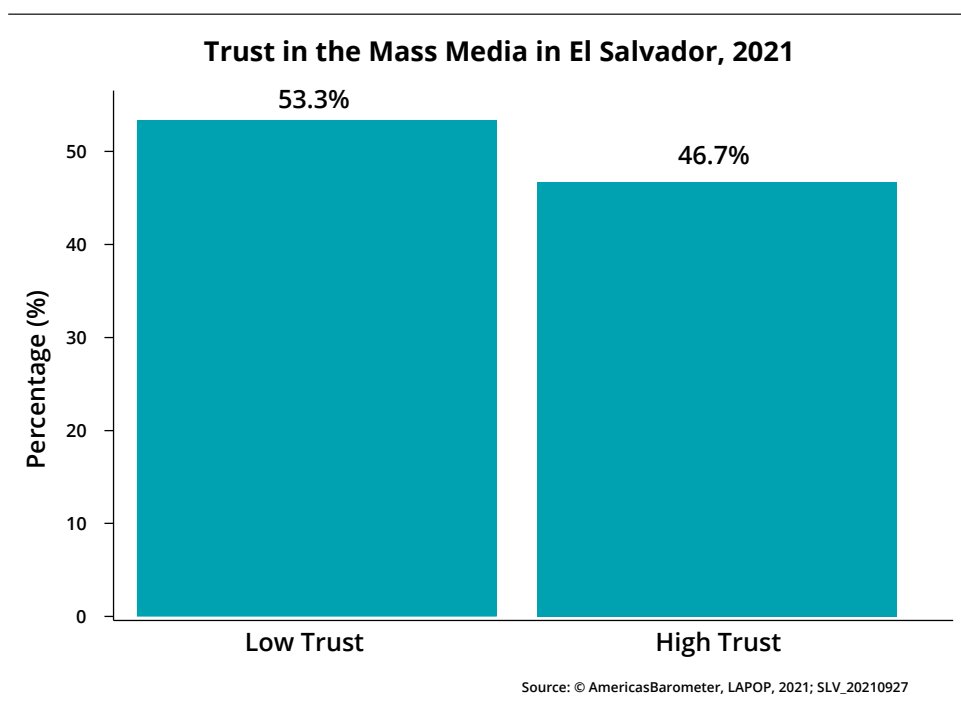


May, 2022 | Isabella Randle

## Spotlight on Trust in the Mass Media in El Salvador

*Trust in the mass media in El Salvador has been steadily decreasing since 2012, with record-low levels of trust in 2021*

**In 2021, less than half of Salvadorans have high trust in the mass media**

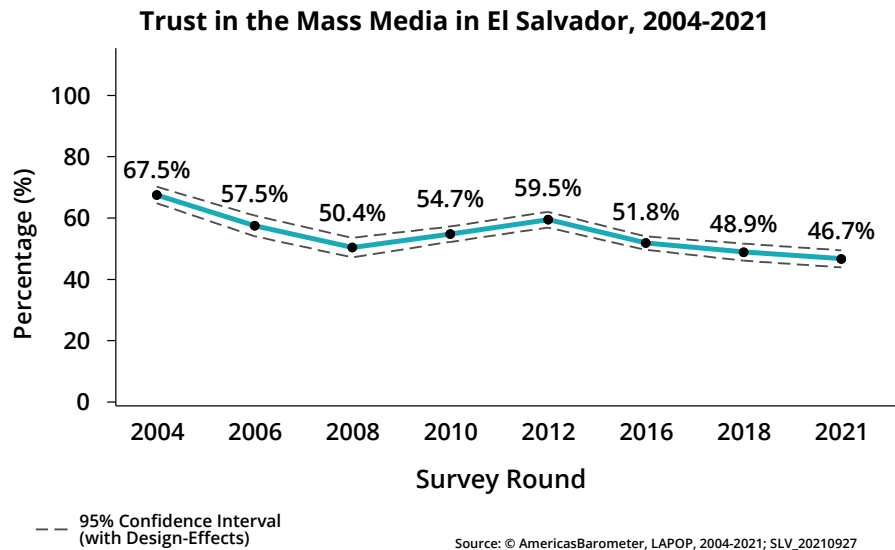


Since 2004, LAPOP’s AmericasBarometer has measured trust in the media in El Salvador by asking the following question: **B37. To what extent do you trust the mass media?** Respondents indicated their opinion using a 1-7 scale, where 1 means “not at all” and 7 means “a lot.” Here we code responses into a dichotomous variable, which allows us to estimate the percentage of people in the country that have high trust in the media. Specifically, responses were recoded into a dichotomous variable indicating trust in the mass media by combining responses “5” through “7” into the “high trust” category, while placing the remaining responses (“1” through “4”) into a baseline “low trust” category.

We find that in 2021, less than half of Salvadorans have high trust in the mass media, while 53.3% have low trust.

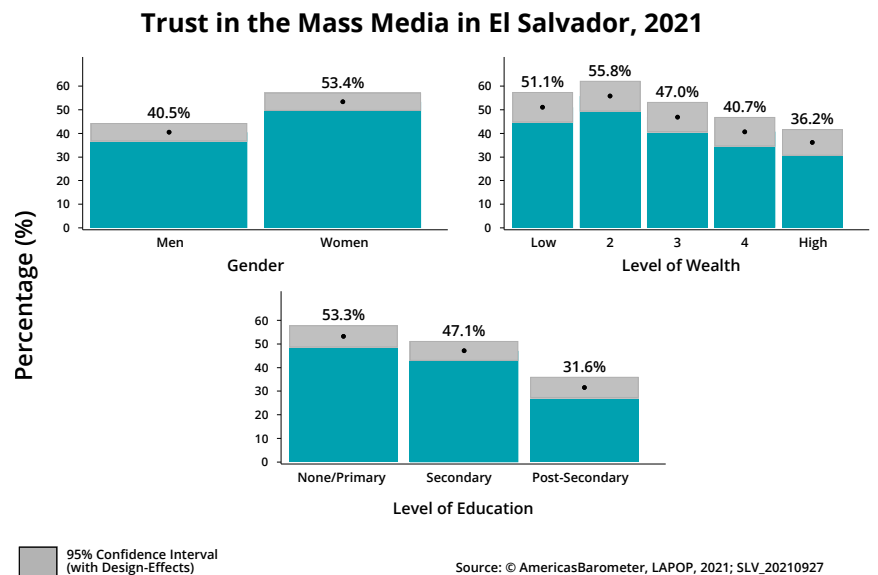
## Trust in the mass media in El Salvador reached its lowest level in 2021

Trust in the mass media was highest in 2004 (67.5%) but then declined to 50.4% in 2008. Following a recovery to 59.5% in 2012, trust in the mass media has steadily declined, reaching its lowest level in 2021 (46.7%).



## Women, the least wealthy, and the least educated have the highest levels of trust in the mass media

What characteristics of individuals predict high trust in the mass media in El Salvador? Women (53.4%) express trust in the mass media more frequently than men (40.5%).<sup>1</sup> Individuals in the two lowest wealth categories reported trust in the media over half of the time (51.1% for the lowest group, 55.8% for the second-lowest group)—more than the three wealthier categories. Finally, less educated individuals are more likely to express trust in the mass media than more educated respondents—53.3% of individuals with no education or at least some primary education express trust in the media, compared to just 47.1% with a secondary education and 31.6% with a post-secondary education.<sup>2</sup>



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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](http://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](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/core-surveys.php)

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<sup>1</sup> In order to avoid excluding non-binary respondents from the analysis, we recode the gender variable to include non-binary respondents with women. In the 2021 survey in El Salvador, 0.22% of respondents identified as a gender other than man or woman.

<sup>2</sup> Due to changes in survey mode in the 2021 AmericasBarometer, place of residence was not analyzed in this Spotlight report.