

August, 2022 | Alexandra Rounds

Spotlight on Police Corruption in Latin America and the Caribbean

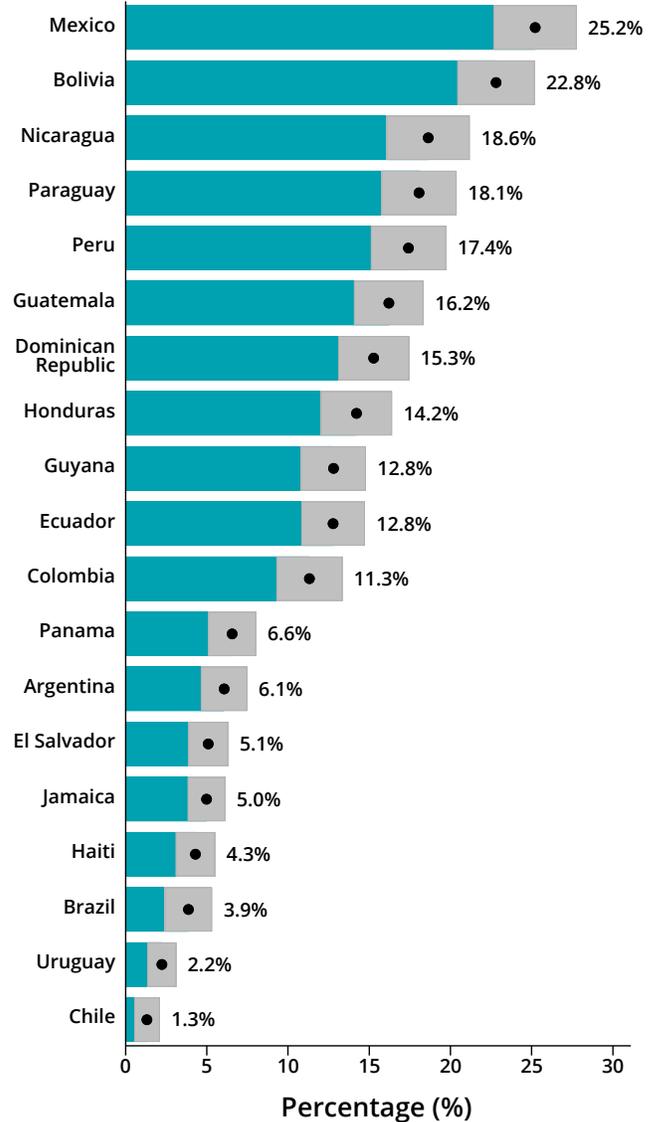
Corruption victimization by police has increased since the 2018/19 survey round in the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region

Corruption victimization by police varies greatly throughout the LAC region

Since 2004, LAPOP's AmericasBarometer has measured corruption victimization by police by asking the following question: **EXC2. Has a police officer asked you for a bribe in the last twelve months?** In the 2021 survey round, this question was included on surveys conducted in 19 LAC countries. Here we show the percentage of respondents that answered "yes" to this question.

Corruption victimization by police is most prevalent in Mexico and Bolivia where about a quarter of respondents answered that a police officer had asked them for a bribe in the last twelve months (25.2% and 22.8%, respectively). In comparison, respondents in Chile (1.3%) and Uruguay (2.2%) had the lowest levels of corruption victimization by police in the past twelve months.

Corruption Victimization by Police, 2021



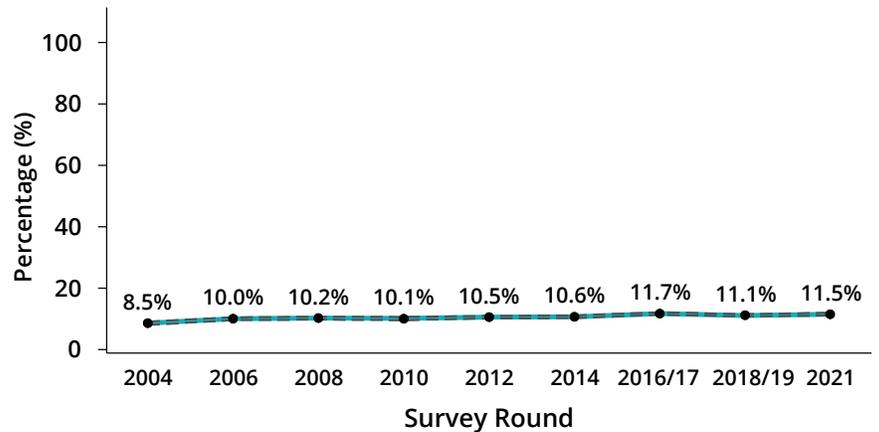
95% Confidence Interval (with Design-Effects)

Source: © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2021; GM_20211108

Since 2004, the rate of corruption victimization by police has slowly increased

The lowest recorded rate of corruption victimization by police was in 2004 when fewer than 1 in 10 in the LAC region reported this type of experience. Since 2006, the rate of corruption victimization by the police has consistently increased, though in small amounts.¹

Corruption Victimization by Police in the LAC Region, 2004-2021



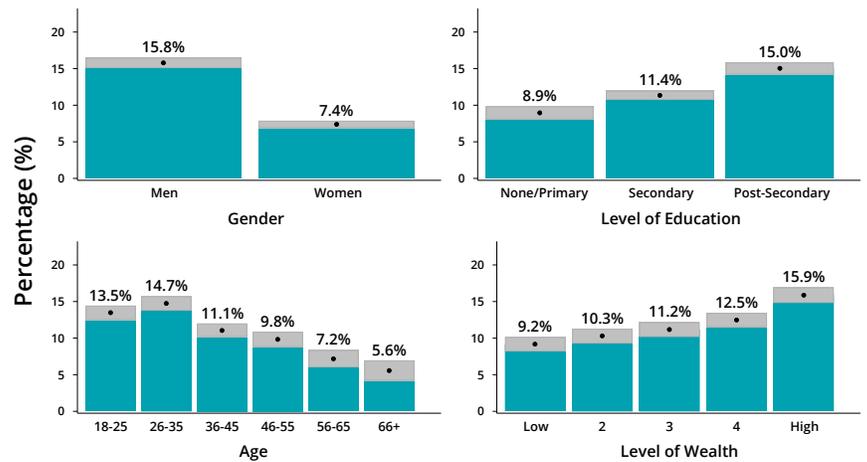
— 95% Confidence Interval (with Design-Effects)

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

Corruption victimization by police is most common among men, those with at least some post-secondary education, those between 18-35 years of age, and those in the highest wealth group

Who is most likely to be asked for a bribe by a police officer? In the LAC region, the percentage of men (15.8%) that were asked for a bribe is more than double that of women (7.4%).² Those with at least some post-secondary education are more likely to be asked for a bribe by a police officer than those with less education. Across age groups, those in the two youngest cohorts 18-25 and 26-35 (13.5% and 14.7%, respectively), are more likely to be asked for a bribe than older age groups. Finally, individuals with the highest level of wealth are more likely than all other wealth groups to be asked for a bribe by a police officer in the LAC region.³

Corruption Victimization by Police in the LAC Region, 2021



■ 95% Confidence Interval (with Design-Effects)

Source: © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2021; GM_20211108

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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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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 in the LAC region, 0.28% of respondents identified as a gender other than man or woman.

³ The variable for place of residence (ur1new) has been omitted for this round of Spotlight Reports due to a change in survey mode for the 2021 round of the AmericasBarometer.