



December 2020 | Kaitlen Cassell

Spotlight on Approval of Regime Critics' Right to Vote in Latin America and the Caribbean

Most in the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region do not approve of regime critics' right to vote

In all LAC countries surveyed, less than half approve of regime critics' voting rights

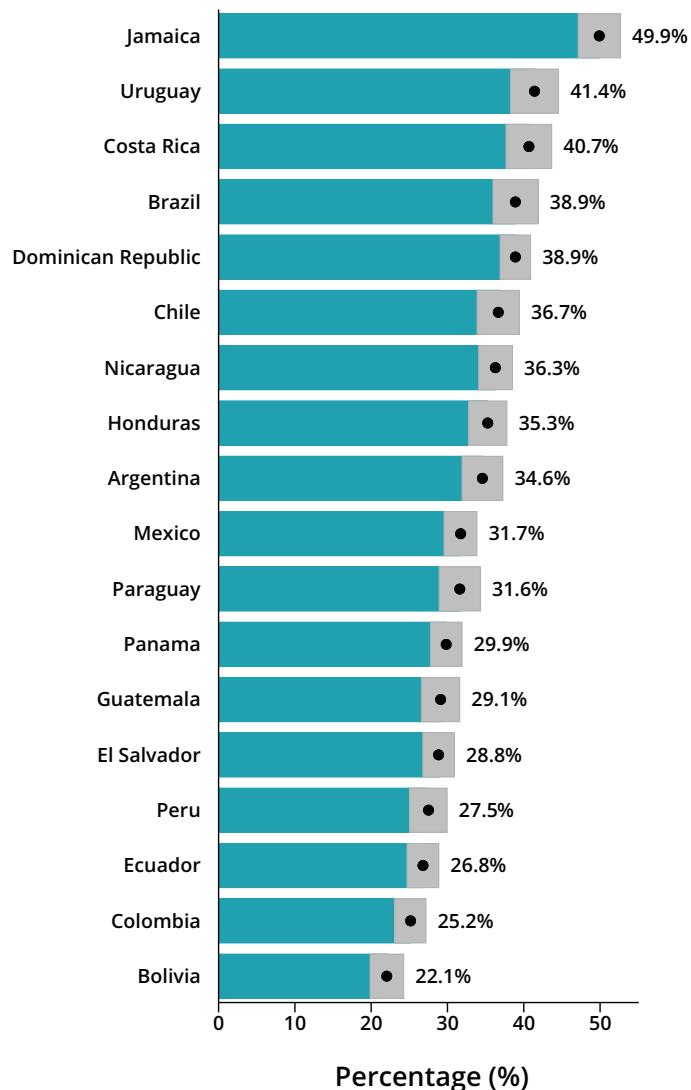
Since 2004, LAPOP's AmericasBarometer has measured the degree to which individuals believe that those who criticize the country's system of government should be allowed to vote by asking the following question:

D1. There are people who only say bad things about the (country) form of government, not just the current (incumbent) government but the system of government. How strongly do you approve or disapprove of such people's right to vote?

In the 2018/19 round, this question was asked in 18 LAC countries. Respondents indicated their opinion using a 1-10 scale, where 1 means "strongly disapprove" and 10 means "strongly approve." Here we code responses into a dichotomous variable, which allows us to estimate the percentage of people in the region who approve of regime critics having the right to vote. Specifically, responses were recoded into a dichotomous variable indicating approval of critics' right to vote by combining responses "8" through "10" into one category, while placing the other responses ("1" through "7") into a baseline category.

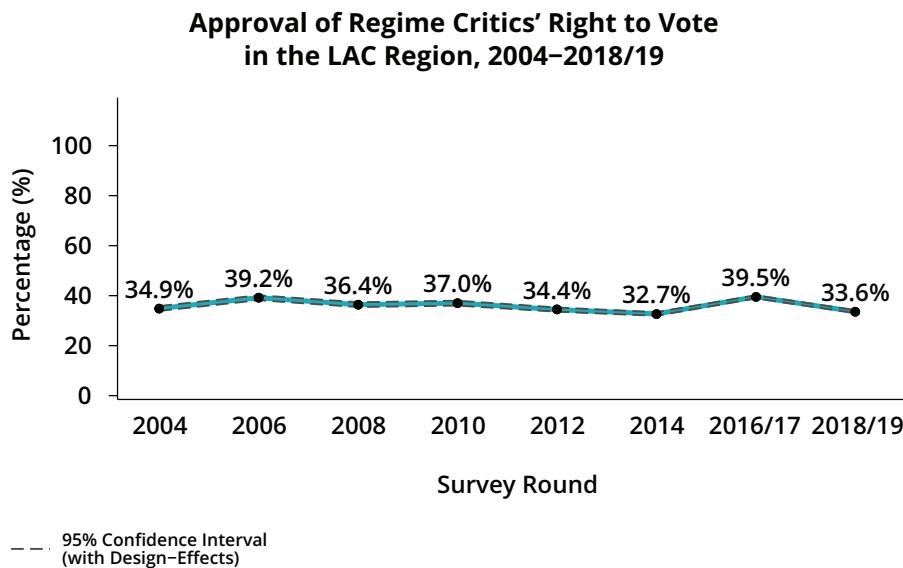
Jamaica has the highest percentage of people who approve of regime critics' right to vote (49.9%), while Bolivia has the lowest in the LAC region, with less than a quarter of Bolivians expressing this form of political tolerance (22.1%). In the average LAC country in the 2018/19 round, less than half of adults approve of regime critics' right to vote. The regional average in the rate of approval of regime critics' right to vote is 33.5%.

Approval of Regime Critics' Right to Vote, 2018/19



Approval of regime critics' right to vote remains relatively stable

On average between 2004 and 2018/19, slightly over a third of adults in the LAC region have consistently expressed approval of regime critics' right to vote.



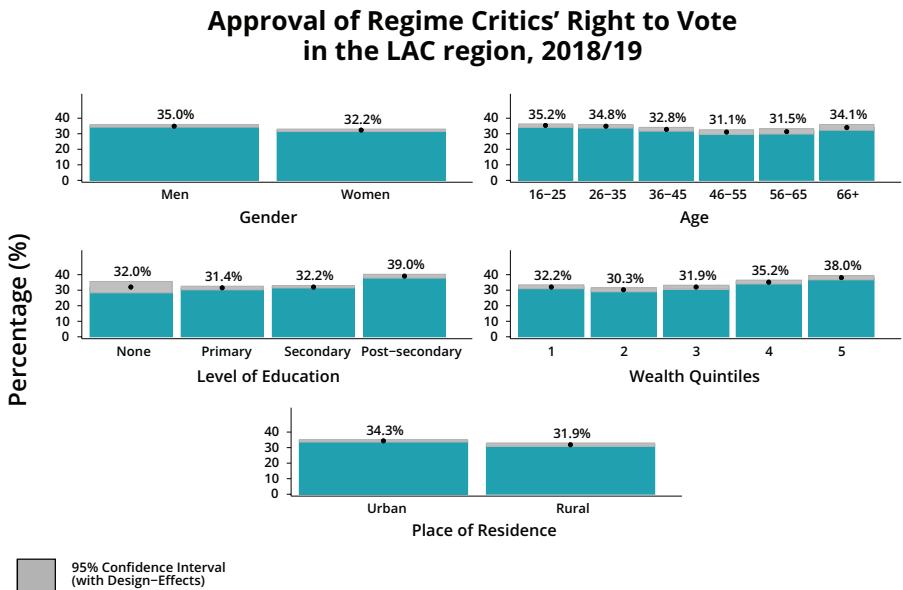
Source: © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2004–2018/19; GM1.0

Approval of regime critics' right to vote is higher among those who are male, young, educated, wealthy, and urban residents

What characteristics of individuals predict the approval of regime critics' right to vote in the LAC region? Men (35.0%) express approval more frequently than women (32.2%). Younger individuals are somewhat more tolerant compared to older cohorts, but the pattern is not linear. Meanwhile, more educated individuals are more likely to express approval of regime critics' right to vote—39.0% of individuals with post-secondary education express this approval, compared to only 32.0% of individuals with no formal education. The wealthier individuals are, the more likely they are to approve of regime critics' voting rights. Additionally, individuals in urban areas are marginally more likely to approve of these rights than rural residents.

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Interested in knowing more about the LAPOP Lab's AmericasBarometer study? Consult the data and our reports at www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop.

As a charter member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) Transparency Initiative, the LAPOP Lab is committed to routine disclosure of our data collection and reporting processes. More information about the AmericasBarometer sample designs can be found at vanderbilt.edu/lapop/core-surveys.

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