

# THE PULSE OF DEMOCRACY IN THE AMERICAS: RESULTS FROM THE 2023 AMERICASBAROMETER

November 2023



AmericasBarometer  
*Barómetro de las Américas*

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LAPOP Lab and the  
AmericasBarometer

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# The AmericasBarometer

The most scientifically  
rigorous comparative  
survey in the region

2004-2023:  
**380K + interviews**  
in **34 countries**

Nationally representative  
samples, stratified by  
region and rural/urban  
residence

Face-to-face and  
phone interviews in  
**8 languages** using  
mobile devices

**Topics:** democracy, rule of law, state  
capacity, trust in institutions, the economy,  
corruption, security, emigration, and more

Data and reports available for free at:  
[www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop)

The project is made possible by  
support from USAID through DIMS III

A stylized map of the Americas, including North and South America, rendered in a light blue color against a dark blue background. The map is positioned on the left side of the slide, with the title 'The AmericasBarometer' overlaid on it.

# The AmericasBarometer

2023

26 countries

~1,500  
interviews/  
country

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Face-to-Face interviewing, except  
for Haiti and Nicaragua (CATI),  
and the US and Canada (Web)

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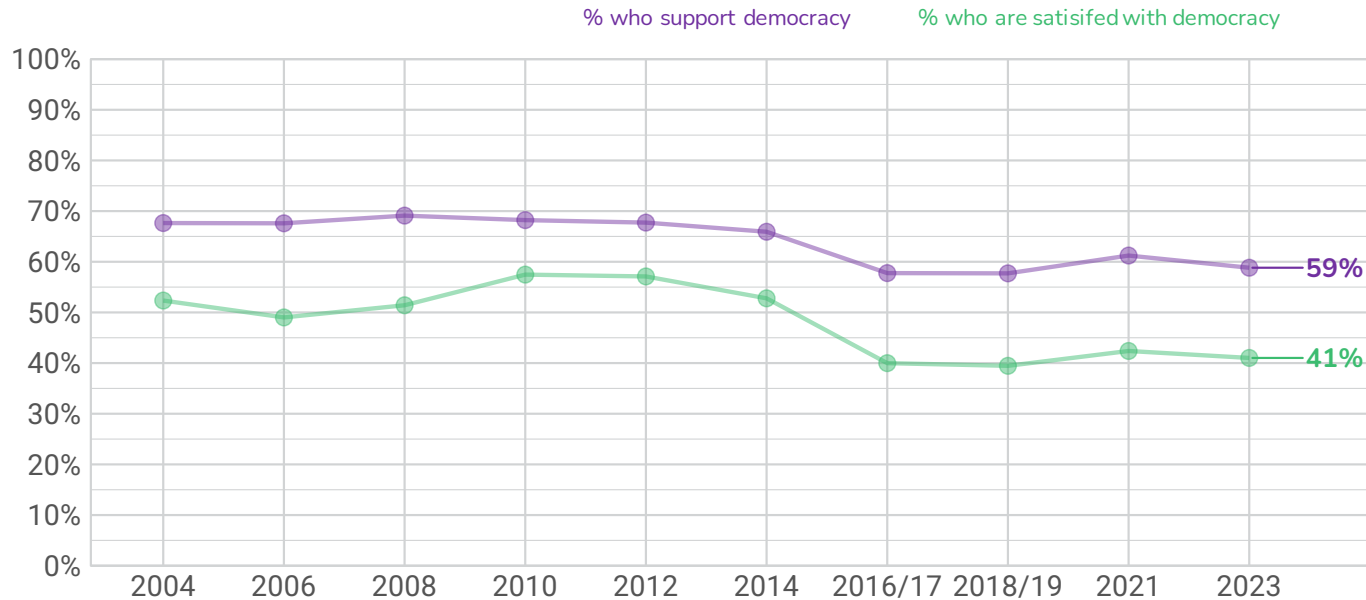
Hybrid fieldwork team training and  
questionnaire pretesting

# 1

## A New Equilibrium

# Following significant declines, views about democracy have remained stable at a new, lower equilibrium

**Support for and satisfaction with democracy have stabilized at lower levels than a decade ago**

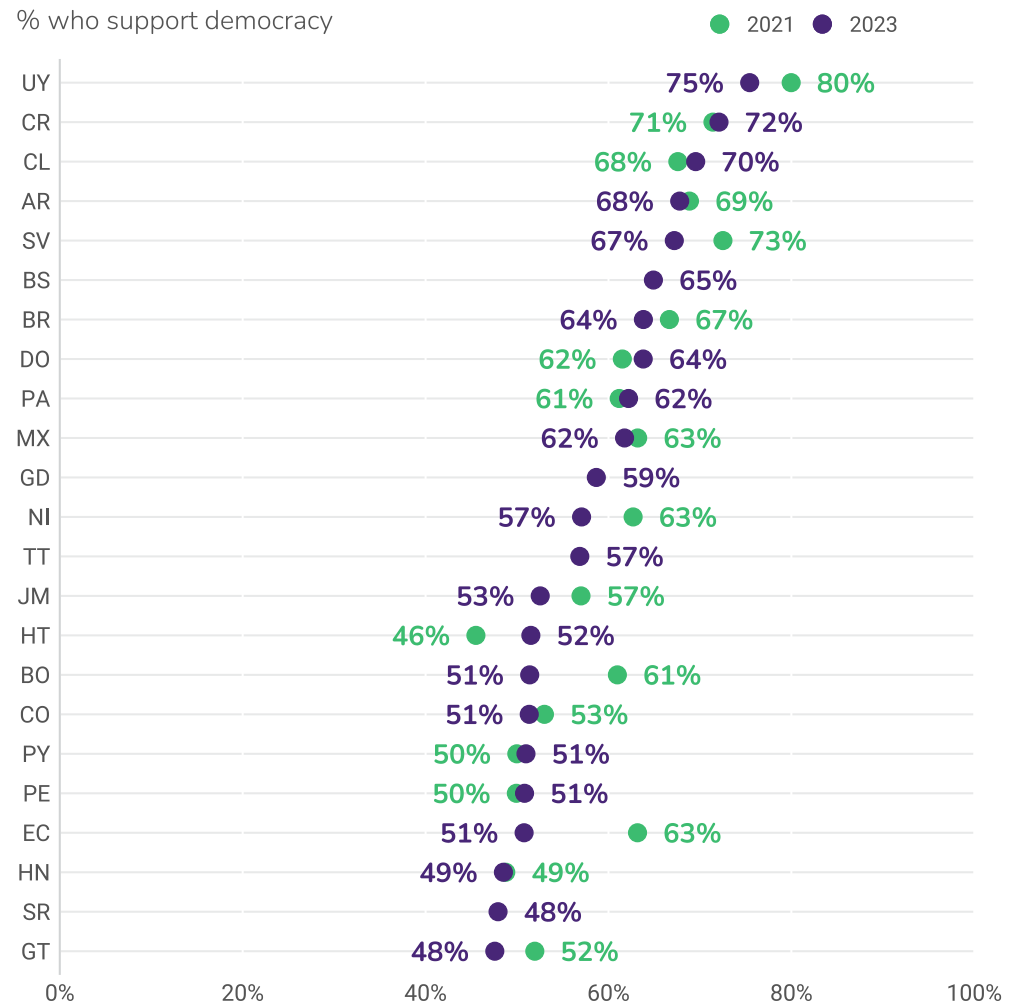


Source: LAPOP Lab, AmericasBarometer 2004-2023

*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?*  
Figure shows the % who responded 5 to 7 on a 7-point scale.

*In general, would you say that you are very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the way democracy works in (country)?*  
Figure shows the % who responded satisfied or very satisfied.

Since 2021, support for democracy has remained stable or declined in most LAC countries



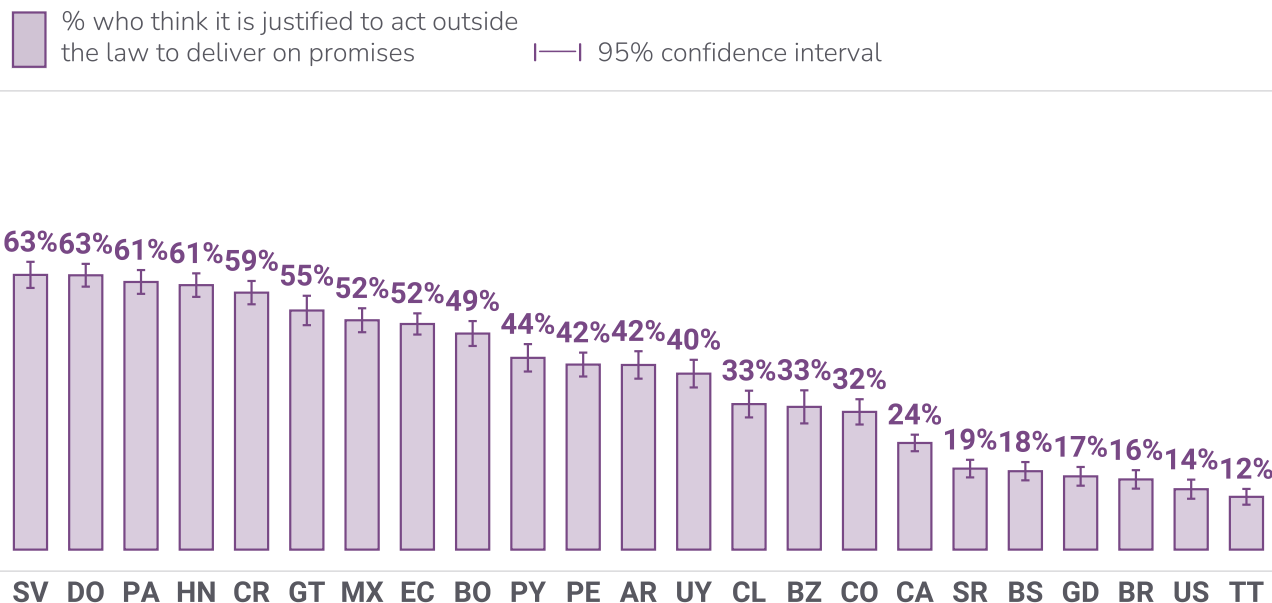
Source: LAPOP Lab, AmericasBarometer 2021-2023

*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?*

Figure shows the % who responded 5 to 7 on a 7-point scale.

# In nearly a third of the countries of the LAC region, a majority would justify leaders acting outside of the law

**Most in El Salvador, the Dom. Republic, Panama, Honduras, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico, and Ecuador would justify extralegal acts**



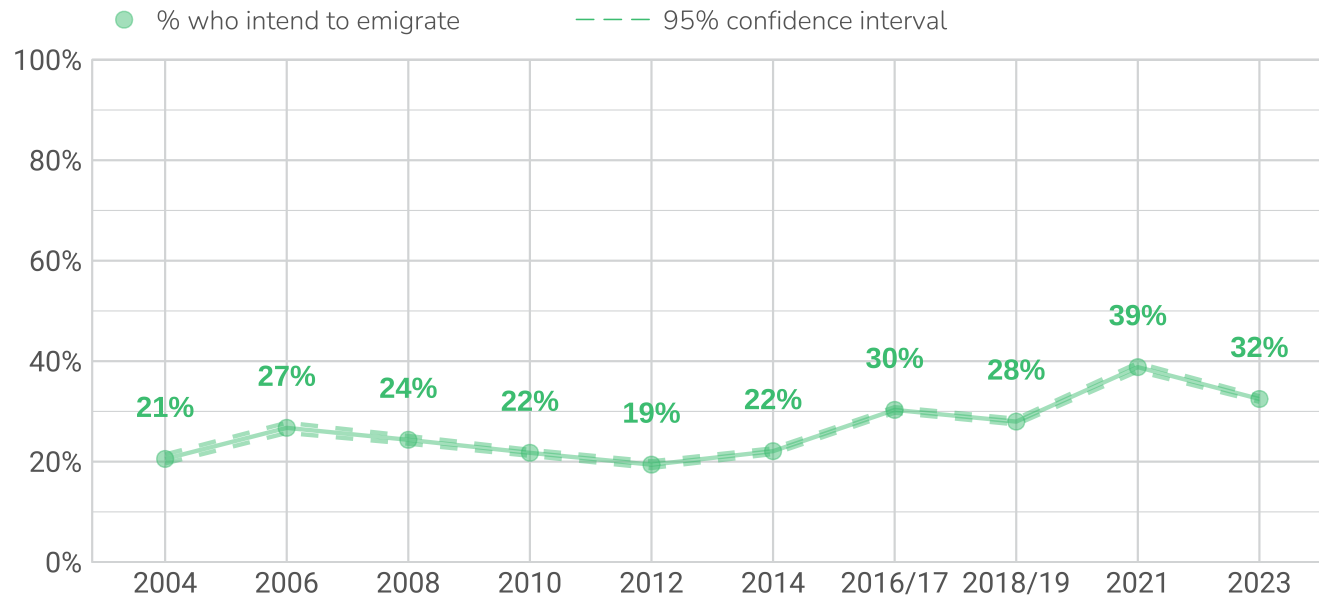
Source: LAPOP Lab, AmericasBarometer 2023

*In order to deliver on promises to the people, it is justifiable for politicians to act outside the law.*



# Though emigration intentions peaked in 2021, the 2023 level is higher than the pre-pandemic level recorded in the 2018/19

**On average in the LAC region, there has been an upward trend in emigration intentions since 2012**



Source: LAPOP Lab, AmericasBarometer 2004-2023

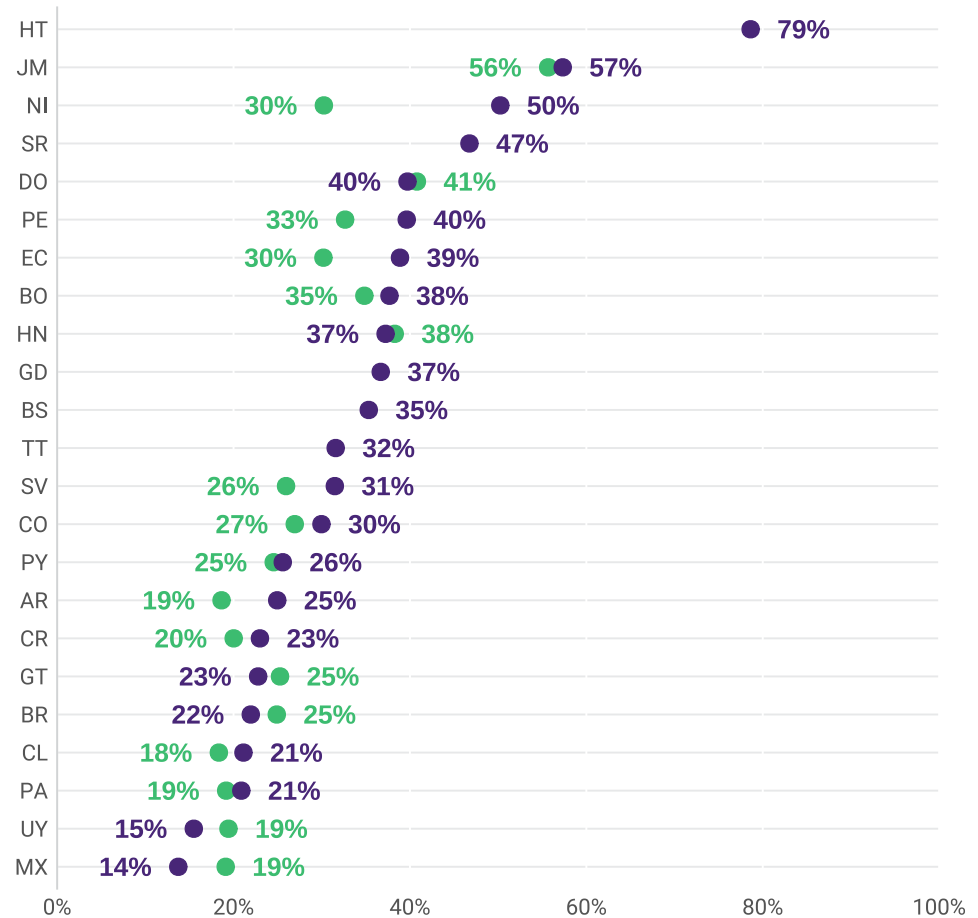
*Do you have any intention of going to live or work in another country in the next three years?*

The percentage of individuals who aspire to leave their country has increased in most countries for which cross-time data are available

## Emigration intentions have increased since 2018/19 in most LAC countries

% who intend to emigrate

● 2018/19 ● 2023



Source: LAPOP Lab, AmericasBarometer 2023

*Do you have any intention of going to live or work in another country in the next three years?*

# 2

## Material and Physical Challenges

# A challenge to building institutional trust is persistent and increasing perceptions of poor national economic conditions

## Pessimism about national economic conditions is at an all-time high



Source: LAPOP Lab, AmericasBarometer 2004-2023

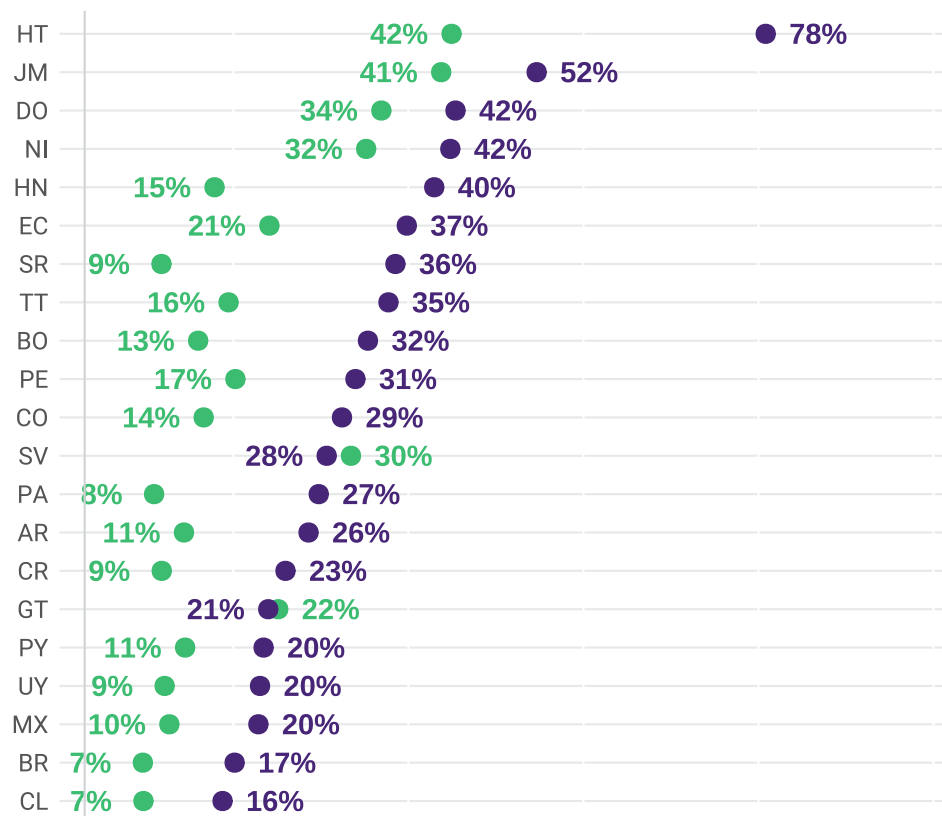
*Do you think that the country's current economic situation is better than, the same as or worse than it was 12 months ago?*

Food insecurity has increased along side economic pessimism, undermining trust in institutions and motivating migration

From 2012 to 2023, food insecurity increased across the LAC region, with the exception of El Salvador and Guatemala

% who ran out of food in the last 3 months

● 2012 ● 2023

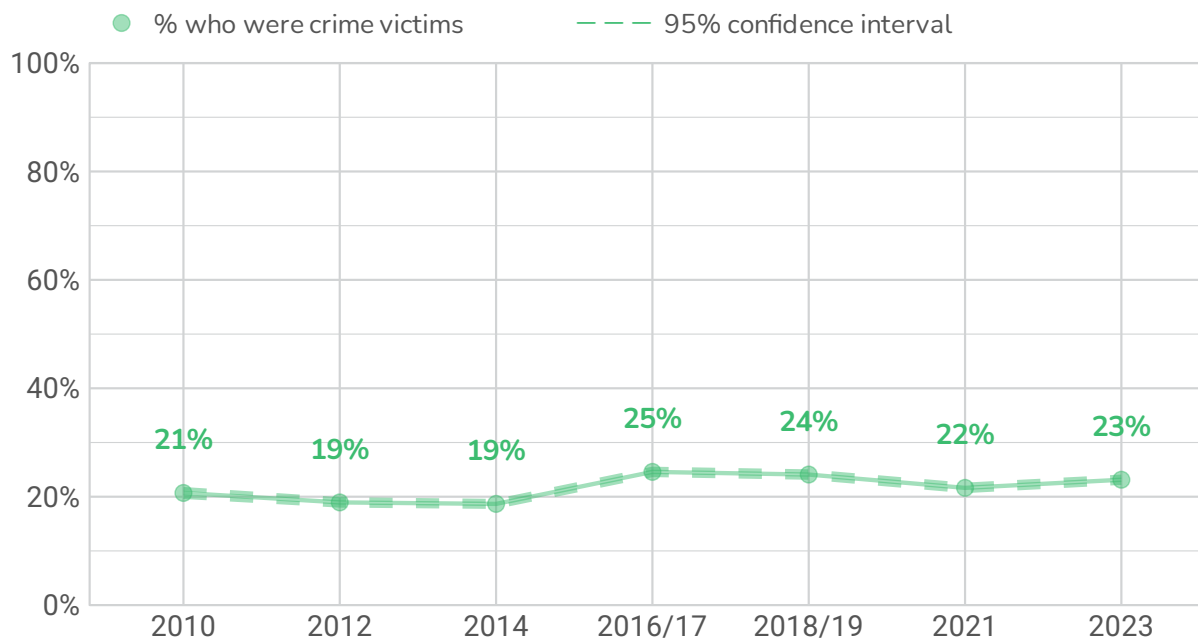


Source: LAPOP Lab, AmericasBarometer 2023

*In the past three months, because of a lack of money or other resources, did your household ever run out of food?*

# Widespread crime erodes trust and motivates emigration

## Region-wide crime victimization increased in 2023

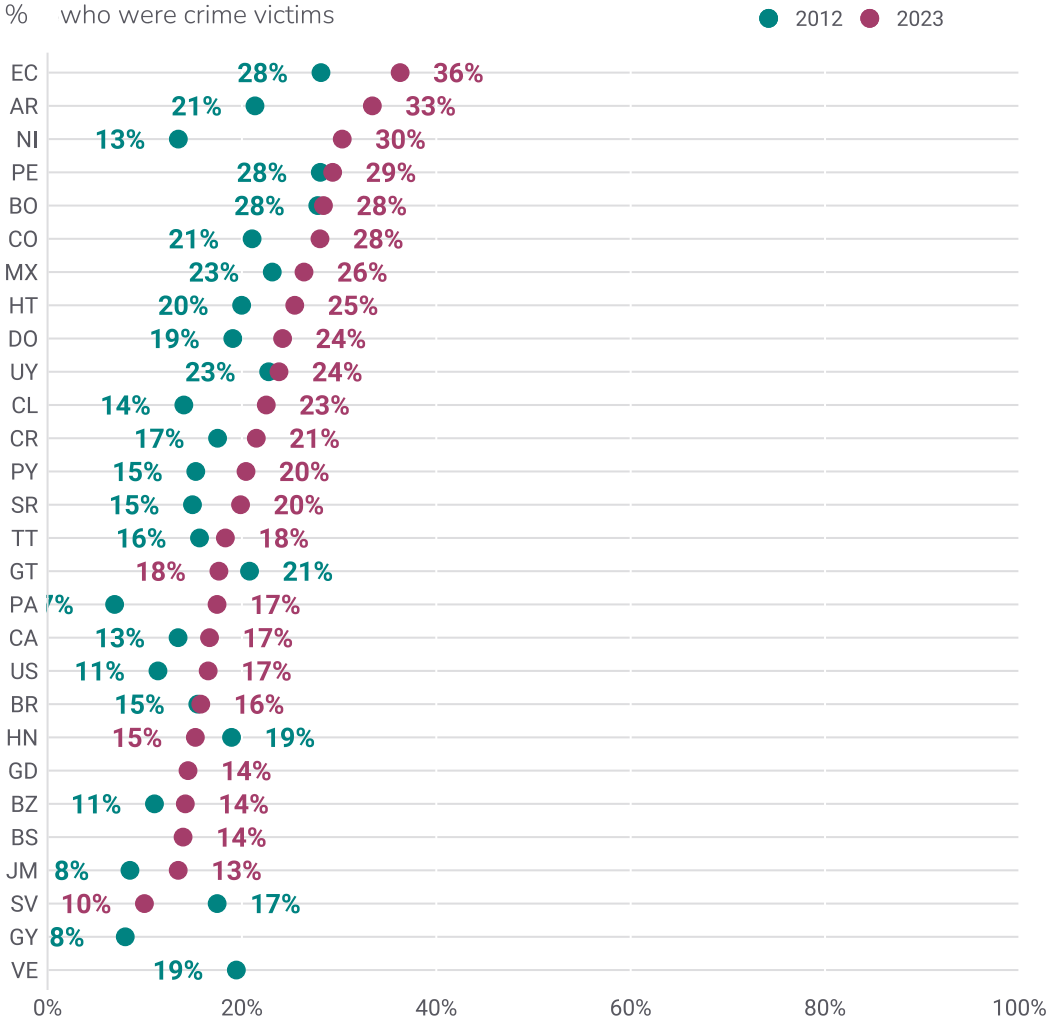


Source: LAPOP Lab, AmericasBarometer 2010-2023

*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?*

In most countries in the LAC region, reported crime victimization has risen significantly since 2012

Since 2012, crime victimization has increased across the LAC region



Source: LAPOP Lab, AmericasBarometer 2012-2023

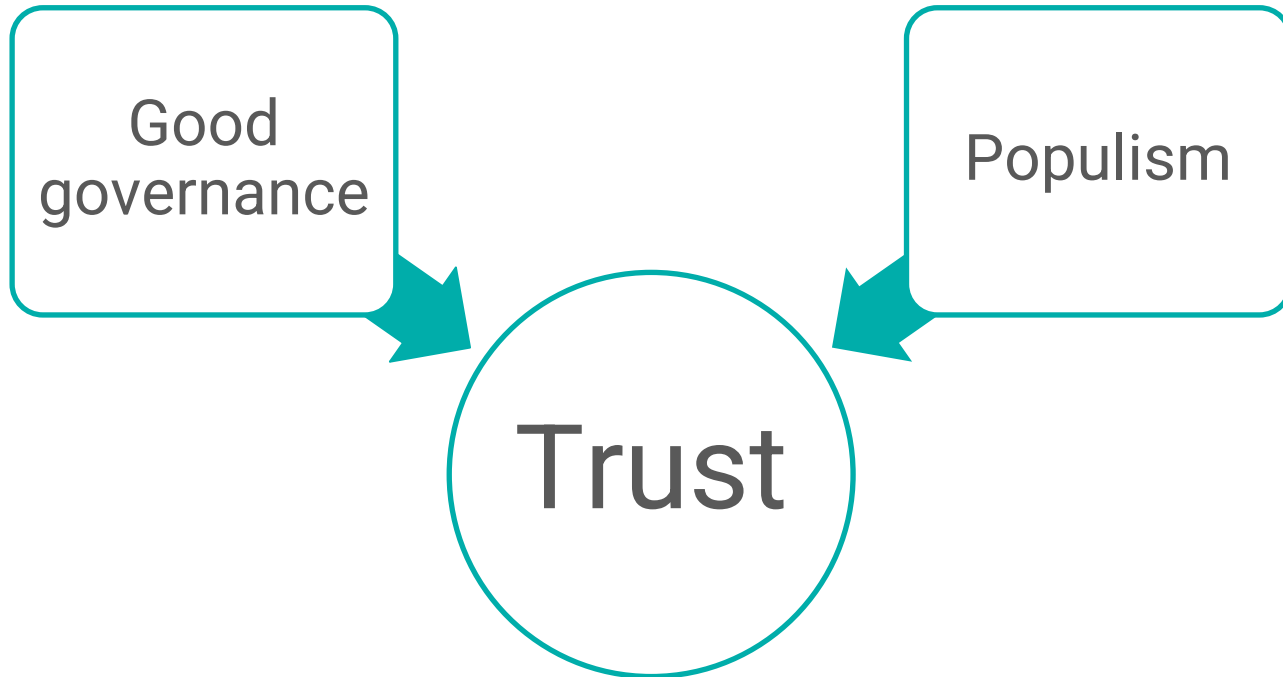
Now, changing the subject, have you been a victim of any type of crime in the past 12 months? That is, have you been a victim of robbery, burglary, assault, fraud, blackmail, extortion, violent threats or any other type of crime in the past 12 months?

# 3

## Paths Forward



## Two pathways to building institutional trust

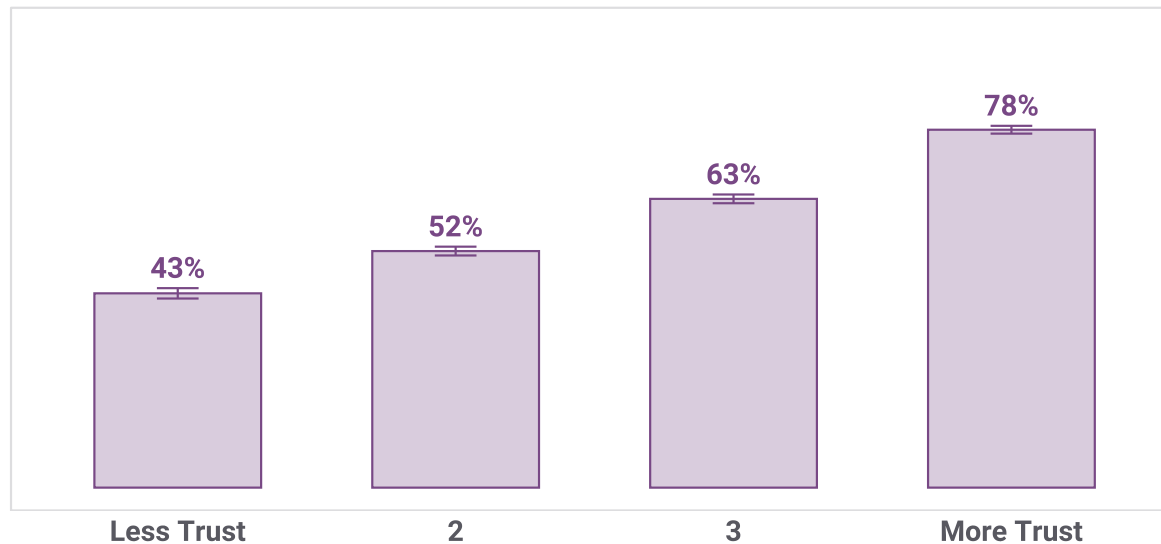


# Building trustworthy institutions is critical to public commitment to democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean

**Higher trust in institutions is strongly associated with higher support for democracy**

■ % who support democracy

— 95% confidence interval

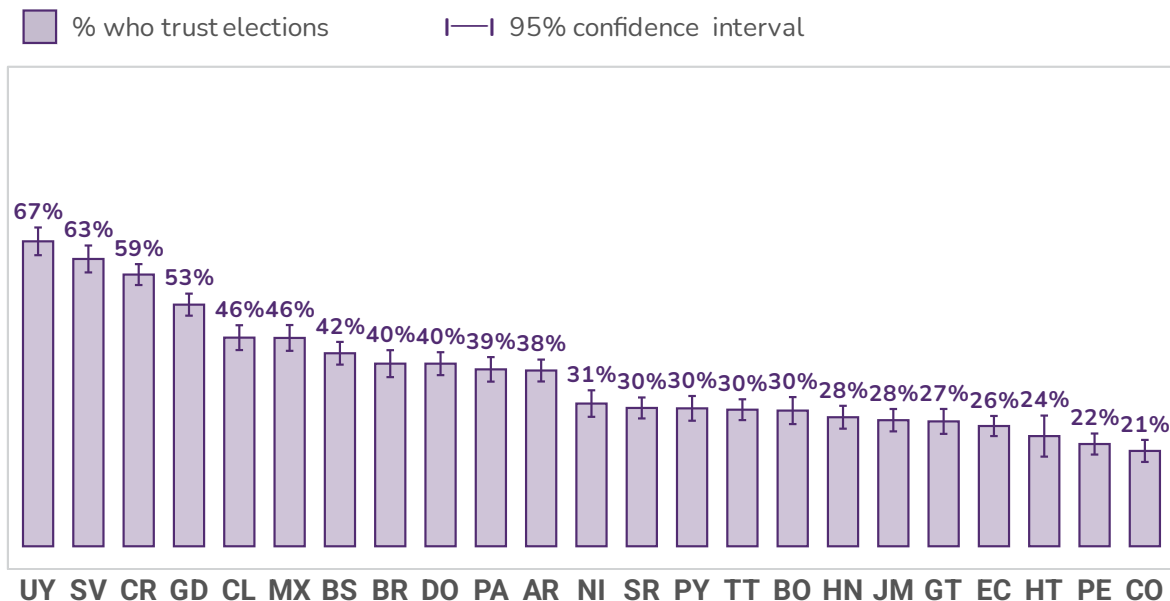


Source: LAPOP Lab, AmericasBarometer 2023

*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?*  
Figure shows the % who responded 5 to 7 on a 7-point scale.

# Trust in elections is high in Costa Rica and Uruguay, as well as El Salvador and Mexico

Across most countries in the LAC region, only a minority of citizens express trust in elections



Source: LAPOP Lab, AmericasBarometer 2023

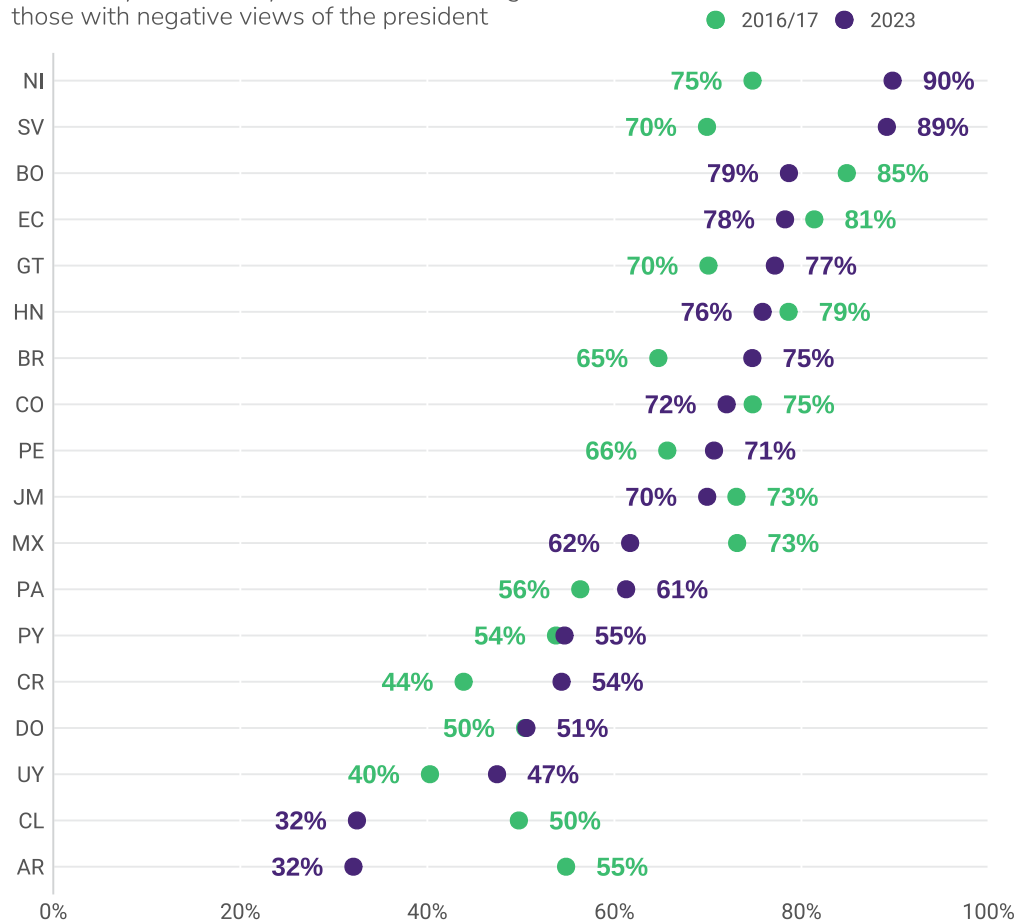
*To what extent do you trust elections?*

Figure shows the % who responded 5 to 7 on a 7-point scale.

# Populist routes risk democratic liberties: “losers” find freedom of speech highly restricted in El Salvador, among others

## Concerns about free speech have increased among government critics in many countries

% who say there is very little freedom among those with negative views of the president



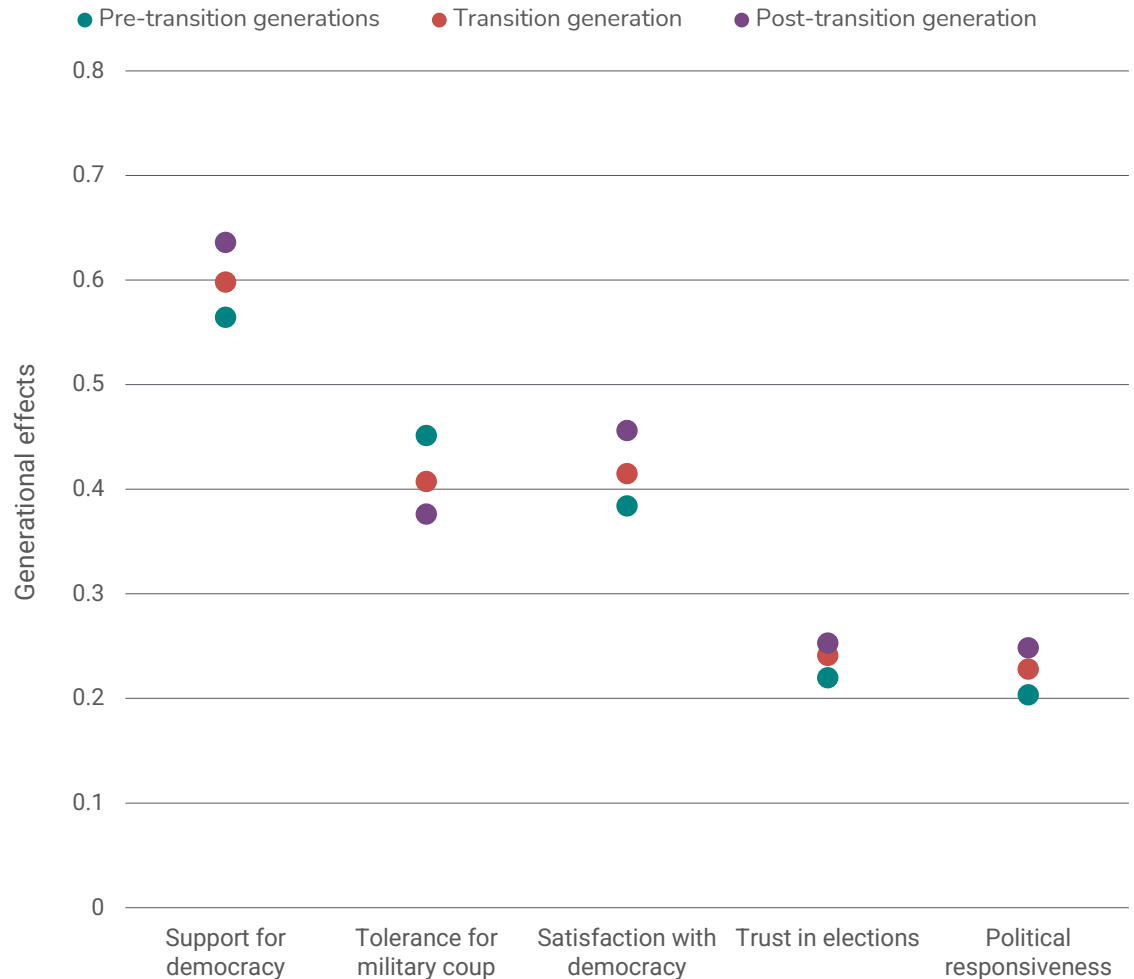
Source: LAPOP Lab, AmericasBarometer 2023

*Do you think that now in the country we have very little, enough or too much freedom to express political views without fear.*

There are reasons to be optimistic about the region's demand for democracy:

Today's young adults are more committed to democracy than were their predecessors

The post-transition generation in LAC is more committed to democracy than their older counterparts



Source: LAPOP Lab, AmericasBarometer 2004-2023

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