

## Data Playground How-To Guide

Welcome to the AmericasBarometer Data Playground, a free, interactive tool designed to help you explore public opinion data across the Americas.

### What Data is Included?

The Data Playground features core questions AmericasBarometer, asked in most countries and survey rounds. However, not every question is included in every country and round. Check the official questionnaires on our [website](#) to confirm the availability of specific questions.

### What Can I Do with the Data Playground?

- Visualize individual survey questions with histograms
- Track trends with time series plots
- Compare responses across countries and survey rounds
- Break down responses by demographic groups or other variables using crosstabulations

The tool focuses on **descriptive statistics**, highlighting patterns across groups. It does not perform advanced analyses like regression models, so results should not be interpreted as showing causal relationships.

### Are the Data Weighted?

Yes. Data are weighted to ensure comparability across countries and years, with some data including poststratification weights to reflect national populations based on region, urban/rural residence, gender, age, education, and/or wealth.

### Can I Save My Results?

Yes, you can download your visualizations as image files or export the data as CSV files.

This guide will walk you through everything you need to know to make the most of the Data Playground.

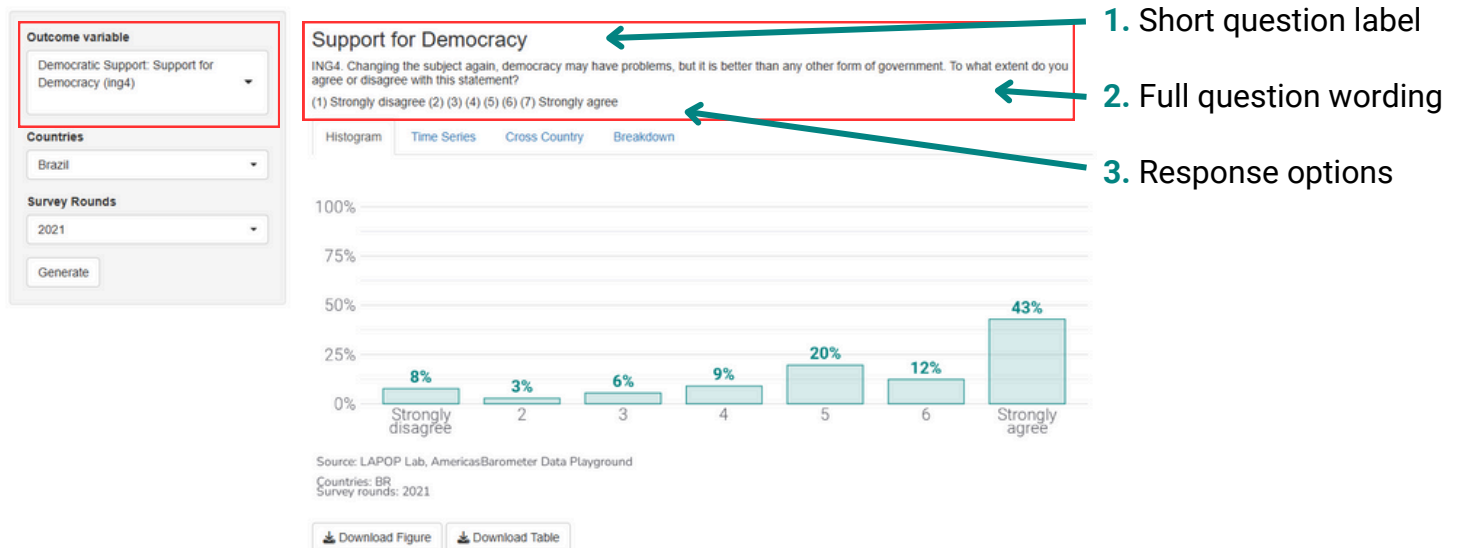
If you have questions or notice a data issue, feel free to email us at [centerforglobaldemocracy@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:centerforglobaldemocracy@vanderbilt.edu).

Users can access the AmericasBarometer Data Playground [here](#)

## 1. Select an Outcome Variable

Use the **Outcome Variable** dropdown in the top-left menu bar to choose an outcome variable.

After selecting the outcome variable and clicking **Generate**, the following information will appear above the data panel on the right:

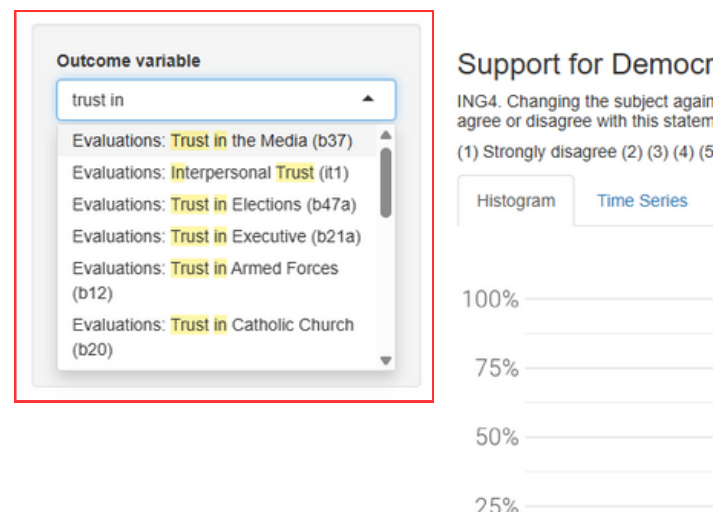


The Data Playground includes variables only from the AmericasBarometer core questionnaire. To access all questionnaires and variables, [click here](#).

**Outcome Variables** are organized alphabetically, first by one of 13 question themes and then by the question's short label. The question code appears in parentheses. Use this information when cross-referencing a questionnaire.

The dropdown menu is **searchable**:

- Press Backspace to delete the current entry
- Type keywords (e.g., "trust in...") or a variable code (e.g., b2) to find specific variables



## 2. Select Countries and Survey Rounds

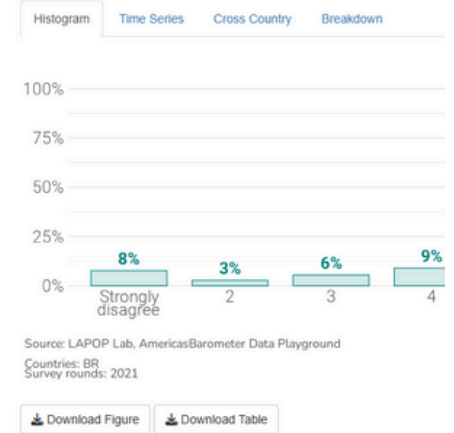
Use the next two dropdowns in the top-left menu to choose:

### Countries:

- Default: Countries included in 3+ rounds and the most recent round (2023).
- Options:
  - Click **Select All** for all countries
  - Click **Deselect All** to select individual countries for country-specific results

### Support for Democracy

ING4. Changing the subject again, democracy may have problems, but it is better to agree or disagree with this statement?  
(1) Strongly disagree (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) Strongly agree



### Survey Rounds:

- Default: All except 2004 (when only a limited slate of countries were included)
- Options: Select specific rounds (option especially useful for generating the “cross-country” graph)

The default for **Survey Rounds** includes all years except 2004, when only a limited number of countries were part of the AmericasBarometer.

## 3. Click Generate and Explore the Data Panel

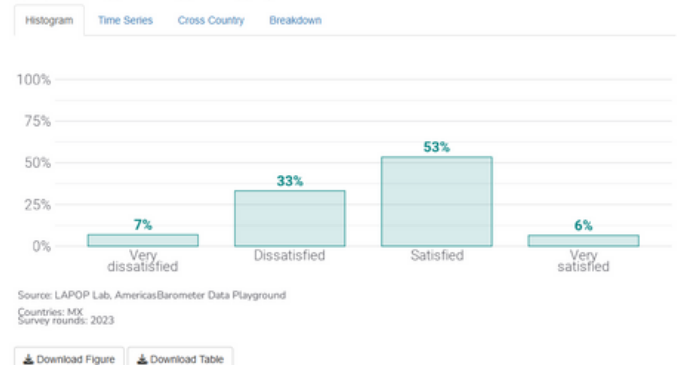
Once you’ve selected your **Outcome Variable**, **Countries**, and **Survey Rounds**, click **Generate**. The main panel will display data for your selections, as well as the question wording for the selected variable.

### Histogram (Default Tab)

Shows the breakdown of responses for the selected outcome variable across countries and survey rounds selected. These data are **weighted**, pooled percentages. Non-responses (e.g., “don’t know”) are excluded from the percentages. Percentages should add up to 100% but may not exactly due to rounding.

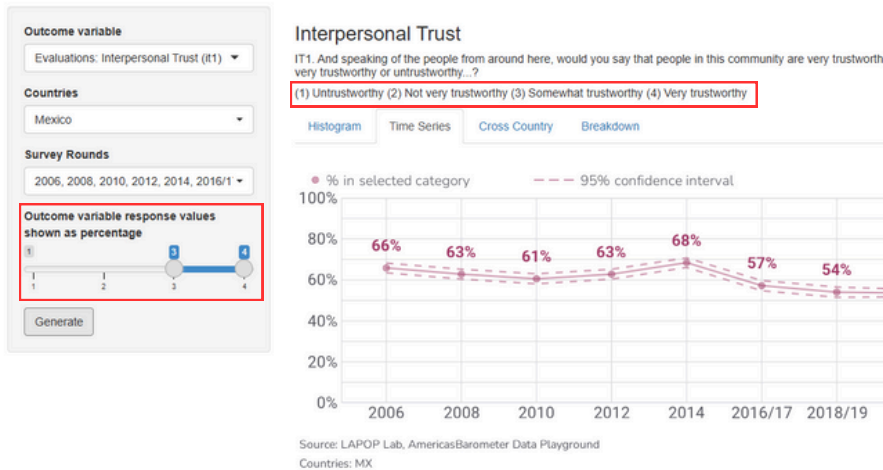
### Satisfaction with Democracy

PN4. In general, would you say that you are very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the way democracy works in (country)?  
(1) Very dissatisfied (2) Dissatisfied (3) Satisfied (4) Very satisfied



## Time Series

Use this to see cross-time data. The time series graphs are typically most useful when examining one country with all survey rounds.



Following LAPOP Lab's reporting style, the results are displayed as a percentage of respondents giving a selected range of responses, which can be adjusted using the **slider** in the left-hand menu. To see the response options and corresponding numeric values, consult the top right-hand pane below the question wording.

**Example:** The graph displays the percentage of Mexicans who say their neighbors are "somewhat trustworthy" (3) or "very trustworthy" (4) (out of all valid responses) in each survey round.

All time-series graphs are **weighted** (using the variable *weight1500* found in the AmericasBarometer datasets). All data points are shown with a 95% confidence interval.

## Cross-Country

This graph displays responses by country for the **Outcome Variable** and **Survey Rounds** selected. Again, the outcome variable's responses are recoded and shown as a percentage (those in the selected range out of all valid responses). This graph type is typically most useful to select one survey round and all countries.

The data are **weighted** and contain a 95% confidence interval for each estimate.

Countries are shown by their two-letter ISO code.

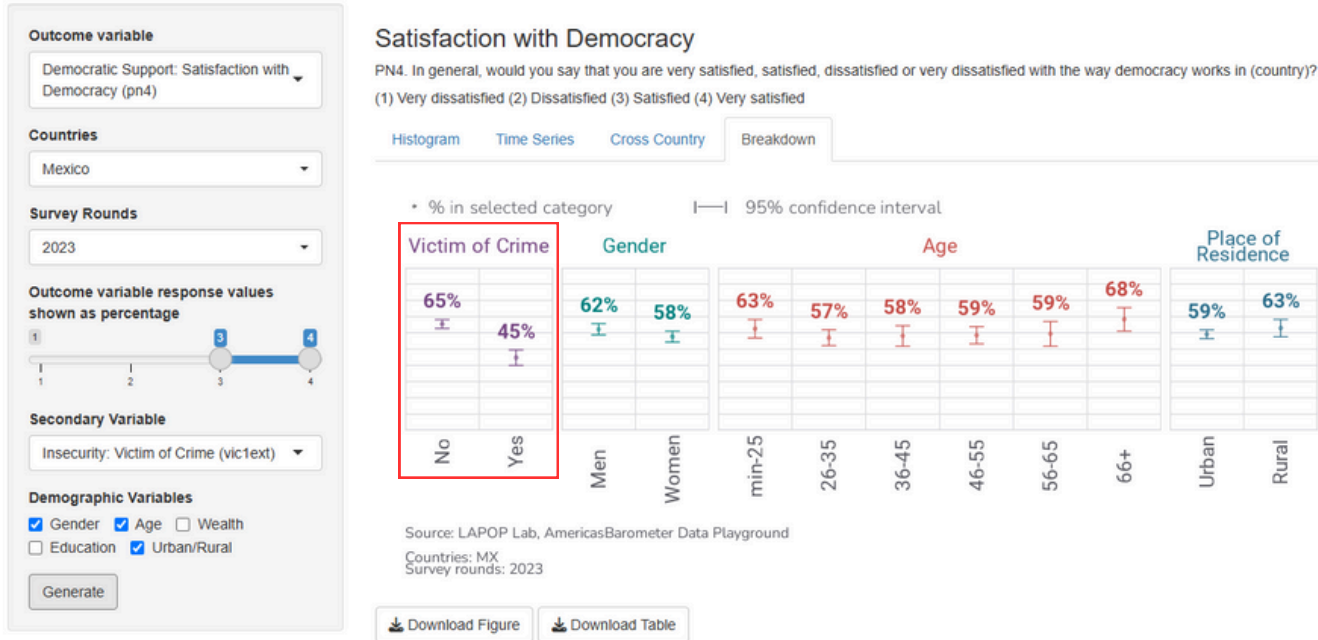
**Tip:** Set the **slider** minimum and maximum to the same value to select a single response option.



## Breakdown

Shows data for a selected **Outcome Variable** by one or more **Demographic Variables** or one **Secondary Variable**. As in the Time Series and Cross-Country graphs, the outcome variable is shown as a percentage (those in the selected range out of all valid responses).

Select one **Secondary Variable** and any **Demographic Variables** (gender, age, wealth, education, or urban/rural) from the dropdown box. These data are **weighted** and include a 95% confidence interval.



**Example:** The results in the highlighted box indicate that among Mexicans who were not victims of crime, 65% are satisfied with democracy, compared to 45% who were victims.

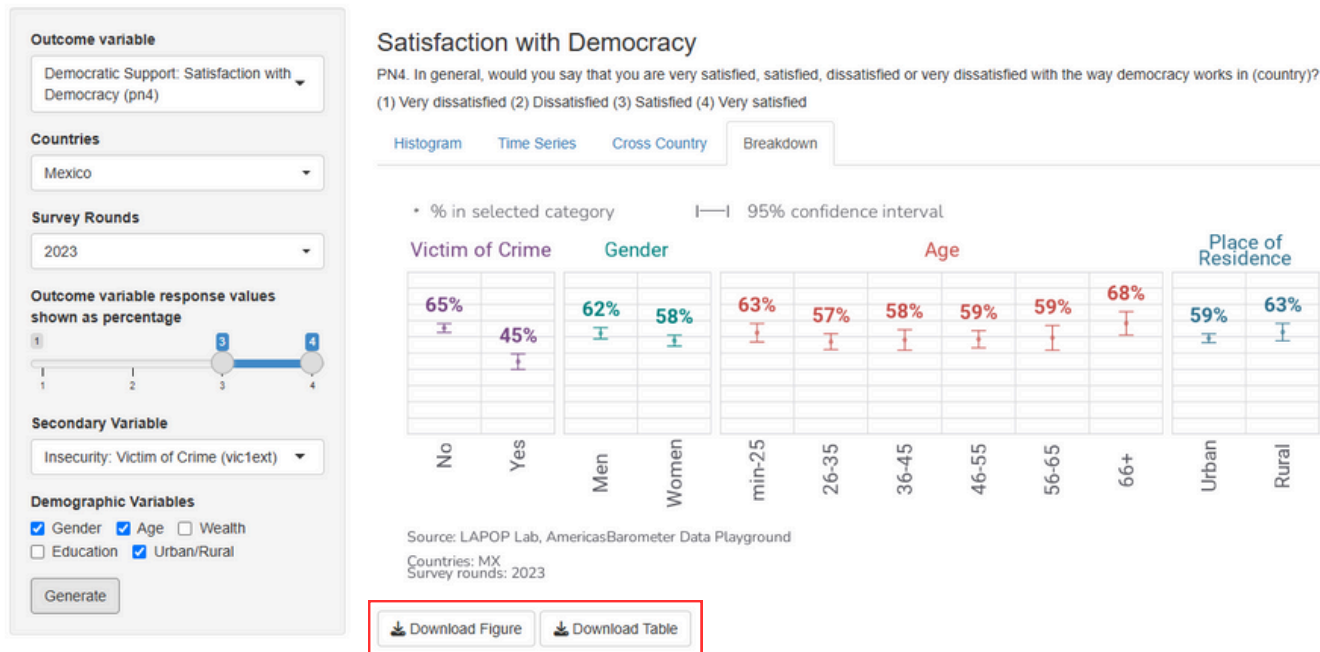
## Note:

- “Gender” is identified by interviewer prior to 2021 and identified by the respondent in 2021 and beyond. Those who responded with neither man/male or woman/female (2021 and beyond) are excluded from this particular graph due to lack of sufficient data.
- The first “Age” category is “min-25” because the minimum age to participate in AmericasBarometer surveys is 18 in most countries and 16 in some others.
- “Wealth” is determined based on a principal components analysis of ownership of several common household items (AmericasBarometer “R-series”).
- “Education” is determined by years of formal education or self-reported level of educational attainment. The categories “secondary” and “superior” indicate at least some education at that level, not necessarily completion.
- “Urban/rural” is determined by census designation in face-to-face studies and self-reported in telephone and web studies.

## 4. Download Results

Use the buttons below the Data Panel to:

- Download the graph as an **image** as a svg file, or
- Download the **data** as a CSV file



For additional questions or to report any technical issues, please email us at [centerforglobaldemocracy@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:centerforglobaldemocracy@vanderbilt.edu).