



SOCIAL OUTBURSTS IN LATIN AMERICA

**Vol 2: Colombia,
Honduras & Puerto Rico**


PROYECTO
BASE.

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Executive Summary

Social outbursts are complex political phenomena whose analysis becomes necessary for a better understanding of political systems, their deficiencies and opportunities for progress. Therefore, the study of the motives that lead to these protests makes it possible to visualize the degree of heterogeneity of the social groups that may or may not participate in protests and the reasons for their actions.

Latin America is a region in which populations grew too fast for the capacity of the States that emerged in the 20th century. Governments have experimented with different policies that have led to economic stability or instability, influencing the country's development capabilities and the welfare of its citizens. Due to this, social outbursts can be a consequence of the implementation of misguided measures, but also can showcase the influence of ideologies and citizens' demands.

This report analyzes the social outbursts that occurred in Colombia, Honduras and Puerto Rico in 2019 in order to generate a better understanding of the possible causes and effects of these mass protests.

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Colombia, although it can be considered one of the longest-lived and most stable democracies in Latin America, (BBC, 2021) also has the longest armed conflict in the history of the continent. The signing of the peace agreement between the FARC and the government of Juan Manuel Santos in 2016 has not guaranteed the fulfillment of all its clauses, which has put the country's democratic stability at risk. Likewise, Colombia, a country with a tradition of macroeconomic stability, has initiated tax reforms that, by benefiting a particular group, have created strong discontent among the population.

PREVIOUS EVENTS: threatened stability



Disapproval of the political elite: Support for those who perform the task of representing citizens in politics has been declining in recent times. According to Latinobarómetro, 81.5% of respondents agree on the fact that those in power only look after their interests and not the citizens' welfare. Likewise, according to LAPOP (2018), Colombians present a level of political tolerance and support for the political system that resembles those found in an "authoritarian stability" instead of a "stable democracy".

Peace Agreement: The people of Colombia have been in the midst of an armed conflict between the FARC and the country's legitimate security forces since the 1960's. In 2016, the signing of the Peace Agreement by the Santos government sought to bring an end to this internal war through peaceful means that would decrease violence. However, with the arrival of Iván Duque to power, several of the points agreed to achieve peace were not fulfilled. The presidency has promoted actions that have undermined compliance with the agreement and generated a policy of "eliminating the enemy".

Marked social inequality: Colombia has certain inequalities in access to opportunities for its inhabitants. One of the problems that mostly affect the less favored classes is access to education and healthcare. According to the Regional Development Index for Latin America, Colombia is the country with the greatest territorial inequalities.

THE PROTESTS: response to an unfeasible tax reform

To learn more about the underlying reasons for this insurrection, we interviewed Nicolás Díaz (**Executive Director of Extituto de Política Abierta, with vast experience in public administration**) who explained the reasons for the discontent among Colombian citizens and the background of the outbreak experienced in 2019 in Colombia.

1. DUQUE'S "PAQUETAZO"

In November 2019, a "Paro Nacional" (National Strike) was formally called and organized by the Strike Committee, which grouped representatives of various sectors of organized civil society. This was in response to the preparation of a series of measures that would cause an economic and social impact on workers and the lower class.

While this series of protests formally began with the rejection of the economic measures taken by Duque's cabinet, which would affect the most vulnerable inhabitants, people who wished to express their discontent with the performance of the current government also joined the demonstrations. Among the most frequent messages expressed were the dissatisfaction with the government's compliance with the Peace Agreement, failures in the implementation of the education budget and the murder of indigenous people in the Cauca region, one of the most affected by the armed conflict.

"(...) since 2019, there were always $\frac{3}{4}$ of the population that supported the strike and $\frac{1}{4}$ that did not. **What we have seen from surveys and polls (1) is that there is a great dissatisfaction (...) we find the level of mobilization surprising"**

(1) According to the Invamer Survey of May (2021) and the Gallup Survey (2019)

2. HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS BY THE POLICE FORCES

During the 2019 Strike (which formally occurred from November 2019 and February 2020, reactivating at the end of April 2021) cases of police brutality were evidenced during the dispersion and repression of the multitudinous demonstrations.

According to the NGO Temblores (2019) Colombia has distanced itself from the Social State of Law proclaimed in the country's Constitution and police brutality is emerging more as a State policy than as part of a few isolated events. As a result, three patterns can be identified:

- 1** It appears systematically in the context of social protest.
- 2** It disproportionately affects Afro-descendants, LGTBI people, women, homeless people, indigenous groups, young people and students.
- 3** It is fueled by the ineffectiveness of the various systems of administration of criminal and disciplinary justice that guarantee impunity.

Although the protests formally began due to the rejection of the tax reform to be implemented in 2019, upon witnessing the response of law enforcement to these mostly peaceful demonstrations, a reform of the police system was added to the series of demands expressed by protesters.

THE FINAL BALANCE (1):



(1) Human Rights Watch (2019)

3. A FAILED DIALOGUE

On November 26, 2019 (5 days after the formal start of the protests) a dialogue table was convened between the representatives of the Strike Committee and the government, in order to create a reconciliation between these groups. It was not possible to reach a resolution that would satisfy both parties.

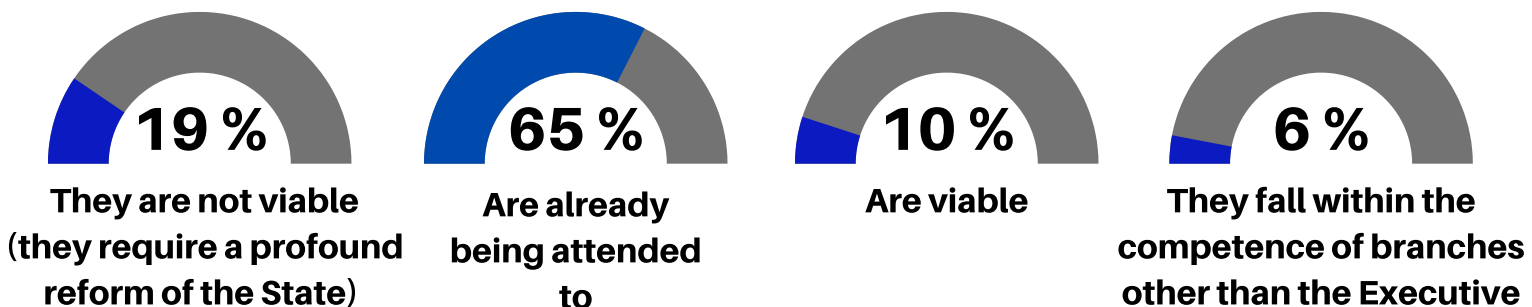
Implementation of a "parallel dialogue"

President Duque promoted the "Great National Conversation" which sought the participation of randomly selected Colombians to express to the Executive their major complaints with the state of the country. Although this initiative installed 46 tables, in which at least 150,000 Colombians were heard through different channels, its achievements are debatable. According to the government, the dialogue did present tangible accomplishments such as the reform of Icetex, the creation of the decree to facilitate the hiring of recent graduates in the public sector without the need for experience, the signing of the Escazú Agreement to protect environmental leaders, among others. However, in 4 months of dialogue, no definitive agreement has been reached with the Strike Committee.

What did [the government] do? With the great national conversation, it sought to avoid dialogue with the organized civil society. What they were looking for was to have a conversation with citizens chosen at random and **say that they had validated with the citizenry, to take the weight away from the organized citizenry.**

Can the demands of the Strike Committee be implemented?

Of the **135 points** proposed by the Committee, the National Government concluded that:



THE CONSEQUENCES: more unrest, protests and repression

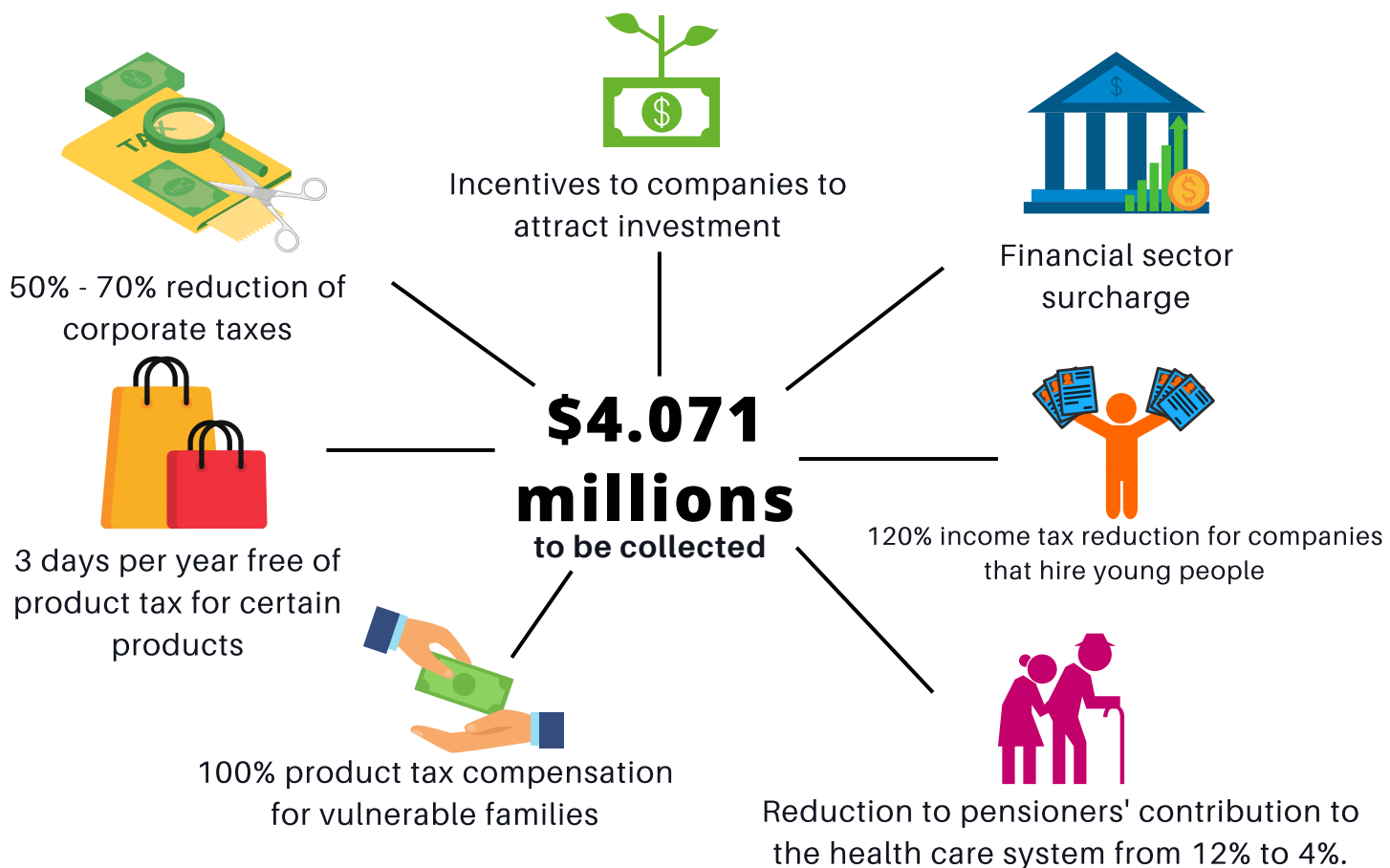
1. A NEW TAX LAW

After negotiations and demonstrations were paralyzed due to the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic to Colombia, at the end of April 2021 Colombians took to the streets again after President Duque announced a new attempt at tax reform. However, how does this reform differ from the one proposed in 2019?

Growth Law (2019) [Ley de Crecimiento]

In 2019, this tax reform was approved, the main objective of which was to reduce taxes to businessmen and transfer this tax burden to citizens. Colombia, for decades has complied with a regulation that generates many exemptions to large companies, a fact that contravenes the principle of equity and proportionality in tax collection. (Forbes, 2019)

This reform also implies:

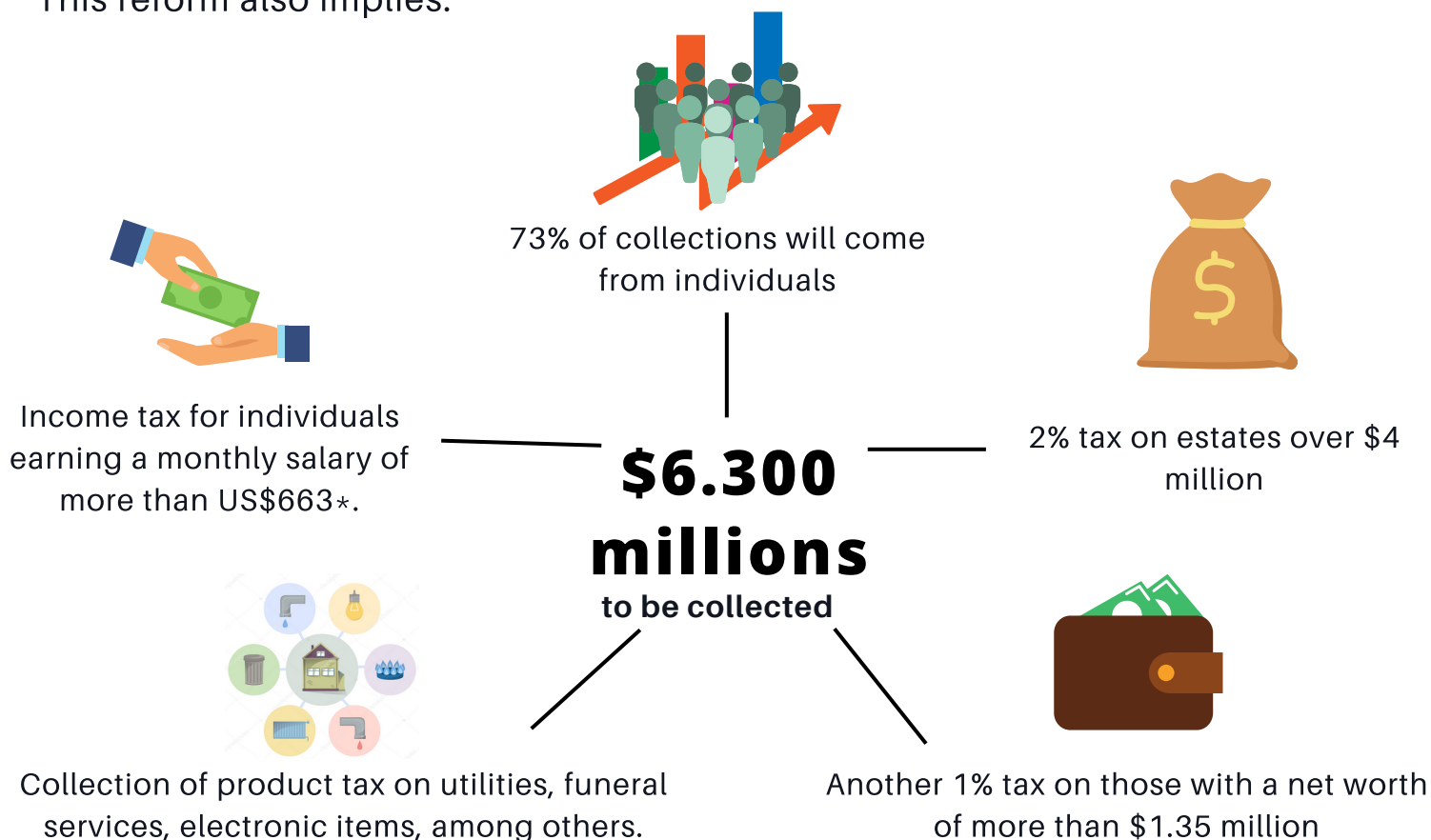


COLOMBIA

Sustainable Solidarity Law (2021) [Ley de Solidaridad Sostenible]

In 2021, after a year marked by the health and economic crisis caused by COVID-19, the Duque government enacts a Tax Reform to collect what was lost during the pandemic. This reform differs from the previous one in that it will increase taxes on the middle class.

This reform also implies:



Although the reform was repealed on May 2, 2021, the demonstrations continue+. This is because this initiative is not the only source of discontent:

STATISTICS OF DISSATISFACTION (1):

1,9%

is the percentage of profits paid by companies in taxes

4,1

million Colombians unemployed

2,3

million households eat only two meals a day

19%

of households have no savings to cope with the pandemic

*In a country where the minimum wage is \$234

+ At the time of writing this report

2. POLICE BRUTALITY BY THE ESMAD

Although, on May 2, 2021 the reform was formally repealed, demonstrations continued and escalated in Colombia. The demands continue to be broadly similar to those of 2019 (compliance with the peace agreement, police reform and greater social equality). However, the country is in the midst of a health and budgetary crisis that may affect the negotiation process, which has not yet resulted in an agreement to the liking of all parties.

Likewise, police abuses, also seen in the 2019 protests, have increased. As a result, the citizenry has organized to confront these forces of law and order. "The Resistance" (La Resistencia) is composed of small civilian armies that organize supply, have articulation with gangs, are supported by local population and decide who passes or does not pass through the streets. (BBC, 2021)

Clashes between these groups and the Mobile Anti-Riot Squad (ESMAD as per its acronym in Spanish) have left people dead, injured and led to arbitrary detentions and rapes.

"In terms of policy [the President] has not even delivered on what he has wanted to do and his governing party has not wanted to implement his policies, **now there are a whole series of promises that we know fiscally he cannot implement and that he does not have the leadership to do so, such as the "tuition zero" (matrícula cero) project.**

A GROWING DEATH TOLL(1)

43

Civilians killed in protests

1.264

Arbitrary detentions

575

Violent interventions in peaceful protests

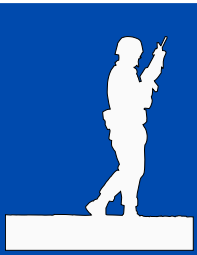
21

Cases of sexual violence

(1) NGO Temblores (2021)

Honduras has experienced in recent decades important moments of democratic instability, which have undermined its institutionality and aggravated its political and social context. In view of this, framed in an atmosphere of distrust towards the government, in April 2019, several communities led by the health and education unions, came out to protest against the apparent privatization of these sectors.

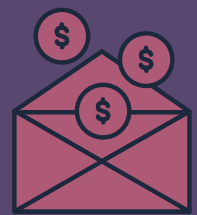
PREVIOUS EVENTS: corruption and displays of authoritarianism



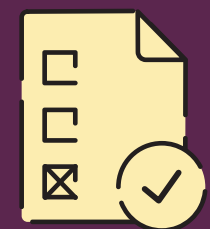
Coup d'état against Manuel Zelaya: Former president Zelaya, after wanting to establish a constituent process that would allow him to reform the articles of the Honduran Constitution that prohibit the reelection of a president, was deposed on June 28, 2009 through a military coup that took him into exile until 2011. This event initiated a period of political instability in Honduras.



Re-election of Juan Orlando Hernandez: Hernandez, although prohibited by the Honduran Constitution, managed to be re-elected as president in 2017. This after alleging before the Supreme Court that preventing his candidacy would be a violation of his right to elect and be elected.



Corruption and inequality: The Hernández government has been the protagonist of several corruption scandals related to drug trafficking and embezzlement, some of them involving "mobile hospitals" to treat patients with COVID and the prosecution in the U.S. of his brother for drug trafficking. Likewise, the country context is not encouraging, with 40% of its population living in poverty.



Lack of opposition representation and the Law for the Restructuring and Transformation of the National Health and Education System: The Honduran opposition, weakly present in Congress by occupying 68/128 seats, failed to have sufficient influence in the drafting of the Law that sparked the protests, which diminished its legitimacy. In addition, the law granted very broad powers to the commissions in charge of restructuring the systems, which, considering the lack of trust in the government, increased uncertainty considerably.

THE PROTESTS: a display of distrust

Despite the fact that re-election is prohibited in Article 239 of the 1982 Constitution of the Republic of Honduras and the fact of attempting to run for a second time after completing a term of office entails disqualifications for 10 years for the exercise of any public function and immediate removal from the position he is holding, Juan Orlando Hernández, through a ruling of the Constitutional Chamber of the Honduran Supreme Court, managed to run for a second term, which began in 2017. To understand the panorama of this country, we spoke with **Rafael Jerez (Coordinator of the Electoral Reform Project at the For a More Just Society Association and graduate of the Universidad Autónoma de Honduras in international financial, commercial and tax law)**.

1. JUAN ORLANDO HERNÁNDEZ' REELECTION

JOH's reelection process was plagued by irregularities that began to manifest themselves prior to his first term as president. In 2012 JOH served as president of the Honduran Congress, and through this institution he illegally achieved the arbitrary dismissal of 4 magistrates of the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court.

"In 2012 the Partido Nacional obtained an overwhelming majority in Congress, and JOH dismissed 4 magistrates of the Constitutional Chamber out of the 5 in total and the one he did not dismiss ended up getting appointed Attorney General of the Republic **Next, in 2014 JOH won his first term in office and extended his control to all institutions. In that year, **a group of deputies close to him presented some actions in the Constitutional Chamber before the magistrates elected by him.**"**

In 2015, the Supreme Court declares Article 239 of the Constitution unconstitutional as it "violates JOH's human right to elect and be elected". In 2017 Hernández wins the presidency in an election that also presented important irregularities in the count, which generated 21 days of protests in the country, 16 deaths and thousands of injured (BBC, 2017). Likewise, in these elections JOH was declared the winner by the president of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal David Matamoros, member of the ruling National Party.

HONDURAS

Provisional results (1) November 27, 2017

Otros
14.7%

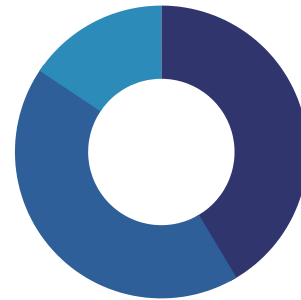


Nasralla
45.1%

Hernández
40.2%

Final official results (2) December 17, 2017

Others
15.6%



Nasralla
41.4%

Hernández
43%

2. POVERTY AND DISCONTENT

The reality of Honduras is that of a country with significant levels of poverty (70% by 2020 according to the National Autonomous University of Honduras). Also, the recent increase in the costs of public services such as electricity (10%), following the crises caused by COVID and tropical storms Eta and Iota, has increased the vulnerability of its citizens.

In addition, the Honduran government has been the protagonist of numerous corruption scandals, some of them linked to the purchase for 47 million dollars of 7 "mobile hospitals" to attend patients infected with COVID-19. The delivery of these structures took more than 100 days (when they should have been operational in 65 days at the latest) and only 3 of the 7 promised hospitals are operational.

POSITION N°

88/167

IN THE ECONOMIST
DEMOCRACY INDEX
(HIBRID REGIMEN) (3)

Honduras (4)

0

24

100

Corrupt

Transparent

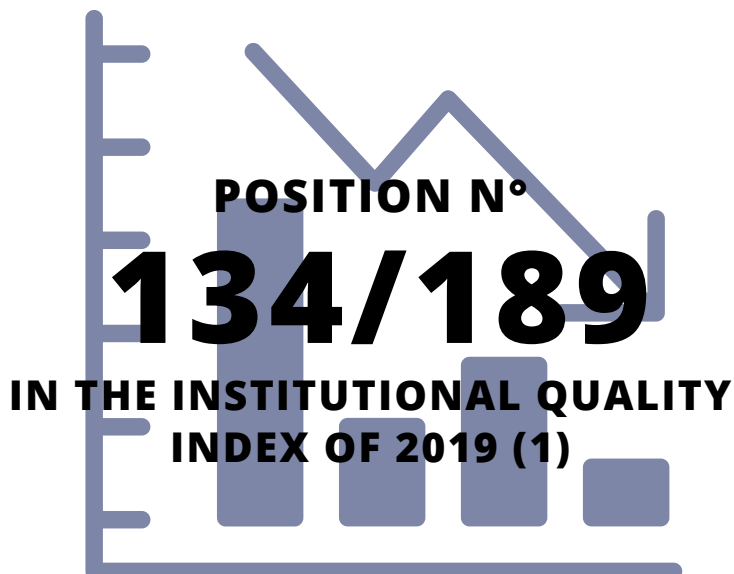
(1) The Economist (2017) (2) TSE (2017) (3) The Economist (2020)(4) Transparencia Internacional (2020)

3. A UNILATERAL LAW

In April 2019, the Law for the Restructuring and Transformation of the National Health and Education System was enacted, which established commissions with broad powers to make the relevant decisions on how these systems will be managed from that time onwards.

These commissions were proposed to carry out hiring in both sectors, review service agreements and contracts, and manage the payment of labor benefits. Due to the general lack of confidence in the government, the enactment of the Law and the creation of the commissions was seen as a precursor to the privatization of the entire education and health system, which, for a low-income population, would mean higher service costs and for doctors and teachers, possible dismissal or salary cuts.

This generated rejection by the population, which organized protests to repeal the law. Led by important figures in the health and education sectors, Hondurans took to the streets, also demanding the departure of JOH from the government.



"The more general problem is that **there was no legitimacy, and there still is none, neither of the president nor of those around him.** In Congress the dynamic is a little different because there are opposition parties that can be a counterweight, but many of the decisions that were made to carry out the protests did not require a vote from the opposition and neither did the opposition have much weight. **In general, the government party is very transversal in the public administration, which causes a lot of rejection.**"

THE CONSEQUENCES: migration, new electoral law and two unsuccessful dialogues

1. DIVIDED DIALOGUES

In June 2019, President Hernandez decides to repeal the Law of Restructuring and Transformation of the National Health and Education System after 1 month of protests, clashes, injuries, deaths and the threat of the health guild to suspend all surgeries and patient care in the country.

However, the mobilizations continued as they had gained the support of the general population who demanded the resignation of Hernández from the presidency. In response, the government extended a dialogue to the health and education unions, with the aim of placating the mobilizations and reaching an agreement for a new restructuring of the health and education systems. Nonetheless, this initiative was also plagued by irregularities, such as communication failures between the two sides, opposing public statements and the summoning of members of these sectors accused of corruption.

In response to this, the Platform for the Defense of Education and Health convened its own alternative dialogue called the Alternative Citizen Dialogue (Diálogo Ciudadano Alternativo), which was attended by two government representatives but from which the secretaries of education and health were absent.

In the end, neither dialogue prospered or generated a response to the collapse of the health and education systems and, with the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, the initiative dissipated.

"The Law was repealed, **but neither of the two sectors succeeded in the end.** The alternative dialogue did not prosper either because there was no sustainability. **Since the culmination of the protests, support for these initiatives was lost,** and when other demands began to be included, such as the resignation of JOH, **the support to the unions was lost because the resignation was not going to happen and also the permanent protest has never worked in Honduras."**

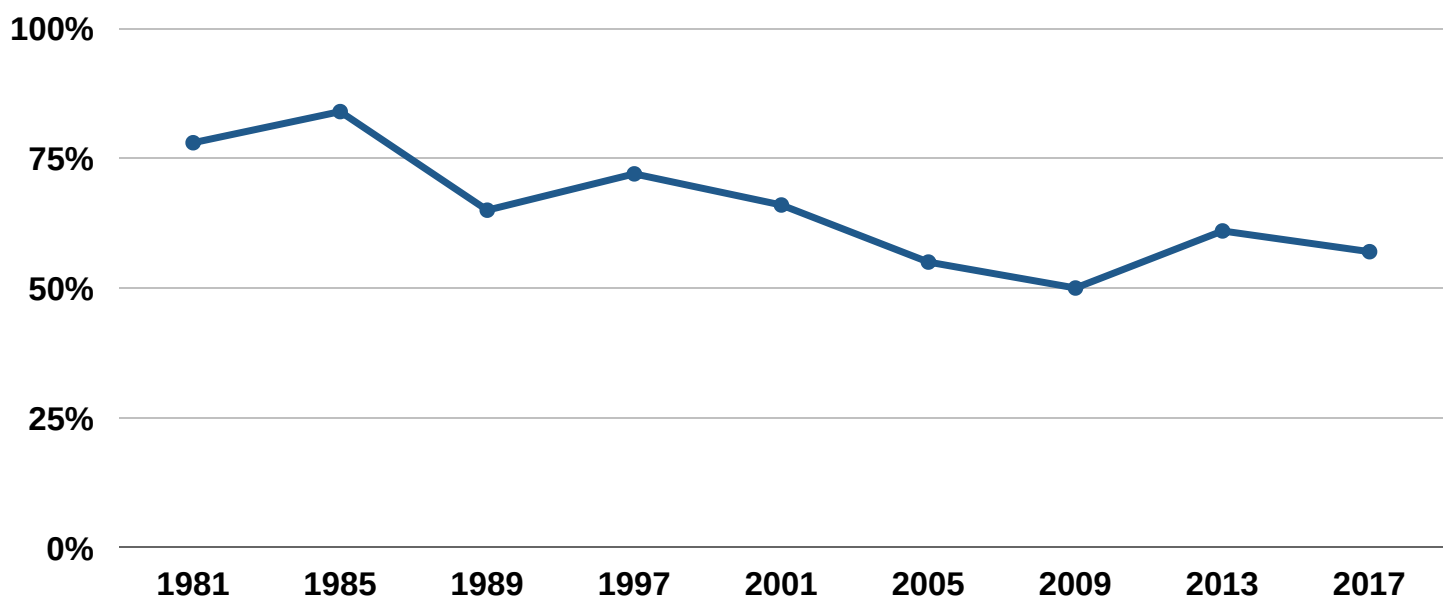
2. REFORM OF THE ELECTORAL LAW

Considering the lack of confidence in Honduran institutions, the alleged electoral fraud of 2017 and the discontent expressed by the population in the many protests that have taken place since April 2019, The Electoral Law's reform is seen as a way to channel discontent in a political way and thus provide some legal security and certainty to Hondurans.

This new law seeks to provide more clarity and rigorous parameters for candidacies, the holding of elections and clear rules that would not be subject to interpretations or misrepresentations, in order to avoid the repetition of the protests witnessed after the 2017 election results.

However, a day before the official call for elections for November 2021, the National Congress passed a new law. Although, the process of discussion and promulgation of this matter generated an uncertain scenario for these general elections since, if a new regulation was not approved, the elections would be held with the electoral laws approved in 2004, which would generate more distrust (translated into abstentionism) in the population.

Participation in general elections



Source: Romero (2018) with data from the TSE

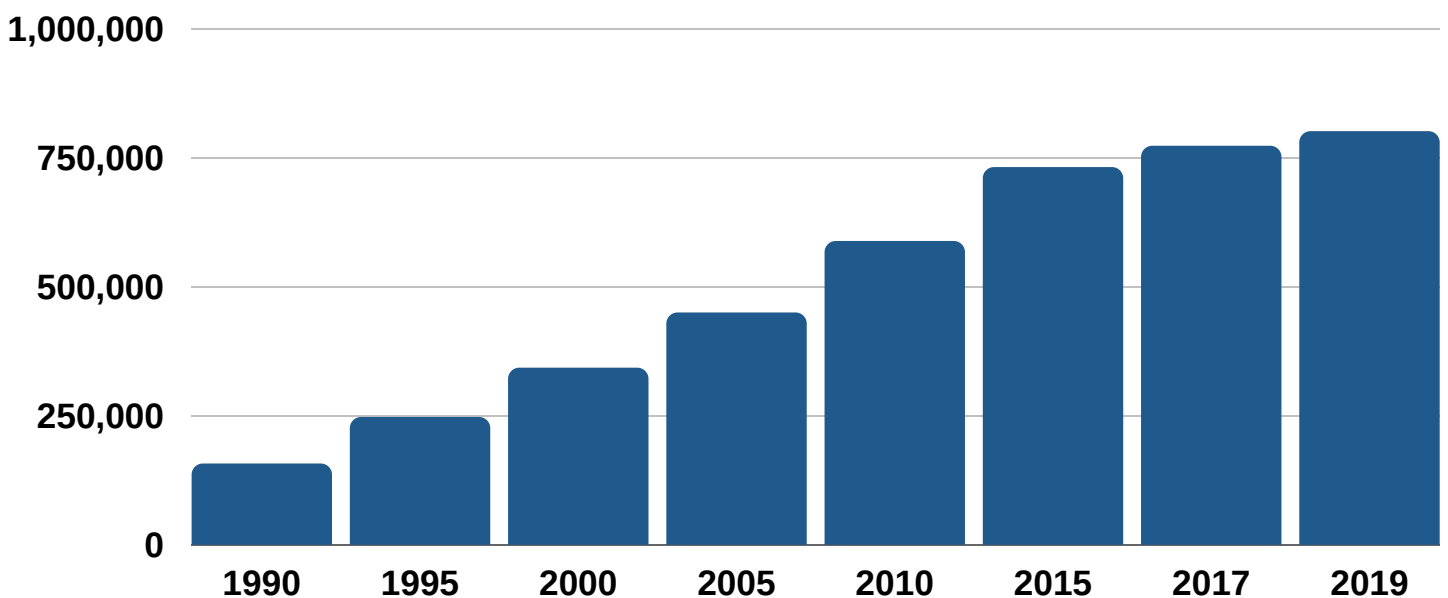
3. MIGRANT CARAVANS: ESCAPING FROM NECESSITY

The migrant caravans are a phenomenon that has been present in Honduras since 2018, when the first one of these left San Pedro Sula for the United States, with more than 7,000 people looking to emigrate. Among the reasons why the migrants decided to embark in such journey are the high levels of crime present in Honduras, the lack of opportunities and poverty, which have become part of the daily life of Hondurans.

While immigration has been an issue since before Juan Orlando Hernández came to power, this new form of migration to the United States shows how the population is affected by a system that has not been able to respond to its most pressing needs.

The 2017 election was not the trigger, **but the decline that occurred after JOH's re-election was**, because the caravans started a year and a half later. They are a reflection of how much the political crisis has escalated, **in fact, caravans leave for the United States each month."**

Migration in Honduras (1990 -2019)




Source: Datos Macro (2019) with data from the UN


PUERTO RICO

During the summer of 2019, Puerto Rico experienced two weeks of massive protests after chats were leaked between the island's governor, Ricardo Roselló, and members of his government team. The 889 page file showed intolerant and unacceptable attitudes from the Governor, who, among other things, mocked opposition figures, took lightly the serious crisis that the island is going through and made homophobic remarks. This, combined with the social and economic problems that the country is experiencing, generated widespread rejection among the population.


BACKGROUND: Corruption, la junta and the US



Corruption: Rosselló's government has also been at the center of corruption schemes. Shortly before the release of the messages, a federal judge accused several former government officials and contractors of conspiracy to commit fraud, theft, electronic fraud, money laundering, and conspiracy to launder money. Among them, Secretary of Education Julia Keleher, and Director of the Health Insurance Administration (ASES) Angela Avila, who were arrested by the FBI.



The Fiscal Oversight Board: Puerto Rico has experienced several consecutive ravages caused by natural disasters. In addition, it has limited independence to make financial decisions due to its status as a US associated state. In 2016, the Obama administration approved the Promise Act, which seeks to refinance the island's foreign debt, due to the fact that it has grown steadily since the collapse of the world economy in 2008. However, it placed creditors at the top of the country's economic priorities which significantly increased inequality and poverty.



Relationship between PR and USA: As a result of the Spanish-American War of 1898, Puerto Rico was annexed to the US; later, in 1952, the associated state of Puerto Rico was created with the approval of Puerto Ricans and US parliamentarians. The island can define its own constitution and local government, however, it is subordinate to the US in other respects, which has generated a duality in the citizens, who, even though are American citizens, want more independence and more opportunities in Puerto Rico. This control was increased in 2016 with the Promise Act, which states that the island's public budget must be approved by a board sent by the United States.

THE PROTESTS: a demonstration of decades of discontent

Puerto Rico lived through two weeks of protests, which brought together a long list of demands and discontent in a single main demand, the resignation of Governor Ricardo Roselló.

While the leaked messages caused widespread outrage, there are other events that added to the discontent expressed in the summer of 2019. To learn more about them, we talked with **Dr. María de Lourdes Lara and Elena Martínez of the Puerto Rican NGO, Agenda Ciudadana.**

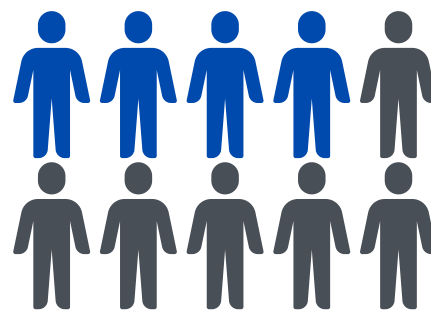
1. POLITICAL ATTRITION AND CORRUPTION

Since its founding as a free associated state in 1952, Puerto Rico has been governed by the leaders of two parties: the Nuevo Partido Progresista and the Partido popular Democrático. The leaders of both institutions have been the protagonists of the continuous economic crisis that the island is going through; in addition, they have been involved in cases of misappropriation of funds, especially during the process of infrastructure reconstruction following natural disasters.

This has generated distrust in the population towards the country's institutions. Therefore, in 2020, a profound change was seen in the political map, when minority parties such as Movimiento Victoria Ciudadana and Proyecto Dignidad were included in the House of Representatives.

Of all the parties, the one that accumulates the most votes is the Nuevo Partido Progresista, because it is the one that has a broader base and the one that has the most supporters, but it won by very few votes. What happened was that **the citizens gave power to various parties so that the decision-making process could be monitored and divided, to see if that would improve their outcomes**" Maria de Lourdes Lara.

(1) EFE (2019)



44% of the population perceives corruption in state authorities(1)

2. "RICKY, QUIT AND TAKE THE BOARD WITH YOU!"

Although the protests were attended by people from different contexts, from workers to housewives, students and celebrities, there was only one demand, the immediate resignation of Ricardo Roselló and with it, the dissolution of the Fiscal Oversight Board.

The scandalous Telegram messages were the issue that united the Puerto Rican population in rejection towards the governor, however, the growing poverty and inequality in the country, as well as the mismanagement of aid after the disaster caused by Hurricane Maria, which completely devastated the island and left 3 million people without basic services for months, also contributed to the dissatisfaction with the ruling class.

Some of the Telegram chat messages:
(CNN, 2019)

Now that we're on the subject, don't we have some corpses to feed our crows?
(Sobrino Vega, former Financial Director of Puerto Rico)

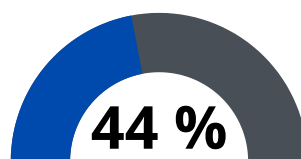
I'm salivating to shoot her [Yulin Cruz of the opposition party]
(Sobrino Vega, former Financial Director of Puerto Rico)

You would be doing me a great favor
(Ricardo Roselló, Governor of Puerto Rico)

Our people should go out and defend Tom and beat that b***h [former New York Council President Melissa Mark-Viverito]
(Ricardo Roselló, Governor of Puerto Rico)

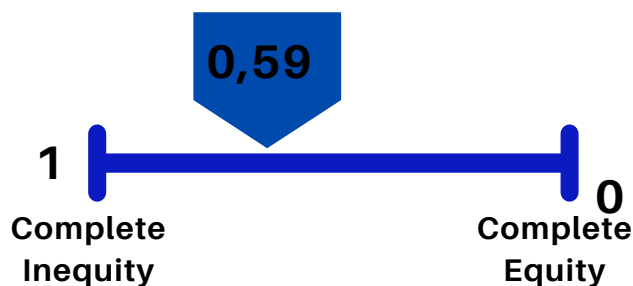
Ricky Martin is so macho that he f**s men because women do not measure up. Pure patriarchy
(Sobrino Vega, former Financial Director of Puerto Rico)

Meanwhile:



of the population living in poverty

Gini coefficient in Puerto Rico (2020):



4.600 Killed by Hurricane Maria in 2017 (CNN, 2019)

5.896 Domestic violence cases in 2019 (DW, 2019)

15 LGTBI+ killings in 2020 (EFE, 2020)

3. NO DEFINED LEADER

These protests have the particularity that (like those seen in Chile) were completely spontaneous and organized through social media. There is no defined leader to this movement, which was composed of very heterogeneous profiles. However, Puerto Rican artists and celebrities were an important part in the transmission of information through their social media accounts about the protests, from concentration sites to activities and even news about the movement.

Celebrities such as Residente, Ricky Martin, Bad Bunny, among others, accompanied the citizens in the rallies, which had more than 500,000 attendees, protesting both the outrage caused by the messages of Roselló and his team, as well as the economic and social conditions of the island, product of a prolonged mismanagement of public resources and the implementation of the Fiscal Oversight Board.

In these concentrations the presence of political groups was rejected, so these are not attributed to opposition parties (although their members were attacked in the chats), it was the citizens of the island who formed the movement.

PUERTO RICO THIS THURSDAY WE MARCH AT 9AM LEAVING THE GOLDEN MILE TO HIRAM BITHORN WE CONTINUE TO PROTEST UNTIL ROSELLÓ RESIGNS. Residente's Tweet on July 23, 2019 (@Residente)

Let the pressure continue. Puerto Rico don't back down, Ricardo Roselló, you have to sit down with members of the Puerto Rican press. #RICKYRENUNCIA Tweet by Ricky Martin on July 23, 2019 @ricky_martin

I arrive to the island and I find out that this scum is mocking people again and playing with our minds! @ricardorossello YOU WON'T resign??? NEITHER WILL WE!!! PUERTO RICO WILL BE RESPECTED!!! CHARLATÁN!!! Tweet from Bad Bunny on July 22, 2019 @sanbenito

The demonstrations here usually have a point of arrival and there is a stage where the leaders who called for the activity express themselves, but **that day the stage was empty. There was not a group that starred in the movement, it was the people of Puerto Rico**, they were people from all sectors. Elena Martinez.

THE CONSEQUENCES: Roselló's resignation and a renewal in the political system

1. RICKY RESIGNS

After two weeks of protests on the island and the withdrawal of several of the sponsors of his party, Ricardo Roselló announced on July 24, 2019 his resignation, to become effective on August 2 of the same year.

His successor was the Secretary of Justice, Wanda Vásquez, since the Secretary of State, Pedro Pierluisi, nominated by Roselló -who should have been the Governor's successor, according to the Constitution of the island- was removed from office by the Supreme Court, by declaring his swearing-in "unconstitutional".

These protests were also followed by repression and law enforcement officials, who used tear gas to disperse demonstrators and made arrests.

"Having achieved his resignation, there were efforts to gather the energy of this movement in Citizens' Assemblies and other groups, but it only went as far as the configuration of these minority parties that obtained very high percentages of electoral vote and occupy. in a surprising way, the representation of the legislative assembly and have been creating a feeling of hope, but **nothing else has been set up.**" Maria de Lourdes Lara.

THE FINAL BALANCE (1):

14

Injured

5

Arrested

40

**Damaged
properties**

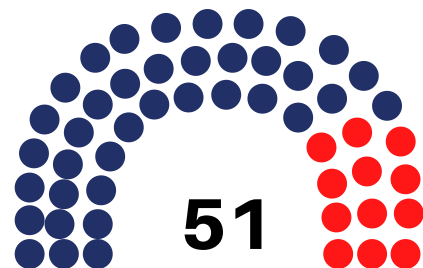
(1) Telemundo (2019)

2. CHANGES IN THE COUNTRY'S POLITICAL FRAMEWORK

On November 3, 2020, general elections were held in Puerto Rico, where Pedro Pierluisi of the Partido Nuevo Progresista won the presidency with a small majority of votes (33.2%). These elections represented the beginning of a new era in the Puerto Rican political landscape as the island gave the first hint of wanting to get out of the bipartisanship that had been present since 1952 by including new forces in the House of Representatives (now a majority of opponents) such as the Movimiento Victoria Ciudadana (11.2%), the Partido Independentista de Puerto Rico (9%), and the Partido Proyecto Dignidad (1.3%). (State Elections Commission, 2020)

"Pierluisi comes out as apparently the least bad of what there was. There was a lot of enthusiasm for the parties that were created, the decision was divided between 5 of them then no one got an absolute majority. The Partido Nuevo Progresista won one third of the vote, it won the Executive but the Legislative, which is ruled by the opposition. What happened was that the population gave power to various parties so that the decision-making between them could be monitored and divided improve their policies." Maria de Lourdes Lara.

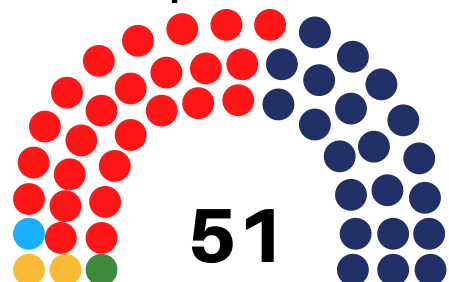
House of Representatives in 2016



Senate in 2016



House of Representatives in 2020



Senate in 2020





Conclusions

- 2019 was a year of protests in Colombia, Honduras and Puerto Rico. In Colombia the official reason for the social explosion was the possible implementation of a law that would increase taxes, but also the discontent with the policies of the Duque administration. In Honduras, it was the lack of trust and legitimacy in Hernández's management and a non-transparent restructuring of the health and education systems. In Puerto Rico, the inefficient economic response and the dissemination of compromising messages from the political elite led to massive protests on the island. Among these three cases, the outbreaks in Colombia and Honduras did not generate an efficient dialogue, and the pandemic made it difficult to continue protests for these causes. On the other hand, in Puerto Rico there were important changes in the political system based on this outbreak. The violence in the protests stands out in the case of Colombia, so the citizens have added a reform of the police to their demands.
- While certain causes can be identified as the triggers of outbreaks, most of the protests are due to structural problems that have evolved over the years. In the cases of Colombia and Honduras, the measures were stopped by the governments, however, they have not shown signs of generating a real dialogue, which can lead to a continuation of discontent and a new outbreak in a short time.

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