



Combating Crime in Latin America and the Caribbean

What Public Policies Do Citizens Want?

Fernando G. Cafferata | Carlos Scartascini

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Executive Summary

Over the past few decades, public opinion in Latin America and the Caribbean has consolidated around the issue of crime as a major problem. With 9 percent of the world's population, the region accounts for 33 percent of global homicides. According to surveys such as the Latin America Public Opinion Project (LAPOP), nearly half the region's inhabitants consider crime to be the most pressing problem. In addition, the cost of crime in the region is greater than anywhere else in the world—twice its fiscal cost in developed countries such as the United Kingdom or the United States (Jaitman et al., 2017).

What anti-crime policies do Latin Americans demand from their governments?

Using new, extensive survey data, we endeavor to answer this question by looking at four sets of anti-crime policies: (a) policy orientation—preventive vs. punitive; (b) responsibility for security provision—public vs. private; (c) police resources—force size and deployment; and (d) policy implementation—discount rate and distribution preferences. We also attempt to analyze the determinants underlying citizens' demands—that is, who is demanding what policies and why?

We found that Latin Americans are clamoring for their leaders to do something about high crime rates, even at the expense of anti-poverty programs. Harsher penalties appear to be the preferred weapon in the anti-crime arsenal, according to the surveys. Still, despite the common belief that Latin Americans accept “iron fist” policies, a majority opposes unethical police practices.

How would people allocate funds in the anti-crime budget? Those surveyed said they would spend roughly a third of the crime budget on harsher penalties for offenders; a third on anti-poverty programs, and the remaining third on crime-detection technologies, including self-protection measures like private security cameras or security alarms.

Citizens recognize that allocating resources to the police is better than subsidizing private security for citizens. Nevertheless, most oppose raising taxes to fund the police, a reluctance that might stem from mistrust in the government's ability to manage these resources.

This mistrust is also seen in the demand for better, not more, law enforcement personnel. If citizens could allocate the budget to expand the police force on the one hand or improve it on the other, about 60 percent would opt for better quality. A low-quality police force appears to be tied to low wages and minimal requirements for entry. More than 70 percent of the respondents said governments could hire better police recruits if they offered higher wages. It's noteworthy that misinformation may be causing suboptimal allocations of resources. Our findings show less-than-unanimous support for hotspot policing even though it is more efficient and effective than traditional, citywide patrolling.

Latin Americans are exceedingly impatient about the high crime rates. The majority say they would consider only policies that deliver substantial and immediate drops in crime. In keeping

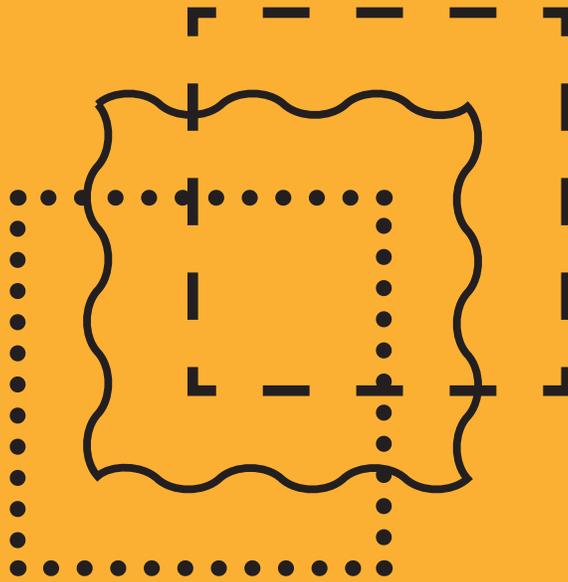
with this impatience, citizens prefer a smaller drop in crime now, achieved by increasing the size of the police force, rather than waiting for a greater reduction in the future, achieved by raising the qualifications of the police force. But the responses are not homogeneous across countries.

What determines this complex set of public policy demands? Demographically, those who oppose harsh punishment (older individuals, men, those with more education, and the nonwhite) tend to favor increasing the resources available to the police. Citizens who have been crime victims tend to demand harsher policies. Crime victims, and people who feel unsafe in their neighborhoods, favor more punitive policies and subsidies for private security so citizens can protect themselves. Those who think crime is "the most significant problem" in the country also demand harsher measures and more police resources.

Trust also plays a major role in shaping policy demand. Those who trust the police favor harsh punishment. Those who trust the media also favor harsher punishment. They want more resources for the police and more traditional policing strategies instead of hotspot policing. It is important to note most Latin Americans prefer less discretionary police brutality regarding crime suspects. They particularly oppose police taking justice in their own hands (*justicia por cuenta propia*), a regional practice known as the "iron fist."

The region is experiencing a crisis not only of crime but also of incarceration. It is easy for politicians to promise more punitive prison sentences, particularly when so many voters demand these things. Meanwhile, the effects of poorly trained, low-paid police forces that brutalize suspects with impunity are compounded by overcrowded and inhumane prisons, an inefficient judiciary system unable to cope with demand, and sky-rocketing security budgets that have made Latin America more, not less, dangerous. There is plenty of evidence, first, that punitiveness is not the most effective tool for fighting crime and, second, that prison overcrowding leads to higher recidivism and greater violence.

Mistrust, misinformation, and impatience combine to create flawed anti-crime policy. Educating citizens both about crime and about the fiscal consequences of their policy preferences may help move the region's public opinion toward a better policy equilibrium. Governments should lead the way by example. The agenda starts with governments investing in their capability to design and deliver evidence-based solutions for fighting crime. Then they should work to increase trust levels among citizens. Effectively fighting crime would be a good start. Reducing corruption, winnowing out bad cops, and engaging in community outreach would also help. Finally, governments need to share more information on crime with the voters and explain policies that could reduce crime effectively so citizens can make informed choices. Only when these things happen, will it be possible to turn anti-crime policy around. Most important, it will be possible to finally turn the tables in a fight that most governments have been losing.

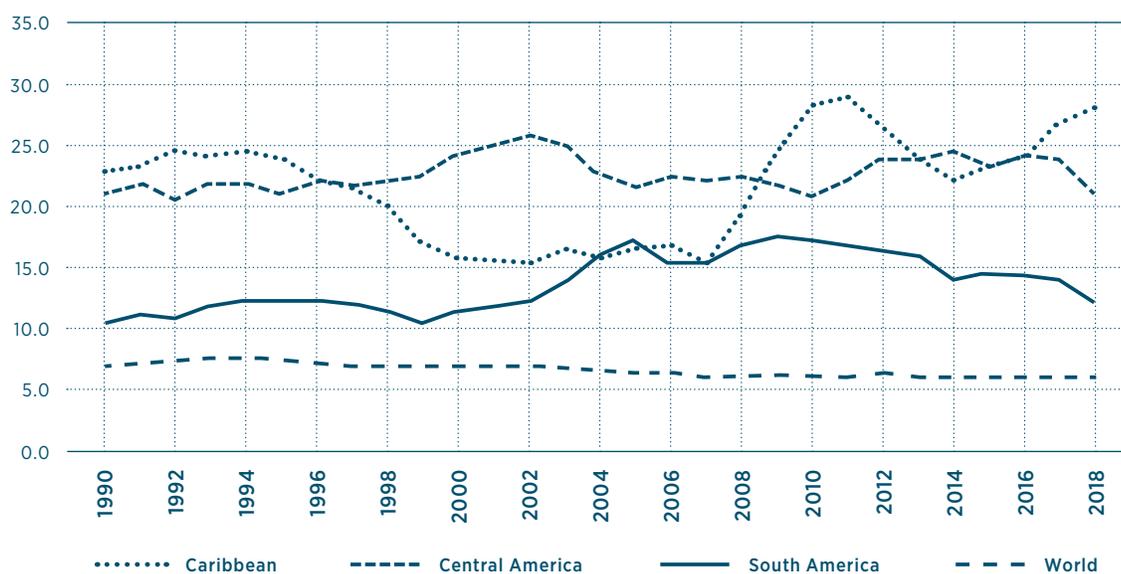


1.

**Crime in Latin America
and the Caribbean:
Framing the Problem**

Crime has individual and social costs: loss of life, security, property, productivity; in the end, it hinders economic growth. Over the past few decades, public opinion has consolidated around the belief that violent crime is a major problem in Latin America and the Caribbean. With reason. The region has the 9 percent of the world's population and 33 percent of its homicides (Jaitman et al., 2017). The magnitude of the problem is evident in Figure 1.1. While crime in the rest of the world has remained relatively stable at around 5 homicides per 100,000, the region has more than double that level. In Central America, homicides are about three times more prevalent than they were thirty years ago.

Figure 1.1 Victims of Intentional Homicide (per 100,000 population)



Source: UNODC, 2020.

About 40 percent of survey respondents in the region think crime is the most important problem their country faces (IADB–LAPOP–Capital Cities survey; LAPOP AmericasBarometer). A large proportion think crime is more serious than unemployment, the economy, or corruption. This is hardly a surprise once one accounts for the number of crime victims in the region. On average, around 30 percent of the survey respondents said they had been a victim of a crime in the past 12 months (IADB–LAPOP–Capital Cities survey). Worse, about 70 percent of respondents fear being a crime victim some or all of the time (LAPOP AmericasBarometer).

The high victimization rate, in addition to the resources devoted to combating crime, puts the cost of crime in the region at 4 percent of GDP annually (Jaitman, 2015).¹ This is approximately

¹ This estimate included all the components of direct costs for seventeen countries. Through an accounting approximation of the phenomena, the crime costs Latin American and the Caribbean countries 3 percent of GDP or \$236 billion (PPP adjusted), on average, with a lower bound of 2.41 percent and an upper bound of 3.55 percent (Jaitman et al., 2017). Most of the spending on crime (42 percent) is devoted to response (mainly police services), followed by private spending (37 percent), and social costs (21 percent).

the share of the region's income going to the poorest 30 percent of its population, or the same amount spent on infrastructure (Jaitman et al., 2017). The percentage of crime-related public spending is almost twice the average of developed economies, which sheds light on the fact that fighting crime is both a government priority and a regional failure. Most countries in Latin America are not overcoming crime. Crime is overcoming them. Nor has higher spending on citizen security made people safer or brought lower crime rates (Jaitman et al., 2017).

In the 2017 LAPOP AmericasBarometer survey, about half the respondents want anti-crime measures to be a policy priority. This might help explain why leaders who fail to address public safety lose support at the ballot box (Cohen, Lupu, and Zechmeister, 2017).

How countries respond to crime depends both on the workings of the political system and popular demand. Governments with high capacity have access to robust policies (Caruso, Scartascini, and Tommasi, 2015; Franco Chuaire, Scartascini, and Tommasi, 2017). Moreover, their institutional partnerships allow for more (or less) cooperation in the present moment to produce policies for the future (Scartascini, Stein, and Tommasi, 2008). In countries where cooperation among politicians is possible, governments tend to produce more efficient policies that focus on the long-run impact of public policy (Scartascini and Tommasi, 2010). Unfortunately, most governments in the region have low capacity overall and little capacity to make policies with medium- and long-term impacts. They therefore tend to promise quick fixes that bring rapid political gain. In this politically expedient context, voters' demands can have influence over decisions that politicians make. Voters' prior beliefs are formed by information they take in and by their lived experiences (Gingerich and Scartascini, 2018). Their demands for a public good are also affected by their store of trust in politicians and policymakers. Mistrustful citizens are skeptical that politicians can produce long-term solutions (Keefer, Scartascini, and Vlaicu, 2020). This public impatience reflects the reluctance of voters to wait for future rewards. Reluctance to hope and civic impatience affect the quality of public policy. If voters do not demand that politicians and policymakers design public policies with long-term social benefits, then those policies will not be made. Politicians have little incentive to offer them (Keefer, Scartascini, and Vlaicu, 2018).

Mistrust, misinformation, and impatience all feed into flawed policymaking (Keefer, Scartascini, and Vlaicu, 2018). Anti-crime policies are particularly hard hit by mistrust. We also know from the criminology canon that victimization, feelings of physical and social vulnerability, and incivility are key determinants in the fear citizens have of crime and civic insecurity (Vilalta, 2013; Bissler, 2003). These variables have also been shown to affect voter preference for harsher anti-crime stances seen across age, gender, and socioeconomic strata and ethnicities, especially in Latin America (Price, Sechopoulos, and Whitty, 2019). Consequently, this document discusses the role these variables play in shaping anti-crime public policy demand.

Latin America's response to crime has moved inexorably toward "iron fist" (*mano dura*) policies that emerge from the stew of tough-on-crime speeches, larger police forces, higher incarceration rates, and other, even more authoritarian practices (Krause, 2016; Visconti, 2019). It is also true that citizens who demand severe penalties will find politicians willing to deliver. The popular appeal of harsh justice imposed on perpetrators of common (and commonly egregious) crimes is the emotional response of an electorate to the state's failure to guarantee safe civic spaces and adequate rule of law (Malone, 2012; Visconti, 2019).

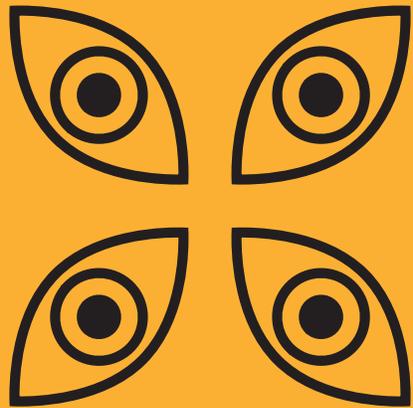
Establishing the rule of law requires laborious, policy-intensive, decades-long focus on social inequities and reforming dysfunctional criminal justice systems—commitments that must span

administrations. Politicians with their eyes on the election calendar will therefore tend to make promises that an “iron fist” will deliver quick results (Holland, 2013). And so it is that anti-crime policies tend to default to programs and laws that deliver quick benefits instead of long-term gains (Keefer, Scartascini, and Vlaicu, 2018). The downside of “immediate” is that, once enacted, these policies have ratchet effects: punitive policies adopted in bad times remain in place in good times, setting up persistently flawed outcomes.

But punitive measures are costly. Look at the exceedingly high incarceration rates. Approximately 1.4 million people are held in the region's countless penal institutions; out of every 100,000 inhabitants in the region, 241 are in prison, about twice the level in the European Union, although less than half the level in United States (Scartascini, Cafferata, and Gingerich, 2020). The rise in incarceration has been driven by increased admissions, longer sentences (particularly for violent crimes), and steep rises in lengthy pretrial detentions. The overcrowding is alarming, exposing both prisoners and the public to high risks of disease and strengthening organized crime organizations, which use prisons as a recruiting ground (Scartascini, Cafferata, and Gingerich, 2020).

“Latin America’s response to crime has moved inexorably toward “iron fist” (mano dura) policies that emerge from the stew of tough-on-crime speeches, larger police forces, higher incarceration rates, and other, even more authoritarian practices.”

Using new survey data that draw on three sources (described in Section 2), this document compiles, develops, and describes the most recent evidence about anti-crime policy demand in Latin America. The main objective of this monograph is to explain the region's policy preferences on crime and the factors determining them, so decision-makers, civil society organizations, and the citizens themselves can understand them and respond accordingly. In the following section we undertake an in-depth analysis of policy demands and implementation preferences in Latin America. Section 3 provides a model for identifying the determinants driving demand for anti-crime policy, systematizing them, and framing them within the literature. In the final section, a series of policy recommendations is provided to guide policy practitioners and to foster discussion among organized civil society and academia.



2.

How People View Crime

2.1. The Surveys

This document draws on three studies that provide information on anti-crime policy demands: the 2016–17 AmericasBarometer; a subsection in AmericasBarometer that has pulled out data from respondents in four Latin American countries; and the IDB–LAPOP–Capital Cities Project, including the study of seven Latin American countries.

2.1.1. AmericasBarometer Survey of Seventeen Countries in Latin America

The 2016–17 AmericasBarometer study is based on interviews with 43,454 respondents in twenty-nine countries; seventeen of those countries were in Latin America (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela). Survey participants were voting-age adults who were interviewed face-to-face in their households by surveyors using handheld devices for data collection with SurveyToGo® (STG) software.

Table 2.1 LAPOP AmericasBarometer Sample

Country	Sample size	Sampling error (%)
Mexico/Central America		
Costa Rica	1,514	2.5
El Salvador	1,551	2.5
Guatemala	1,546	2.5
Honduras	1,560	2.5
México	1,563	2.5
Nicaragua	1,560	2.5
Panamá	1,521	2.5
Southern Cone/Andean Region		
Argentina	1,528	2.5
Bolivia	1,691	2.5
Brasil	1,532	2.5
Chile	1,625	2.5
Colombia	1,563	2.5
Ecuador	1,545	1.9
Paraguay	1,528	2.4
Perú	2,647	2.4
Uruguay	1,515	2.5
Venezuela	1,558	2.5

Source: LAPOP AmericasBarometer.

Samples in each country were developed using a multistage probabilistic design (with quotas at the household level for most countries) and then stratified by country, region, size of municipality, and by urban and rural areas within municipalities. This sample design continues to use, in almost all cases, the stratification used since 2004, adjusting where necessary when census information has been updated.

The samples are all representative at the stratum level. The new design, however, stabilized the primary sampling unit (PSU) and cluster sizes, with each PSU selected for probability proportional to size (PPS). Within PSUs, clusters are standardized (typically with six interviews) to minimize intraclass correlation while taking advantage of economies of fieldwork, which simple, random selection of interviews within the entire PSU would render impossible.

2.1.2. The IADB–LAPOP–Capital Cities Project, 2017

Data collection for the project took place between August and September of 2017. A total of 6,040 interviews in seven countries were conducted as part of the project (Chile, Colombia, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Peru, and Uruguay). The target sample size was 900 interviews in each country. In Mexico, however, the survey was disrupted by the Puebla earthquake of 2017; only 569 interviews were collected. The project included public policy questions under the following rubrics: Economic Shocks, Education, Infrastructure, Redistribution, and Security. To collect data in all the countries surveyed, surveyors used handheld devices for every interview and were equipped with the SurveyToGo® (STG) software.

Table 2.2 IADB–LAPOP–Capital Cities Project Sample, 2017

Country	Sample Size	Fieldwork start date	Fieldwork end date
Chile	903	August 24	October 17
Colombia	938	August 8	October 14
Honduras	904	August 26	October 4
Mexico	569	August 31	October 19
Panama	900	August 26	October 18
Peru	925	August 22	October 3
Uruguay	901	August 19	September 19

Source: IADB–LAPOP–Capital Cities Project.

During data collection, only two countries, Colombia and Honduras, contacted LAPOP to express concerns about their samples. Only under exceptional circumstances (floods, riots, blockades, or extreme cases of insecurity) does LAPOP authorize the substitution of a sample point. In all cases, substitutions are formally requested by fieldwork teams and revised and approved (or not) by LAPOP. Substitution requests made for reasons of cost or practicality are never accepted.

2.2. Anti-Crime Policies

Crime policy demands can be grouped into four sets of options and ten policy actions. The first three sets pertain to policy alternatives, while the final set concerns implementation. Regarding the first set, citizens can specify how punitive (or preventive) policy should be. Some want the police to take a zero-tolerance approach to crime, and they endorse repressive tactics. Others call for social and situational policies focused on prevention, such as poverty reduction or motivational training. This set of choices becomes relevant at the present political juncture in Latin America, when specialists are identifying a wave of popular support for punitive policies.

The second set of policy choices concerns public vs. private provision of security. Understanding from the citizen's perspective who should be responsible for security and to whom resources should be distributed—i.e., the people or the police—is crucial for designing anti-crime policy and assigning accountability.

The third set of anti-crime policy choices concerns force size and the allocation of police resources. In addition to views on force size, it identifies citizens' preferences about police training, wages, and labor conditions, as well as urban deployments of police resources.

Table 2.3 Anti-Crime Policies

Policy area	Policy type/action
Orientation: Punitive vs. preventive	Police take justice in their own hands
	Police use of force with suspect if crime is serious
	Crime reduction is better than poverty reduction
	Increase punishment of offenders or invest in anti-poverty programs
Responsibility for security provision: Public vs. private	More resources to police or to the people
	Reduce crime in the community or compensate victims
Police resources: Force size and deployment	Police force: Quality vs. quantity
	Police deployment: Concentration vs. distribution
Implementation: Discount rate and distribution of costs and benefits	Discount rate for crime reduction (now or later)
	Distribution of social cost and benefits (paying or receiving)

The fourth and final set of policy choices pertain to citizen preferences regarding policy implementation. According to Scartascini, Stein, and Tommasi (2008), implementation is a vital policy characteristic. Table 2.3 synthesizes the four policy areas and ten policy actions.

2.2.1. Punitive vs. Preventive Anti-Crime Policies

Regional crime specialists agree that punitive security policies are seeing a wave of popular support (Dammert, Ruz, and Salazar, 2008; Otamendi, 2019; Stippel and Moreno, 2018) and that societies are demanding and legitimizing ever-harsher punishments for criminals. They also agree that these policies generate poor, or even counterproductive, results (Dudley and Bargent, 2017).

There is empirical evidence in Latin America that young people, women, those who have been crime victims, those who feel vulnerable to crime, and those who trust the police appear more supportive of punitive policies (Price, Sechopoulos, and Whitty, 2019). Nevertheless, experts note that unidimensional measurements—for example, popular preferences for the death penalty, longer sentences, higher penalties, vigilante justice—have inspired intense dissent and empirical controversy among scholars. As a result, a complex and multivariate approach to the punitive-vs.-preventive dimensions seems more valid to structure crime policy attitudes and preferences in Latin America (Maguire and Johnson, 2015). And so this report follows this multivariate idea.

As a result, the first set of policy preferences (or “punitive vs. preventive”) will be considered along four dimensions: (1) using the “iron fist,” (2) applying physical force (police brutality) to extract information from crime suspects, (3) reducing crime vs. reducing poverty, and (4) exacting harsher punishments vs. supporting anti-poverty programs.

2.2.2. **Responsibility for Providing Security: Public vs. Private**

As noted by Keefer, Scartascini, and Vlaicu (2018), one central function of government is to provide public services, particularly services not supplied by private markets, such as policing. Nevertheless, governments in the region usually neglect public investments in physical and human capital. These public investments would yield economic rewards far exceeding their cost (Keefer, Scartascini and Vlaicu, 2018). Citizens have therefore acclimated to the need for, and have come to prefer, obtaining certain public goods privately.

Given this awkward dichotomy, it is difficult to gauge citizens' policy preferences on crime. Do you address crime with public- or private-oriented solutions? This next section will analyze policy demand along two dimensions: The first posits public vs. private provision of resources (providing more to the police or more to the general public). The second set of choices posits victim compensation vs. security improvements for the public.

According to Gary Becker's model (1968), when social costs of reducing crime exceed the costs of compensating the victims, this latter option would be preferred and might be why citizens support a compensation policy. Citizen mistrust, misinformation, and impatience with the public provision of goods will boost a preference for subsidies (Keefer, Scartascini, and Vlaicu, 2018). Nevertheless, these two options seem at odds with the idea of citizen security as a public good—a public good in the traditional economic sense, as a nonexclusionary and noncompetitive commodity.

2.2.3. **Police Resources: Endowment and Deployment**

Crime is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon. Nevertheless, anti-crime policy uses the police as its primary tool. Just as teachers are the primary instrument of the educational sector and doctors of the health sector, police officers constitute the government's main mechanism for crime suppression (Cafferata, 2018).

As a consequence, we analyze two policy dichotomies in the context of Latin American policing preferences. The first is quantity vs. quality. Should the institution (1) hire more police personnel (quantity), or (2) improve police personnel with proper training (quality). The second policy dichotomy pertains to deployment: (1) deploying police in random and uniform citywide

patrols or (2) deploying police to hotspots (in neighborhoods with the highest concentrations of crime). Hotspot policing is common in the United States and Europe. Latin America is slowly adopting the practice, according to a recent IDB study, with police departments in the region's eleven most-populous cities using hotspot patrolling (Serrano-Berthet, 2017).

Deficiencies in quality of recruits, their wages, or their labor conditions have increased security budgets and their fiscal burdens, and achieved only meager results in crime prevention and deterrence.

Police force characteristics are relevant, as the region's default option is to expand the police without much care for the quality of the recruits, their wages, or their labor conditions. These deficiencies have lowered policing quality, increased security budgets and their fiscal burdens, and gotten only meager results in crime prevention and deterrence. The type of police deployment (traditional vs. hotspot) is also a worthy discussion in view of the effectiveness of hotspot patrols. Although hotspot policing has been widely validated, the region has not embraced the practice for a number of reasons, among them time-consuming emergency response, difficulties in criminal analyses, bureaucratic resistance to modernization, unfounded beliefs about crime displacement, and incentives rooted in corruption (Serrano-Berthet, 2017).

2.2.4.

Policy Implementation: Discount Rate and Distribution Preferences

The final set of anti-crime policy preferences pertains to implementation. Besides policy content, public policies must improve the welfare of the people and contribute to civic life by providing stability, adaptability, coherence and coordination, high-quality implementation, effective application, public interest orientation, and efficiency (Scartascini, Stein, and Tommasi, 2008).

Effective public policy depends on proper implementation, so this section focuses on the preferences Latin American citizens have for policy implementation. The variables selected to analyze policy implementation include the time discount rate and the distribution of potential benefits vs. potential burdens.

The time discount rate is a measure of time experienced subjectively as *impatience*, a factor affecting the adoption of policies with a potential for high future payoffs but paid out of current budget expenditures (Keefer, Scartascini, and Vlaicu, 2018). The unwillingness, or inability, of citizens to attach a higher value to future benefits in their preferences will shape popular demand for policies with fewer but more immediate benefits (Keefer, Scartascini, and Vlaicu, 2018).

The social burdens and benefits of crime policies are distributed in ways that require us to study citizen preference for a larger police force. Is the funding source, in the form of a tax increase, clear? Do citizens want quantity (more police) or quality (better police)? Information plays a major role in shaping policy demand (Gingerich and Scartascini, 2018). So it is important to inform and educate citizens about government action (Alessandro et al., 2019). Gingerich and Scartascini (2018) have also shown that information about higher crime rates reinforces citizen demand for punishment and degrades social policy; information about falling crime rates does not alter policy preferences.

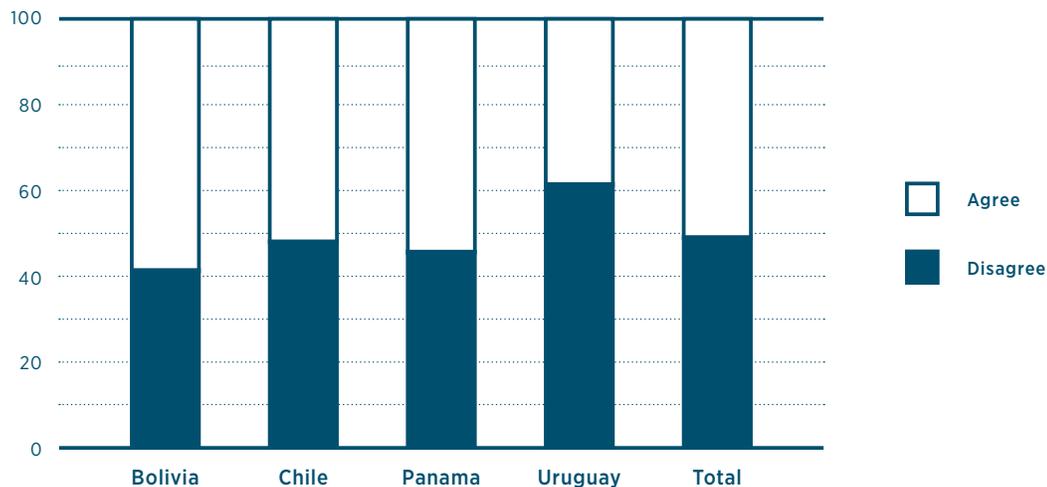
2.3. Talking about the Numbers

This section develops and compiles empirical evidence on the anti-crime policies Latin Americans demand. It is structured according to four policy options and ten policy actions.

2.3.1. Punitive vs. Preventive Policies

A survey of four countries—Bolivia, Chile, Panama, and Uruguay—shows that citizen support for “iron-fist” policies (*mano dura*, sometimes termed *justicia por cuenta propia*, or “taking justice into their own hands”) is evenly split, with 49 percent opposed and 51 percent in favor (Figure 2.1). Levels of support vary by country. In Uruguay 61 percent of respondents oppose the practice, compared to 48 percent in Chile; in Panama and Bolivia the survey found support at 45 percent and 41 percent, respectively. The Bolivian findings are in line with Stipple and Serrano Moreno (2018), who concluded that public opinion drives policy changes on incarceration rates and pretrial detentions.

Figure 2.1 Agree or Disagree: Should Police Take Justice into Their Own Hands? (in %)

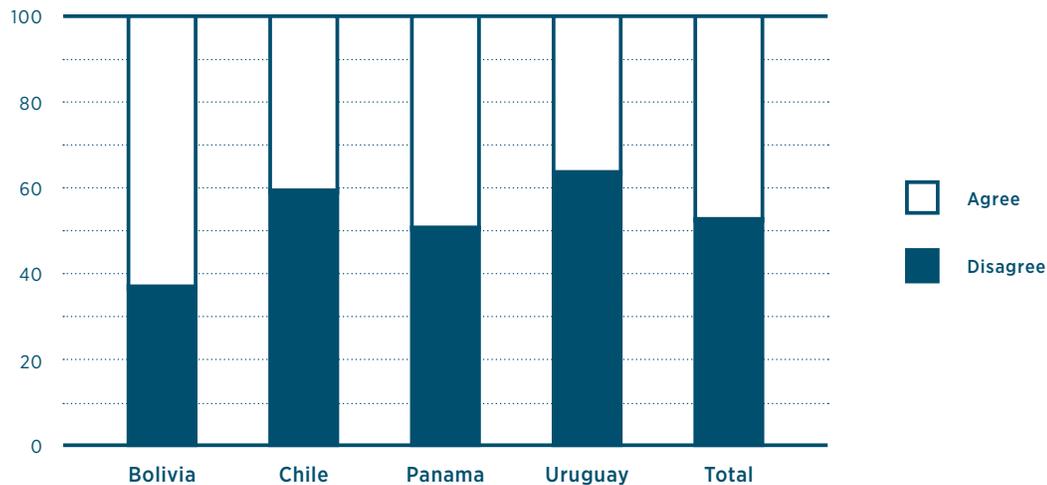


Source: LAPOP, 2017.



As with the previous question, 52 percent of respondents disagreed that police brutality should be used to obtain information, meaning that police should not resort to physical force to obtain information from crime suspects (see Figure 2.2). This means that Latin Americans disagree, although not markedly, on the role of torture in curbing crime. This is an interesting result given that most respondents in the LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2016–17 survey expressed little confidence that the justice system would punish the guilty if a citizen were victimized (Cohen, Lupu, and Zechmeister, 2017). Despite low confidence in the justice system, few respondents rejected brutal interrogation methods (police brutality) to acquire information from criminal suspects.

Figure 2.2 Support Police “Use of Physical Force” with Suspects to Obtain Information (If the Crime Is Serious) (%)



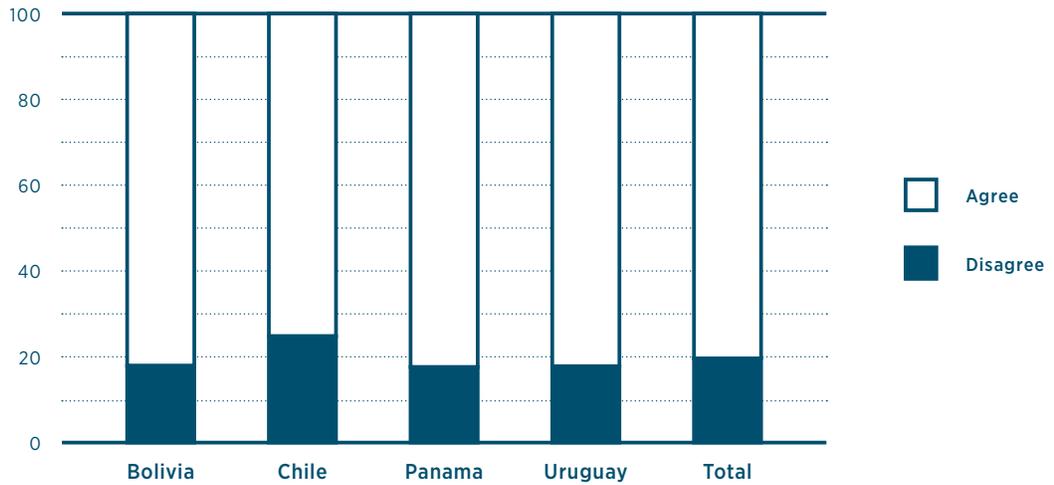
Source: LAPOP, 2017.

Once again, important differences persist among the four countries in this sample. Uruguay heads up disagreement, with 64 percent opposed, followed by Chile at 59 percent, Panama at 50 percent, and Bolivia at 37 percent. Once again, based on Stipple and Serrano Moreno (2018), Bolivia's results are less surprising and accord with this trend toward the punitive.

These results are in line with the idea that Latin Americans react to insecurity by demanding more security—but not at all costs.

In previous sections, we saw how popular opinion was evenly split on punitive approaches. The LAPOP four-country survey shows that 80 percent of those surveyed preferred crime reduction over poverty reduction (Figure 2.3). Once again, regional variations show that 82.4 percent of Panamanians preferred crime reduction, followed by Uruguayans at 82.2 percent, with Bolivians and Chileans at 82.1 percent and 75 percent, respectively. This is overwhelming support for crime reduction vs. poverty reduction. It shows that anti-crime, not anti-poverty, policies are top priorities for Latin Americans. Also, in contrast with findings from results discussed above, a more homogeneous public opinion toward crime is emerging in Latin American. Finally, Latin Americans are demanding nonpunitive approaches to security and crime reduction.

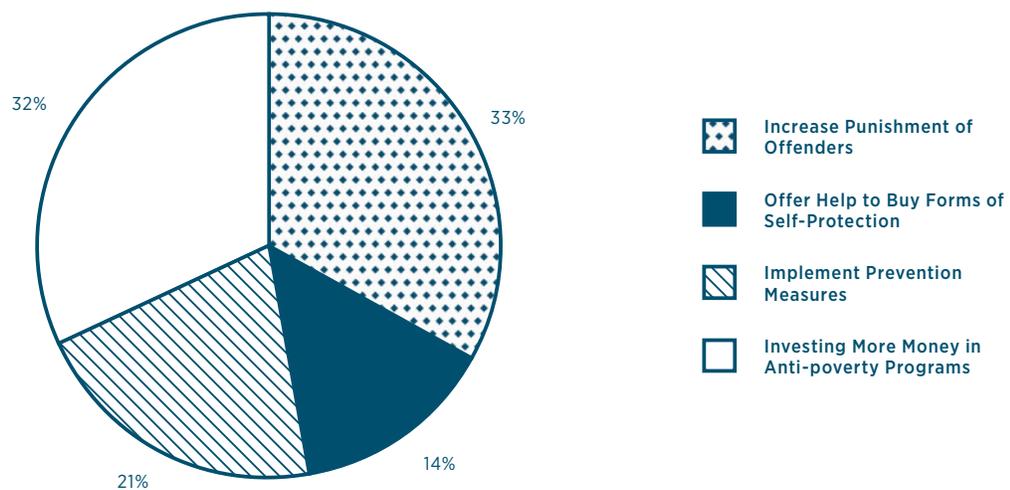
Figure 2.3 Crime Reduction Is Preferred over Poverty Reduction (%)



Source: LAPOP, 2017.

In line with previous findings (Figure 2.4), data from the LAPOP general survey on four countries show that increasing punishment for offenders was, on average, the most popular policy alternative. The survey asked control group members to distribute ten coins among four different policies: (1) more punishment; (2) transfer resources to citizens so they can supply their own private security and other forms of self-protection; (3) implement prevention policies like vocational training and rehabilitation programs; or (4) invest more resources in anti-poverty programs. On average, those surveyed allocated 32.6 percent of their coins to increase punishment of criminals, followed by more investment in anti-poverty programs, at 32.2 percent; prevention

Figure 2.4 Budget Allocations on Anti-Crime Policies



Source: LAPOP, 2017.

Note: Allocation of votes (in the form of "coins") by the control group, in percentages.

measures (vocational training or rehab programs) took 21.4 percent of the coins; and, finally, taking 13.8 percent of the coins, subsidies for people to buy security systems and other self-protection measures.

These sorts of questions encourage the respondent to weigh the tradeoffs inherent in their policy preferences given the information they possess. Consequently, policy preferences (not sentiments) are tested by presenting subjects with a fixed budget that they can allocate across a set of specific activities designed to reduce crime. The results illuminate the relative attractiveness of different policy options in voters' minds.

One issue worth mentioning is the impact of information. Interviewees presented with a card showing shocking levels of crime during a survey experiment expressed more punitive views than those who did not view the card.²

Box 2.1**PUNITIVE VS. PREVENTIVE POLICY APPROACHES TO CRIME**

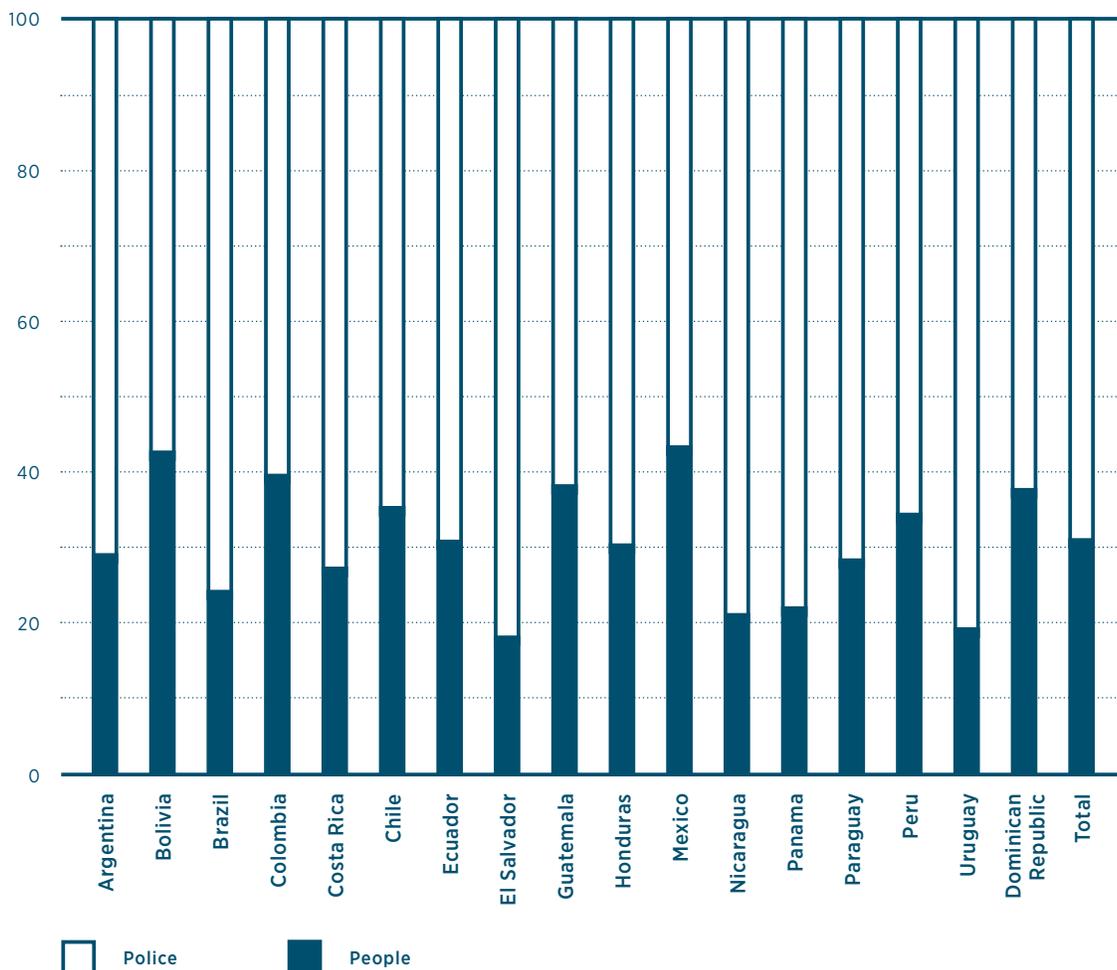
Preferences for punitive policy approaches are not homogeneous. In fact, evidence indicates that Latin Americans want security, not necessarily punitive policies. On average, a slightly smaller majority does not support unethical police practices (brutality and abuse of crime suspects), but almost half the survey respondents said they would support police dispensing their own justice if it were seen as necessary. Also, they support harsher punishments for those who break the law. Moreover, Latin Americans consider crime reduction more important than poverty reduction. The final takeaway from this section of the data is that, when facing policy choices under budgetary restrictions, respondents favor increased resources for punishing offenders instead of investing more money in anti-poverty programs. This finding seems to be in line those made in the Caribbean countries relating crime policy and public opinion, where punitive and progressive/preventive attitudes seemed more like two separate constructs instead of a continuum (Maguire and Johnson, 2015).

² See Gingerich and Scartascini (2018) for their research on Panama.

2.3.2. Public vs. Private Security Provision

In the AmericasBarometer survey, individuals were presented with the following question: if government had two options for resolving crime in their neighborhoods—resourcing the police or subsidizing private security—most respondents supported the first option. About 70 percent of the respondents preferred resourcing the police over subsidizing citizen self-protection (Figure 2.5).

Figure 2.5 Resources to the Police or Subsidies to the People? (%)



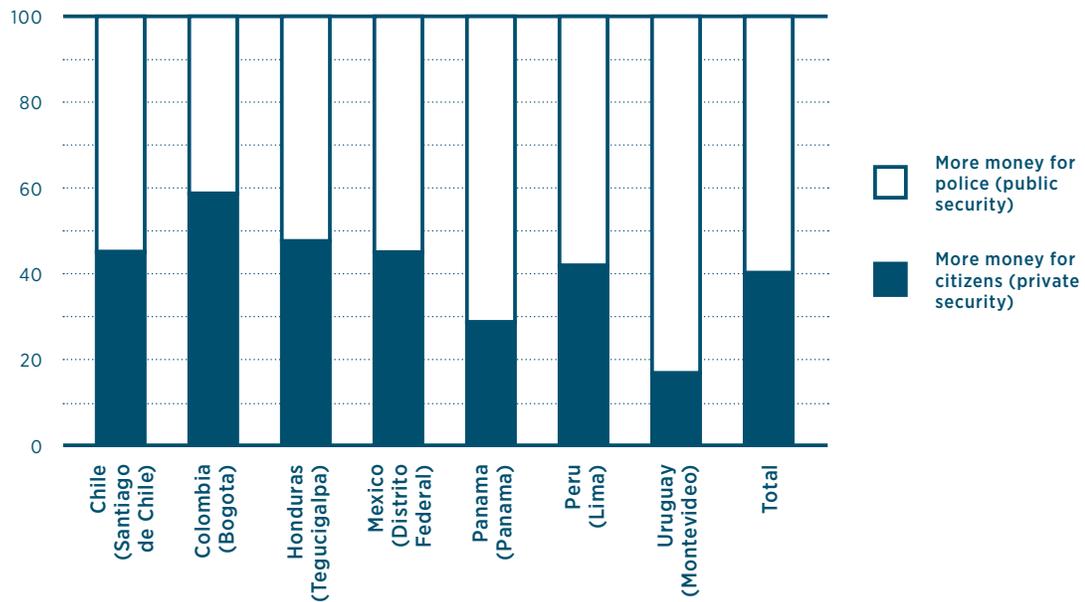
Source: AmericasBarometer, 2016–2017.

Nevertheless, there are important differences among countries. Mexico and Bolivia show the lowest support for resourcing the police, at 57 percent and 58 percent, respectively. El Salvador, Uruguay, and Panama show the highest support, with 83 percent, 82 percent, and 79 percent of support, respectively.

The IADB–LAPOP–Capital Cities survey asked respondents in seven capital cities: would they prefer for resources to go to the police or for citizens to pay for their own private security

(Figure 2.6). On average, 60 percent of the respondents preferred resourcing the police, while 40 percent preferred subsidies for private security sources, cameras, alarms, etc. All the countries on average preferred more resources to the police, with the exception of Colombia, where about 58 percent supported subsidized private security systems. These results prove interesting when the extra resources derive from taxation. As described by Keefer, Scartascini, and Vlaicu (2018), Latin Americans find the promise of greater benefits at little or no cost more attractive. As a consequence, they only support more resources to the police if it does not mean higher taxes.

Figure 2.6 Resources to the Police or Subsidies to Citizens? (cities sample)



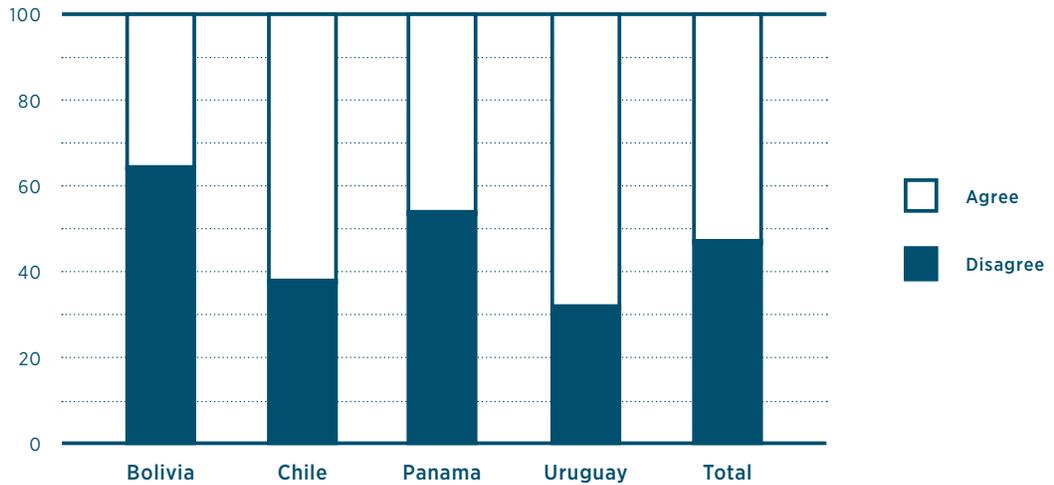
Source: IDB–LAPOP–Capital Cities Project, 2017.

Finally, the four-country survey (Bolivia, Chile, Uruguay, and Paraguay) asked respondents (Figure 2.7) to express their agreement (or disagreement) with the following question: in the event of a crime, should citizens invest in private security or go to the police or other government authority? On average, 53 percent of respondents agreed that citizens should contact authorities. The responses showed two clusters of countries, with Bolivian and Panamanian citizens leaning against going to the authorities and Chile and Uruguay leaning toward it. There were important differences among countries: in Uruguay 68 percent “strongly” agreed with going to the authorities while in Bolivia only 36 percent agreed.

The LAPOP four-country survey asked people to choose between two options: (1) compensate crime victims X amount of money or (2) make public investments to reduce crime X percent (Figure 2.8). This question was repeated three times at a constant dollar amount (\$1,000), while public investments reduced crime from 10 percent to 25 percent and then 50 percent. On average, 90 percent of respondents agreed that investing in crime reduction (instead of cash compensations for crime victims) was the preferred option. When crime fell by 25 percentage points,

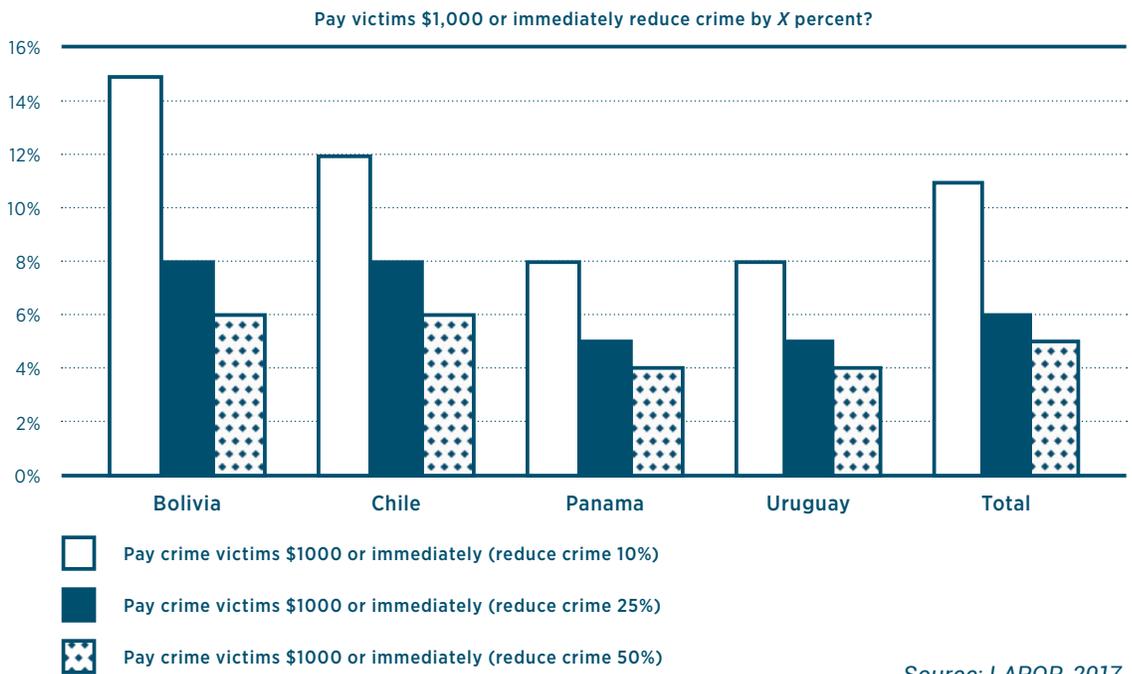
93 percent of the people chose that option. Finally, when crime fell 50 percent, 95 percent of all respondents chose that option. Despite the vast majority preferring to invest in crime reduction in the community, few citizens chose the option in which victims were compensated. Overall, the survey showed that most people are opposed to victim compensation.

Figure 2.7 Reach Out to the Police or Subsidies to Citizens? (national sample, in %)



Source: LAPOP, 2017.

Figure 2.8 Reduce Crime or Compensate Victims?



Source: LAPOP, 2017.

Box 2.2

PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE SECURITY

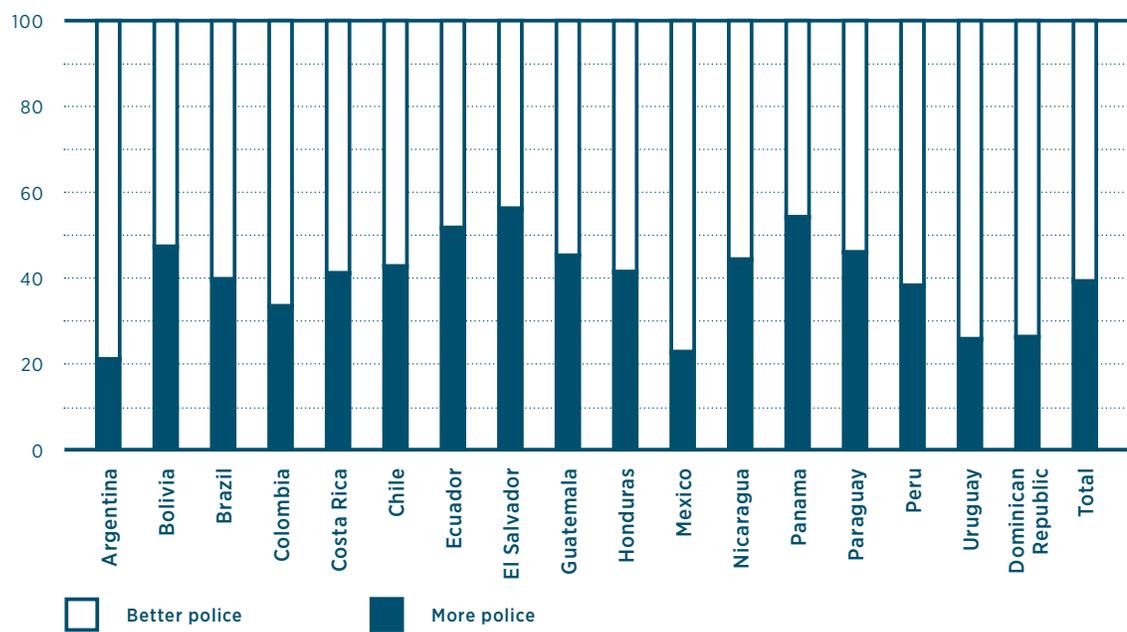
Empirical findings in these sections show that most respondents support resourcing the police instead of providing resources for private security, even if there are subsidies. Moreover, they believe that citizens should go to the police or authorities with a criminal complaint and they prefer investments in crime reduction rather than victim compensation. Overall, respondents did not favor private provision of security, even if it is subsidized; they did favor the social benefits of general crime reduction instead of privately compensated crime victims.

2.4.

Police Resources: Size and Deployment of the Force

In their interviews, the AmericasBarometer survey conductors presented respondents with two crime-reduction options for government: first, hiring more police officers, or, second, improving the quality of the current force with more training and better wages (Figure 2.9). Most Latin Americans chose better-trained police, with an average 60 percent of those surveyed choosing that option. Once again, intraregional variations were notable. Argentina, Colombia, Mexico, Uruguay, and Dominican Republic, five countries, preferred that policy by substantially higher

Figure 2.9

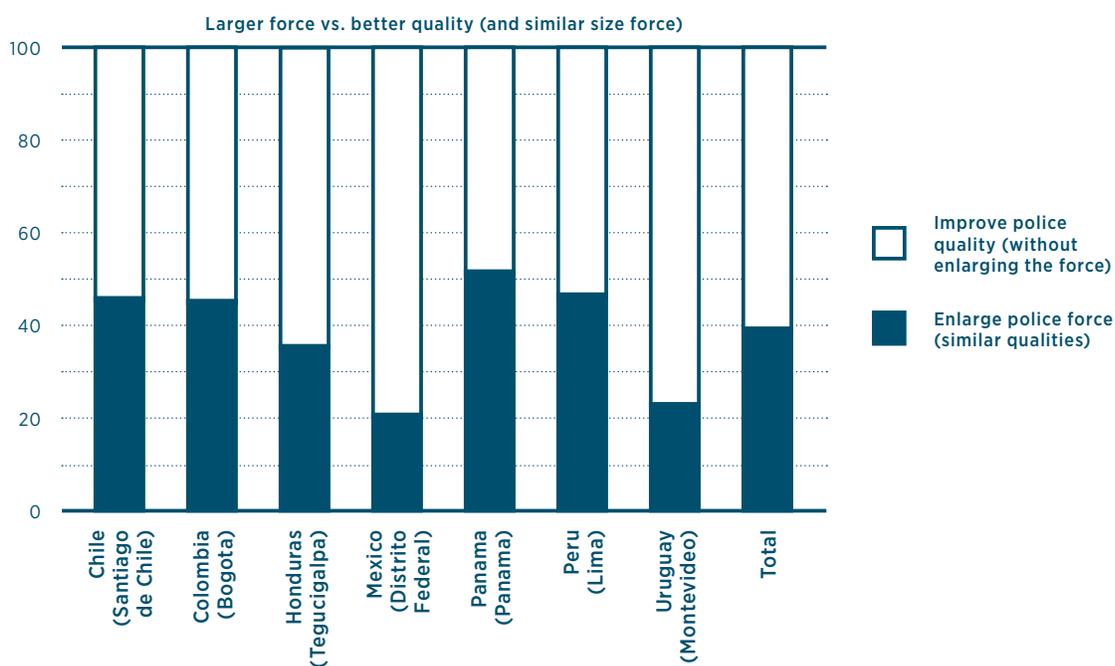
Police Quantity vs. Police Quality (national sample, in %)

Source: AmericasBarometer, 2017.

margins, while support was less pronounced in the twelve other countries surveyed. Respondents in three countries (Ecuador, El Salvador, and Panama) registered support that was 20 percentage points lower for the “better police” policy.

The IDB–LAPOP–Capital Cities survey presented interviewees with two propositions: (1) hiring more officers “with the same characteristics and wages,” or (2) raising the quality of police officers at the size of the present force and spending more on training and salaries, while firing the underperforming police (Figure 2.10). This question was slightly more complex, as interviewees were told that both options had the same budgetary cost but government could implement just one of them. Responses in seven capital cities resembled the ones in AmericasBarometer. On average, 61 percent of respondents chose improving police quality while maintaining the same personnel. Once again within country variation shows that Uruguay and Mexico had the highest support for the policy, with 77 percent and 80 percent of respondents supporting it respectively, while Panama had the lowest support with 49 percent (meaning most respondents prefer to increase police personnel).

Figure 2.10 Police Quantity vs. Police Quality (cities sample, in %)

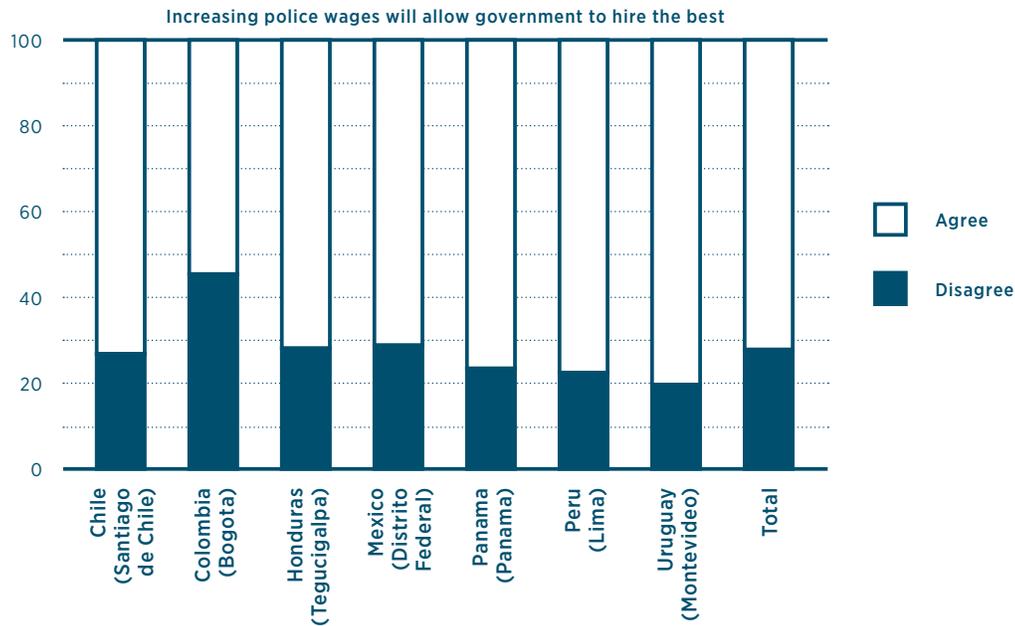


Source: IDB–LAPOP–Capital Cities Project.

With respect to police resources, Latin Americans prefer better-quality police who receive more training and better wages over a police force that is merely larger; higher-quality police was preferred by 61 percent, while 39 percent of the respondents said they preferred hiring more police with the same qualities as current ones. This result is robust for all sources of data. Furthermore, the results hold even when the new hires are at the same level as the existing officers and low-performing officers are replaced. These responses show high popular support for improved police training and better working conditions and wages.

Most respondents (around 80 percent) said they thought higher police wages would help governments recruit more highly qualified candidates (Figure 2.11).

Figure 2.11 Higher Wages, Better Police (%)



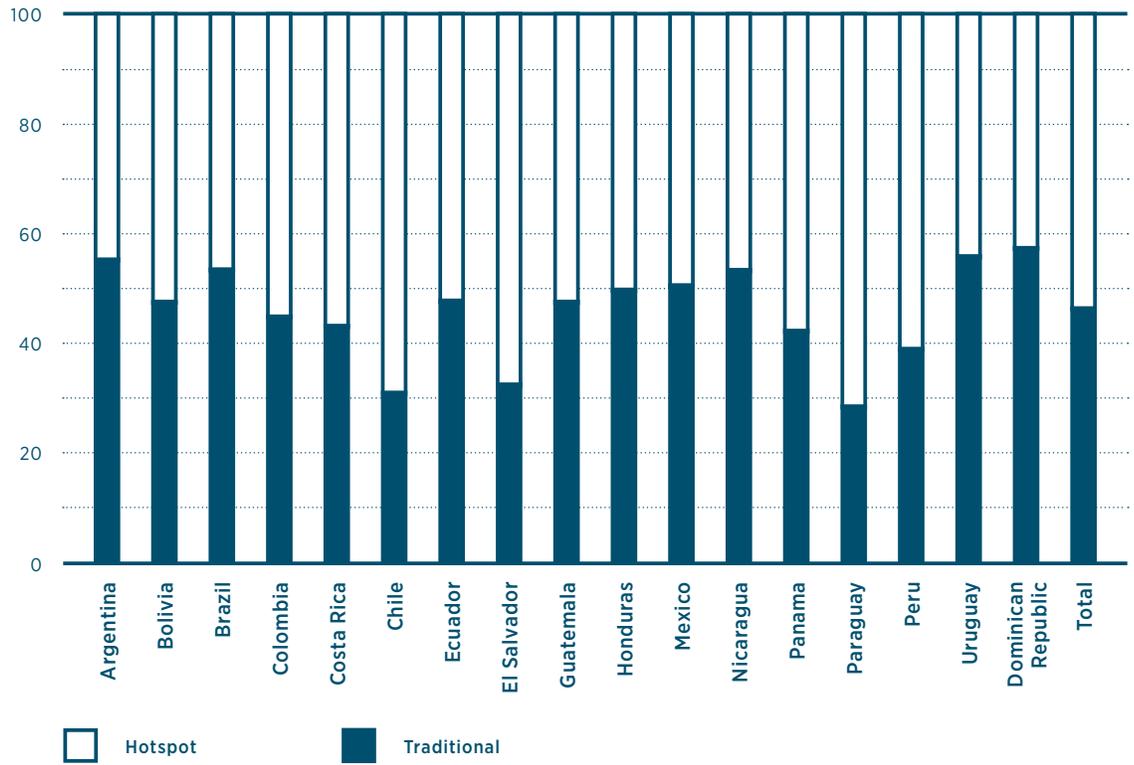
Source: IADB–LAPOP–Capital Cities Project.

It has been empirically proven that hotspot policing is more productive and efficient than regular homogeneous citywide patrolling (Braga, Papachristos, and Hureau, 2012; Chainey, Serrano, and Veneri, 2017; Cafferata, 2018). Nevertheless, when hotspot neighborhoods are over-patrolled, questions arise from a justice perspective, as patrols can become profiling operations (Green, 1999; Rosenbaum, 2006). Moreover, hotspot patrols can turn into aggressive policing, which doesn't reduce crime, as shown by Gingerich and Oliveros (2018) and Bullock and Garland (2018).

The AmericasBarometer survey and the IDB–LAPOP–Capital Cities survey asked Latin Americans to choose between hotspot and traditional homogeneous patrolling (Figure 2.12). AmericasBarometer found more than half the respondents favored hotspot patrols (54 percent); fewer respondents preferred traditional tactics (46 percent). Intra-regional responses show that citizens in six countries—Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Nicaragua, Uruguay, and Dominican Republic—prefer traditional citywide patrols, while citizens in the other eleven countries lean toward preferring hotspot patrols.

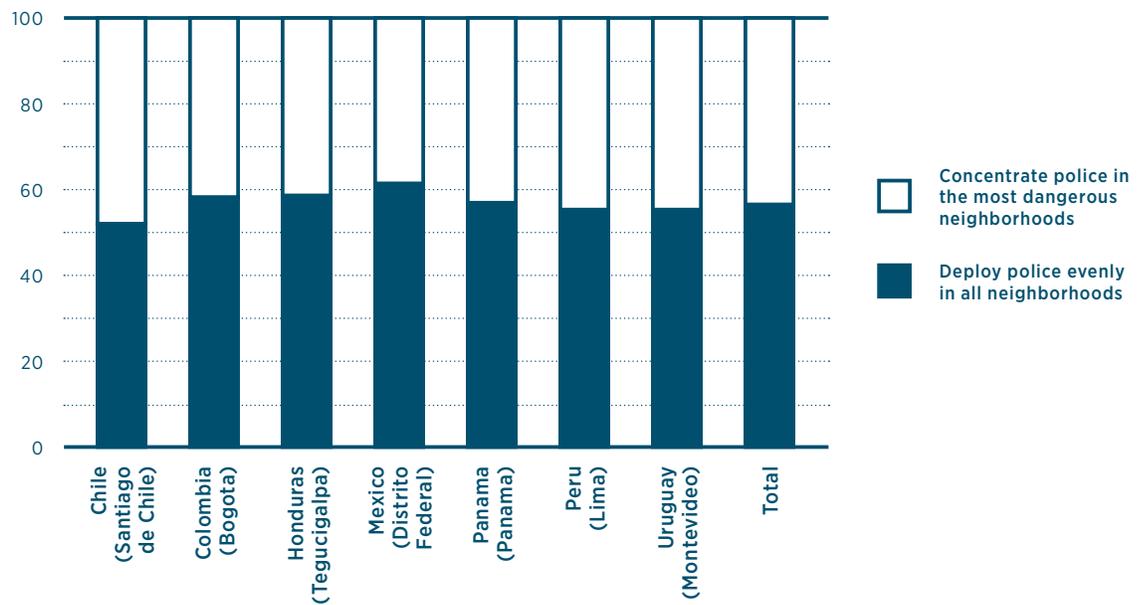
The IDB–LAPOP–Capital Cities survey asked capital-city citizens about their preferences for police deployment: Should patrols be citywide or just in high-crime neighborhoods (Figure 2.13)? On average, 44 percent of respondents preferred hotspot policing, while traditional citywide patrolling was preferred by 56 percent. These differences might be traced to the phrasing of the question, or perhaps the national vs. cities samples teased out a hotspot

Figure 2.12 Police Deployment: Citywide Patrols vs. Hotspot Policing (national sample, in %)



Source: AmericasBarometer, 2017.

Figure 2.13 Police Deployment: Citywide Patrols vs. Hotspot Policing (cities sample, in %)



Source: IADB-LAPOP-Capital Cities Project.

policing preference. The incorporation of more countries also appears to shift the sample response toward hotspot policing.

Finally, it is important to mention that when asked how often they saw police patrols in their neighborhoods, on average, 64 percent of Latin Americans surveyed by AmericasBarometer stated they saw police patrolling "most of the time" or "almost once a week." So citizens perceive regular or frequent patrols. Intercountry variations show stark divergences. On the one hand, 67 percent of Bolivian respondents, 56 percent of Nicaraguans, 47 percent of Peruvian, and 45 percent of Guatemalan respondents said patrols were once a month or less. On the other hand, respondents in Argentina, Uruguay, Costa Rica, and Dominican Republic (83 percent, 75 percent, 74 and 73 percent, respectively) reported high-frequency patrols.

Box 2.3**POLICE RESOURCES: QUANTITY VS. QUALITY AND CONCENTRATION VS. DISTRIBUTION**

This section of the survey shows that Latin Americans prefer better-quality police (more training and higher wages) rather than just a larger force with "more of the same" officers. These results hold even if both policies cost the same. Average preferences for hotspot deployments vary, according to the survey. In the large sample survey with national representation, hotspot policing is preferred, while the Capital Cities survey shows the average preference is for traditional citywide deployment. Two interesting collateral findings are that half the respondents think that government, if it paid higher salaries, would be able to hire the best possible candidates. Also, except for a handful of countries, the perceived patrol frequency among the citizens is quite high.

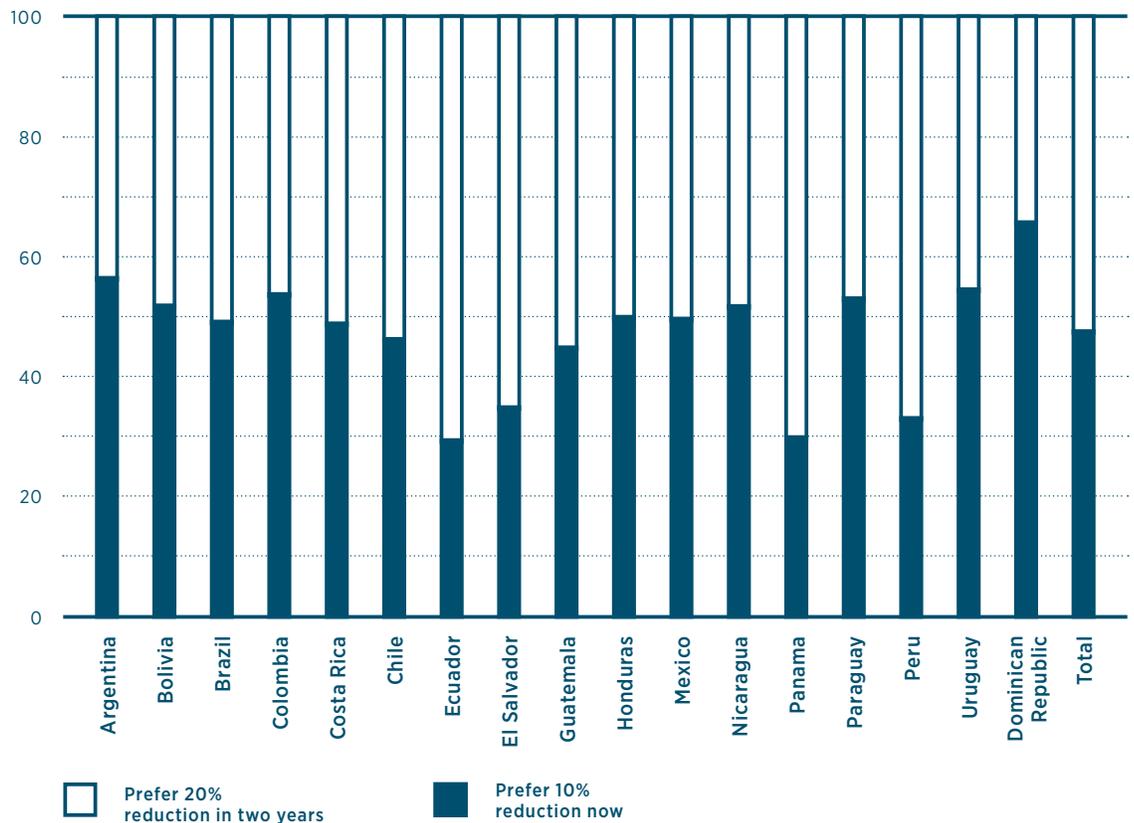
2.5. Policy Implementation Preferences

In terms of policy implementation preferences, the variables include the time discount-rate and distribution of potential benefits and burdens. The role of perceived corruption is also discussed briefly.

2.5.1. Discount Rate

Latin Americans show high *discount rates*. The AmericasBarometer included two questions to elicit discount rates for crime reduction policies, proposing tradeoffs of time and crime reduction (Figure 2.14). The first question posed a 20 percent decrease in crime over two years vs. an immediate 10 percent decline. The second question posited more crime reduction (30 percent) over the same period (two years) with the alternative, immediate reduction of 10 percent, as with the first question. For the first choice, 53 percent of respondents said it was better to reduce crime 20 percent over two years, while 47 percent said that it was better to reduce crime now by 10 percent.

Figure 2.14 Discount Rates for Crime Reduction (%)

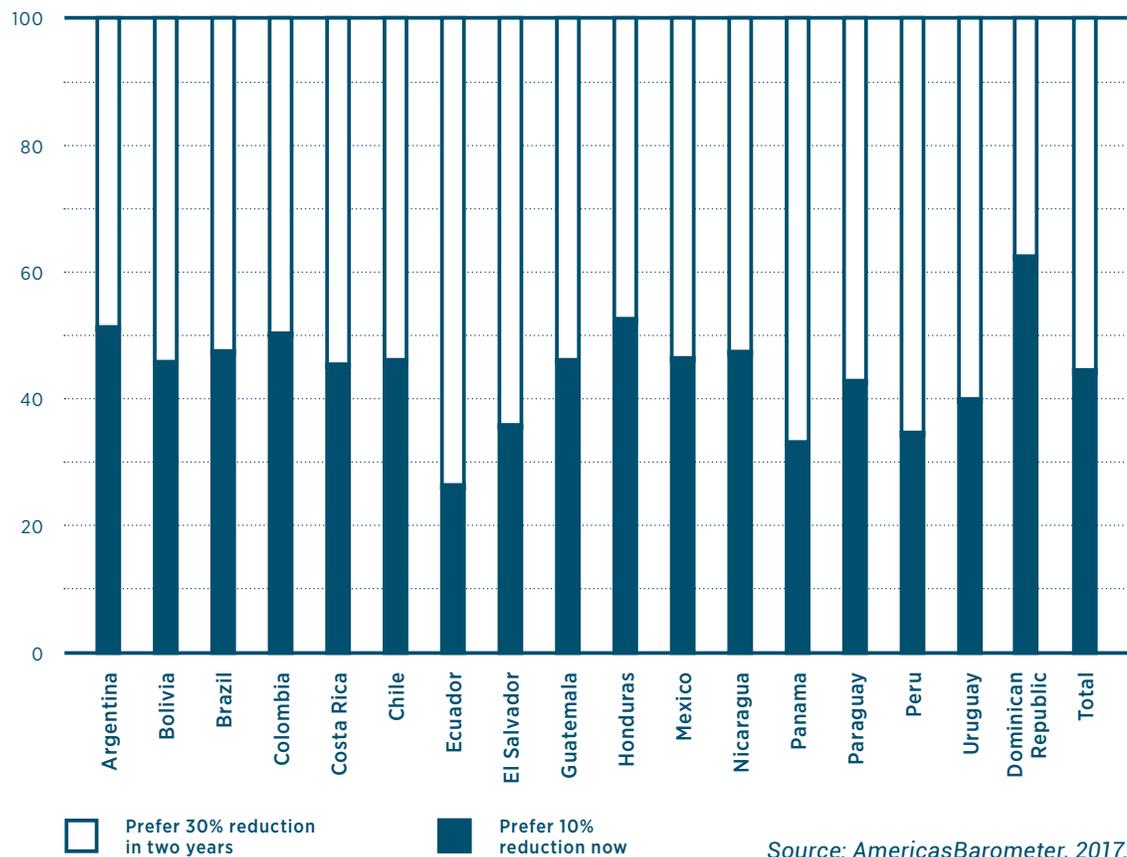


Source: AmericasBarometer, 2017.

On the second question, 56 percent replied that it was better to reduce crime by 30 percent over two years, while 44 percent said it would be better to reduce crime now by 10 percent (Figure 2.15). The structure of intertemporal choices seems reasonable, as a 10 percent reduction in crime increased the number of those choosing the option. Nevertheless, these data show that to increase the share of people willing to wait two years to reduce crime by 3 percentage points, crime must fall by an extra 50 percent, or 10 more percentage points. The relationship is inelastic (-0.06), as the price variation for reductions in crime is big in order to modify tiny magnitudes of intertemporal demand. This makes sense, as the necessity of a public good makes its demand inelastic.

IDB–LAPOP–Capital Cities tested time-discount rates with an extra layer of complexity. The survey questions presented a tradeoff between, on the one hand, lower crime in less time pursuant to increased police hires (similar in quality to existing police) and, on the other hand, better-quality police (Figure 2.16). The first option, hiring more police, proposes to cut crime rates by 10 percent immediately, while the second option (better training) proposes to diminish crime rates by 20 percent in two years' time. An average of about 57 percent of the Latin Americans in capital cities supported hiring more officers with immediate rewards, while 43 percent supported medium-term improvement. The differences among countries are substantial: 45 percent of both Mexicans and Uruguayans support long-term policies. The other countries (Honduras, Panama, Colombia, Peru, and Chile) leaned toward the short-term gains.

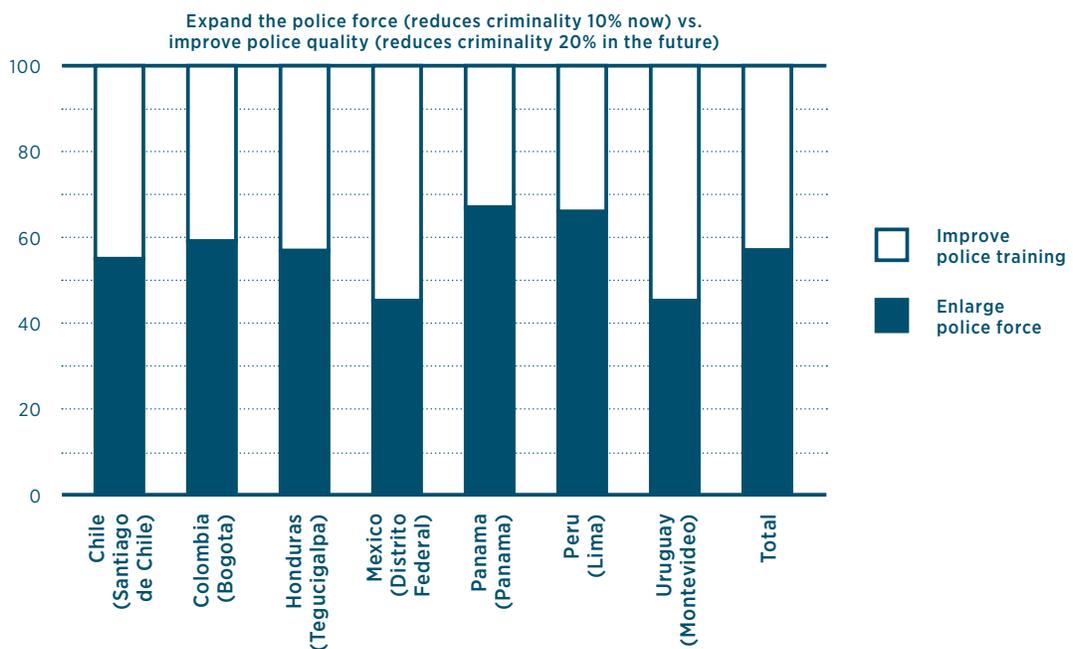
Figure 2.15 Discount Rates for Crime Reduction (national sample, in %)



Source: AmericasBarometer, 2017.

In the four-country LAPOP survey, the treatment subgroup in Panama was asked a similar question, to choose between a 10 percent drop in crime now or a 20 percent drop over two years. In this case, 41.6 percent of the respondents supported short-term crime reduction, while 58.4 percent supported the medium-term option. The “less patient” group was asked again if they preferred an immediate 10 percent drop in crime or a 30 percent decline in two years. Faced with this choice, the short-term response increased to 62 percent in favor of immediate results. Finally, the remaining less-patient respondents were asked to choose between 10 percent now or a 50 percent decrease in two years. Now nearly 70 percent picked the short-term choice, while 30.6 percent of the remaining chose the medium term.

Figure 2.16 Discount Rate for Crime Reduction with Policing Alternatives (cities sample)



Source: IADB–LAPOP–Capital Cities Project.

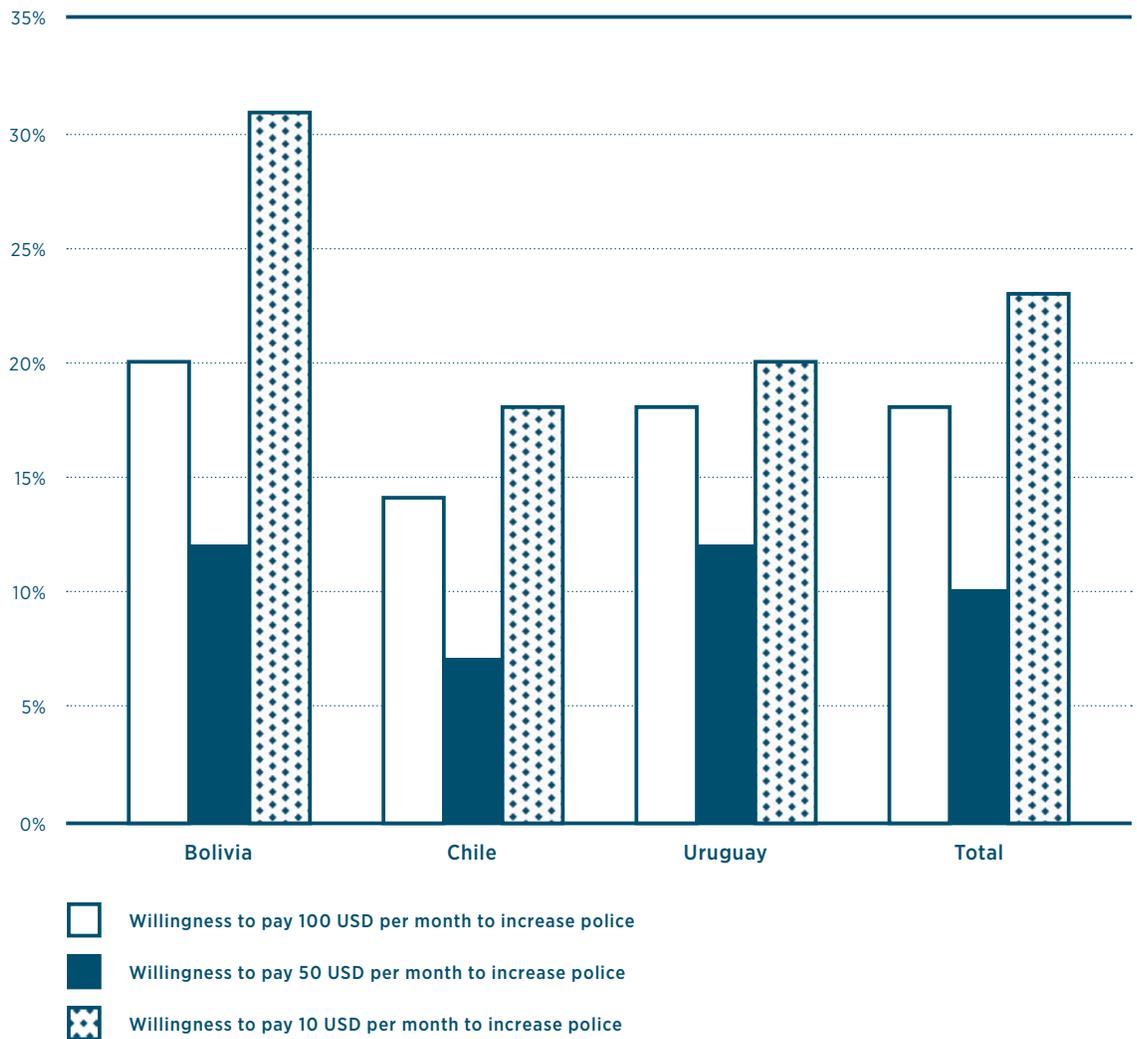
An average of about 57 percent of the Latin Americans in capital cities supported hiring more officers with immediate rewards, while 43 percent supported medium-term improvement.



2.5.2. **Distribution of Social Cost and Benefits**

As mentioned above, respondents in the four-country LAPOP survey were asked if they would pay more in taxes to enlarge the police force, with different marginal tax increases in order to gauge support (Figure 2.17). When respondents were asked about paying an extra \$100 per month, only 18 percent of them answered positively. Those with negative replies (83 percent) were asked about the prospect of paying \$50 extra in taxes per month to expand the police force. With this proposed tax increase, 10.3 percent agreed. Finally, the rest (72 percent) were asked about paying \$10 extra in taxes per month to increase police numbers, and 22.8 percent agreed they would. Overall, the remaining 56 percent opposed paying more in taxes to hire more police. But the import of this finding is unclear: Do they oppose paying more taxes in general or more taxes to hire more police? With such high levels of mistrust and impatience, these factors are confounding.

Figure 2.17 **Willingness to Pay**

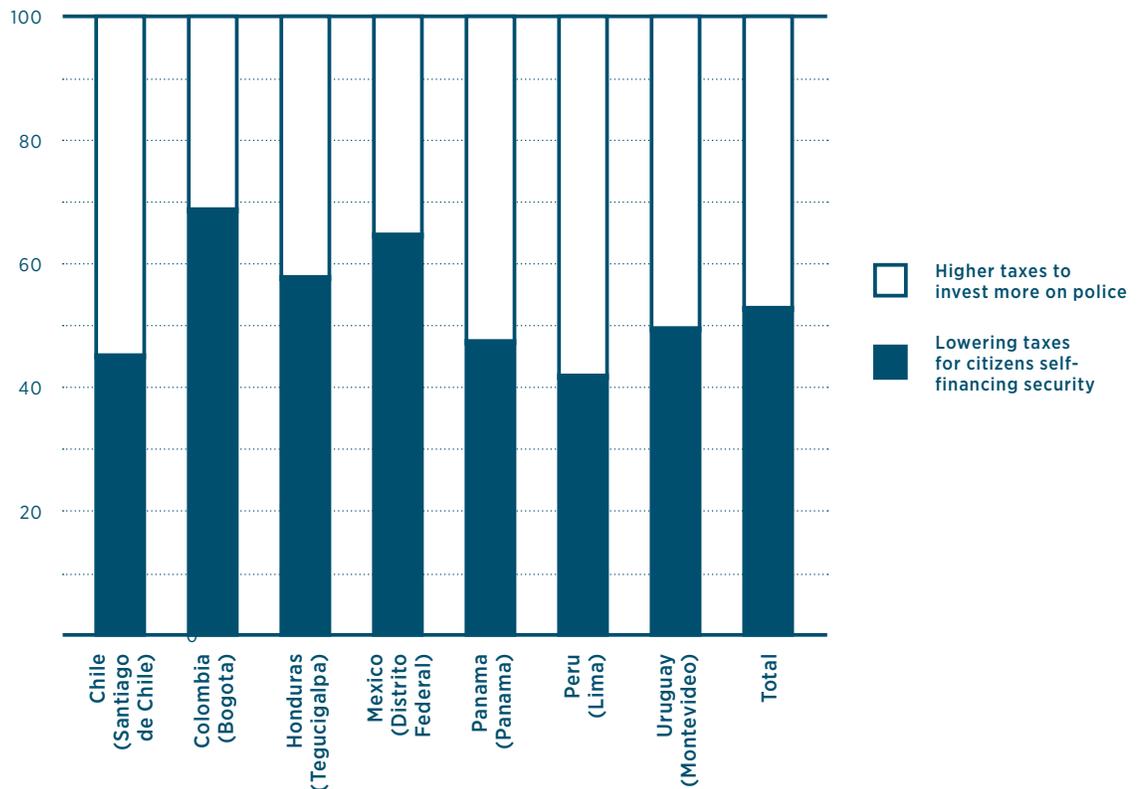


Source: LAPOP, 2017.

In the IADB–LAPOP–Capital Cities survey, respondents were asked if they would pay higher taxes to invest more in police or lower taxes so citizens could self-finance their security (Figure 2.18). On average, 53 percent of respondents supported lower taxes for self-financed security instead of higher taxes for more police. Nevertheless, this average varies by country, and of the eight countries sampled, half support one choice and half support the other. Average support for investing more in police is higher in Panama, Peru, Chile, and Uruguay. Whereas in Mexico, Honduras, and Colombia, the majority support lower taxes.

Figure 2.18

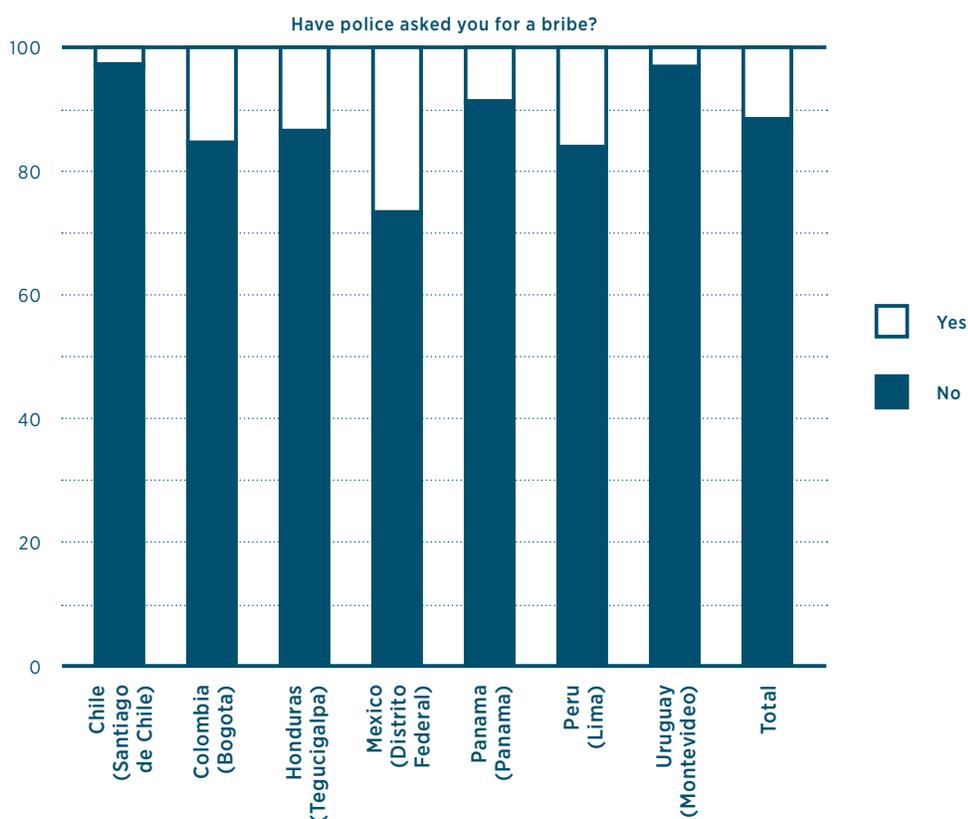
More Taxes for Police or Lower Taxes for Funding Private Security (cities sample)



Source: IADB–LAPOP–Capital Cities Project.

Citizens who experience, or who are exposed to information about, police corruption will likely alter their policy preferences. As stated by Keefer, Scartascini, and Vlaicu (2018), those who experience police corruption were much less likely to support either transferring resources to the police or increasing taxes to finance larger police budgets. In the IADB–LAPOP–Capital Cities survey, on average, 11.6 percent of the respondents had been asked for a bribe by the police (Figure 2.19). Furthermore, 16 percent of the survey respondents replied that corruption is the “most important” problem facing society. As it has been shown, the amount (and source) of information will alter citizens’ perspective on crime risks and their penalty preferences (Gingerich and Scartascini, 2018). How these two factors shape policy demands will be further explained in section 3, on determinants of policy demand.

Figure 2.19 Experience with Police Corruption: Bribes (cities sample)

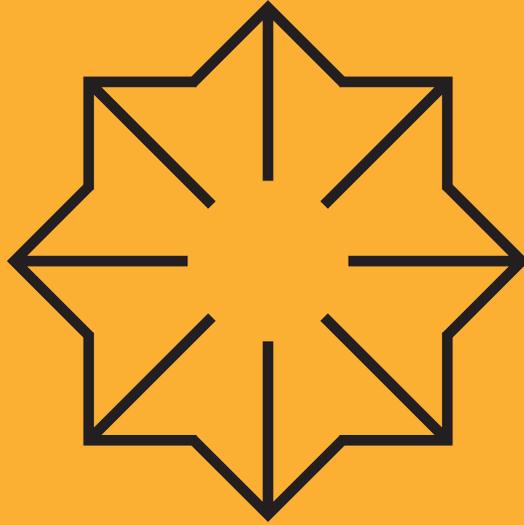


Source: IADB-LAPOP-Capital Cities Project.

Box 2.4

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION PREFERENCES

To sum up section 2, Latin Americans prefer lower crime rates even if this means waiting a longer time. Nevertheless, their intertemporal choice structure is skewed toward the present because they have high discount rates. In terms of information, as expected, more information prompts them to revise their preferences on public policies desirability. Regarding the distribution of costs and benefits, the majority is not willing to pay higher taxes for more police officers and prefers to lower taxes so they can afford self-protection measures instead of higher taxes to invest more on police.



3.

**Anti-Crime Policy and
Determinants of Demand**

In order to reach a deeper understanding of policy demands regarding crime, it is important to disentangle their determinants. The variables associated with the demand for certain policies might explain why demand varies from country to country. And knowledge of these variables could make policymakers more situationally aware of the issues that shape policy preferences.

We have classified our determinants into seven factors, each with a set of variables. The factors are: (i) sociodemographic, (ii) crime salience, (iii) compliance perception, (iv) trust, (v) opinion, (vi) experience, and (vii) behavioral.

The first factor, sociodemographic, is highly developed in the criminology canon and comprises age, education, sex, income, ethnicity, and employment. These variables affect (a) fear of crime and victimization (Vilalta, 2013) and (b) attitudes toward punishment (Spiranovic, Roberts, and Indermaur, 2012). Fear and punitiveness are linked to public policy preferences in the most recent literature. International evidence shows that demographic factors appear to show inconsistent correlations with attitudes on punishment (Spiranovic, Roberts, and Indermaur, 2012). Age, ethnicity, and employment appear to have clear patterns of connection with demand for punitive policies. Nevertheless, respondents who are men or who report lower income or less education tend to have harsh attitudes toward criminal punishment (Spiranovic, Roberts, and Indermaur, 2012).

A recent paper on Latin America (Price, Sechopoulos, and Whitty, 2019) found age negatively correlated with support for harsher policies. In fact, increased age was the strongest predictor of low support for harsh penal punishment. These authors found women to be marginally more supportive of harsh criminal penalties than men, a finding they relate to the higher incidence of women being crime victims and their vulnerability to crime. Finally, these authors also found that education levels and wealth quintiles in the region are not statistically associated with attitudes on harsher criminal punishment.

The second factor, crime salience, has three components—emotional, cognitive, and experiential—expressed as fear of crime, general concern about crime as a social problem, and experience with being a crime victim (Spiranovic, Roberts, and Indermaur, 2012). These authors have found that beliefs about crime and the perception of increased crime are associated with higher demand for punitive policies. Being a crime victim does not, however, have the same direct link to retributive attitudes (Spiranovic, Roberts, and Indermaur, 2012). Regional evidence substantiates the idea that crime victimization bolsters support for vindictive policies, but not by much (Price, Sechopoulos, and Whitty, 2019). In fact, experimental evidence in the region shows that in high-crime contexts, citizens will demand more punitive strategies, but not in low-crime context (Gingerich and Scartascini, 2018). Furthermore, regional evidence also points out that feelings of vulnerability to crime (“insecurity”) correlate with support for harsher criminal punishment (Price, Sechopoulos, and Whitty, 2019). The same study also found that a group’s subjective sense of proximity to crime is a significant variable in predicting opinions on penalties for convicted offenders—specifically, when a group is more likely to perceive itself as a target of crime.

The third group of variables falls under compliance. It includes two elements: (a) does a person think the government abides by the law ("respects the law"), and (b) does she think her family abides by the law. The legal-cynicism theory holds that there is a cultural frame in which law-abiding beliefs coexist with law-violating behavior because the law and the agents of its enforcement are viewed as illegitimate, unresponsive, and ill-equipped to ensure public safety (Kirk and Papachristos, 2011). Moreover, according to some version of this framework, while individuals may believe in the substance of the law, antagonism toward and mistrust of the agents of the law may propel some individuals toward violence because they feel they cannot rely on the police to help them resolve grievances (Kirk and Papachristos, 2011). Previous evidence has found that Latin Americans with little confidence that public officials and politicians obey the law are less likely to prefer policies that entail expanding the role of government in education, policing, or income redistribution (Scartascini, Keefer, and Vlaicu, 2018). Consequently, this framework seems relevant to influences on policy demands.

The fourth group of variables falls under trust, which is linked to "legal perception" and involves faith in government, people in general, family, the police, and the media. According to the literature, in Latin America, mistrust of government biases citizens against policies that promise future benefits but have costs in the present (Scartascini, Keefer, and Vlaicu, 2018). Moreover, when there is little trust in government, people prefer to transfer benefits to citizens rather than having the government invest for them (Scartascini, Keefer, and Vlaicu, 2018). Also, lack of trust undermines market and social interactions (Scartascini and Valle Luna, 2020).

In addition, citizens who trust people in general tend to support higher taxes that finance larger police budgets (Scartascini, Keefer, and Vlaicu, 2018). Nevertheless, regional evidence has found, unsurprisingly, that respondents believe their family members are much more trustworthy than people in general. This finding is interesting, as these attitudes might skew policy preferences regarding crime. In addition to these previous measures of trust, the evidence indicates that those who trust the police less are less supportive of harsh policies (Price, Sechopoulos, and Whitty, 2019). These results are in line with the finding that those with higher trust in police and also trust their neighbors feel more secure (Vilalta, 2013). Also, opinions accepting police brutality and violence are negatively correlated with support for progressive social measures regarding crime (Maguire and Johnson, 2015). Finally, the variable, "trust in the media," is relevant because, generally, media exposure boosts tough-on-crime policies, increasing support for them (Jennings et al., 2017).

Opinions constitute the fifth group of potential determinants of anti-crime policy. They are a set of variables regarding personal views on the main problems facing the country. Holding the opinion that crime was the country's "most important problem" was a driving assumption in determining punitive preferences (Gingerich and Scartascini, 2018). This factor adds some additional variables such as corruption, bad government, and inequality. Corruption assumptions (the perception of corruption) seem as relevant as assumptions regarding widespread political corruption. Individuals holding these assumptions are also more likely to tolerate corruption (Cohen, Lupu, and Zechmeister, 2017). The view that "bad government" is the country's main problem seems relevant for anti-crime policies that rely on more government involvement. The "inequality" assumption seems relevant to policy demands for hotspot policing or social prevention, because the view regarding "social causes of crime" is linked to individual markers for punitiveness (Frost, 2010). Finally, there are two other variables in underlying assumptions. They include the importance of police in solving problems and the need for strong policies to reduce inequality.

The experience factor falls into a group of potential determinants of anti-crime policy and includes two variables of indirect or direct experiences linked to punitive attitudes. The first variable is whether the person considers herself informed. This seems relevant, as the average citizen has little direct experience with the criminal justice system and develops most of her understanding about crime and punishment from the media (Frost, 2010). Moreover, this variable proves relevant as there is evidence that media exposure influences harsh attitudes (Spiranovic, Roberts, and Indermaur, 2012). The variable “informed” is a dummy variable that takes the value 1 for respondents exhibiting high levels of news consumption, as with previous studies (Gingerich and Scartascini, 2018).

The “inequality” assumption seems relevant to policy demands for hotspot policing or social prevention, because the view regarding “social causes of crime” is linked to individual markers for punitiveness.

It is worth mentioning that regional evidence previously found that uninformed citizens tend to support punitive choices when taking in crime salience data (Gingerich and Scartascini, 2018). The second variable is “has been asked for bribes by the police.” As corruption extends to more victims, adverse outcomes spread along important political, economic, and social outcomes because corruption reduces growth and overall wealth, hinders economic investment, fuels economic inequality, and undermines social capital (Cohen, Lupu, and Zechmeister, 2017). Moreover, harmful contacts with police (that is, bribe solicitations) diminish police trustworthiness scores and heighten punitive attitudes (Frost, 2010). Note that regional evidence on those who report experience with police corruption had specific anti-crime policy preferences: they were much less likely to support transferring resources to the police or increasing taxes to finance larger police budgets (Scartascini, Keefer, and Vlaicu, 2018).

Unusual in the criminological literature is a final factor, which we call behavioral, and its two variables, patience and risk. Patience is the willingness to wait for the prospect of future benefits instead of opting for present benefits. Patient respondents are more likely to choose public policies that promise future benefits for society (Scartascini, Keefer, and Vlaicu, 2018). Previous studies have used a 32-point scale for patience on the scale of anti-crime policies, where 1 signifies unwillingness “never” to sacrifice current for future benefits and 32 a willingness “always” to accept the sacrifice. Previous findings in Latin America have found that patient citizens are more likely to prefer more police training when it delivers higher expected outcomes on crime reduction (Scartascini, Keefer, and Vlaicu, 2018).

The second variable, the risk index, is best described in prospect theory and seems interesting with respect to levels of risk-seeking in the anti-crime policy choices citizens make. Some authors have argued that risk and its elements are related to punitive policies (Tonry, 2007).

The following table (Table 3.1) summarizes the variables grouped by factor and their corresponding descriptions according to each of the three datasets.

Determinant Factors and Variables by Dataset

Table 3.1

Factor	Variable / policy action	Survey/coding		
		LAPOP capital cities	LAPOP 4 countries	AmericasBarometer
Socio-demographic	Sex	0 “female” 1 “male”	0 “female” 1 “male”	0 “female” 1 “male”
	Ethnicity (declared)	No data	1 “White” (omit) 2 “mestizo” 3 “indigenous” 4 “Black” 5 “mulatto” 7 “other”	1 “White” (omit) 2 “Asian” 3 “Afro-descendant” 4 “indigenous” 5 “Mestizo” 6 “Mulatto”
	Age	Continuous	Continuous	Continuous
	Income	Range in local currency	Range in USD	socioeconomic level
	Education	Last year of approved formal education	Years of schooling	1 “no studies” 2 “1 year” 3 “2 years” 4 “3 year” ... 14 “incomplete undergrad” 15 “undergrad”
	Employment	0 “no” 1 “yes”	0 “no” 1 “yes”	0 “no” 1 “yes”

Table 3.1 Determinant Factors and Variables by Dataset (*continued*)

Factor	Variable / policy action	Survey/coding		
		LAPOP capital cities	LAPOP 4 countries	AmericasBarometer
Crime and victimization	Victim	0 “no” 1 “yes”	0 “no” 1 “yes”	0 “no” 1 “yes”
	Unsafe (neighborhood)	0 “safe” 1 “unsafe”	0 “safe” 1 “unsafe”	No data
	Unsafe (city)	0 “safe” 1 “unsafe”	No data	No data
	Fear of crime	No data	No data	0 “never or almost never” 1 “occasionally” 2 “sometimes” 3 “Almost all the time”
	Perceived chance of being murdered (stranger/someone you know)	0 “unknown” 1 “known”	No data	No data
Compliance	Fulfill promises (government)	0 “no” 1 “yes”	No data	No data
	Law abiding (family)	0 “unusual” 1 “usual”	No data	No data
Trust	Government	0 “no” 1 “yes”	0 “no” 1 “yes”	0 “mistrust” 1 “trust”
	General/all people	0 “mistrust people” 1 “trust people”	No data	0 “mistrust people” 1 “trust people”
	Family	0 “untrustworthy” 1 “trustworthy”	No data	No data
	Institution (Police)	No data	0 “no” 1 “yes”	0 “mistrust” 1 “trust”
	Institution (Media)	No data	0 “no” 1 “yes”	No data
Opinions	Most important problem in the country (crime)	0 “no” 1 “yes”	0 “no” 1 “yes”	0 “no” 1 “yes”
	(corruption)	0 “no” 1 “yes”	0 “no” 1 “yes”	0 “no” 1 “yes”
	(bad government)	0 “no” 1 “yes”	0 “no” 1 “yes”	No data
	(inequality)	0 “no” 1 “yes”	0 “no” 1 “yes”	0 “no” 1 “yes”
	Importance of police to solve problems	0 “not important” 1 “important”	No data	No data
	Strong policies to reduce inequality	No data	0 “no” 1 “yes”	No data
Experience	Informed person	No data	0 “no” 1 “yes”	No data
	Experienced bribes (police)	Police ask for bribe: 0 “no” 1 “yes”	0 “no” 1 “yes”	Likelihood of bribing: 0 “no” 1 “yes”
Behavioral	Risk	1 to 32	No data	No data
	Patience	1 to 32	No data	No data

3.1.

Models

Most of the models are constructed with different specifications. All of them are ordinary least squares (OLS) estimations in the form of linear probability models (LPM), then checked for consistency using more sophisticated nonlinear specifications (such as logits, probits, and ordered logits), to check results for robustness. In general, the model for determining the variables for citizen policy demands will be ordered in a set of variables according to factors found in Section 2. The general form is:

$$Y_{ic} = B_0 + B_1 X_{1ic} + B_2 X_{2ic} + B_3 X_{3ic} + B_4 X_{4ic} + B_5 X_{5ic} + B_6 X_{6ic} + B_7 X_{7ic} + B_8 X_{8ic} + e_{ic}$$

Where Y_{ic} is the dependent variable with the binary categories for the following variables are:

- Police justice "in their own hands" (agree / disagree)
- Police use of physical force with suspect if crime is serious (agree / disagree)
- Crime reduction is better than poverty reduction (agree / disagree)
- More resources to police or more resources to the people
- Improve police quality or increase police quantity
- Hotspot vs. traditional patrols
- Preference for less crime tomorrow—20 percent in two years or 10 percent in one year (discount rate for crime reduction: 1)
- Increasing police wages allows to contract the best (agree / disagree)
- Improve police quality reduces crime by 20 percent in two years or increase quantity decreases crime by 10 percent in one year (discount rate for crime reduction: 2)
- Increase punishment of offenders or invest more in anti-poverty programs
- Reduce crime in the community vs. compensate victims
- Distribute social cost and benefits: willing to pay x amount of taxes more per month to enlarge police force (yes / no)

X_{1ic} is a vector of the sociodemographic characteristics with the six variables described in the previous subsection (age, gender, ethnicity, income, education, and employment). The vector X_{2ic} is crime salience, comprising the set of variables described in Table 3.2, such as victimization, fear of crime, and concern about crime. X_{3ic} and X_{4ic} vectors are composed of the perception and trust variables, linked to the concepts of short-term policy bias and legal cynicism, as explained in the previous section. The vector X_{5ic} is the factor composed by the opinions a person has on the importance of certain issues as the main problem of the country, the relevance of police to solve problems, and the need for redistribution polices. The X_{6ic} vector is composed of the factors grouped as "experiences" (information and bribes), which can substantially alter the demand for anti-crime policy. Finally, the last vector X_{7ic} used two indices, for risk and patience, both not usual regressors in the criminological literature but part of the behavioral literature.

All the models include country-fixed effects (X_c) and cluster robust standard errors at survey cluster level (e_{ic}). It is important to mention that, as explained in Table 3.1, not all regressors appear in every dataset; their presence varies according to the availability of the data. Results are presented in Table 3.2.

3.2.

Results

This policy paper aims to help both practitioners and decision-makers understand what drives the demand for policies on crime in Latin America. So the determinants are synthesized in a table of the variables, explaining whether they are positively or negatively related with a certain policy area, the policy action and if they are statistically significant or not.

In Table 3.2, the results are coded for the nonspecialist reader, using asterisks and plus and minus signs. The signs show the correlation of the determinant and the variable (positive or negative). As we have three datasets, the entry will have three signs. In order to understand the magnitude of findings, we expressed the results in a slash mark to show how many times the variable has a certain sign and in how many datasets. The signs in the superior part of the solidus show the correlation signs that are statistically significant, and the ones in the lower part of the slash mark shows the correlation sign in the dataset, disregarding its statistical importance.

If the variable is present in only one dataset, a plus or minus sign will appear on either side of the solidus, or slash mark: +/-.

Inconsistent results, such as a positive sign in one dataset and negative in the other will be shown as +/--. When inconsistent results are found, but the variable is statistically significant only in one dataset, the sign of the statistically relevant variable will appear before the slash, while the signs of both datasets will appear after the slash, as in -/-+.

Only statistically significant variables will be coded.

If the variable is statistically significant (at 10 percent in all three survey datasets), it will feature three asterisks (***). If in only two, then two (**), and if it is statistically significant at 10% in only one dataset, then one (*). Statistically nonsignificant data have no asterisks.

Codes appearing below the table identify which variable appears in which dataset.

3.2.1.

Policy Orientation: Preventive vs. Punitive

The first policy choice analyzed in the punitive-vs.-preventive set is “police justice in their own hands” (*justicia por cuenta propia*). Almost all sociodemographic variables for this factor are statistically significant and negatively associated with supporting that option. Increasing age, education, and income decreases the probability of supporting police taking justice in their own hands. Being a nonwhite decreases the likelihood of support for *justicia por cuenta propia* by the police. Another determinant negatively associated is trusting the community. The literature points us to demographic factors (woman, lower income, and less education) that are consistent with previous studies. The three variables—trust in the police, trust in the media, and crime as the “most important” problem facing the country—all increase the chances of supporting police taking justice in their own hands. Crime victimization was not statistically significant, but opinions about crime were.

The variables making support likelier for “police use of physical force (torture) with suspect if crime is serious” (“*cuando el delito es lo suficientemente grave, es aceptable que la policía utilice la violencia física en contra de un sospechoso para obtener información*”) include being former crime



victim, feeling vulnerable to crime in the neighborhood, trusting the police, trusting the media, and considering crime the most important problem facing the country. All these variables act in accordance with the literature: increased association with punitive attitudes. Alternatively, the variables that decrease the likelihood of supporting police torture are increasing age and levels of education, being nonwhite, and seeing inequality as the most important problem facing the country. These findings also align with previous studies.

In a similar way, the variables in the sociodemographic vector that lessen the likelihood of supporting the notion that “crime reduction is better than poverty reduction” are being nonwhite and having more education. The variables that increase the likelihood of supporting the idea include: feeling unsafe in your neighborhood, trusting the police, trusting the media, and viewing crime as the country’s top problem. In addition, being an “informed” person (closely following the news on TV, radio, newspapers) makes people more likely to support the idea.

The final choice on the punitive-vs.-preventive set is “more punishment” vs. “more investment” in anti-poverty programs. The default choice was more punishment, so all variables raise or lower the likelihood of support. Variables that lower the likelihood of support for punitive measures are more education, trusting government, and having been asked by police to pay bribes. Trusting government is a new finding worth exploring further. Given how poorly various regional governments perform on security policy, it might be worth studying how trust in government is shaped and how that trust plays out in forming punitive attitudes. Alessandro et al. (2019) tested information about how government overperforming on its promises increased trust among citizens, the opposite might be happening in citizen security. The variables raising the likelihood of supporting punitiveness are being a former crime victim and viewing crime as the most important problem in the country. Both of them work as expected by the literature.

3.2.2. **Responsibility for Security Provision: Public vs. Private**

Variables increasing the likelihood of support for more resources for the police are increasing age, being nonwhite, being a man, higher education and income levels, trust in police, and view crime as the country’s most important problem. The variable, “the police are important for solving the country’s most pressing problems,” also increases the probability. The variables that lessen the likelihood of supporting more resources for the police are feeling unsafe in the neighborhood and in the city, trust people in general, view bad government as the most important problem facing the country, having experience with police asking for bribes, and, with less significance, being employed. Despite having three variables with inconsistent results (positive in one dataset and negative in another), only results that are consistent in sign are also relevant from the perspective of statistical significance.

Regarding the second policy choice in this area—reducing crime in the community or compensating victims—the variables affecting the likelihood of supporting crime reduction over victim compensation are increasing education, employment, trust in the police, and being “informed.” Those four variables work for the three tradeoffs (paying victims now or reducing crime in increments of 10 percent, 25 percent, or 50 percent). In the first tradeoff—paying victims now or cutting crime 10 percent—other relevant variables are considering crime as the “most relevant” problem facing the country and considering corruption the “most important” problem facing the country; both increase the likelihood of supporting crime reduction.

3.2.3. **Police Resources: Department Size and Deployment**

The sociodemographic vector shows that being nonwhite, increasing age, with higher education and income levels are positively associated with support for better-quality police through training instead of increasing police department size with the same qualities. Those having experienced police bribes are also more likely to support this policy (though statistically significant only in one dataset, with results inconsistent in sign). Other variables affecting the likelihood of support for better-quality police include seeing corruption and inequality as the most important problems of the country, along with viewing the police as important to solving the country's most important problems. Being a former crime victim, trusting the community, and viewing crime as the most important problem lessen a likelihood of supporting improvements in police training or, by way of contrast, increase the likelihood of supporting a larger police force. Being a man also lessens the likelihood of support and is statistically significant but inconsistent in sign between datasets.

Employment is positively associated with support for higher taxes for security and considering inequality one of the most important problems in the country, but these results are inconsistent between datasets, despite being statistically significant.

The determinants associated with the likelihood of supporting hotspot vs. citywide patrols are increasing age, being more educated citizens, being a former crime victim, trust in community, have higher levels of patience, and view police as important for resolving society's most important problems. The variables that decrease the likelihood of support for hotspot policing are being a man, feeling unsafe in the neighborhood, trusting the government, and trusting the police. Ethnicity is statistically significant for nonwhites—negative for the indigenous but positive for ethnic Asians.

Though it is not shown in Table 3.2 (although linked to police resource concentration, it is not the policy itself), the proposal to raise police wages so better-quality police can be hired was also tested. The variables that increase the likelihood of supporting this idea are increasing age, trust in government, and viewing the police as an important tool for solving society's most pressing problems.

3.2.4. **Policy Implementation: Discount Rate and Distribution Preferences**

The determinants associated with increasing the chance of supporting bigger crime reductions in the future rather than wanting immediate smaller reductions are increasing education and income, being male, trusting government, and having more patience. Also, perceiving higher chances of being murdered by someone you know increases the probability of supporting significant crime downturn in the future.

The variables that decrease the chances of supporting greater crime reductions in the future rather than choosing immediate smaller reductions are: (i) being employed; (ii) being nonwhite; (iii) being older; (iv) having greater trust in the police and in media; (v) being well-informed; and (vi) holding the opinion that crime and inequality are “the most important” problems in the country. Moreover, the belief that strong policies are needed to reduce inequality also decreases the likelihood of supporting bigger crime reductions tomorrow. Trust in community is positively associated in one dataset and negatively associated in another. This might be because of the way the question is phrased, or context.

Finally, regarding the distribution of social costs and the benefits of anti-crime policies (where the option is to support higher taxes in order to invest in the quality of policing or to increase the size of the force), the variables that increase the chances of supporting the option are higher income, being a man, thinking you’ll be murdered by someone you know, trust in government, trust in the police, trust in the media, believing that crime is the most important problem in the country, believing that the police are important to solving the country’s most important problems, and having higher levels of patience. Also, employment is positively associated with support for higher taxes for security and considering inequality one of the most important problems in the country, but these results are inconsistent between datasets, despite being statistically significant. In addition, members of nonwhite ethnic groups are positively related but only with respect to the smallest tax hike to pay for more police resources. Increasing age is negatively associated with support for paying more taxes as well the belief that bad government is the most important problem the country faces. Feeling unsafe in the neighborhood also lessens the likelihood of support for higher taxes to finance the police, but the results are inconsistent in sign between datasets.

Table 3.2 Policy Determinants (by area) (part 1)

		Policy area			
		Orientation: Punitive vs. preventive			
Factor	Variable/ policy action	Police justice in their own hands †	Police use of physical force with suspect if crime is serious (torture) ‡	Crime reduction is better than poverty reduction ‡	Increase punishment of offenders or invest more in anti- poverty programs ‡
Socio- demographic	Sex (male)	-/-*			
	Ethnicity (not white)	-/-*	-/-*	-/-*	
	Age	-/-*	-/-*		
	Income	-/-*			
	Education	-/-*	-/-*	-/-*	-/-*
	Employment				
Crime and victimization	Victim		+/+*		+/+*
	Unsafe (neighborhood)		+/+*	+/+*	
	Unsafe (city)				
	Fear of crime				
	Perceived chance of being murdered (relative)				
Compliance	Law-abiding (government)				
	Law-abiding (family)				
Trust	Government				- /-*
	General/ community	- /-*			
	Family				
	Institution (police)	+/+*	+/+*	+/+*	
	Institution (Media)	+/+*	+/+*	+/+*	

*** Occurs at least 10% of the time in all three survey datasets;

** Occurs at least 10% of the time in two survey datasets. * Occurs at least 10% of the time in one survey dataset.

¶ = IADP–LAPOP–Capital Cities Project; † = LAPOP–four countries; ‡ = LAPOP–four countries (Panama); § = AmericasBarometer.

Table 3.2 Policy Determinants (by area) (part 1 continued)

Factor	Variable/ policy action	Policy area					
		Responsibility for security provision: Public vs. private provision		Police resources: Size and deployment		Implementation: Discount rate and distribution	
		More resources to police vs. to the people ¶ §	Reduce crime in the community or compensate victims †	Police force: quality vs. quantity ¶ §	Police deployment –hotspot ¶ §	Discount rate for crime reduction—less crime tomorrow ¶ † §	Distribution of social cost and benefits—more taxes for more police ¶ †
Socio-demographic	Sex (male)	++/+++*		-/- +*	+/- +*	++-/+++**	+/+++*
	Ethnicity (not white)	++/+++*		+/+*	- +/-+*	--/- -**	+/+*
	Age	++/+++*		+/+++**	+/+++*	--/- - -**	-/- - +*
	Income	+/+++*		+/+*		++/+++**	+/+++*
	Education	+/-+*	+/+*	+/+++*	++/+++*	++/+++**	
	Employment	-/- -*	+/+*			-/-+++*	+/-+*
Crime and victimization	Victim			-/--*	++/+++*	++/+++*	
	Unsafe (neighborhood)	-/-*			-/-*		-/+ -*
	Unsafe (city)	-/-*					
	Fear of crime						
	Perceived chance of being murdered (relative)					+/+*	+/+*
Compliance	Law-abiding (government)				-/-*		
	Law-abiding (family)					+/+*	
Trust	Government	+/+++*			-/- -*	+/-+**	++/+++*
	General/community	+-/+++**		-/--*	+/+++*	-/+ -+**	
	Family						
	Institution (police)	+/+*	+/+*		-/-*	-/-+*	++/+++*
	Institution (Media)					-/-*	+/+*

*** Occurs at least 10% of the time in all three survey datasets; ** Occurs at least 10% of the time in two survey datasets. * Occurs at least 10% of the time in one survey dataset.
 ¶ = IADP–LAPOP–Capital Cities Project; † = LAPOP–four countries; ‡ = LAPOP–four countries (Panama); § = AmericasBarometer.

Table 3.2 Policy Determinants (by area) (part 2)

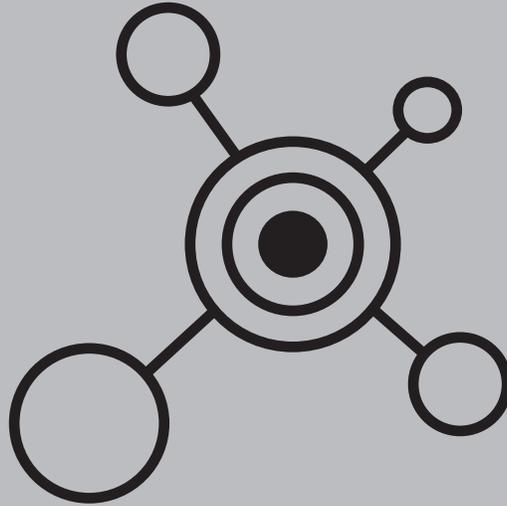
		Policy area			
		Orientation: Punitive vs. preventive			
Factor	Variable / policy action	Police justice in their own hands †	Police use of physical force with suspect if crime is serious (torture) †	Crime reduction is better than poverty reduction †	Increase punishment of offenders or invest more in anti-poverty programs †
Opinions	Most important problem in the country (crime)	+/+*	+/+*	+/+*	+/+ *
	Most important problem in the country (corruption)				
	Most important problem in the country (bad government)				
	Most important problem in the country (inequality)		-/-*		
	Importance of police to solve problems				
	Strong policies to reduce inequality				
Experience	Informed person				
	Suffered bribes (police)				-/-*
Behavioral	Risk				
	Patience				

*** Occurs at least 10% of the time in all three survey datasets;
 ** Occurs at least 10% of the time in two survey datasets. * Occurs at least 10% of the time in one survey dataset.
 ¶ = IADP-LAPOP-Capital Cities Project; † = LAPOP-four countries; ‡ = LAPOP-four countries (Panama); § = AmericasBarometer.

Table 3.2 Policy Determinants (by area) (part 2 continued)

Factor	Variable / policy action	Policy area					
		Responsibility for security provision: Public vs. private provision		Police resources: Size and deployment		Implementation: Discount rate and distribution	
		More resources to police vs. to the people ¶ §	Reduce crime in the community or compensate victims †	Police force: quality vs. quantity ¶ §	Police deployment –hotspot ¶ §	Discount rate for crime reduction—less crime tomorrow ¶ † §	Distribution of social cost and benefits—more taxes for more police ¶ †
Opinions	Most important problem in the country (crime)	+ /+++*	+ /+*	- /+ -*		- /-*	+ /+++*
	Most important problem in the country (corruption)		+ /+*	+ /+ +*		+ /++++*	
	Most important problem in the country (bad government)	- /-*					- /- -*
	Most important problem in the country (inequality)			+ /+++*		- /-*	- + /- +**
	Importance of police to solve problems	+ /+*		+ /+*	+ /+*		+ /+*
	Strong policies to reduce inequality					- /-*	
Experience	Informed person		+ /+*			- - /- - -*	+ /+*
	Suffered bribes (police)	- /+ -*		+ /- +*		- /+++*	
Behavioral	Risk						
	Patience				+ /+*	+ /+ *	+ /+*

*** Occurs at least 10% of the time in all three survey datasets;
 ** Occurs at least 10% of the time in two survey datasets. * Occurs at least 10% of the time in one survey dataset.
 ¶ = IADP–LAPOP–Capital Cities Project; †= LAPOP–four countries; ‡ = LAPOP–four countries (Panama); § = AmericasBarometer.



4.

Conclusions

Views on crime in Latin America and the Caribbean have consolidated around the conclusion that crime is a huge problem for the region, one constituting a “binding constraint” for social and economic development (Hausmann, Rodrick, and Velasco, 2008). The fiscal resources government spends on fighting crime are about twice what most developed countries spend. Still, crime levels in the region remain stubbornly high.

By exploiting new and extensive survey data, this report analyzes the anti-crime policy demands of Latin Americans. It also analyzes the determinants driving these demands. Based on our conceptual model, we divided policy demand into four sets: (a) policy orientation—preventive vs. punitive; (b) responsibility for security provision—public vs. private; (c) police resources—size and force deployment; and (d) policy implementation—discount rate and distribution preferences.

Dealing with crime is high on people’s list of priorities. If given a choice, Latin Americans view crime reduction as more important than poverty reduction. Nevertheless, the demand for more security is not always a demand for punitive policies. Latin Americans want the government to respond quickly to crime. Sometimes their impatience drives policy demand toward more punitive choices.

Not all citizens think the same. Sociodemographic variables play an important role in determining policy preferences related to crime, but they are not the only factors. We also found that classic criminological determinants, such as crime victimization and feelings of insecurity and fear, shape demand for anti-crime policy.

Latin Americans have a peculiar relationship with law enforcement. Most of them prefer harsher penalties while opposing unethical police practices. The majority prefers the police, not individuals, to handle crime, but they are reluctant to pay higher taxes for more resources. Most Latin Americans prefer to invest in better-trained police rather than in more police. But if better-quality police implies larger cuts in crime but with a delay, they quickly jump on the “more police, small gains” bandwagon. Latin Americans have high discount rates and want results now when it comes to crime.

Trust also plays a major role, as trusting government and trusting the police are important determinants of support for more taxes to invest in the police. In the opposite direction, mistrust in government leads to lower appetite for more taxes and greater demand for self-security.

Lack of information is also a real problem. Hotspot policing is a good example of an effective and efficient policy that does not command universal support in the region. Most people prefer traditional policing—citywide deployment of resources—even though it has been shown to be less effective. This is one of the many policies that tend to be favored over others that could prove more effective in the long run.

Governments need to share more information on crime with the voters and explain policies that could reduce crime effectively so citizens can make informed choices.

Mistrust, misinformation, and impatience combine to create flawed anti-crime policy (similar to Keefer, Scartascini, and Vlaicu 2018). The aim of this report has been to describe and explain the factors behind the shaky equilibrium of crime policy in the region. We hope that our work will help specialists understand that knowing the best policy options counts only to the extent that citizens grasp those options and support them.

For good policies to become the norm, taxpayers should understand the tradeoffs and learn what works and what does not work, and governments should lead the way by example. The priority agenda starts with governments investing in their capability to design and deliver evidence-based solutions for fighting crime. Then they should work to increase trust levels among their citizens. Effectively fighting crime would be a good start. Reducing corruption, winnowing out the bad cops, and engaging in community outreach would also help. Finally, governments need to share more information on crime with the voters and explain policies that could reduce crime effectively so citizens can make informed choices. Only when these things happen will it be possible to turn crime-fighting policy around. Most important, it will be possible, finally, to turn the tables in a fight that most governments have been losing. ●



PAIR'S RE...

Product

D Real G...

② Yen



④ Household



UNEMPLOYMENT'S SEASONAL



⑤ Jobless rate
MAY 2001 TO MAY 2004
IN PERCENT



Analysis by Deborah Adamson (d...

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