

# Citizenships and sub-citizenships, as a democratic outcome, in Latin America

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*This research is based on theoretical alternatives of citizenship, which emphasize on the conquest of rights (T.H. Marshall) and on the configuration of collective identities (Stein Rokkan). Citizen construction corresponds to long-term historical processes associated with the constitution of the nation-state and the consolidation of community identities. Furthermore, its current evolution corresponds to political processes and public policies, which have a partway in the democratizations of the mid 80s. The factors of inequality in the 21st century are presented: poverty and indigence, ethnicity and gender, and the results of democratization processes in favor of equality.*

## **Introduction**

The constitution of citizenships in Latin America corresponds to long and medium-term sociopolitical orders, as well as the changes and orientations of governments regarding the rights of a political community. This set of orders and orientations imply distributive social-state matrices of resources allocation, acknowledgment and duties to its members. Regarding long term, matrices can be found in Latin America, which configure at least two types of citizenship:

- a) *The populist citizenships*, which have as a common historical matrix the socio-state model of Industrialization by substitution of imports (ISI model), prone to the manipulation of rules and institutions, to have difficulties in the development of civil citizenship, as well as to perceive the State as an important resource of political action. Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico fall in this category.
- b) *Republican citizenships*, characterized by a great respect to public liberties, a conception of the State as a limit to public action and greater development of civil citizenship. This category includes countries such as Uruguay, Chile, and Costa Rica.

On the other hand (as we will see later), citizenship can be considered according to rights as opportunities based on civil, political, and social rights

(Marshall 1950) or as a construction of identity and belonging. In the latter case, these are predominant citizenships in countries with vast native populations pre-existing to the State (Bolivia, Peru, Mexico and Guatemala). The main tension axis in citizen construction is the recognition of national and cultural identity, through the reinstallation of pre-state practices and institutions. In these cases, the advance and construction of citizen rights does not only reach with social policies, but with actions of structural change at the state level, as it has happened in Bolivia. Two cases: Mexico, the country with the largest indigenous population in the region and Brazil, with the largest number of African-descendant people, fall in this category (country with rooted citizenship) in an objective way, although, in the case of Mexico, the problem of a reform towards a Mexican democracy of consensus and multi-ethnic inclusion is not on the agenda of the main parties. On the contrary, in Mexico little or nothing is discussed about a State reform, and to a large extent, the problem of original populations is, still, that of a denied civilization (Bonfil Batalla 1990); one of the factors that contributes to low participation and political disaffection (Russo 2010).

#### *T.H. Marshall and Stein Rokkan*

In the consequent, I will dwell on the citizenship situation considering recent data, which emerge in the 21st Century, and which mark important trends for the region, also differentiated from other regions of the world. I will analyze dimensions related to the development and practice of citizenship and sub-citizenships in Latin America. In this regard, I find it useful to briefly review two classifications of citizenship, one by the English sociologist T.H. Marshall (1950) and the other one by the Norwegian scholar Stein Rokkan (2002); certainly the first one being very famous and the second scarcely spread in Latin America. Marshall's categorization of citizenship is based on the nature of rights: civil rights, political rights, and social rights. Civil rights concern freedom, property, and security; also involve a great possibility of doing or not doing. On the other hand, political rights are fundamentally related to the organization of demands and political participation; finally, social rights related to health protection and opportunities for public education and housing. For its part, Rokkan's citizenship classification is more abstract and is divided into two classes: a) *rights to roots*, that is to say, "the right for the origin community to be respected, such as language and ethnic composition"; and b) *rights to options*, that is, "the right to opportunities of full use of individual capacities within a broader territorial network" (Rokkan 2002: 230 et seq.). This implies in the

first case, the rights associated to a sense of belonging, links, and identities; and in the second case, the rights to choose one's life project taking advantage of the context opportunities. For Rokkan, the roots are important because they help to know oneself and to know whom we can trust; they constitute the sap of cultural identity; and *options* are also important, which we can choose, because an actor may want to "go out" to wider scenarios. When these rights, *to be* and *to choose*, are given in an unbalanced way, various problems occur. If the root rights are secured but there is a shortage of options, therefore, difficulties to choose, then this can lead to social, cultural, and economic servitude. Conversely, when option rights predominate, that is to say, when everything or almost everything can be chosen but there is a shortage of rooting; this can lead to anomie, irresponsibility, and depersonalization (Rokkan 2002: 230 *et seq.*).

In Rokkan, rights work with counterparts of pre-established duties. Thus, obligations of tolerance and respect correspond to *the rights to roots*; while the obligations to pay taxes, participate in public affairs, and contribute to the community, correspond to *the rights to options*. The conception of citizenship in both scholars differ, in Marshall's perspective, rights are at the center of the evolution of citizenship. On the contrary, in Rokkan's perspective, political systems imply a structure of norms, which link rights-duties and incorporate life options along with the system of belonging. On the other hand, for Marshall, citizenship implies political and social positions through the conquest of rights, while for Rokkan, citizenship constitutes an essential part of existence and helps to make sense of it; both scholars also value the spheres of citizenship in different ways. For the English sociologist, the zenith of rights is achieved with social citizenship as the culmination of civil and political rights; while for the Norwegian political scientist, political rights are crucial as they empower the actors to acquire other rights.

Possibly, the political system from which rights are reflected, guides to emphasize different dimensions of citizenship. Thus, thinking citizenship from a liberal democracy such as the English one, favors considering social citizenship as the zenith, while reflecting from a social democracy such as Norway, emphasizes the crucial role of political citizenship.

In Latin America (unlike the English case), the sequencing between civil, political, and social rights does not occur, and social rights are often accompanied by manipulation and patronage, instead of involving more agency. In the same way (unlike the Norwegian case), political rights such as voting and forming political parties (although important instruments) do not guarantee the conquest of civil and social rights.

Largely in Latin America, the main challenge is to achieve civil citizenship, related to the protection of basic freedom inscribed in human rights.

Without real rights related to the recognition of roots, the worst defects of state institutions built to defend the power and a few people against vulnerable communities and actors arise.

It is important to highlight a structurally diverse situation between Latin America and Europe that consists in the relationship between the rights and institutional guarantees of citizenship. The citizenship has had, in countries such as those of our cited scholars (Great Britain and Norway), solid support institutions, fulfillment guarantors of those rights, while in a large part of Latin America, the citizen rights are diminished by class factors, regional position, or pre-existing ascribed benefits. In the same way, institutions guaranteeing civil citizenship, such as the courts of justice, in most Latin American countries, have serious autonomy and professionalism deficits, in such a way that instead of constituting a guarantee of civil rights, they tend to constitute a potential threat to citizens. The difference between *the quality of guarantors* in one region and another is not a matter of state extension. As Tilly (1984: 38) points out about political rights in Europe: a) Countries with greater statehood during the nineteenth century were the first ones to extend the vote and did it in a broader way. Even though, on the other hand, b) the rights were sustained for a longer time when they had greater guarantees in governments with lower statehood. Tilly thinks about political rights insofar as they are actors' claims from society to the State. The relations between political mobilization and the construction of the State lead to the loss or acquisition of rights (1984: 40).

### *Sub-Citizenships*

As I have shown in another site (Russo 2017), sub-citizenships correspond to citizenships. This is the *practice of diminished rights* and, opposite to citizenships; it reinforces and legitimizes systems of relative inequality in different spheres (economic, social, and politics).

Citizenship is a *system of rights-duties* with *padlocks* that consists of a set of commitments between civil society and the State. Padlocks link the *vertical structures* (State), to the *horizontal structures* (societal), and to the *individual structure*. The latter are linked *upwards* (State) through collective organizations (unions, political parties, civil associations); *downwards* through the effectiveness of standards and sanctions; and *inwards* (subjective dimension), when there are commitments inside the actors, that is to say, in the political community members, through control actions, as introjected values by the agents of socialization (family and groups of belonging).

Social and political organizations may have greater or lesser weight in the success of their efforts to reinforce citizenship, and this depends on the sensitivity to be pressured by the *base members* to carry out certain actions, as well as the dependence on those bases. When these organizations get weak, the padlocks lose strength and the compromises system between State and society loses effectiveness.

As I mentioned in another site (Russo 2017), sub-citizenship is a type of deficit citizenship, which takes place when, 1) recognition comes from only one part (the State or the community) and not from the whole political community. Thus, the citizenship guaranteed by the State, but with recognition problems of civil society and perception by the individual of rejection, corresponds to the *societal sub-citizenship*. Also the citizenship recognized by a community of peers or actors of civil society, but with deficits of recognition of the State, is a *statist sub-citizenship*.

Through updating that scheme, we can also speak about sub-citizenship when the rights of a particular area (rights to roots) or of opportunities (civil, social, and political rights) are not recognized or fully exercised. This can be illustrated as follows:

#### Sub-citizenships

- a. *Of roots* (null or little recognition by the State and society, rights [civil, political, and social, as well as recognition) caused by their cultural identity],
  - a.1. *State-owned of origin* [null or little recognition by the State, of rights (civil, political, and social, as well as recognition) caused by their cultural identity];
  - a.2. *Societal of origin* [null or little recognition by the State and society, of rights (civil, political, and social, as well as recognition) caused by their cultural identity].
- b. *Of opportunities* (defective or null exercise of civil, political, and social rights).

The sub-citizenships of origin are mainly developed in Latin American countries, where there are ethnic majorities that were colonized (Bolivia, Perú, Ecuador, Paraguay, Brazil, Guatemala, and Mexico); also, in regional minorities (northern region of Argentina, Chile, and Colombia), or minorities of gender (women, LGTB) and migrants.

In the cases when the sub-citizenship is both, state and societal, and it affects an area of rights, I will simply refer to *sub-citizenship of origin* or *civil sub-citizenship*, etc.

When the sub-citizenship includes the set of political, social, and civil rights, I will talk about the *sub-citizenship of opportunities*; and in the case when it

affects the set of rights by the State and society, I will talk about *sub-citizenship, tout court*.

In any case, the sub-citizenship is experienced as discrimination by individuals; an example of the *societal sub-citizenship (of rights) of origin* is the one of young Afro-descendant people in France, who in 2015, produced a car-burning movement as a rebellious action due to the lack of social and subjective *integration*, despite having guarantees from the State of equal legal treatment and having good jobs. That is, their civil, social, and political rights were given by the State, but at the level of society they felt rejected, mainly because of their ethnic identity.

On the other hand, an example of *statist sub-citizenship (of rights) of origin*, is the one of the Mesoamerican communities in Guatemala or Mexico, where the State does not make an effective treatment of equality before the communities law, but this recognition comes from the communities themselves. In this last example, the *sub-citizenship (statist and societal) of origin*, causes *sub-citizenship of opportunities* in general terms. It is not by chance that the poorest populations in Mexico and Guatemala are populations of Mesoamerican origin, nor that they have a high social and legal vulnerability.

In some Latin American regions there are sub-citizenship of roots, which are translated into the intolerance and contempt of the State towards communities with history and diverse identities to the dominant ones, according to the miscegenation paradigm.

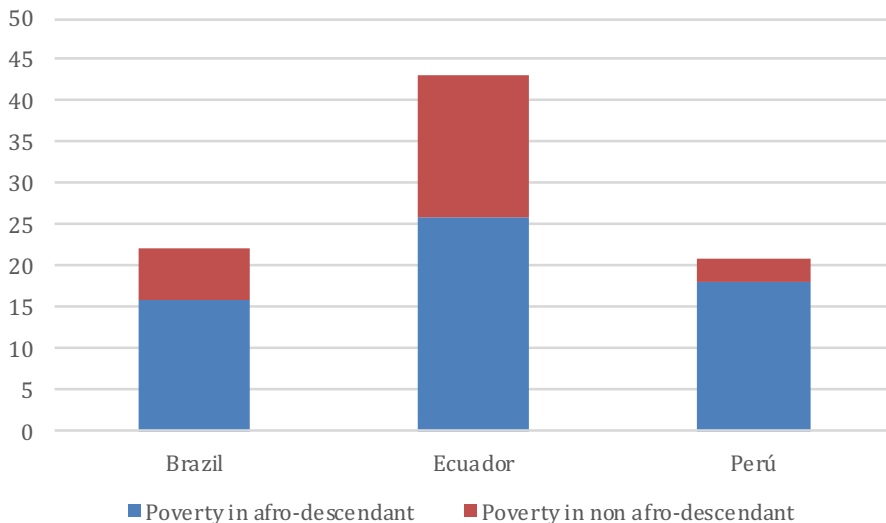
### *Sub-citizenships of Origin*

Currently, in the region there are more than eight hundred indigenous peoples recognized by the States, with a population of around fifty million, to which, about one hundred twenty-five million Afro-descendants must be added; most of them living in Brazil (Cepal, 2016). Five countries, add together, almost 90% of the regional indigenous population: Perú (27%), Mexico (26%), Guatemala (15%), Bolivia (12%), and Ecuador (8%). The Afro-descendant population (Afro-Latin and Afro-Caribbean) reaches 150 million people, which means around 30% of the total population of the region, located predominantly in Brazil (50%), Colombia (20%), and Venezuela (10%). The discrimination situations are not exclusive to the original populations from America and Africa, but the reasons for this type of discrimination in Latin America affect rights linked to identity and people's origin.

Despite the reduction of poverty and indigence since the beginning of 2000, [it went from 43.9% in 2002 to 28.2% of poor people in 2014, and from

19.3% to 11.8% of indigents (CEPAL 2016: 30)], today both scourges affect 168 million people in poverty and seventy million in indigence. How much do these figures imply and hide a culture of discrimination? Is tolerance for poverty in Latin America part of ethnic discrimination? The highest poverty and indigence levels correspond to indigenous and Afro-descendant populations. At the same time, discrimination also operates within each group, with women from each ethnic group being the most affected. Comparing the number of poor people with *sub-citizenship of origin* regarding the general population, it is observed that “the population in situation of indigence and poverty is significantly higher among the indigenous ... of around 30 percentage points in Brazil and Paraguay... At the same time, the poverty rate among indigenous people is equal or higher than 50% in Guatemala, Mexico, and Paraguay; close to 40% in Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, and Ecuador; and 26% in Perú. Only in Chile and Uruguay, the percentages of indigenous poverty are equal or lower than 10%” (ECLAC 2016: 32). Figure 1 shows the cases of Afro-descendant people and the poverty rate compared to the non-afro-descendant poor population.

Figure 1. *Poverty in Afro descent and not Afro descent*

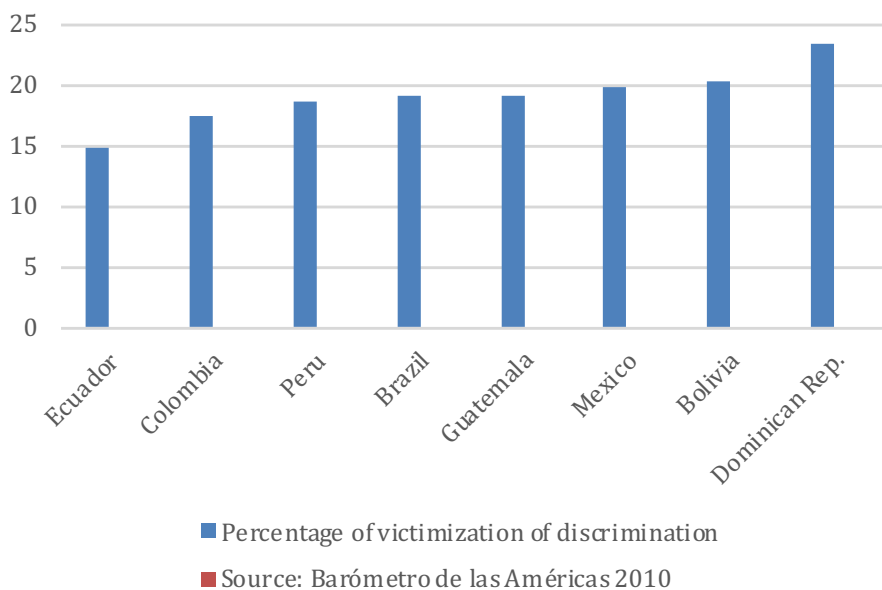


These data concerning *sub-citizenship of origin* are consistent with the composition of the lower income concentrate. A massive presence of people of

indigenous or Afro-descendant origin can be observed in the first income quintile, this stands out when it is compared to the population in general. This contrast shows that the population distribution, by income quintiles, is also marked by the ethnic and racial condition of people: «considering the proportion of Afro-descendant people, of these populations in the first quintile (34%), it is significantly higher than the proportion of the non-Afro-descendant or non-indigenous population (19%) in that condition. In the fifth quintile (of higher income), the situation is the opposite: there is 10% of Afro-descendant people and 20% of non-Afro-descendants and non-indigenous people» (ECLAC 2013: 32).

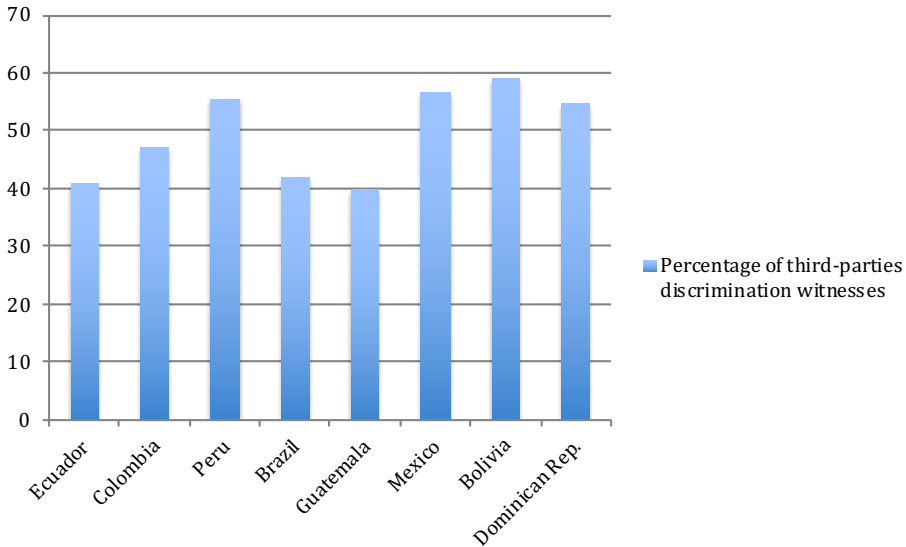
Moreover, in terms of perceived discrimination (victimization of discrimination), the figures are high in the countries with the highest percentages of indigenous populations and with an Afro-descendant population, as it can be seen in figure 2.

Figure 2. *Victimization of discrimination*



It is even higher in those cases, when the population witnessed discriminatory acts (figure 3), perhaps more real figures, if one takes into account that many interviewees prefer to present their case as the one of a third person.



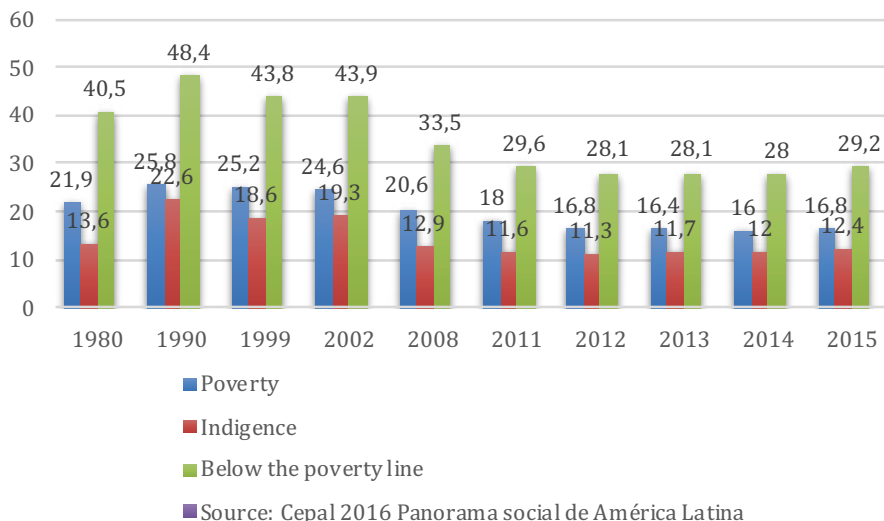
Figure 3. *Witness of discrimination*

The experiences of discrimination in eight countries with original populations and Afro-descendant people in America show high levels of intolerance, which give an objective and subjective nature to sub-citizenships, which reinforce and consolidate the internal walls of society itself. Different nations, recognized in a new state (in the case of Bolivia), denied (in the case of Mexico), with historical attempts to exterminate their population by the government itself (in the case of Guatemala), are erected and maintained in different parts of Latin America. The sub-citizenships of origin affect the recognition, the identity of peoples, and the native populations integrity from America and Afro-descendants. Furthermore, the sub-citizenship of origin reaches women, although, it should be noted that with respect to other groups (original populations), there has been a more positive evolution, much faster and sustained. Thus, in Latin America and the Caribbean, the employment rate reached 45.5%, even though it is still lower than the one of men (67%) (ILO, 2018). In the same way, the quality of conditions regarding the female work is inferior to the male one, which implies inequities in the remuneration and recognition of the work done (ILO, ECLAC, FAO, UNDP, UN Women 2013). The “silent revolution” of women still finds pockets of stagnation and aggravation of inequalities, as it can be seen in the fact that it continues to be the most affected sector of the indigenous and Afro-descendant populations.

### Sub-citizenships of Opportunities

The concept of citizenship is important, insofar as, it constitutes a factor in favor of the equality of people. It is the opposite force to the process of inequality caused by social class (Marshall 1957), or by cultural (ethnic, of gender) discrimination. In the 1980s, the region began a process of unprecedented democratization, leaving behind the historical inertia of dictatorships or the instability of the political regime, which until then had characterized much of the 20th century. How much has citizenship advanced in Latin America overcoming the deep-rooted situations of sub-citizenship (Russo 2017)? How much democratization progress in the region, initiated in the 80s and which led to a positive construction in terms of political rights, implied the constitution of an egalitarian society (Rokkan hypothesis)? How much the force of equality was caused by social policies (Marshall hypothesis)? The answer lies in the joint advance of political and social rights. As it can be seen in the following table, the evolution of poverty and indigence has varied since the arrival of democracy.

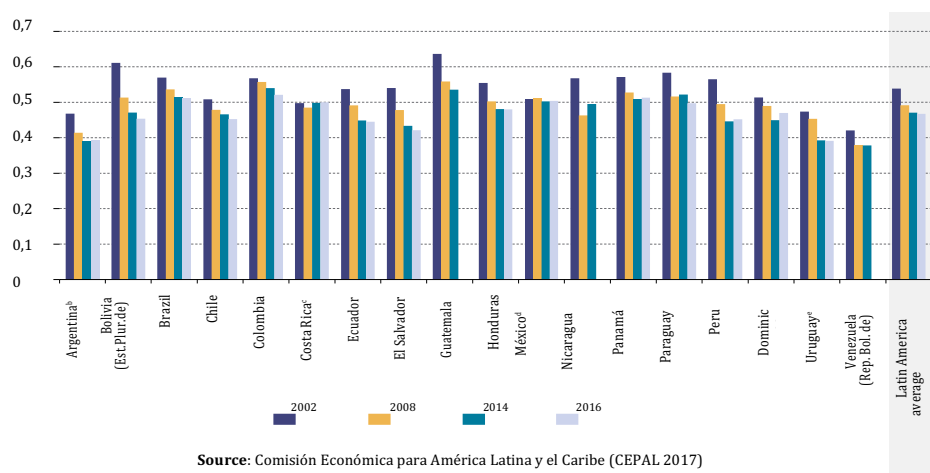
Figure 4. *Evolution of poverty/indigence 1980-2015*



The existence of democracy by itself and political rights is not achievable to improve social rights: this is shown by the transition from the 80s to the 90s,

where the vulnerable population increased from 40 to 48%. The first years of democracy, despite the advances in political rights, coincided with the world record of inequality in Latin America. The evolution of social rights was associated with specific public policies that have reinforced social citizenship. Therefore, the 90s, with a predominance of liberal policies, were accompanied by a consolidation of the poor population, while the compensatory policies from the middle of the new century first decade implied an improvement in the poverty and indigence figures. At the same time, it is clear that without political rights and access to the positions of alternative political groups and parties, changes in the public policies orientation would have been achieved. Finally, it is not appropriate to measure the impact of political rights in a short period of time. These are rights that imply the possibility of overcoming thresholds (Rokkan 1982), that after the medium and long terms, they will have an impact on the development of social rights.

Figure 5. *Inequality in Latin America*



«Between 2002 and 2012, the average participation of the first quintile in the total income went from 4.8% to 6.2%, while the one of the fifth quintile decreased from 50.7% to 45.0%. Consequently, the participation of the highest income quintile went from 10.7 times higher than the one of the lowest income quintile, to 7.2 times. Even though, slightly, the tendency to reduce inequality continued between 2012 and 2016. In 2016, the quotient between the participation of the fifth quintile (44.2%) and the first quintile (6.5%) was 6, 8 times (see figure I.2)» (ECLAC 2017: 43).

How much does the right / left ideological sign count in the inequality decrease?

From 2002 to 2016, the behavior of inequality decrease is a regional fact that covers different countries regardless of their ideological sign. However, in those countries with left and center-left governments, the decrease has been greater. For example in Bolivia, Venezuela, Argentina, Ecuador, and Brazil, this is observable. Even when there are national tendencies of State policies (Chile and Argentina), where the left / right alternation did not diminish the tendency to lower inequality, or of “inertias” of equality / inequality in each country, which is also explanatory: the case of Argentina (with Kirchner / Macri alternation).

### *The weak glue: Unreliability*

Sub-citizenships such as the diminished exercise or the denial of rights produce a social fabric of distrust and political disaffection. This is partly explained by the “tunnel effect” discovered by Albert Hirschman (1984, chapters 3, 4, and 5). When economically or socially disadvantaged groups observe that the elites welfare will also be their own welfare, then, the support for the cultural and political system grows. On the contrary, when the elites welfare grows rapidly, while the bases are in the same position, the citizenship becomes detached and the sense of community is lost. This is congruent with the effect that corruption seems to have on political disaffection and distrust. A lubricant of the citizenship development is interpersonal trust. Security problems and the growth of victimization rates in the region have impacted on a decrease in reliability. This is relevant because if the population fears instead of respecting, the police, or distrusts instead of trusting, the arbiters of justice, then citizenship is seriously affected (Portantiero 2000: 180). On the other hand, the reliability between the others implies a “bona fide” recognition (Fukuyama 1995) of the society towards the person. According to Latinbarometer (Latinobarómetro), in 2016 «interpersonal reliability remains the same as last year in one of its lowest points in the entire series with 17%» average. That is, more than 8 out of 10 people do not trust “the other one”, in Latin America. It amazes that a country with high traditional levels of unreliability (such as Mexico and Argentina), currently appears with the highest levels of relative reliability in the region (30 and 25% respectively). In these countries, reliability is limited and covers a minority radius of people. Thus, in terms not related to the region, the majority (7 people out of 10 in Mexico, and more than 7 in Argentina), do not fully trust their neighbors. Brazil is the

extreme case (3% of reliability): that is to say, it is a country emptied of interpersonal trust. This is attributable, in part, to corruption scandals and the political crisis, which affects society as a whole.” The vertical reliability, this is, from the citizens towards the institutions is not encouraging either: only the Catholic Church has confidence levels that exceed 50% (69%). The State is strongly questioned. Thus, out of 10 Latin Americans, more than half of them do not trust the Armed Forces (56%), 7 do not trust the police (67%), nor the Justice Department (70%), nor the Congress, and 8 of 10 people do not trust political parties (Latinobarómetro 2016: 33).

The tunnel effect manifests itself in the perception of what the object is, of politics for politicians. Politicians are not perceived following the common benefit, but on the contrary, they are perceived behind their particular interests: «In Brazil, Paraguay, and Chile only 9% to 10% of the population believe in a government for all the people; while in Nicaragua, Bolivia, and Ecuador, the three countries where the government for all the people is mostly believed, this perception reaches 46%, 40%, and 35%, respectively. In 2016, a maximum of 73% of regional citizens, who believe that it is governed for the benefit of a few powerful groups, is reached. Percentages in other countries reached 88% in Paraguay, 87% in Brazil and Chile, 86% in Costa Rica, 84% in Perú, 82% in Colombia, and 80% in Panama. Therefore, in 7 countries of the region, 80% or more of the population believe the same; that is, they are societies, which feel deeply disappointed with the results of democracy and its performance» (Latinobarómetro 2016: 33).

The justification for not paying taxes is considered as citizen defection. Therefore, in 2016 «the countries with the highest social justification for tax evasion are Guatemala, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, and Mexico; evasion is least justified in Argentina and Chile. Corruption and the weakness of governments (lower levels of approval) are some of the factors that explain this behavior, as well as the massive criticism to the quality of Politics» (2016: 67).

Regarding tolerance to corruption, that is, a problem that can be compensated by the effectiveness of government, the most tolerant countries are those of Central America and the Caribbean; while in the southern cone (Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile) and the Andean countries (Perú, and Bolivia) have lower levels of tolerance. In accordance with the above, the Americas Barometer reports «citizens of the Americas are more concerned, today, with crime and violence than what they were a decade ago» (Report 2014: 3). How much does this affect political participation? How much do Latin Americans participate? This point is shown below.

### *Political Participation*

Political participation is a relevant dimension when, from the actions, strategies, and rules, the actors, without relevant origin positions, have the possibility of influencing the course of public events, including the occupation of vertex positions. On the contrary, if political positions derive from conditions outside participation, then it declines or disappears. In this tenor, Alessandro Pizzorno (1966) has pointed out that the participation problem appears only at the moment when popular sovereignty emerges. Participation then becomes a significant political phenomenon when such automatic correspondence between conditions and political position ceases. For participation to be a relevant piece of information in any political system, it is required that:

- a. There is no automatic correspondence between the political position and external conditions beyond the participation of the community members,
- b. Any position (social, economic, political, or cultural) is not a sufficient condition for accessing political positions,
- c. Any political position requires, at least partially, the action of the actors, regardless of their previous positions.

That is, participation acquires meaning when influence depends on the decision-making process. Political participation is, besides, important for two reasons: a) *political mobility*, in other words, citizens can, starting from below, ascend to government positions or representation through their participation; b) *the influence of citizens* on decision makers, through their action. Therefore, a system with scarce participation, theoretically, has a negative impact on the accountability of rulers, as well as on political equality. However, do citizens participate in democracies? Do they participate in Latin America?

Although electoral participation is only one of the possible participation modalities, in democratic regimes its consequences are immediate and significant. Furthermore, in democracy, electoral participation is always present when other forms of participation are relatively infrequent.

In Table 1, there are clearly three groups of countries with different average participation thresholds and inertias: firstly, those *participatory countries*, which surpass the 70% threshold (Uruguay, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, Bolivia, Argentina, and Panama); secondly, the countries with medium participation, with a threshold of more than 60% (Venezuela, El Salvador, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Costa Rica, Chile, and Honduras); and finally, the countries with little participation and with a threshold of less than 50% (Paraguay, Colombia, and Guatemala). The countries electoral behavior in the region during the first decade of the 21st century has been relatively stable. Thereby, the countries of the extremes are kept at the same threshold: participatory (with the exception of Bolivia that has increased and Panama that decreased

Table. 1. *Electoral participation in presidential elections*

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Average
Uruguay					91					96				93
Ecuador			70				84			90				81
Peru	76	78					83					86		81
Brazil			79				84				77			80
Bolivia			67			63				86				72
Argentina				77				72				77		75
Panama					80					69				75
Venezuela	47						76							61
El Salvador					63					72				68
Dominican R.	65				69				72				70	69
Mexico	60						63						65	63
Costa Rica			59					64				62		62
Chile	72						63				59			65
Honduras		72				61				53				62
Paraguay				48									46	47
Colombia			45				44				45			45
Guatemala				42					45			61		49

Source: Political citizenship, (2014) PNUD, Idea Report.

electoral participation) and with less participation (except Guatemala, with a participation increase in the last election). Conversely, the intermediate countries have higher instability. They stand out in terms of declining participation, Chile and Honduras. What factors contribute to this vote distribution in the region? A factor is usually the confidence in being able to modify political situations through voting. But this is not clear, based on opinion studies from the Latinobarómetro (2008, 2009, 2010), where the distribution of these opinions is not consistent with the electoral behavior. Additionally, the political tradition influences as well as the conjunctures of disenchantment or, on the contrary, to see political options perceived as a true change. However, these generalizations may result being over abstract in the light of history. The evolution of electoral participation in each country and in the region may follow a homogeneous course, or on the contrary, follow a divergent course of unconventional participation. Regarding conventional participation, Chile has recently become one of the countries with the lowest electoral participation (it reached its lowest point in the 2016 municipal elections with 34% of participation). It is alarming if we take into consideration that only a little over

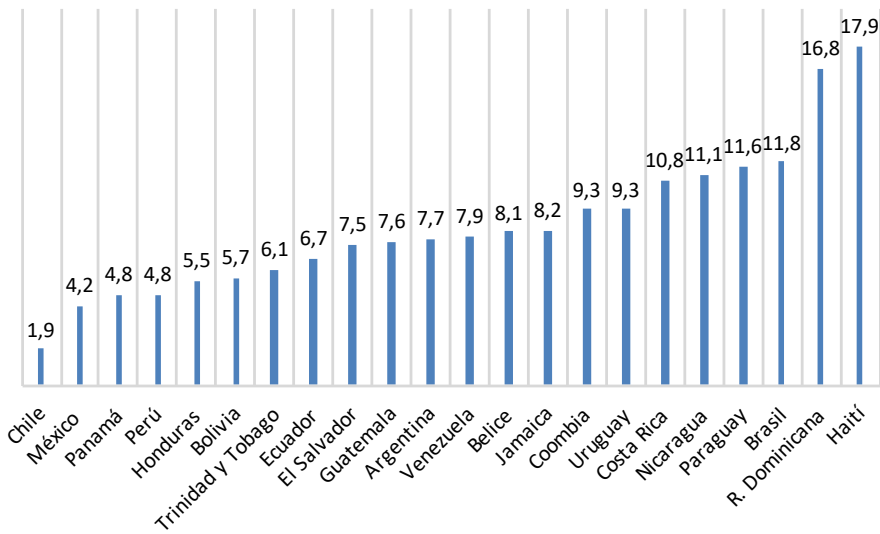
a decade ago, more than 80% of the electoral registration voted. This variation can be hardly explained only by the change in the compulsory nature of the vote in 2012, although from that year the decline began. In 2012, we can observe that less than 2% of Chileans participated in political campaigns. Conversely, countries such as Brazil, Paraguay, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica transcend the 10% of participation. However, when the level of participation outside the political representation is analyzed, for example in protests, Chile occupies the first positions with 11% of people who have participated. A plausible hypothesis, particularly if the difficulties of modifying fundamental rules are taken into account, this may indicate a level of disagreement with aspects related to the political order itself. Another contrasting case is Bolivia, which leads the participation in protests, and at the same time it is the country that presents lower levels in persuading others along the electoral campaign. On the contrary, there are countries with greater congruence in the types of participation. Thus, Mexico shows really low levels in any type of participation, both, in the electoral processes and in the protests. The case of Haiti is high in both (participation in protests and in the electoral process). This can perhaps be explained by the confidence of the citizens in the possibility of being able to modify the political circumstances, extremely low confidence in Mexico and high in Haiti.

There are notable differences in democratic regimes regarding electoral participation rates. The explanation of this difference is systemic, that is, it depends on the political and institutional characteristics of each political system. At parity of political and institutional order, the greater or lesser inclination of the individuals to vote may be due to psychological orientations and socioeconomic conditions. A person is more likely to vote if there are three cognitive conditions: in general, the person a. is interested in voting; b. possesses political information; and c. has a sense of effectiveness. These cognitive conditions work best in alliance with certain objective conditions such as socioeconomic status (Milbrath 1965, Milbrath and Goel 1977). According to Milbrath, those “central” actors of society participate more. In this *central* case, it is to be trained, to come from the middle class, to be a man, to belong to the intermediate cohorts of age, to be married, to be a citizen, to be a resident, to belong to the majority ethnic group, and be a member of associations. The higher the socioeconomic status of an individual is, the more likely it is for the individual to participate. However, as the Italian sociologist Alessandro Pizzorno (1966) points out: *that which favors participation is not the centrality in abstract or in general, pointed out by Milbrath, but the centrality with respect to a social group*. Political participation is an action in solidarity with others, which aims to preserve or transform the structure (and values) of the system of dominant interests.



We can consider two types of political participation: the one of representation support, and the one of criticism to political representation. Regarding the first one, electoral participation and participation in the electoral process (in the campaign and in convincing others about the vote) is included. In the second type of participation, protests are counted outside state institutions. Participation in elections is important in any democracy. Democracy has among its challenges, the recognition, with actions and policies, of its great cultural diversity; *to vote is to reaffirm the idea of nation*. Latin Americans have very diverse traditions of electoral participation. There is no subregional pattern. Thus, southern cone countries such as Uruguay, Brazil, and Argentina have high electoral participatory traditions; but Paraguay, on the other hand, has one of the lowest participatory traditions in the region; Chile, in the last decade has had a pronounced descent; and the Andean countries (Ecuador, Perú, and Bolivia in recent years) are also participatory.

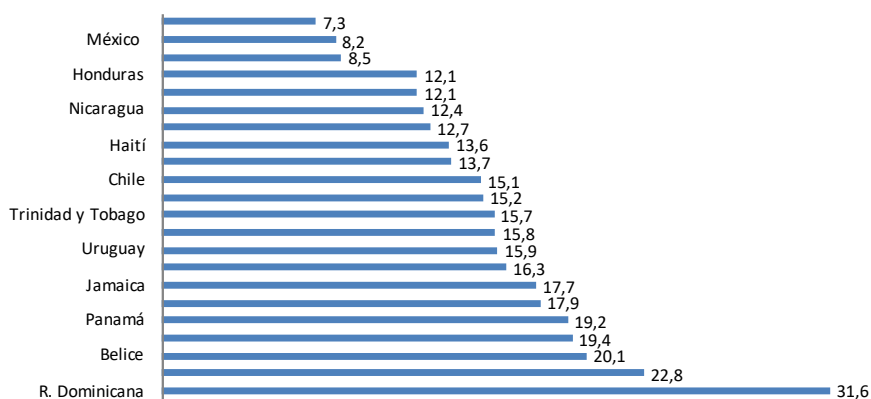
Figure 6. *Participation in political campaigns*



Political participation consists of people's commitment to the political system, at different levels, from total disinterestedness to occupying a position in a public office [Rush 1992]; and more precisely, it consists of the set of citizens' behavior oriented to influence the political process [Axford, Rosamond 1997]. Political participation can be classified into two types: a) visible political partici-

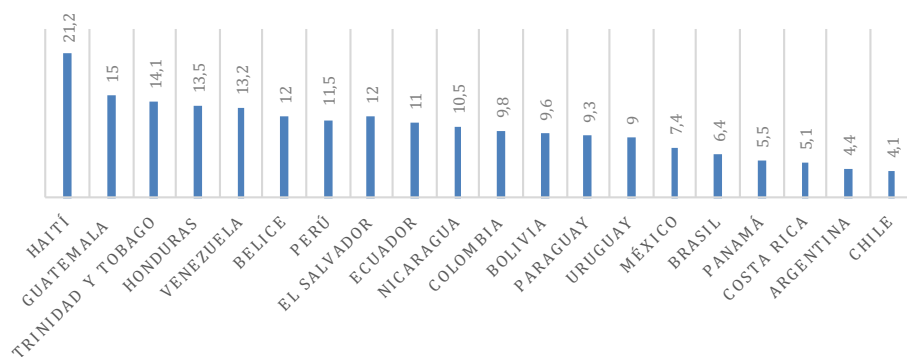
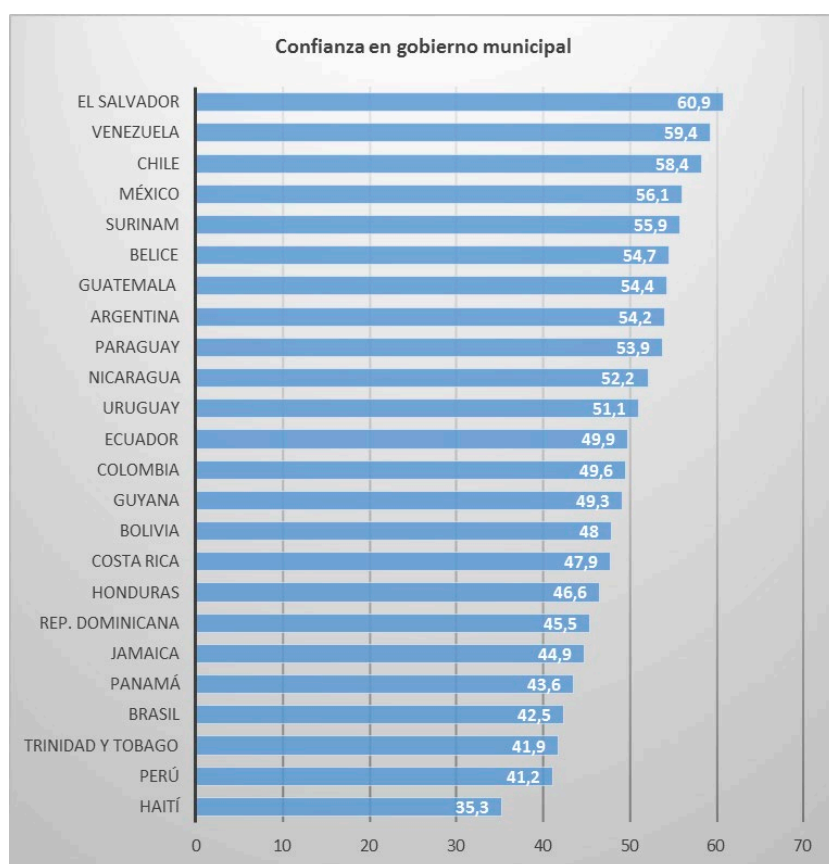
pation, that is, the set of actions and behaviors that aim to influence somehow directly, and somehow legally, in decisions. Among them, the selection itself of the power holders in the political system, or in simple political organizations, with the intention of preserving or modifying the structure (and then the values) of the dominant interests system. Literature in the field of power has made evident that influence can also take place even in the absence of actions (Bachrach and Baratz 1962), through the so-called predicted reactions (Lukes 1974, 2005).

Figure 7. *Percentage of people who tried to convince others*



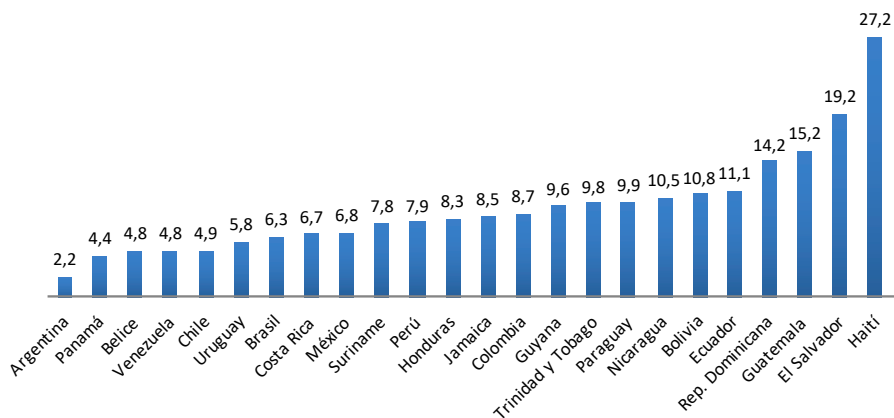
There has been a discussion about b) “latent” participation, that is to say, potential participation and, to a certain extent, effective participation, when there is a political community interested in politics and informed about its dynamics. This is rarely activated and in a discontinuous way, but with the capacity to participate. In this regard, visible political participation is low in Latin America, but how much is it latent participation? The answer is clear: potentially, becoming a structural fact reinforces low participation. How much electoral participation is compensated by dynamics of non-electoral participation? As it can be seen in figure 8, participation at the municipal level is low, particularly if attending meetings in the municipality is considered. The same occurs when a greater commitment is measured (figure 9), Chile appears in the extremes (in a congruent way with electoral participation (4.1%) and Haiti (21.2%).

Participation does not depend on trust to the municipal government. On the contrary, for example, Haiti is one of the countries with the least municipal reliability and Chile, on the other hand, one with a high level of confidence and low participation.

Figure 8. *Meetings in municipalities*Figure 9. *Confidence in the municipal government*Source: *Latinobarómetro 2017*

It is also important to pay attention to *participation as a community leader*, this is, the protagonist participation that is not individual, such as voting, but involves forming groups and participating into group activities. As it can be seen in the following figure, it is a type of participation, which takes place in countries with a greater proportion of pre-Hispanic indigenous populations, where cultures of greater community citizenship take place.

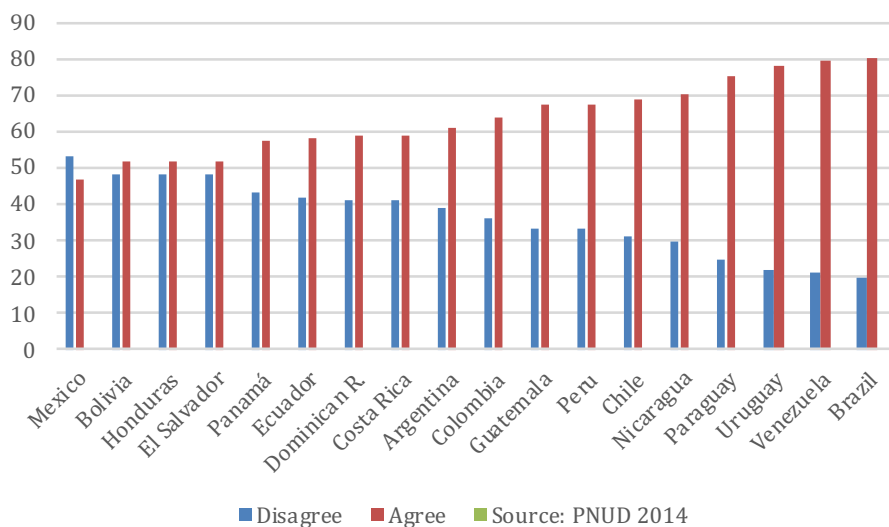
Figure 10. *Participation as a community leader*



In this regard, it is convenient to review the compared literature to appreciate that scarce participation is not only a fairly widespread phenomenon in many countries, but that it dates from quite a long time in some of them. The theory of a participatory political community has been largely refuted by the facts in fully consolidated and fairly stable democracies. In addition, this discrepancy was raised in terms of, whether “extensive participation” is actually an indicator of good democracy, or not. This classical question arose already in the 60s, when the coexistence of advanced democracies, developed economies, and extremely low political participation was noticed. A highly relevant comparative research was carried out by Almond and Verba, published in 1963. The famous comparison between the United States, England, Mexico, Germany, and Italy yielded results that challenged the normative premise of highly participatory and informed citizens, as well as democracy stability. The researchers pointed out that, actually, research “about political behavior doubts this activist and rational model, since it is evident that citizens of democratic systems do not respond, but rarely to this model. They are not well

informed, nor deeply engaged, nor particularly active “(Almond and Verba 1963: 383). At the same time (1965), another famous investigation, confirmed the conclusions of Almond and Verba. I refer to Milbrath, who verified that in the United States, the “gladiators”, an actor with a high level of political participation (measured with indicators such as contacting a politician, giving an economic contribution to a party or a candidate, participating in a political meeting, granting time for a political campaign, becoming an active member of a party, participating in important political meetings, requesting funds for political objectives, and being elected to a political office), barely reached 7% of all citizens, while the sum of the “spectators”, characterized by a minimum commitment reached 60%, and apathetic 30%. That is, in total, the non-participatory reached 90% of the political community. In 1978, Verba and Nie, specifying levels of participation, confirmed the data, becoming a solid tendency towards low participation. Voters (those who only vote) reach 21%, while those interested in broad public issues reach 18%. Fifteen years after the publication of Almond and Verba’s work, Lagroye (1993) would observe that the distance between the norm of participation and effective participation was still very large. Does Latin America follow the trend towards participation in unconventional ways?

Figure 11. *Percentage of people who agree and disagree with protests*



Political participation has changed from orthodox forms such as voting, joining a party, joining a union, organizing a meeting, and signing to participate in a referendum; to modern and heterodox forms such as campaigning for abstention or blank vote, participating in a movement, carrying out wild strikes, blocking traffic, doing sit-ins sittings, boycotting a supermarket, and damaging material goods. An important work carried out in the second half of the 70s, revealed, “in advanced industrial societies, direct action techniques contain the stigma of deviation, and are not seen as antisystem either.” (Barnes et al. 1979: 162). In countries such as England, Germany or the United States, the percentage of the population willing to participate unconventionally facing situations generated by unfair rules has increased seven times, over a period of almost 15 years (between 1960 and 1974). Has this happened in Latin America? Now, we can clarify this point: an investigation carried out on Western Europe (Topf 1995), has shown that unconventional participation has increased enormously to the point of talking about a participatory revolution. Therefore, the inactive ones have decreased (from 85% in 1959, to 44% in 1990) and a parallel growth of people with a certain type of political activity (from 15% in 1959 to 66% in 1990). Citizens entered the 2000s very distant from political parties, critics to elites and institutions, and less positively oriented towards governments (Dalton 2004).

In order to clarify, we can recall, the question, what are the types of participation according to an important research [Barnes et.al. 1979]. If the range of behaviors that we will call political participation is extended, then five kinds of behavior can be considered. On one side, a) *the conformists*, who as its name suggests, are actors engaged in conventional forms of participation; b) *the reformers*: who participate in a conventional way exploring the borders of the legal forms of protest, but staying within the limits of that legality; c) *the activists*, who use all legal forms, touch and cross borders until they adopt non-legal modes of response; d) *the inactive*, who go from the total absence of political interest to information or at most, to signing a petition; and e) *the protestants*, who are willing and adopt all unconventional forms, but also reject conventional forms of participation. Therefore, our questioning is whether in Latin America, actors with alternative forms of participation, such as those mentioned above, predominate. In Latin America, a larger percentage, in general, of the population, which can be observed approving street marches and protests in all countries with the exception of Mexico, where more than 50% of the population rejects them. This northern country, generally, has a high level of unreliability in participation, as the rates of formal and informal participation have shown.

How many people participate or have participated in protests?

Figure 12. *Percentage of people with participation in protests in 2012*

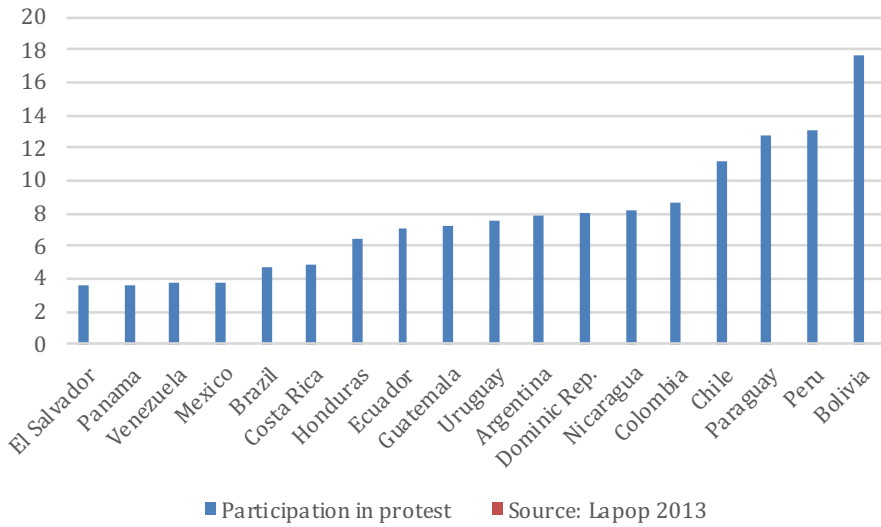
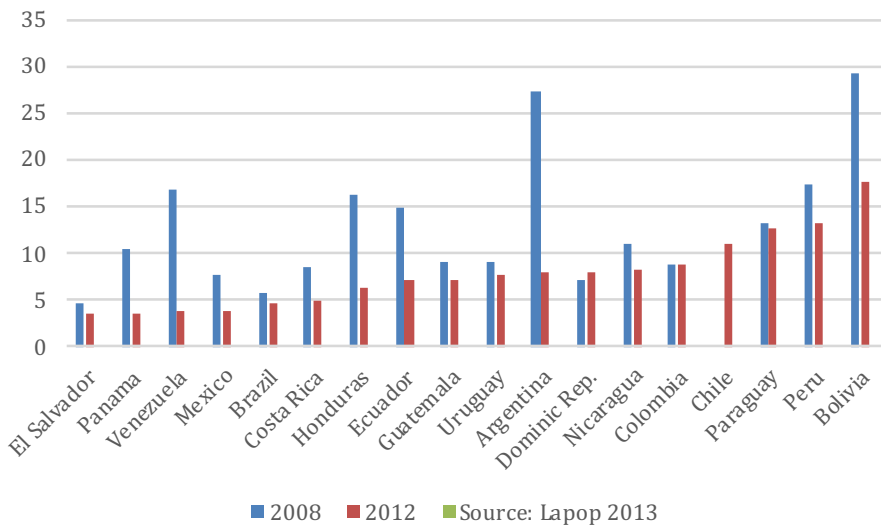


Figure 13. *Evolution of participation in protests 2008-2012*



The participation rate is low, even in those countries where the protests have been approve in high percentages, such as Brazil and Uruguay, and as

it is observed in figure 13, it has gradually decreased from the last decade to today.

In some countries, the figures are more consistent (relatively high participation and approval of protests) such as Chile or Peru; or (relatively low participation and disapproval of protests) such as Mexico. Public participation as a protest is far today in Latin America of 66%, mentioned by Topf (1995).

### *Conclusions*

How much has Latin America advanced in citizen rights and in terms of representative quality in the last decades? It has been noted, for a long time, that it constitutes the most violent region as well as one of the most unequal over the planet. In terms of social citizenship, poverty has decreased from 48.3% to 33.2% between 1990 and 2008 (ECLAC 2009). However, sub-citizenships continue to be a reality and five of the ten most unequal countries in the world are in the region; among them, the most economically powerful (Brazil). In terms of security, 27% of the world's homicides are committed in the region, which has 10 of the 20 countries with the highest homicide rates in the world (Dammert, 2012). At the same time, in recent decades, a profound and unprecedented process of political change has taken place, oriented towards democratization and towards the evolution of new citizen forms. Naturally, there is a diversity of internal processes that make it difficult to talk about the same regional reality. Countries such as Haiti and Uruguay are part of very different histories, however, Latin America is a region with common historical trajectories in the long term, a geopolitical reality regarding dominant powers, and also in more recent times, a set of shared experiences. In the last 70 years, Latin America was urbanized, educated, and modernized; the family structure was modified, new technologies reached the whole region, even with internal disparities (Delich, 2004). All this has resulted, as shown by cross-national cultural studies, in the consolidation of a core of common values in the region (Inglehart, Carballo, 2008). Since the 1980s, democratization has been experienced, with contradictory and sometimes paradoxical effects for the development of citizenship. The fate of citizen evolution is tied to the development of democracies. Countries such as Mexico, with difficulties to achieve the alternation of political block (right / left), have found at the time of their electoral institutions improvement and political competition with the historic alternation of the year 2000, obstacles that set democracy at stake. They imply citizen regressions unthinkable only 15 years ago. The countries that have gone through the center-left populist experiences, such as Ecuador



and Argentina, have been able to process the political block transition without major problems. In Argentina, the eve of overcoming a crucial problem such as that a non-Peronist government succeeds in completing an alternating process. In the meanwhile, Bolivia, still fails to overcome (as Ecuador did) the dilemma of succession, to consolidate a different mode of political construction and State. Countries that have gone through gradualist experiences and better-combined alternation with institutional solidity, such as Uruguay and Chile find, in the first case, an important advance in citizenship indicators (civil, political, and social). In Chile, the democratization with solid vestiges of change impotence to the inherited Pinochet order, disenchant the Chileans, to the point where it has today one of the lowest voter participation rates. It is clear that the scale and quality of the problems facing the processes of citizen construction are disparate and follow national inertias: there are countries where public policies are central to the development of citizenship. In particular, those cases where the *citizenship of opportunities* is predominant, such as Argentina or Uruguay; others where state reform is required to empower large (and at the same time marginalized) sectors of the population: Mexico or Guatemala. The 21st century shows that with respect to citizenship, democracy did not come in vain (it is far from the systematic violations of human rights implied by state terrorism), but at the same time, the challenges arising can imply new abysses if problems are not diagnosed with courage and reinvented to achieve better citizens with the horizon of the best traditions.

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