



DIRECTORIO
LEGISLATIVO

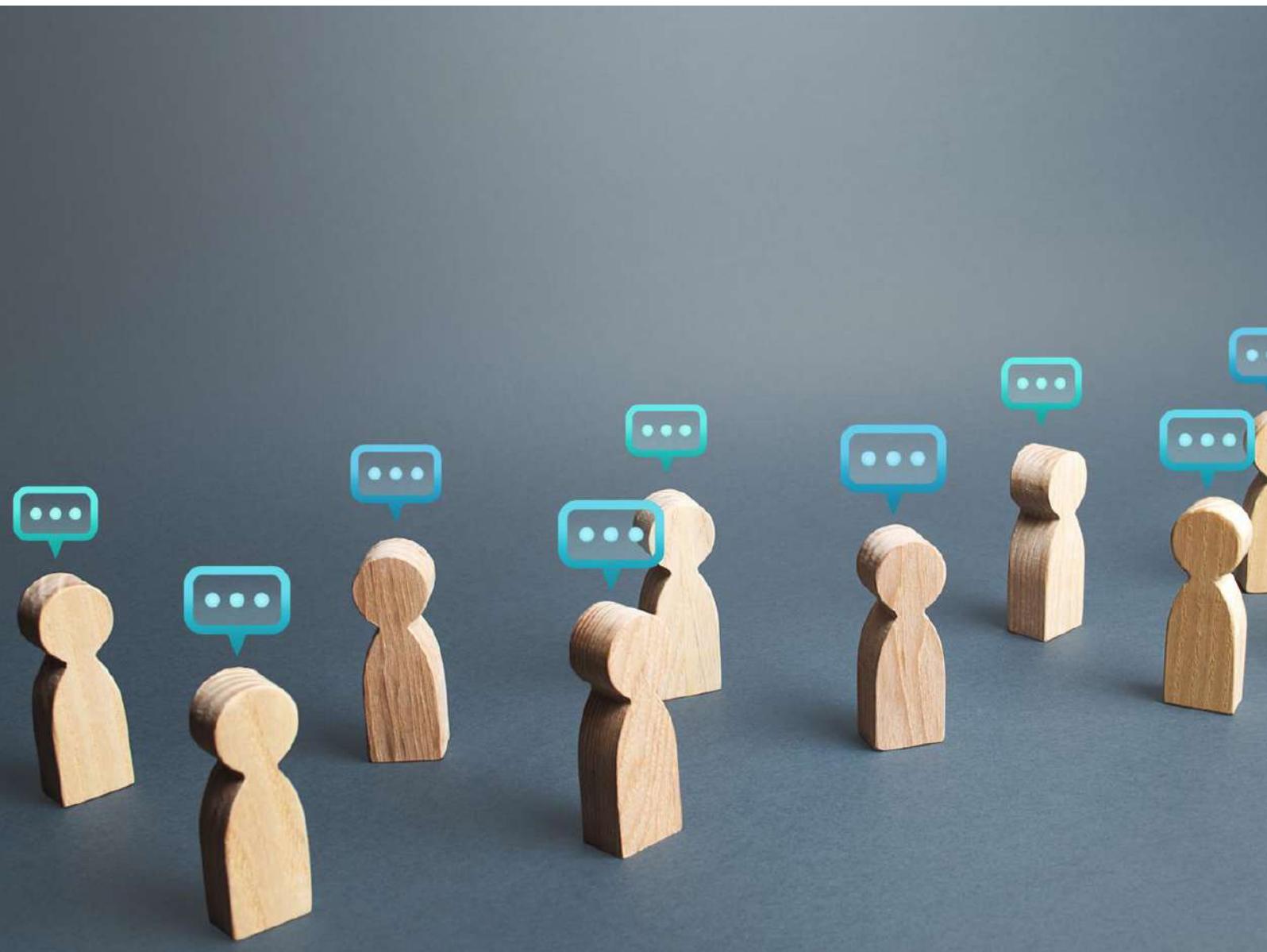
FORTALECEMOS
LAS DEMOCRACIAS
DE AMÉRICA LATINA

STRENGTHENING
DEMOCRACIES
IN LATIN AMERICA

SEPTEMBER 2021

Image of power Power of an image

REPORT ON PRESIDENTIAL APPROVAL RATINGS IN LATIN AMERICA
JULY-AUGUST 2021



Executive summary

Between July and August, presidential approval levels remained relatively stable in the assessed countries, with deviations of only +/- 4% except for the Dominican Republic (-9%) and Chile (+5%). Of particular note is the **fresh four-point drop for Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro which marks a new low in support at just 27%.**

The on-average smaller shifts in popularity witnessed in July through to August contrast with those seen between May and June this year, when presidential approval in Argentina and Colombia fell sharply to their lowest point since taking office, and which also saw the beginning of dwindling backing for Uruguay's Executive branch.

Argentina's Alberto Fernández had, between May and June, suffered a 5% fall in popularity amid revelations he held a party last year in full breach of the country's lockdown requirements. An average-based estimate of his government's popularity this August - 35% - is similar if somewhat above the 31% of votes secured by Fernández's government in the country's just-held primary legislative elections.

Should the tepid support in those elections for his Frente de Todos ruling coalition - far below what pools had predicted - be repeated in the legislative elections proper, due on 14th November, then expect a shake-up in the power balance of both houses of Congress, with ramifications for the next presidential vote in 2023.

Events in Argentina fit with a **broader pattern in the region that has seen the pandemic coincide with an undermining of the strength and electoral prospects of incumbent governments.**

Witness, for instance, the presidential and legislative elections in Ecuador (held between February and April this year) and in Peru (April to June), and the subnational ballots in Chile in May. Also in Bolivia, victory for MAS last October was not maintained through regional and local elections in March-April, with the Luis Arce-led party securing only three out of nine governorships and winning in just two of the country's 10 biggest cities.

Two countries bucked this trend and avoided midterm legislative setbacks. One was Mexico, where MORENA consolidated in June as the leading national political force with 34% of the votes. The other, El Salvador, where Nuevas Ideas, the party founded by President Nayib Bukele, similarly strengthened, albeit via a judicially rigged reelection that violated the country's Constitution.

What do the next months hold? November will certainly be busy, with presidential and legislative votes set for Chile, Nicaragua and Honduras and with Argentina renewing its Congress. **In Chile, polls are predicting a two-horse race but with the likelihood of a run-off on December 19.**

Looking ahead to next year, key presidential elections are to be held in Colombia (in May) and in Brazil (October). Colombia's Iván Duque, whose approval languishes at 27%, has next to no chance of staying in office with polls, for now, placing the opposition in the lead. The same goes for Brazil, where Jair Bolsonaro, seemingly all but certain to be replaced, has taken aim at the country's electronic voting system to generate voter distrust ahead of the elections, as well as rallying against the Supreme Federal Court which is investigating him over dissemination claims.

About this publication. *Image of Power* provides bimonthly analysis of presidential approval ratings in 18 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean drawing on survey data from 80 sources. The Presidential Image Ranking only includes those cases where a minimum of three measurements are available over the study period and from at least two different sources.

What are the topics covered in this issue?

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- Bolsonaro's approval drops further hitting all-time low (7)
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- What do citizens think of the work of their parliaments? (10)
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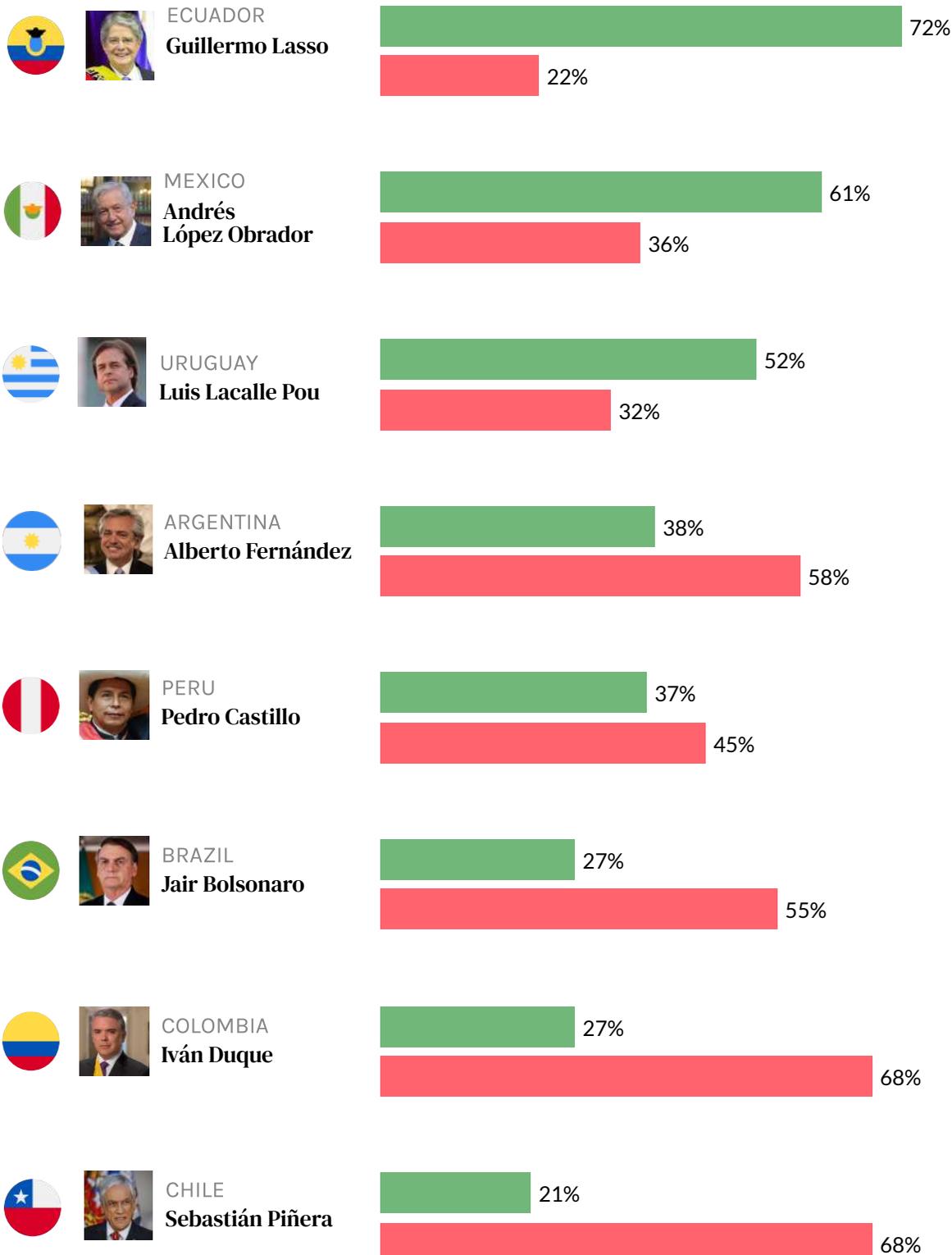
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Presidential Image Ranking

July - August 2021

This ranking includes cases where a minimum of three measurements are available over the study period from at least two different sources.

Positive
Negative



How did the image of presidents evolve?

January 2020 - July 2021

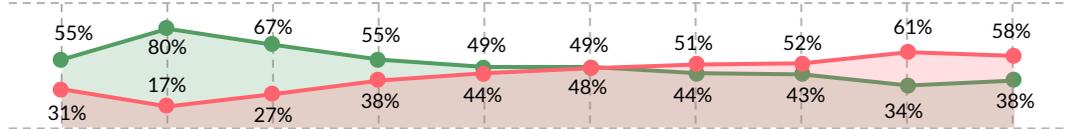
Positive
Negative



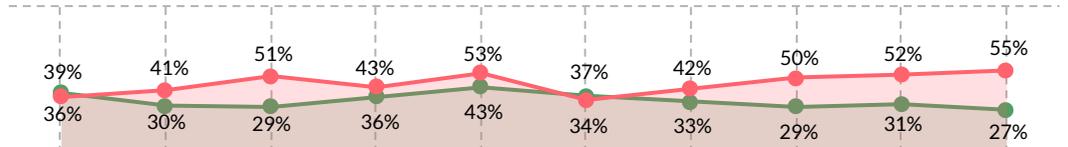
JAN> FEB MAR> APR MAY> JUN JUL> AUG SEP> OCT NOV> DEC JAN> FEB MAR> APR MAY> JUN JUL> AUG



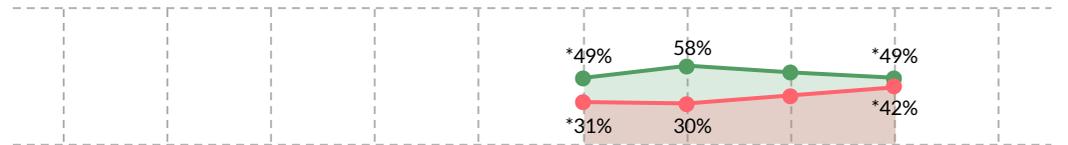
ARGENTINA
Alberto Fernández



BRAZIL
Jair Bolsonaro



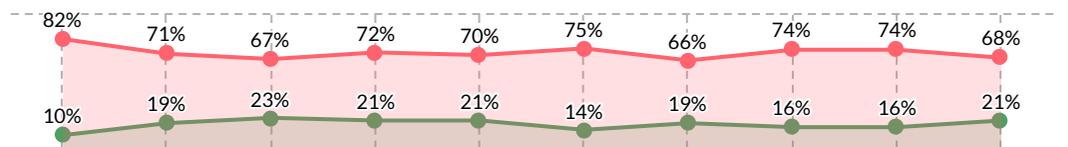
BOLIVIA
Luis Arce



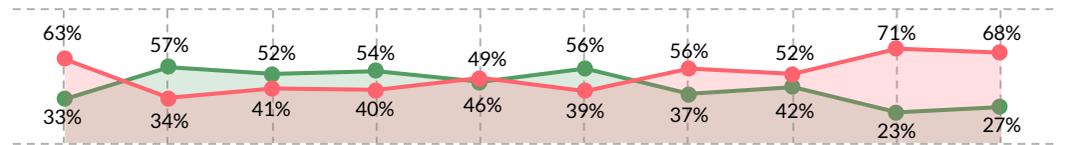
Arce took office on 08/11/2020



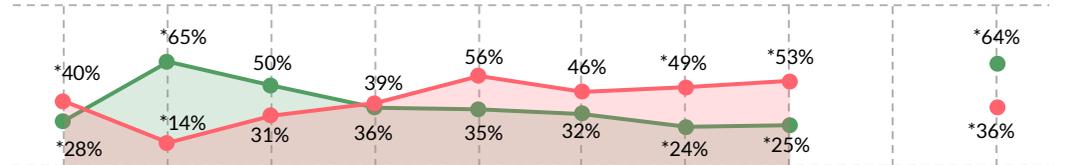
CHILE
Sebastián Piñera



COLOMBIA
Iván Duque



COSTA RICA
Carlos Alvarado



ECUADOR
Guillermo Lasso



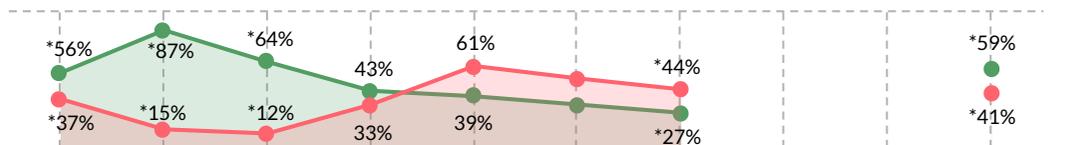
Lasso took office on 05/24/2021



EL SALVADOR
Nayib Bukele



GUATEMALA
Alejandro Giammattei



How did the image of presidents evolve?

January 2020 - July 2021

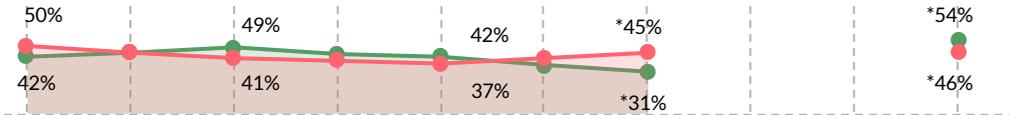
Positive
Negative



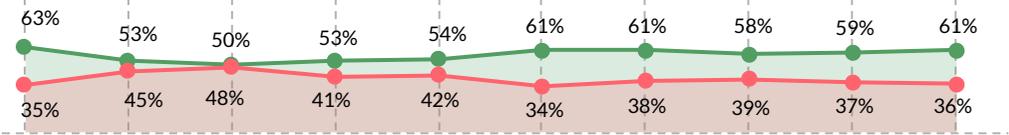
JAN> FEB MAR> APR MAY> JUN JUL> AUG SEP> OCT NOV> DEC JAN> FEB MAR> APR MAY> JUN



HONDURAS
Juan Orlando Hernández



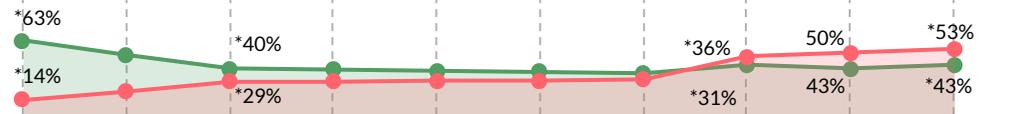
MEXICO
Andrés Manuel López Obrador



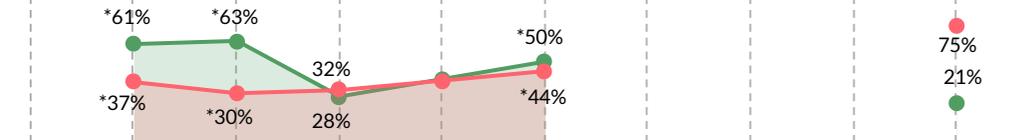
NICARAGUA
Daniel Ortega



PANAMA
Laurentino Cortizo



PARAGUAY
Mario Abdo Benítez



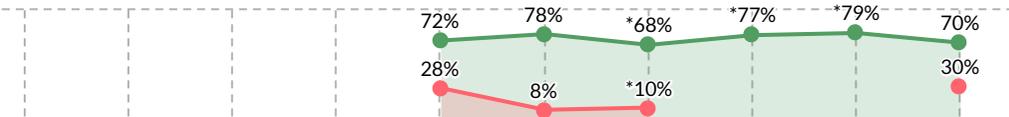
PERU
Pedro Castillo



Castillo took office on 07/28/2021



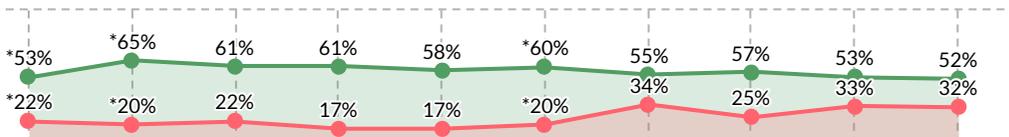
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
Luis Abinader



Abinader took office on 08/16/2020



URUGUAY
Luis Lacalle Pou



VENEZUELA
Nicolás Maduro



Bolsonaro's approval drops further hitting all-time low

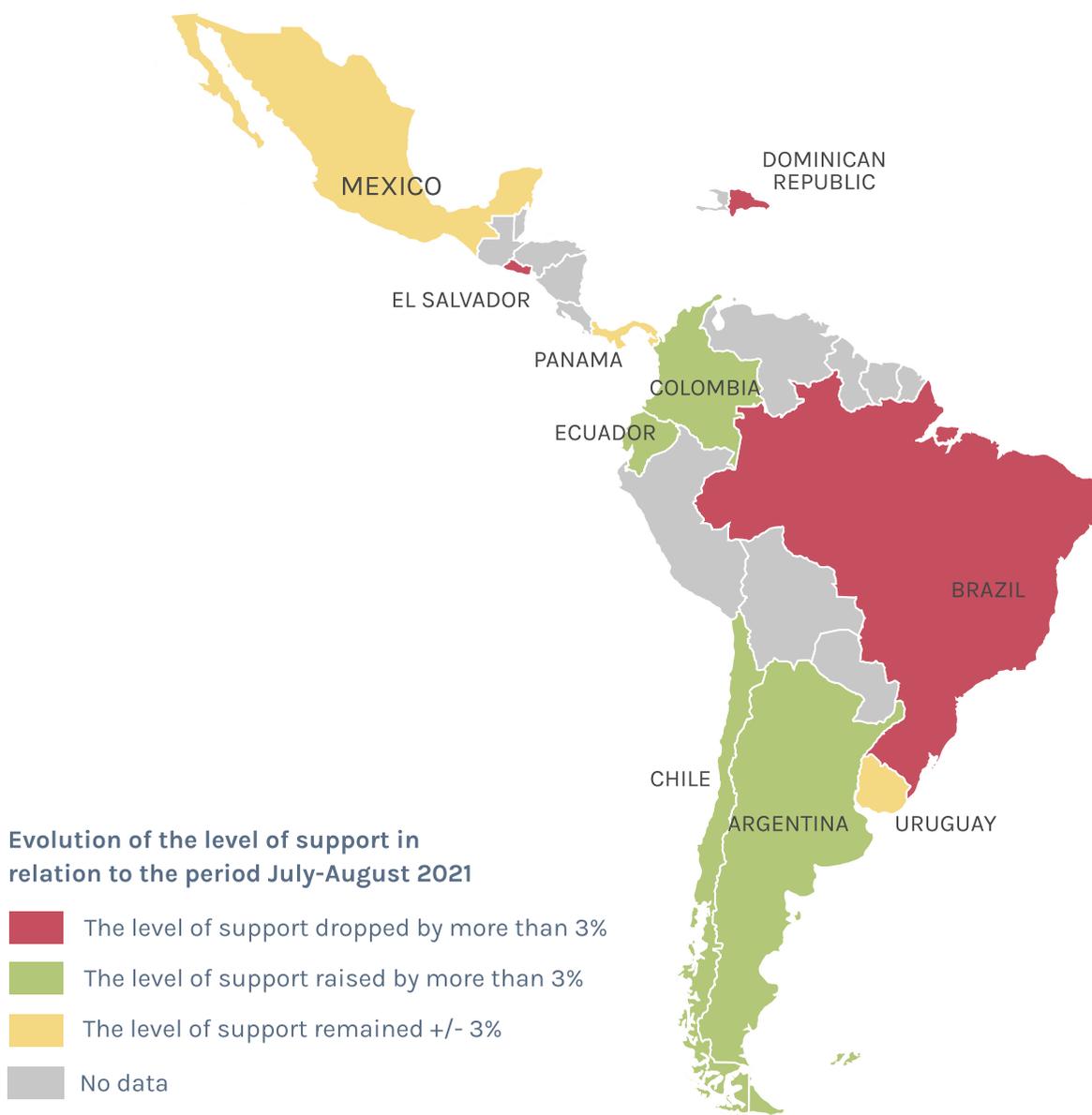
Comparison with the period May-June 2021

While May-June was marked by a sharp decline in the levels of executive approval for Argentina and Colombia, and the beginnings of an erosion of public backing for Uruguay's president, approval ratings in all cases appear to have stabilized somewhat in the last two months. Not so for Jair Bolsonaro, however, who with a 4% drop touches his popularity floor.

Alberto Fernández's approval dropped between July and August from 40% to 35%. This latter figure resembles though slightly exceeds the fraction of votes won by the ruling party in the

primary legislative elections held on September 12: 31%. Throughout the two-month period analyzed, the level of support for Uruguay's Lacalle Pou also fell – from 57.5% in July to 47% in August, on average.

Peru's president began his term in office with an average rating of 37%, less than that recorded ahead of his inauguration. For his part, Ecuador's Guillermo Lasso, enjoying levels of popularity in excess of 70%, completed his first 100 in office with a cabinet reshuffle.



Opinion leaders' take on the region's governments

July - August 2021

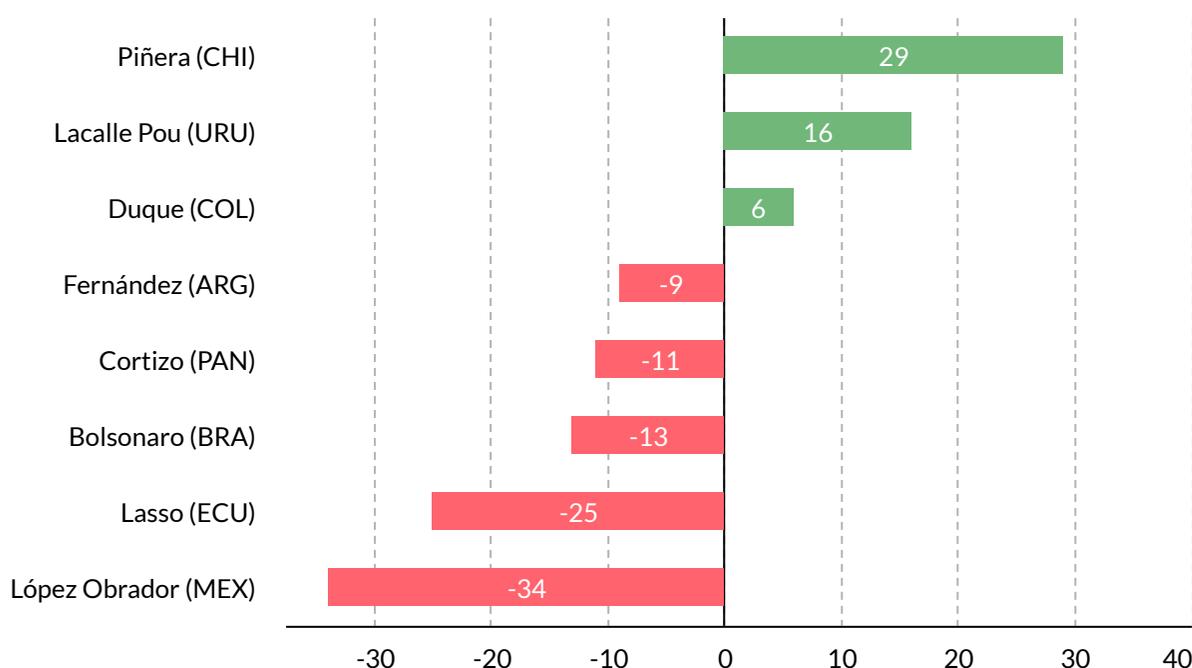
How do the views on the region's heads of state of opinion leaders differ from those of the public? To analyze this, we compare average percentages for July-August with an [IPSOS](#) poll of opinion leaders taken on July 24.

The latter, which covered overall perceptions of the presidents as well as their handling of the pandemic and vaccination response, was based 380 interviews conducted across 14 countries with opinion leaders and journalists who regularly broadcast their points of view in the media in Latin America (newspapers 51%, websites 42%, radio 32%, magazines 20%, open TV 20%, cable TV 12% and others).

Broadly, level of approval among the opinion leaders, vis a vis citizens, tended to be higher for the governments generally seen as less populist, more liberal and/or right of center, and lower in the case of populist administrations. There were some exceptions to this, notably in the case of Ecuador's President Guillermo Lasso.

Notwithstanding, there is consistency in how the views of both audiences have evolved over time since the start of the pandemic. In other words, where citizens' approval has risen or fallen so has, broadly speaking, that of the opinion leaders. As we shall see, only for the president of Uruguay, Luis Lacalle Pou, did this not apply (ie perceptions diverged).

Net difference (%) vs. approval rate measured by probability sampling



Opinion leaders' take on the region's governments

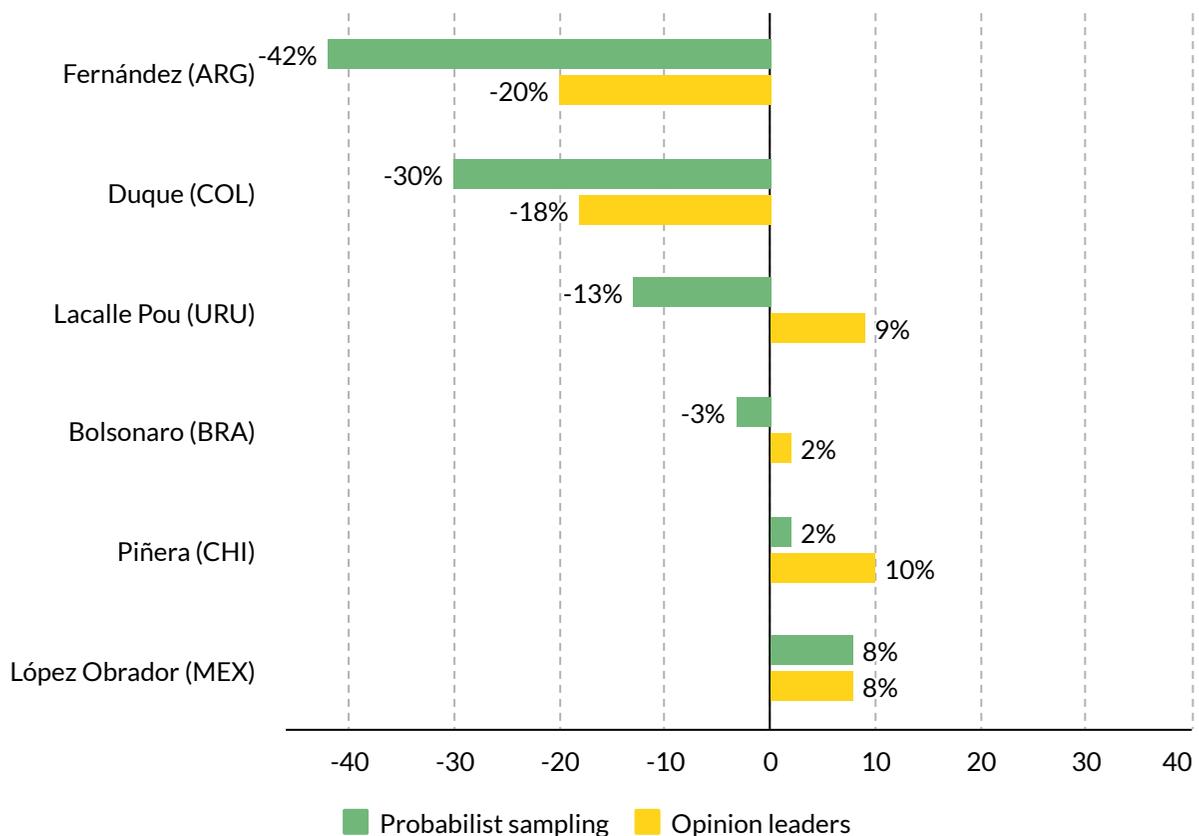
Thus in Argentina, since the pandemic, the government has seen a drop in its approval of 42% among the public on average versus a fall of 20% among the interviewed opinion leaders; in Colombia, the proportion was -30% among compared with -18% for the opinion leaders; in Brazil, it was -3% against +2%; in Mexico, both were +8%; while in Chile the ratio was +2% versus +10%. The only case where perceptions went in opposing directions was Uruguay (-13% vs. +9%).

In summary, the approval levels of the opinion leaders rose in the case of Chile (from 40% to 50%), Mexico (from 19% to

27%) and Uruguay (from 59% to 68%). Whereas the opposite occurred for Argentina (down from 49% to 29%), Colombia (51% to 33%) and Panama (36% to 32%).

Interestingly, for Colombia and Argentina, the approval scores of the presidencies overall are lower than the approval of their handling of the pandemic. Fernández's handling of Covid-19 has a positive evaluation of 36% (against 29% overall); while in the case of Duque, 45% approved his pandemic management vs 33% support for his overall performance as president).

Total % change since April20 (probability sampling vs. opinion leaders)



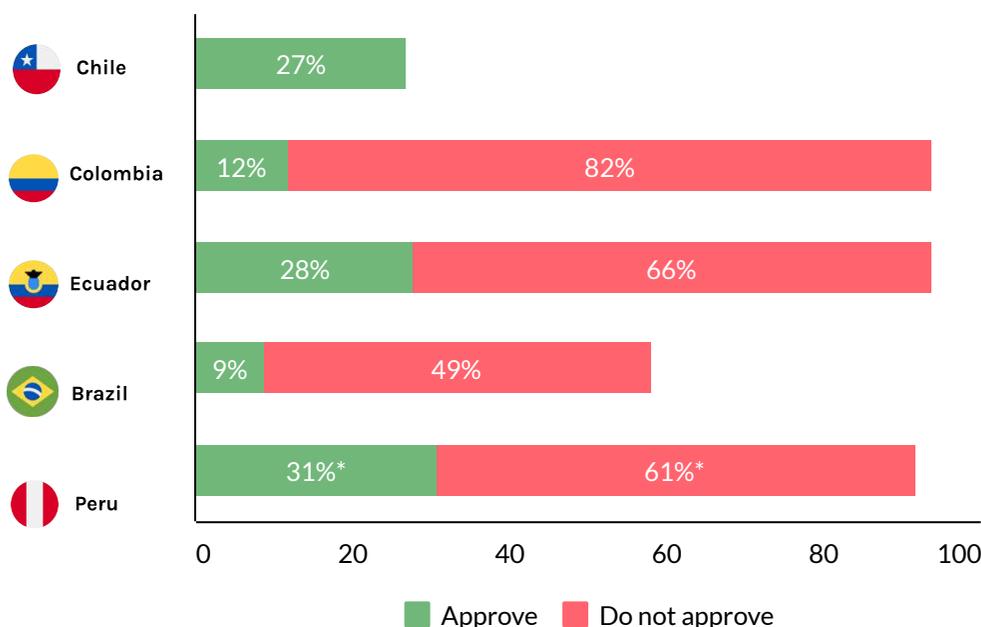
How does the public view the work of Congress?

July - August 2021

In Peru, the Congress was renewed during the period of this study. The presidency of the body is now held by Deputy María del Carmen Alva of the opposition bloc Acción Popular. According to measurements taken by [IEP](#) (Unstitute of Peruvian Studies) on August 19, the new Congress has considerably lower public approval than the previous one had when it first convened in April 2020 (47%).

Approval ratings of the **Brazilian Congress** have remained stable in recent months, although they remain very low. In this context, it is interesting to note that, according to an August 14 [XP/lpespe](#) poll, 67% of respondents said they were familiar with the Senate Pandemic Inquiry Committee, with 57% approving this vs 31% opposing it.

The graph shows the data available for the study period.



Chile's Constitutional Convention

Looking beyond the legislative branches, data from Chile show that **confidence in the work of its Constitutional Convention has receded.** An August 16 [Activa](#) survey shows that only 30.9% of respondents have 'a lot of confidence' in it (down from 43.6% in July).

This finding is consistent with that of an August 3 [Criteria](#) poll, which revealed that 30% approved of the Constitutional Convention while 47% did not. Among the cited reasons for disapproval are its slowness, excessive spending, deviation from its core functions, and the pursuit of personal agendas by some of its members.

Contrastingly, measurements from Cadem show a higher degree of support for the body, at 49%, taken in mid-August. However, it similarly shows that approval has dropped with respect to July, when according to its data support had reached 63%.

The highlights of this issue



ARGENTINA

Results of the legislative primaries rocked the government and strained the ruling coalition

On September 12, the Open, Simultaneous and Mandatory Primary Elections (PASO in Spanish) went ahead. Although the purpose of these is simply to decide on who will stand as candidates for the legislative ballot in November, they effectively serve as a touchstone for the public's view of the government.

Neither of the main two parties was expecting an easy ride, but nor had anyone anticipated quite what was to ensure. **The ruling coalition Frente de Todos suffered sweeping losses across the country –even in stronghold districts with current Peronist governors.** In fact, its proposed candidates won only in 6 out of the country's 24 jurisdictions.

As remarked previously, **the overall votes obtained nationally (around 31% for Deputies and 28% for Senators), is below the 35% average government approval rating measured in August**, which has suffered following the publication of photos showing that the president held a private party amid a strict national lockdown. Even less predictable were the government's losses in districts with relatively high executive approval among them Santa Cruz (49.7%), La Pampa (48.6%), the Province of Buenos Aires (46.3%) Tierra del Fuego (46.2%) and San Luis (45%), according to July data from [CB Consultora](#).

At stake in November, therefore, is the composition and power balance in the National Congress which will see one third of Senate seats and half of its Chamber of Deputies renewed. In the Senate, Frente de Todos has 41 seats (4 above the minimum for a majority); in Deputies it holds 120 (9 below). It is the bloc that has the highest number of Senate seats up for grabs (15), with its rival, Juntos por el Cambio,

risking the most Deputies (62 versus Frente de Todos' 52).

If the results of the PASO were to be repeated, **Frente de Todos stands to lose up to 6 seats in the Senate -- and with it, its majority there – and another three seats in the Chamber of Deputies.** Thus, it would hold only a one-deputy advantage over Juntos por el Cambio. This potential evening out of the power balance, added to the two rival blocs growing ever more ideologically opposed, could make it hard for the ruling party to press forward its legislative agenda. Such a new composition of Congress, were it to materialise, could scupper approval of the government-backed judicial reform proposals, as well as suggested reforms of the Public Prosecutor's Office and potentially, too, of the country's health system.

The results have led to a flaring of tensions within the government coalition. Three days after the elections, some ten top-level officials of the national cabinet, all of them loyal to Vice-President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner handed in their notice. The entire cabinet of the government of the province of Buenos Aires, where just two years previously Peronism had triumphed with over 50% of the votes, also resigned.

Taken as a whole, and aside from the shock electoral inroads achieved by more extremist third-party outsiders, the elections of the last years have seen the emergence of two strong (and strongly opposed) and potentially stable political coalitions which, together, account for slightly more than 70% of votes in Argentina. (In the presidential and legislative elections of 2019 they accounted for just over 80%, and in the presidential vote before that, in 2015, for 70%).

The highlights of this issue



Bolsonaro intensifies his campaign against electronic voting and threatens the Supreme Federal Court

The presidential elections are more than a year away, but in Brazil there is already a climate of anticipation of campaigning, which the president has only ignited by questioning the reliability of the electronic vote adopted more than 20 years ago and hinting at the possibility of fraud.

At the beginning of August, a group of 18 magistrates of the Superior Electoral Court (with current and past mandate) had issued a statement guaranteeing that the electronic ballot boxes are auditable at every stage of the process and ratifying that since their implementation not a single case of fraud was documented. However, the crusade intensified after the **failure in the Chamber of Deputies in mid-August of a constitutional amendment bill promoted by the executive to adopt a mixed voting system** (electronic/paper).

The president's diatribe against electronic voting takes place in a context of a **sustained fall of his image and the strengthening of the figure of Luis Inácio Lula da Silva in view of the 2022 presidential elections**. Indeed, between July and August, Bolsonaro registered a new drop of 4 points on average, which places him at the lowest point of popularity since the beginning of 2020.

The events of the last few weeks also once again highlight the long-standing conflict between the president and the Supreme Federal Court, in which at least three investigations are underway for dissemination of false news and handling incompatible with his office, one of them from 2019.

It was this same court that annulled last March the convictions of Lula Da Silva for bias in the process.

In early September, Bolsonaro escalated hostilities to unprecedented levels by attacking judges Alexandre de Moraes and Luis Roberto Barroso in a public act and declaring that he will not comply with court orders.

What scenarios are anticipated for the next elections?

For the moment, all polls place Lula da Silva as the candidate with the highest voting intention (around 27% of spontaneous intention; 40%, in the directed questions). In second place is Bolsonaro with a percentage of around 22 to 26%.

In this still uncertain scenario, the candidates are working to build agreements that will allow them to pave the way to the presidency. Lula began negotiations with Partido Socialismo e Liberdade (PSOL), an internal split of the PT, which since its foundation in 2004 has always presented its own candidacies.

Bolsonaro, for his part, is trying to strengthen his alliance with the Centrão bloc, which brings together the center-right parties, by appointing Senator Ciro Nogueira as chief of staff to replace Luiz Eduardo Ramos (a retired military officer). The decision was read by some media as a change of direction aimed at guaranteeing the stability of the government at the cost of partially relegating its right-wing and militarist ideological imprint.

The highlights of this issue



Polls predict a close electoral race, likely to go to a run-off

On November 21, the presidential elections will be held in Chile for the period 2022-2026. In addition, the Chamber of Deputies will be completely renewed and the Senate partially renewed.

The Chilean electoral system provides for a two-round system in the event that none of the candidates obtains more than 50% of the votes in the first round. This happened in the general elections of 1999, 2005, 2009, 2013 and 2017, and - considering the projections - everything indicates that this scenario will be repeated this year. In that case, a run-off will take place on December 19.

So far, the Constitutional Court has granted the necessary authorization to seven candidates. Although a fragmented and tight race is expected, latest polling by [Cadem](#), [Pulso Ciudadano/Activa](#) and [Criteria](#), place **two candidates closely in the lead: the opposition contender Gabriel Boric of Apruebo Dignidad** (23%, 19.9% and 25%, respectively) **and the pro-government Sebastián Sichel of the Chile Podemos+ coalition** (19%, 11.8% and 19%). The surveys also show that the intention to vote for Boric has been sustained in the last weeks whereas the opposite has occurred for Sichel.

Boric, the youngest of the candidates, has considerable support among students and among the social/welfare-minded groups whose protests prompted the referendum on the constitutional reform. Frente Amplio was also the second most voted-for political force in the elections for regional governors in May of this year.

Sichel is a conservative who started out in Democracia Cristiana and later moved toward Chile

Vamos, eventually serving as Minister of Social Development and President of the State Bank of Chile during the current presidency of Sebastián Piñera. He has declared that his first measures will be to reduce bureaucracy, facilitate conditions for entrepreneurs and strengthen the social protection network.

Trailing these two contenders are Senator Yasna Provoste of Unidad Constituyente (12%, 11.9% and 12%) and José Antonio Kast of Partido Republicano (12%, 14% and 8%). Like Sichel, Provoste began her militancy in Democracia Cristiana, served as Minister during the governments of Lagos and Bachelet and currently serves as President of the Senate. The Chilean right-wing candidate, for his part, already ran in the 2017 elections, where he obtained 7.93% of the votes.

Regardless of the projected results, polls also reveal symptoms of discontent and voter fatigue. Indeed, **40% of people surveyed by CADEM state that they have only 'some or little interest' in the elections.**

Overall, the political panorama seems to be changing for the Andean country. After a long period dominated by bipartisanship and alternation that saw candidates being pushed from one side or the other in search of centerground voters, now parties see winning as being increasingly down to the breadth of their appeal among the electorate. This is reflected, for instance, in there being a center-right candidate keen to push social policies and a moderate left-wing one promising 'sustainable fiscal policy'. Party identification, then, as a determinant of voter behavior, appears to be giving way to the need for concrete and urgent responses to public demands.

The highlights of this issue



Honeymoon was over before it even started for Pedro Castillo

President Pedro Castillo took office on July 28. The first **polls taken since mid-August place his approval rating in the order of 37% on average**, a considerably low percentage if compared to that of other heads of state at the beginning of their mandate, although not surprising in the context of polarization that the country is going through.

In this first month, one of the first challenges the government had to face was **to get Congress to grant a vote of confidence to the national cabinet headed by Guido Bellido**. This was finally achieved on August 28 in an extensive session defined by 73 votes in favor and 50 against.

The ruling bloc Perú Libre and its ally Juntos por el Perú - which in total only have 42 of the 130 seats - obtained the support of the opposition benches Acción Popular, Alianza para el Progreso and Somos Perú, third, fourth minority and sixth minority respectively. Fuerza Popular (Fujimorism), Avanza País and Renovación Popular, which together amount to 43 seats, voted against.

Although **opposition leaders declared that their support was a gesture in favor of governability and against polarization**, it would be risky to project future balances of power based only on this vote, even more so in light of the political and economic instability of the weeks that followed. A month before, the list presented by the ruling party for the conformation of the body's board of directors was challenged and was finally left under the presidency of María del Carmen Alva Prieto of Acción Popular. Peru Libre also failed to gain control of any of the key legislative committees.

On the other hand, there are several ministers in the opposition's sights, among them Íber Maraví (Labor) and Walter Ayala (Defense). The former, a teacher and union leader very close to the president, has been accused of alleged links with the guerrilla group Sendero Luminoso and of participation in an attack against the police in the early 1980s. The tensions generated around his figure led in early September to a request for his resignation by cabinet chief Guido Bellido, which Maraví has not yet presented and which would also be resisted by Castillo himself.

Even before achieving the legislative vote of confidence, several names had already been questioned, among them that of Héctor Béjar, originally targeted as head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for his statements on Sendero Luminoso. Thus, the coalition **cabinet** formed by the government was also formed by Pedro Francke (Economy), Hernando Cevallos Gómez (Health), Oscar Maúrtua (Foreign Affairs), Aníbal Torres Vásquez (Justice), Vice President Dina Boluarte (Development and Social Inclusion), Juan Carrasco (Interior), Roberto Sánchez (Foreign Trade), Iván Merino (Energy and Mines) and Anahí Durand (Women and Vulnerable Populations), among others.

In this context, **it seems unlikely that the government will be able to make politically viable one of its campaign promises, the reform of the Political Constitution**, since it would have to be approved by an absolute majority in Congress and ratified by means of a referendum. In any case, the issue is still on the agenda and, according to what was reported, the ruling bloc is collecting signatures to achieve that the process be initiated by popular initiative, one of the alternatives contemplated by the Constitution in its article 206.

The highlights of this issue



VENEZUELA

Major opposition parties to return to the electoral arena for the first time since 2017

Talks between representatives of the ruling party and the Unitary Platform of the Opposition began in Mexico City in mid-August. The meetings, sponsored by the Norwegian government, are focused on a seven-point agenda, including guarantees for the holding of observable elections, the lifting of sanctions and unfreezing of assets abroad, reparations for victims of violence and respect for the rule of law. The agenda was set forth in a [Memorandum of Understanding](#), subsequently endorsed by the National Assembly.

In the weeks prior to the beginning of the dialogues, the government of **Nicolás Maduro tried to send signs of renewal** with partial changes in his cabinet of ministers, the reduction of obstacles for the return of some opposition members who were in exile and the release of opposition leader Freddy Guevara.

To this is added a legislative agenda that includes reforms to the Laws against Corruption and to the Police Statute, and a new Law for the Respect of Human Rights in the Public Service, all of which were approved in the first discussion. **For many, however, these measures are nothing more than a "facelift" before the international community.**

A [study published by Datincorp](#) on August 7, shows that slightly more than **50%** of the 1200 people interviewed throughout the country **agreed with the negotiations and are willing to vote in the**

elections for governors and mayors scheduled for November 21. However, **only 14.3% trust the political leadership to solve the crisis**, while 57% do not identify with any of the parties.

In this context, and beyond the - rather conservative - expectations generated by the process, **the main opposition parties announced on August 31 that they will present candidates in the next elections** under the Mesa de la Unidad Democrática (MUD) ticket. In this way, they abandon the strategy of electoral abstention that they have been sustaining since 2017 despite the fact that they consider that "they will not be fair or conventional elections" and the resistance of Juan Guaidó.

The Platform includes the four most important opposition parties, Voluntad Popular (Juan Guaidó / Leopoldo López), Primero Justicia (Henrique Capriles), Acción Democrática (Henry Ramos Allup) and Un Nuevo Tiempo (Stalin González), whose authorities were dismissed by the Supreme Court of Justice in 2020.

In the second round held in early September, the parties reached partial agreements related to the search for resources to guarantee the humanitarian response to the pandemic, as well as on Venezuela's sovereign claim over the region of Guayana Esequiba, in dispute with Guyana. They also agreed to **meet again between September 24 and 27.**

The highlights of this issue

In search of forbidden time: presidential reelection in El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Bolivia



EL SALVADOR

On September 3, the **Supreme Court opened the door for President Nayib Bukele to run for a second consecutive term in 2024**, despite the fact that immediate reelection is expressly prohibited by [art. 154](#) of the Constitution. It thus reverses a 2014 [ruling](#) in which it ratified that "the principle of alternability in the exercise of the Presidency of the Republic requires the passage of two terms of office before the eventual reelection of the same person".

Now, the members of the Constitutional Chamber of the Court [ordered](#) the Supreme Electoral Tribunal to allow the candidacy of "a person who holds the Presidency of the Republic and has not been President in the immediately preceding period" (in this case, the term 2014-2019). The president running as a candidate for a new immediate term must "request a leave of absence during the previous six months".

Curiously, the judges further alleged that "the rules on the alternation of the exercise of the Presidency are aimed at overcoming the cases of those officials who exercised the Presidency but no longer enjoy the approval of the people and therefore their postulation is contrary to the will of the people". Bukele is, by the way, the head of state with the highest positive image in the entire region.

A key fact to complete the picture is that these judges were appointed by the new Legislative Assembly (XIII Legislature) last May 1st, that is, the same day of its installation. This was possible because, after the resounding electoral victory in February, the ruling party enjoys an absolute majority with the support of its allies.

It is also in this area where the [constitutional reform](#) proposed by the government, which includes the extension of the presidential mandate to a period of 6 years and the reduction of the waiting period for reelection, will have to be discussed. However, in order for such reform to be enacted "it must be ratified by the next Legislative Assembly with the vote of two thirds of the elected Deputies", which could not happen until 2024.

This is not the only case in the annals of the region. In the last years, **similar situations occurred in Honduras, Nicaragua and Bolivia.**



HONDURAS

In April 2015, **Honduras** Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court declared inapplicable five articles and subparagraphs of the Constitution that explicitly prohibited the reelection of the head of state and punished it as a crime of treason. They thus enabled incumbent president Juan Orlando Hernández to run in the 2017 elections. The ruling argued that this prohibition violated the political rights enshrined in Article 23 of the American Convention and that the norm most beneficial to the individual should be applied.

Four justices of the Court had been appointed by Congress in 2012, when it was presided over by Hernández himself. In 2009, President Manuel Zelaya Rosales had been overthrown by a coup d'état, after propitiating a popular consultation to reform the Constitution and allow reelection.

The highlights of this issue

In search of forbidden time: presidential reelection in El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Bolivia



NICARAGUA

In **Nicaragua**, President Daniel Ortega is seeking his 4th consecutive term in office (5th in total) in the general elections next November and is elbowing his way by imprisoning many of his opponents.

How did he manage to stay in power since 2007? The constitutional reform of 1995 expressly prohibited in its article 147 the immediate reelection: "the following may not be candidates for President or Vice-President of the Republic: a. those who hold or have held the Presidency of the Republic at any time during the period in which the election is held for the following period, nor those who have held it for two presidential periods [...]".

Consequently, for the 2011 elections, Ortega's candidacy did not meet either of the two conditions since he had held the presidency for two terms (1985-1990 and 2007-2012). His winning card was a 2010 Supreme Court ruling that ratified a previous ruling of the Constitutional Chamber. Basically, the ruling declared the inapplicability of the mentioned article under the argument that the prohibition violated the political rights of the president. Although it was later challenged by the National Assembly, Ortega ran in the elections and won with 62% of the votes.

Once again in power, and despite the fact that the constitutional impediment had been cleared, he embarked on a campaign to reform the Magna Carta, which he eventually achieved by using his large legislative majority. At the end of 2013, the National Assembly approved the elimination of Article 147, by 64 votes in favor and 25 against.



BOLIVIA

In 2017, the Constitutional Court of **Bolivia** suspended the articles of the Constitution that prohibited two consecutive continuous reelections, thus allowing President Evo Morales to seek a fourth term. It did so with an argumentation similar to that used by the Honduran Supreme Court, i.e., declaring the preferential application of Article 23 of the American Convention as the norm most favorable to political rights.

Morales' candidacy, endorsed in 2018 by the Superior Electoral Court, turned its back on the 2016 referendum in which the citizenry rejected a constitutional reform that would enable that possibility. The decision ultimately ended with a political crisis, the forced resignation of the president and a non-popularly elected government that remained in power for more than a year.

Elections calendar

November 2021



NICARAGUA



November 7: presidential and legislative elections

To be elected: President, Vice President and all members of the National Assembly



ARGENTINA



November 14: legislative elections

To be elected: 127 deputies (half of the seats) and 24 senators (one third)



CHILE



November 21: presidential and legislative elections

To be elected: President, Vice President, all members of the Chamber of Deputies and 27 Senators



HONDURAS



November 28: presidential and legislative elections

To be elected: President, Vice-Presidents and all members of Congress

Methodological notes

July - August 2021

This monitoring of presidential image compiles surveys conducted in 18 countries in the region. The survey includes measurements of the level of presidential approval, presidential image and level of approval of the government's administration from a group of 75 consulting firms and research centers, subject to expansion.

The measurements are integrated by means of a simple average per country for the period surveyed. Data sources are not weighted according to the methodology used, sample size or pollster. The averages for this two-month period are compared with those of previous two-month periods, using the same methodology.

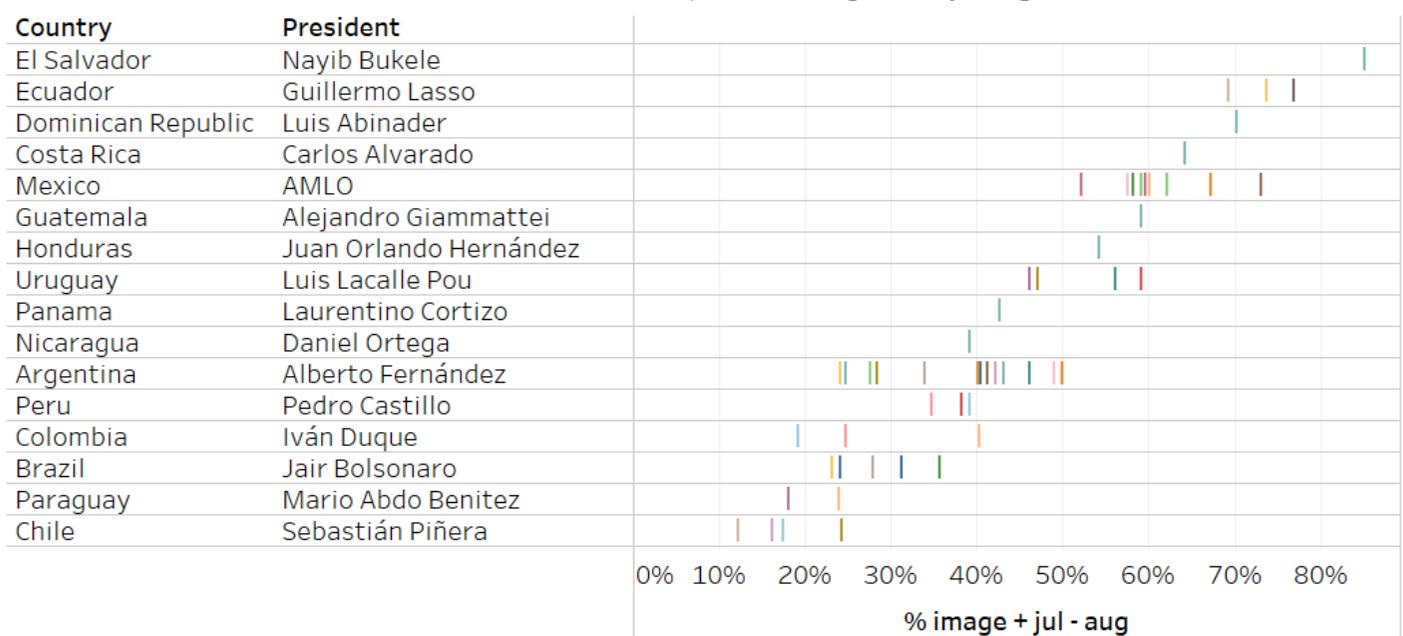
Although the ultimate goal of this report is to average multiple data sources, its fulfillment is conditioned by the availability of information.

For this reason, all those cases in which the figures are based on a single source of data for each period considered are identified.

The ranking of presidential image only includes cases with at least three measurements obtained from two or more data sources (consulting firms / research centers) over the period under review.

Since in some cases a considerable level of dispersion between measurements has been noted, Tables 1 and 2 below - also available in the interactive version - disaggregate the values according to data source for the two-month period considered in this report.

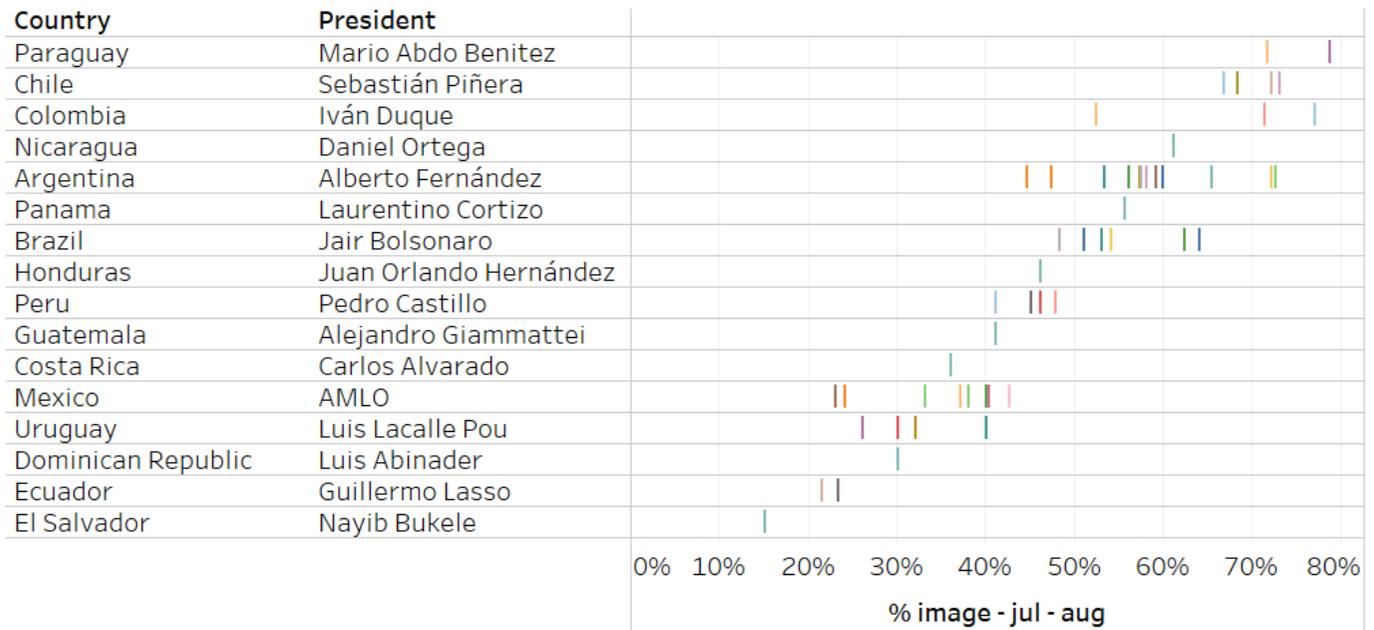
Chart 1. Variation in the measurement of Presidents' positive images - July - August 2021



Methodological notes

July - August 2021

Chart 2. Variation in the measurement of Presidents' negative images - July - August 2021



Sources

- Acierto Consultora
- Activa - Pulso Ciudadano
- Analogías
- Ati Sneed
- Atlasintel
- Buendia & Márquez
- Cadem
- CEDATOS
- CELAG
- CID Gallup
- Cifra
- CIT
- Click Report
- CNT/MDA
- Consulta Mitofsky
- Consulta Mitofsky - AMLO Track..
- COP (Celag Opinión Pública)
- Criteria
- D'Alessio IROL
- Data Influye - TúInfluyes
- Datafolha
- Datum
- Demotecnia
- EcoAnalítica - Percepción País
- El Financiero
- Enkoll
- Equipo Consultores
- EXAME/ IDEIA
- Factum
- Giacobbe & Asoc
- IEP
- INVAMER
- IPSOS
- Management & Fit
- Massive Caller
- Observatorio Social
- Opción Consultores
- Opinaia
- Parametria
- Perfiles de Opinión
- PODER360
- Pulso País-Datexco
- Raúl Aragón
- Reforma
- Ricardo Rouvier Asociados
- Synopsis
- Taquion
- UDESA - ESPOP
- XP/Ipespe
- Zubán, Córdoba y Asoc.



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Power of an image
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BUENOS AIRES

Av. Entre Ríos 258 3o E
(1079), CABA. Argentina
+ (5411) 5218-4647



WASHINGTON D.C.

1110 Vermont Ave, NW, Suite 500
Washington DC 20005, USA
+ 1 (786) 828-0675



+ (5411) 5218-4647



+ 1 (786) 828-0675



info@directoriolegislativo.org



www.directoriolegislativo.com