

July, 2022 | Mark Grujic

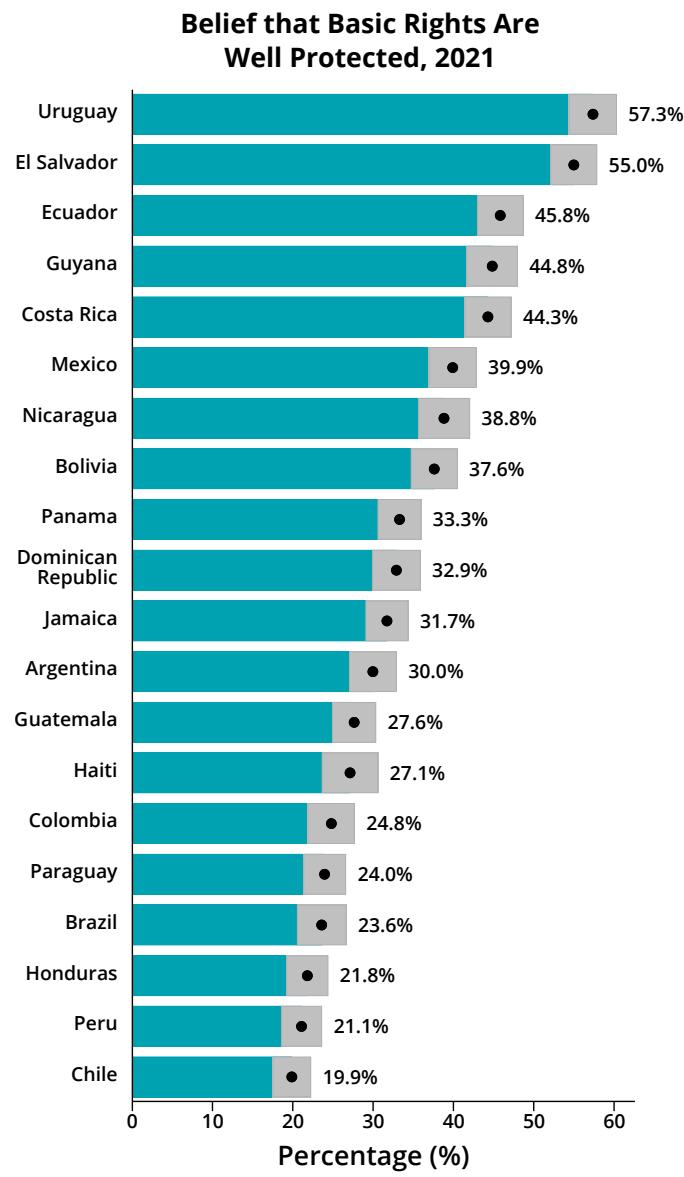
Spotlight on Perceived Basic Rights Protections in Latin America and the Caribbean

The belief in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) that the basic rights of citizens are well protected by the government has increased since 2018/19

In most LAC countries, less than one-half of respondents believe that citizens' basic rights are protected by the government

Since 2004, LAPOP's AmericasBarometer has measured perceived basic rights protection in the LAC region with the following question: **B3: To what extent do you think that citizens' basic rights are well protected by the political system of (country)?** In the 2021 round, this question was included in surveys in 20 LAC countries. Respondents indicated their opinion using a 1 to 7 scale, where 1 means "not at all" and 7 means "a lot." Here we recode responses into a dichotomous variable, which allows us to estimate the percentage of people that trust that the government protects citizens' basic rights. Specifically, responses "5" through "7," indicating trust in basic rights protection by the government were combined in one category, while placing the remaining responses ("1" through "4") into a baseline category.

The country with the highest level of belief that their government protects their basic rights is Uruguay (57.3%), while individuals in Chile (19.9%) believe this the least. In the majority of countries, less than half of adults believe that the government protects citizens' basic rights in 2021.



Just over one-third of respondents in the LAC region currently believe that their basic rights are well protected by their government, an increase from the level seen in 2018/2019

Across the LAC region, the belief that basic rights are well protected remained somewhat stable between 2004 and 2016, with around one-third of respondents reporting that they believed the government protects citizens' basic rights. In 2018/2019, this figure fell to 28.3% but increased to 34.1% in 2021.¹

In the region, the belief that citizens' basic rights are well protected by their political system is highest among women, individuals with lower levels of wealth, the youngest and oldest age groups of respondents, and individuals with lower levels of education

What characteristics of individuals predict the belief that basic rights are well protected by the political system in the LAC region? On average, women (36.6%) in the LAC region are more likely than men (31.7%) to trust that the government is protecting citizens' basic rights.² Individuals with lower levels of wealth are more likely to believe that the government is protecting citizens' basic rights compared to individuals with higher levels of wealth. Individuals age 66+ (38.7%) and individuals age 18-25 (37.8%) are more likely to believe that citizens' basic rights are well protected than other age categories. Individuals with no education or primary education (38.8%) are more likely to believe that citizens' basic rights are being protected than individuals with at least some secondary education or higher.³

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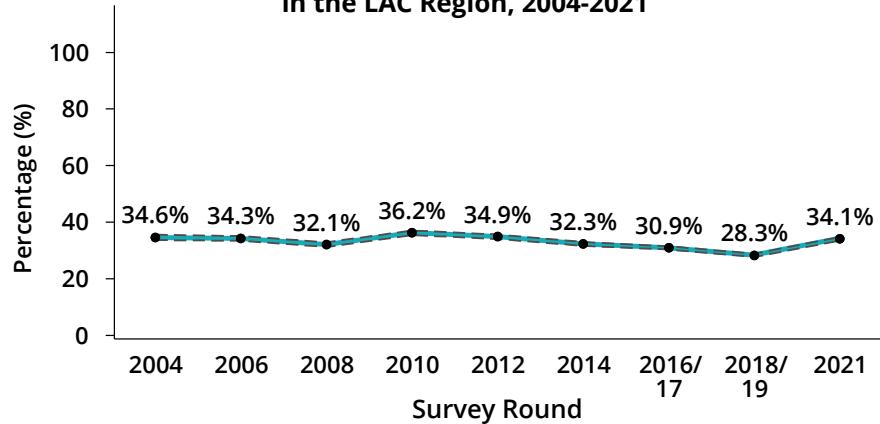
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¹ The number of countries included in the AmericasBarometer has increased since the initial rounds. Our conclusions in over-time analyses do not change if we focus only on the countries surveyed consistently since 2004, or if we focus on the countries included in the 2021 round.

² In order to avoid excluding non-binary respondents from the analysis, we recode the gender variable to include non-binary respondents with women. In this survey of the LAC region, 0.28% of respondents identified as a gender other than man or woman.

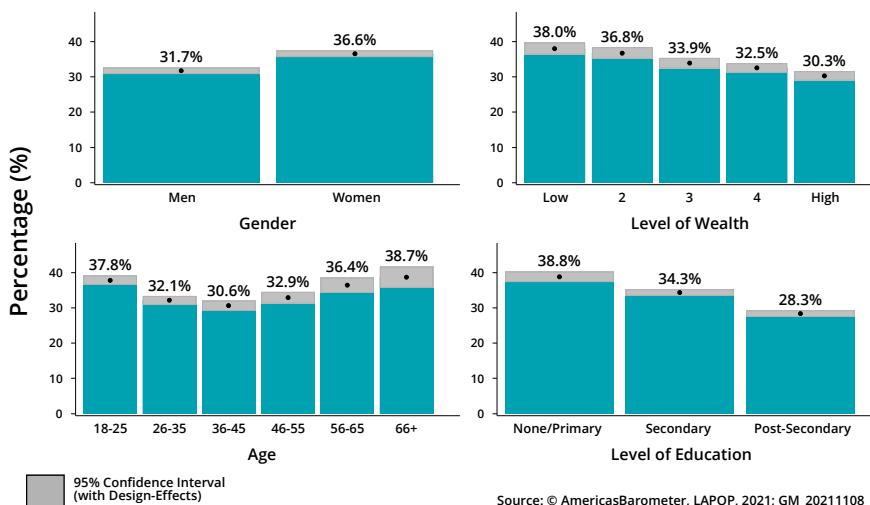
³ Due to changes in survey mode in the 2021 AmericasBarometer, place of residence was not analyzed in this Spotlight report.

Belief that Basic Rights Are Well Protected in the LAC Region, 2004-2021



Source: © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2004-2021; GM_20211108

Belief that Basic Rights Are Well Protected in the LAC Region, 2021



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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, 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 www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/core-surveys.php

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