to have lower average levels of education), gender (married women have lower average levels of education than do single women and single women have slightly lower levels of education than do single men although they are not significantly different than are married men), and age (younger respondents tend to be more educated).

<sup>13</sup> The reference category in the model is the 36-45 years-old category.

early adopters of technology, or because many of them still live at home or receive support from their parents. Household wealth then drops as respondents enter their late 20s and early 30s but increases with age until dropping among the oldest groups.

Wealth also differs across genders, although this gap is affected by marital status. We break respondents up into those who live in a household as part of a couple (marriage, common-law marriage, or civil union) and those who do not (single, separated, divorced, or widowed). Individuals living as a couple tend to have more resources than do those who are not. In further analysis we found that parents of children who do not live with another person tend to have fewer resources than do single individuals without children (and this is equally true for men and women) while men and women who are part of a couple and have kids tend to have more possessions than couples who do not have children. Yet among both single individuals and couples, men are more likely to report higher ownership of goods than women. The survey does not allow us to isolate why married women are less likely to report the same levels of *household* wealth as married men, given that we would expect the two groups on average to report the same levels of wealth. One explanation is suggested by a study done in Malawi on reporting of household wealth, which posits that women may be less likely to report ownership of an item if it is predominantly used by her husband (Miller, Msiyaphazi Zulu, and Cotts Watkins 2001).

In summary, these results remind us that across the Americas, as a whole, certain groups – the uneducated, darker skinned individuals, single individuals (especially single parents), women, and individuals living in rural areas still experience real disadvantages in accumulating household wealth despite recent improvements in overall wealth levels.

#### IV. Despite Improvements, Many Households Struggle to Make Ends Meet

Though the data in Figure 4.2 display a clear upward trend in the ownership of household goods, households do not necessarily feel financially secure. Many households obtained these goods by going into debt, which leaves them struggling to make payments.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, rising aspirations may leave individuals unsatisfied even as they are better off (Easterlin 2001; Graham 2005). Thus, we move beyond objective measures of wealth to subjective measures of personal financial situations. Specifically, the AmericasBarometer asks respondents how well their income allows them to cover their financial needs.

**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]** DK (98) **[Don't read]** DA

The citizens of the Americas are split almost equally between those who think that they can make ends meet and those who report that they are struggling to do so (Figure 4.4). These differences break down along objective wealth lines. In Figure 4.5, we divide the sample by quintiles of household wealth (measured within each country), using the series of questions about household goods ownership following the approach by Córdova (2009). Over 29% of respondents in the lowest wealth category

<sup>14</sup> See dos Santos (2013) or Soederberg (2014) for a review of evidence about the expansion of credit markets. Also <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/economia/niveles-preocupantes-llega-deuda-de-hogares-colombianos-articulo-304173> and [http://www.cps.fgv.br/cps/bd/DD/DD\\_Neri\\_Fgv\\_TextoFim3\\_PRINC.pdf](http://www.cps.fgv.br/cps/bd/DD/DD_Neri_Fgv_TextoFim3_PRINC.pdf)



report they not only feel stretched but have a hard time making ends meet. This contrasts with less than 6% of those in the households with the most material benefits feeling they are in the same situation. Yet even in the highest wealth quintile, 3 out of every 10 individuals report that their income is not enough to comfortably meet their needs, and 52% of households in the median wealth quintile report that their income is not enough to meet their needs. Thus this question does not merely reflect income but also likely tracks the number of financial commitments households have taken on and the financial aspirations of different groups. At all levels of wealth across the Americas, on average, large numbers of individuals feel like they are financially stretched or worse.

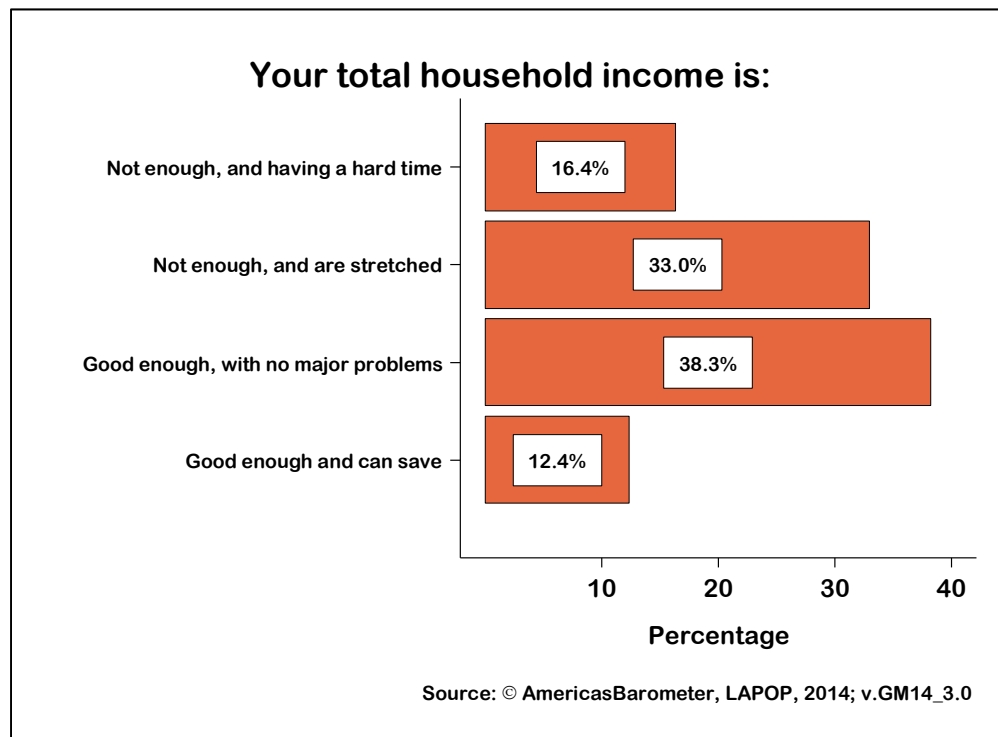


Figure 4.4. Is The Household’s Income Sufficient to Meet Its Needs?, 2014

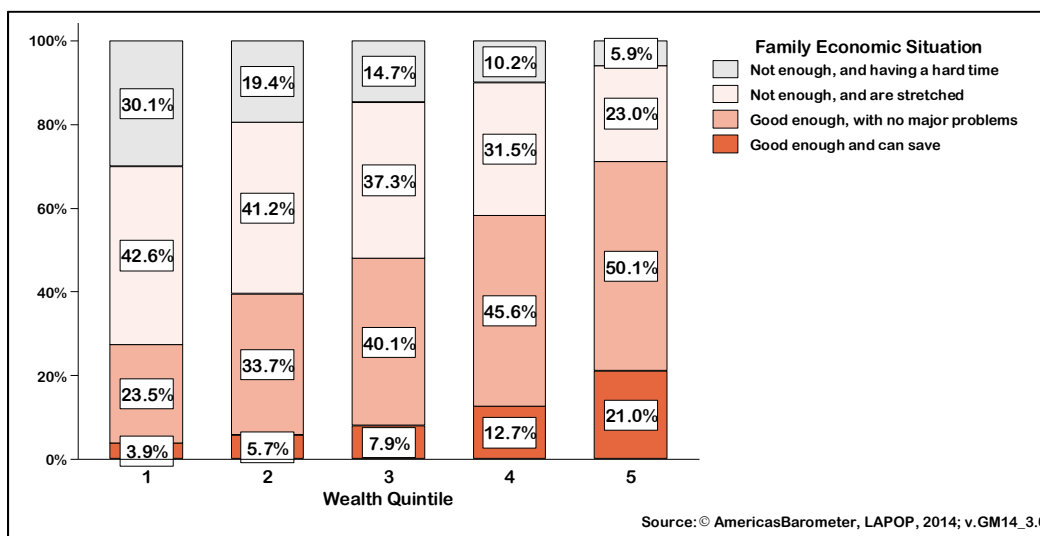


Figure 4.5. Perceptions of Household Finances across Household Wealth Quintiles, 2014

If we look over time, the regional average across the hemisphere has hardly changed since 2006; outside of an increase in perceived security in 2012, the differences between years are fairly small (Figure 4.6). More importantly, the relative stability of respondents' perceptions of their household situations stands in contrast to the growth seen in the sheer number of material objects households have accumulated. While individuals in the Americas today own more things than ever before, they are feeling no more financially secure.

Levels of financial contentment at the household level vary across countries. Following LAPOP standard practices, answers to question Q10D are scored on a 0-100 scale, with high values representing greater ability to cover household expenses. In 2014 Panama, Trinidad & Tobago, Canada, Costa Rica, Paraguay, and Uruguay have the highest level of individuals who feel like their income meets their needs, while Honduras and Haiti have the most individuals who report financial struggles (Figure 4.7). Since the question was asked in prior years, we can present a comparison between the 2014 results and those obtained in the 2012 AmericasBarometer survey. In this analysis, we find that while Haiti had the lowest levels of subjective economic security in 2012, subjective household security in Honduras has fallen by more than 13 points on the 0-100 scale over the last 2 years as many more respondents report having difficulty making ends meet. Venezuela also saw the number of households who feel financially secure fall; the financial perceptions index is 11 points lower in 2014 than in 2012. Canada and Colombia, in contrast, were the only two countries that saw even a 2-point increase in subjective household finances over the past two years.

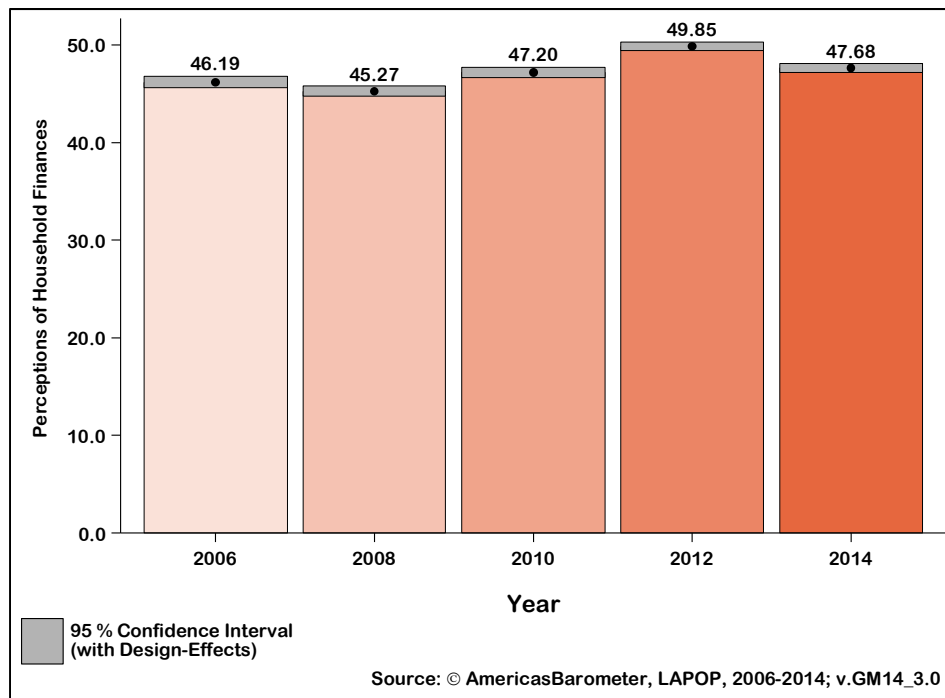


Figure 4.6. Perceptions of Household Finances over Time

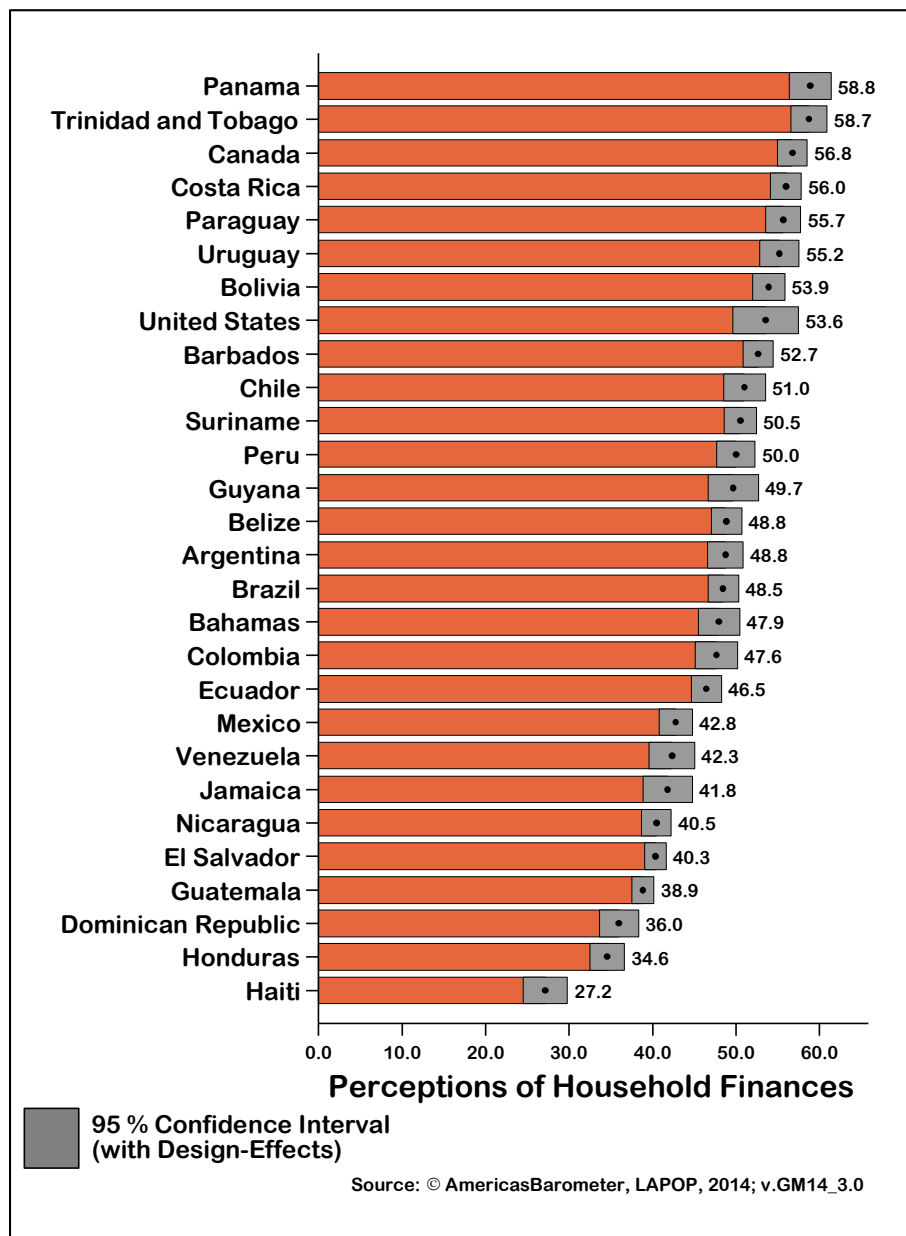


Figure 4.7. Perceptions of Household Finances by Country, 2014

## V. How Do People Perceive the National Economy?

The citizens of the Americas offer mixed assessments of the national economy. In the AmericasBarometer survey respondents were asked how they perceived the recent performance of the national economy.

**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



The most frequent response in 2014 was the economy was getting worse while relatively few respondents said the economy was getting better (Figure 4.8). This represents a sizable drop in economic assessments from the 2012 survey and, indeed, economic perceptions have not been this negative in the Americas since 2008 (Figure 4.9).

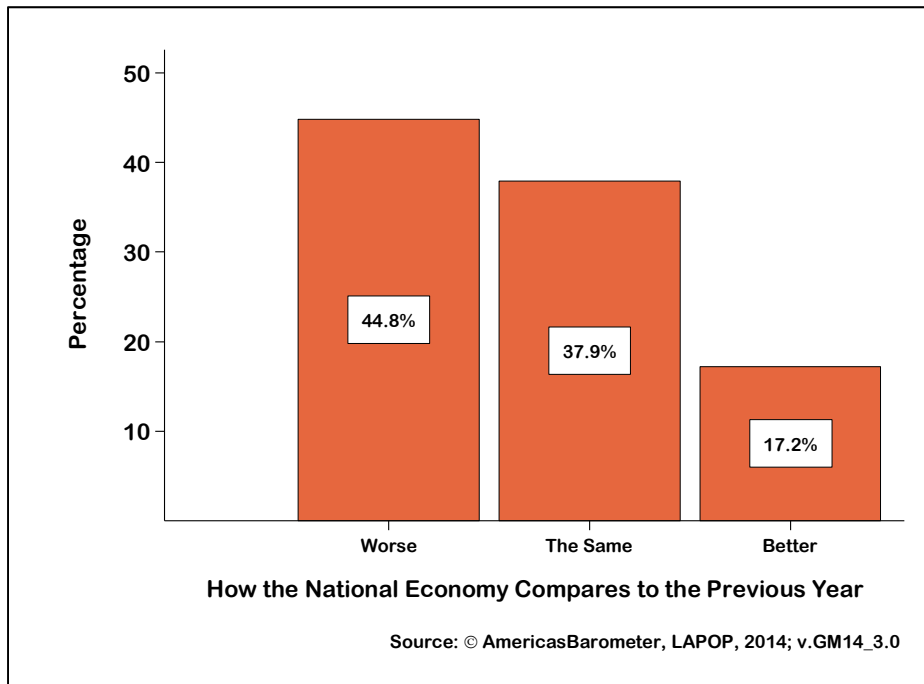


Figure 4.8. Perceptions of the National Economy, 2014

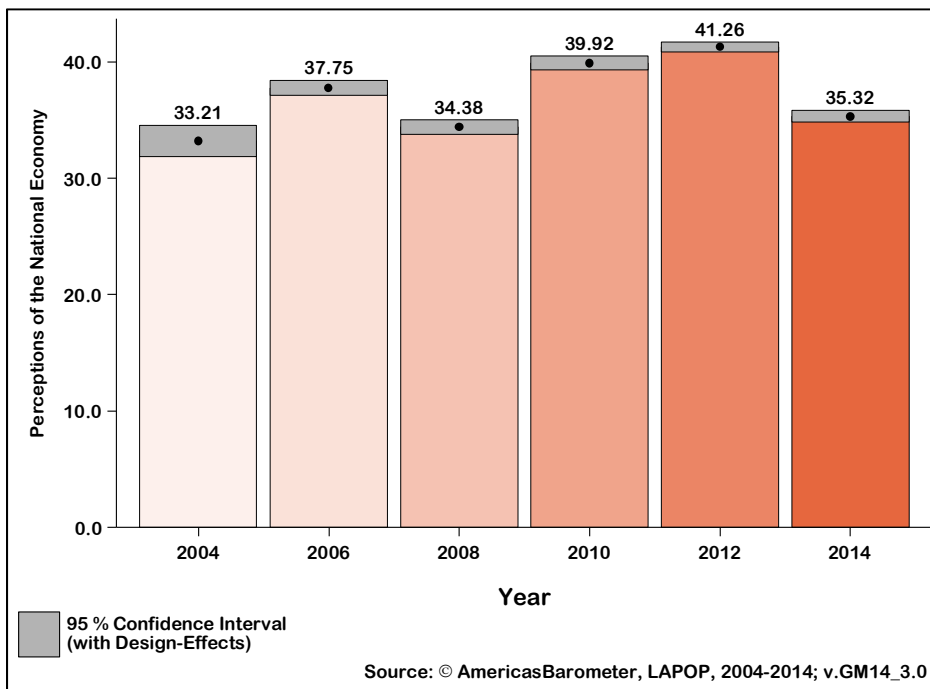
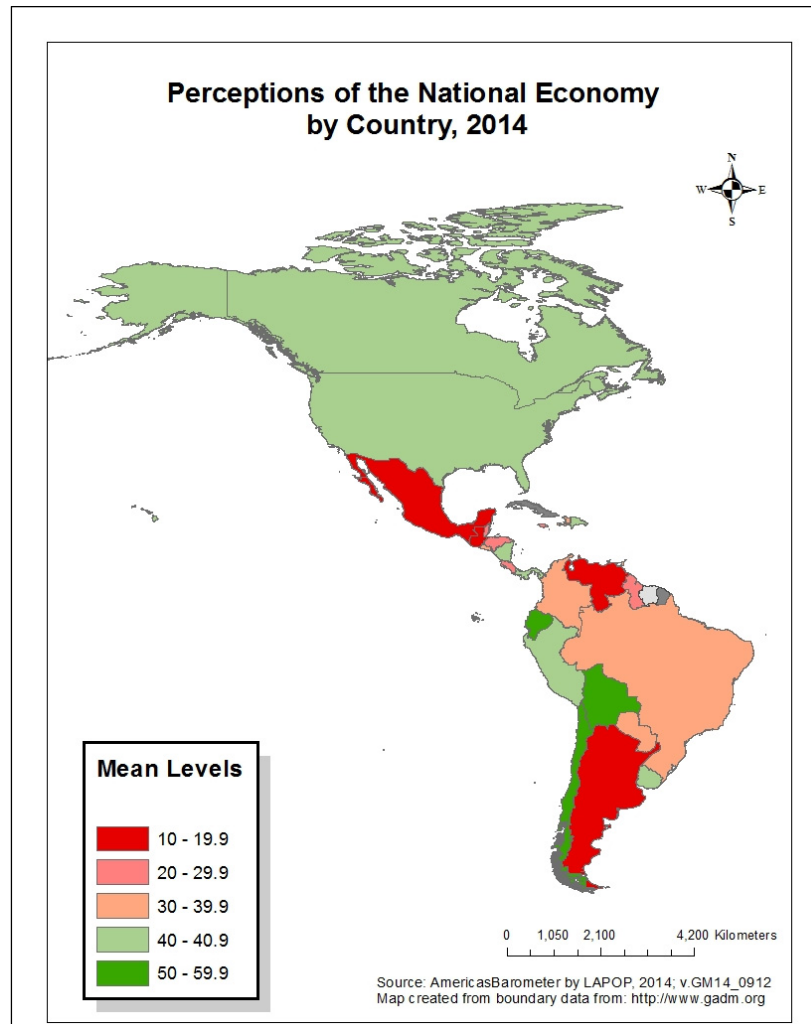


Figure 4.9. Perceptions of the National Economy over Time



Citizen evaluations of the national economy vary substantially across countries (Map 4.1). To facilitate the interpretation of this question, we have recoded it on a 0-100 scale where high values represent a belief that the economy has gotten better. Respondents in Ecuador, Bolivia, and Chile have the most positive views of their economy. Comparing these results for 2014 to those obtained from the 2012 AmericasBarometer, we can report that each of these countries saw a fairly large increase in economic optimism; the economic assessment measure in Ecuador is eight points higher in 2014 than it was in 2012, while Bolivia and Chile each saw their economic perceptions score rise by more than 12 points. The other country where citizens view the economy much more positively in 2014 than two years ago is the Dominican Republic. In fact, economic assessments there changed from some of the most negative in 2012 to among the most positive in 2014. If we shift our attention to countries where respondents are the least positive in 2014, Venezuelans lead the region followed by Guatemalans, Argentines, and Mexicans. Venezuela also saw the largest drop in economic assessments (30 points) since the previous AmericasBarometer. For its part, Argentina saw a substantial drop of 26 points compared to two years ago. In total, 11 of the 25 countries in Map 4.1 have economic perception indexes that shrank by 10 points or more compared to 2012. Economic assessments are more negative than they were two years ago in 17 of the 25 countries.



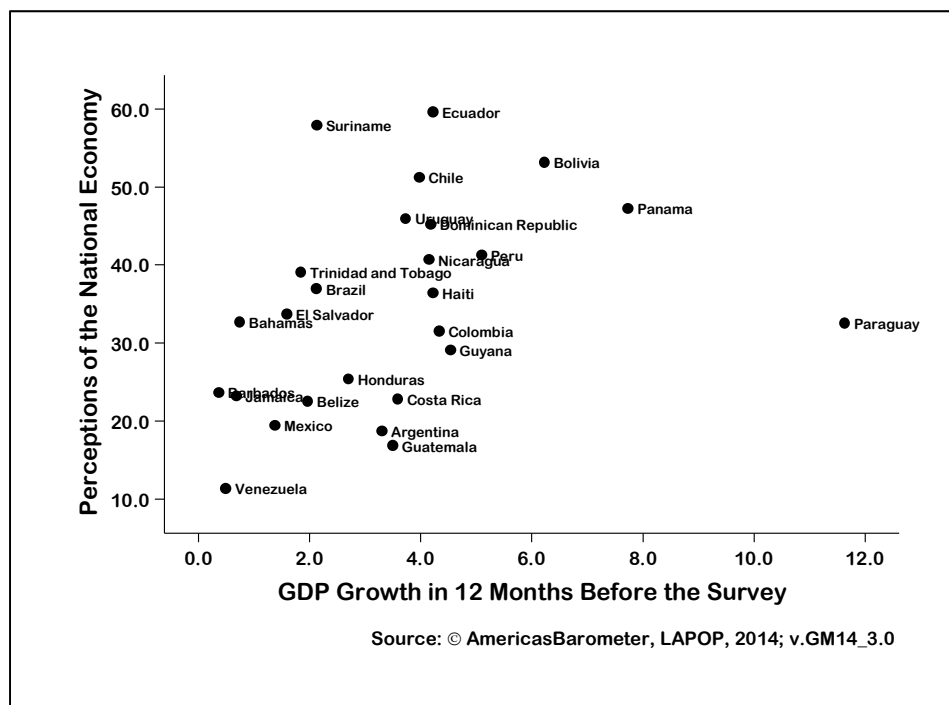
**Map 4.1. Perceptions of the National Economy by Country, 2014<sup>15</sup>**

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, widespread levels of economic pessimism are consistent with the weakening of many economies in the Americas. The IMF’s April 2014 World Economic Outlook database projects that the average GDP growth for the Latin American and Caribbean countries that are part of the 2014 AmericasBarometer was 3.9% in 2013 and will be 3.3% in 2014, compared to the 4.3% growth rate the hemisphere averaged between 2010-2012. The IMF’s projected inflation rate for the hemisphere in 2014 is 6.7%, an increase over the average inflation rates of 5.7 and 5.8 percent observed in 2012 and 2010 respectively. These estimates will be revised as more data become available, but they mirror the weakness that many AmericasBarometer respondents report.

Differences in economic opinions across countries often reflect differences in these macroeconomic indicators, although imperfectly. The Venezuelan economy, for example, is particularly weak, with the IMF forecasting a slight contraction in GDP for 2014 and inflation rates nearing 50% in 2014 (even after 1% growth in GDP and 40% inflation in 2013). Thus it is not surprising that Venezuelans hold the most negative views about the economy in the hemisphere in 2014. More

<sup>15</sup> The estimated economic perceptions score for each country in Map 4.1 is available in Appendix 4.2. For 2012 scores, see *The Political Culture of Democracy in the Americas 2012: Towards Equality of Opportunity* (Seligson, Smith and Zechmeister 2012).

generally, there is a positive association between the estimated GDP growth rate for the 12 months before the survey was conducted in each country and respondent's views of how their economy was doing compared to the previous year; a particularly high growth in Paraguay in 2013 as it recovered from a contracting economy in 2012 weakens the relationship somewhat (Figure 4.10).<sup>16</sup>



**Figure 4.10. GDP Growth and National Perceptions of the Economy, 2014**

Yet differences across countries cannot be fully explained by macroeconomic trends. Even if the cautious assessments of the economy in Paraguay likely reflect recent economic volatility, there are still some countries, like Guatemala, where respondents are particularly pessimistic given the state of the economy and others, such as Ecuador, where assessments of the economy seem more positive than one might expect given recent economic trends and forecasts. Moreover, citizens within these countries do not necessarily agree on how well the economy is doing, a finding consistent with work showing citizen evaluations of the economy not only reflect economic factors but also their personal economic experiences (Duch et al. 2000) and other non-economic outcomes (De Boef and Kellstedt 2004; Duch and Kellstedt 2011).

In Figure 4.11 we model citizens' evaluations of the economy in 2014 as a function of the estimated GDP growth rate in the country, demographic factors, and non-economic factors like whether the respondent reports crimes in his or her neighborhood<sup>17</sup> and whether the respondent had to pay a bribe

<sup>16</sup> Following Singer (2013) we estimate the growth rate in the 12 months before each survey by taking the weighted average of the previous year's growth rate and the current one, weighting them according to the number of months in 2014 that had passed when the bulk of respondents in each country completed the survey.

<sup>17</sup> Specifically we use answers to the VICBAR series outlined in Chapter 1; this series asks if burglaries, drug dealing, extortion and blackmail had occurred in the respondent's neighborhood or not.

in the last 12 months.<sup>18</sup> Because the GDP growth variable is measured at the country level, this model is estimated using a hierarchical linear model.<sup>19</sup>

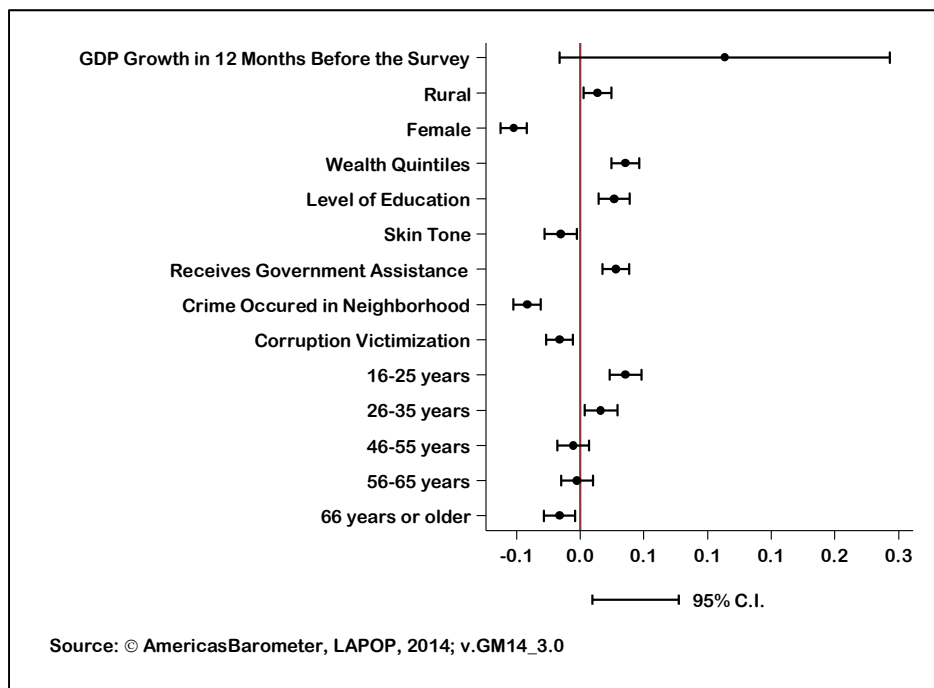
These data show a positive association between the estimated GDP growth and citizen evaluations of the economy; though the relationship is not statistically significant.<sup>20</sup> The data confirm the notion that citizen assessments significantly differ along demographic lines. Wealthy and educate individuals tend to have more positive views of the national economy, perhaps because they are better positioned to capture the benefits of any eventual economic growth. Individuals who receive financial assistance from the government also hold positive assessments of the national economy. In contrast, women and individuals with darker skin tend to have more negative perceptions of how the national economy is performing. Previous waves of the AmericasBarometer showed women and darker skinned individuals experienced high levels of economic discrimination (Seligson et al. 2012) and the analysis presented previously in this chapter in Figure 4.3 remind us that these groups continue to face disadvantages in accumulating wealth. These structural disadvantages may be reflected in their negative views of the economy even after controlling for current levels of wealth. Yet other differences do not have as clear of an economic explanation. Young respondents, for example, tend to be more positive than older cohorts. Finally, despite higher levels of poverty in rural areas, rural residents tend to report that the national economy is doing better.

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<sup>18</sup> See the discussion of this measure in Chapter 5; the measure is based on a series of questions to which respondents report being asked to provide a bribe (or not) to a government official, the police, a municipal government employee, in a court, to the military, in work, in a school, or in accessing public health care.

<sup>19</sup> As in prior regression plots reported in this study, coefficients measuring each variable's effect are indicated by dots, and confidence intervals by whiskers (the horizontal lines extending to the right and left of each dot). If a confidence interval does not intersect the vertical 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.

<sup>20</sup> In a previous version of this report, the same multilevel regression analysis that excluded Bahamas, Barbados, and Suriname did confirm a positive and statistically significant association between the estimated GDP growth and citizen evaluations of the economy.



**Figure 4.11. Correlates of Citizen Perceptions of the National Economy,<sup>21</sup> 2014**

The high levels of crime and corruption in the Americas also seem to be spilling over into respondent views of the national economy. Individuals who report that there have been crimes in their neighborhood are less likely to have a positive view of the economy. Bribery victims also tend to see the economy negatively. As poor governance affects citizens, it colors how they view the overall economic state of their country.

## VI. Conclusion

Recent macroeconomic reports coming out of Latin America and the Caribbean have emphasized both the major improvements that have occurred in many countries and a risk of seeing these gains erased as economies slacken. The same mixed message emerges out of the 2014 AmericasBarometer. Household wealth continues to improve but many households struggle to meet basic needs. Large inequalities in access to these goods exist within societies, with historically excluded groups still lagging behind in their objective wealth. Finally, as the macroeconomic climate has worsened, and as many states struggle to fully combat crime and corruption, citizens have become pessimistic about their country's economic progress.

These data remind us of the challenges facing the hemisphere in furthering economic development. Room for improvement exists with regards to household access to sanitation and water. Education levels can continue to improve while darker skinned individuals, women, and rural residents need to be further incorporated into the economy. If the gains the Americas have achieved over the past decade are going to continue, new economic opportunities for traditionally underrepresented groups are

<sup>21</sup> The analyses in this figure do not include the United States or Canada because of missing values on some variables. The estimated coefficients are available in Appendix 4.3 at the end of the chapter.

necessary. Additionally, improvements in the rule of law and clean government may both prevent money from exiting the market and also increase consumer confidence, further stimulating economic development.

These economic fluctuations may very well have implications beyond the economy. In particular, a classic viewpoint suggests that wealth is often positively correlated with the deepening of democratic values. If so, then the overall trends in economic development in the hemisphere should have a stabilizing force. Yet the high levels of economic insecurity that remain potentially place a strain on democracies as impoverished individuals and those who cannot make ends meet look for political actors who might be able to alleviate their economic pain. Moreover, a weak economy may also bring with it doubts about the efficacy of political institutions, although a normative commitment to democratic values may insulate democratic institutions from instability when the economy deteriorates. We examine these relationships in Chapter 7. But, before turning to that analysis, in the next chapter we look at another area of policy concern in the Americas – fighting corruption.

## Appendix

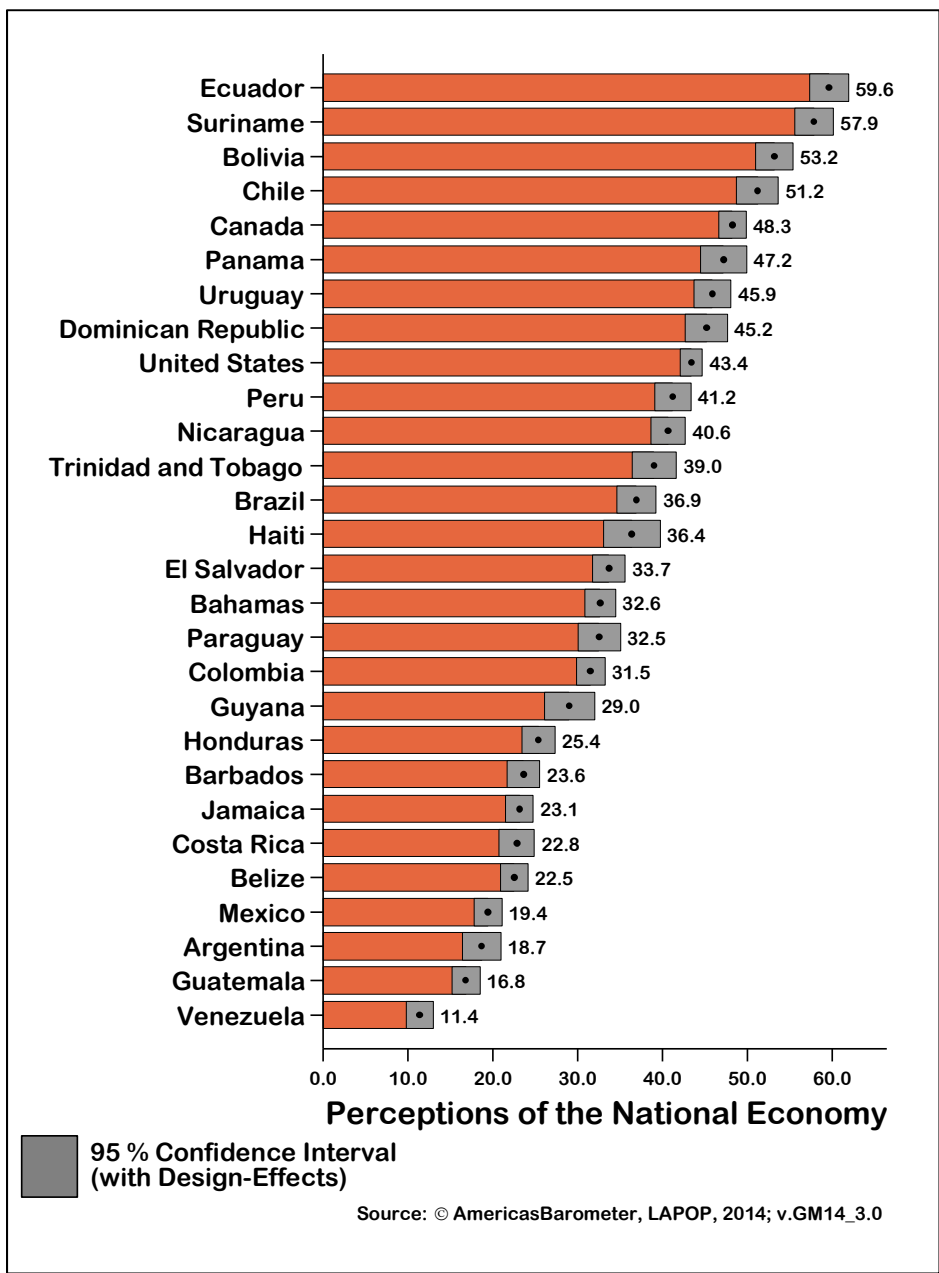
**Appendix 4.1: Coefficients for Figure 4.3-the Correlates of Household Wealth, 2014**

	Standardized Coefficient	(t)
66 years or older	-0.008	(-1.77)
56-65 years	0.012*	(2.70)
46-55 years	0.006	(1.34)
26-35 years	-0.015*	(-3.09)
16-25 years	0.004	(0.68)
Skin Tone	-0.141*	(-22.71)
Level of Education	0.320*	(63.50)
Woman Living Alone	-0.042*	(-8.45)
Woman in a Couple	-0.005	(-0.94)
Man in a Couple	0.044*	(8.14)
Rural	-0.158*	(-23.48)
Guatemala	-0.060*	(-6.44)
El Salvador	-0.081*	(-9.45)
Honduras	-0.035*	(-3.21)
Nicaragua	-0.137*	(-15.51)
Costa Rica	0.114*	(13.04)
Panama	0.032*	(3.25)
Colombia	-0.013	(-1.31)
Ecuador	-0.038*	(-3.13)
Bolivia	-0.125*	(-8.45)
Peru	-0.074*	(-8.88)
Paraguay	0.020*	(2.64)
Chile	0.074*	(8.96)
Uruguay	0.088*	(11.08)
Brazil	0.090*	(10.61)
Venezuela	0.051*	(5.43)
Argentina	0.056*	(8.14)
Dominican Republic	-0.009	(-0.86)
Haiti	-0.156*	(-11.81)
Jamaica	0.023*	(2.43)
Guyana	0.014	(1.24)
Trinidad and Tobago	0.139*	(18.36)
Belize	0.008	(1.08)
Suriname	0.109*	(12.94)
Bahamas	0.111*	(21.10)
Barbados	0.113*	(20.66)
Constant	-0.102*	(-11.69)
Constant	-0.220*	
F	495.62	
No. of cases	45542	
R-Squared	0.42	
Regression-Standardized Coefficients with t-Statistics Based on Standard Errors Adjusted for the Survey Design. * p<0.05		

Uruguay, the United States, and Canada are excluded because they are missing values on at least one variable.



### Appendix 4.2: Estimated Perceptions of the National Economy by Country, 2014 Empirical Basis for Map 4.1



**Appendix 4.3: Coefficients for Figure 4.12-Correlates of Citizen Perceptions of the National Economy**

	Standardized Coefficient	(Z Statistic)
GDP Growth Rate (Estimated)	0.113	(-2.57)
Rural	0.013*	(2.39)
Woman	-0.052*	(-9.97)
Wealth Quintile	0.035*	(6.24)
Level of Education	0.026*	(4.23)
Skin Tone	-0.015*	(-2.38)
Received Assistance From the Government	0.027*	(5.21)
Crimes Occurred in Neighborhood	-0.041*	(-7.55)
Asked to Pay a Bribe	-0.016*	(-3.02)
16-25 Years	0.035*	(5.53)
26-35 Years	0.016*	(2.47)
46-55 Years	-0.005	(-0.87)
56-65 Years	-0.002	(-0.39)
66 Years or Older	-0.016*	(-2.57)
Constant	-0.059	(-0.87)
var(Country-Level)	0.114	
var(Individual-Level)	0.879	
Number of groups	25	
Wald $\chi^2(14)$	382.39*	
Hierarchical Linear Model with z-Statistics in Parentheses. * p<0.05		

The United States, and Canada are excluded because they are missing values on at least one variable.





## Chapter 5. Corruption in the Americas

*Matthew M. Singer, Ryan E. Carlin, and Gregory J. Love*

### I. Introduction

While corruption trails crime and the economy as public priorities in the Americas (see Figure 1.4), it remains a major problem in the hemisphere. For example, a recent analysis looking at various indicators of government success in fighting corruption compiled by the World Bank<sup>1</sup> finds, on average, Latin America's governments are less successful at fighting corruption than their counterparts in Western Europe and North America and trail Eastern Europe in promoting clean government (Mungiu-Pippidi, Martinez, and Vaz Mondo 2013). Latin America has comparable levels of corruption with Asia and has less corruption, again on average, than Sub-Saharan Africa and the members of the former Soviet Union. Yet corruption levels vary substantially across the hemisphere, with some countries ranking among the cleanest in the world while in neighboring countries bribery is a part of many citizens' everyday lives.

The failure to prevent officials from misusing their power for personal gain can have deleterious economic and social consequences. Economists have noted corruption's adverse impact on growth (Ugur 2014) and wealth distribution (Gupta, Davoodi, and Alonso-Terme 2002).<sup>2</sup> Because corruption diverts funds from public programs' intended beneficiaries, it lowers the efficiency and quality of public services (Shleifer and Vishny 1993; Ehrlich and Lui 1999). The result may be higher death rates (Silverson and Johnson 2014). Of course corruption undermines the egalitarian administration of justice (Rose-Ackerman 1999; Pharr 2000; Méon and Sekkat 2005; Morris 2008; Fried, Lagunes, and Venkataramani 2010). Some have further suggested that corruption erodes social capital by making its victims less trusting of their fellow citizens (Rothstein and Uslaner 2005; Rothstein and Eek 2009).

Corruption also generates political costs. It has been shown to reduce citizen engagement in politics (McCann and Dominguez 1998; Chong et al. 2011; Stockemer, LaMontagne, and Scruggs 2013) and hamper support for democratic institutions and democracy more generally (Seligson 2002, 2006; Morris 2008; Booth and Seligson 2009; Salinas and Booth 2011). Indeed, some scholars argue that political governance outcomes like corruption have a larger impact on democratic stability than economic outcomes (Evans and Whitefield 1995; Bratton and Mattes 2001).

Thus in this chapter we document how respondents in the 2014 AmericasBarometer perceived and experienced corruption. We focus on two related but distinct dimensions: whether or not the respondent was asked to pay a bribe to obtain services and if they perceive public officials as corrupt. These complimentary dimensions capture two different facets of corruption: measures of corruption victimization tap the day-to-day corruption people observe and endure while questions about corruption in government can also track grand corruption, such as national scandals, with which respondents have no personal experience. Furthermore, citizens often have different tolerances when it comes to what kinds of activities undertaken by public officials they consider corrupt (Treisman 2007; Donchev and

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<sup>1</sup> The AmericasBarometer is one of the indicators used by the World Bank when generating its governance indicators. See [www.govindicators.org/](http://www.govindicators.org/)

<sup>2</sup> Although Latin America may have a different pattern; see Dobson and Ramlogan-Dobson (2010).

Ujhelyi 2014). That is, these two types of questions provide windows into two different forms of governance failures, both of which can have negative consequences for democracy in the Americas.

Despite the differences in these indicators, the data confirm corruption in all of its forms is common across Latin America. Levels of perceived political corruption are high and have not significantly improved since the 2012 AmericasBarometer, though several countries have seen significant swings. Corruption victimization is also widespread among the population, although certain groups are more likely to be exposed than others. We conclude by considering whether respondents in the Americas are so accustomed to corruption that they have become acclimated to paying bribes. The one piece of good news is that the vast majority of 2014 AmericasBarometer respondents report that paying a bribe is never justifiable, even if they themselves had to pay a bribe in the last year. While this suggests the region's residents have not abandoned a commitment to clean governance, the failure of so many regimes to fully prevent corruption may have negative consequences for levels of political support for democracy and its institutions.

## II. Main Findings

The findings in this chapter can be summarized as follows. First, with regards to key findings, we see the following patterns:

- In an average country in the hemisphere, roughly one in five AmericasBarometer respondents paid a bribe in the last year.
- Bribery victimization is reported at particularly high levels among citizens who have engaged with municipal governments, courts, and the police.
- Region-average bribe victimization levels are unchanged from 2012.
- Bribe victimization levels vary by country, with Haiti an extreme outlier.
- Most respondents think corruption is common among public officials, with average perceived corruption levels unchanged from previous years.
- While one in six AmericasBarometer survey respondents believe that paying a bribe can be justified in some circumstances, that number is much higher among those who paid a bribe during the year prior to the survey.
- Yet even among those who paid a bribe, the vast majority does not believe bribes are justifiable.

Second, we consider the factors that lead citizens to have different levels of exposure to corruption and perceptions of how common it is. The evidence from these analyses is consistent with the following conclusions:

- Bribery victimization is more common for men, in urban areas, in places where crime is common, and for the middle aged.
- Bribery victimization is generally more common for wealthy respondents but also among individuals who receive financial assistance from the government.

- Men, those who live in urban areas or in places where crime is common, wealthy respondents, and educated respondents are more likely to believe that the government is corrupt.

### III. Personal Experiences with Corruption

The AmericasBarometer surveys have employed over time a series of questions that measure corruption victimization, focusing specifically on bribery because this is the form that is most common for average citizens. Because definitions of corruption can vary across different country contexts, we avoid ambiguity by asking direct questions such as: “Within the past year, have you had to pay a bribe to a government official?” We ask similar questions about demands for bribes at the level of local government, from police agents, from military officials, in schools, at work, in the courts, in public health facilities, and other settings (see below for the exact questions). By asking about the variety of ways in which individuals interact with government, the data provide an extensive snapshot of the forms corruption can take.

	N/A Did not try or did not have contact	No	Yes	DK	DA
Now we want to talk about your personal experience with things that happen in everyday life...					
<b>EXC2.</b> Has a police officer asked you for a bribe in the last twelve months?		0	1	88	98
<b>EXC6.</b> In the last twelve months, did any government employee ask you for a bribe?		0	1	88	98
<b>[DO NOT ASK IN COSTA RICA AND HAITI; IN PANAMA, USE “FUERZA PÚBLICA”]</b>					
<b>EXC20.</b> In the last twelve months, did any <b>soldier or military officer</b> ask you for a bribe?		0	1	88	98
<b>EXC11.</b> In the last twelve months, did you have any official dealings in the municipality/local government? <b>If the answer is No → mark 99</b> <b>If it is Yes → ask the following:</b>	99				
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?		0	1	88	98
<b>EXC13.</b> Do you work? <b>If the answer is No → mark 99</b> <b>If it is Yes → ask the following:</b>	99				
In your work, have you been asked to pay a bribe in the last twelve months?		0	1	88	98
<b>EXC14.</b> In the last twelve months, have you had any dealings with the courts? <b>If the answer is No → mark 99</b> <b>If it is Yes → ask the following:</b>	99				
Did you have to pay a bribe to the courts in the last twelve months?		0	1	88	98
<b>EXC15.</b> Have you used any public health services in the last twelve months? <b>If the answer is No → mark 99</b> <b>If it is Yes → ask the following:</b>	99				
In order to be seen in a hospital or a clinic in the last twelve months, did you have to pay a bribe?		0	1	88	98

	N/A Did not try or did not have contact	No	Yes	DK	DA
<b>EXC16.</b> Have you had a child in school in the last twelve months? <b>If the answer is No → mark 99</b> <b>If it is Yes → ask the following:</b> Have you had to pay a bribe at school in the last twelve months?	99	0	1	88	98

In Figure 5.1 we break down responses to these questions in two ways; the left figure displays the average percentage of respondents that reported being asked for at least one bribe in each setting to measure the overall scope of different types of corruption victimization.<sup>3</sup> Yet these numbers are affected by two factors: how frequently do interactions in each setting result in citizens being asked for a bribe and the frequency with which citizens have interactions in each of the settings the survey asks about. Since we also asked respondents about their interactions with different offices and institutions, we can also directly gauge the percentage of respondents whose interactions gave them the opportunity to be targeted for corruption subsequently paid a bribe. The right side of the figure thus looks at the number of people who were asked to pay a bribe in each setting as a percentage of the people who had relevant interactions. The questions about bribe requests from the police, soldiers, and government employees do not ask if respondents had any dealings with these officials and so the estimated percentages for these three categories are constant across the two parts of the figure.

The data in Figure 5.1 demonstrate the wide range of arenas where bribery occurs. For example, in the full population the most common corruption experiences occur with the police, as 9.4% of respondents reported a police officer asking them for a bribe in the past year. If we restrict our attention to individuals who actually had experiences with various public entities, however, we see they experience bribe requests in some settings at a significantly higher rate. For example, only 1.4% of the overall sample reported being asked for a bribe in court in the 12 months before the survey. Yet being required to present oneself in court is relatively rare – only 1 in 11 respondents had any dealings with courts in that period – but among those individuals who actually were in court, 13.6% were asked to pay a bribe. We see a similar pattern with corruption in the process of dealing with municipal government employees: while very few individuals had to process a document with the municipal government in the 12 months before the survey and thus only 2.7% of respondents reported being requested to pay a bribe, among those individuals who did try to process paperwork with the municipal government, 14.4% were asked for a bribe. Over 9% of individuals with children in school were asked for a bribe related to education while nearly 8% of respondents who accessed public health services were targeted. Although most interactions with public officials do not involve corruption, it is a fairly common element of citizen-state interaction in the Americas.

<sup>3</sup> As with all other figures in this report that display the regional average, countries are weighted equally and thus the numbers in each figure represent the percentages who were asked for a bribe in each setting in an average country in the hemisphere. The data in Figure 5.1 include the United States and Canada

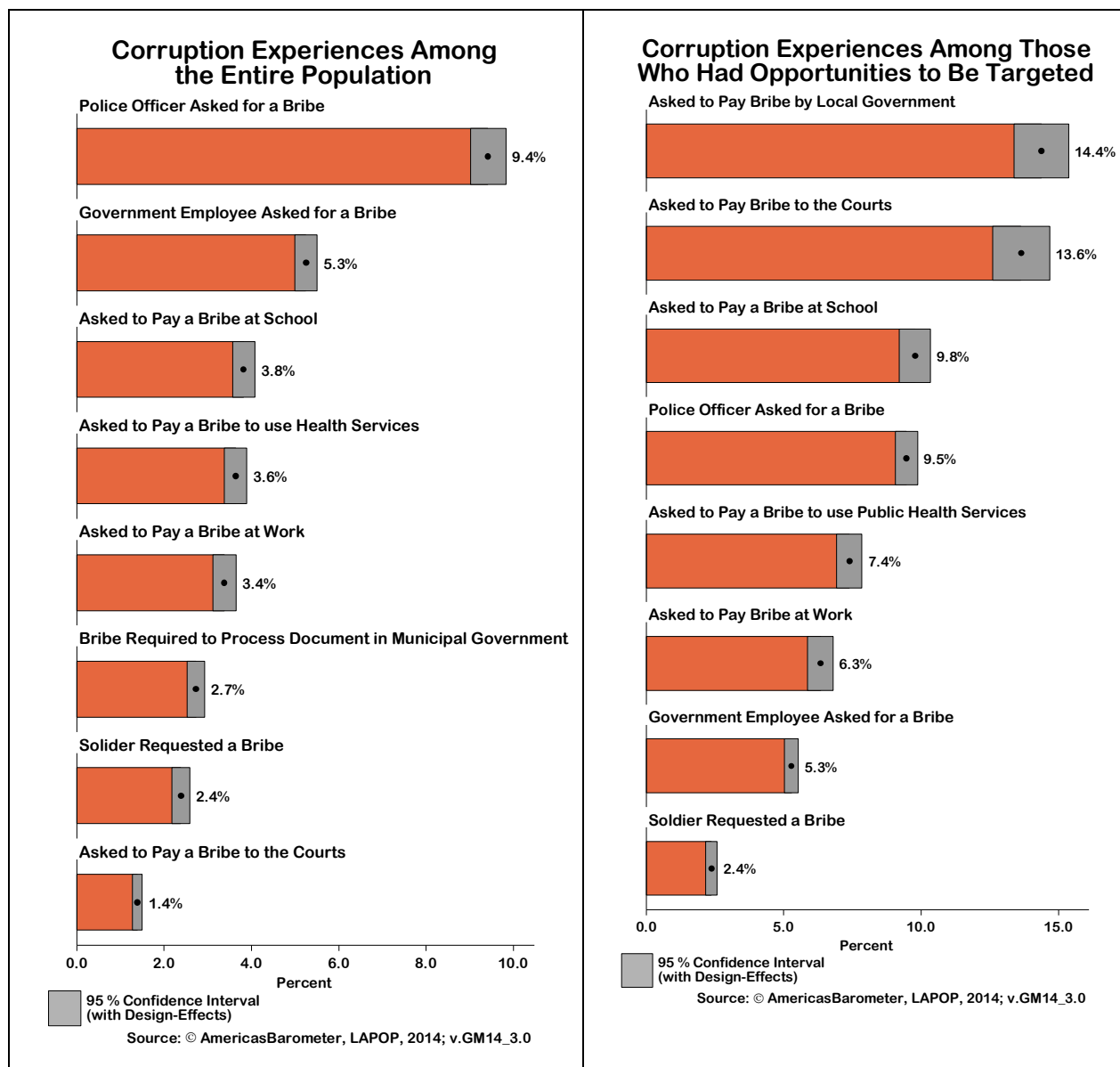


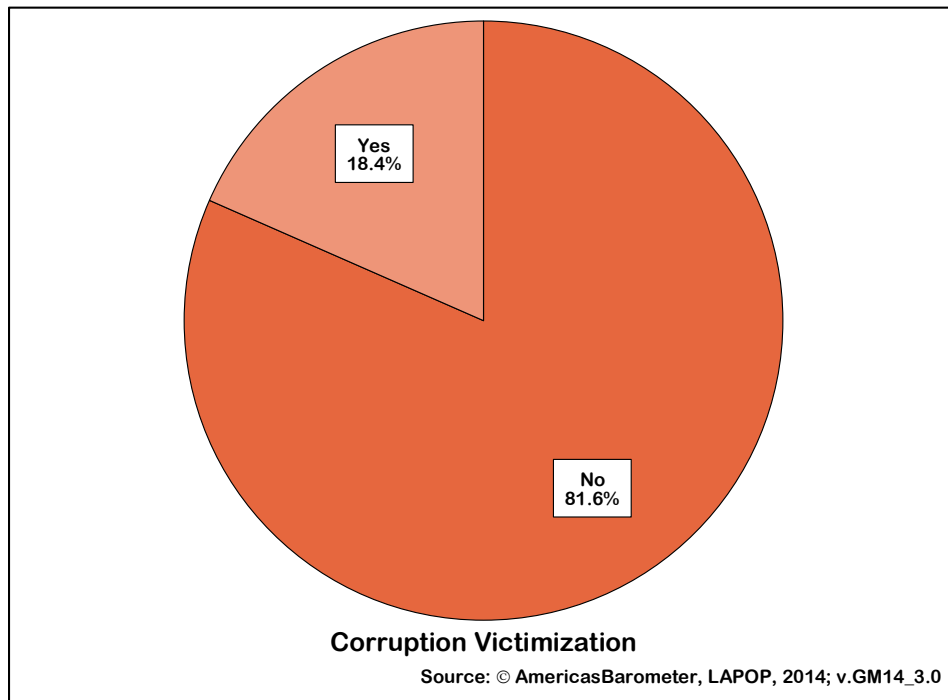
Figure 5.1. Corruption Experiences by Location, 2014

As we consider the wide range of activities in which corruption plays a part, citizens of the Americas have multiple opportunities to be targeted for corruption and many people are being asked to pay bribes each year. From this battery of questions we can then build a summary index of whether or not a person was asked for a bribe in at least one of these settings.<sup>4</sup> In an average country, just under 1 in 5 AmericasBarometer respondents reported paying at least one bribe in the last 12 months (Figure

<sup>4</sup> The measure, labeled CORVIC in the dataset documentation, looks at the percentage of the total sample that was asked for a bribe and does not adjust for whether or not individuals had any contact with government or other relevant officials in the past year. While most of the questions in the module refer specifically to interactions with government officials or institutions, it is possible that some of the corruption reported in this overall measure, CORVIC, relates to bribe solicitation by individuals who are not public officials.



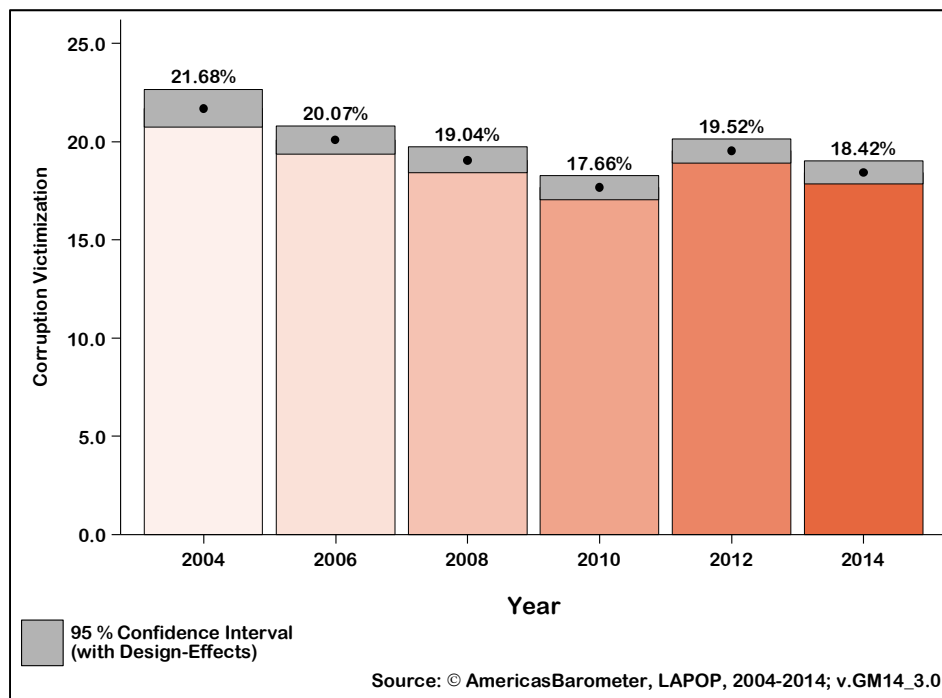
5.2).<sup>5</sup> This rate of corruption experiences is virtually unchanged from 2012 and is not significantly different from corruption levels in 2008 or 2006 (Figure 5.3).<sup>6</sup>



**Figure 5.2. Overall Percentage of Individuals who were Corruption Victims in the Last Year, 2014**

<sup>5</sup> The data in Figure 5.2 and Figure 5.3 include the United States and Canada. If we exclude those two countries, the regional average level of corruption victimization increases slightly to 19.36% for 2014. 2004 has slightly higher corruption than 2006 does because the 2004 sample had fewer countries and includes countries where corruption victimization is more common. Yet if we look only at countries who have been in the sample since 2004, the same pattern of corruption declining over time and then increasing in 2012 occur. Corruption victimization levels increase somewhat, however, in the countries that were not part of the 2004 sample while they have decreased in the Central American and Andean countries that were the emphasis of the first AmericasBarometer survey.

<sup>6</sup> While 2004 saw significantly higher levels of corruption experiences than any other year in Figure 5.3, this is caused by the 2004 AmericasBarometer survey being limited to Mexico, Central America, and the Central Andes where corruption is slightly more common than in the rest of the hemisphere.



**Figure 5.3. Corruption Victimization over Time**

Yet these hemisphere averages mask large differences across countries (Figure 5.4). Haiti has the highest level of corruption victimization by a considerable margin; over two-thirds of Haitian respondents were asked to pay a bribe in the 12 months before being surveyed. Many of these corruption experiences in Haiti occur as citizens try to access social services; Haiti is actually right below the regional mean for police bribery requests but is an outlier for bribery occurring in schools, public health services, and work settings.<sup>7</sup> Bolivia has the second highest level of bribery victimization (30%). Yet this represents a significant drop from 2012 when nearly 45% of Bolivians were corruption victims.<sup>8</sup> Ecuador also saw a double-digit drop in corruption victimization from the 2012 poll, from nearly 41% to 26%. In contrast, Paraguay, Venezuela, Belize, and Panama all saw corruption victimization rates increase by seven percentage points or more since 2012. This moved Paraguay and Venezuela from around the hemispheric average to among the highest rates and moved Belize and Panama from comparatively low levels of corruption to around the regional average. The United States, Suriname, Chile, Uruguay, Canada, and Barbados have the lowest levels of corruption.

<sup>7</sup> For example, 49% of Haitian respondents, and 74% of respondents with students in school, paid a bribe in a school in the 12 months before the survey. If we look at health care, 33% of all respondents and 76% of those who said they visited a health care facility paid a bribe as part of that process.

<sup>8</sup> Corruption data from 2012 are not reported here but are available from Singer et. al (2012) or the LAPOP website.

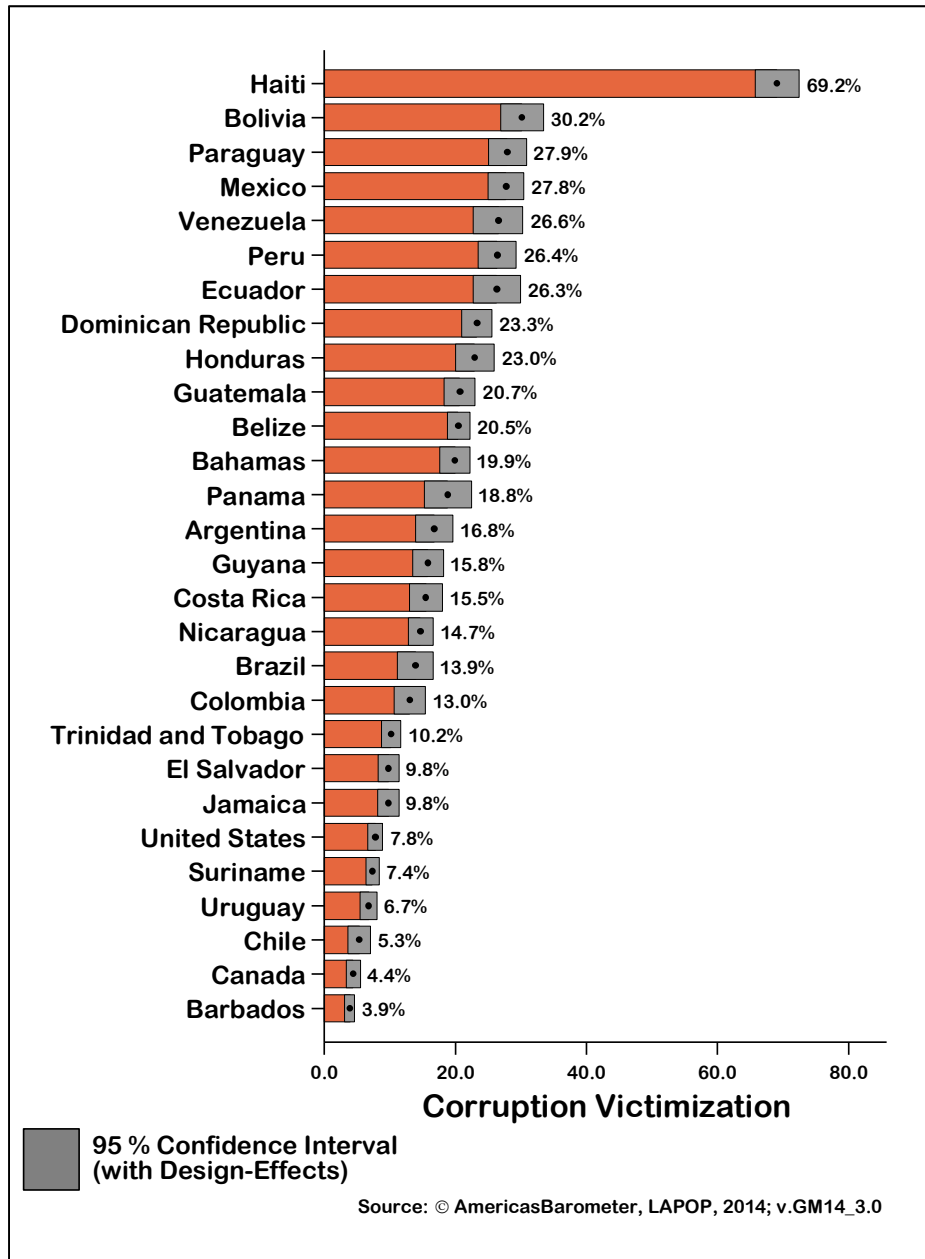


Figure 5.4. Corruption Victimization by Country, 2014

To understand which individuals are most likely to be targeted for bribes, we model the summary variable of whether or not the respondents were asked for at least one bribe (the measure presented in Figure 5.2) with logistic regression. Just as in previous chapters, we focus on the demographic characteristics of the respondent and whether he or she lives in an urban or rural area. We also look at two features that might be related to respondents being in a position where corrupt interactions are likely to occur. First is whether or not the respondent received financial assistance from the government (excluding pensions or social security) to test if that interaction with the state places respondents at risk of being solicited for a bribe.<sup>9</sup> Second, we model whether the respondent lives in a neighborhood where

<sup>9</sup> Measured from the question WF1: “Do you or someone in your household receive regular assistance in the form of money, food, or products from the government, not including pensions/social security? Yes or No”



a crime occurred to test if corruption victimization is more likely to occur in places where the rule of law is objectively weaker.<sup>10</sup> As we model these differences, we include country fixed effects to control for any unmeasured differences across countries, as such the estimated effects in the figure explain differences in likely corruption victimization within countries.<sup>11</sup>

The results of this model in Figure 5.5 show that groups differ significantly in their exposure to corruption.<sup>12</sup> In interpreting these differences, it is important to remember that while several surveys specifically ask about officials requesting bribes, the questions do not ask if the respondent played any role in initiating the bribe. The survey does not attempt to determine between these two scenarios because many people will lie if asked if they offered the bribe (Kray and Murrell 2013). Yet in considering why some groups experience corruption more often than others, we should not discount the possibility that group diversity reflects differences in the shares of individuals that are willing to offer a bribe as well as differences in which groups are targeted by officials. Differences across groups can also potentially reflect differences in the frequency with which groups interact with specific institutions or government officials.

For example, corruption experiences break down on gender lines. Men are more likely to report being asked for a bribe than women. Yet across the types of corruption measured by the survey, we find exceptions to this pattern: corruption victims in schools and healthcare are slightly more likely to be female than male.<sup>13</sup> This difference in corruption victimization patterns across settings does not occur because officials in education and health are particularly targeting women but rather because women were more likely to be users of these services. In fact, among users of these services, men and women are equally likely to be asked for bribes. Yet in the other forms of corruption we study men were more likely to pay bribes than women, even when we take into account differences in government and societal interactions across genders.

Within the Americas, solicitation of bribes is also more common among wealthy respondents. These individuals have the most to offer officials and thus are either frequently targeted for bribes, more frequently offer to pay bribes, or both. Educated individuals also are asked to pay more bribes. At the same time we see that individuals who receive welfare, who are overwhelmingly concentrated among poor individuals, are also significantly more likely to have been targeted for a bribe than non-welfare recipients. The implication may be that, in many parts of the Americas, the process of obtaining and maintaining welfare benefits involves corruption.

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<sup>10</sup> Specifically we use answers to the VICBAR series outlined in Chapter 1 that asked about burglaries, drug dealing, extortion and blackmail.

<sup>11</sup> The United States and Canada are excluded from this analysis because they are missing at least one of the questions used as controls.

<sup>12</sup> As in prior regression plots reported in this study, coefficients measuring each variable's effect are indicated by dots, and confidence intervals by whiskers (the horizontal lines extending to the right and left of each dot). If a confidence interval does not intersect the vertical 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. Coefficients are standardized. The full set of coefficients are available in Appendix 5.1 at the end of the chapter.

<sup>13</sup> We do not present the results of this analysis here but they are available from the authors upon request.

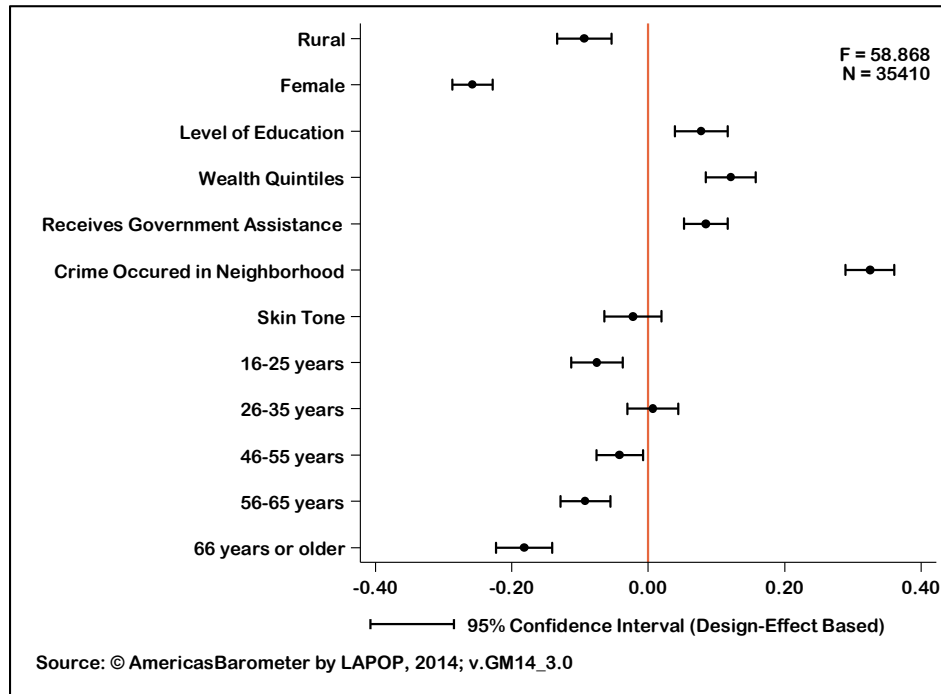


Figure 5.5. Predictors of Being Asked to Pay a Bribe, 2014

Furthermore, people who live in high crime areas appear to be more likely targets for bribes. Further data analysis demonstrates that high-crime areas are, not surprisingly, highly correlated with being asked to pay bribes to policemen. Perhaps more surprising is that other forms of corruption are also correlated with respondents who live in high-crime neighborhoods. While we cannot state with any certainty whether high crime causes corruption, is caused by corruption, or both factors have common underlying causes, the breakdown of public security in parts of the Americas goes hand in hand with a broader weakness in the quality of governance. Finally, corruption victimization is more common in urban areas and is concentrated among respondents in the middle-age categories. There is no evidence that those with darker skin tones are more likely to be asked to pay bribes.

In summary, as we look across the Latin American and Caribbean region as a whole, the 2014 AmericasBarometer reminds us that while bribery may vary somewhat across groups and across countries, it is routine in many parts of the hemisphere.

#### IV. How Do the Citizens of the Americas Perceive Corruption in Government?

Given the frequency with which respondents are asked to pay bribe, we might suspect many people in the hemisphere, even those who personally were not asked for a bribe, will believe that corruption is common. Moreover, the Americas are not immune to scandals involving high-level government officials (Carlin, Love, and Martinez-Gallardo 2014). Thus it is instructive to look beyond personal experiences to see how citizens of the Americas perceive corruption generally.

The AmericasBarometer survey asks respondents to consider the prevalence of corruption among public officials.<sup>14</sup> Specifically, respondents are asked:

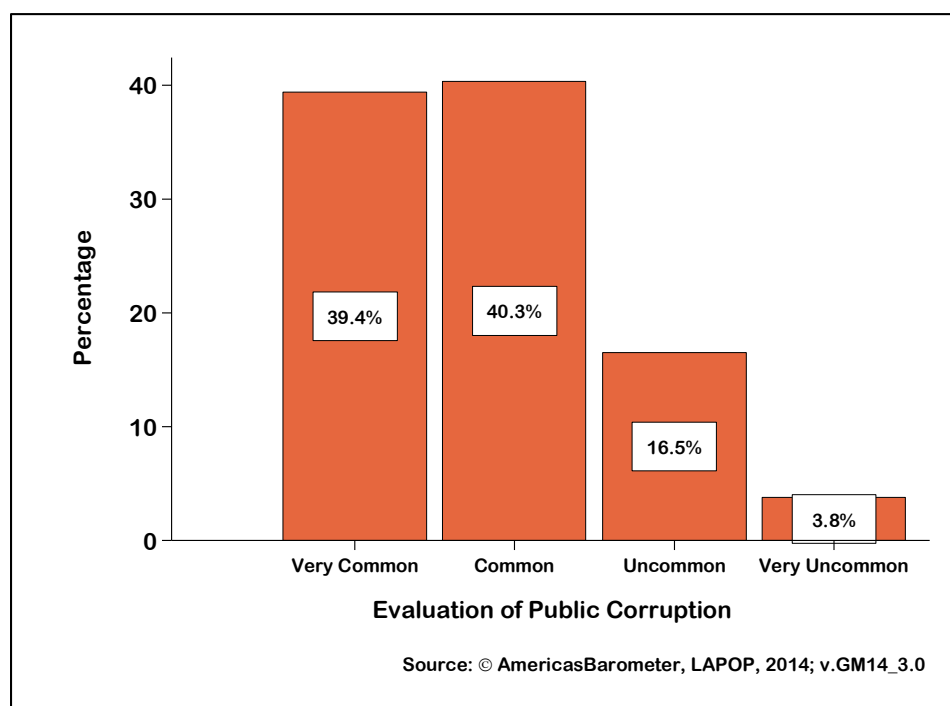
<sup>14</sup> This question was not asked in Costa Rica, Chile, Brazil, Bahamas, Barbados or Trinidad & Tobago in 2014.

**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) DK (98) DA

Following standard LAPOP procedures, responses to this question (EXC7) are re-coded on a 0 to 100 scale, where 0 represents the perception that corruption is “very uncommon” and 100 represents the perception that corruption is “very common.”

The average citizen of the Americas is convinced that corruption is common among public officials, and just under 80% of respondents said that corruption was either very common or common among public officials, with respondents being equally split between the two categories (Figure 5.6). The average public evaluation of corruption in 2014 increased slightly, but significantly in comparison to 2012 (Figure 5.7). Over the years, the AmericasBarometer survey has found persistent agreement that corruption is common among government officials; in every wave since 2006 the combined percentage of respondents who think corruption is somewhat or very common is between 79.9 and 80.9 percent. While there is variation in the number of people who consider corruption to be very common compared to merely being common, the data consistently show few residents of the Americas believe that their government is uncorrupt.



**Figure 5.6. Perceptions of Corruption, 2014**

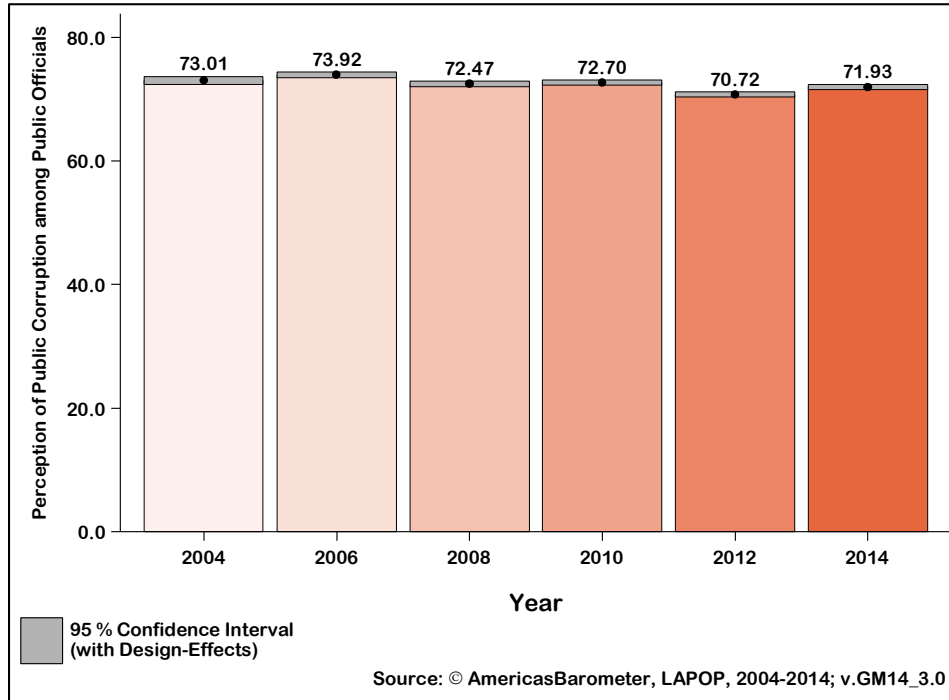


Figure 5.7. Perceptions of Corruption over Time

Just as with corruption experiences, there is substantial variation across countries in how governments are perceived (see Figure 5.8). Respondents in Canada, Haiti, and Uruguay were the least likely to describe their government as corrupt in 2014. Yet even in these countries over 68% of respondents said that corruption was either common or very common. A number of countries have very high levels of perceived corruption, led by Venezuela, Colombia, and Argentina.

It is worth highlighting that the countries where respondents report having frequently paid bribes (as tracked by Figure 5.4 above) are not necessarily the ones where governments are perceived as being corrupt in Figure 5.8. This difference is illustrated in Figure 5.9, which plots the average perceived levels of government corruption and the percentage of respondents who were asked at least once for a bribe in the 12 months before the survey. The largest difference is in Haiti; while Haiti has by far the highest rate of individual-level corruption victimization in the hemisphere, it has the second lowest level of perceived government corruption in the hemisphere. This may be because bribery in Haiti is frequently occurring in settings like the workplace, schools, or hospitals that many respondents do not necessarily connect to “the government” even if these tend to be public institutions. Yet Haiti is not the only exception and that difference is clear in the bottom figure of Figure 5.9 where we exclude Haiti (an outlier with regard to the level of corruption victimization) to make the differences within the rest of the sample clear. Perceived levels of government corruption in Bolivia, Ecuador, and Honduras are also substantially lower than one would expect given the frequency of citizens reporting paying bribes in those countries. Colombia, Argentina, Guyana, and Jamaica, in contrast, all have levels of reported corruption victimization that are below the hemisphere average but rank in the top seven countries where citizens perceive that corruption is common among government officials. As we noted above, the discrepancy between perceived levels of corruption and reported corruption rates is a common pattern in corruption studies because measures of corruption victimization tap the day-to-day corruption people observe and endure while questions about corruption in government often also track grand corruption



such as national scandals that respondents do not have personal experience with as well as different tolerances for what kinds of activities are considered corrupt.

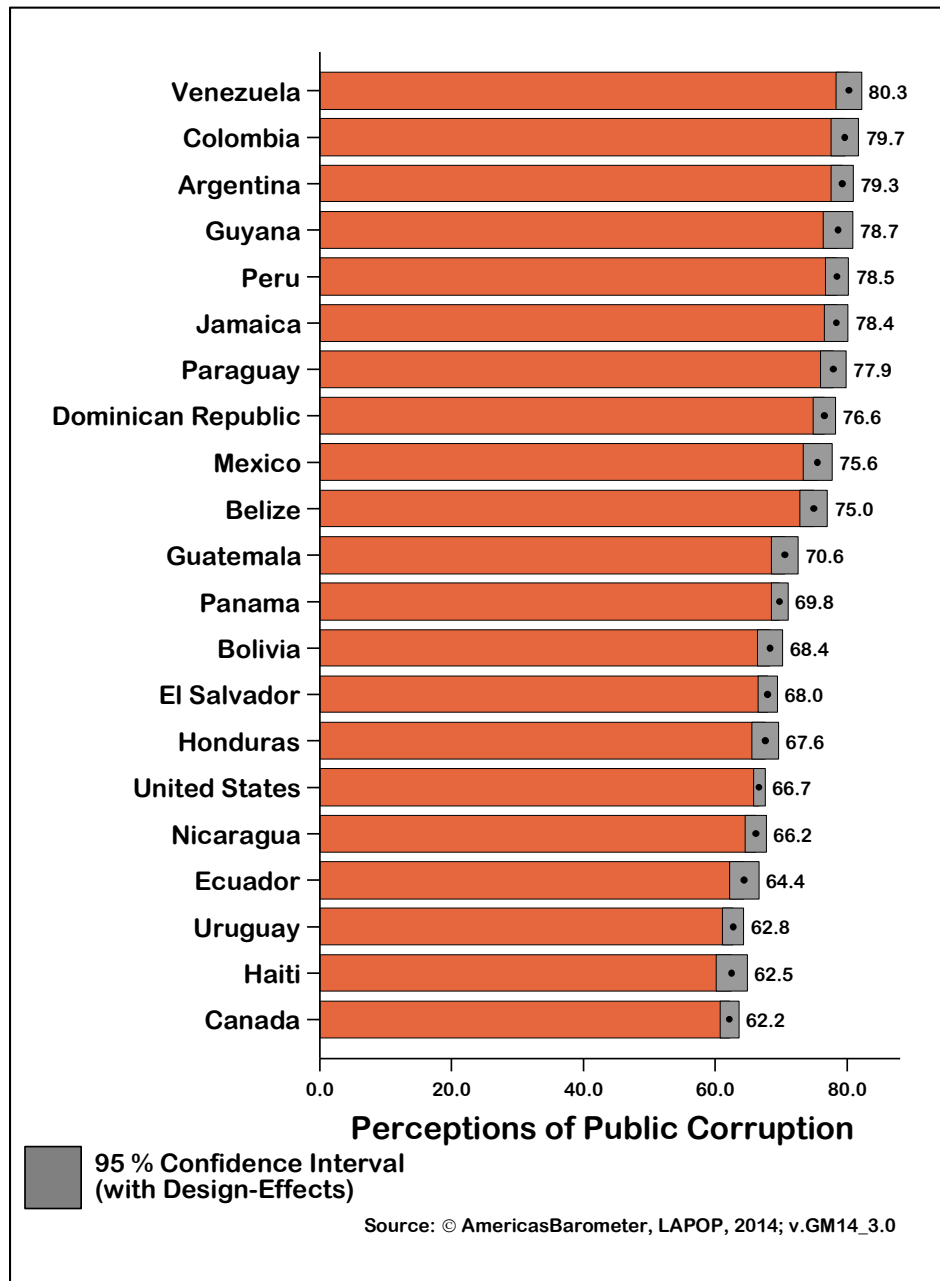
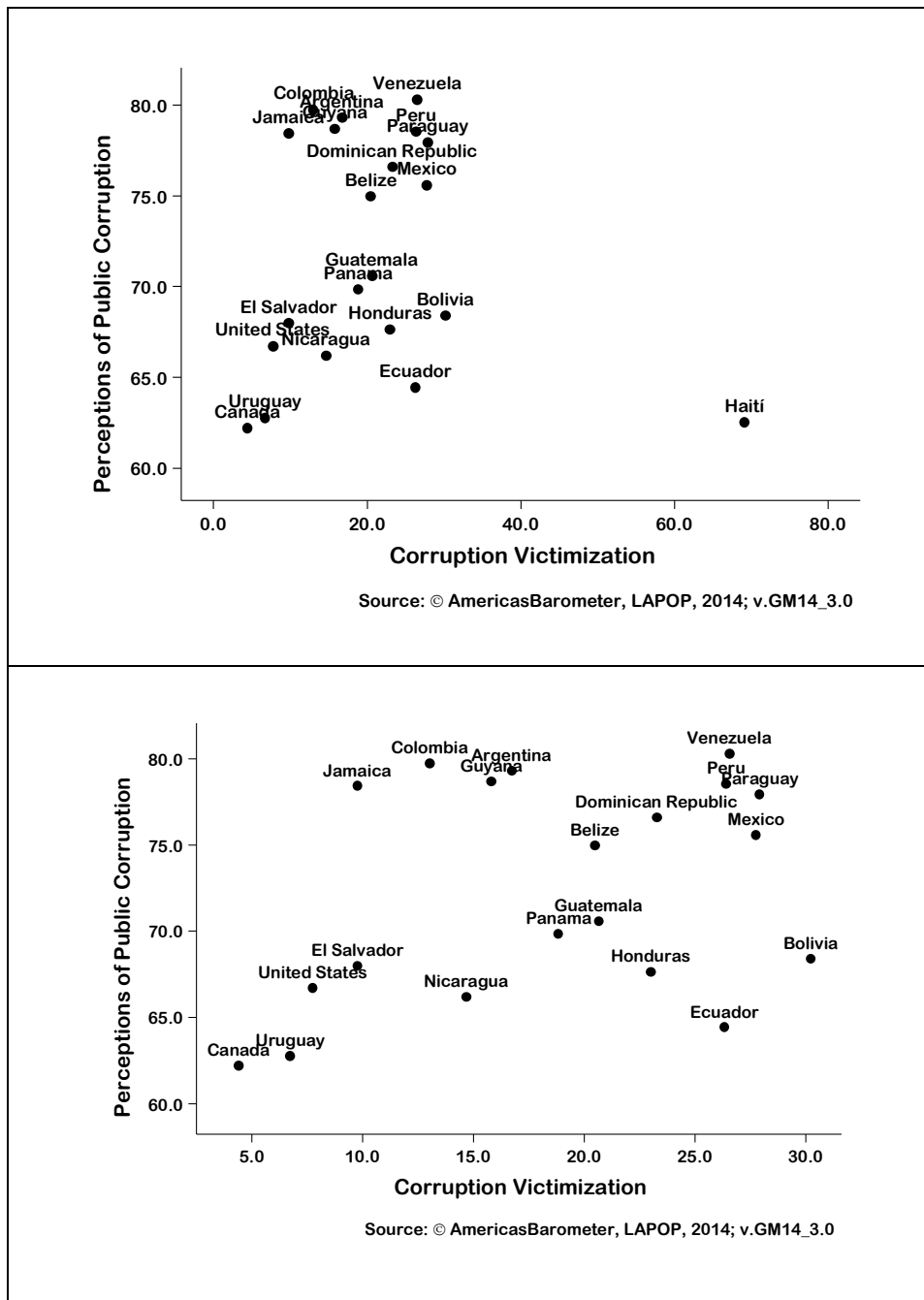


Figure 5.8. Perceptions of Corruption across Countries, 2014

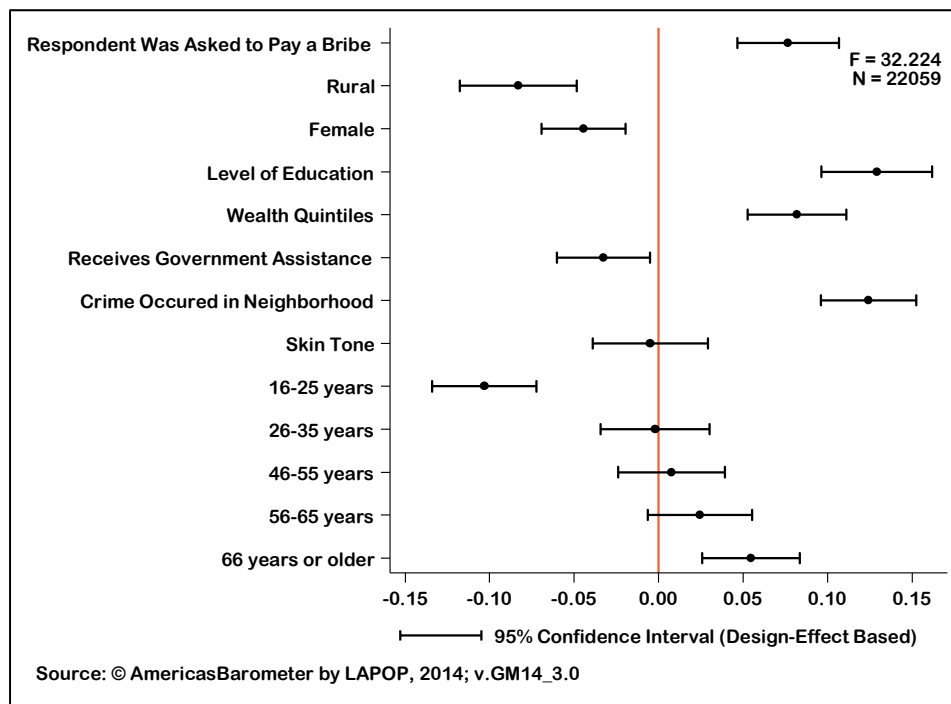




**Figure 5.9. Comparing Perceived Corruption Levels and Corruption Victimization rates Across Countries, 2014**

Yet within countries, individuals who were asked to pay a bribe in the last year are more likely to say that corruption is common among government officials. Figure 5.10 is an ordered logistic analysis of corruption perceptions, with high values on the dependent variable representing the perception that corruption is very common. The model includes dummy variables for each country, so again the results should be read as explaining differences within countries not necessarily across them.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> The coefficients are standardized-the full specification of the model is available in Appendix 5.2 at the end of the chapter.



**Figure 5.10. Factors Associated with Perceived Government Corruption, 2014**

We see above that there is a weak correspondence at the country level between the bribery victimization and perceptions of government corruption. Yet if we look within countries, individuals who were targeted for bribery in the last year judge their public officials as more corrupt than their counterparts. Personal experiences with corruption, on average, spillover into broad evaluations of political corruption even if the two concepts do not perfectly coincide.

Of course one does not have to be directly affected by corruption to believe corruption is common. The other correlates of perceived government corruption are similar to those of corruption victimization. Men, those who live in urban areas or in places where crime is common, and respondents who are comparatively wealthy, educated, and old are more likely to believe the government is corrupt even after controlling for these individuals' personal experiences with being asked to pay bribes. And although citizens who receive government assistance are more likely targets for bribery, they are *less* likely to believe the government is corrupt. Further analysis suggests this occurs because these individuals are more likely to support the government. Once we control for government approval, there is no significant association between receiving welfare benefits and corruption perceptions.

## V. Do the Citizens of the Americas See Corruption as Justifiable?

So far our analysis of the AmericasBarometer 2014 survey suggests that levels of corruption victimization are high in the hemisphere and perceptions that the government is corrupt are widespread. In such circumstances, the worry is that citizens might begin to consider corruption a natural part of politics. Several recent studies have suggested individuals can see corruption as necessary to grease bureaucratic wheels, particularly when regulatory agencies are inefficient (Méon and Weill 2010; Dreher and Gassebner 2011). There is also some evidence the negative effects of corruption on respondent well-being become attenuated in high corruption contexts as citizens adapt to their reality or begin to see it as

one of the costs of doing business (Graham 2011). Thus the questions become whether citizens of the Americas believe that bribery is an acceptable practice and, in particular, whether those who engage in it are more likely to justify it.

The AmericasBarometer asks respondents about whether bribes can ever be justified.<sup>16</sup>

	No	Yes	DK
<b>EXC18.</b> Do you think given the way things are, sometimes paying a bribe is justified?	0	1	88

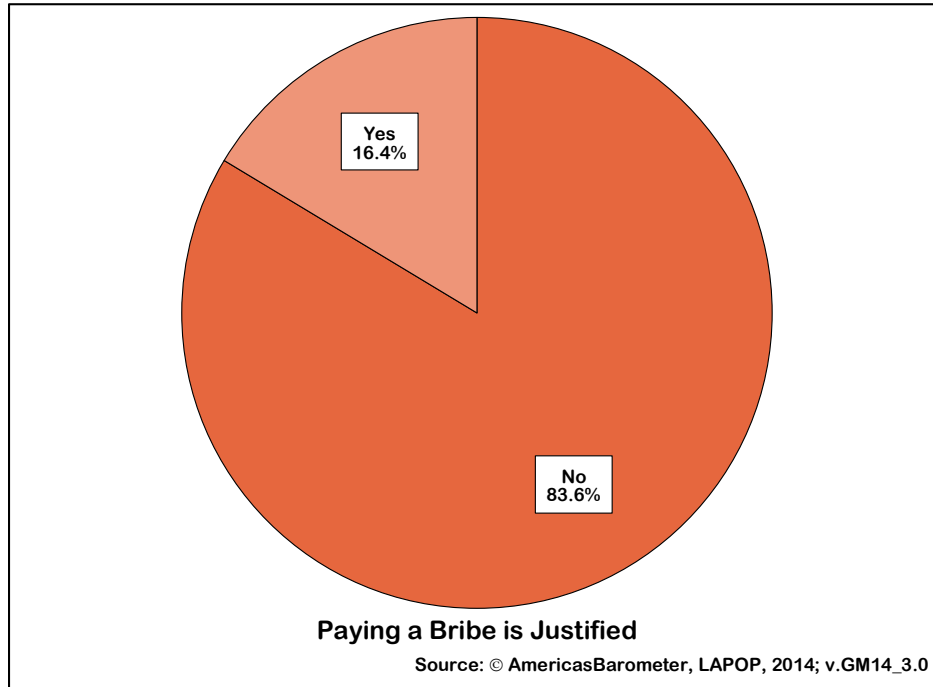
The percentage of people who think bribes can be justified – 16% (Figure 5.11) – is roughly the same as the number of people who were asked for bribes. The percentage is significantly higher, however, among those individuals who actually paid a bribe in the last year (Figure 5.12): almost 1 in 3 individuals who paid a bribe thought that paying a bribe could be justified compared to the 1 in 8 among those who did not pay a bribe.<sup>17</sup>

In analyses not presented here, we model which individuals were most likely to believe paying a bribe was justifiable. Corruption justification is more frequent among individuals who are younger, are male, and live in urban areas. It is more common among the wealthiest members of society. Individuals who reported that a crime occurred in their neighborhood are more likely to believe corruption could be justified as well. These differences exist regardless of whether or not the respondent was asked for a bribe and so they do not reflect differences in groups being targeted for bribery subsequently justifying that behavior. Yet if we compare bribery justification across those who were targeted for bribes and those who did not, an important pattern emerges: individuals who were targeted for a bribe and who get government assistance are more likely to find corruption justifiable than other bribery victims (Figure 5.13), which may imply that some see a connection between the bribe they paid and the benefits they receive and feel justified in their actions.<sup>18</sup> All of these data suggest that corruption can create an atmosphere where corruption is more likely to be tolerated (see also Carlin 2013).

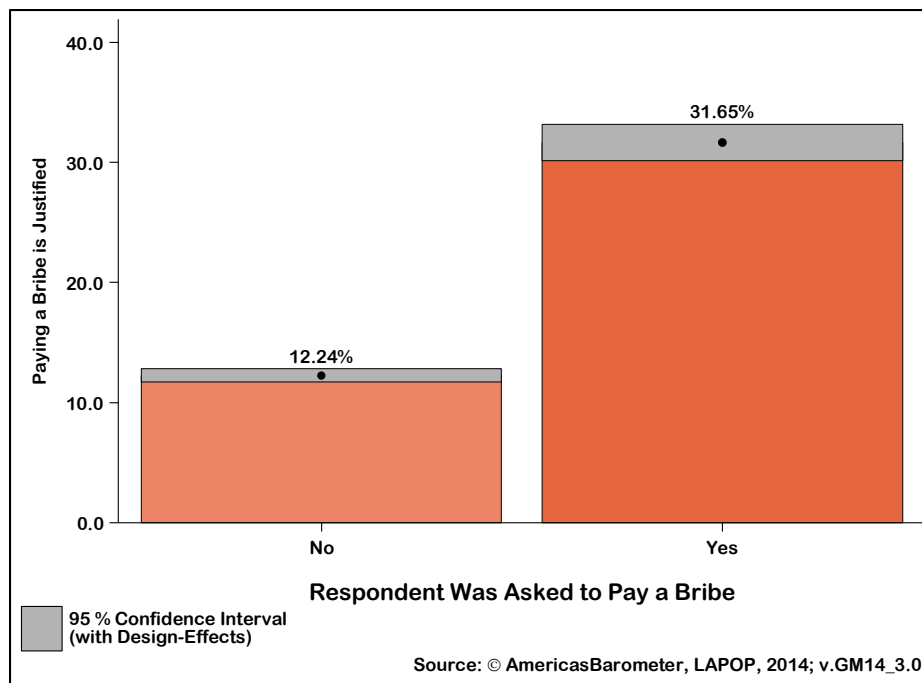
<sup>16</sup> This question was not asked in Guatemala, Costa Rica, Chile, Brazil, Bahamas, Barbados or Trinidad & Tobago in 2014.

<sup>17</sup> Research on the 2012 AmericasBarometer comes to a similar conclusion (see Carlin 2013).

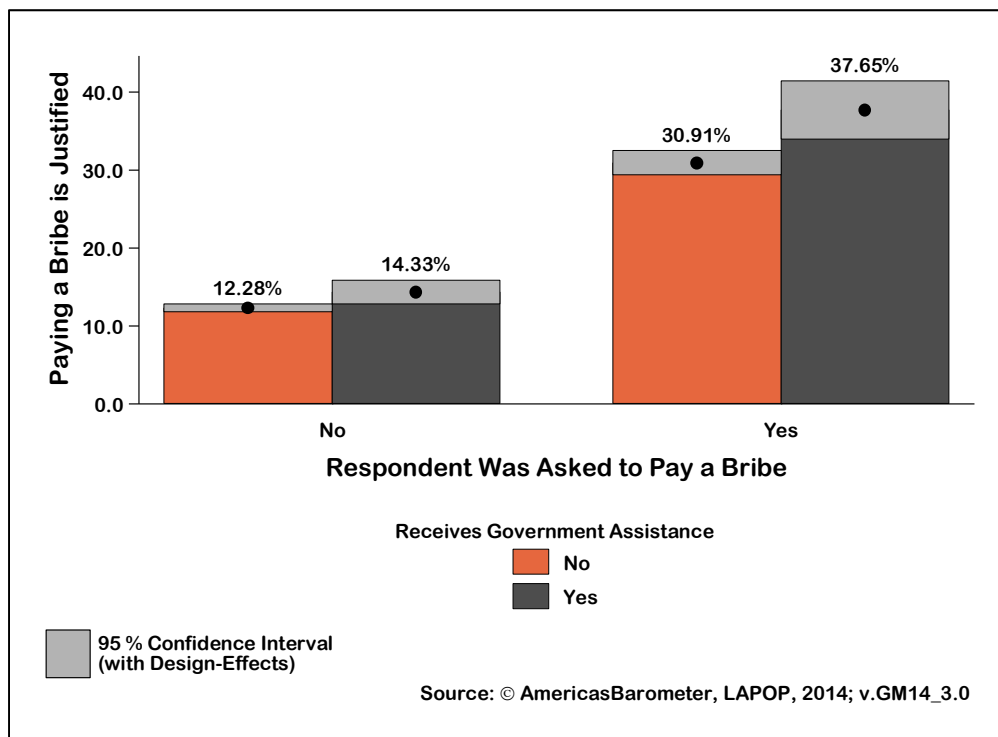
<sup>18</sup> In analysis not reported here, we model bribe justification as a function of the control variables in Figure 5.10 and interact corruption victimization and receiving government assistance and find that the two variables significantly modify their effect—the gap between corruption victims and non-victims is significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) larger among those who got help from the government than among the general population.



**Figure 5.11. Do Respondents Think Paying a Bribe Can be Justified at Times, 2014**



**Figure 5.12. Corruption Justification is Higher among Those Who were Asked to Pay a Bribe, 2014**



**Figure 5.13. Individuals Who Get Financial Assistance from the Government Are More Likely to Think Corruption Can Be Justified, Especially if they were Targeted for a Bribe, 2014**

Yet we should not overlook the fact that *most* individuals – over 68% – who had to pay a bribe in the last year still believe it is *never* justifiable to pay a bribe. In other words, most citizens in the Americas reject bribery despite its prevalence in society and politics even as they may be in a position where they feel compelled to pay a bribe. Thus many citizens of the Americas may be offended by the corruption that pervades their society and this, in turn, may lead to them have negative views of democratic institutions. Analyses in the chapters to follow will address this possibility.

## VI. Conclusion

Corruption has pernicious economic, social, and political effects. Yet despite progress in reducing corruption in some countries, corruption remains widespread in many countries in the Americas. On average, 1 in 5 citizens reported paying a bribe in the last year, with those bribes being paid in many different settings. Perhaps more disconcertingly, at least 68% of respondents in every country in which the survey was conducted in 2014 think that corruption is somewhat or very common among government officials in their country. In most countries that percentage is higher. While most citizens do not believe bribery can ever be justified, many citizens do and this is particularly true for those who have been involved in corrupt exchanges.

Thus the AmericasBarometer survey reminds us that citizens are frequently experiencing corruption in their daily lives and perceive it to be widespread at the elite level. The relative consistency of aggregate bribery rates and corruption perceptions across waves of the survey serve as reminders of the severity of these problems in the hemisphere. What worries democrats in the region is that, if left unchecked, corruption could undermine support for democracy itself. To address this concern, Chapter



6 explores how corruption affects trust in local governments while Chapter 7 looks at how corruption (among other variables) affects attitudes towards the national political system.

Appendix

Appendix 5.1: Coefficients for Figure 5.5-Predictors of Being Asked to Pay a Bribe, 2014

	Standardized Coefficient	(t)
66 years or older	-0.182*	(-8.63)
56-65 years	-0.092*	(-4.91)
46-55 years	-0.042*	(-2.39)
26-35 years	0.007	(0.36)
16-25 years	-0.075*	(-3.88)
Skin Tone	-0.022	(-1.05)
Crime Occurred in Neighborhood	0.325*	(17.82)
Receives Government Assistance	0.085*	(5.19)
Wealth Quintiles	0.121*	(6.43)
Level of Education	0.078*	(3.96)
Female	-0.257*	(-17.03)
Rural	-0.094*	(-4.58)
Guatemala	-0.060*	(-2.70)
El Salvador	-0.251*	(-9.56)
Honduras	-0.046	(-1.83)
Nicaragua	-0.178*	(-8.00)
Costa Rica	-0.164*	(-6.04)
Panama	-0.105*	(-3.32)
Colombia	-0.231*	(-9.22)
Ecuador	-0.065*	(-2.09)
Bolivia	0.021	(0.66)
Peru	-0.035	(-1.70)
Paraguay	0.000	(0.02)
Chile	-0.356*	(-9.31)
Uruguay	-0.300*	(-12.25)
Brazil	-0.200*	(-7.28)
Venezuela	-0.051*	(-2.15)
Argentina	-0.119*	(-5.38)
Dominican Republic	-0.086*	(-3.50)
Haiti	0.370*	(14.85)
Jamaica	-0.240*	(-10.81)
Guyana	-0.127*	(-5.09)
Trinidad and Tobago	-0.225*	(-9.37)
Belize	-0.064*	(-3.85)
Suriname	-0.263*	(-11.20)
Bahamas	-0.057*	(-3.88)
Barbados	-0.279*	(-12.96)
Guatemala	-0.060*	(-2.70)
Constant	-1.448*	(-63.98)
Constant	-1.505*	
F	58.87	
No. of cases	35410	
Constant	-1.505*	
Binary Logit with t-Statistics from Standard Errors Adjusted for Survey Design Effects in Parentheses. * p<0.05		

The United States and Canada are not included in the model because of missing observations on at least one variable.

## Appendix 5.2: Factors Associated with Perceived Government Corruption, 2014

	Standardized Coefficient	(t)
66 years or older	0.055*	(3.72)
56-65 years	0.024	(1.56)
46-55 years	0.008	(0.48)
26-35 years	-0.002	(-0.13)
16-25 years	-0.103*	(-6.54)
Skin Tone	-0.005	(-0.29)
Crime Occurred in Neighborhood	0.124*	(8.63)
Receives Government Assistance	-0.033*	(-2.32)
Wealth Quintiles	0.082*	(5.51)
Level of Education	0.129*	(7.74)
Female	-0.044*	(-3.49)
Rural	-0.083*	(-4.71)
Respondent Was Asked to Pay a Bribe	0.077*	(5.03)
Guatemala	-0.041	(-1.94)
El Salvador	-0.066*	(-3.39)
Honduras	-0.078*	(-3.61)
Nicaragua	-0.090*	(-4.48)
Panama	-0.092*	(-4.62)
Colombia	0.081*	(3.40)
Ecuador	-0.169*	(-5.98)
Bolivia	-0.131*	(-4.34)
Peru	0.035	(1.83)
Paraguay	0.059*	(3.05)
Chile	0.000	(.)
Uruguay	-0.146*	(-7.86)
Venezuela	0.040*	(1.96)
Argentina	0.028	(1.62)
Dominican Republic	0.051*	(2.13)
Haiti	-0.151*	(-6.46)
Jamaica	0.047*	(2.34)
Guyana	0.054*	(2.36)
Belize	0.006	(0.31)
cut1	-3.215*	(-71.54)
cut2	-1.434*	(-46.14)
cut3	0.396*	(13.85)
F	32.22	
No. of cases	22059	
Ordered Logit with Standard errors Adjusted for Survey design in Parentheses. * p<0.05		

The model does not include Brazil, Costa Rica, Chile, Trinidad & Tobago, Suriname, Bahamas, Barbados, the United States, or Canada because these countries have missing observations on at least one variable in the model.





## Chapter 6. Democracy, Performance, and Local Government in the Americas

*Gregory J. Love, Ryan E. Carlin, and Matthew M. Singer*

### I. Introduction

When citizens interact with the state they do so far more frequently with representatives and officials of the local, rather than national or even regional, governments. For residents of the Americas, therefore, local government performance, responsiveness, and trustworthiness are central factors in the legitimacy of the political system. Furthermore, the performance of local services has crucial and material impacts on people's quality of life. Because of the recognition of the importance of local government, significant resources from international organizations and national governments have been used to further fiscal and political decentralization. This chapter examines a series of questions to assess citizens' view of their local government and its services and to measure community participation in the Americas. In particular, how often do they interact with their local government? How well do they evaluate those interactions? What are the trends over the past decade in evaluations of local government and services? Do national factors affect evaluations of local government?

While the local-level of government is often where citizens interact directly with the state, the power of local governments varies substantially within and across the countries of the hemisphere. In some places local authorities have significant resources, lawmaking prerogatives, and administrative power, while other local authorities have little political and fiscal autonomy. Moreover, local governments may be more or less democratic. A core premise motivating this chapter is that local government can effectively shape citizens' attitudes towards democracy as a whole, a point that is demonstrated in Chapter 7.

### II. Main Findings of this Chapter

This chapter examines three key aspects of citizen engagement with local government vis-à-vis the AmericasBarometer survey. The first is participation in local government affairs and community activities. Key findings around these issues are:

- In 2014 citizen participation in local government meetings reached a new low, with only 1 in 10 having attended a meeting in the past 12 months.
- More citizens made demands of their local officials than any time since 2006.
- Those most satisfied and those least satisfied with local services were most likely to attend local government meetings (compared to those with middling levels of satisfaction).
- Citizens in formally federal countries were more likely to make demands on their local government.

A second aspect of the chapter is evaluations of local services:

- Satisfaction with local services in general, and several specific ones, remains fair with most respondents viewing service provision as “neither good, nor bad.”
- Evaluations of public schools in the Americas declined somewhat between the 2012 and 2014 waves.
- Over the same period average evaluations of public health care increased (and evaluations of roads was unchanged).

The final section of the chapter looks at citizen trust in local governments:

- Region-average trust in local government reached a new low in 2014.
- Evaluations of local services are strongly correlated with trust in local government.
- Being a victim of corruption is negatively related to trust in local government.
- Perception of insecurity is also negatively related to trust in local government and is at its highest level since 2006.

The rest of the chapter focuses on three main aspects of local government and participation. First, we look at how and how often citizens in the Americas interact with their local governments and help improve their community. The section finishes with a focus on the individual factors related to when people make demands. We then turn to citizens’ evaluations of local services (roads, schools, and health care) along with the individual-level factors related to citizen evaluations of these services. Finally, we look at levels of trust in municipalities over time and in select countries as well as its individual-level correlates. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the patterns of interaction, support, and evaluations of the level of government most proximate to citizens.

### **III. Local Government, Participation, Institutional Trust, and Democracy**

While decentralization has occurred in many developing countries it is especially pronounced in Latin America and the Caribbean (Rondinelli, Nellis, and Cheema 1983). It has occurred simultaneously with the “third wave” of democratization in the hemisphere (Huntington 1991), fostering an environment of both strengthened local governments and widespread adoption of democratic procedures for representation at the local level. However, there is significant variation in the success and extent of decentralization and subnational democratization (Benton 2012).

Research on local politics provides both enthusiastic and skeptical views of decentralization’s influence on democratic consolidation. Some authors argue increased decentralization has generally created positive outcomes for governance and democracy. Faguet’s study of Bolivia’s 1994 decentralization process shows it changed the local and national investment patterns in ways that benefited the municipalities with the greatest needs in education, sanitation, and agriculture (Faguet 2008). Akai and Sakata’s findings also show that fiscal decentralization in the United States had a positive impact on economic growth (Akai and Sakata 2002). Moreover, Fisman and Gatti’s cross-country research finds, contrary to conclusions of previous studies, that fiscal decentralization in



government expenditures leads to lower corruption, as measured by different indicators (Fisman and Gatti 2002).

However, others argue local politics does not always produce efficient and democratic results and can be problematic when local governments and communities are ill prepared. Bardhan warns that local governments in developing countries are often controlled by elites taking advantage of institutions and frustrating service delivery and development more broadly (Bardhan 2002). Willis et al. show that in Mexico decentralizing administrative power and expanding sub-national taxing capacity led to the deterioration of services and to increasing inequality in poorer states (Willis, Garman, and Haggard 1999). Galiani et al. find that while decentralization improved Argentine secondary student performance overall, performance declined in schools from poor areas and in provinces with weak technical capabilities (Galiani, Gertler, and Schargrotsky 2005). Moreover, as Van Cott (2008) argues, the success of local democracy often depends on whether the decentralization process was a bottom-driven (as opposed to top-down), the presence of effective mayoral leadership, party cohesiveness, and a supportive civil society. Relatedly, Falleti (2010) forcefully argues that the nature and extent of decentralization in a particular Latin American country is due to the territorial and partisan interests of elites at the time reforms were implemented. In total, the extant literature is mixed at best with regard to the effectiveness and extent of decentralization in the region.

The performance of local government may not only be about the quality of service provision to citizens and political participation by residents, but also have the potential to affect trust in democratic institutions and support for democratic norms. Since many citizens only interact with government at the local level, those experiences may be central to shaping trust decisions and democratic attitudes. In this chapter and the next we look at these linkages because a significant proportion of citizens may rely on experiences with local government when evaluating democracy and democratic institutions. In a study of Bolivia, Hiskey and Seligson (2003) show that decentralization can improve system support; however, relying on local government performance as a basis of evaluation of the system in general can become a problem when local institutions do not perform well (Hiskey and Seligson 2003). Weitz-Shapiro (2008) also finds that Argentine citizens rely on evaluations of local government to evaluate democracy as a whole. According to her study, citizens distinguish between different dimensions of local government performance; while perception of local corruption affects satisfaction with democracy, perception of bureaucratic efficiency does not. And using 2010 AmericasBarometer data, Jones-West finds that citizens who have more contact with and who are more satisfied with local government are more likely to hold democratic values. (Jones-West 2011) Moreover, this relationship is especially strong for minorities.

If local government performance and participation are central to democratic legitimacy, as we argue, then inclusion at the local-level of minorities and women is crucial for representation and the quality of democracy generally. A pivotal question in this realm is whether decentralization can improve the representation of groups that are historically marginalized, such as women and racial or ethnic minorities. Scholarship on this topic usually views local institutions as channels through which minorities can express their interests (Hirschmann 1970). Moreover, local public officials may be better than national-level officials at aggregating and articulating minority preferences, effectively enhancing minority representation (Hayek 1945). If decentralization contributes to minority representation, it may also lead to increased levels of systems support and satisfaction with democracy, especially among minority groups (Jones-West 2011).

Nonetheless, existing research has produced mixed results (Pape 2007, 2008). Patterson finds that the decentralization of electoral laws in Senegal in 1996 led to an increase in the proportion of women participating in local politics, but not to more women-friendly policies (Patterson 2002). West uses the 2010 round of the AmericasBarometer survey data to show that recent decentralization in Latin America does not increase minority inclusion or access to local government. The 2012 AmericasBarometer report found no relationship between gender and skin tone (a proxy for minority status), respectively, and which individuals made demands on local officials. However, the 2012 report did find significant linkages between trust in the local government and gender (positive) and darker skin tones (negative). In this chapter we explore if these are stable patterns or whether, instead, new or altered linkages have developed between local governments and women and minorities.

In the next section of the chapter we examine the extent to which citizens in the Americas participate in local politics, when they make demands of their leaders, how they evaluate local political institutions, and if they participate in local community building. We focus on indicators of two types of direct participation: *attending town meetings* and *presenting requests to local offices*, and one indirect: *working to solve community problems*. We compare the extent citizens from different countries participate in local politics through these formal channels and we compare the cross-national results from 2014 with the ones from previous years (2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012). We also seek to understand the main determinants of the two types of governmental participation, with an emphasis on local government performance and racial, ethnic, and gender inequality. This is followed by an assessment of the extent to which citizens across the Americas are satisfied with their local governments and local services and trends in these evaluations. Finally, we examine trust in local government and seek to understand which citizens in the Americas trust their local governments to a greater or lesser extent.

We note that previous work using the AmericasBarometer surveys, including the 2012 regional report, has examined in detail some of these phenomena, and that research stands as an additional resource for those interested in these topics (Montalvo 2009a; 2009b; 2010).

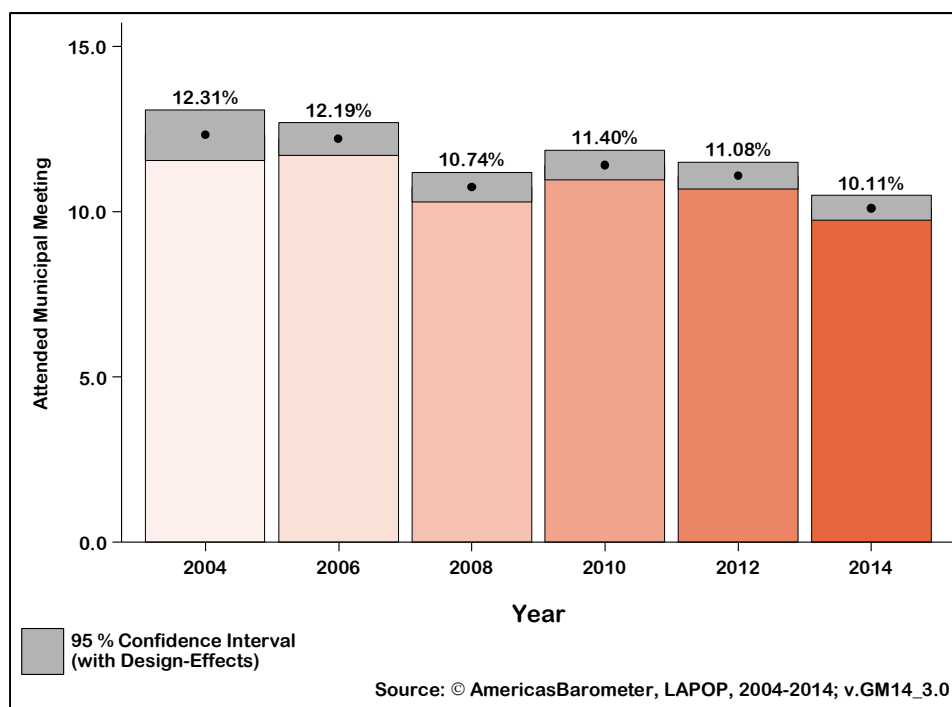
#### IV. Local Level Participation

The 2014 AmericasBarometer included a series of questions to measure citizens' engagement with the local political system:

Now let's talk about your local municipality...
<b>NP1.</b> 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
<b>NP2.</b> 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 <b>[Continue]</b> (2) No <b>[Go to SGL1]</b> (88) Doesn't know <b>[Go to SGL1]</b> (98) Doesn't answer <b>[Go to SGL1]</b>

### Local Meeting Attendance

How has participation in municipal meetings evolved in recent years? Using all countries, Figure 6.1 shows levels of local participation in the Americas since 2004.<sup>1</sup> The first waves of the surveys were a high-water mark for participation in local government meetings. Since then, the rate of participation has remained fairly steady until 2014, with about 11% of people taking part in municipal meetings between the years 2008 and 2012. However, the most recent wave of the AmericasBarometer finds a new low point for public participation in local government. In the past two years there has been a significant one percentage-point drop in the local government meeting participation, a greater than 8% decline in the region-wide average for participation.<sup>2</sup>



**Figure 6.1. Municipal Meeting Participation, 2004-2014**

Figure 6.2 uses the 2014 AmericasBarometer data to display, for each country, the percentage of citizens in each country of the Americas who report having attended a local meeting in the past year. We see wide variation in the rate of citizen participation in municipal meetings across countries. As in the 2012 survey, the highest participation rates in 2014 are found in Haiti and the United States. While Haiti still has the highest rates, it has declined substantially from 2012 (21.2% attendance rate), with previous high value likely linked to the recovery and reconstruction of the devastated country following the massive earthquake in 2010. Again, Chile, Panama, and Argentina have some of the lowest participation rates. Participation rates are not directly tied to the level of decentralization in a country. While Panama and Chile are both unitary systems, and thus more likely to have weaker and less consequential local governments, Argentina has a strong and extensive federal system. Overall, some of Latin America's strongest federal systems (Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico) rate among the bottom third in terms of local-

<sup>1</sup> Following LAPOP conventions, all countries in the region are weighted equally, regardless of their population size.

<sup>2</sup> Figure 6.1, and all the over-time figures presented in the chapter (unless otherwise noted), would look roughly the same if we examine only the 22 countries that have been surveyed since 2006. We exclude these figures from the text for brevity and conciseness.

level participation. Somewhat surprisingly, this means that – per the 2014 AmericasBarometer – there is no significant relationship between formal political federalism and the rate of municipal meeting attendance.

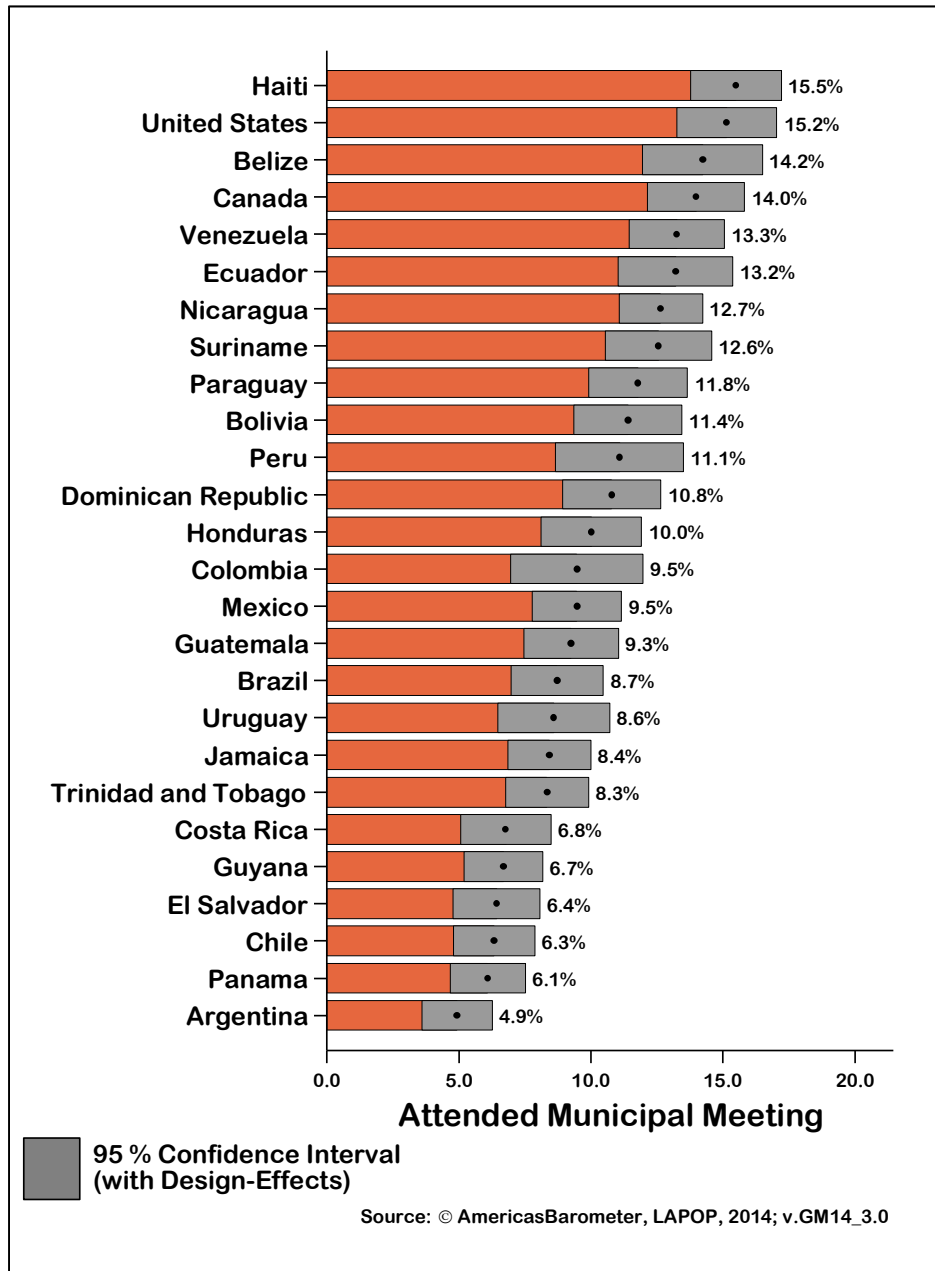
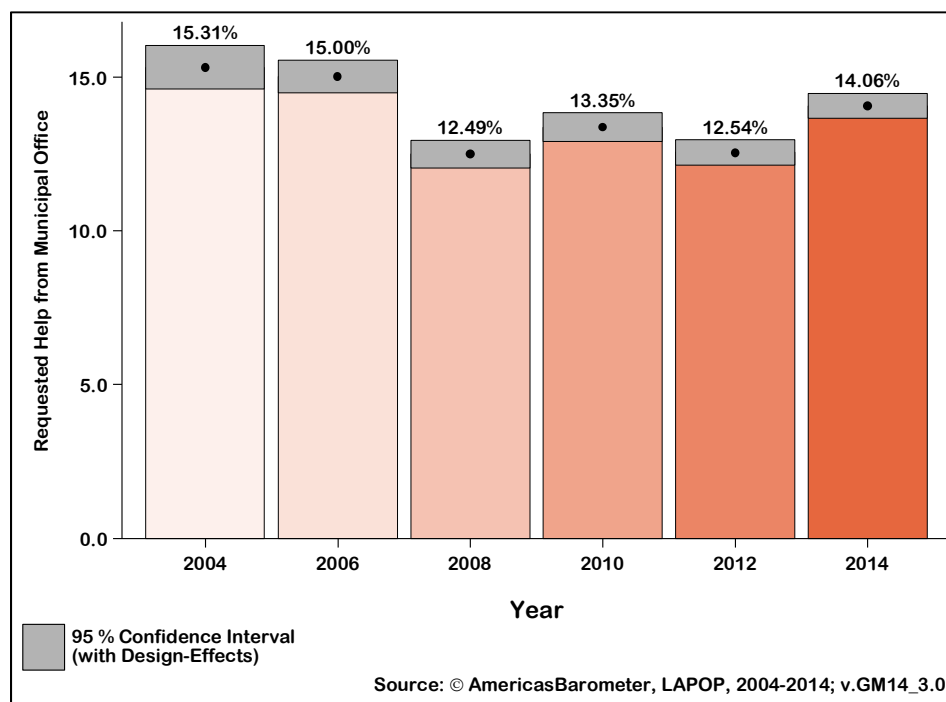


Figure 6.2. Municipal Meeting Participation in the Countries of the Americas, 2014

### *Demand Making on Local Government*

While attending municipal meetings is a crucial way for citizens to engage their local governments, another important point of interaction is when citizens make demands of their local officials. Fortunately, the AmericasBarometer allows us to examine both activities. How has local

demand making changed over time? In Figure 6.3, unlike Figure 6.1, we find some potentially encouraging patterns. In 2014 citizen demand making on local government reaches its highest level since 2006. The optimistic view of this change is that citizens feel that asking their local government for changes is a potentially effective route to remedy problems. However, it is also possible to see this increase in a more negative light if increased demands are the result of local government having declining performance. As we will argue below, both interpretations appear to be accurate.



**Figure 6.3. Demand Making on Local Government, 2004-2014**

Figure 6.4 shows a significant difference in the percentage of citizens in each country who have made a request or demand to a person or agency in local government in the past year. As with local meeting attendance, the rate of demand making on local governments varies significantly across the region. With the aftermath of the Haitian 2010 earthquake fading, Haiti went from the top spot in 2012 (21.3%) to some of the lowest demand-making levels. The top three countries, and Ecuador, all saw substantial increases (+4-6 percentage points) in demand making. In most of the other countries in the Americas between 10 and 16% of respondents claimed to have made a demand on local government. Unlike with meeting attendance, the variance across countries in demand making in 2014 is correlated with political federalism.<sup>3</sup> Demand making is about one percentage point greater in federal than unitary countries.

<sup>3</sup> We follow Lijphart's (2012) approach and code as politically federal those countries whose constitutions specifically declare themselves federal and provide for strong, elected regional governments.



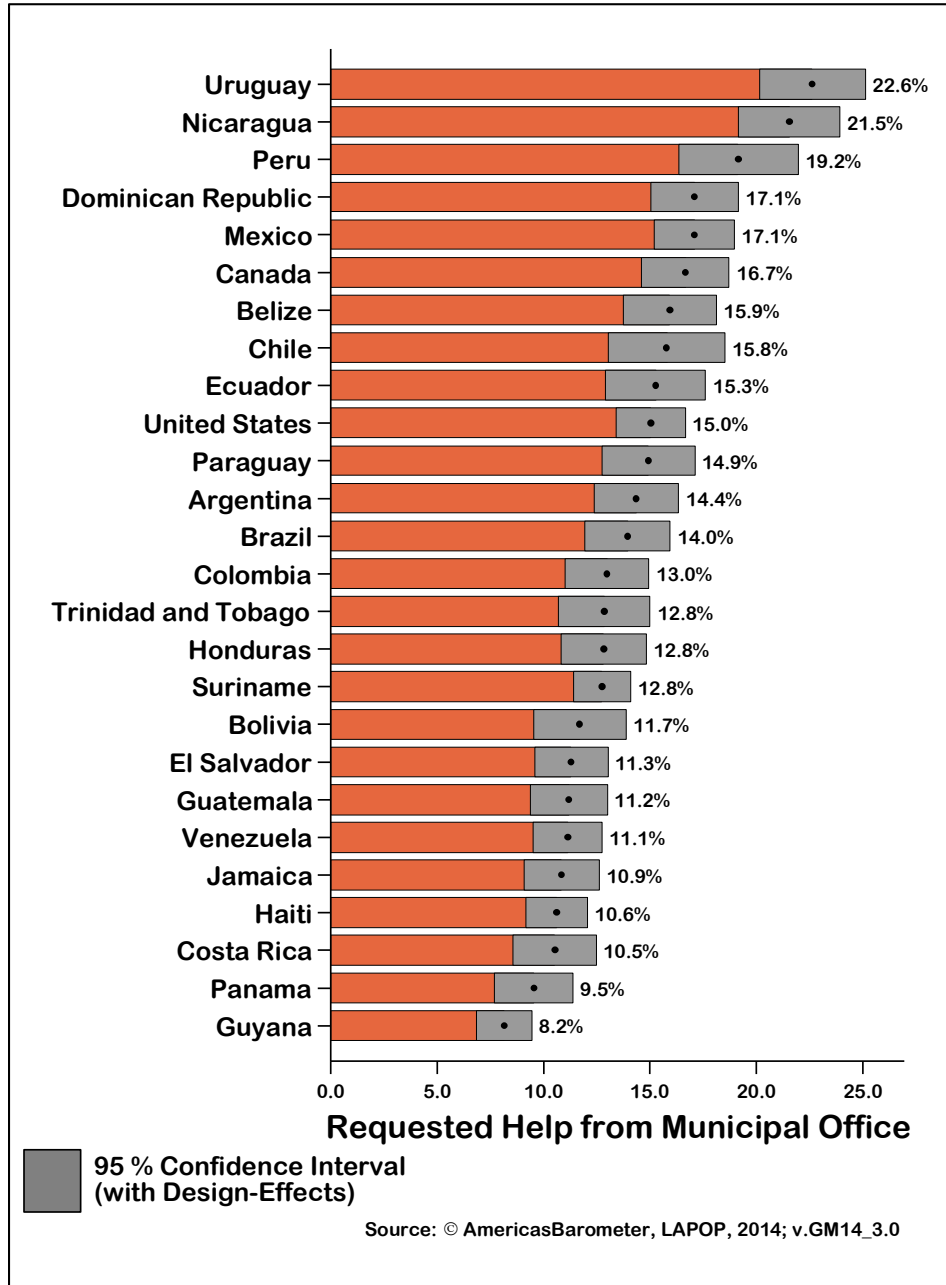
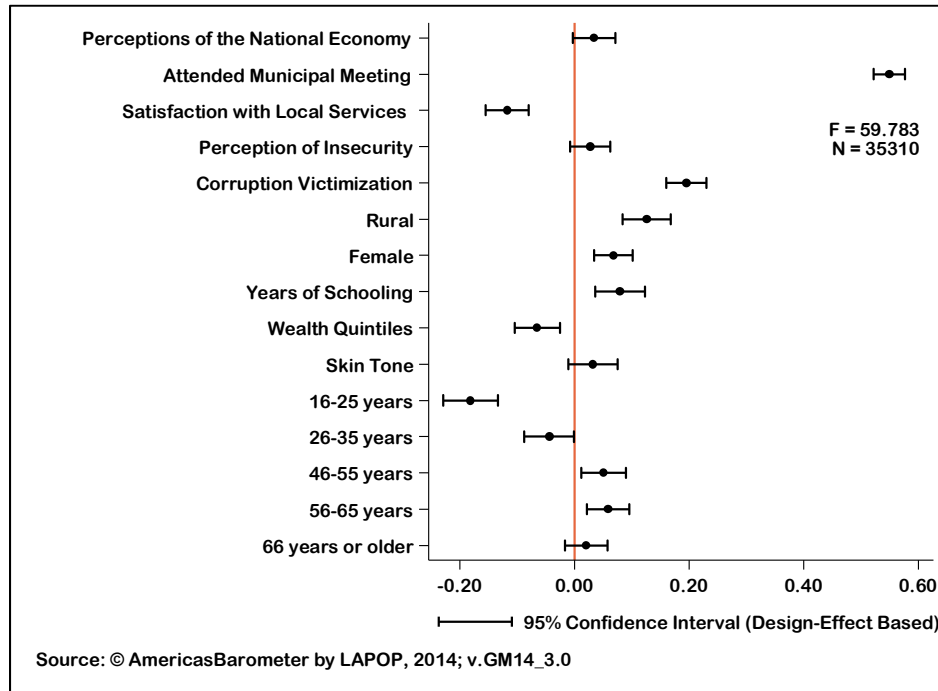


Figure 6.4. Demand Making on Local Government, 2014

To understand which types of individuals are most likely to make demands of local government we look at key individual experiences, evaluations, and socio-demographic factors using logistic regression with country fixed effects. Figure 6.5 shows that older citizens, those with higher levels of educational attainment, those who live in rural areas, and women are more likely to make demands. So are, intriguingly, corruption victims and those who attend local government meetings. Of all the factors, attending local meetings is most strongly linked to demand making. A person who has attended a municipal meeting in the last year is 32% more likely to make a demand on municipal government, indicating that many individuals who ask things of their municipality do so via formal channels (see Figure 6.5 below).

Wealthier citizens are generally less likely to make demands. As we discuss below, both the most and least satisfied with services make more demands. Demand making generally increases with age until people become elderly, at which point the likelihood of making a demand decreases, fitting a large literature on life cycles and political participation.



**Figure 6.5. Factors Associated with Demand Making of Local Government, 2014<sup>4</sup>**

In Figure 6.6 we examine in further detail the bivariate relationships between demand making on local government, on one hand, and attending local government meetings, corruption victimization, place of residence, and satisfaction with local services on the other hand. The bar chart in the top left in Figure 6.6 clearly shows that those who are active in local government, indicated by attending municipal meetings, are more likely to make demands of local government. Victims of corruptions are also more likely to make demands of local government; however, we are unable to tell if this is because they demand less corruption or if interaction with the state (by making demands) brings them into opportunities for corruption to occur. Both are possible, but the data cannot distinguish between the two potential processes (and both can be occurring simultaneously).

The bottom row (left side) shows respondents who reside in rural areas are more likely to make demands of their local government. Thus, social and/or geographic distance between the respondent and local government influence demand making.

The bottom right of Figure 6.6 shows a bimodal relationship between satisfaction with services and demand making. As Figure 6.5 shows, on average the more satisfied are less likely to make demands; however, we see in Figure 6.6 that this interpretation should be amended. Like the least satisfied with

<sup>4</sup> For this regression analysis, like all others in the chapter, the United States and Canada are excluded from the sample. And tabular results for each of the regression analyses are in the chapter appendix.



services, the most satisfied are also more likely to make demands. The bimodal relationship also is present in a multivariate analysis.

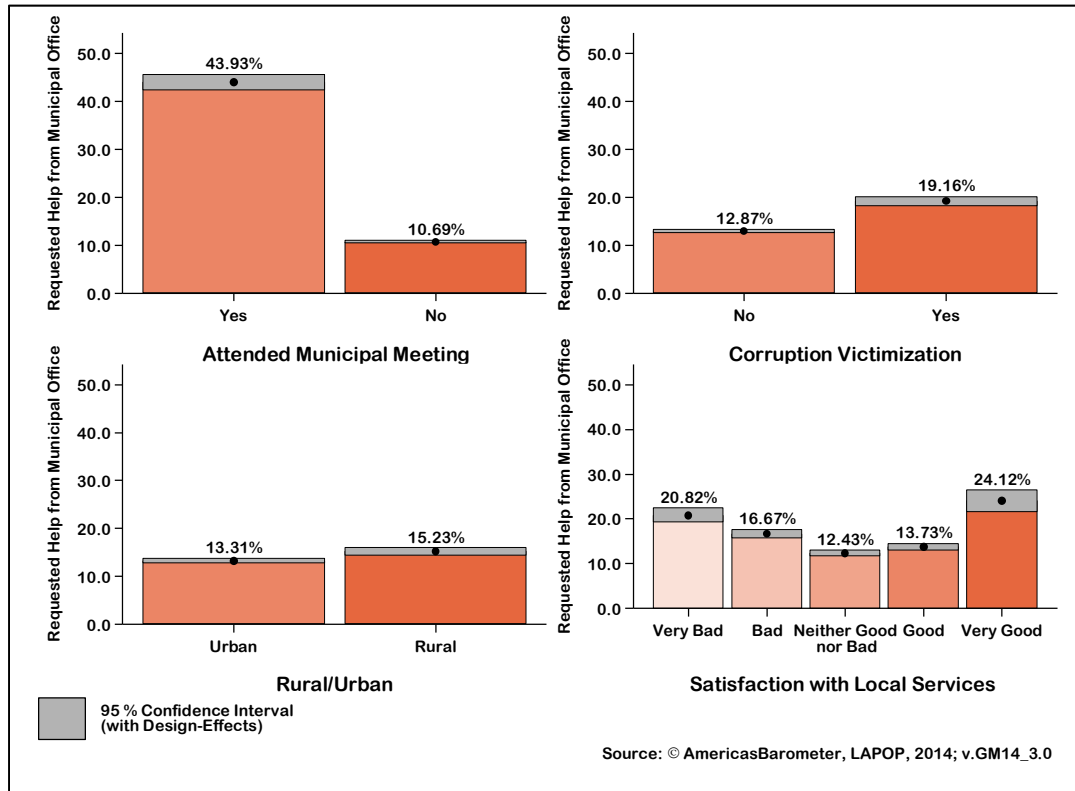


Figure 6.6. Who Makes Demands on Local Government, 2014

Not all citizen participation at the local level is via the local government. To help improve their communities, some citizens work through community organizations instead of, or in addition to, governmental pathways. To get a more general grasp on the pattern of citizen engagement in their local communities the AmericasBarometer includes the following question designed to measure if and how often people work to improve their communities:

**CP5.** Now, changing the subject. In the last 12 months have you tried to help 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 the last 12 months?

(1) Once a week	(2) Once or twice a month
(3) Once or twice a year	(4) Never
(88) Doesn't know	(98) Doesn't answer

Per LAPOP standards, we reverse and rescale the 1-4 responses from 0 to 100, with 0 meaning “never” and 100 meaning “once a week.”

Finally, Figure 6.7 shows that the average amount of effort individuals put towards solving community problems has remained relatively static since the question was introduced in the 2008 AmericasBarometer. The stability of community-level involvement in problem-solving contrasts with the decline in municipal meeting attendance noted at the outset of this chapter.

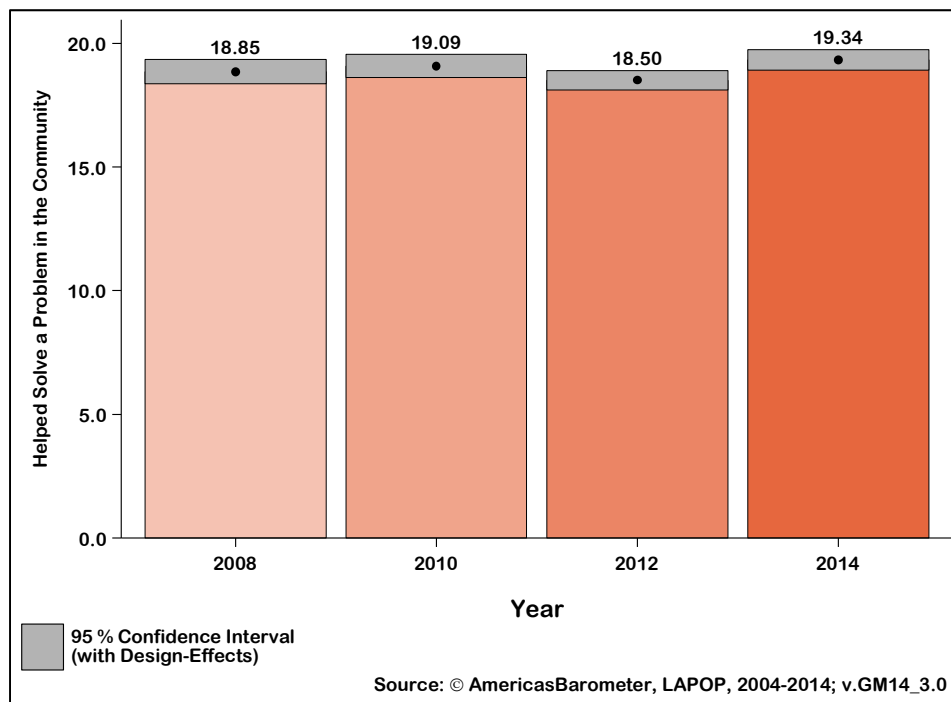


Figure 6.7. Efforts to Solve Community Problems, 2008-2014

## V. Satisfaction with and Trust in Local Government

Like previous rounds, the 2014 AmericasBarometer included a number of questions to assess the extent to which citizens are satisfied with and trust their local governments. The first question is as follows:

**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

In addition, the 2014 round included three questions first introduced in the 2012 AmericasBarometer survey:

<p><b>SD2NEW2.</b> And thinking about this city/area where you live, are you very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with the condition of the streets, roads, and highways?</p> <p>(1) Very satisfied (2) Satisfied (3) Dissatisfied (4) Very dissatisfied (99) N/A (Does not use) (88) DK (98) DA</p>
<p><b>SD3NEW2.</b> And the quality of public schools? [Probe: are you very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?]</p> <p>(1) Very satisfied (2) Satisfied (3) Dissatisfied (4) Very dissatisfied (99) N/A (Does not use) (88) DK (98) DA</p>
<p><b>SD6NEW2.</b> And the quality of public medical and health services? [Probe: are you very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?]</p> <p>(1) Very satisfied (2) Satisfied (3) Dissatisfied (4) Very dissatisfied (99) N/A (Does not use) (88) DK (98) DA</p>

Finally, the last question, which measures trust in local government, is also one that has appeared in many previous waves. It asks citizens to respond to the following question using a 7-point scale, where 1 means “not at all” and 7 means “a lot.”

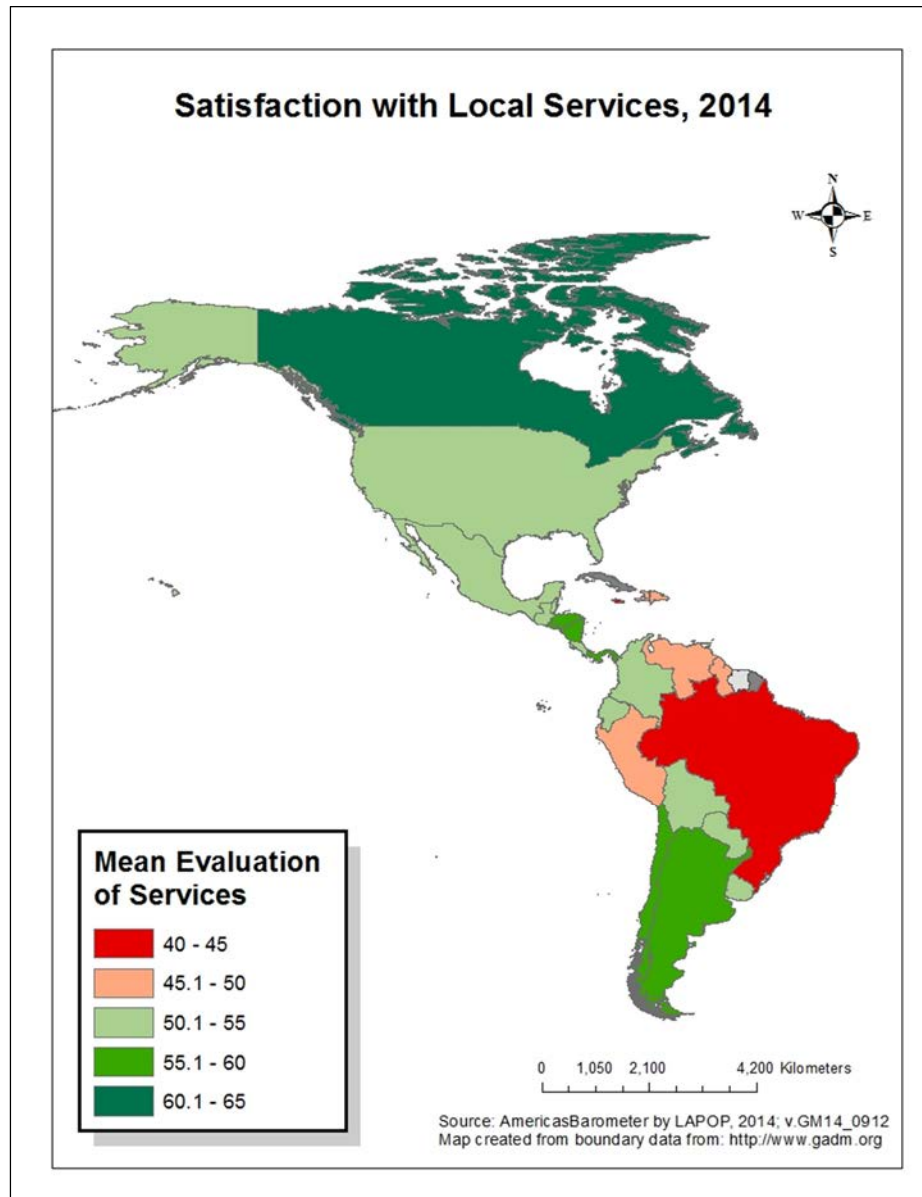
**B32.** To what extent do you trust the local or municipal government?

### *Satisfaction with Local Services*

In Map 6.1<sup>5</sup> we examine citizens’ average levels of satisfaction with local government services across the Americas, using question SGL1. Following the AmericasBarometer standard, responses have been re-coded to run from 0 to 100, where 0 represents very low satisfaction and 100 represents very high satisfaction. With a few exceptions, the average citizen in most countries in the Americas is essentially neutral towards local government services, meaning that average scores cluster around the midpoint (50) on the scale. Brazil and Jamaica have the lowest levels of satisfaction with local government in the hemisphere while Canada has the highest. As with the 2012 survey, the appearance of Nicaragua and Ecuador at the same level as the U.S. indicates that while there may be a link between satisfaction with services and national wealth, it is not an ironclad one. The biggest shift of any country between the last two waves of the AmericasBarometer was Haiti’s rise from the bottom of the list in 2012 (37.6 units or points on the 0-100 scale), up several places as respondents viewed services a bit more positively as the earthquake and its aftermath receded further into the past.

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<sup>5</sup> A bar chart version of this information, with standard error bars, is in the appendix.



**Map 6.1. Evaluations of Local Government Services in the Countries of the Americas, 2014**

How do the aggregate 2014 results compare to previous waves of the AmericasBarometer? Figure 6.8, which presents annual average evaluations on a 0-100 scale, shows that there is some reason for optimism with regard to local service provision. After waves with little change, 2014 had a significant increase in citizens' satisfaction with local services of just over 1.5 units (or points). However, middling ratings of service provision remain, and have always been, the norm in the region.

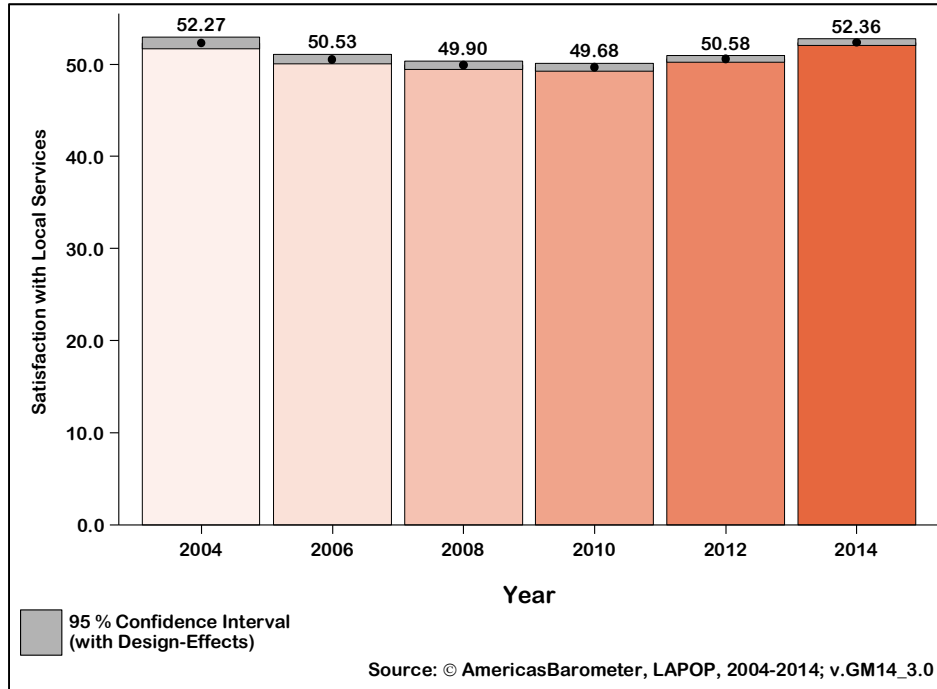


Figure 6.8. Evaluation of Local Services, 2004-2014

In Figure 6.9 we further explore citizens’ evaluations of their local government services. Since 2008, 4 out of 10 respondents see their local services as neither good nor bad. In general a few more people have a positive view of services than negative, with roughly 36% of respondents holding “Good” or “Very Good” views. In general, for the past six years (and likely longer) local governments have been neither highly effective at providing services nor completely failing citizens in service provision. The public sees services as generally middling in quality.

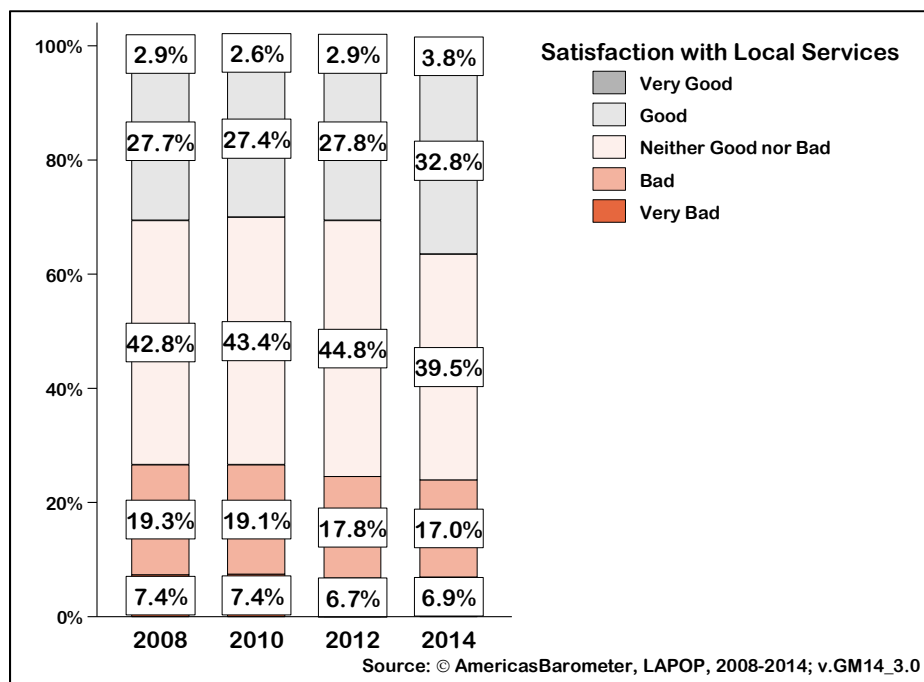
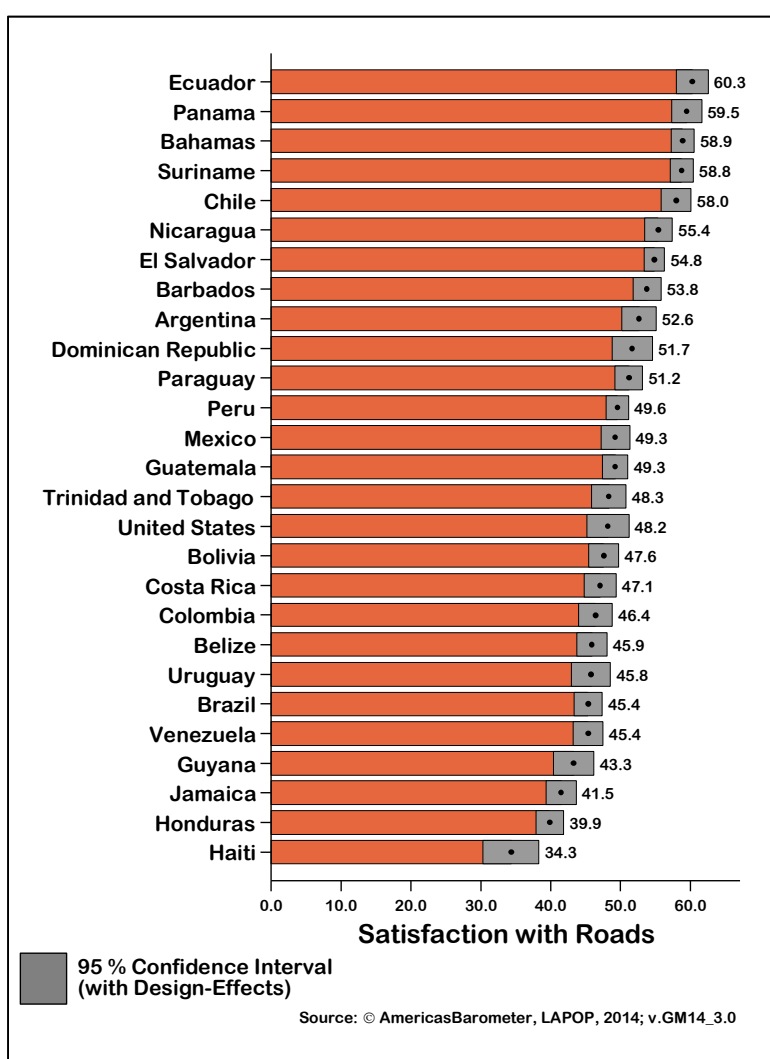


Figure 6.9. Evaluation of Local Government Services by Category

Not all local services are equally difficult to provide or equally valued by citizens; thus, respondents may evaluate some aspects of local service delivery more highly than others. In the next three figures, we examine levels of satisfaction in the Americas with the provision of services in three key areas: roads, schools, and health care.<sup>6</sup> Figure 6.10 shows satisfaction with roads and highways, based on question SD2NEW2 (the wording of which was reported above in the text). Once again, responses have been rescaled to run from 0 to 100, where 0 represents the least satisfaction and 100 represents the most satisfaction. Across the region we find moderate levels of satisfaction with road infrastructure. Residents in several Caribbean and Central American countries hold particularly dim views of their road infrastructure. Levels of satisfaction with roads for most countries were stable between the 2012 and 2014 wave with the exception of Honduras. The continued political, economic, and security instability in the country may be taking its toll on service provision: Hondurans rate road infrastructure 10 units lower in 2014 than 2012.



**Figure 6.10. Satisfaction with Roads in the Countries of the Americas, 2014**

<sup>6</sup> We recognize that responsibility for this type of service provision may come from varying levels of government across the countries in the Americas.



Figure 6.11 examines satisfaction with public schools, based on question SD3NEW2 (again rescaled 0-100). Similar to roads and public health, there are no clear patterns between national wealth and satisfaction with schools with the possible exception that wealthier countries have lower ratings. It is possible that with greater resources come greater expectations. Looking at a few key countries unearths some interesting results. For example, Chile is one of the wealthiest and most stable countries in the region but again has one the lowest levels of satisfaction with education. This low level of satisfaction with public schools may be linked with the now long-running university and high school student protests in Chile that began in 2006. Whether this dissatisfaction is the cause or consequence of the protests, we cannot say. We also want to point out Venezuela's decline. Compared to 2012, Venezuelans rated schools 6.3 units lower in 2014, which may also be linked to the ongoing political and social instability in the country.

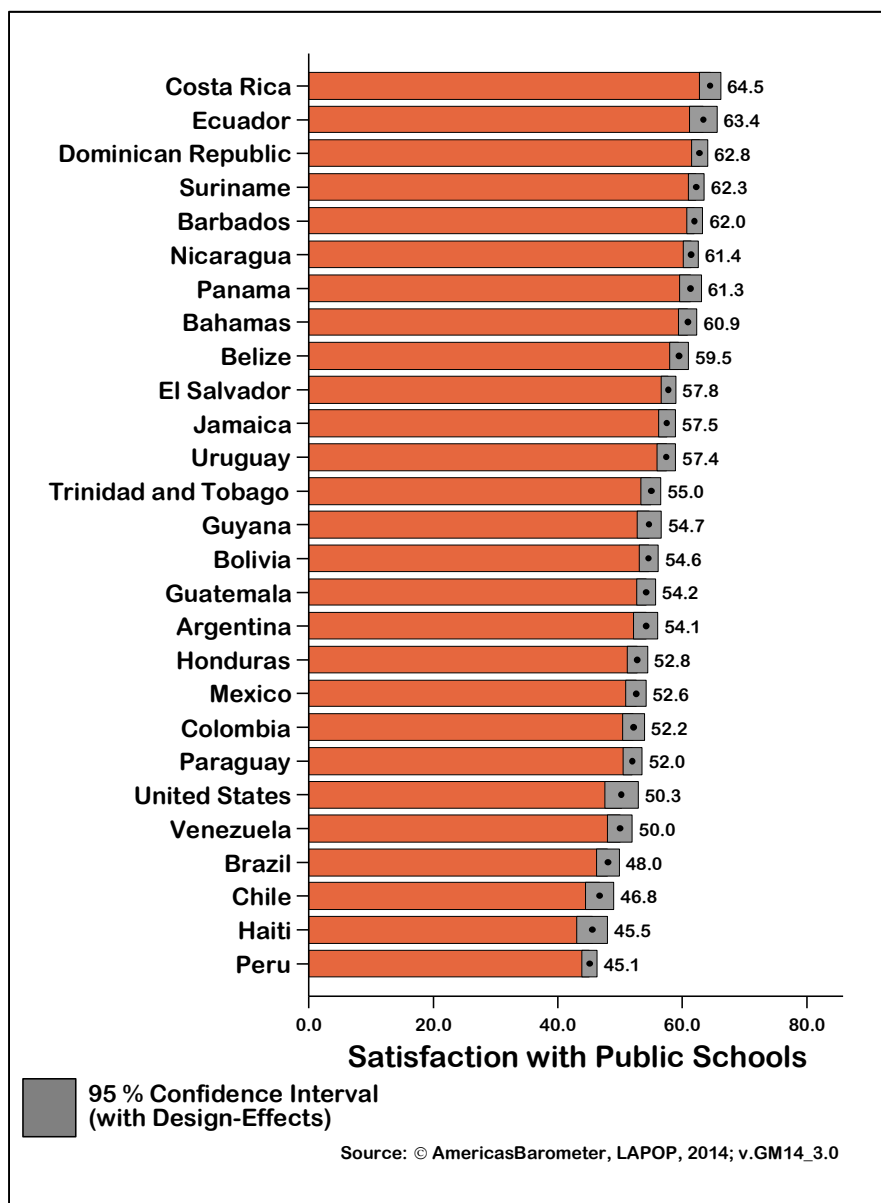


Figure 6.11. Satisfaction with Public Schools in the Countries of the Americas, 2014

Finally, in Figure 6.12 we assess satisfaction with public health services, based on question SD6NEW2 (rescaled 0-100). Though most countries average between 43 and 53 units, no country scores particularly high, and four countries are rated quite poorly: Brazil, Colombia, Honduras, and Haiti. Brazil, though has recently tagged as a rising global economic power (if faltering at the moment), receives significantly lower evaluations than nearly all other countries in the region for health services, roads, and education. Like public schools, evaluations of public health services has declined dramatically in Venezuela (52.1 units in 2012 vs. 42.3 units in 2014) adding more evidence that the environment in Venezuela is taking its toll on public evaluations of government performance.

Additionally, as the graphs tend to indicate, citizens' evaluations of educational services are more closely correlated with their evaluations of health services ( $r = .46$ ) than the quality of roads ( $r = .33$ ) and health services is also more weakly correlated ( $r = .29$ ) with roads than education. While all three are key indicators of local government performance, it appears that citizens may evaluate hard infrastructure, like roads, differently than the more complex services of the welfare state, such as health care and education.

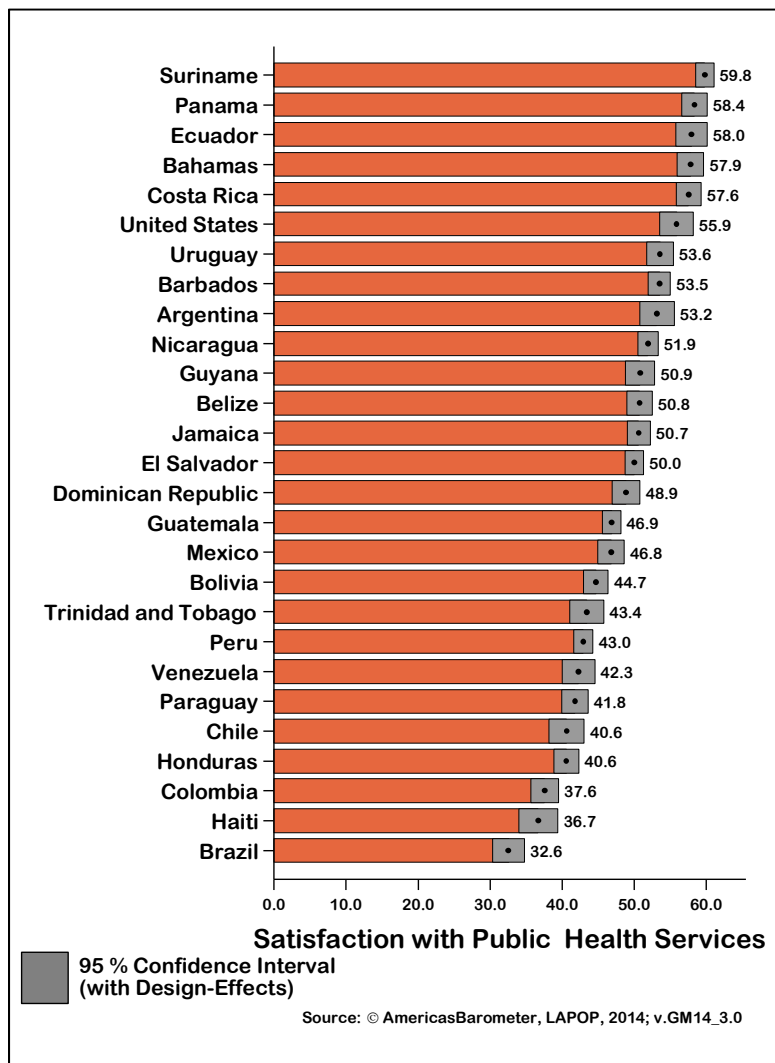


Figure 6.12. Satisfaction with Public Health Services in the Countries of the Americas, 2014

Looking at aggregate comparisons for the three types of services between the 2012 and 2014 waves we see mixed results (Figure 6.13). With regard to public schools, respondents in the Americas in 2014 rated them slightly higher than they did in 2012; however, they evaluated public health services and road quality similarly across the two waves. Unlike the questions about general local services (Figure 6.10) that saw an uptick in evaluations, when asked about specific services stasis is the norm. Of the three specific service areas, respondents' evaluations of roads were the most closely linked to their general evaluation of local services, although it only at a modest level ( $r = .26$ ).

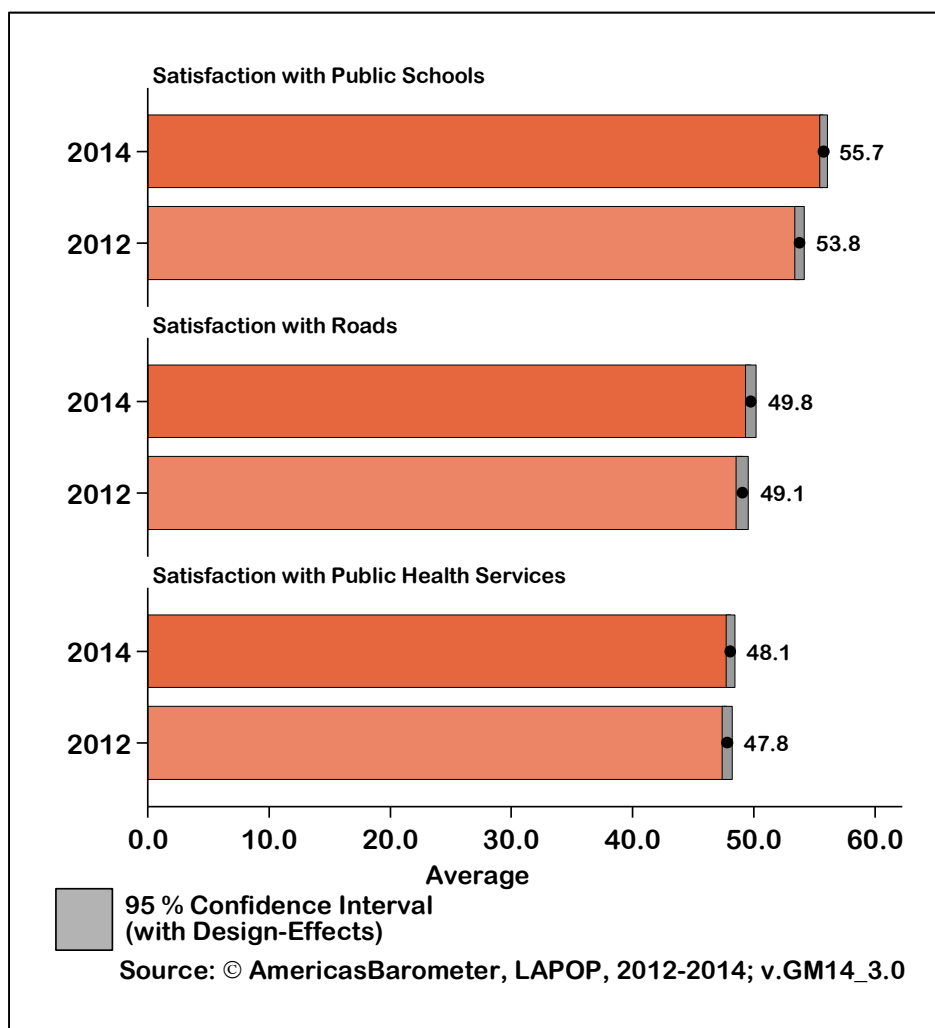
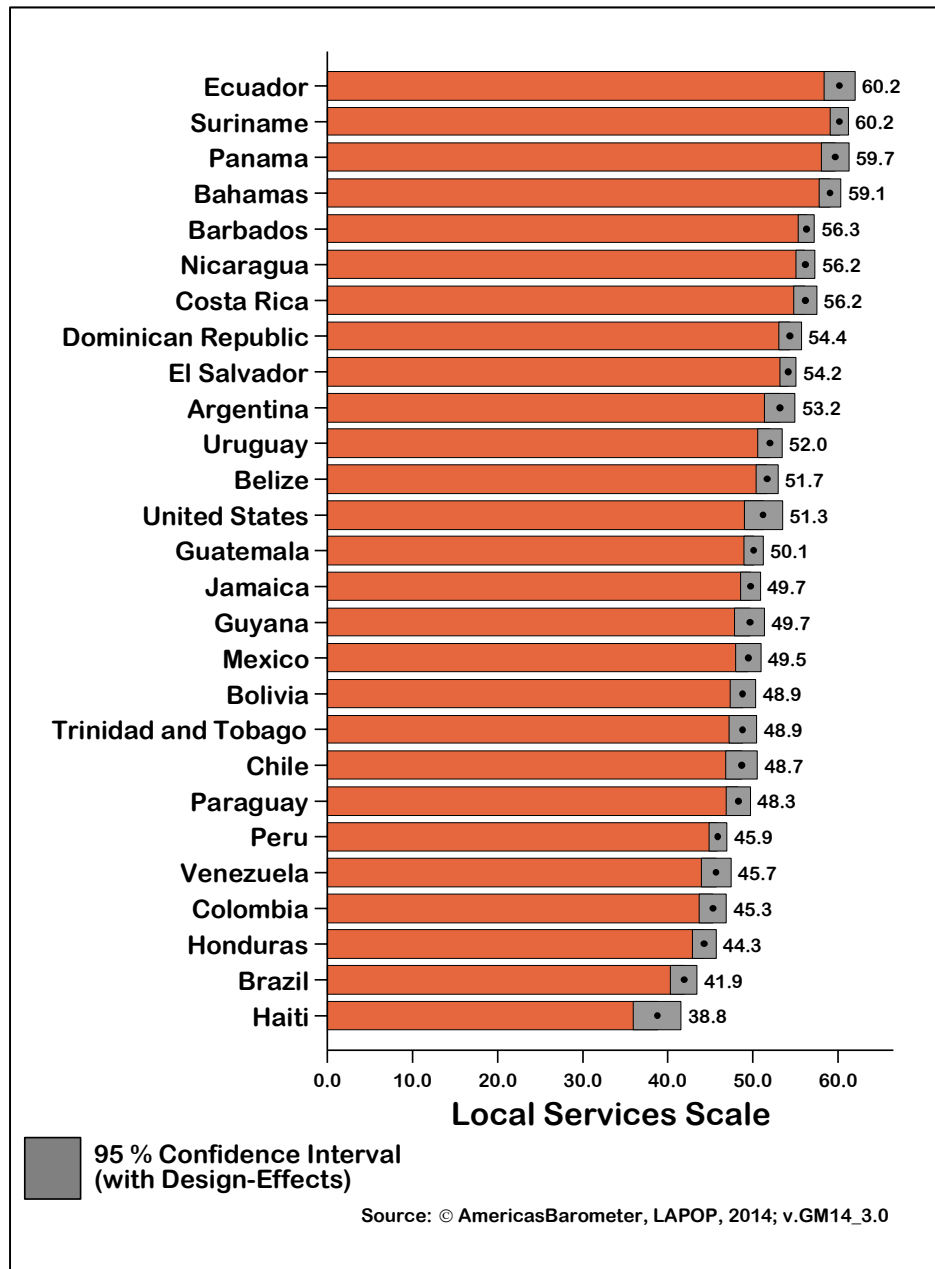


Figure 6.13. Trends in Satisfaction with Three Types of Services

While question SGL1 asks people about their evaluations of general local services, the previous sets of figures suggest people may evaluate specific local services quite differently than the abstract idea of local services. To see how respondents may differ in their views of services when they are asked about them specifically or generally we create an additive scale from responses regarding the condition of roads, public schools, and public health care.<sup>7</sup> Figure 6.14 displays the average scores for this scale (0-100) across the countries in which the questions were asked. When compared to the general evaluations

<sup>7</sup> A principle component analysis of these three variables (SD2NEW, SD3NEW, SD6NEW) indicate that there is only one underlying dimension and it is different than SGL1. Cronbach's alpha for an additive scale of the three variables is a moderate .62.

of services (SGL1), the results in several countries exhibit interesting contrasts. Chileans appear to be quite happy with their local services in the abstract (57.5 units) but when asked about specific services they take a much dimmer view (48.7). Likewise, Colombians prefer their services in the abstract (53.9) more than specific ones (45.3). On the flipside, citizens of the Dominican Republic have a more dismal view of services in the abstract (46.6) than when asked about specific services (54.4). Overall, the bivariate correlation between SGL1 and the Local Services Evaluations Scale is  $r=.29$ . While there is somewhat of a disconnect between the specific questions about services and the general question, it is important to note that we were not able to ask about all relevant local services.



**Figure 6.14. Satisfaction with Local Services (Additive Scale) in Countries of the Americas, 2014**

To examine the individual factors and events that affect general evaluations of local services (SGL1) we use linear regression with country fixed effects. If we use the Local Services Evaluations Scale instead of SGL1 the results are substantively identical to those presented below. Figure 6.15 shows people in the more marginalized positions in society rate their municipality services the lowest. Specifically, people with darker skin tone; poorer and lower educated residents; and those with higher levels of perceived insecurity all rate local services lower. Of particular note is the result for corruption victims. People who report having been asked for a bribe rate services significantly lower; this finding combined with results from the previous chapter showing high rates of corruption victimization among those who interact with local government indicates that this a widespread and substantively important result. One of the overall patterns in the results is that citizens who often have physically more difficult lives (poorer, rural, fear for physical security, darker skin tone) feel their local government’s services are failing them.

We also find that people who have requested help of the municipality have more negative views of local services; however, if you are active in local government (by attending meetings), you are more likely to have a positive view of services. Thus, it is the nature of the interaction with local government that seems to matter with regard to views of local services. Finally, the national economy appears connected to evaluations of services: individuals who have positive perceptions of the national economy generally view local services in a more positive light. Whether it is local factors causing a positive national outlook or the reverse, we cannot say.

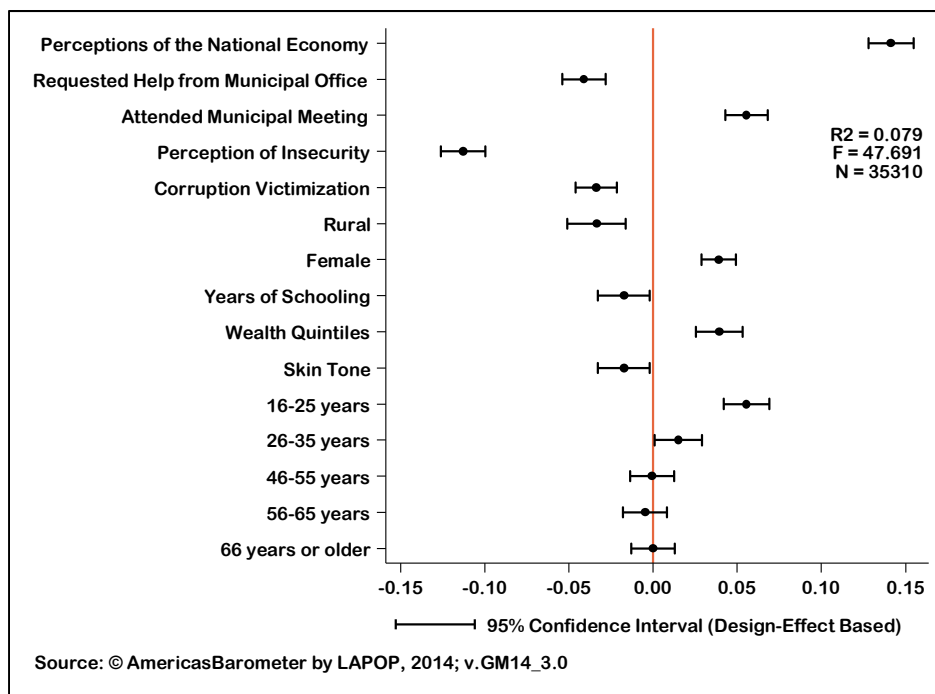


Figure 6.15. Determinants of Satisfaction with Local Services, 2014

### Trust in Local Government

Like the previous waves of the AmericasBarometer, the 2014 survey asked citizens not only whether they were satisfied with local government, but also whether they trusted local government. This question aims to tap more long-standing, abstract attitudes towards local government. In Figure 6.16, we look at trust in local government since 2004. While it appears that 2004 was a high point, the peak is a function of a smaller number of countries included in that wave. If we restrict the sample to only those countries that had been included since 2006 the general trend for trust in local governments remained steady for six years before taking a significant decline in 2014. The public now has substantially less trust in their local government than ever before, as measured by the AmericasBarometer. This decline coincides with the highest level of perceived insecurity in the region since 2006.

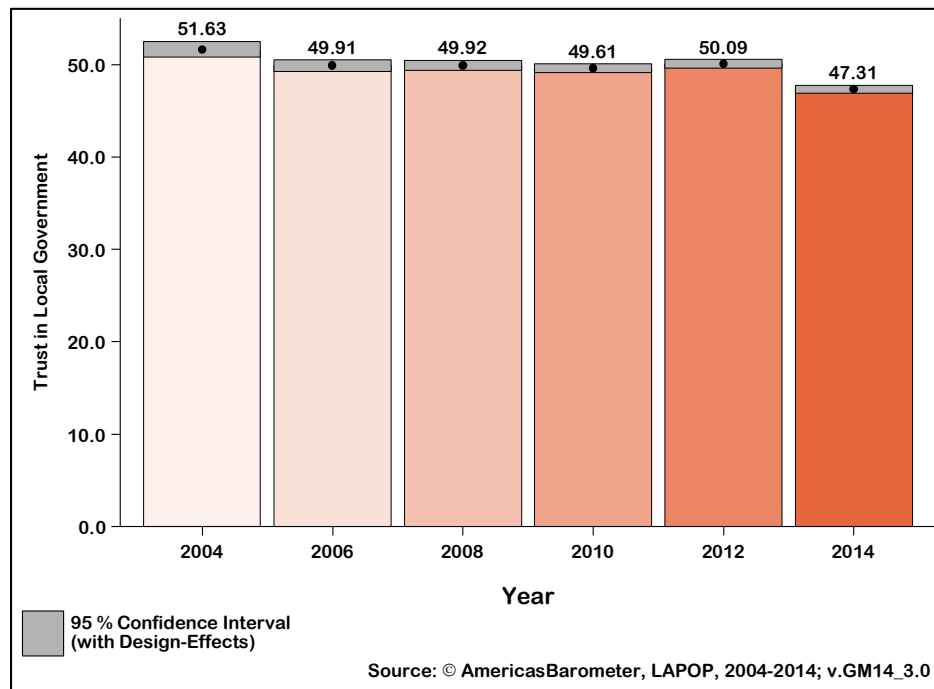
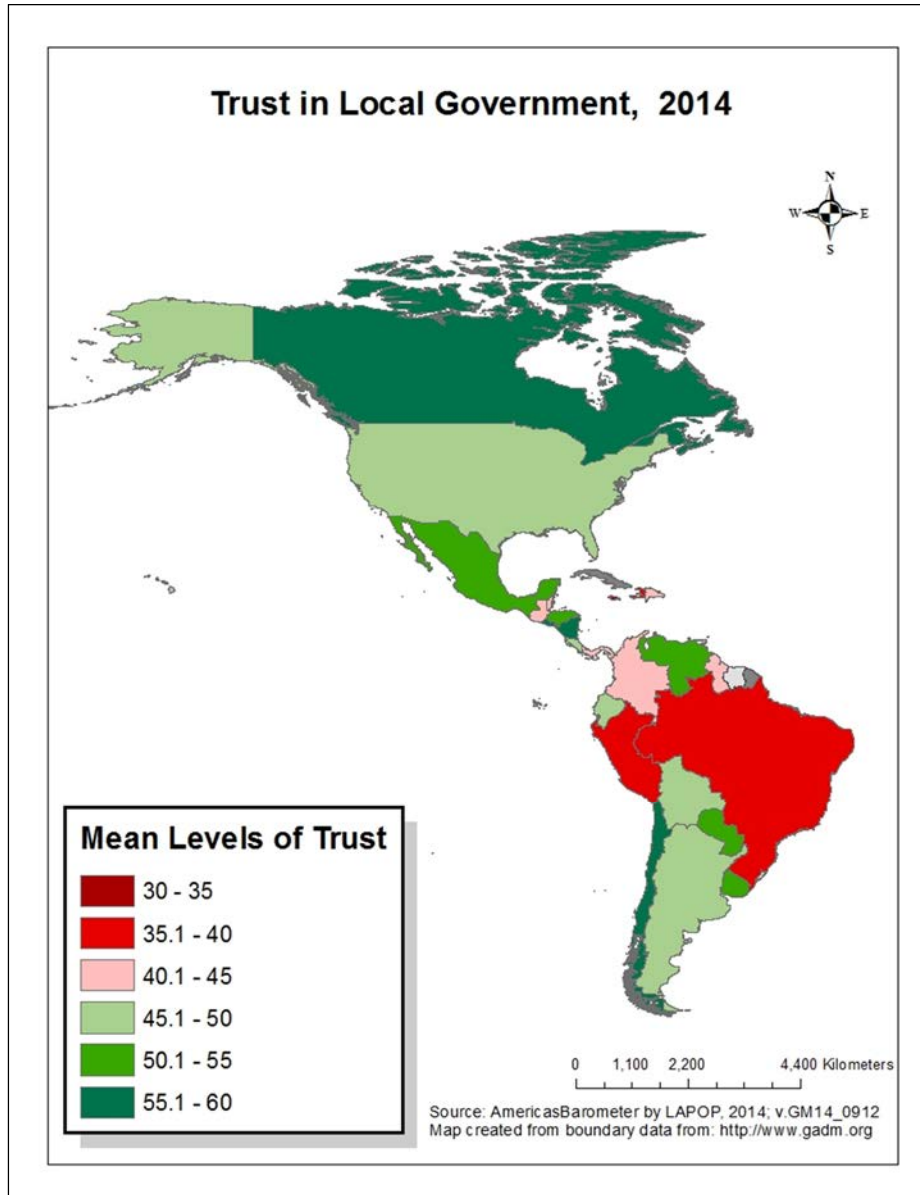


Figure 6.16. Trust in Local Government over Time



**Map 6.2. Trust in Local Government in the Countries of the Americas, 2014**

While the average level of trust in local government declined in the region, this decline was not uniform in the hemisphere. Map 6.2 presents average levels of trust in local government across the Americas on a 0-100 scale.<sup>8</sup> Compared to the 2012 wave most countries saw a slide in trust of local governments with Venezuela suffering the largest drop (from 59.4 to 50.2). Overall, the countries of the Southern Cone and North America appear to have the highest levels of trust in local governments although trust in local governments in Nicaragua is also high.

Comparing the results in Map 6.2 to those in Figure 6.8 there appears to be a linkage between trust in local government and satisfaction with local services across countries. For example, Chilean municipalities, which have moderate satisfaction with specific services, enjoy exceptionally high levels

<sup>8</sup> A bar chart version of this information, with standard error bars, is in the appendix.

of trust. However, across the region the individual-level measures of trust and satisfaction with local services (SGL1) are correlated ( $r = .39$ ).

Next we look at the factors that shape how much an individual trusts their local government. Using linear regression with country fixed effects, we test to see if interaction with local government and evaluations of local services predict levels of local political trust. Figure 6.17 indicates the most important factor shaping citizens' trust in local government is how they perceive the quality of municipal services.

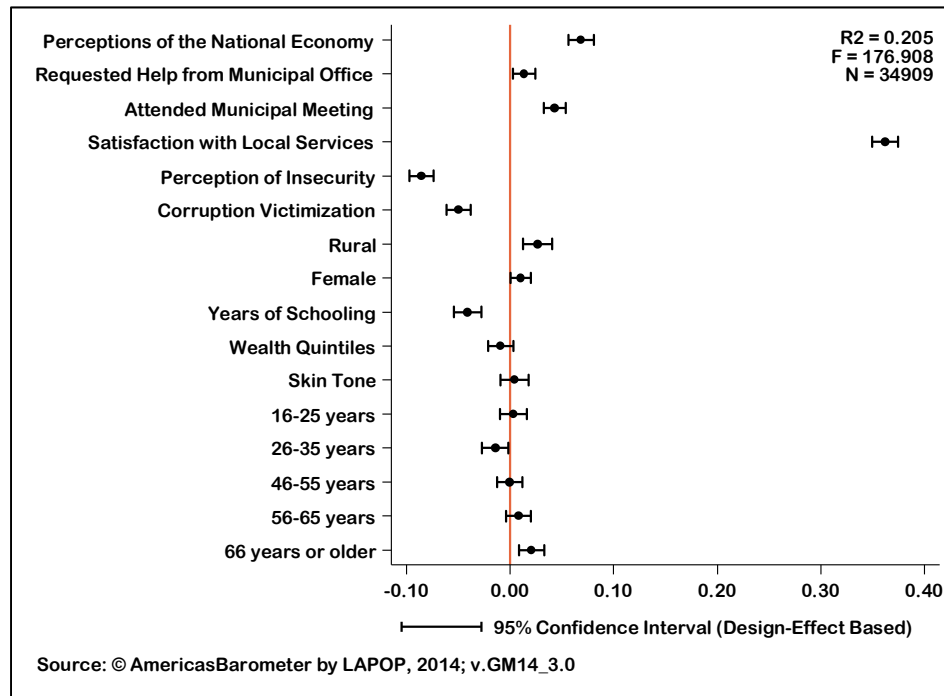


Figure 6.17. Determinants of Trust in Local Government, 2014

Attending a municipal meeting also exhibits a positive relationship with trust in the local government, but its coefficient is only about 1/8<sup>th</sup> the size of the coefficient for evaluation of services. Overall, we see individuals who interact with their local government and rate the performance of the municipality more favorably express higher levels of trust in the institution.

Again we find a halo-effect between individuals' views of the national economy and trust in their local government. The more positive is one's view of the national economic outlook, the greater the level of trust in the local government. While economic outlook is positively correlated with trust in local government, individual-level factors associated with more advanced economies are not. People with higher levels of educational attainment and who live in urban areas are *less* trusting of their local governments. Also, similar to the determinants of who makes requests or demands of their local government, skin tone is not related to trust in local government.<sup>9</sup> People of darker skin tones, often minorities in the hemisphere (overall, though not necessarily in particular countries), appear to not view local governments any differently than others on average. If decentralization and local government reforms were designed to help enfranchise the traditionally disenfranchised (darker skin tone) these findings might be viewed as mixed. While people traditionally excluded from power have similar levels

<sup>9</sup> Excluding the Caribbean countries and Guyana has no effect on the skin tone result.



of trust in their local government can be seen as a success, if we consider the effect of satisfaction with local services the outcome is more mixed. As Figure 6.15 illustrates, the poorest in society tend to have the lowest evaluations of services—a crucial predictor of trust in local government. Women appear to display similar levels of trust in local government as men; thus, also bringing evidence that decentralization may have the ability to improve gender parity for government responsiveness.

Finally, we observe that negative perceptions of physical security and corruption victimization have negative correlations with trust in local government. The result for perception of insecurity is particularly interesting because it occurs at a time when citizens of the Americas have the highest average level of perceived insecurity since 2006. These results are unchanged if we use reported neighborhood crime instead of insecurity perceptions.

## **VI. Conclusion**

In 2014 we see two diverging trends with regards to citizen interaction with local government in the Americas. On the one hand, after eight years of decline, we observe an uptick in the number of people making demands of their local officials. On the other hand, 2014 marked a significant drop in the number of people attending local government meetings after years of stable levels. A potentially positive explanation may be the expansion of e-government in the region with countries like Mexico investing heavily in online communication linkages for citizens. However, in light of an overall decline in institutional trust, discussed below, it is difficult to be overly sanguine about the effects of declining participation. Moreover, while the number of people making demands on their local government continues to rise, satisfaction with local government services remains lower among those who made a demand on local governments than among those who did not, which may imply that the quality of the interactions citizens are having with local governments as they make these requests is poor.

Although the overall trend in citizen participation in local government declined somewhat, there are significant differences between the countries in the region. Haiti continues to have the greatest level of participation, with 15% attending a town meeting, while only 4.9% of Argentines report having attended. A similar spread is observed for making demands on local government; yet, Haitians are near the bottom while some countries with low meeting attendance rates are at the top (Uruguay). While the aggregate relationship between meeting attendance and demand making is weak at the national level, there is a strong link between participating in meetings and making demands at the individual level: those who attended meetings were 32% more likely to make demands or requests of their local government.

Turning to local government performance, many people view municipal services as neither good nor bad. In the region as a whole, there is a slight increase in the average assessment of services after eight years of no change. In a few countries people give particularly low scores (e.g., Haiti, Brazil, Jamaica) or high scores (e.g., Panama and Canada), but in most countries the average citizen gives services a middling score near 50 out of 100. This finding holds if we break local services down to three specific areas (public health care, public school, and roads). In short, perceptions of local government are mediocre: local governments are not failing the average citizen but, at the same time, there is clearly room for improvement.

More discouraging is the new low in citizens' trust in local government observed in 2014. Again Haiti, Brazil, and Jamaica (along with Peru) have some of the lowest trust in local governments. When looking at what factors are linked to high institutional trust we see trust in local government is significantly associated with the perceived performance of the government (via services) and whether or not they directly take part in local government meetings. The fact that these evaluations and levels of participation have increased somewhat while trust has declined implies other factors must be at work. Figure 6.17 indicates that corruption, perceptions of insecurity, and perceived negative economic outlooks are likely drivers for the drop in trust.

Since the local level of government is often the only place citizens come in to direct contact with the state, it seems reasonable that to expect citizens' attitudes toward local government reflect, or are reflected in, their broader political attitudes and belief systems. We assess this in the next chapter by investigating how perceptions of local government performance predict support for democratic norms, the legitimacy of political institutions, and political tolerance.

## Appendix

### Appendix 6.1: Making Demands of Local Government (NP2)

	Standardized Coefficients	(t)
66 years or older	0.020	(1.08)
56-65 years	0.059*	(3.14)
46-55 years	0.051*	(2.54)
26-35 years	-0.044*	(-1.98)
16-25 years	-0.181*	(-7.50)
Skin Tone	0.032	(1.49)
Wealth Quintiles	-0.065*	(-3.23)
Years of Schooling	0.079*	(3.59)
Woman	0.068*	(3.99)
Rural	0.126*	(5.88)
Respondent Was Asked to Pay a Bribe	0.195*	(10.96)
Perception of Neighborhood Insecurity	0.028	(1.56)
Satisfaction with Services of Local Government	-0.117*	(-6.14)
Attended Municipal Meeting	0.549*	(39.56)
Perceptions of the National Economy	0.034	(1.80)
Guatemala	-0.107*	(-4.65)
El Salvador	-0.075*	(-3.44)
Honduras	-0.076*	(-3.35)
Nicaragua	0.064*	(2.98)
Costa Rica	-0.111*	(-4.34)
Panama	-0.128*	(-4.66)
Colombia	-0.058*	(-2.73)
Ecuador	-0.094*	(-3.13)
Bolivia	-0.173*	(-4.89)
Peru	-0.001	(-0.03)
Paraguay	-0.047*	(-2.53)
Chile	0.026	(1.05)
Uruguay	0.085*	(4.31)
Brazil	-0.032	(-1.47)
Venezuela	-0.104*	(-5.25)
Argentina	-0.005	(-0.28)
Dominican Republic	-0.033	(-1.34)
Haiti	-0.222*	(-9.76)
Jamaica	-0.089*	(-3.81)
Guyana	-0.183*	(-7.83)
Trinidad and Tobago	-0.046*	(-2.08)
Belize	-0.052*	(-2.49)
Constant	-1.945*	(-85.53)
F	59.78	
No. of cases	35310	
Regression-Standardized Coefficients with t-Statistics based on Standard Errors Adjusted for the Survey Design. * p<0.05		

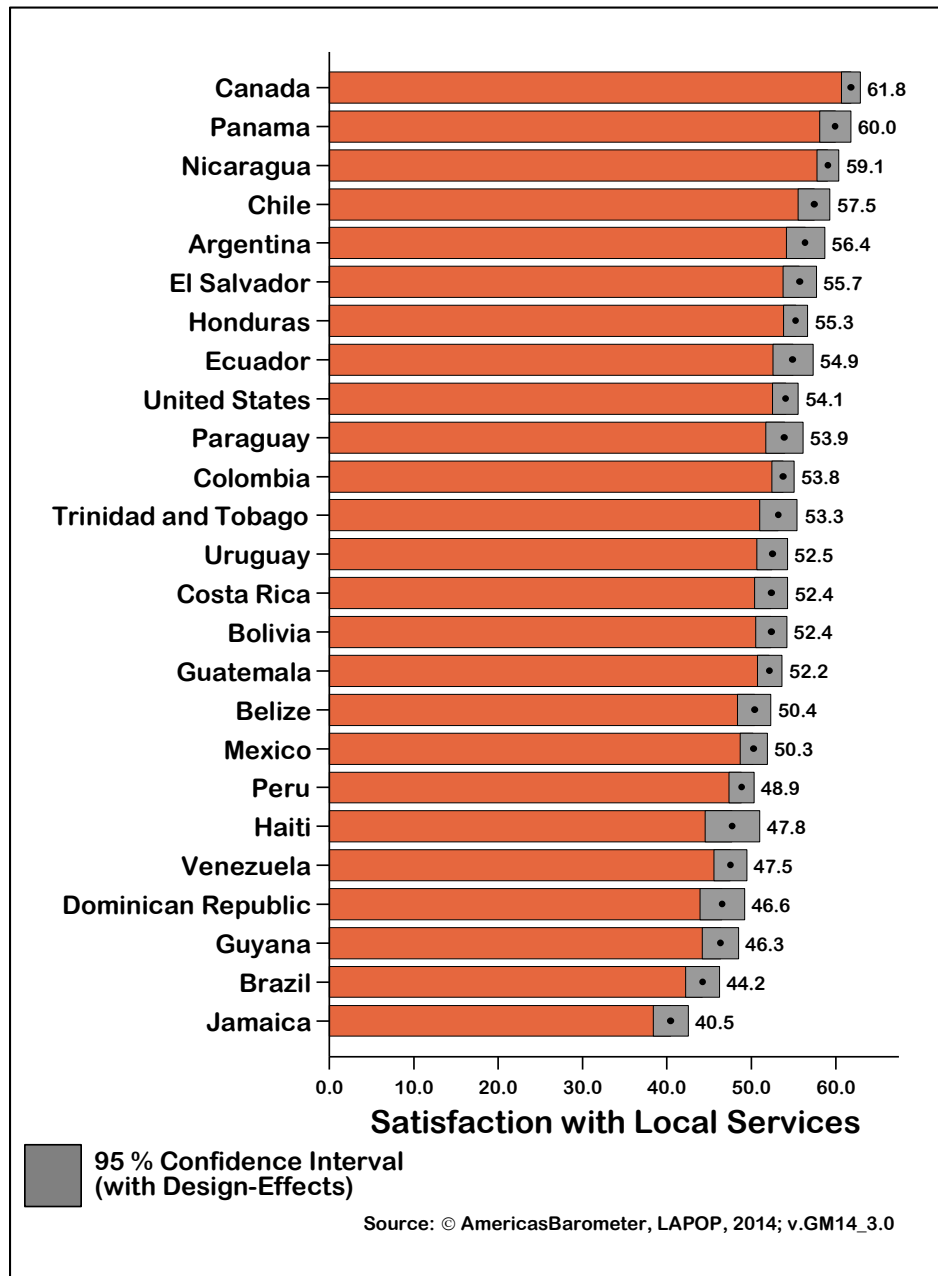
## Appendix 6.2: Evaluation of Local Services SGL

	Standardized Coefficients	(t)
66 years or older	-0.000	(-0.02)
56-65 years	-0.005	(-0.70)
46-55 years	-0.001	(-0.09)
26-35 years	0.015*	(2.12)
16-25 years	0.056*	(8.08)
Skin Tone	-0.017*	(-2.21)
Wealth Quintiles	0.039*	(5.52)
Years of Schooling	-0.017*	(-2.21)
Woman	0.039*	(7.42)
Rural	-0.034*	(-3.79)
Respondent Was Asked to Pay a Bribe	-0.034*	(-5.38)
Perception of Neighborhood Insecurity	-0.113*	(-16.72)
Attended Municipal Meeting	0.056*	(8.63)
Requested Help from Municipal Office	-0.041*	(-6.22)
Perceptions of the National Economy	0.141*	(20.54)
Guatemala	0.013	(1.46)
El Salvador	0.027*	(2.56)
Honduras	0.027*	(2.95)
Nicaragua	0.046*	(5.54)
Costa Rica	0.011	(1.05)
Panama	0.050*	(5.15)
Colombia	0.010	(1.22)
Ecuador	-0.002	(-0.16)
Bolivia	-0.004	(-0.32)
Peru	-0.022*	(-2.75)
Paraguay	0.010	(1.08)
Chile	0.021*	(2.16)
Uruguay	-0.008	(-0.92)
Brazil	-0.065*	(-6.54)
Venezuela	-0.010	(-1.10)
Argentina	0.034*	(3.84)
Dominican Republic	-0.051*	(-3.56)
Haiti	-0.024	(-1.76)
Jamaica	-0.088*	(-8.81)
Guyana	-0.042*	(-4.21)
Trinidad and Tobago	-0.007	(-0.74)
Belize	-0.002	(-0.27)
Constant	-0.001	(-0.06)
Constant	-0.001	
F	47.69	
No. of cases	35310	
R-Squared	0.08	
Regression-Standardized Coefficients with t-Statistics based on Standard Errors Adjusted for the Survey Design. * p<0.05		

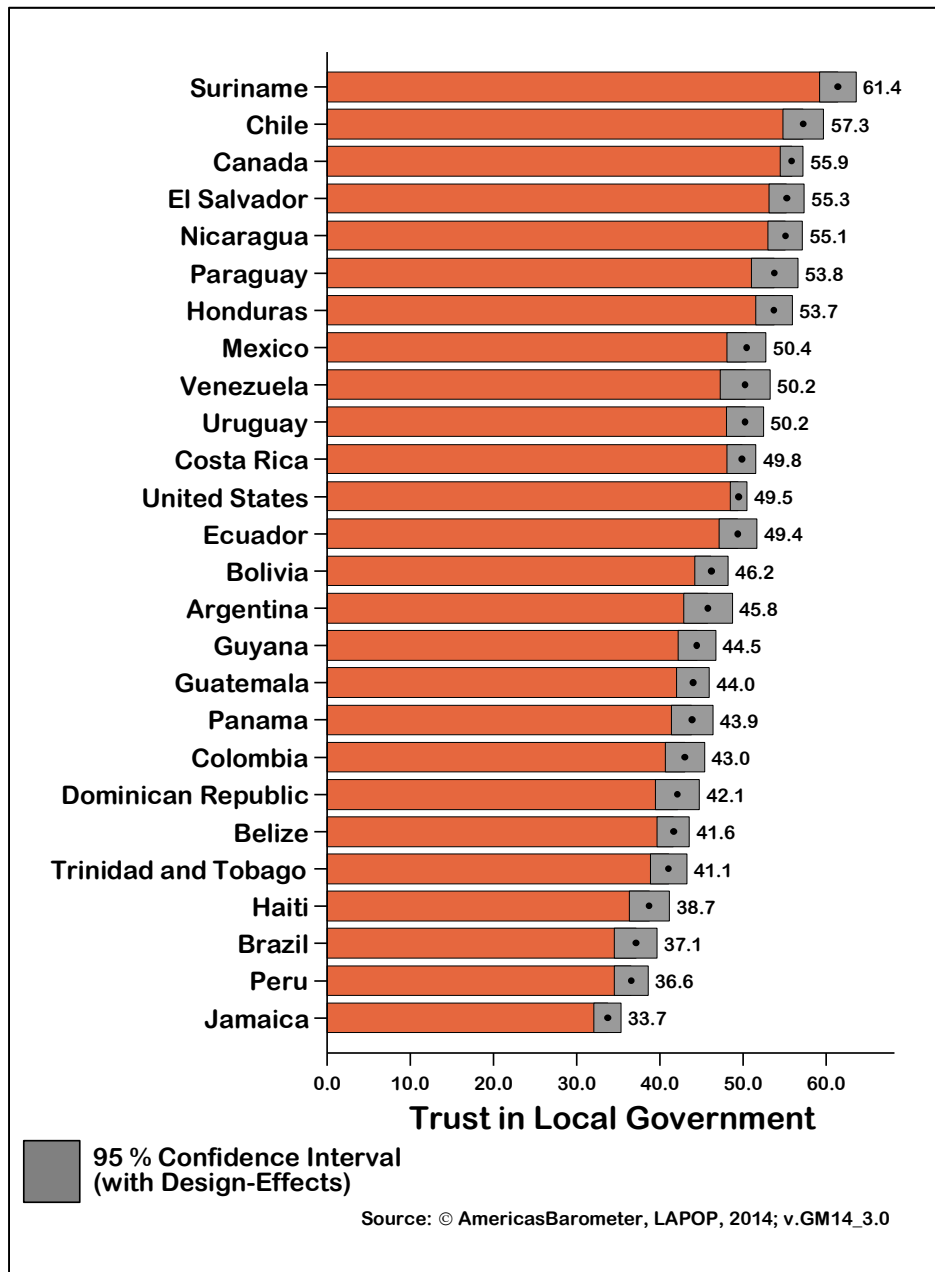
**Appendix 6.3: Trust in Local Government (B32)**

	Standardized Coefficients	(t)
66 years or older	0.021*	(3.39)
56-65 years	0.008	(1.34)
46-55 years	-0.000	(-0.04)
26-35 years	-0.014*	(-2.21)
16-25 years	0.003	(0.51)
Skin Tone	0.004	(0.63)
Wealth Quintiles	-0.009	(-1.47)
Years of Schooling	-0.041*	(-6.01)
Woman	0.010*	(2.03)
Rural	0.026*	(3.69)
Respondent Was Asked to Pay a Bribe	-0.050*	(-8.50)
Perception of Neighborhood Insecurity	-0.085*	(-14.50)
Satisfaction with Local Services	0.362*	(57.04)
Attended Municipal Meeting	0.043*	(7.93)
Requested Help from Municipal Office	0.014*	(2.47)
Perceptions of the National Economy	0.069*	(11.10)
Guatemala	-0.057*	(-6.68)
El Salvador	0.000	(0.04)
Honduras	-0.007	(-0.81)
Nicaragua	-0.018	(-1.92)
Costa Rica	-0.017*	(-2.13)
Panama	-0.087*	(-8.80)
Colombia	-0.064*	(-6.94)
Ecuador	-0.049*	(-4.41)
Bolivia	-0.058*	(-5.08)
Peru	-0.079*	(-10.37)
Paraguay	-0.000	(-0.06)
Chile	0.007	(0.75)
Uruguay	-0.021*	(-2.70)
Brazil	-0.072*	(-7.86)
Venezuela	0.018	(1.79)
Argentina	-0.038*	(-4.37)
Dominican Republic	-0.055*	(-5.59)
Haiti	-0.071*	(-7.39)
Jamaica	-0.087*	(-11.12)
Guyana	-0.037*	(-3.93)
Trinidad and Tobago	-0.076*	(-9.78)
Belize	-0.055*	(-7.30)
Constant	0.044*	(5.49)
F	176.91	
No. of cases	34909	
R-Squared	0.20	
Regression-Standardized Coefficients with t-Statistics based on Standard Errors Adjusted for the Survey Design. * p<0.05		

### Appendix 6.4: Evaluations of Local Government Services in the Countries of the Americas, 2014



### Appendix 6.5: Trust in Local Government in the Countries of the Americas





## Chapter 7. A Decade of Democratic Legitimacy in the Americas

*Ryan E. Carlin, Gregory J. Love, and Matthew M. Singer*

### I. Introduction

Philosophers and political scientists have asked what makes democracy tick since the times of Plato. One of the secrets of democracy's success is that it can generate and maintain legitimacy while giving its detractors a political voice. Yet if democratic values start to slip, political instability could result. This chapter provides a time-lapsed photo of democratic legitimacy and political tolerance among the citizens of the Americas over the decade 2004-2014 and analyzes the factors that shape these orientations and values.

Because it captures the relationship between citizens and state institutions, legitimacy plays a defining role in the study of political culture and is key for democratic stability and quality (Almond and Verba 1963; Diamond 1999; Booth and Seligson 2009). LAPOP defines political legitimacy in terms of citizen support for the political system. In theory, political legitimacy or “system support” has two central dimensions: diffuse and specific support (Easton 1975). While specific support concerns citizen evaluations of the incumbent authorities, diffuse system support refers to a generalized attachment to the more abstract objects represented by the political system and the political institutions themselves. LAPOP's measure of system support (operationalized through the AmericasBarometer survey data) captures the diffuse dimension of support that is central to democratic survival (Booth and Seligson 2009).

Democratic legitimacy is a product of both contextual and individual factors. Prominent among the contextual explanations is the idea that certain cultures naturally have higher levels of political legitimacy. Institutional features that make electoral defeat more palatable, e.g. that make legislative representation more proportional, can further bolster system support, especially among election losers (Anderson et al. 2005; Carlin and Singer 2011). Other scholars, however, propose that the level of economic development influences citizens' attitudes about the political system (e.g. Lipset 1963; Almond and Verba 1963; Inglehart 1988). In particular, education is often shown to be strongly correlated with the development of democratic values in Latin America (Booth and Seligson 2009, Carlin 2006, Carlin and Singer 2011). Thus support for the political system is often theorized to be stable in the short run because strong most contextual factors are fairly static or slow moving.

However, this may not always be the case. Individual-level factors that change more frequently can partially determine the degree of legitimacy citizens accord the democratic system. In particular, a weakening economy, a rise in crime and insecurity, and poor governance can all undermine democratic legitimacy (Duch 1995; Evans and Whitefield 1995; Bratton and Mattes 2001; Booth and Seligson 2009; Seligson 2002, 2006; Morris 2008; Salinas and Booth 2011). The 2012 AmericasBarometer Regional Report found how citizens in the Americas perceive or experience economic outcomes; the integrity of state officials; and the security situation influences how they evaluate the political system (Carlin et al. 2013).

To understand what makes political support unstable, some scholars use the imagery of a reservoir: extended periods of strong performance raise the levels of support high enough so that in hard



times the regime can draw on these reserves of legitimacy to sustain itself. In such circumstances, the regime takes on inherent value and political support is robust to economic shocks and short downturns in performance (Easton 1975; Lipset 1963). But few Latin American and Caribbean democracies have enjoyed long interrupted periods of prosperity and good governance. Thus the reservoirs of political support in the region are likely to remain shallow and to ebb and flow with recent performance.

Political tolerance is a second major component of political culture and a central pillar of democratic survival. In line with previous LAPOP research, political tolerance is defined as “the respect by citizens for the political rights of others, especially those with whom they may disagree.” Intolerance has nefarious effects on the quality of democracy. Among both the mass public and elites, it is linked to support for policies that seek to constrain individual freedoms (Gibson 1988, 1995, 1998, 2008).

Why are some citizens intolerant? Scholars believe many micro-level factors affect tolerance including perceptions of high levels of threat (Marcus, Neuman and MacKuen 2000; Merolla and Zechmeister 2009), authoritarian personality (Altemeyer 2007), gender (Golebiowska 1999), and religion (Stouffer 1955). At the macro level, more developed countries present higher levels of support for same-sex marriage (Lodola and Corral 2013) and have generally more tolerant citizenries (Inglehart and Welzel 2005; Peffley and Rohrschneider 2003). External threats and security crises as well as levels of democratization are also related to tolerance.

## **II. Main Findings**

This chapter covers two main sets of themes. First, it documents the breadth of democratic attitudes in the Americas. Some key findings include:

- Support for democracy as a form of government is fairly stable but has fallen slightly since 2012.
- Levels of trust in political and social institutions are generally falling, with the Catholic Church and the Army the most trusted, and political parties the least. Of all institutions, trust in elections suffered the greatest decline between 2012 and 2014.
- Among law-and-order institutions – armed forces, national police, and justice system – the justice system enjoys the least public trust and that trust declined the most since 2012.
- Though stable between 2004-2012, overall political system support dropped in 2014. Components tapping beliefs about the legitimacy of courts and rights protection deteriorated most. Several cases exhibit great volatility over time.
- Though stable between 2004-2012, political tolerance decreased in 2014 both overall and across each of its components. Major volatility is detected over time in several cases.
- Previously steady levels of attitudes conducive to democracy stability fell as attitudes that place democracy at risk rose dramatically.

Second, this chapter considers what factors lead citizens to have different attitudes toward the political system. The evidence from these analyses is consistent with the following conclusions:

- System support in the Americas reflects the performance of and experiences with government at the national and local levels in broad policy areas such as neighborhood security, the economy, and corruption.
- Political tolerance is reduced among those who judge the president and local government as performing well. In short, those benefiting from the status quo are less likely to tolerate dissenting elements within society.
- Education and wealth have slight negative effects on system support, but strong positive effects on political tolerance. Compared to citizens aged 36-45, the younger and older cohorts are more supportive of the political system, and older cohorts are more politically tolerant. Women are more supportive of the political system than men but less politically tolerant.

The rest of the chapter unfolds as follows. Section III looks at stated support for “democracy” as the best form of government over time. Section IV examines trust in major political and social institutions in the region. Special attention is given to institutions responsible for establishing and upholding law and order. Section V’s goal is to explore the attitudes theorized to foster stable democracy. Its first two subsections describe levels of (a) Support for the Political System and (b) Political Tolerance from 2004 to 2014 and within the region in 2014. Regression analyses probe what kinds of citizens are most likely to hold these two sets of attitudes. A third subsection derives attitudinal profiles from these two measures in order to gauge (c) Attitudes Conducive to Democratic Stability at the regional level since 2004 and cross-nationally in 2014. Section VI concludes with the main findings and a discussion of their potential implications.

### III. Support for Democracy

As an entrée into a decade of gauging democratic legitimacy in the Americas, we analyze support for democracy in the abstract. This diffuse form of political legitimacy is a basic requirement for democratic consolidation. One way the AmericasBarometer measures abstract support for democracy is by asking citizens to respond to a statement that is a modification of a quote from Winston Churchill<sup>1</sup> and inspired by the work of Rose and Mishler (1996). The “Churchillian” question uses a 7-point response scale, which has been rescaled, as is standard practice at LAPOP, to run from 0 (“strongly disagree”) to 100 (“strongly agree”):

**ING4.** Changing the subject again, 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?

While overall belief in democracy as the best system of government is reasonably high in the Americas, Figure 7.1 shows the 2014 regional average<sup>2</sup> is slightly lower than the 2012 level and its apex in 2008. The same pattern emerges among only those countries the AmericasBarometer has included

<sup>1</sup> Churchill actually referred to democracy as “the worst form of government except for all the others.”

<sup>2</sup> As with all other figures in this report that display the regional average, countries are weighted equally and thus the numbers represent the percentages in an average country in the hemisphere..

since 2006<sup>3</sup> and by sub-region.<sup>4</sup> Thus, support for democracy as a form of government in the Americas peaked in 2008, plateaued through 2012, but fell in 2014 to levels on par with those in the middle of the last decade.

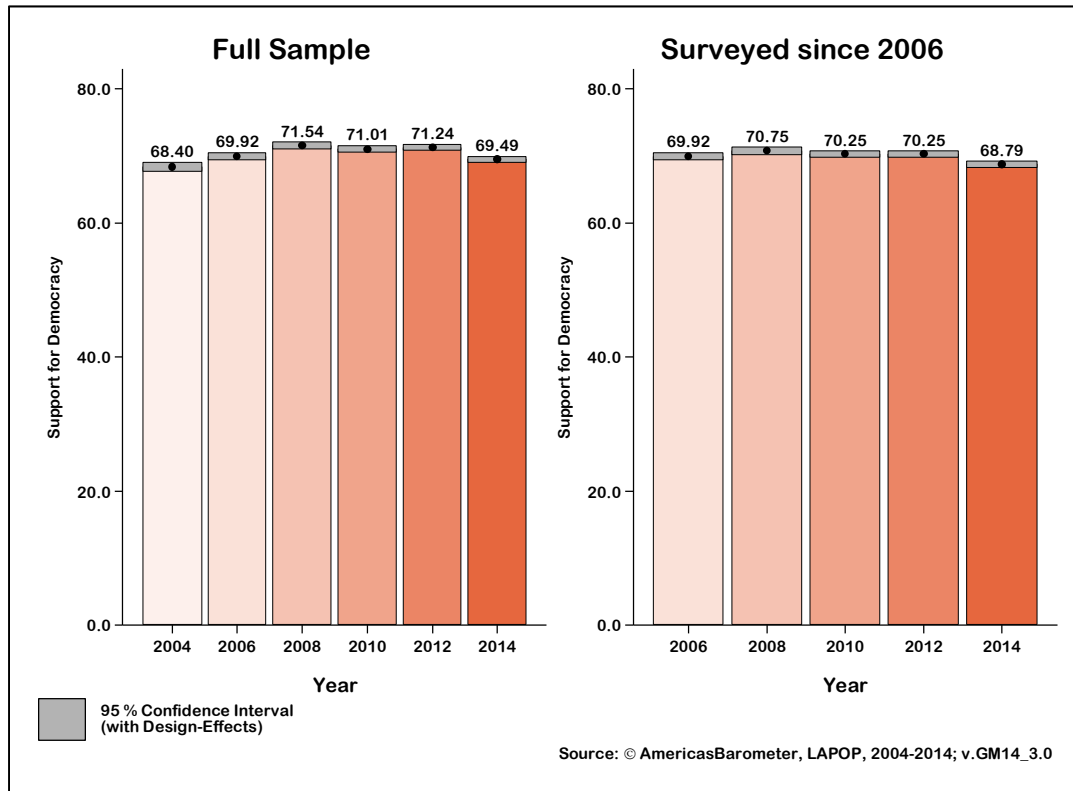


Figure 7.1. Support for Democracy in the Americas over Time

#### IV. Trust in Political and Social Institutions

To what extent do citizens in the Americas support major political and social institutions? Like previous rounds of the AmericasBarometer, the 2014 round asked about trust in a number of specific institutions. Using a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 represented “not at all,” and 7 represented “a lot,” citizens responded to the following questions:

<b>B10A.</b> To what extent do you trust the justice system?
<b>B12.</b> To what extent do you trust the Armed Forces?
<b>B13.</b> To what extent do you trust the National Congress?
<b>B18.</b> To what extent do you trust the National Police?
<b>B20.</b> To what extent do you trust the Catholic Church?
<b>B20A.</b> To what extent do you trust the Evangelical/Protestant Church?

<sup>3</sup> Among the Latin American countries, only Argentina is excluded since it was first surveyed in 2008.

<sup>4</sup> Sub-regions refer to Mexico and Central America, the Andes, the Southern Cone, and the Caribbean. Only in the latter is the shape substantively different. Support for democracy peaked in 2004 and rebounded in 2012 and then fell all the more in 2014.

<b>B21.</b> To what extent do you trust the political parties?
<b>B21A.</b> To what extent do you trust the President/Prime Minister?
<b>B47A.</b> To what extent do you trust elections in this country?

As per the LAPOP standard, responses have been rescaled to run from 0 to 100. Results from the 2004-2014 AmericasBarometer reported in Figure 7.2 suggest levels of institutional trust form four distinct groupings. First, citizens of the Americas expressed the greatest levels of trust, on average, in the armed forces and the Catholic Church. The second most trusted set of institutions in the region includes the executive, the Evangelical/Protestant Church, elections, and national police forces. This set is followed by two major state organs: the justice system and the national legislature. Political parties stand alone as the least trusted institutions in the Americas.

Figure 7.2 also shows levels of trust in these social and political institutions over the decade 2004-2014. Trust has not increased in any of these institutions since 2012 and, in most cases, it has decreased.<sup>5</sup> The largest drop-off since 2012 is in trust in elections (4.7 units). This drop has occurred despite almost half of the countries in the 2014 AmericasBarometer holding a national election between the beginning of 2013 and the end of 2014 fieldwork.<sup>6</sup> A drop in confidence in elections after elections have been held often reflects the disappointed opinions of supporters of the losing party (Anderson et al. 2005). Executive trust has also fallen on average since 2012 (4.1 units), although the variations across countries are substantial: it is bookended by a high of 71.1 in the Dominican Republic and a low of 36.5 in Venezuela. Trust in Evangelical/Protestant Churches fell substantially, as did trust in the Catholic Church, despite the naming of the first Pope from the Americas in 2013. Overall, this broad retreat in trust erases modest gains posted between 2008 and 2012 across all institutions.

<sup>5</sup> This conclusion holds within the sub-sample continuously studied since 2004, with one exception: average levels of trust in the armed forces increased significantly.

<sup>6</sup> Ecuador (February 2013, presidential/legislative), Trinidad & Tobago ((February 2013, presidential indirect), Venezuela (April 2013, presidential), Paraguay (April 2013, presidential), Argentina (October 2013, legislative), Chile (November 2013, presidential/legislative; December 2014, second-round presidential), Honduras (November 2013, presidential), Costa Rica (February 2014 first-round presidential; April 2014 second round), El Salvador (February 2014 first-round presidential; March 2014 second round), Colombia (March 2014, legislative; June 2014, presidential), Panama (May 2014).

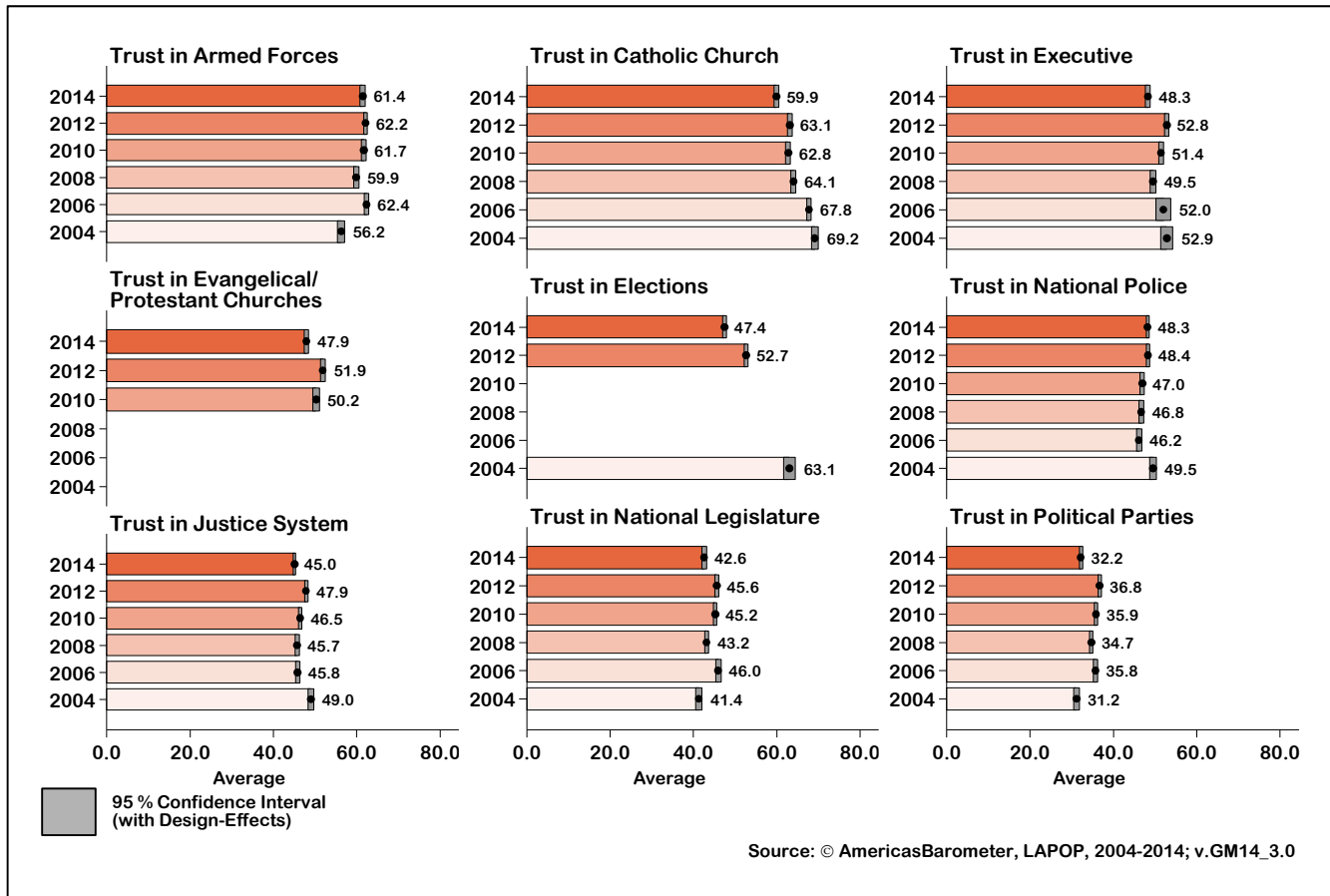


Figure 7.2. Trust in Institutions in the Americas, 2004-2014

Following on the thematic focus at the start of this report on the public opinion consequences of insecurity in the Americas, we now turn to the regional distribution of trust in three key law-and-order institutions: the armed forces, the national police, and the justice system. According to Figure 7.3, trust in the armed forces is generally high throughout the Americas. Ecuador leads in trust, trailed closely by Canada, the United States, and Guatemala. Only in Venezuela does it dip below 50 units.

High and stable regional levels of citizen trust in the armed forces mask massive over-time shifts within countries. For example, Venezuela reached its region-low levels after falling precipitously from 60 in 2012 to 42 units in 2014. And in Honduras, trust in the armed forces jumped from 52 in 2008 to 61 units in 2010, before plunging to 48 units in 2012 only to skyrocket to 64 units in 2014. These and other examples suggest the legitimacy of this key institution may correspond to the actual and potential role the military plays in politics.

If the armed forces are generally well trusted throughout the Americas, Figure 7.4 shows, by contrast, the national police are not. Average levels of trust in the national police sit below 40 units in over one third of the countries in the 2014 AmericasBarometer. Canada, Suriname and Chile top the region on this measure of institutional legitimacy, followed by Bahamas, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and Haiti. No country’s average level of trust in the national police surpasses 70 units.

Within the increasingly unruly Central American corridor, trust in the national police has been volatile over the 2004-2014 decade. Spikes and/or drops of 8 units or more on the 0-100 scale occurred

in all cases except Mexico and Nicaragua. Since 2012, however, there is no uniform trend. Public trust in the national police fell greatly in Belize (-13.8 units), moderately in Panama (-5.1), and slightly in El Salvador (-3.2); it rebounded mightily in Honduras (+18.1 units) and somewhat in Guatemala (+3.2); in Mexico and Nicaragua it did not change. In Brazil, where from 2011 to 2014 the national police played a central role in the “pacification” of slums in preparation for the World Cup, trust in the national police has fallen more than 7 units since 2010.

A third Figure (7.5), displays levels of trust in the justice system across the Americas in 2014. Of the three institutions of law and order, the justice system is clearly the one respondents view as the least legitimate. No country scores over 60 units, and most have mediocre trust levels of 40-49 units. Below that, in the 30-40 unit range, are two types of the countries: those in which trust in the justice system is perennially low (Peru and Paraguay) and those in which trust levels have eroded dramatically of late (Venezuela, Chile, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, and Bolivia).

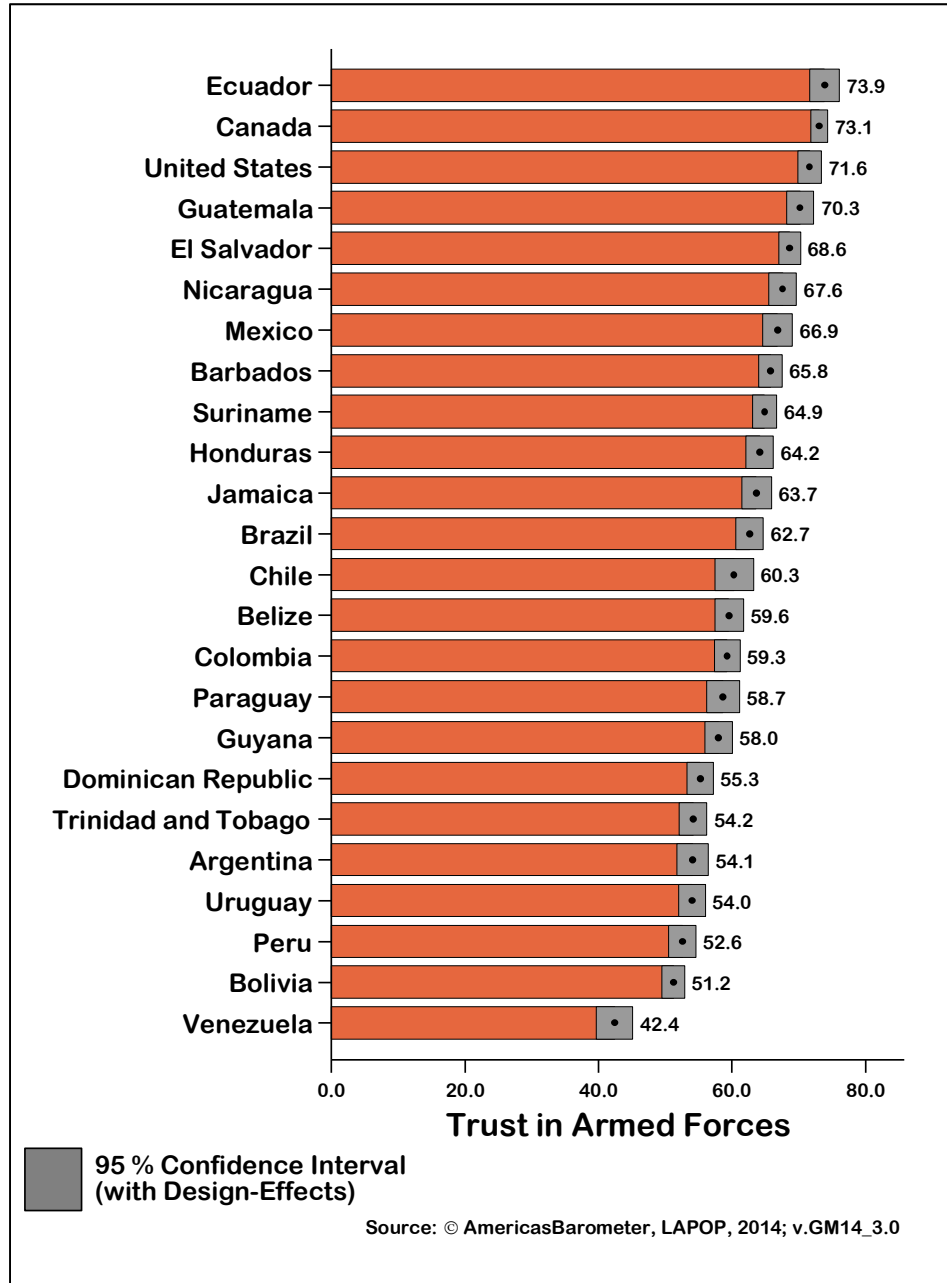
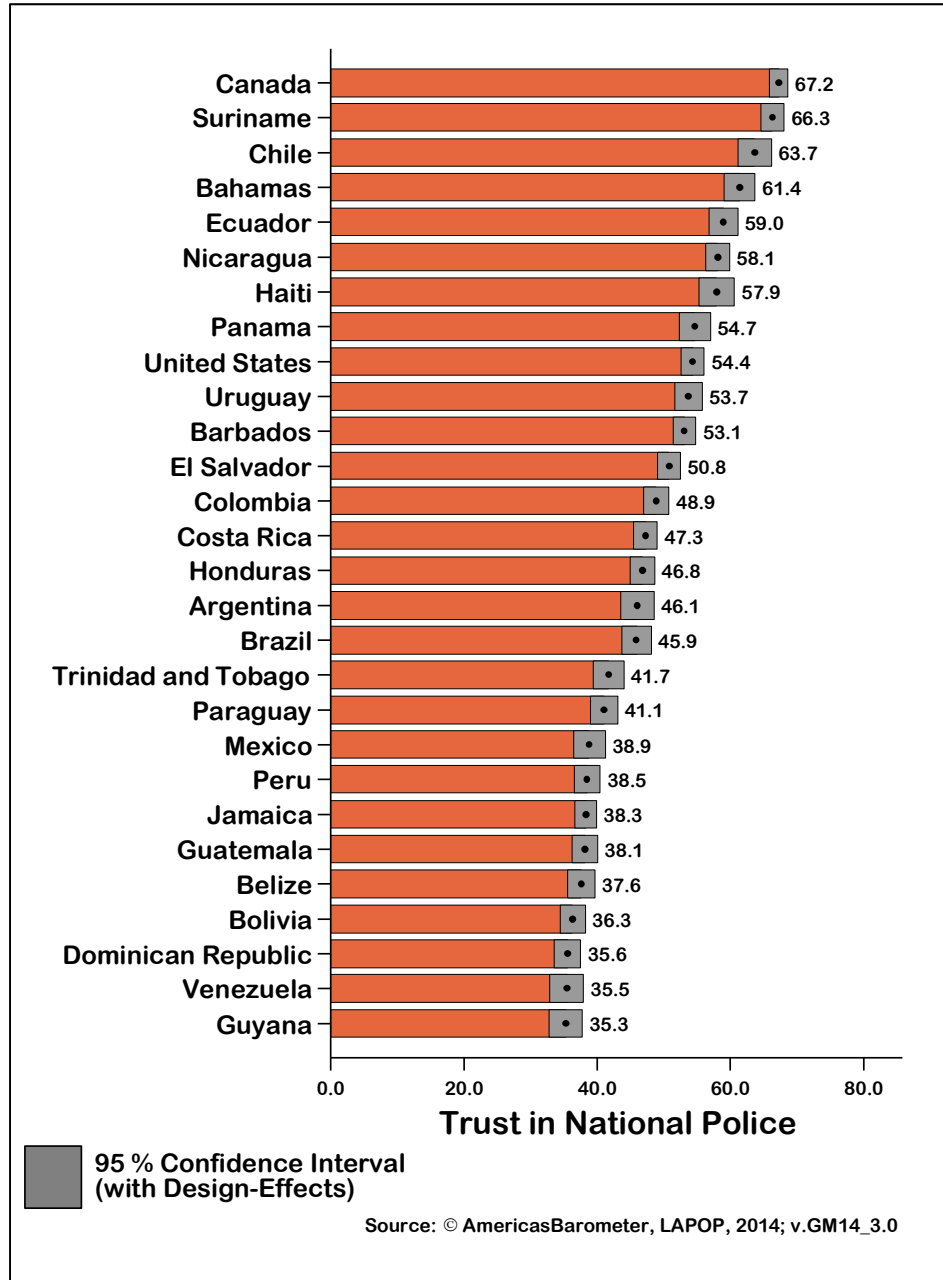


Figure 7.3. Trust in Armed Forces in the Americas, 2014



**Figure 7.4. Trust in National Police in the Americas, 2014**



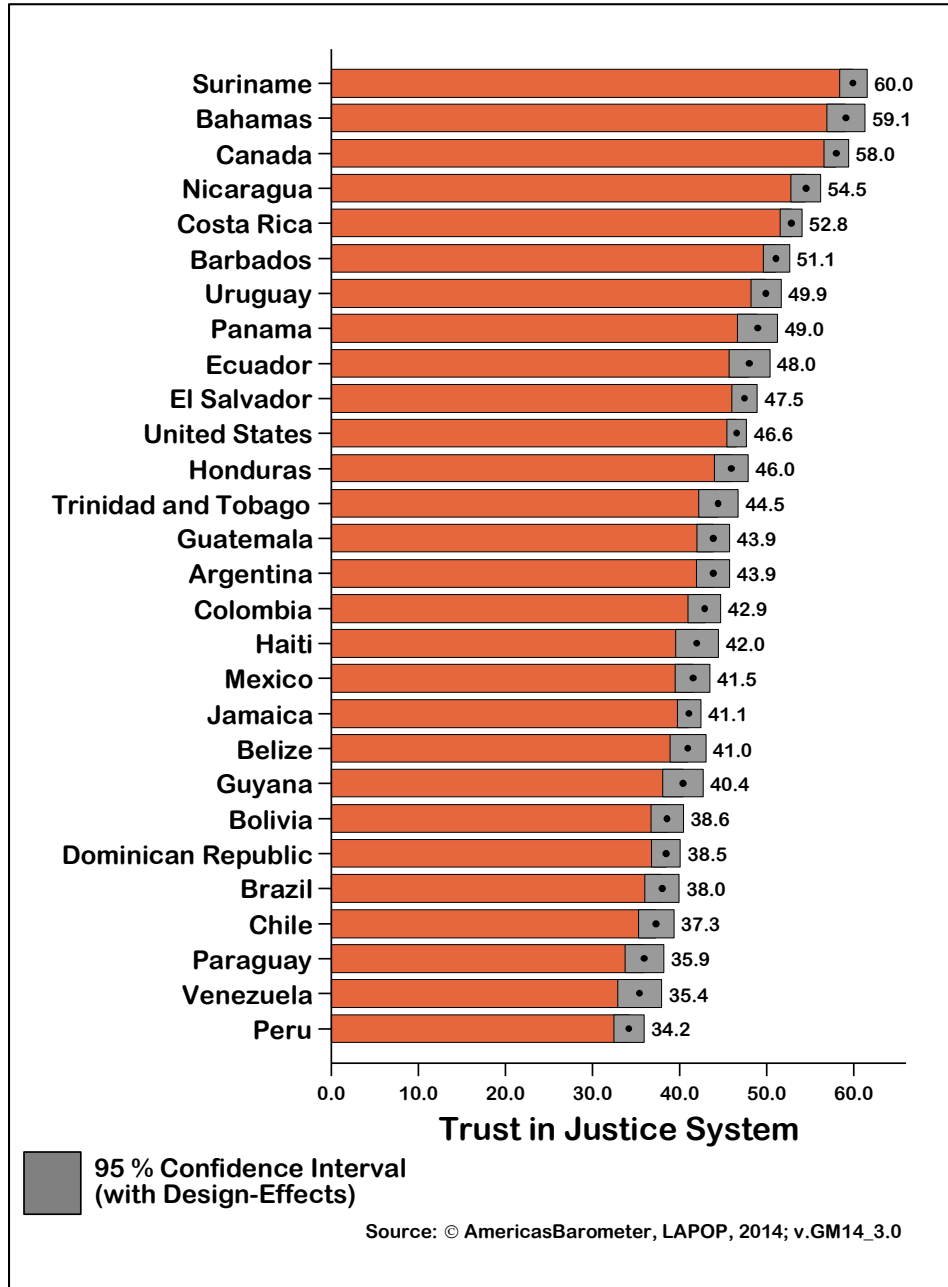


Figure 7.5. Trust in the Justice System in the Americas, 2014

Looking across all three 2014 figures, average levels of trust in institutions of law and order are highly, but by no means perfectly, correlated.<sup>7</sup> Yet two patterns stand out. Canada, the United States, Ecuador, and Nicaragua consistently register among the region’s highest levels of trust, while Venezuela, Peru, and Bolivia reliably register some of the lowest levels.

Of thematic interest is the role of neighborhood insecurity in the legitimacy of democratic institutions. An index based on the four questions introduced in Chapter 1 about burglary, drug dealing, blackmail/extortion, and murder in a respondent’s neighborhood is used to capture this concept.

<sup>7</sup> Trust in the Justice System and Trust in the Armed Forces:  $r = 0.42$ ; Trust in the Justice System and Trust in the National Police:  $r = 0.52$ ; Trust in the Armed Forces and Trust in the National Police:  $r = 0.46$ .



Responses were recoded 1 (“yes” the form of neighborhood insecurity took place in the last 12 months) and 0 (“no” it did not) and combined into an additive index rescaled to 0-100.<sup>8</sup>

Figure 7.6 illustrates how neighborhood insecurity varies across the Americas in 2014. Brazil, the Dominican Republic, and Venezuela stand out for their high levels of neighborhood insecurity. Most of the countries along the Andes-Central America-Mexico drugs supply chain fall within the next range, roughly equivalent to having one of these forms of neighborhood insecurity in the past year. Only Bolivia, Haiti, Jamaica, Guyana, Barbados, and Suriname are significantly lower than this threshold. Overall, then, the regional distribution runs from an average of just over two forms of neighborhood insecurity (50 units) to an average of less than one (20 units).

Does the low trust in rule of law institutions across the Americas reflect neighborhood insecurity? Below are fixed-effects regression models of trust in the national police (Figure 7.7) and trust in the justice system (Figure 7.8). Included are socioeconomic and demographic variables, a measure of presidential approval, and factors related to the performance of and experiences with local and national government.<sup>9</sup> These analyses will help determine whether neighborhood security is partially responsible for the low levels of trust in these key security-related state institutions.

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<sup>8</sup> These items are, respectively, VICBAR1, VICBAR3, VICBAR4, and VICBAR7. Polychoric principal components analysis suggests a single factor explains 65% of the variance among these variables, and a Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  coefficient of 0.63 suggests these variables form a fairly reliable scale.

<sup>9</sup> Full results available in Appendix 7.1 and 7.2. Models exclude the United States and Canada.

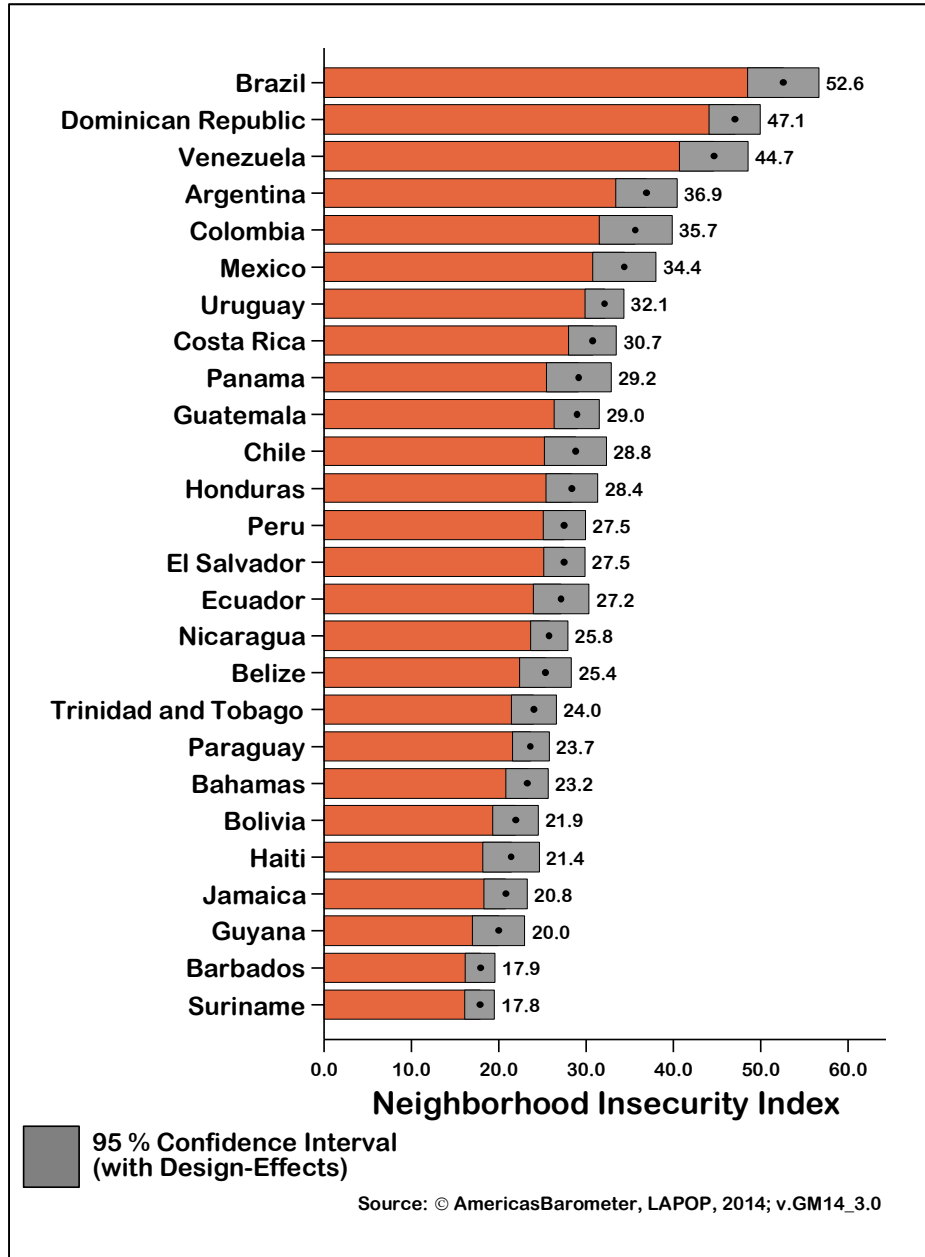
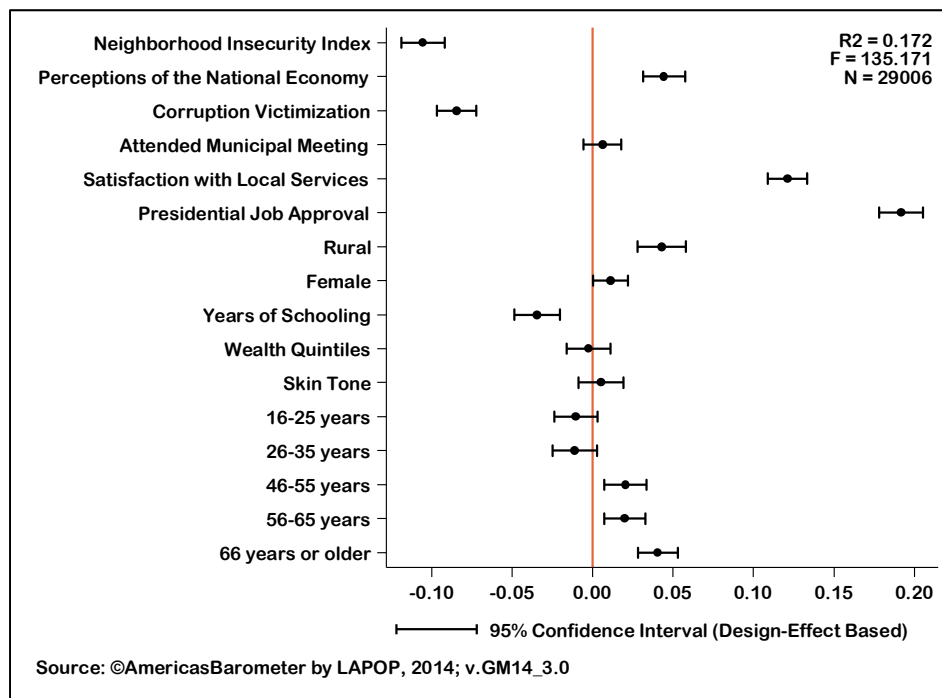


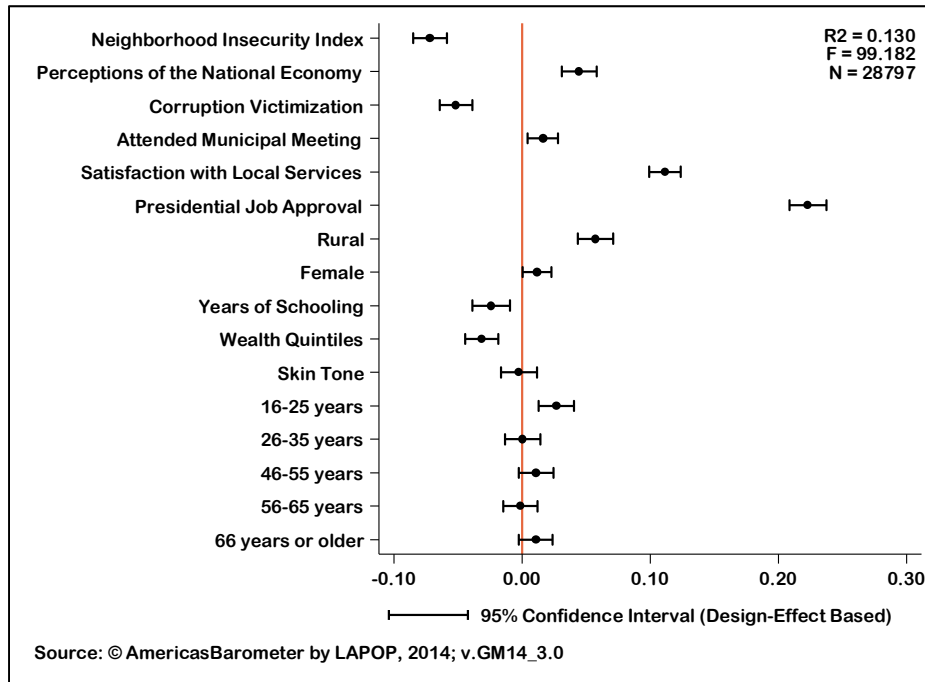
Figure 7.6. Neighborhood Security in the Americas, 2014



**Figure 7.7. Factors Associated with Trust in National Police in the Americas, 2014**

A straightforward inference from Figure 7.7 is that the more insecure citizens' neighborhoods are, the less they trust the national police. This effect is on par with that of being asked to pay a bribe. An auxiliary analysis not reported suggests the adverse effects of neighborhood insecurity are potentially larger than those of crime victimization. Citizens who are satisfied with municipal services are more trustful of the national police, as are those who approve of the executive. Rural residents and those of middle age or older are more likely to trust the national police than urbanites and younger cohorts. Education slightly weakens police trust.

Figure 7.8 reports an analysis of the factors related to individual-level trust in the justice system in the Americas. Neighborhood insecurity appears to erode trust in the justice system as well. Again, rosy perceptions of the municipal government and the executive correlate positively with trust in the justice system, as does attending local government meetings. Not only are the more educated less trustworthy, so are wealthier respondents. Citizens who live in rural areas and who are in the youngest cohort trust the justice system more than urban dwellers and all other age cohorts.



**Figure 7.8. Factors Associated with Trust in the Justice System in the Americas, 2014**

In sum, many institutions charged with upholding the law in the Americas lack citizen trust. Fairly high and stable regional levels of trust in the armed forces and the national police belie big changes within countries over time. Trust in the justice system is at critical levels in much of the Americas and has eroded quickly in some cases. The moderate correlation across these measures suggests that trust in one law and order institution does not necessarily translate into trust in the other two. Countries’ rule of law outcomes, measured by the World Justice Project, are significantly correlated with trust in these institutions.<sup>10</sup> Publics across the Americas, it seems, do not blindly grant legitimacy to the core institutions tasked with upholding law and order. Rather, these institutions must earn the public’s trust and support.

## V. Attitudinal Profiles Conducive to Democratic Stability

Stable democracies need citizens who grant their institutions legitimacy and who tolerate and respect the rights of dissenters. In other words, system support and political tolerance influence democratic stability or “consolidation.” The ways in which tolerance and system support are expected to affect stable democracy, according to previous LAPOP studies, are summarized in Table 7.1. If the majority shows high system support as well as high tolerance, democracy is expected to be stable and consolidated. On the contrary, if the majority is intolerant and unsupportive of democratic institutions, the democratic regime may be at risk of degradation or even breakdown. A third possibility is an unstable democracy, where the majority exhibits high political tolerance but accords political institutions low legitimacy; these cases might see some instability but critiques of the system are grounded in commitment to core democratic values. Finally, if the society has high system support but low tolerance,

<sup>10</sup> Order and Security correlates with trust in the armed forces ( $r = .34$ ), the national police ( $r = .67$ ), and the justice system ( $r = .50$ ). Correlations between Criminal Justice and these three institutions are, respectively,  $r = .44$ ,  $r = .69$ , and  $r = .45$ .

the conditions do not bode well for democracy and, at the extreme, are ripe for the regime to drift toward a more authoritarian model.

**Table 7.1. The Relationship between System Support and Political Tolerance**

	High Tolerance	Low Tolerance
High System Support	Stable Democracy	Authoritarian Stability
Low System Support	Unstable Democracy	Democracy at Risk

Notably, this conceptualization has empirical support. For example, Booth and Seligson used the 2008 AmericasBarometer to trace the serious warning signs of political instability in Honduras just before the military forces unconstitutionally exiled the then president Zelaya to Costa Rica (Booth and Seligson 2009; Pérez, Booth and Seligson 2010). A prior step to analyzing these attitudes in combination is to first examine these two dimensions – support for the political system and political tolerance – separately.

### *Support for the Political System*

Booth and Seligson (2009) have proposed a general way of looking at public support for the political system by measuring “system support” – a summary belief in the legitimacy of political institutions in a country and overall levels of support for how the political system is organized. It is measured using an index created from the mean of responses to the following questions from the AmericasBarometer survey:

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.
<b>B1.</b> To what extent do you think the courts in (country) guarantee a fair trial? ( <b>Read:</b> If you think the courts do not ensure justice <u>at all</u> , choose number 1; if you think the courts ensure justice a lot, choose number 7 or choose a point in between the two.)
<b>B2.</b> To what extent do you respect the political institutions of (country)?
<b>B3.</b> To what extent do you think that citizens' basic rights are well protected by the political system of (country)?
<b>B4.</b> To what extent do you feel proud of living under the political system of (country)?
<b>B6.</b> To what extent do you think that one should support the political system of (country)?

Responses to each question were based on a 7-point scale, running from 1 (“not at all”) to 7 (“a lot”). Following the LAPOP standard, the resulting index is rescaled from 0 to 100, so that 0 represents very low support for the political system, and 100 represents very high support. Responses for each component have also been rescaled from 0 to 100 for presentation.

Figure 7.9 compares levels of the system support index and its five components for countries included in the AmericasBarometer since 2006. On the whole, system support in the Americas in 2014 is down two units from readings in 2012 and 2010. Broken down into regions, however, one finds decreases on the order of three to four units in the Andes, Southern Cone, and Caribbean but an increase

of roughly three points in Mexico and Central America. On the other hand, significant declines across all regions in the beliefs that the courts guarantee a fair trial and that the political system respects citizens' basic rights combined to pull the index lower in 2014.<sup>11</sup> Considered in tandem with the low levels of trust in the justice system presented in Figure 7.5, the judiciary appears to pose a major hurdle to strong political support in the hemisphere.

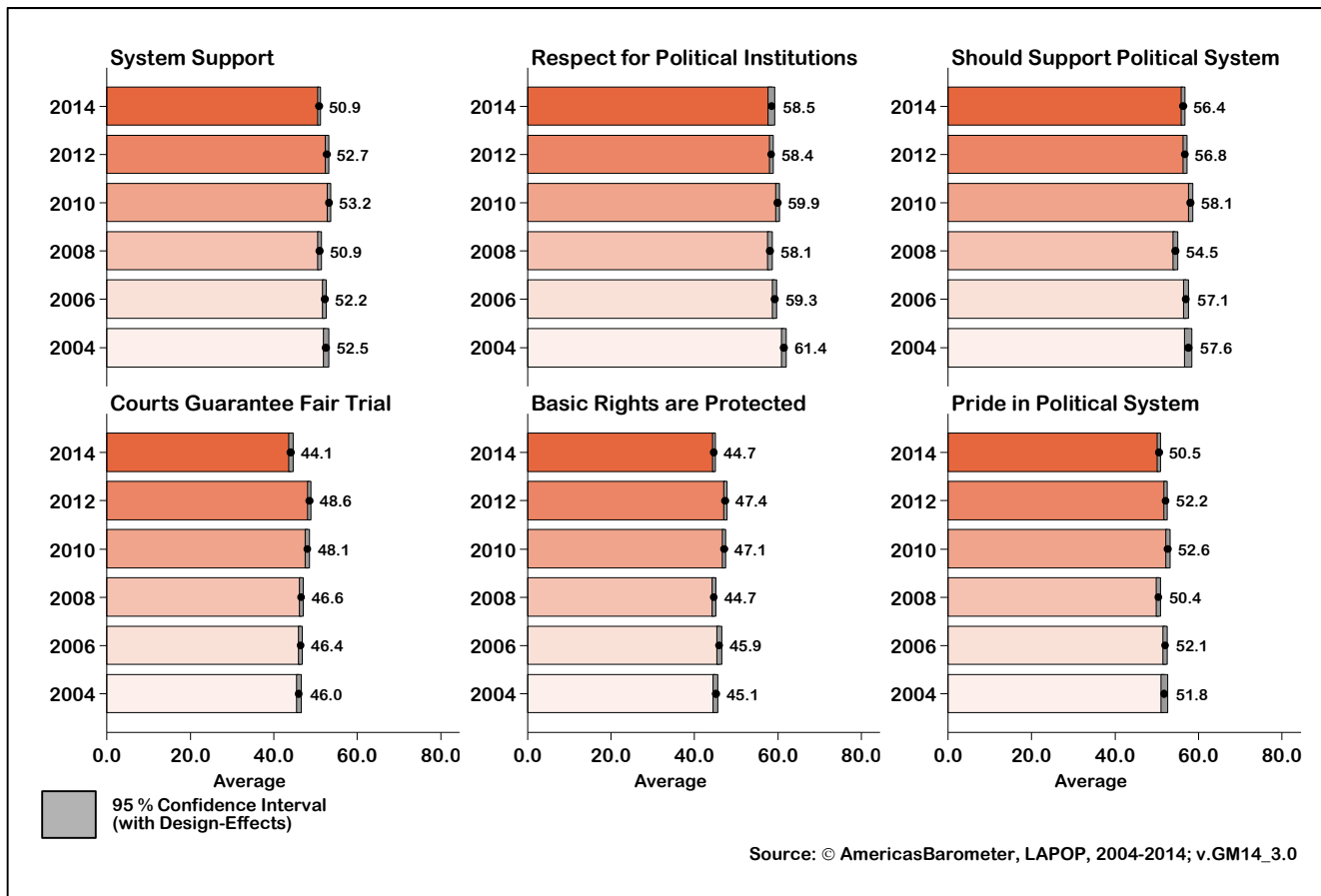
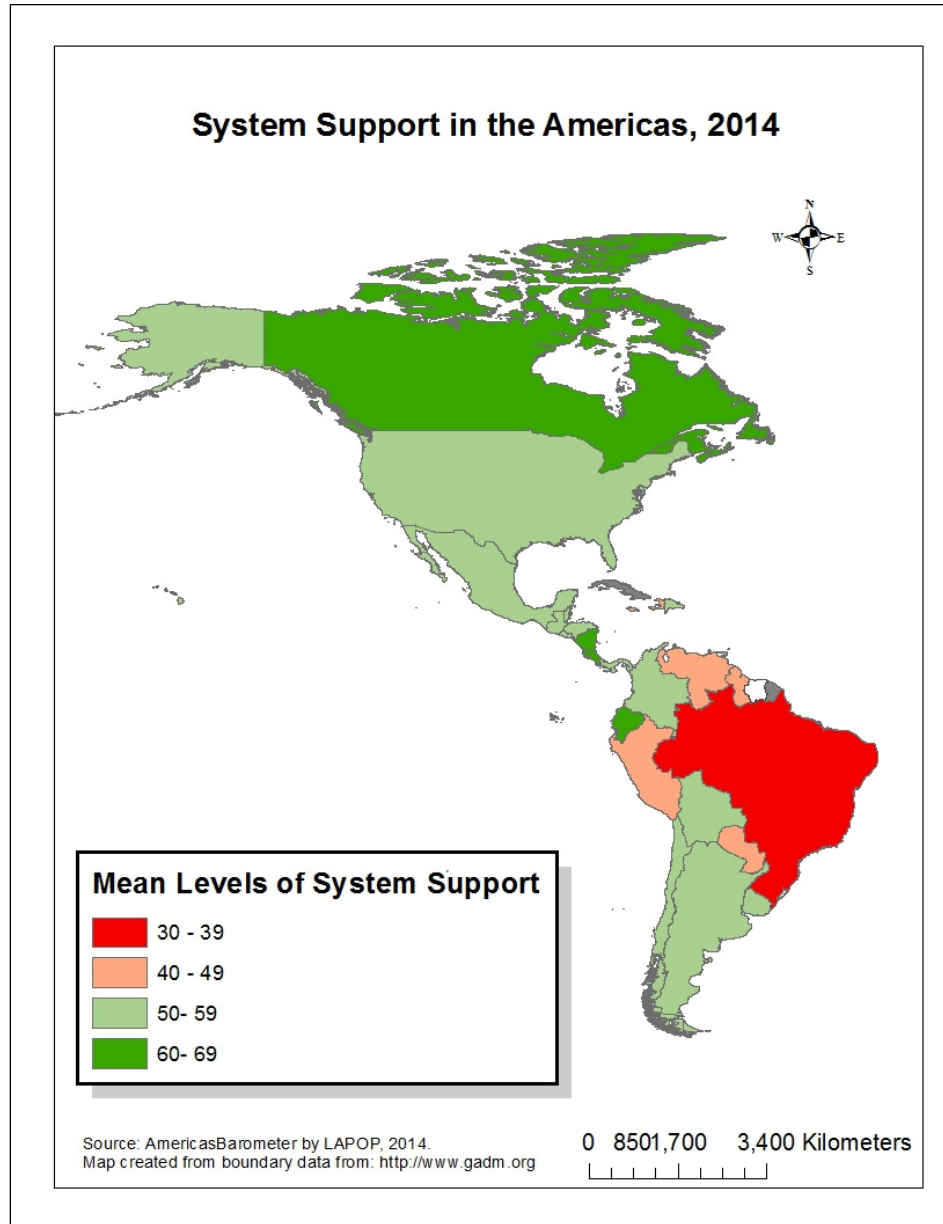


Figure 7.9. System Support and Its Components in the Americas, 2006-2014

How does support for the political system vary within the Americas today? Map 7.1 presents the levels of system support in the AmericasBarometer study in 2014. System support peaks in Costa Rica (62.3 units) and bottoms out in Brazil (37.6 units). Costa Rica and Canada sit atop the regional list on this legitimacy indicator while the United States hovers around the regional average (around 50 units). Encouragingly, citizens in the violent and politically volatile countries in Meso-America remain supportive of their political system.

<sup>11</sup> However, if the analysis is confined to the nine core countries continuously the AmericasBarometer surveyed 2004-2014, modest gains in the system support index and in all of its components, except the belief that the courts guarantee a fair trial, are observed.



**Map 7.1. System Support in the Americas, 2014**

Because system support is supposed to tap the inherent value citizens place in democratic institutions it should be fairly stable over time. Radical shifts were nonetheless observed in several cases. Major gains were made, for example, in Honduras (+11.1 units), Panama (+9), Costa Rica (+6.4), and Ecuador (+6). Major losses, in turn, were recorded in Venezuela (-13.9 units), Belize (-12.2), Jamaica (-10.6), and Brazil (-7.8). A deeper look (not presented here) indicated that these swings do not correspond neatly with cross-time changes in economic perceptions.

What kinds of citizens are most supportive of their political systems? Fixed-effects regression is used to model system support as a function of, again, socio-economic and demographic variables, presidential approval, and local and national government performance and experience indicators.<sup>12</sup> As

<sup>12</sup> Full results available in Appendix 7.3. Models exclude the United States and Canada.



mentioned above, in long-standing democracies diffuse support for the political system is viewed as a deep-seated orientation that is relatively impervious to short-run changes in government performance. However in the comparatively new democracies of Latin America and the Caribbean, perceived performances of and experiences with both national and local government may still be crucial predictors of system support.

How well do neighborhood security and the rest of these variables correlate with system support in 2014? To focus on the America’s newer democracies the United States and Canada are removed from this particular analysis. The results of the analysis, presented in Figure 7.10, indicate individuals who live in more insecure neighborhoods have lower system support. An analysis not shown for reasons of space indicate that when entered into the model separately, rather than as part of an index, each of these four variables has a statistically significant and negative relationship with system support. Rooting out insecurity can help cement this dimension of democratic legitimacy.

Other performance evaluations matter as well. At the level of national government, rosy evaluations of past economic performance and executive approval are strongly related to support for the broader political system. At the local level, satisfaction with municipal government services has similarly positive effects. System support also reflects individuals’ interactions with the state. Whereas those who have been asked to pay a bribe are less supportive, those who have attended a meeting of the municipal government are more supportive.<sup>13</sup>

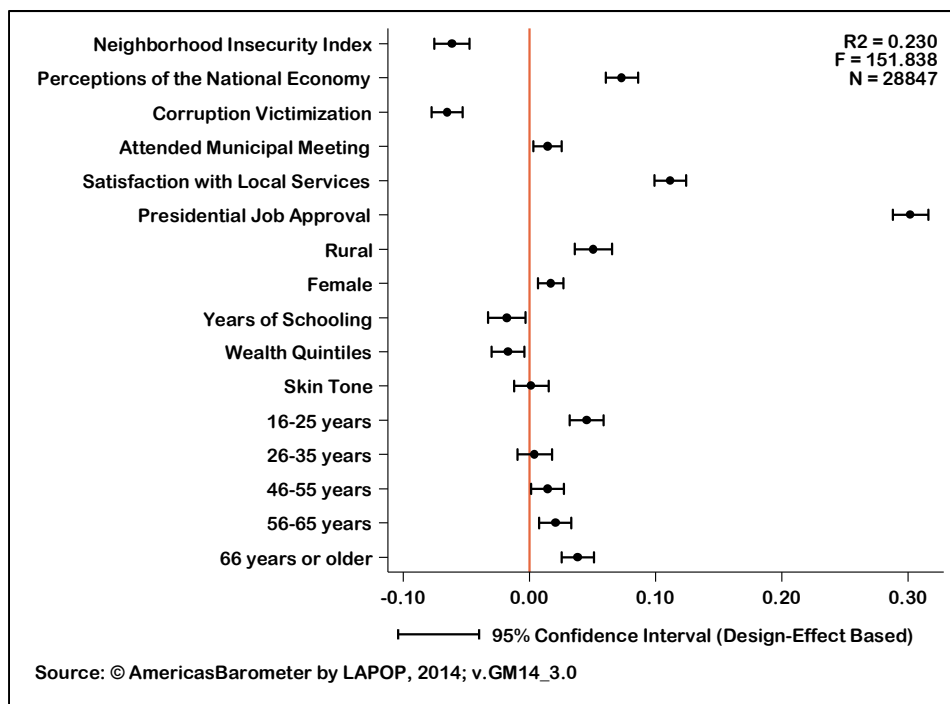


Figure 7.10. Factors Associated with System Support in the Americas, 2014

In addition, system support differs across demographic groups. Rural residents, the less wealthy, and women all support the political system more than their counterparts. Also, education has a small but

<sup>13</sup> When presidential approval is excluded, economic, municipal government evaluations, and municipal meeting attendance gain strength. Corruption victimization and neighborhood security do not change appreciably. Models exclude the United States and Canada.

significant effect. The relationship between age and system support is non-linear: it is higher among the youngest and the two oldest cohorts than among those ages 36-45.

These findings support three main conclusions. First, despite the expectation that system support is a deeply rooted orientation resistant to short-run performance fluctuations, in the Americas system support appears to shift with changes in neighborhood security, the state of the economy, and recent corruption experiences. Second, while system support is often viewed as a national-level concept, it appears in part based on the performance of local governments: how citizens view and interact with their municipalities shapes how they view their national political system. Thirdly, while cohort effects account for the differences in system support across age groups, the results run contrary to theories that link political legitimacy to rising levels of wealth, education, and urbanization (Lipset 1963, Inglehart and Welzel 2005).

### *Political Tolerance*

High levels of support for the political system do not guarantee the survival of liberal democratic institutions. Liberal democracy also requires citizens to accept the principles of open democratic competition and tolerance of dissent. Thus the AmericasBarometer measures political tolerance for those citizens who object to the political system. This index is composed of the following four items in the questionnaire:

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

As with all LAPOP indices, each respondent's mean (average) reported response to these four questions is calculated and then rescaled so that the resulting variable runs from 0 to 100, where 0 represents very low tolerance and 100 represents very high tolerance. Responses for each component have also been rescaled from 0 to 100 for presentation below.<sup>14</sup>

Analyses by country (not shown) find levels of political tolerance are more than 4 units lower in countries with active high-profile dissident groups or actors.<sup>15</sup> Venezuela, where many candidates for national and sub-national offices are outwardly critical of the regime, rates among the most tolerant countries in the Americas. Where former dissidents are now sitting presidents tolerance is relatively high

<sup>14</sup> The Cronbach's alpha for an additive scale of the four variables is very high ( $\alpha = .84$ ) and principal components analysis indicates that they measure a single dimension.

<sup>15</sup> These include Colombia (FARC/Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia and ELN/Ejército de Liberación Nacional), Peru (Shining Path/Sendero Luminoso), Mexico (EPR/Ejército Popular Revolucionario and FAR-LP/Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Liberación del Pueblo), and Paraguay (EPP/Ejército del Pueblo Paraguayo).

(Uruguay, Chile, and Brazil), middling (Nicaragua), and low (Bolivia). Countries with active dissident groups, such as Paraguay, Colombia, and Peru, exhibit middling levels of tolerance.

How stable is political tolerance? While theoretically it should be quite stable, in actuality tolerance has changed drastically since 2012 in multiple countries. Gains in Venezuela (+7.6 units) and Honduras (+6.7) were overshadowed by huge losses in Panama (-19.8 units), Guatemala (-17.8), Guyana (-14.4), and Belize (-11.2). Most other publics became only somewhat less tolerant. Political tolerance is therefore no more or less stable than system support and, like many of the legitimacy measures analyzed here, has suffered a setback in the last two years.

To explore the evolution of political tolerance in the Americas, Figure 7.11 displays the regional means on political tolerance index in each round of the AmericasBarometer since 2004. Though relatively static from 2008 to 2012, regional levels of political tolerance declined in 2014. Tolerance of political dissidents' right to free expression and to compete for political office observed the largest decreases. A similar story emerges from an analysis (not shown) of the sub-sample of countries surveyed continuously since 2004.

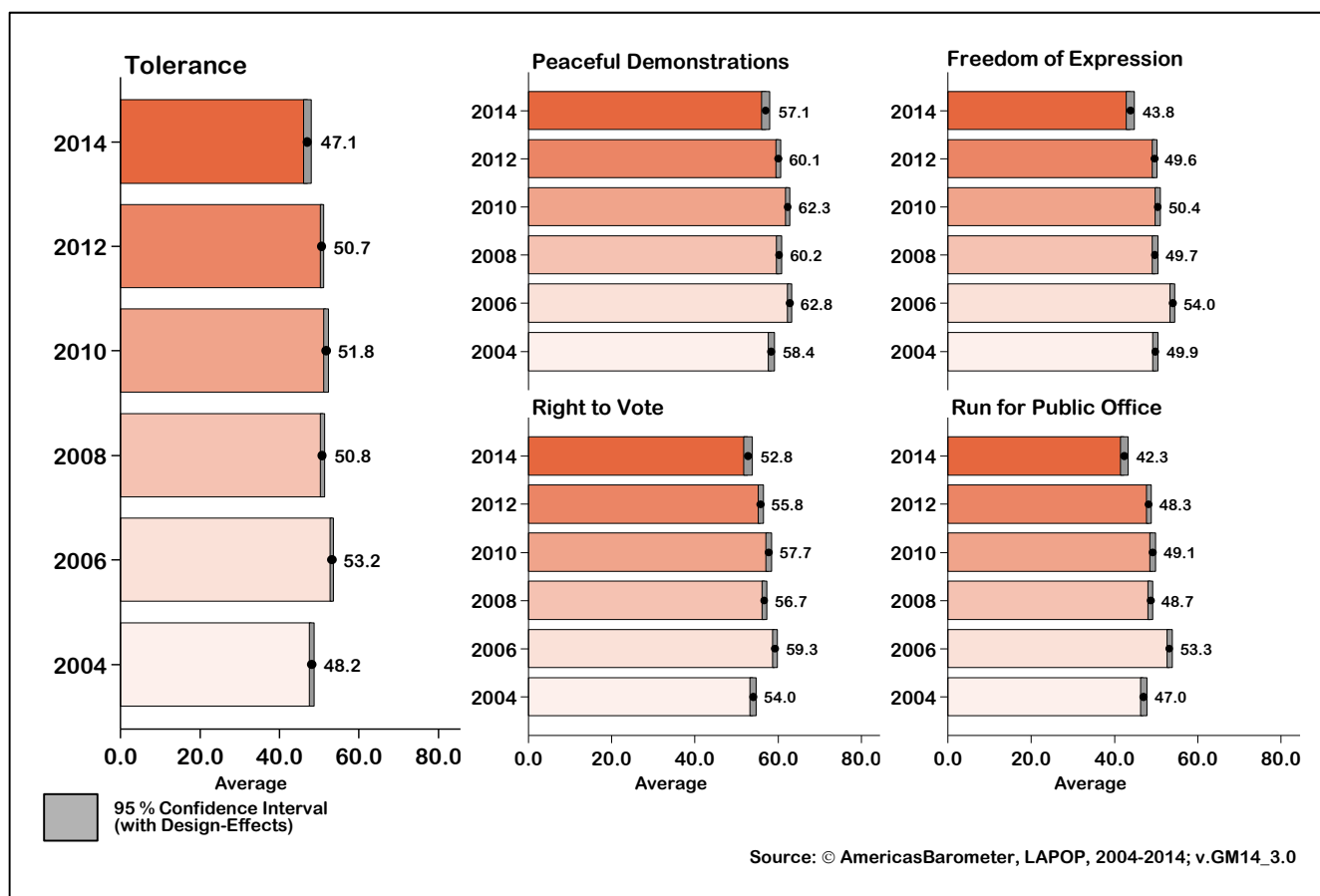
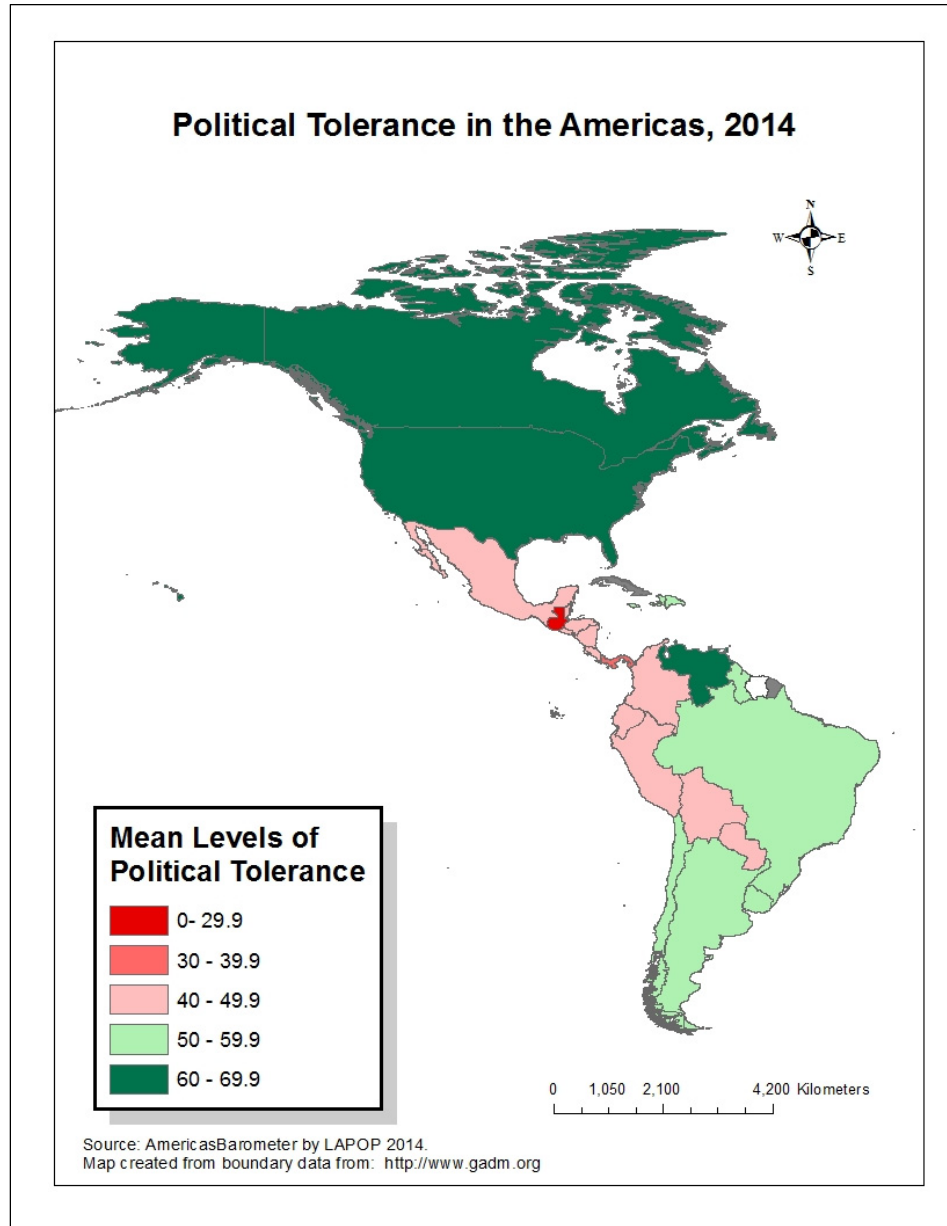


Figure 7.11. Political Tolerance and Its Components in the Americas, 2004-2014

The geographical distribution of tolerance for political dissent in the region can be appreciated in Map 7.2, which maps countries by mean score range on the index from the 2014 AmericasBarometer. Tolerance is greatest in the United States and Canada (69.9 and 69.3 units on the 0-100 scale, respectively) and lowest in Guatemala and Panama (29.5 and 32.1 units, respectively).



**Map 7.2. Political Tolerance and Its Components in the Americas, 2014**

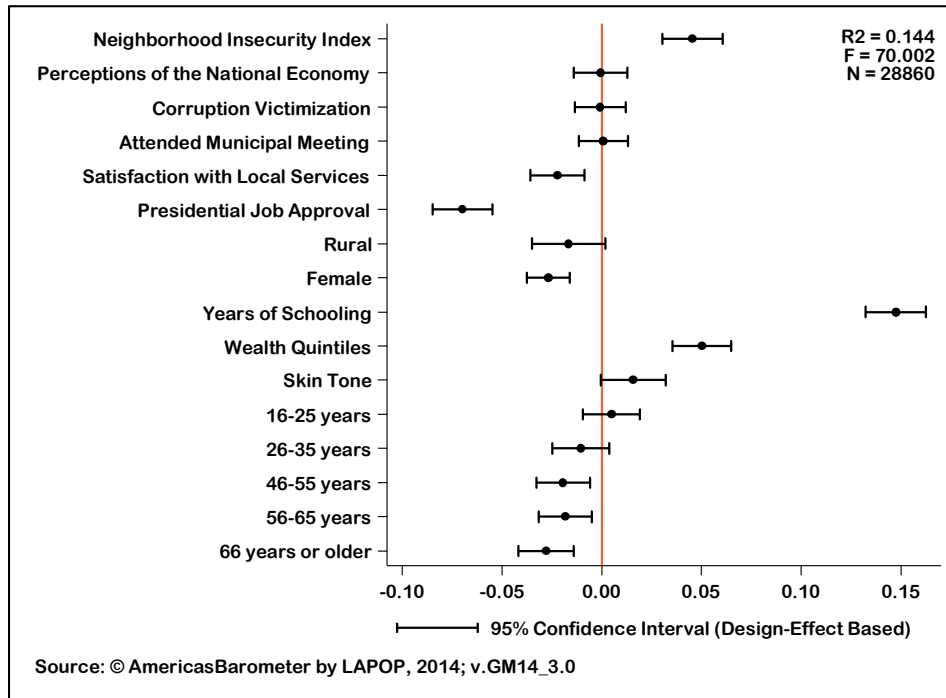


Figure 7.12. Factors Associated with Political Tolerance in the Americas, 2014

What sorts of citizens on average are most politically tolerant in the comparatively new democracies of Latin America and the Caribbean? A fixed-effects regression model analyzes political tolerance as a function of the same socio-economic and demographic variables, performance perceptions, and experiences with local and national government as in the analyses above.<sup>16</sup> The 2012 comparative report concluded that many of these predictors had opposing effects on system support and political tolerance (Carlin et al. 2013). Does this conclusion hold in 2014?

In many instances the answer is yes, according to Figure 7.12. Neighborhood insecurity, for example, is negatively associated with system support but positively associated with tolerating the political rights and civil liberties of people who are openly against the regime. Upon closer inspection, items tapping the presence of burglary and drug dealing appear to drive this relationship; blackmail/extortion and murder are not systematically related to political tolerance (analysis not shown).

But unlike system support, political tolerance does not consistently reflect evaluations of recent economic performance, corruption victimization, or participation in local government meetings.<sup>17</sup> And whereas strong performance by the national executive and local government services are positively correlated with system support, they are negatively correlated with political tolerance. These results are troubling insofar as they suggest that popular national executives and good local service provision can hinder the consolidation of democracy. Yet they resonate with findings from Latin America that election losers are particularly tolerant of political dissidents and continue to mobilize in support of their rights while political winners are likely to delegate additional authority to “their” executive.

<sup>16</sup> Full results available in Appendix 7.4. Models exclude the United States and Canada.

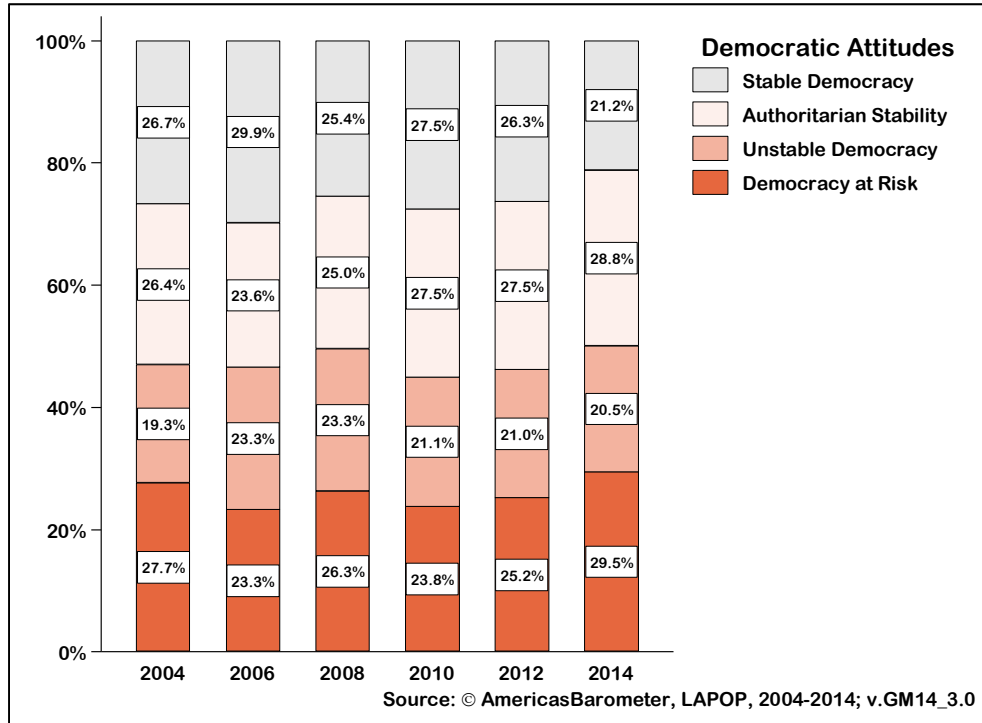
<sup>17</sup> When presidential approval is excluded from the model, the same patterns hold with one exception: positive economic perceptions are negatively related to tolerance.

Results from the socio-economic and demographic variables reveal more evidence that system support and political tolerance have distinct micro-foundations. A single (marginal) year of education has the greatest effect on tolerance of any other variable considered. From a policy perspective, this suggests tolerance can be taught. In addition, wealthy, male, respondents are more tolerant than poorer, female. Place of residence and skin tone have no systematic effect on tolerance. Age appears related to tolerance beyond a certain threshold. Those in the 36-45 age bracket are significantly less tolerant than the older cohorts in the model.

These results place democracy's champions in some awkward positions. Neighborhood insecurity, for example, appears to present a Catch-22: improving it may enhance the legitimacy of the political system but could simultaneously lower political tolerance. Satisfaction with incumbent governments presents another puzzle. Citizens who approve of the sitting executive and are happy with local services express relatively higher levels of system support but are, in turn, less tolerant of individuals who openly criticize the regime and question the value of democracy. Perhaps these contradictions signal a desire to insulate a system that delivers basic public goods and services from those who would destroy it. Yet somewhat paradoxically, strong democracy requires supporting the basic institutions undergirding the system *and* extending political and civil freedoms even to those who wish to undermine them. Reconciling these two sets of attitudes, then, is a major challenge for the development of the cultural foundations of democracy in the Americas (Singer n.d.). From a public policy standpoint the task is all the more daunting since neighborhood insecurity and citizen evaluations of incumbent governments appear to affect democracy's cultural foundations in different, and sometimes, contradictory ways.

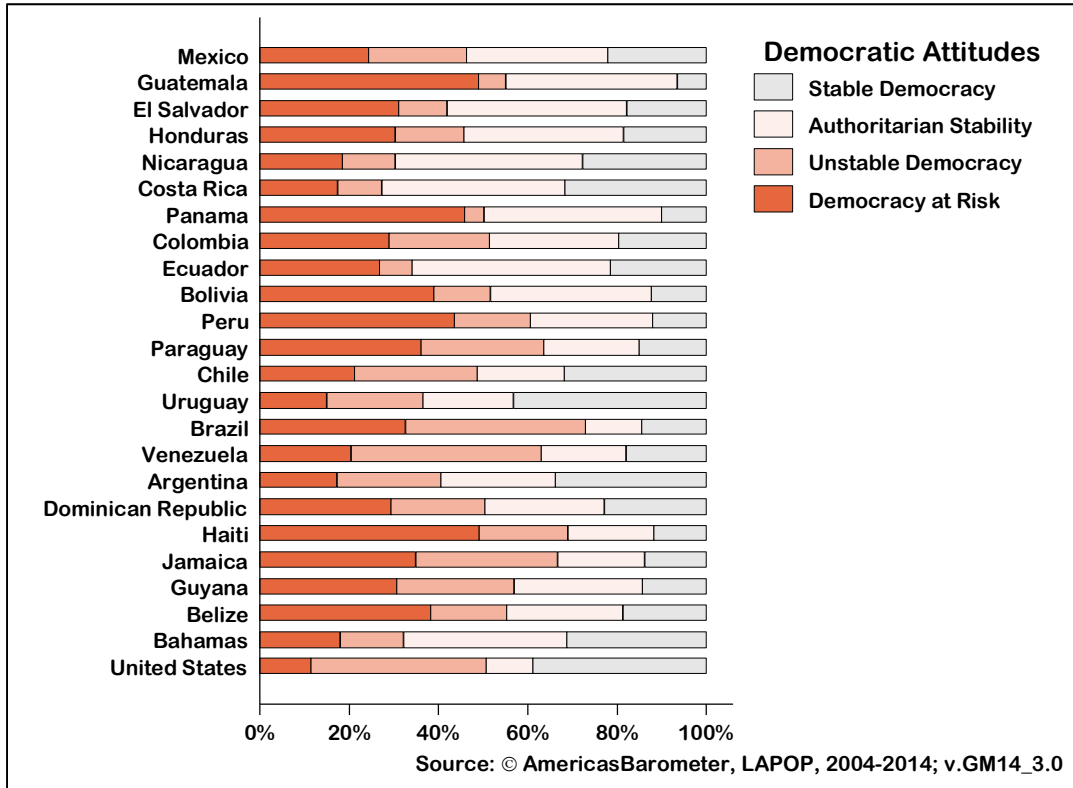
### *Attitudes Conducive to Democratic Stability*

To identify the attitudes theorized to bolster democracy, the data from the system support and political tolerance indices outlined in the previous two sections are combined. Individuals who scored above 50 (the midpoint) on both of the scales are considered to have attitudes conducive to *Stable Democracy*. Those who scored below 50 (the midpoint) on both scales are considered to hold attitudes that place *Democracy at Risk*. Individuals with high political tolerance but low system support have attitudes that favor *Unstable Democracy*. Lastly, individuals with high system support but low tolerance are said to foster *Authoritarian Stability*.



**Figure 7.13. Democratic Attitudes Profiles over Time in the Americas, 2004-2014**

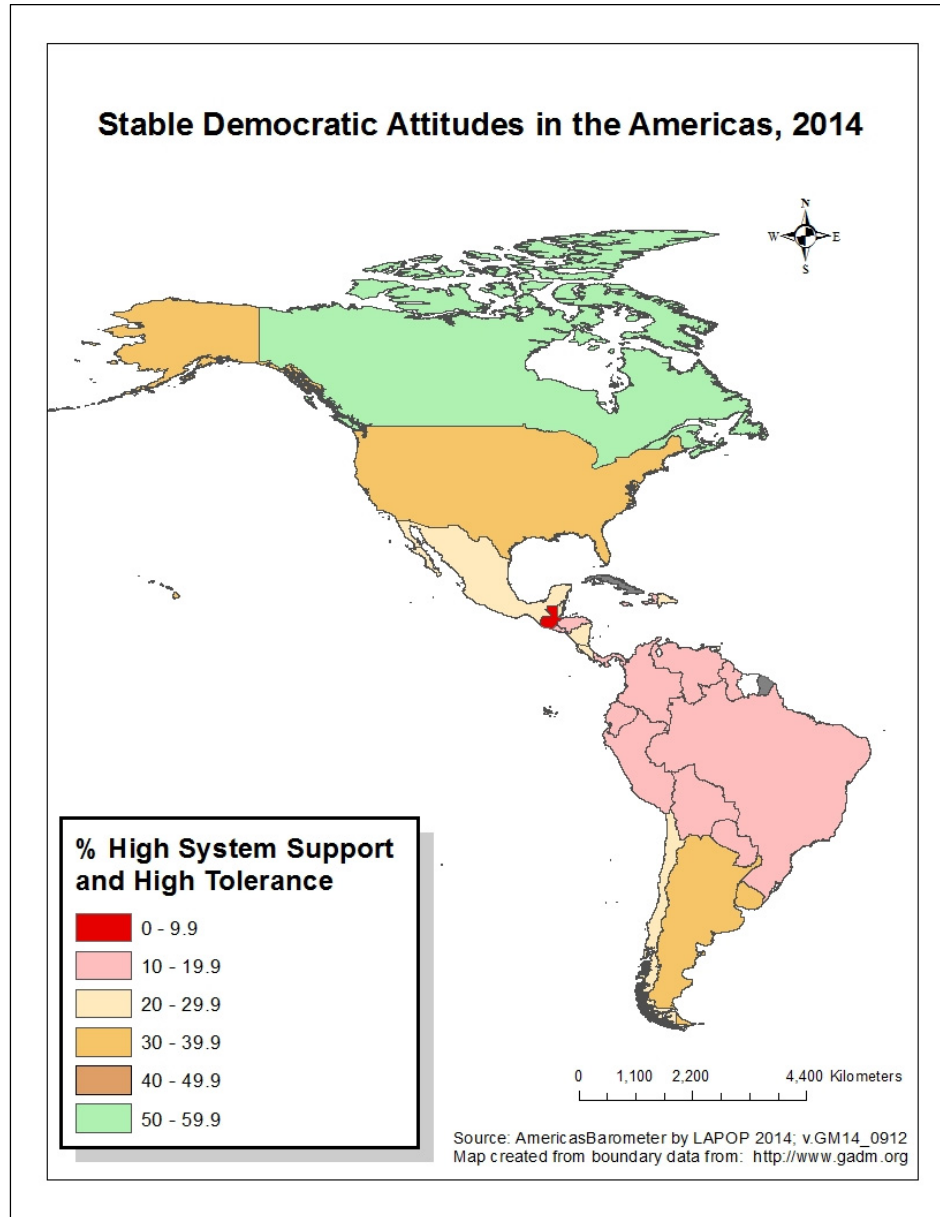
How prevalent are these attitudinal profiles in the Americas? Regional trends across the four profiles from 2004 to 2014 are reported in Figure 7.13. Alarminglly, *Stable Democracy* attitudes reach their lowest region-average levels of the decade in 2014, and *Authoritarian Stability* and *Democracy at Risk* profiles hit their decade highs. These trends are similar in a restricted sample of countries surveyed continuously since 2006 and even more pronounced in the nine core countries measured in each wave 2004-2014. But whereas *Democracy at Risk* is the modal profile in Figure 7.13, in the nine-country continuous sub-sample *Authoritarian Stability* is the most common profile. All of these results, but especially the latter, may sit uneasily with democracy’s champions in the region. To see how these profiles are distributed across countries please reference Figure 7.14.



**Figure 7.14. Democratic Attitude Profiles in the Americas, 2014**

Map 7.3 shows the percentage of citizens with the profile that favors *Stable Democracy* across the Americas in 2014. This snapshot identifies two clear outliers. At 56.8%, Canada boasts greater than 18% more citizens with stable democratic attitudes – high system support *and* high political tolerance – than any other country in the Americas. The next closest are Uruguay (38.5%) and the United States (37.1%). At 7.5%, Guatemala has statistically fewer citizens with attitudes favorable to stable democracy than any country except Panama, whose 95% confidence intervals overlap. Once again, we note dramatic declines from 2012 to 2014 in a handful of countries: Guyana (-28.0%), Jamaica (-20.6%), Guatemala (-17.2%), Belize (-16.7%), Colombia (-8.5%), and Brazil (-7.7%). Honduras and Haiti rebounded +9.6% and 5.4%, respectively, over the same period.





**Map 7.3. Distribution of Stable Democracy Attitude Profile (High System Support and High Tolerance) in the Americas, 2014**



## VI. Conclusion

The future of democracy in the Americas hinges on its legitimacy. When citizens broadly trust its local and national institutions, believe in its core principles, and value the system for its own sake, democracy is most stable and effective. But when legitimacy wanes, democracy's fate is less certain. Therefore it is important to track the evolution of legitimacy in the Americas, to compare it across countries, and, most crucially, to understand what drives legitimacy among citizens. To these ends, this chapter unpacked legitimacy into its constituent parts and sought to explain them with factors of high policy and theoretical relevance. As signaled by the first section of this volume, the 2014 report puts special emphasis on the role of insecurity and the institutions tasked with addressing it.

A straightforward message from this comparative analysis is that most indicators of democratic legitimacy on average fell across the Americas since their last reading in 2012. An investigation of the role of insecurity in democratic legitimacy, however, reveals a nuanced relationship. For example, support for democracy in the abstract and system support actually increased in the nine Latin American countries extending southward from Mexico to Bolivia, arguably the Americas' most violent and insecure sub-region. Yet individuals in insecure neighborhoods are less supportive of the political system but more politically tolerant. Taken together, these results suggest neighborhood insecurity may contribute to the mixture of attitudes amenable to *Unstable Democracy*: low system support, high tolerance. If so, insecurity could have a potentially destabilizing effect on democracy in the Americas.

Another inference that one can draw from this study is that institutions whose missions include establishing and maintaining security, law, and order in the Americas enjoy distinct levels of citizen trust. Long among the most trusted institutions in the region, the armed forces are far more trusted than the national police or, particularly, the justice system. Citizen orientations to the justice system generally appear to be souring. Beyond flagging trust, across the Americas the belief that courts guarantee a fair trial was far less firm in 2014 than at any time in the decade between 2004-2014. While regional average levels of trust in the armed forces and the national police are generally stable, in countries where these institutions have taken more prominent political roles over the past decade, citizen trust in them has shown volatility. This may suggest that the greater a political role these institutions of national and local security play, the more frequently citizens update their beliefs about their trustworthiness.

A final noteworthy conclusion is that, contrary to what might be considered classic theoretical expectations, levels of democratic legitimacy remain volatile in the Americas. The regression analyses imply this is likely due to links between individual indicators of democratic legitimacy and evaluations and experiences of government performance in the recent past. Brief analyses of specific cases here indicate democratic legitimacy is also reflective of the real-time processes of democratization and de-democratization. In addition to actual levels of democratic legitimacy, short-term volatility may have important implications for democracy as well. Monitoring democratic legitimacy over long time periods, a core mandate of the AmericasBarometer, is crucial to knowing whether these are secular trends or merely a return to "normal".

To avoid an overly negative reading of the data, this chapter closes by noting that the association between government performance at the national and local levels and support for the political system and for democratic institutions can cut both ways. Although it finds, on average, downward trends in government performance in the Americas, other chapters also document public concern about weak performance in areas of heightened importance to citizens in many countries. Evaluations of the

economy have fallen despite evidence that wealth has risen. Personal security is becoming an increasingly important issue to citizens across the region despite the fact that crime victimization remains unchanged. Corruption victimization and perceptions of the corruption and crime situations remain at the relatively high levels documented in 2012 (Singer et al. 2012). Finally, while wealth levels in the region as a whole have improved, many countries continue to experience slowing economies, high levels of crime, and poor governance. If the region's political systems continue to fail in these respects, levels of democratic legitimacy could continue to tumble. Of course, frustrations with democratic institutions and their performance can either create space for actors to undermine those institutions or propel new modes of participation, such as reform movements, which can strengthen democratic institutions. Thus monitoring citizens' long-standing commitments to democratic principles and the norms of open political competition and tolerance is key to forecasting democracy's fate in the region.

## Appendix

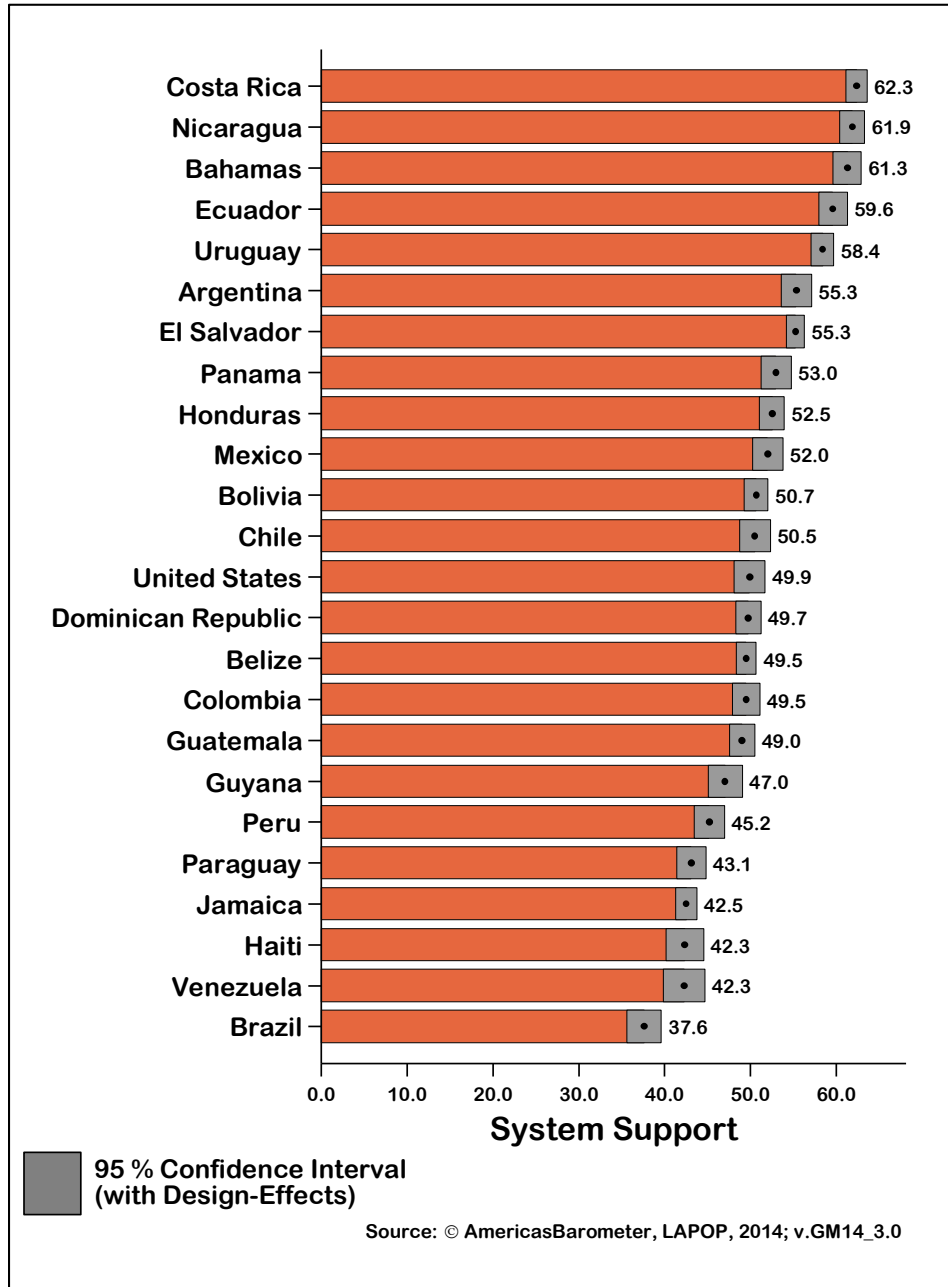
**Appendix 7.1: Coefficients for Figure 7.7, Factors Associated with Trust in National Police in the Americas, 2014**

	Standardized Coefficient	(t)
66 years or older	0.041*	(6.41)
56-65 years	0.020*	(3.06)
46-55 years	0.020*	(3.04)
26-35 years	-0.011	(-1.59)
16-25 years	-0.011	(-1.53)
Skin Tone	0.005	(0.72)
Wealth Quintiles	-0.003	(-0.37)
Years of Schooling	-0.034*	(-4.84)
Female	0.011*	(2.03)
Rural	0.043*	(5.64)
Executive Job Approval	0.192*	(27.70)
Satisfaction with Local Services	0.121*	(19.62)
Attended Municipal Meeting	0.006	(1.04)
Respondent Was Asked to Pay a Bribe	-0.085*	(-13.52)
Perceptions of the National Economy	0.044*	(6.64)
Neighborhood Insecurity Index	-0.105*	(-15.32)
Guatemala	-0.037*	(-3.86)
El Salvador	0.018*	(2.05)
Honduras	-0.001	(-0.11)
Nicaragua	0.059*	(6.19)
Costa Rica	0.048*	(5.06)
Panama	0.052*	(4.95)
Colombia	0.044*	(4.54)
Ecuador	0.085*	(6.96)
Bolivia	-0.081*	(-6.46)
Peru	-0.011	(-1.25)
Paraguay	-0.016*	(-1.99)
Chile	0.104*	(9.51)
Uruguay	0.047*	(5.39)
Brazil	0.041*	(4.42)
Venezuela	0.020*	(2.08)
Argentina	0.032*	(3.58)
Dominican Republic	-0.074*	(-6.53)
Haiti	0.088*	(8.34)
Jamaica	-0.016	(-1.79)
Guyana	-0.047*	(-4.76)
Belize	-0.033*	(-3.86)
Constant	0.003	(0.36)
F	135.17	
No. of cases	29006	
R-Squared	0.17	
Regression-Standardized Coefficients with t-Statistics based on Standard Errors Adjusted for the Survey Design. * p<0.05		

**Appendix 7.2: Coefficients for Figure 7.8, Factors Associated with Trust in Justice System in the Americas, 2014**

	Standardized Coefficient	(t)
66 years or older	0.011	(1.62)
56-65 years	-0.001	(-0.18)
46-55 years	0.011	(1.60)
26-35 years	0.001	(0.09)
16-25 years	0.027*	(3.83)
Skin Tone	-0.002	(-0.32)
Wealth Quintiles	-0.031*	(-4.78)
Years of Schooling	-0.024*	(-3.21)
Female	0.012*	(2.08)
Rural	0.057*	(8.10)
Executive Job Approval	0.223*	(30.02)
Satisfaction with Local Services	0.112*	(18.00)
Attended Municipal Meeting	0.016*	(2.72)
Respondent Was Asked to Pay a Bribe	-0.051*	(-7.87)
Perceptions of the National Economy	0.045*	(6.47)
Neighborhood Insecurity Index	-0.072*	(-10.73)
Guatemala	-0.020*	(-2.23)
El Salvador	-0.026*	(-3.13)
Honduras	-0.024*	(-2.79)
Nicaragua	0.020*	(2.38)
Costa Rica	0.075*	(9.43)
Panama	-0.002	(-0.16)
Colombia	-0.012	(-1.39)
Ecuador	-0.030*	(-2.43)
Bolivia	-0.102*	(-8.59)
Peru	-0.062*	(-8.26)
Paraguay	-0.068*	(-8.70)
Chile	-0.074*	(-7.75)
Uruguay	0.009	(1.15)
Brazil	-0.038*	(-4.55)
Venezuela	-0.003	(-0.32)
Argentina	0.007	(0.98)
Dominican Republic	-0.086*	(-8.50)
Haiti	-0.040*	(-4.04)
Jamaica	-0.017*	(-2.03)
Guyana	-0.040*	(-4.85)
Belize	-0.030*	(-4.12)
Constant	0.001	(0.14)
F	99.18	
No. of cases	28797	
R-Squared	0.13	
Regression-Standardized Coefficients with t-Statistics based on Standard Errors Adjusted for the Survey Design. * p<0.05		

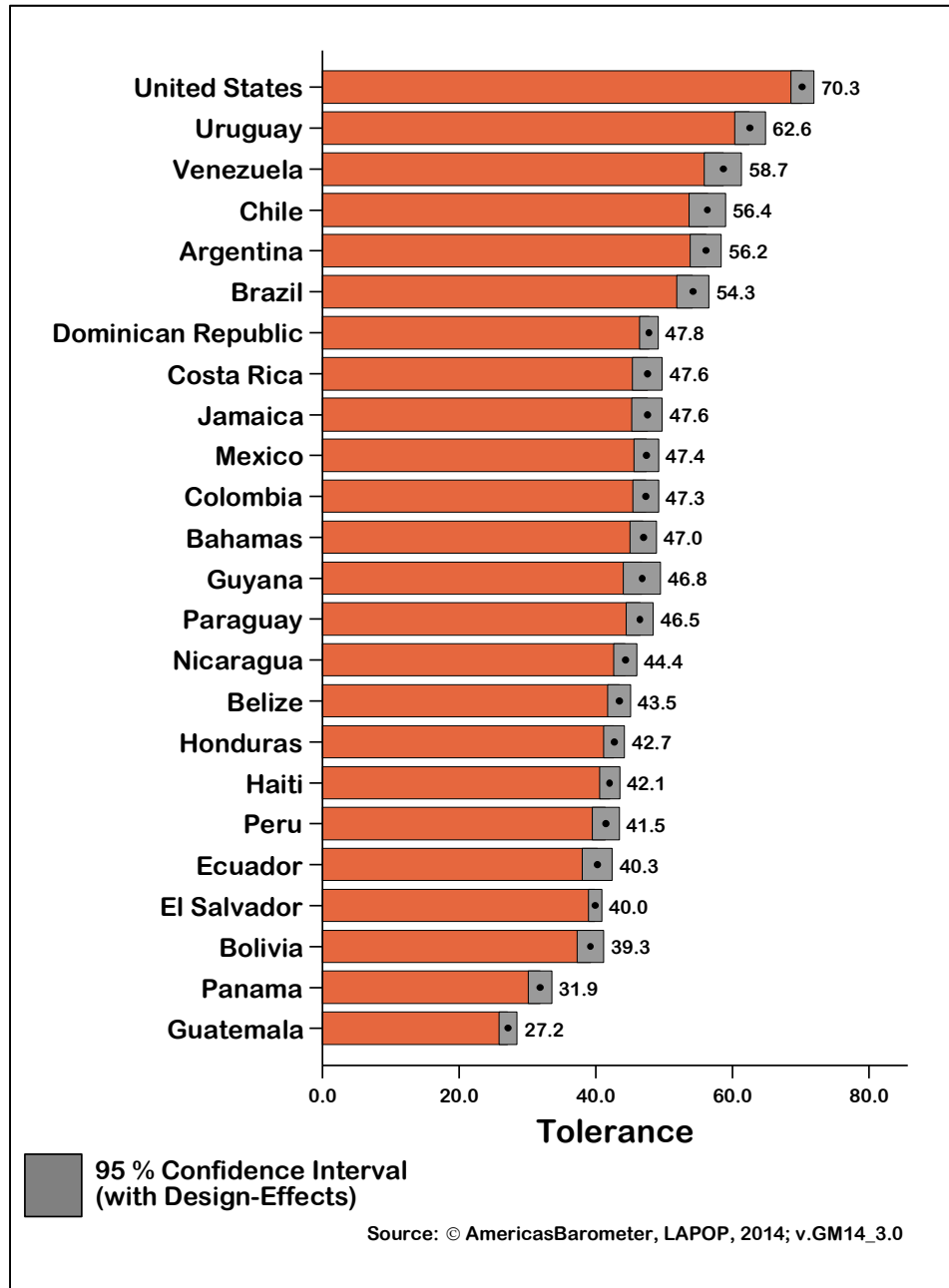
Appendix 7.3: Estimated System Support by Country, 2014; Empirical Basis for Map 7.1



**Appendix 7.4: Coefficients for Figure 7.10, Factors Associated with System Support in the Americas, 2014**

	Standardized Coefficient	(t)
66 years or older	0.038*	(5.88)
56-65 years	0.021*	(3.19)
46-55 years	0.014*	(2.16)
26-35 years	0.004	(0.61)
16-25 years	0.046*	(6.62)
Skin Tone	0.002	(0.25)
Wealth Quintiles	-0.017*	(-2.58)
Years of Schooling	-0.018*	(-2.38)
Female	0.017*	(3.27)
Rural	0.051*	(6.73)
Executive Job Approval	0.302*	(41.53)
Satisfaction with Local Services	0.112*	(17.49)
Attended Municipal Meeting	0.015*	(2.55)
Respondent Was Asked to Pay a Bribe	-0.065*	(-10.27)
Perceptions of the National Economy	0.073*	(11.17)
Neighborhood Insecurity Index	-0.061*	(-8.68)
Guatemala	-0.066*	(-6.73)
El Salvador	-0.052*	(-6.26)
Honduras	-0.064*	(-6.57)
Nicaragua	0.008	(0.82)
Costa Rica	0.100*	(11.14)
Panama	-0.056*	(-5.35)
Colombia	-0.048*	(-5.12)
Ecuador	-0.027*	(-2.19)
Bolivia	-0.107*	(-8.52)
Peru	-0.076*	(-8.35)
Paraguay	-0.108*	(-12.84)
Chile	-0.075*	(-6.74)
Uruguay	-0.003	(-0.35)
Brazil	-0.145*	(-13.65)
Venezuela	-0.041*	(-3.61)
Argentina	0.021*	(2.49)
Dominican Republic	-0.111*	(-10.33)
Haiti	-0.141*	(-12.28)
Jamaica	-0.093*	(-11.41)
Guyana	-0.071*	(-7.45)
Belize	-0.044*	(-5.82)
Constant	0.014	(1.79)
F	151.84	
No. of cases	28847	
R-Squared	0.23	
Regression-Standardized Coefficients with t-Statistics based on Standard Errors Adjusted for the Survey Design. * p<0.05		

### Appendix 7.5: Estimated Political Tolerance by Country, 2014; Empirical Basis for Map 7.2

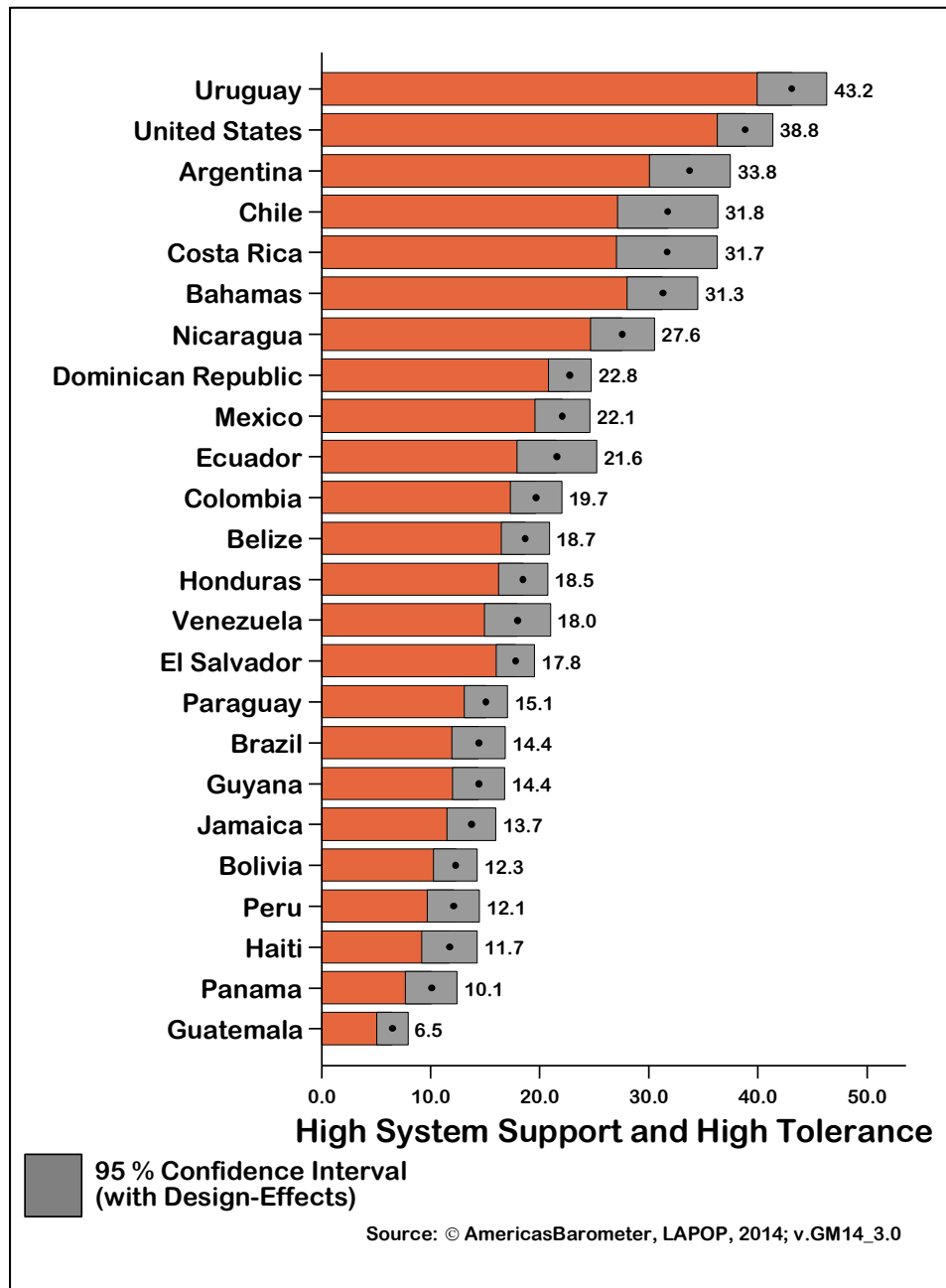




**Appendix 7.6: Coefficients for Figure 7.12, Factors Associated with Political Tolerance in the Americas, 2014**

	Standardized Coefficient	(t)
66 years or older	-0.028*	(-3.96)
56-65 years	-0.018*	(-2.72)
46-55 years	-0.019*	(-2.80)
26-35 years	-0.010	(-1.43)
16-25 years	0.005	(0.67)
Skin Tone	0.016	(1.90)
Wealth Quintiles	0.050*	(6.68)
Years of Schooling	0.147*	(19.10)
Female	-0.027*	(-4.86)
Rural	-0.017	(-1.77)
Executive Job Approval	-0.070*	(-9.12)
Satisfaction with Local Services	-0.022*	(-3.24)
Attended Municipal Meeting	0.001	(0.13)
Respondent Was Asked to Pay a Bribe	-0.001	(-0.12)
Perceptions of the National Economy	-0.001	(-0.08)
Neighborhood Insecurity Index	0.045*	(5.90)
Guatemala	-0.147*	(-14.05)
El Salvador	-0.042*	(-4.44)
Honduras	-0.017	(-1.53)
Nicaragua	0.005	(0.43)
Costa Rica	0.008	(0.68)
Panama	-0.122*	(-10.73)
Colombia	-0.002	(-0.20)
Ecuador	-0.068*	(-4.19)
Bolivia	-0.085*	(-5.63)
Peru	-0.058*	(-5.27)
Paraguay	-0.007	(-0.64)
Chile	0.075*	(5.24)
Uruguay	0.115*	(10.44)
Brazil	0.051*	(4.39)
Venezuela	0.056*	(4.16)
Argentina	0.049*	(4.30)
Dominican Republic	0.014	(1.23)
Haiti	-0.021*	(-2.04)
Jamaica	-0.003	(-0.21)
Guyana	-0.006	(-0.50)
Belize	-0.015	(-1.56)
Constant	-0.012	(-1.32)
F	70.00	
No. of cases	28860	
R-Squared	0.14	
Regression-Standardized Coefficients with t-Statistics based on Standard Errors Adjusted for the Survey Design. * p<0.05		

### Appendix 7.7: Estimated Stable Democracy Attitudes by Country, 2014; Empirical Basis for Map 7.3





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# Appendices





## Appendix A. 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.

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

To calculate this error, it is very important to consider the design with which the sample was selected. The design effect (DEFT –above is DEFT) indicates the efficiency of the design used in relation to an 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.

Table 3 show the value of the statistic in question (average or percentage) and the design effects (DEFT) of the 2014 round of the AmericasBarometer. The table also reports the design effects of the 2012 round (for the same variables). The SE were estimated with the Stata 12 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. In general for a well design study, the design effect usually ranges from 1 to 3. For example, in the case of Costa Rica, the Support for Democracy (Ing4r) has a sampling error of 1.63. This means that the 95% confidence interval (1.96 times the SE) for the average of this variable (74.19) goes from 72.01 to 76.37. According to the DEFT of the table, this interval is 63% greater than that which would have been obtained with a URS (see Table 3).

**Table 3: Design effects, 2014 AmericasBarometer Survey**

Country	Ing4r				it1r			
	2014			2012 Round	2014			2012 Round
	Average	Std. Error	DEFT	DEFT	Average	Std. Error	DEFT	DEFT
México	66.41	1.18	1.66	1.33	59.07	1.08	1.55	1.58
Guatemala	67.27	1.05	1.47	1.32	56.89	0.94	1.27	2.83
El Salvador	65.86	0.68	0.99	0.98	62.05	1.05	1.28	1.11
Honduras	65.77	1.06	1.37	1.05	61.33	1.16	1.41	1.71
Nicaragua	68.43	0.74	0.97	1.07	61.50	1.07	1.30	1.13
Costa Rica	74.19	1.11	1.63	1.31	63.47	1.33	1.75	1.87
Panamá	58.87	1.18	1.51	1.37	60.28	1.10	1.56	1.41
Colombia	71.48	1.05	1.46	1.36	63.10	1.23	1.61	1.61
Ecuador	71.31	1.35	1.93	1.23	60.30	1.23	1.62	1.52
Bolivia	67.37	0.71	1.68	1.87	52.80	1.05	2.21	1.93
Peru	62.49	1.16	1.63	1.21	51.06	0.89	1.33	1.63
Paraguay	62.59	0.97	1.08	1.10	70.81	0.90	1.17	1.20
Chile	75.33	1.10	1.81	1.38	67.00	1.38	1.91	1.99
Uruguay	85.08	0.79	1.30	1.15	67.17	1.12	1.54	1.78
Brazil	66.13	1.35	1.69	1.25	52.76	1.12	1.45	1.58
Venezuela	76.13	2.02	2.49	1.35	59.10	1.22	1.68	1.41
Argentina	81.72	0.90	1.33	1.23	64.49	1.22	1.69	1.73
Dominican Rep.	72.58	0.84	1.21	0.96	57.78	0.98	1.28	1.23
Haiti	64.30	1.10	1.49	1.16	47.98	1.53	1.86	1.56
Jamaica	63.84	1.29	1.63	1.29	55.59	1.00	1.36	1.72
Guyana	69.64	1.24	1.54	1.33	63.57	1.11	1.66	2.01
Trinidad and Tobago	74.95	1.16	2.87	1.04	67.03	0.76	2.34	1.05
Belize	71.39	1.18	1.50	1.12	59.46	1.13	1.50	1.52
Bahamas	67.43	0.76	1.71	-	64.34	0.92	1.93	-
Suriname	67.61	0.95	2.04	1.01	67.88	0.78	1.63	1.85
United States	72.59	0.91	1.35	1.03	63.41	0.82	1.38	1.06
Canada	77.72	0.61	1.06	1.03	66.39	0.56	1.09	1.07

**Table 3: Design effects, 2014 AmericasBarometer Survey (cont.)**

Country	corvic				PSA5			
	2014			2012 Round	2014			2012 Round
	Average	Std. Error	DEFT	DEFT	Average	Std. Error	DEFT	DEFT
México	27.25	1.39	1.24	1.48	52.18	0.90	1.60	1.84
Guatemala	20.66	1.24	1.18	1.20	49.00	0.75	1.45	1.96
El Salvador	9.79	0.80	1.05	1.13	55.26	0.55	1.05	0.99
Honduras	23.00	1.53	1.44	1.46	52.51	0.75	1.38	1.69
Nicaragua	14.74	0.97	1.07	0.94	61.85	0.74	1.29	1.12
Costa Rica	15.52	1.30	1.41	3.29	62.34	0.62	1.28	1.00
Panamá	18.85	1.84	1.83	1.60	52.99	0.89	1.65	1.42
Colombia	13.62	1.25	1.42	1.52	49.47	0.81	1.44	1.55
Ecuador	25.99	1.84	1.62	1.48	59.58	0.86	1.68	1.66
Bolivia	30.21	1.68	2.02	2.98	50.67	0.72	2.26	2.82
Peru	26.40	1.51	1.33	1.19	45.19	0.90	1.76	1.65
Paraguay	28.10	1.50	1.29	1.33	43.03	0.87	1.43	1.22
Chile	5.31	0.90	1.58	1.49	50.53	0.93	1.89	2.28
Uruguay	6.75	0.67	1.04	0.93	58.38	0.68	1.19	1.17
Brazil	13.87	1.38	1.55	1.50	37.61	1.04	1.74	1.74
Venezuela	26.55	1.94	1.70	1.19	42.26	1.25	1.72	1.70
Argentina	16.75	1.45	1.51	1.74	55.33	0.91	1.54	2.09
Dominican Rep.	23.29	1.18	1.08	0.89	49.75	0.74	1.25	1.14
Haiti	69.16	1.74	1.47	1.57	42.34	1.11	2.13	1.97
Jamaica	9.83	0.84	1.09	1.14	42.49	0.63	1.13	1.67
Guyana	15.81	1.19	1.28	1.53	47.07	1.01	1.72	2.33
Trinidad and Tobago	10.21	0.76	1.63	1.26	52.29	1.11	2.92	1.28
Belize	20.53	0.89	0.86	1.08	49.49	0.60	1.05	1.49
Bahamas	18.21	1.14	1.73	-	61.28	0.85	2.19	-
Suriname	7.35	0.50	1.21	1.07	60.73	0.79	2.48	1.24
United States	7.78	1.06	1.54	1.08	49.90	0.79	1.40	1.05
Canada	4.42	0.56	1.05	1.08	60.10	0.57	1.07	1.06

**Table 3: Design effects, 2014 AmericasBarometer Survey (cont.)**

Country	tol				mlr			
	2014			2012 Round	2014			2012 Round
	Average	Std. Error	DEFT	DEFT	Average	Std. Error	DEFT	DEFT
México	47.68	1.04	1.62	1.96	44.46	0.96	1.44	1.62
Guatemala	29.54	0.75	1.28	2.04	53.77	0.76	1.60	1.52
El Salvador	42.07	0.58	0.98	0.91	67.47	0.52	0.83	1.20
Honduras	43.34	0.82	1.25	1.62	65.90	0.55	1.02	1.37
Nicaragua	46.82	0.94	1.41	0.99	66.68	0.59	1.04	1.15
Costa Rica	47.01	1.26	1.99	1.83	37.00	0.69	1.13	1.16
Panamá	32.09	0.92	1.82	1.89	62.18	0.83	1.46	1.48
Colombia	46.96	0.96	1.41	1.46	50.93	0.80	1.43	1.26
Ecuador	40.89	1.21	1.92	1.88	71.61	0.80	1.45	1.26
Bolivia	40.69	1.04	2.78	2.55	63.12	0.70	1.99	2.67
Peru	42.84	1.05	1.85	1.52	47.69	0.56	1.20	1.43
Paraguay	49.73	1.15	1.57	1.33	55.75	0.89	1.42	1.23
Chile	54.01	1.43	1.94	2.38	60.98	0.95	1.68	2.15
Uruguay	58.66	1.28	1.62	2.09	61.82	0.56	0.93	1.12
Brazil	52.91	1.31	1.89	1.77	52.43	0.96	1.45	1.31
Venezuela	61.80	1.53	2.02	2.54	34.31	1.21	1.54	1.52
Argentina	54.88	1.27	1.65	1.90	46.33	0.90	1.25	1.33
Dominican Rep.	51.13	0.74	1.08	1.38	73.91	0.69	1.34	1.01
Haiti	50.04	0.88	1.76	2.16	68.78	1.05	1.65	1.29
Jamaica	55.40	1.39	2.04	2.14	48.89	1.07	1.47	1.40
Guyana	53.52	1.56	2.24	2.76	50.94	1.35	1.95	2.09
Trinidad and Tobago	60.45	1.29	2.86	1.29	44.26	1.44	3.20	1.41
Belize	49.95	1.04	1.43	1.40	51.17	0.73	1.15	1.20
Bahamas	53.08	1.16	2.56	-	56.48	0.87	1.84	-
Suriname	43.86	0.69	1.73	1.18	65.94	0.63	1.80	1.62
United States	69.94	0.87	1.36	1.05	42.70	1.21	1.34	1.02
Canada	69.29	0.59	1.08	1.06	47.55	0.83	1.09	1.07

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>.

## Appendix B. Letter of Informed Consent

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



VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

January 2014

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 [local partner if applies] 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.

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 approximately 45 minutes to complete.

Your answers will be kept confidential. 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. The study IRB Approval number is: 110627

Do you wish to participate?







## Appendix C. Questionnaire

LAPOP 2014 Master Questionnaire Version # 15.2 IRB Approval: 110627

	<b>USAID</b> FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE	<b>LOGO OF LOCAL PARTNER INSTITUTION TO BE INSERTED HERE</b>	

### LAPOP: Country, 2014

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<b>PAIS. Country:</b>					
01. Mexico	02. Guatemala	03. El Salvador	04. Honduras	05. Nicaragua	<input type="checkbox"/>
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	28. Bahamas	29. Barbados			
<b>IDNUM. Questionnaire number [assigned at the office]</b>					<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>ESTRATOPRI:</b> Insert a complete list of the names of the strata here					<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>ESTRATOSEC.</b> Size of the Municipality [voting age population according to the census; modify for each country, using the appropriate number of strata and population ranges]:					
(1) Large (more than 100,000)                      (2) Medium (between 25,000-100,000)					<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) Small (< 25,000)					
<b>UPM [Primary Sampling Unit, normally identical to "MUNICIPIO"]</b> _____					<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>PROV. Province</b> (or department, state; Jamaica = county): _____					<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>MUNICIPIO. County</b> (or municipality or "cantón" or parish): _____					<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>XXXDISTRITO. District</b> (or constituency): _____					<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>XXXSEGMENTO. Census Segment [official census code]</b> _____					<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>XXXSEC. Sector [optional]</b> _____					<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>CLUSTER.</b> [ Final sampling unit, or sampling point]: _____					<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>[Every cluster must have 6 interviews; assigned key-code by field supervisor]</b>					<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>UR.</b> (1) Urban                      (2) Rural <b>[Use country's census definition]</b>					<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TAMANO. Size of place:</b>					
(1) National Capital (Metropolitan area)                      (2) Large City                      (3) Medium City                      (4) Small City                      (5) Rural Area					<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>IDIOMAQ. Questionnaire language:</b> (11) English <b>[Insert other languages used]</b>					<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Start time:</b> _____ : _____					<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>FECHA. Date Day:</b> _____ <b>Month:</b> _____ <b>Year:</b> 2014					<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you live in this home?

Yes → continue

No → Thank the respondent and end the interview

Are you a [nationality] citizen or permanent resident of [country]?

Yes → continue

No → Thank the respondent and end the interview

How old are you? [Only continue if they are at least 18 years old, or 16 in Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador and Nicaragua?]

Yes → continue

No → Thank the respondent and end the interview

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

<b>Q1. Sex [Record but do not ask]:</b> (1) Male (2) Female	_
<b>Q2Y. In what year were you born?</b> _____ year (8888) DK (9888) DA	_ _ _ _
<b>LS3. To begin, in general how satisfied are you with your life? Would you say that you are: [Read options]</b> (1) Very satisfied (2) Somewhat satisfied (3) Somewhat dissatisfied (4) Very dissatisfied (88) Doesn't know (98) Doesn't Answer	_ _

<b>A4. In your opinion, what is the most serious problem faced by the country? [DO NOT READ THE RESPONSE OPTIONS; ONLY A SINGLE OPTION]</b>		_ _ _
Armed conflict	30	Inequality 58
Bad government	15	Inflation, high prices 02
Corruption	13	Kidnappings 31
Credit, lack of	09	Land to farm, lack of 07
Crime	05	Malnutrition 23
Discrimination	25	Migration 16
Drug addiction; consumption of drugs	11	Politicians 59
Drug trafficking	12	Popular protests (strikes, blocking roads, work stoppages, etc.) 06
Economy, problems with, crisis of	01	Population explosion 20
Education, lack of, poor quality	21	Poverty 04
Electricity, lack of	24	Roads in poor condition 18
Environment	10	Security (lack of) 27
External debt	26	Terrorism 33
Forced displacement of persons	32	Transportation, problems of 60
Gangs	14	Unemployment 03
Health services, lack of	22	Violence 57
Housing	55	War against terrorism 17
Human rights, violations of	56	Water, lack of 19
Impunity	61	Other 70
DK	88	DA 98

<b>[Add only in countries that use Android and that use more than one language]</b> <b>A4L. [RECORD BUT DO NOT ASK]</b> Which language was used in the answer to the last question (A4)? (1) Spanish	_
<b>[USE CODES FROM IDIOMAQ]</b> <b>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?</b> (1) Better (2) Same (3) Worse (88) Doesn't know (98) Doesn't Answer	_ _



<b>IDIO2.</b> Do you think that <b>your</b> 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	_ _
--	-----

Now, let's talk about your local municipality...

<b>NP1.</b> 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	_ _
<b>NP2.</b> 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 (2) No (88) Doesn't know (98) Doesn't answer	_ _
<b>SGL1.</b> Would you say that the services the municipality is providing to the people are...? <b>[Read options]</b> (1) Very good (2) Good (3) Neither good nor bad (fair) (4) Bad (5) Very bad (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.

<b>CP4A.</b> In order to solve your problems have you ever requested help or cooperation from a local public official or local government: for example, a mayor, municipal council, councilman, provincial official, civil governor or governor? (1) Yes (2) No (88) Doesn't know (98) Doesn't answer	_ _
--	-----

<b>CP5.</b> Now, changing the subject. In the last 12 months have you tried to help solve a problem in your community or in your neighborhood? Please, tell me if you did it <b>at least</b> once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year, or never in the last 12 months? (1) Once a week (2) Once or twice a month (3) Once or twice a year (4) Never (88) Doesn't know (98) Doesn't answer	_ _
---	-----

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

	Once a week	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a year	Never	DK	DA	INAP	
<b>CP6.</b> Meetings of any religious organization? Do you attend them...	1	2	3	4	88	98		
<b>CP7.</b> Meetings of a parents' association at school? Do you attend them...	1	2	3	4	88	98		
<b>CP8.</b> Meetings of a community improvement committee or association? Do you attend them...	1	2	3	4	88	98		
<b>CP13.</b> Meetings of a political party or political organization? Do you attend them...	1	2	3	4	88	98		
<b>CP20. [WOMEN ONLY]</b> Meetings of associations or groups of women or home makers? Do you attend them...	1	2	3	4	88	98	99	



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), Panama (Fuerza Pública de Panamá), and Haiti (Police Nationale d'Haïti) ]

<p><b>JC10.</b> When there is a lot of crime.</p>	<p>(1) A military take-over of the state would be justified</p>	<p>(2) A military take-over of the state would not be justified</p>	<p>(88) DK</p>	<p>(98) DA</p>	<p>___</p>
<p><b>JC13.</b> When there is a lot of corruption.</p>	<p>(1) A military take-over of the state would be justified</p>	<p>(2) A military take-over of the state would not be justified</p>	<p>(88) DK</p>	<p>(98) DA</p>	<p>___</p>

<p><b>JC15A.</b> 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?</p>	<p>(1) Yes, it is justified</p>	<p>(2) No, it is not justified</p>	<p>(88) DK</p>	<p>(98) DA</p>	<p>___</p>
--	---------------------------------	------------------------------------	----------------	----------------	------------

<p><b>VIC1EXT.</b> 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 <b>any other type</b> of crime in the past 12 months?  (1) Yes <b>[Continue]</b>      (2) No <b>[Skip to VIC1HOGAR]</b>      (88) DK <b>[Skip to VIC1HOGAR]</b>  (98) DA <b>[Skip to VIC1HOGAR]</b></p>	<p>___</p>
---	------------

<p><b>VIC1EXTA.</b> How many times have you been a crime victim during the last 12 months?  <b>[fill in number]</b> _____ (88) DK (98) DA (99) N/A</p>	<p>___</p>
--	------------

<p><b>VIC2.</b> Thinking of 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? <b>[Read the options]</b>  (01) Unarmed robbery, <b>no</b> assault or physical threats  (02) Unarmed robbery <b>with</b> 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 (thieves got into your house while no one was there)  (10) Extortion  (11) <b>[Don't read]</b> Other  (88) DK (98)DA (99) N/A (was not a victim)</p>	<p>___</p>
--	------------

<p><b>VIC2AA.</b> Could you tell me, in what place that last crime occurred? <b>[Read options]</b>  (1) In your home  (2) In this neighborhood  (3) In this municipality/canton/parish  (4) In another municipality/canton/parish  (5) In another country  (88) DK  (98) DA  (99) N/A</p>	<p>___</p>
---	------------

<p><b>VIC1HOGAR.</b> 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 <b>any other type</b> of crime in the past 12 months?  (1) Yes (2) No (88) DK (98) DA (99) N/A (Lives alone)</p>	<p>___</p>
---	------------

<p><b>POLE2N.</b> In general, are you very satisfied, satisfied, <b>dissatisfied</b>, or very <b>dissatisfied</b> with the performance of the police in your neighborhood?  <b>[If respondent says there is no police, mark 4 "Very dissatisfied"]</b>  (1) Very satisfied (2) Satisfied (3) Dissatisfied (4) Very dissatisfied (88) DK (98) DA</p>	<p>___</p>
---	------------

<p><b>AOJ11.</b> 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 <b>unsafe</b> or very <b>unsafe</b>?</p> <p>(1) Very safe            (2) Somewhat safe            (3) Somewhat unsafe (4) Very unsafe            (88) DK            (98) DA</p>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
<p><b>PESE1.</b> Do you think that the current level of violence in your <b>neighborhood</b> is <b>higher, about the same, or lower</b> than in other neighborhoods?</p> <p>(1) Higher            (2) About the same            (3) Lower            (88) DK            (98) DA</p>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
<p><b>PESE2.</b> Do you think that the current level of violence in your <b>neighborhood</b> is <b>higher, about the same, or lower</b> than 12 months ago?</p> <p>(1) Higher            (2) About the same            (3) Lower            (88) DK            (98) DA</p>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

<p><b>AOJ17.</b> To what extent do you think your neighborhood is affected by gangs? Would you say a lot, somewhat, a little or none?</p> <p>(1) A lot            (2) Somewhat            (3) Little            (4) None            (88) DK            (98) DA</p>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
<p><b>AOJ12.</b> If you were a victim of a robbery or assault how much faith do you have that the judicial system would punish the guilty? <b>[Read the options]</b></p> <p>(1) A lot            (2) Some            (3) Little            (4) None            (88) DK            (98) DA</p>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
<p><b>AOJ22.</b> In your opinion, what should be done to reduce crime in a country like ours: Implement preventive measures or increase punishment of criminals?</p> <p>(1) Implement preventive measures (2) Increase punishment of criminals (3) <b>[Don't read]</b> Both (88) DK (98) DA</p>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

**[GIVE CARD B 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
<b>Not at all</b>						<b>A lot</b>	<b>Doesn't know</b>	<b>Doesn't Answer</b>

**Note down a number 1-7, or 88 DK and 98 DA**

<p>I am going to ask you a series of questions. I am going to ask that you use the numbers provided in the ladder to answer. Remember, you can use any number.</p>	
<p><b>B1.</b> To what extent do you think the courts in (country) guarantee a fair trial? (<b>Read:</b> If you think the courts do not ensure justice <u>at all</u>, choose number 1; if you think the courts ensure justice <u>a lot</u>, choose number 7, or choose a point in between the two.)</p>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
<p><b>B2.</b> To what extent do you respect the political institutions of (country)?</p>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
<p><b>B3.</b> To what extent do you think that citizens' basic rights are well protected by the political system of (country)?</p>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
<p><b>B4.</b> To what extent do you feel proud of living under the political system of (country)?</p>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
<p><b>B6.</b> To what extent do you think that one should support the political system of (country)?</p>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
<p><b>B10A.</b> To what extent do you trust the justice system?</p>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
<p><b>B12.</b> To what extent do you trust the Armed Forces? <b>[Not in Bahamas, Costa Rica or Haiti; ; IN PANAMA, USE "FUERZA PÚBLICA"]</b></p>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
<p><b>B13.</b> To what extent do you trust the National Congress?</p>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
<p><b>B18.</b> To what extent do you trust the National Police?</p>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
<p><b>B20.</b> To what extent do you trust the Catholic Church?</p>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
<p><b>B20A.</b> To what extent do you trust the Evangelical/Protestant Church <b>[use the most common name in your country]</b>?</p>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
<p><b>B21.</b> To what extent do you trust the political parties?</p>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>



<b>B21A.</b> To what extent do you trust the President/Prime Minister?	□□
<b>B32.</b> To what extent do you trust the local or municipal government?	□□
<b>B47A.</b> To what extent do you trust elections in this country?	□□

Now, using the same ladder, <b>[continue with Card B: 1-7 point scale]</b> <b>NOT AT ALL 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A LOT</b>	<b>Note down</b> <b>1-7,</b> <b>88 = DK,</b> <b>98 = DA</b>
<b>N9.</b> To what extent would you say the current administration combats (fights) government corruption?	□□
<b>N11.</b> To what extent would you say the current administration improves citizen safety?	□□
<b>N15.</b> To what extent would you say that the current administration is managing the economy well?	□□

<b>NOT AT ALL 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A LOT</b>	<b>Note down</b> <b>1-7,</b> <b>88 = DK,</b> <b>98 = DA</b>
<b>B3MILX. [DON'T ASK IN COSTA RICA OR HAITI; IN PANAMA USE "FUERZA PÚBLICA"]</b> To what extent do you believe that the [nationality] Armed Forces respect [nationality's] human rights nowadays?	□□
<b>MIL3.</b> Changing the topic a little, how much do you trust the Armed Forces of the United States of America?	□□
<b>MIL4. [DON'T ASK IN COSTA RICA OR HAITI; IN PANAMA USE "FUERZA PUBLICA"]</b> To what extent do you believe that the Armed Forces of the United States of America ought to work together with the Armed Forces of (country) to improve national security?	□□

Using the same 1 to 7 scale, where 1 is "Not at all" and 7 is "A lot," how likely is it that people in your neighborhood would be punished by authorities for...:	<b>(88) DK</b> <b>(98) DA</b>
<b>PR3A.</b> Buying pirated (bootleg) DVDs. How likely is it that they would be punished by the authorities?	□□
<b>PR3B.</b> And for obtaining electricity (bypassing the meter) without paying? How likely is it that they would be punished by the authorities?	□□
<b>PR3C.</b> And for occupying or invading a vacant lot. How likely is it that they would be punished by the authorities?	□□
<b>[Only in Bahamas, Belize, Chile, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Suriname, Trinidad &amp; Tobago, and Uruguay]</b> <b>PR3D.</b> And for building or renovating a house without a license or permit? How likely is it that they would be punished by the authorities?	□□
<b>[Only in Bahamas, Belize, Chile, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Suriname, Trinidad &amp; Tobago, and Uruguay]</b> <b>PR3E.</b> And, still using the same 1 to 7 scale, if people in your neighborhood were to build or renovate a house, how likely do you think it is that they would be asked to pay a bribe to get a license or permit, or to ignore the construction altogether?	□□
<b>PR4.</b> To what degree do you feel that the (nationality) government respects the private property of its citizens? Please use the same scale from 1 is "not at all" to 7 is "a lot."	□□

**[TAKE BACK CARD B]**

<b>PR5.</b> Do you believe that the (nationality) government has the right to seize private property from a person on behalf of the "national interest," even if that person does not agree with it, or do you believe that the government does not have that right? (1) The government has the right to seize private property (2) The government does not have that right (88) DK (98) DA	□□
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<b>M1.</b> Speaking in general of the current administration, how would you rate the job performance of President NAME CURRENT PRESIDENT? <b>[Read the options]</b> (1) Very good (2) Good (3) Neither good nor bad (fair) (4) Bad (5) Very bad (88) DK (98) DA	□□
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<p><b>SD2NEW2.</b> And thinking about this city/area where you live, are you very satisfied, satisfied, <b>dissatisfied</b>, or very <b>dissatisfied</b> with the condition of the streets, roads, and highways?</p> <p>(1) Very satisfied                      (2) Satisfied                      (3) Dissatisfied                  (4) Very dissatisfied                      (99) N/A (Does not use)                      (88) DK                      (98) DA</p>	
<p><b>SD3NEW2.</b> And the quality of public schools? Are you... <b>[Read alternatives]</b></p> <p>(1) Very satisfied                      (2) Satisfied                      (3) Dissatisfied                  (4) Very dissatisfied                      (99) N/A (Does not use)                      (88) DK                      (98) DA</p>	
<p><b>SD6NEW2.</b> And the quality of public medical and health services? Are you... <b>[Read alternatives]</b></p> <p>(1) Very satisfied                      (2) Satisfied                      (3) Dissatisfied                  (4) Very dissatisfied                      (99) N/A (Does not use)                      (88) DK                      (98) DA</p>	

<p><b>INFRA3.</b> Suppose someone enters your home to burglarize it and you call the police. How long do you think it would take the police to arrive at your house on a typical day around noon? <b>[READ ALTERNATIVES]</b></p> <p>(1) Less than 10 minutes                  (2) Between 10 and 30 minutes                  (3) More than 30 minutes and up to an hour                  (4) More than an hour and up to three hours                  (5) More than three hours                  (6) <b>[DON'T READ]</b> There are no police/they would never arrive                  (88) DK                  (98) DA</p>	
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<p><b>INFRA2.</b> Suppose now that your house catches fire. How long do you think it would take the firefighters to arrive at your house on a typical day around noon? <b>[READ ALTERNATIVES]</b></p> <p>(1) Less than 10 minutes                  (2) Between 10 and 30 minutes                  (3) More than 30 minutes and up to an hour                  (4) More than an hour and up to three hours                  (5) More than three hours                  (6) <b>[DON'T READ]</b> There are no firefighters/they would never arrive                  (88) DK                      (98) DA</p>	
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<p><b>COER1.</b> When you shop in a local store/shop in your neighborhood, even if you do not ask for it, would you receive a receipt/cash register receipt/invoice <b>[READ ALTERNATIVES]</b></p> <p>(1) Always    (2) Sometimes    (3) Almost never or    (4) Never?  <b>[DON'T READ]</b> (99) I do not shop at the local store/shop in my neighborhood                  (88) DK                      (98) DA</p>	
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**[GIVE CARD C TO THE RESPONDENT]**

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.

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

Note down 1-7, 88 = DK 98=DA

**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.**

<p><b>ROS1.</b> 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?</p>	
<p><b>ROS4.</b> The (Country) government should implement <b>strong</b> policies to reduce income inequality between the rich and the poor. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?</p>	
<p><b>Note down 1-7, 88 = DK 98=DA</b></p>	
<p><b>ING4.</b> Changing the subject again, 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?</p>	
<p><b>EFF1.</b> Those who govern this country are interested in what people like you think. How much do you agree or disagree with this statement?</p>	

<b>EFF2.</b> You feel that you understand the most important political issues of this country. How much do you agree or disagree with this statement?	
<b>[DON'T ASK IN COSTA RICA, HAITI, OR PANAMA]</b>	
<b>MIL7.</b> The Armed Forces ought to participate in combating crime and violence in [country]. How much do you agree or disagree?	

**[TAKE BACK CARD C]**

<b>ENV1.</b> In your opinion, what should be given higher priority: protecting the environment, or promoting economic growth? (1) Protect the environment (2) Promoting economic growth (3) <b>[Don't read]</b> Both (88) DK (98) DA	
<b>[Only in Bahamas, Belize, Chile, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Suriname, Trinidad &amp; Tobago, and Uruguay]</b>	
<b>DST1.</b> In your opinion, what should be given higher priority: safer construction of homes or avoiding cost increases? (1) Safer construction of homes (2) Avoiding cost increases (3) ) <b>[Don't read]</b> Both (88) DK (98) DA	
<b>PN4.</b> In general, would you say that you are very satisfied, satisfied, <b>dissatisfied</b> or very <b>dissatisfied</b> with the way democracy works in (country)? (1) Very satisfied      (2) Satisfied      (3) Dissatisfied      (4) Very dissatisfied      (88) DK (98) DA	
<b>W14A.</b> And now, thinking about other topics. Do you think it's justified to interrupt a pregnancy, that is, to have an abortion, when the mother's health is in danger? (1) Yes, justified      (2) No, not justified      (88) DK      (98) DA	

**[Give Card D TO THE RESPONDENT]**

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 <i>strongly disapprove</i> and 10 means that you <i>strongly approve</i> . 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	98
										<b>Doesn't know</b>	<b>Doesn't Answer</b>
<b>Strongly disapprove</b>										<b>Strongly approve</b>	

	<b>1-10, 88=DK, 98=DA</b>
<b>E5.</b> Of people participating in legal demonstrations. How much do you approve or disapprove?	
<b>E15.</b> Of people participating in the blocking of roads to protest. Using the same scale, how much do you approve or disapprove?	
<b>E3.</b> Of people participating in a group working to violently overthrow an elected government. How much do you approve or disapprove?	
<b>E16.</b> Of people taking the law into their own hands when the government does not punish criminals. How much do you approve or disapprove?	
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.	<b>1-10, 88=DK, 98=DA</b>

<b>D1.</b> 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 <b>right to vote</b> ? Please read me the number from the scale: <b>[Probe: To what degree?]</b>	□□
<b>D2.</b> How strongly do you approve or disapprove that such people be allowed to conduct <b>peaceful demonstrations</b> in order to express their views? Please read me the number.	□□
<b>D3.</b> 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 <b>run for public office</b> ?	□□
<b>D4.</b> How strongly do you approve or disapprove of such people appearing on television to <b>make speeches</b> ?	□□
<b>D5.</b> And now, changing the topic and thinking of homosexuals, how strongly do you approve or disapprove of such people being permitted to <b>run for public office</b> ?	□□
<b>D6.</b> How strongly do you approve or disapprove of same-sex couples having the right to marry?	□□

[TAKE BACK CARD D]

[GIVE CARD C TO THE RESPONDENT]

[NOTE: KEEP PER4 AND PER9 IF FEAR6e AND FEAR6f ARE KEPT]

Now, I am going to read you 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.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	88	98	
Strongly disagree						Strongly agree		DK	DA

You see yourself as:

<b>PER4.</b> An anxious and easily upset person.	□□
<b>PER9.</b> A calm and emotionally stable person.	□□

[TAKE BACK CARD C]

<b>DEM2.</b> Now changing the subject, 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) DK (98) DA	□□
<b>DEM11.</b> Do you think that our country needs a government with an iron fist, or do you think that problems can be resolved with everyone's participation? (1) Iron fist (2) Everyone's participation (88) DK (98) DA	□□

	N/A Did not try or did not have contact	No	Yes	DK	DA	
Now we want to talk about your personal experience with things that happen in everyday life...						
<b>EXC2.</b> Has a police officer asked you for a bribe in the last twelve months?		0	1	88	98	□□
<b>EXC6.</b> In the last twelve months, did any government employee ask you for a bribe?		0	1	88	98	□□
<b>[DO NOT ASK IN BAHAMAS, COSTA RICA AND HAITI; IN PANAMA, USE "FUERZA PÚBLICA"]</b> <b>EXC20.</b> In the last twelve months, did any <b>soldier or military officer</b> ask you for a bribe?		0	1	88	98	□□



	N/A Did not try or did not have contact	No	Yes	DK	DA	
<b>EXC11.</b> In the last twelve months, did you have any official dealings in the municipality/local government? <b>If the answer is No → mark 99</b> <b>If it is Yes→ ask the following:</b> 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	
<b>EXC13.</b> Do you work? <b>If the answer is No → mark 99</b> <b>If it is Yes→ ask the following:</b> In your work, have you been asked to pay a bribe in the last twelve months?	99	0	1	88	98	
<b>EXC14.</b> In the last twelve months, have you had any dealings with the courts? <b>If the answer is No → mark 99</b> <b>If it is Yes→ ask the following:</b> Did you have to pay a bribe to the courts in the last twelve months?	99	0	1	88	98	
<b>EXC15.</b> Have you used any public health services in the last twelve months? <b>If the answer is No → mark 99</b> <b>If it is Yes→ ask the following:</b> 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	
<b>EXC16.</b> Have you had a child in school in the last twelve months? <b>If the answer is No → mark 99</b> <b>If it is Yes→ ask the following:</b> Have you had to pay a bribe at school in the last twelve months?	99	0	1	88	98	
<b>EXC18.</b> Do you think given the way things are, sometimes paying a bribe is justified?		0	1	88	98	

<b>EXC7.</b> Taking into account your own experience or what you have heard, corruption among <b>public officials</b> is: [Read] (1) Very common      (2) Common      (3) Uncommon or      (4) Very uncommon?      (88) DK      (98) DA	
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Now, I am going to read a list of situations that might or might not be a problem in some neighborhoods. Please, tell me if the following situations are a problem that is very serious, somewhat serious, a little serious, not serious at all, or are not a problem in **your neighborhood**. [Repeat after each question: "Is this very serious, somewhat serious, a little serious, not serious at all, or not a problem in your neighborhood?" to help the interviewee]

	Very serious	Somewhat serious	A little serious	Not serious at all	Not a problem	DK	DA
<b>[Mandatory question in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico and Panama, optional in the rest of the countries]</b> <b>DISO7.</b> Young people or children in the street doing nothing, wandering around <b>here in your neighborhood</b>	1	2	3	4	5	88	98
<b>[Ask only in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico and Panama]</b> <b>DISO8.</b> Young people or children living <b>here in your neighborhood</b> who are in gangs	1	2	3	4	5	88	98

<b>[Ask only in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico and Panama]</b> <b>DISO10.</b> Selling or trafficking of illegal drugs here in <b>your</b> neighborhood	1	2	3	4	5	88	98
<b>[Ask only in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico and Panama]</b> <b>DISO18.</b> Gangs fighting here in <b>your</b> neighborhood	1	2	3	4	5	88	98
<b>[Ask only in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico and Panama]</b> <b>DISO14.</b> Drug addicts in the streets here in <b>your</b> neighborhood	1	2	3	4	5	88	98
<b>[Ask only in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico and Panama]</b> <b>DISO16.</b> Assaults of people while they walk on the streets here in <b>your</b> neighborhood	1	2	3	4	5	88	98
<b>[Mandatory question in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico and Panama, optional in the rest of the countries]</b> <b>DISO17.</b> Shootings here in <b>your</b> neighborhood	1	2	3	4	5	88	98

Given your experience or what you have heard, which of the following criminal acts have happened in the last 12 months in your neighborhood.	Yes	No	Once a week	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a year	DK	DA	N/A
<b>VICBAR1.</b> Were there burglaries in the last 12 months in your neighborhood?	1 [Continue]	2 [Skip to VICBAR3]				88	98	
								[Skip to VICBAR3]
<b>VICBAR1F</b> How many times did this occur: once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year?			1	2	3	88	98	99
<b>VICBAR3.</b> Have there been sales of illegal drugs in the past 12 months in your neighborhood?	1 [Continue]	2 [Skip to VICBAR4]				88	98	
								[Skip to VICBAR4]
<b>VICBAR3F</b> How many times did this occur: once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year?			1	2	3	88	98	99
<b>VICBAR4.</b> Has there been any extortion or blackmail in the past 12 months in your neighborhood?	1 [Continue]	2 [Skip to VICBAR7]				88	98	
								[Skip to VICBAR7]
<b>VICBAR4F</b> How many times did this occur: once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year?			1	2	3	88	98	99
<b>VICBAR7.</b> Have there been any murders in the last 12 months in your neighborhood?	1 [Continue]	2 [Skip to FEAR10]				88	98	
								[Skip to FEAR10]
<b>VICBAR7F</b> How many times did this occur: once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year?			1	2	3	88	98	99



	Yes	No	DK	DA	
<b>FEAR10.</b> In order to protect yourself from crime, in the last 12 months, have you taken any measures such as avoiding walking through some areas in <b>your neighborhood</b> because they are dangerous?	1	0	88	98	_ _
<b>VIC44.</b> In the last 12 months, out of fear of crime, have you organized with the neighbors of your community?	1	0	88	98	_ _

	A lot	Some what	A little	Not at all	DK	DA	N/A	
<b>FEAR6e.</b> And in general, how worried are you that someone in your family will be assaulted on public transportation? Would you say a lot, somewhat, a little, or not at all?	1	2	3	4	88	98	99 [Does not use public transportation]	_ _
<b>FEAR6f.</b> And how worried are you about the safety of children in school? Would you say a lot, somewhat, a little, or not at all?	1	2	3	4	88	98	99 [Does not have any close children in school]	_ _

<b>VB1.</b> Are you registered to vote? [El Salvador, Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru: Do you have an Identity Card?] (1) Yes (2) No (3) Being processed (88) DK (98) DA	_ _
<b>[DO NOT ASK IN BAHAMAS, COSTA RICA, PANAMÁ, PERÚ, HONDURAS, NICARAGUA, AND EL SALVADOR]</b> <b>INF1.</b> Do you have a national identification card? (1) Yes (2) No (88) DK (98) DA	_ _

<b>VB2.</b> Did you vote in the last <b>presidential elections</b> of (year of last presidential elections)? <b>[IN COUNTRIES WITH TWO ROUNDS, ASK ABOUT THE FIRST]</b> (1) Voted <b>[Continue]</b> (2) Did not vote <b>[Go to VB4NEW]</b> (88) DK <b>[Go to VB10]</b> (98) DA <b>[Go to VB10]</b>	_ _
<b>VB3n.</b> Who did you vote for in the last presidential election of 2008? <b>[DON'T READ THE LIST] [IN COUNTRIES WITH TWO ROUNDS, ASK ABOUT THE FIRST]</b> (00) None (Blank ballot) <b>[Go to VB101]</b> (97) None (null ballot) <b>[Go to VB101]</b> (X01) <b>INSERT CANDIDATE NAME AND NAME OF PARTY OR COALITION</b> <b>[Go to VB10]</b> (X02) <b>[Go to VB10]</b> (X03) <b>Replace X for the country code [Go to VB10]</b> (XX77) Other <b>[Go to VB10]</b> (88) DK <b>[Go to VB10]</b> (98) DA <b>[Go to VB10]</b> (99) INAP (Didn't vote) <b>[Go to VB4NEW]</b>	_ _

<p><b>VB4NEW. [ONLY FOR THOSE WHO DIDN'T VOTE. DON'T READ ALTERNATIVES]</b>  <b>[IN COUNTRIES WITH TWO ROUNDS, ASK ABOUT THE FIRST]</b>  <b>[If respondent says "I didn't vote because I didn't want", ask why did not he/she want]</b>                  Why did you not vote in the last presidential election? <b>[Only allow one response]</b>                  (1) Was confused                  (2) Didn't like any of the candidates, didn't like the campaign                  (3) Do not believe in elections/electoral authorities                  (4) Do not believe in democracy                  (5) Bureaucratic matters (voter registry)                  (6) Age-related matters (too young, too old)                  (7) Not in the district/away from home                  (8) Not interested in politics                  (77) Another reason                  (88) DK                  (98) DA                  (99) INAP (voted) <b>[AFTER THIS QUESTION GO TO VB10]</b></p>	
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<p><b>VB101. [ONLY FOR THOSE WHO RESPONDED "NONE (BLANK OR NULL)" ON VB3n]</b>  <b>[IN COUNTRIES WITH TWO ROUNDS, ASK ABOUT THE FIRST]</b>                  Why did you cast a null or blank ballot in the last presidential election? <b>[DON'T READ ALTERNATIVES]</b>                  (1) Was confused                  (2) Wanted to express their discontent with all of the candidates; didn't like any of the candidates                  (3) Do not believe in democracy, wanted to protest against the political system                  (4) Do not believe in elections/electoral authorities                  (5) Not interested in politics                  (6) My vote does not make any difference                  (7) Another reason                  (88) DK                  (98) DA                  (99) INAP</p>	
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<p><b>VB10.</b> Do you currently identify with a political party?                  (1) Yes <b>[Continue]</b>      (2) No <b>[Go to POL1]</b>      (88) DK <b>[Skip to POL1]</b>                  (98) DA <b>[Skip to POL1]</b></p>	
<p><b>VB11.</b> Which political party do you identify with? <b>[DON'T READ THE LIST]</b>                  (X01) <b>[WRITE DOWN THE NAMES OF CURRENT POLITICAL PARTIES]</b>                  (X02)                  (X03) <b>[Replace X with Country Code]</b>                  (88) DK                  (98) DA                  (99) N/A</p>	

<p><b>POL1.</b> How much interest do you have in politics: a lot, some, little or none?                  (1) A lot      (2) Some      (3) Little      (4) None      (88) DK      (98) DA</p>	
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<p><b>VB20.</b> If the next presidential elections were being held this week, what would you do? <b>[Read options]</b>                  (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) DK      (98) DA</p>	
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<p><b>CLIEN1n.</b> Thinking of the last national elections, any candidate or political party offered a favor, gift, or other benefit to <b>a person whom you know</b> in exchange for that person's support or vote?                  (1) Yes      (2) No      (88) DK      (98) DA</p>	
<p><b>CLIEN1na.</b> And thinking about the last presidential elections of 2009, did someone offer <b>you</b> something, like a favor, gift or any other benefit in return for your vote or support?                  (1) Yes      (2) No      (88) DK      (98) DA</p>	



<p><b>[GIVE CARD G TO THE RESPONDENT]</b>  <b>FOR1n.</b> Now we are going to talk about your views with respect to some countries. Which of the following countries has the <b>most influence</b> in <b>Latin America/ Caribbean</b>? <b>[READ CHOICES]</b></p> <p>(1) China, that is mainland China and not Taiwan                      (2) Japan  (3) India    (4) United States  (5) Brazil    (6) Venezuela  (7) Mexico    (10) Spain  (11) <b>[Don't read ]</b> Another country, or                                      (12) <b>[Don't read ]</b> None  (88) <b>[Don't read ]</b> DK    (98) <b>[Don't read ]</b> DA</p>	_ _
<p><b>FOR4.</b> And <b>within 10 years</b>, in your opinion which of the following countries will have most influence in <b>Latin America/ Caribbean</b>? <b>[Read options]</b></p> <p>(1) China    (2) Japan  (3) India    (4) United States  (5) Brazil    (6) Venezuela  (7) Mexico    (10) Spain  (11) <b>[Don't read ]</b> Another country    (12) <b>[Don't read ]</b> None  (88) <b>[Don't read ]</b> DK    (98) <b>[Don't read ]</b> DA</p>	_ _
<p><b>[TAKE CARD G. HAND OUT CARD H] [Note that Card H requires customization by country]</b>  <b>FOR5.</b> In your opinion, which of the following countries ought to be the model for the future development of <b>our country</b>? <b>[Read options]</b></p> <p>(1) China    (2) Japan  (3) India    (4) United States  (5) Singapore    (6) Russia  (7) South Korea    (10) <b>[Exclude in Brazil]</b> Brazil  (11) <b>[Exclude in Venezuela]</b> Venezuela, or                                      (12) <b>[Exclude in Mexico]</b> Mexico  (13) <b>[Don't read ]</b> None/we ought to follow our own model  (14) <b>[Don't read ]</b> Other                      (88) DK                      (98) DA</p> <p><b>[TAKE CARD "H"]</b></p>	_ _
<p><b>FOR6.</b> And thinking now <b>only of our country</b>, how much influence do you think that China has in <b>our country</b>? <b>[Read options]</b></p> <p>(1) A lot <b>[Continue]</b>    (2) Some <b>[Continue]</b>  (3) A little <b>[Continue]</b>    (4) None <b>[Go to FOR6b]</b>  (88) DK <b>[Go to FOR6b]</b>    (98) DA <b>[Go to FOR6b]</b></p>	_ _
<p><b>FOR7.</b> In general, the influence that China has on our country is very positive, positive, negative, or very negative?</p> <p>(1) Very positive    (2) Positive  (3) <b>[Do not read]</b> Neither positive nor negative                              (4) Negative  (5) Very negative    (6) <b>[Do not read]</b> Has no influence  (88) DK    (98) DA                      (99) N/A</p>	_ _
<p><b>FOR6b.</b> Again thinking about <b>only our country</b>, how much influence does the United States have in <b>our country</b>? <b>[Read alternatives]</b></p> <p>(1) A lot <b>[Continue]</b>    (2) Some <b>[Continue]</b>  (3) A little <b>[Continue]</b>    (4) None <b>[Go to MIL10A]</b>  (88) DK <b>[Go to MIL10A]</b>    (98) DA <b>[Go to MIL10A]</b></p>	_ _
<p><b>FOR7b.</b> The influence that the United States has on our country is very positive, positive, negative, or very negative?</p> <p>(1) Very positive    (2) Positive  (3) <b>[Do not read]</b> Neither positive nor negative                              (4) Negative  (5) Very negative    (6) <b>[Do not read]</b> Has no influence  (88) DK    (98) DA                      (99) N/A</p>	_ _



Now, I would like to ask you how much you trust **the governments** of the following countries. For each country, tell me if in your opinion it is very trustworthy, somewhat trustworthy, not very trustworthy, or not at all trustworthy, or if you don't have an opinion.

	Very trustworthy	Somewhat trustworthy	Not very trustworthy	Not at all trustworthy	Don't know/No opinion	DA	
<b>MIL10A.</b> The government of China. In your opinion, is it very trustworthy, somewhat trustworthy, not very trustworthy, or not at all trustworthy, or do you not have an opinion?	1	2	3	4	88	98	_ _
<b>MIL10C.</b> Iran. In your opinion, is it very trustworthy, somewhat trustworthy, not very trustworthy, or not at all trustworthy, or do you not have an opinion?	1	2	3	4	88	98	_ _
<b>MIL10E.</b> United States. In your opinion, is it very trustworthy, somewhat trustworthy, not very trustworthy, or not at all trustworthy, or do you not have an opinion?	1	2	3	4	88	98	_ _

**Now we want to ask you about a different topic**

**VOL207n.** Do you think that to correct a child who misbehaves it is necessary to hit or physically punish them? **[Read options]**

- (1) Always
- (2) Most often
- (3) Sometimes
- (4) Almost never
- (5) Never
- (88) DK      (98) DA

|\_|\_|

**Now let's talk about your experience. Remember that if you are uncomfortable or for another reason prefer not to answer these questions, just tell me and we will move to the next question.**

**VOL208n.** When you were a child, your parents or guardians would hit or physically punish you in some way to correct your misbehavior? **[Read options]**

- (1) Always
- (2) Most often
- (3) Sometimes
- (4) Almost never
- (5) Never      (88) DK      (98) DA

|\_|\_|



Now I am going to read some situations in which some people think that it is justified that the husband hits his wife/partner and I will ask your opinion.....	Would approve	Would not approve but understand	Would not approve or understand	DK	DA	
<b>DVW1.</b> His wife neglects the household chores. Would you approve of the husband hitting his wife, or would you not approve but understand, or would you neither approve nor understand?	1	2	3	88	98	_ _
<b>DVW2.</b> His wife is unfaithful. Would you approve of the husband hitting his wife, or would you not approve but understand, or would you neither approve nor understand?	1	2	3	88	98	_ _

<b>WF1.</b> Do you or someone in your household receive regular assistance in the form of money, food, or products from the government, not including pensions/social security? (1) Yes (2) No (88) DK (98) DA	_ _
<b>[Only in countries with CCT programs]</b> <b>CCT1B.</b> Now, talking specifically about <b>[Conditional Cash Transfers]</b> , are you or someone in your house a beneficiary of this program? (1) Yes (2) No (88) DK (98) DA	_ _

<b>ED.</b> How many years of schooling have you completed? ____ Year _____ (primary, secondary, university, post-secondary not university) = _____ total number of years <b>[Use the table below for the code]</b>							
	1 <sup>0</sup>	2 <sup>0</sup>	3 <sup>0</sup>	4 <sup>0</sup>	5 <sup>0</sup>	6 <sup>0</sup>	
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 answer	98						

<b>ED2.</b> And what educational level did your mother/mom complete? <b>[DO NOT READ OPTIONS]</b> (00) None (01) Primary incomplete (02) Primary complete (03) Secondary incomplete (04) Secondary complete (05) Technical school/Associate degree incomplete (06) Technical school/Associate degree complete (07) University (bachelor's degree or higher) incomplete (08) University (bachelor's degree or higher) complete (88) DK (98) DA	_ _
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<p><b>Q3C.</b> What is your religion, if any? <b>[Do not read options]</b>  <b>[If the respondent says that he/she has no religion, probe to see if he/she should be located in option 4 or 11]</b>                  (01) Catholic                  (02) Protestant, Mainline Protestant or Protestant non-Evangelical (Christian; Calvinist; Lutheran; Methodist; Presbyterian; Disciple of Christ; Anglican; Episcopalian; Moravian).                  (03) Non-Christian Eastern Religions (Islam; Buddhist; Hinduism; Taoist; Confucianism; Baha'i).                  (04) None (Believes in a Supreme Entity but does not belong to any religion)                  (05) 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).                  (06) LDS (Mormon).                  (07) 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) DK (98) DA</p>	<p style="text-align: right;"> _ _ </p>
<p><b>Q5B.</b> Could you please tell me how important is religion in your life? <b>[Read options]</b>                  (1) Very important (2) Rather important (3) Not very important (4) Not at all important (88) DK (98) DA</p>	<p style="text-align: right;"> _ _ </p>
<p><b>OCUP4A.</b> How do you mainly spend your time? Are you currently <b>[Read options]</b>                  (1) Working? <b>[Continue]</b>                  (2) Not working, but have a job? <b>[Continue]</b>                  (3) Actively looking for a job? <b>[Go to PR1]</b>                  (4) A student? <b>[Go to PR1]</b>                  (5) Taking care of the home? <b>[Go to PR1]</b>                  (6) Retired, a pensioner or permanently disabled to work <b>[Go to PR1]</b>                  (7) Not working and not looking for a job? <b>[Go to PR1]</b>                  (88) DK <b>[Go to PR1]</b> (98) DA <b>[Go to PR1]</b></p>	<p style="text-align: right;"> _ _ </p>
<p><b>OCUP1A.</b> In this job are you: <b>[Read the options]</b>                  (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) DK                  (98) DA                  (99) N/A</p>	<p style="text-align: right;"> _ _ </p>



<p><b>PR1. Is the home in which you reside... [READ ALTERNATIVES]:</b></p> <p>(1) Rented <b>[GO to PR3]</b></p> <p>(2) Owned <b>[If respondent has doubts, say "paid off completely or being paid for in regular mortgage payments"] [GO to PR2]</b></p> <p>(3) Borrowed or shared <b>[GO to Q10NEW]</b></p> <p>(4) <b>[DO NOT READ]</b> Another situation <b>[GO to Q10NEW]</b></p> <p>(88) DK <b>[GO to Q10NEW]</b></p> <p>(98) DA <b>[GO to Q10NEW]</b></p>	_ _
<p><b>PR2. Does this home have a property title so that it is in your name, or is the title in the name of a bank or another institution?</b></p> <p>(1) Yes (it is in your name, or the title is in the name of a bank or another institution) <b>[GO to Q10NEW]</b></p> <p>(2) No <b>[GO to Q10NEW]</b></p> <p>(3) Being processed <b>[GO to Q10NEW]</b></p> <p>(88) DK <b>[GO to Q10NEW]</b></p> <p>(98) DA <b>[GO to Q10NEW]</b></p> <p>(99) INAP</p>	_ _
<p><b>PR3. Do you have a rental contract?</b></p> <p>(1) Yes</p> <p>(2) No</p> <p>(88) DK (98) DA (99) INAP</p>	_ _

**[GIVE CARD F TO THE RESPONDENT]**

<p><b>Q10NEW.</b> 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?</p> <p><b>[If the interviewee does not get it, ask: "Which is the total monthly income in your household?"]</b></p> <p>[17 categories based on the currency and distribution of the country]</p> <p>(00) No income</p> <p>(01) Less than \$25</p> <p>(02) \$26- \$50</p> <p>(03) \$51-\$100</p> <p>(04) \$101-\$150</p> <p>(05) \$151-\$200</p> <p>(06) \$201-\$300</p> <p>(07) \$301-\$400</p> <p>(08) \$401-500</p> <p>(09) \$501-\$750</p> <p>(10) More than \$751</p> <p>(11) xxxx</p> <p>(12) xxxx</p> <p>(13) xxxx</p> <p>(14) xxxx</p> <p>(15) xxxx</p> <p>(16) xxxx</p> <p>(88) DK</p> <p>(98) DA</p>	_ _
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<b>ETID.</b> Do you consider yourself white, mestizo, indigenous, black, mulatto, or of another race? <b>[If respondent says Afro-country, mark (4) Black]</b> (1) White      (2) Mestizo      (3) Indigenous      (4) Black (5) Mulatto      (7) Other      (88) DK      (98) DA					<input type="text"/>
<b>LENG1.</b> What is your mother tongue, that is, the language you spoke first at home when you were a child? <b>[Mark only one answer] [Do not read the options]</b> <b>[Coding: the 'X' is replaced by the country code as found in variable "PAIS"]</b> (X01) Spanish (X02) Indigenous language <b>[NB; list the name of the most common indigenous languages]</b> (X04) Other (indigenous) (X05) Other foreign (88) DK    (98) DA					<input type="text"/>
<b>[Use only in Mexico, Guatemala, Ecuador, Bolivia, Paraguay, and Peru]</b> <b>LENG4.</b> Speaking about the language that your parents knew, your parents speak or spoke: <i>[Interviewer: if one of the parents spoke only one language and the other two, mark 2.]</i> <b>[ Read the options]</b> (1) Spanish only    (2) Spanish and indigenous language    (3) Indigenous language only (4) Spanish and foreign language    (5) Foreign language only    (88) DK    (98) DA					<input type="text"/>
<b>WWW1.</b> Talking about other things, how often do you use the internet? <b>[Read options]</b> (1) Daily (2) A few times a week (3) A few times a month (4) Rarely (5) Never (88) <b>[Don't read]</b> DK      (98) <b>[Don't read]</b> DA					<input type="text"/>
<b>G10.</b> About how often do you pay attention to the news, whether on TV, the radio, newspapers or the internet? <b>[Read alternatives]:</b> (1) Daily    (2) A few times a week    (3) A few times a month    (4) Rarely (5) Never    (88) DK    (98) DA					<input type="text"/>
For statistical purposes, we would like to know how much information people have about politics and the country...	<b>Correct</b>	<b>Incorrect</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Don't answer</b>	
<b>G11.</b> What is the name of the current president of the United States of America? <b>[Don't read: Barack Obama, accept Obama]</b>	1	2	88	98	<input type="text"/>
<b>G1X4.</b> In which continent is Nigeria? <b>[Don't read: Africa]</b>	1	2	88	98	<input type="text"/>
<b>G14.</b> How long is the presidential/prime ministerial term of office in (country)? <b>[Don't read: insert number of years]</b>	1	2	88	98	<input type="text"/>
<b>G17.</b> How many representatives does the <b>[lower or only chamber of Congress]</b> have? <b>[WRITE DOWN THE EXACT NUMBER STATED. REPEAT ONLY ONCE IF THE INTERVIEWEE DOESN'T ANSWER]</b>	Number: _____		8888	9888	<input type="text"/>

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

<b>R3.</b> Refrigerator	(0) No	(1) Yes	DK (88)	DA (98)		
<b>R4.</b> Landline/residential telephone (not cellular)	(0) No	(1) Yes	DK (88)	DA (98)		
<b>R4A.</b> Cellular telephone	(0) No	(1) Yes	DK (88)	DA (98)		
<b>R5.</b> Vehicle/car. How many? <b>[If the interviewee does not say how many, mark "one."]</b>	(0) No	(1) One	(2) Two	(3) Three or more	DK (88)	DA (98)
<b>R6.</b> Washing machine	(0) No	(1) Yes	DK (88)	DA (98)		
<b>R7.</b> Microwave oven	(0) No	(1) Yes	DK (88)	DA (98)		
<b>R8.</b> Motorcycle	(0) No	(1) Yes	DK (88)	DA (98)		
<b>R12.</b> Indoor plumbing	(0) No	(1) Yes	DK (88)	DA (98)		
<b>R14.</b> Indoor bathroom	(0) No	(1) Yes	DK (88)	DA (98)		
<b>R15.</b> Computer	(0) No	(1) Yes	DK (88)	DA (98)		
<b>R18.</b> Internet	(0) No	(1) Yes	DK (88)	DA (98)		
<b>R1.</b> Television	(0) No <b>[Skip to R26]</b>		(1) Yes <b>[Continue]</b>		DK (88)	DA (98)
<b>R16.</b> Flat panel TV	(0) No	(1) Yes	DK (88)	DA (98)	<b>(99)</b> <b>INAP</b>	
<b>R26.</b> Is the house connected to the sewage system?	(0) No	(1) Yes	DK (88)	DA (98)		

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

<p><b>FORMATQ.</b> Please indicate the format in which <b>THIS</b> specific questionnaire was completed.</p> <p>(1) Paper (2) Android (3) Windows PDA</p>	_
---	---

<p><b>COLORR.</b> [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] _____</p> <p>(97) Could not be classified <b>[Mark (97) only if, for some reason, you could not see the face of the respondent]</b></p>	_ _
<p>Time interview ended _____ : _____</p>	_ _ _ _
<p><b>TI.</b> Duration of interview <i>[minutes, see page # 1]</i> _____</p>	_ _ _ _
<p><b>INTID.</b> Interviewer ID number: _____</p>	_ _ _ _
<p><b>SEXI.</b> Note interviewer's sex: (1) Male (2) Female</p>	_
<p><b>COLORI.</b> Using the color chart, note the color that comes closest to your own color.</p>	_ _



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

*Field supervisor's signature* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Comments:* \_\_\_\_\_

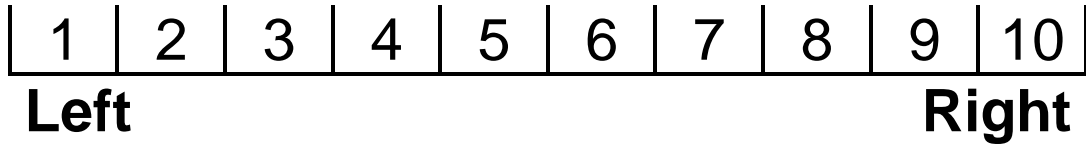
\_\_\_\_\_  
*[Not for PDA/Android use] Signature of the person who entered the data* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*[Not for PDA/Android use] Signature of the person who verified the data* \_\_\_\_\_

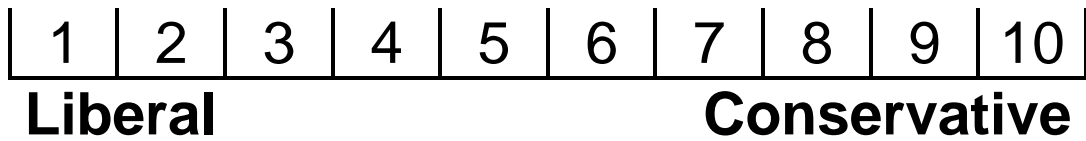




### ***Card A (L1)***

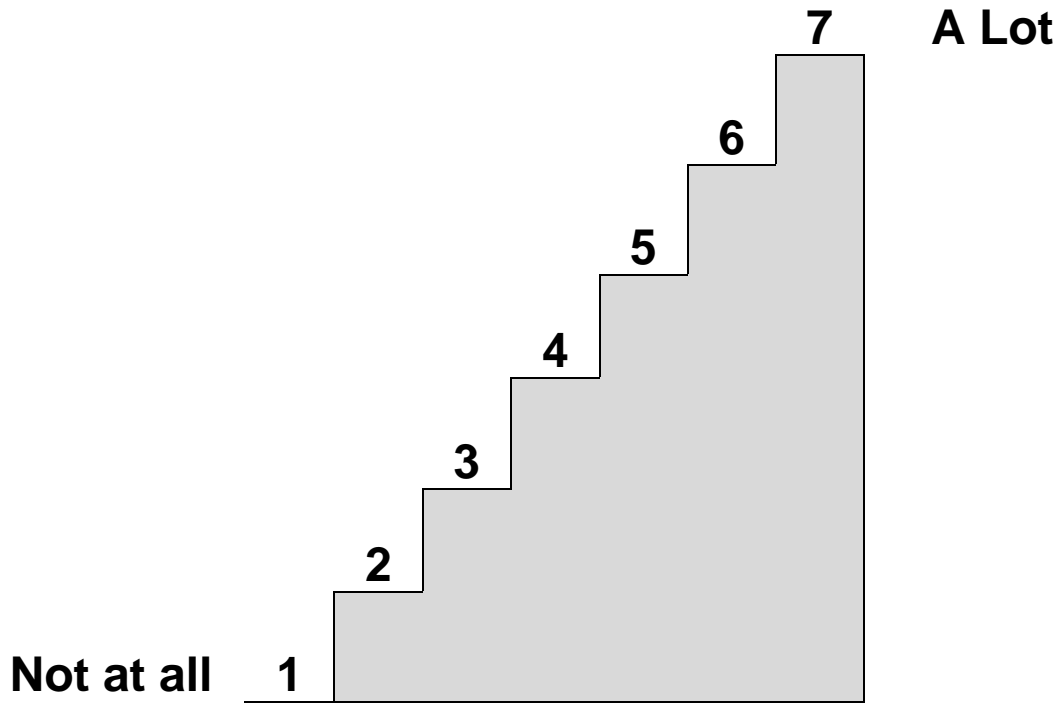


### ***Card A (L1B)***



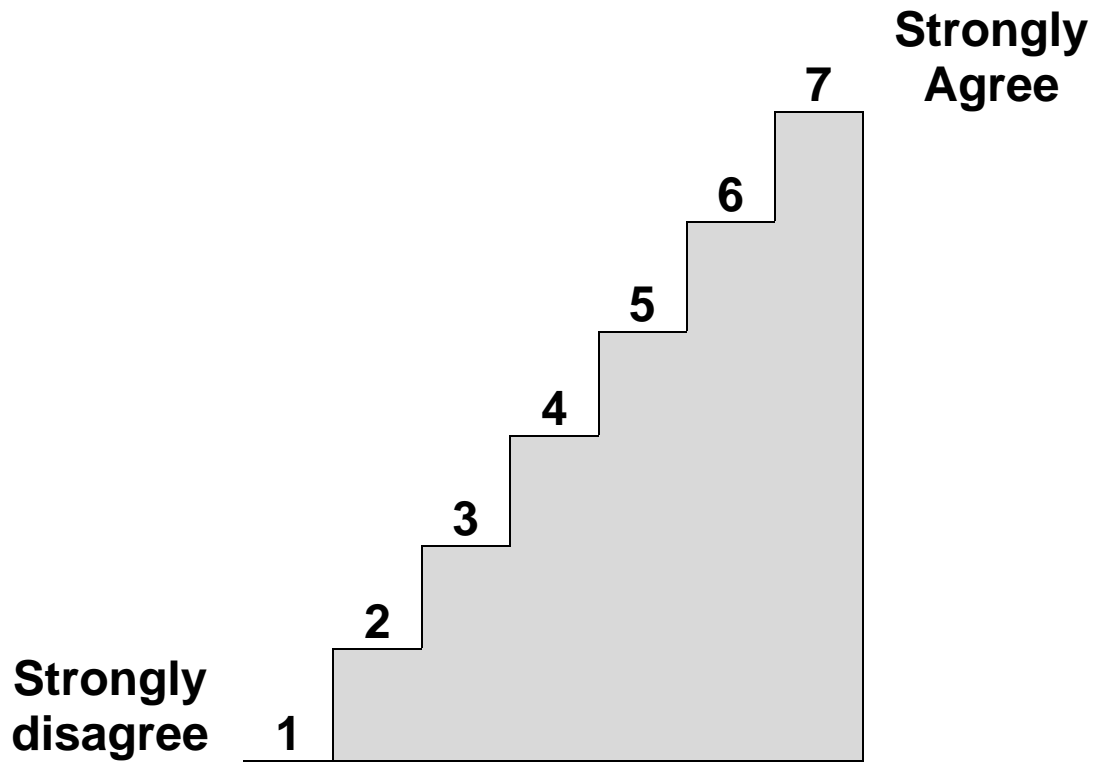


# Card B



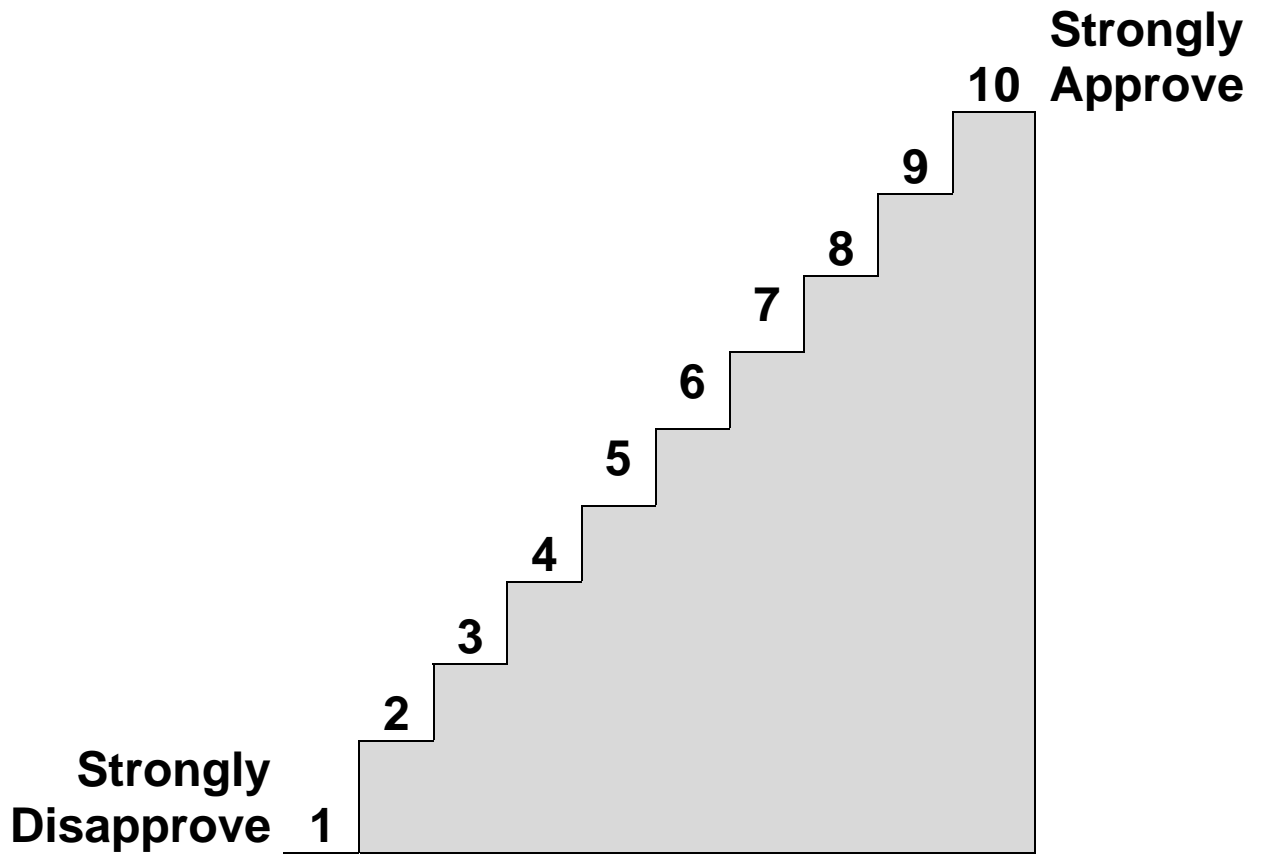


# Card C





# Card D





## **Card G**

Brazil

China

Spain

United States

India

Japan

Mexico

Venezuela



## ***Card H***

[CUSTOMIZE FOR EACH COUNTRY]

Brazil

China

South Korea

United States

India

Japan

Mexico

Russia

Singapore

Venezuela



## 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
- (11) Xxxx
- (12) Xxxx
- (13) Xxxx
- (14) Xxxx
- (15) Xxxx
- (16) Xxxx



# Color Palette





## The AmericasBarometer

This study forms part of a research program that the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) has been carrying out for more than two decades. LAPOP is a consortium of academic and research institutions spread throughout the Americas, with its headquarters at Vanderbilt University, in the United States. More than 30 institutions throughout the region participate in research collaborations with LAPOP. LAPOP's efforts are directed at producing objective, nonpartisan, and scientifically sound studies of public opinion. These studies focus primarily on the measurement of political attitudes and behaviors related to democracy and quality of life. Over the course of the AmericasBarometer's duration, the project has received generous support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Vanderbilt University, the Tinker Foundation, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), the United States National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Center for Research in Brazil (CNPq), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the Swedish Embassy in Bolivia, as well as Duke University, Florida International University, the University of Miami, Princeton University, the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile, and the Kellogg Institute at Notre Dame University. LAPOP also maintains linkages with entities such as the Organization of American States.

The most recent surveys, whose results are analyzed and discussed in this publication, were carried out in 2014 via face-to-face interviews in Latin American and Caribbean countries, using nationally representative stratified and clustered probability samples in both urban and rural areas. The same surveys were conducted by Internet to national samples in the United States and Canada. Interviews were conducted in the national language or in the major indigenous/creole languages of each country. The 2014 round of the AmericasBarometer includes surveys conducted in 28 countries across the Americas and more than 50,000 interviews. Common core modules and standardized techniques allow for comparison across individuals, between certain sub-national regions within countries, across countries, and over time.

The Latin American Public Opinion Project offers its AmericasBarometer country datasets free to the public via its webpage: [www.lapopsurveys.org](http://www.lapopsurveys.org). In addition to the datasets, the reports, articles, and books that LAPOP produces are free to the public. This research and the data can also be accessed via our "data repositories" and subscribing institutions in major universities in the United States and Latin America. With these initiatives, LAPOP continues to collaborate in the pursuit of excellence in academic and policy research and analysis throughout the Americas.

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