

Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Compilation of Selected Indices

Updated June 15, 2020

Congressional Research Service
<https://crsreports.congress.gov>

R46016



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This report provides a regional snapshot of the political climate in Latin America and the Caribbean, based on the U.S. Department of State's description of each country's political system and selected nongovernmental indices that measure democracy trends worldwide. Using tables and graphs to illustrate regional trends, this report provides a snapshot of democracy indicators from the following sources: (1) the U.S. Department of State's *2018 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*; (2) Bertelsmann Stiftung's 2018 Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI); (3) the Economist Intelligence Unit's (EIU's) *Democracy Index 2018*; (4) Freedom House's *Freedom in the World 2019*; and (5) the Varieties of Democracy Institute's (V-Dem's) Liberal Democracy Index in its *Democracy Report 2019*. Additional resources appear at the end of the report.

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Introduction

The current trajectory of democracy around the world is an issue of interest for Congress, which has contributed to U.S. democracy promotion objectives overseas. For decades, U.S. policy has broadly reflected the view that the spread of democracy around the world is favorable to U.S. interests. This report provides a regional snapshot of the political climate in Latin America and the Caribbean, based on the U.S. Department of State's description of each country's political system and selected nongovernmental (NGO) indices that measure democracy trends worldwide.

For additional information on democracy in the global context, see CRS Report R45344, *Global Trends in Democracy: Background, U.S. Policy, and Issues for Congress*, by Michael A. Weber.

For related information about democracy in Latin American and the Caribbean, see the following products:

- CRS Report R46258, *Latin America and the Caribbean: U.S. Policy and Issues in the 116th Congress*, coordinated by Mark P. Sullivan
- CRS In Focus IF10460, *Latin America and the Caribbean: U.S. Policy Overview*, by Mark P. Sullivan;
- CRS Report R45547, *U.S. Foreign Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean: FY2019 Appropriations*, by Peter J. Meyer and Edward Y. Gracia;
- CRS Report 98-684, *Latin America and the Caribbean: Fact Sheet on Leaders and Elections*, by Carla Y. Davis-Castro; and
- CRS Report R45733, *Combating Corruption in Latin America: Congressional Considerations*, coordinated by June S. Beittel.

CRS also publishes reports on specific Latin American and Caribbean countries.

Source Notes

This report compiles information from the U.S. State Department and data from four nongovernmental (NGO) indices. For a discussion about definitions of democracy and critiques of democracy indices, see CRS Report R45344, *Global Trends in Democracy: Background, U.S. Policy, and Issues for Congress*, by Michael A. Weber. CRS does not endorse the methodology or accuracy of any particular democracy index.

In parentheses following the country name in the tables below is the nature of the country's political system, as described in the U.S. State Department's *2019 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*.¹ While the publication focuses broadly on human rights conditions in each country, the first sentence of each country report provides a characterization of the country's political system. This U.S. government information is included here for comparison with findings from the democracy indicators published by NGOs.

Bertelsmann Stiftung, a private foundation based in Germany, has published the Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI) biannually since 2006. Key regional findings and country reports are available in English (BTI publishes the full regional report in German). BTI 2020 evaluates the quality of democracy, a market economy, and political management in 137 developing and

¹ U.S. Department of State, *2019 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, March 11, 2020, at <https://www.state.gov/reports/2019-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/>

transition countries. For political transformation specifically, BTI ranks countries using 18 indicators grouped into five criteria: (1) stateness, (2) political participation, (3) rule of law, (4) stability of democratic institutions, and (5) political and social integration.² Based on the criteria, BTI assigns a category: *democracy in consolidation*, *defective democracy*, *highly defective democracy*, *moderate autocracy*, and *hardline autocracy*. In its global report, BTI notes “in some Latin American countries, the degree to which autocratic alternatives are clearly rejected has diminished significantly. Strong declines in the scores assessing approval of democracy, though at different levels, can be seen in countries such as Brazil (-3), Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica and Panama (each -2)” but the report also highlights the opposite: “two Latin American countries have shown that the path of backsliding is just as reversible as that of progressive democratization,” in reference to Ecuador and Colombia.³ BTI evaluates all Central and South American nations. With the exception of Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago, and Jamaica, BTI does not evaluate Caribbean nations.

The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), based in London and New York, has offices and analysts in various countries. Since 2006, EIU has produced a democracy index that provides an annual snapshot of the state of democracy for 165 independent states and two territories.⁴ The EIU classifies countries as *full democracies*, *flawed democracies*, *hybrid regimes*, or *authoritarian regimes* based on an aggregate score of 60 indicators in five categories: (1) electoral process and pluralism, (2) civil liberties, (3) the functioning of government, (4) political participation, and (5) political culture. According to the EIU’s *Democracy Index 2019*, the Latin America and Caribbean region’s overall score went down for the fourth year in a row from 6.24 in 2018 to 6.13 in 2019 (on a 0 to 10 scale).⁵ The three countries in the region classified in 2019 as full democracies are Uruguay, Costa Rica, and, new to the group, Chile. EIU’s *Democracy Index 2019* identified three countries in the region as authoritarian regimes: Nicaragua, Venezuela, and Cuba.⁶ EIU evaluates all Central and South American nations. With the exceptions of Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago, EIU does not evaluate Caribbean nations.

Freedom House is a U.S.-based NGO that conducts research on democracy, political freedom, and human rights worldwide. It has published *Freedom in the World* since 1978, and the current report covers 195 countries and 15 territories. Freedom House assigns each country 0 to 4 points on 25 indicators (10 political rights indicators and 15 civil liberties indicators) for a total of up to 100 points. The scores determine numerical ratings for political rights and civil liberties freedoms on a scale of 1 (most free) to 7 (least free). The political rights and civil liberties ratings are averaged to produce an overall status of *free*, *partly free*, or *not free*. Freedom House’s report covering 2019 found that “acute political and governance crises also affected the region during the year, leading two countries [Peru and Haiti] to decline in the Freedom in the World indicator pertaining to representative rule.”⁷ Venezuela continued to deteriorate while El Salvador,

² Bertelsmann Stiftung, “Methodology,” accessed November 18, 2019, available at <https://www.bti-project.org/en/about/project/methodology/>.

³ Sabine Donner, *BTI 2020: Resistance to democratic regression and authoritarian rule is growing Global Findings Democracy*, Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2020, at https://www.bti-project.org/content/en/reports/global-report-d/global_findings_democracy_2020_EN.pdf.

⁴ The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) did not produce a democracy index report covering 2007 or 2009.

⁵ EIU, *Democracy Index 2019: A year of democratic setbacks and popular protest*, 2020, available at <https://www.eiu.com/topic/democracy-index>, p. 33.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Sarah Repucci, *Freedom in the World 2020: A Leaderless Struggle for Democracy*, Freedom House, 2020, at

Guatemala and Honduras “suffered score declines for the year, though the specific reasons varied.”⁸ The top 10 countries with democratic declines included Bolivia, Chile, Haiti and Venezuela while the top 10 countries with democratic declines over the last decade include Venezuela, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic.⁹ The report’s analysis is based on data that are detailed in full on the Freedom House’s report web page both for current and past reports.¹⁰ Freedom House’s webpage “Countries,” lists the current freedom scores of all countries.¹¹ Freedom House evaluates democracy in all Central and South American and Caribbean nations.

The Varieties of Democracy Institute (V-DEM), headquartered at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden, collects democracy data through its research team in collaboration with country experts. In 2017, V-Dem published its first global report measuring the status of democracy with an index. *Democracy Report 2020* includes the Liberal Democracy Index, which examines 71 indicators included in the Liberal Component Index and the Electoral Democracy Index.¹² For 2019, V-Dem groups 179 countries into four categories: *liberal democracy*, *electoral democracy*, *electoral autocracy*, and *closed autocracy*. The current report notes that “by the population-weighted measure, Latin America has been thrown back to a level of democracy last recorded around 1992” yet three quarters of the countries in Latin America and the Caribbean “still qualify as democratic.”¹³ V-DEM evaluates all Central and South American nations. With the exceptions of Barbados, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago, V-DEM does not evaluate Caribbean nations.

Table 1 looks at Caribbean countries’ global democracy rankings according to EIU’s *Democracy Index 2019*, Freedom House’s *Freedom in the World 2020*, V-Dem’s *Democracy Report 2020*, and Bertelsmann Stiftung’s 2020 Transformation Index. **Table 2** compares the same reports for Mexico and Central America, as does **Table 3** for South America. Each report evaluates a different number of countries, so there are missing rankings for some countries. Countries are listed alphabetically in each table.

https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2020-02/FIW_2020_REPORT_BOOKLET_Final.pdf

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Freedom House, “Freedom in the World 2020: A Leaderless Struggle for Democracy,” accessed June 1, 2020, at <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2020/leaderless-struggle-democracy>

¹¹ Freedom House, “Countries and Territories,” accessed June 1, 2020, at <https://freedomhouse.org/countries/freedom-world/scores?sort=desc&order=Total%20Score%20and%20Status>.

¹² Varieties of Democracy Institute, *Democracy Report 2020: Autocratization Surges – Resistance Grows*, March 2020, at https://www.v-dem.net/media/filer_public/f0/5d/f05d46d8-626f-4b20-8e4e-53d4b134bfc3/democracy_report_2020_low.pdf.

¹³ Ibid.

Table I. Caribbean: 2019 Democracy Rankings

Country (U.S. State Dept. political system description)	Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index 2020		EIU Democracy Index 2019		Freedom House Freedom in the World 2020				V-Dem Democracy Report 2020	
	Political Transfor- mation Global Rank	Status Index ^a	Global Rank ^b	Regime Type ^c	Aggregate Score ^d	Political Rights Score	Civil Liberties Score	Freedom Status ^e	Liberal Democracy Index Rank	Regime Type ^f
Antigua & Barbuda (parliamentary multiparty democracy)	—	—	—	—	85	2	2	Free	—	—
Bahamas (constitutional parliamentary democracy)	—	—	—	—	91	1	1	Free	—	—
Barbados (parliamentary multiparty democracy)	—	—	—	—	95	1	1	Free	29	(-) Liberal democracy
Belize (constitutional parliamentary democracy)	—	—	—	—	86	2	2	Free	—	—
Cuba (authoritarian state)	110	Hardline autocracy	143	Authoritarian	14	7	6	Not free	159	Closed autocracy
Dominica (parliamentary multiparty democracy)	—	—	—	—	93	1	1	Free	—	—

Country (U.S. State Dept. political system description)	Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index 2020		EIU Democracy Index 2019		Freedom House Freedom in the World 2020				V-Dem Democracy Report 2020	
	Political Transfor- mation Global Rank	Status Index ^a	Global Rank ^b	Regime Type ^c	Aggregate Score ^d	Political Rights Score	Civil Liberties Score	Freedom Status ^e	Liberal Democracy Index Rank	Regime Type ^f
Dominican Republic (representative constitutional democracy)	41	Defective democracy	60=	Flawed democracy	67	3	3	Partly free	100	Electoral democracy
Grenada (parliamentary democracy)	—	—	—	—	89	1	2	Free	—	—
Guyana (multiparty democracy)	—	—	71=	Flawed democracy	74	2	3	Free	83	Electoral democracy
Haiti (constitutional multiparty republic)	92	Moderate autocracy	105	Hybrid regime	38	5	5	Partly free	121	Electoral autocracy
Jamaica (constitutional parliamentary democracy)	15	Democracy in consolidation	50	Flawed democracy	78	2	2	Free	39	(+) Electoral democracy
St. Kitts and Nevis (parliamentary multiparty democracy and federation)	—	—	—	—	89	1	1	Free	—	—

Country (U.S. State Dept. political system description)	Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index 2020		EIU Democracy Index 2019		Freedom House Freedom in the World 2020				V-Dem Democracy Report 2020	
	Political Transfor- mation Global Rank	Status Index ^a	Global Rank ^b	Regime Type ^c	Aggregate Score ^d	Political Rights Score	Civil Liberties Score	Freedom Status ^e	Liberal Democracy Index Rank	Regime Type ^f
St. Lucia (parliamentary multiparty democracy)	—	—	—	—	92	I	I	Free	—	—
St. Vincent and the Grenadines (parliamentary multiparty democracy)	—	—	—	—	91	I	I	Free	—	—
Suriname (constitutional democracy)	—	—	49	Flawed democracy	75	2	3	Free	55	Electoral democracy
Trinidad & Tobago (parliamentary democracy)	13	Democracy in consolidation	43=	Flawed democracy	82	2	2	Free	43	(-) Liberal democracy

Source: Compiled by CRS using the U.S. State Department's 2019 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, Bertelsmann Stiftung's 2020 Transformation Index, EIU's Democracy Index 2019, Freedom House's Freedom in the World 2020, and the Varieties of Democracy Institute's Democracy Report 2020.

Notes: Although Belize is located in Central America and Guyana and Suriname are located in South America, all three are members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

- BTI classifies a country as an autocracy if one of seven political transformation indicators falls short of the relevant threshold. BTI considers failing states autocracies.
- The symbol "=" indicates a tying score or equal rank with another country.
- Definitions from EIU: Full democracies are countries where the "functioning of government is satisfactory. Media are independent and diverse.... effective checks and balances.... judiciary is independent and judicial decisions are enforced.... only limited problems." Flawed democracies have "free and fair elections ... basic civil liberties are respected. However, there are significant weaknesses in other aspects of democracy, including problems in governance, an underdeveloped political culture and low levels of political participation." Hybrid regimes have "substantial election irregularities.... government pressure on opposition parties and

candidates.... corruption tends to be widespread and the rule of law is weak. Civil society is weak.... and the judiciary is not independent.” In authoritarian regimes, “state political pluralism is absent or heavily circumscribed.... some formal institutions of democracy may exist, but these have little substance.... elections ... are not free and fair.... disregard for abuses and infringements of civil liberties.... repression of criticism of the government and pervasive censorship. There is no independent judiciary.”

- d. Freedom House assigns each country 0 to 4 points on 25 indicators (10 political rights indicators and 15 civil liberties indicators) for a total of up to 100 points.
- e. Freedom House assigns each country a rating for political rights and one for civil liberties, where 1 represents the greatest degree of freedom and 7 the smallest degree of freedom. The average of a country's political rights and civil liberties ratings determines the status of *free* (1.0 to 2.5), *partly free* (3.0 to 5.0), or *not free* (5.5 to 7.0).
- f. The symbol (-) indicates that, taking uncertainty into account, the country could belong to the lower category while (+) signifies that the country could belong to the higher category.

Table 2. Mexico and Central America: 2019 Democracy Rankings

	Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index 2020		EIU Democracy Index 2019		Freedom House Freedom in the World 2020				V-Dem Democracy Report 2020	
Country (U.S. State Dept. political system description)	Political Transfor- mation Global Rank	Status Index ^a	Global Rank	Regime Type ^b	Aggregate Score ^c	Political Rights Score	Civil Liberties Score	Freedom Status ^d	Liberal Democracy Index Rank	Regime Type ^e
Costa Rica (constitutional republic)	8	Democracy in consolidation	19	Full democracy	91	1	1	Free	8	(-) Liberal democracy
El Salvador (constitutional multiparty republic)	30	Defective democracy	71=	Flawed democracy	66	2	4	Partly Free	76	Electoral democracy
Guatemala (constitutional multiparty republic)	93	Moderate autocracy	93	Hybrid regime	52	4	4	Partly free	86	Electoral democracy
Honduras (constitutional multiparty republic)	83	Moderate autocracy	89=	Hybrid regime	45	4	4	Partly free	129	Electoral autocracy
Mexico (federal multiparty republic)	59	Defective democracy	73	Flawed democracy	62	3	3	Partly free	68	Electoral democracy
Nicaragua^f (constitutional multiparty republic)	94	Moderate autocracy	122=	Authoritarian	31	6	5	Not free	170	Electoral autocracy

Country (U.S. State Dept. political system description)	Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index 2020		EIU Democracy Index 2019		Freedom House Freedom in the World 2020				V-Dem Democracy Report 2020	
	Political Transfor- mation Global Rank	Status Index ^a	Global Rank	Regime Type ^b	Aggregate Score ^c	Political Rights Score	Civil Liberties Score	Freedom Status ^d	Liberal Democracy Index Rank	Regime Type ^e
Panama (constitutional multiparty democracy)	35	Defective democracy	46	Flawed democracy	84	1	2	Free	47	Electoral democracy

Source: Compiled by CRS using the U.S. State Department's *2019 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*, Bertelsmann Stiftung's 2020 Transformation Index, EIU's *Democracy Index 2019*, Freedom House's *Freedom in the World 2020*, and the Varieties of Democracy Institute's *Democracy Report 2020*.

- BTI classifies a country as an autocracy if one of seven political transformation indicators falls short of the relevant threshold. BTI considers failing states autocracies.
- Definitions from EIU: Full democracies are countries where the "functioning of government is satisfactory. Media are independent and diverse.... effective checks and balances.... judiciary is independent and judicial decisions are enforced.... only limited problems." Flawed democracies have "free and fair elections ... basic civil liberties are respected. However, there are significant weaknesses in other aspects of democracy, including problems in governance, an underdeveloped political culture and low levels of political participation." Hybrid regimes have "substantial election irregularities.... government pressure on opposition parties and candidates.... corruption tends to be widespread and the rule of law is weak. Civil society is weak.... and the judiciary is not independent." In authoritarian regimes, "state political pluralism is absent or heavily circumscribed.... some formal institutions of democracy may exist, but these have little substance.... elections ... are not free and fair.... disregard for abuses and infringements of civil liberties.... repression of criticism of the government and pervasive censorship. There is no independent judiciary."
- Freedom House assigns each country 0 to 4 points on 25 indicators (10 political rights indicators and 15 civil liberties indicators) for a total of up to 100 points.
- Freedom House assigns each country a rating for political rights and one for civil liberties where 1 represents the greatest degree of freedom and 7 the smallest degree of freedom. The average of a country's political rights and civil liberties ratings determines the status of *free* (1.0 to 2.5), *partly free* (3.0 to 5.0), or *not free* (5.5 to 7.0).
- The symbol (-) indicates that, taking uncertainty into account, the country could belong to the lower category while (+) signifies that the country could belong to the higher category.
- "Constitutional multiparty republic" comes from the U.S. State Department's *2018 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Nicaragua* while the *2019 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Nicaragua* states: "Nicaragua has a highly centralized, authoritarian political system dominated by President Daniel Ortega Saavedra and his wife, Vice President Rosario Murillo Zambrana. Ortega's Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) party exercises total control over the executive, legislative, judicial, and electoral functions."

Table 3. South America: 2019 Democracy Rankings

Country (U.S. State Dept. political system description)	Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index 2020		EIU Democracy Index 2019		Freedom House Freedom in the World 2020				V-Dem Democracy Report 2020	
	Political Transfor- mation Global Rank	Status Index ^a	Global Rank ^b	Regime Type ^c	Aggregate Score ^d	Political Rights Score	Civil Liberties Score	Freedom Status ^e	Liberal Democracy Index Rank	Regime Type ^f
Argentina (federal constitutional republic)	16	Democracy in consolidation	48	Flawed democracy	85	2	2	Free	44	Electoral democracy
Bolivia (constitutional multiparty republic)	41	Defective democracy	104	Hybrid regime	63	3	3	Partly free	105	(+) Electoral autocracy
Brazil (constitutional multiparty republic)	2	Defective democracy	52	Flawed democracy	75	2	2	Free	60	Electoral democracy
Chile (constitutional multiparty democracy)	6	Democracy in consolidation	21	Full democracy	90	1		Free	2	(-) Liberal democracy
Colombia (constitutional multiparty republic)	44	Defective democracy	45	Flawed democracy	66	3	3	Partly free	62	Electoral democracy
Ecuador (constitutional multiparty republic)	30	Defective democracy	67	Flawed democracy	65	3	3	Partly free	63	Electoral democracy

Country (U.S. State Dept. political system description)	Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index 2020		EIU Democracy Index 2019		Freedom House Freedom in the World 2020				V-Dem Democracy Report 2020	
	Political Transfor- mation Global Rank	Status Index ^a	Global Rank ^b	Regime Type ^c	Aggregate Score ^d	Political Rights Score	Civil Liberties Score	Freedom Status ^e	Liberal Democracy Index Rank	Regime Type ^f
Paraguay (constitutional multiparty republic)	46	Defective democracy	70	Flawed democracy	65	3	3	Partly free	80	Electoral democracy
Peru (constitutional multiparty republic)	49	Defective democracy	58	Flawed democracy	72	2	3	Free	40	Electoral democracy
Uruguay (constitutional republic)	1	Democracy in consolidation	15	Full democracy	98	1	1	Free	19	Liberal democracy
Venezuela^g (constitutional multiparty republic)	120	Hardline autocracy	140	Authoritarian	16	7	6	Not free	163	Electoral autocracy

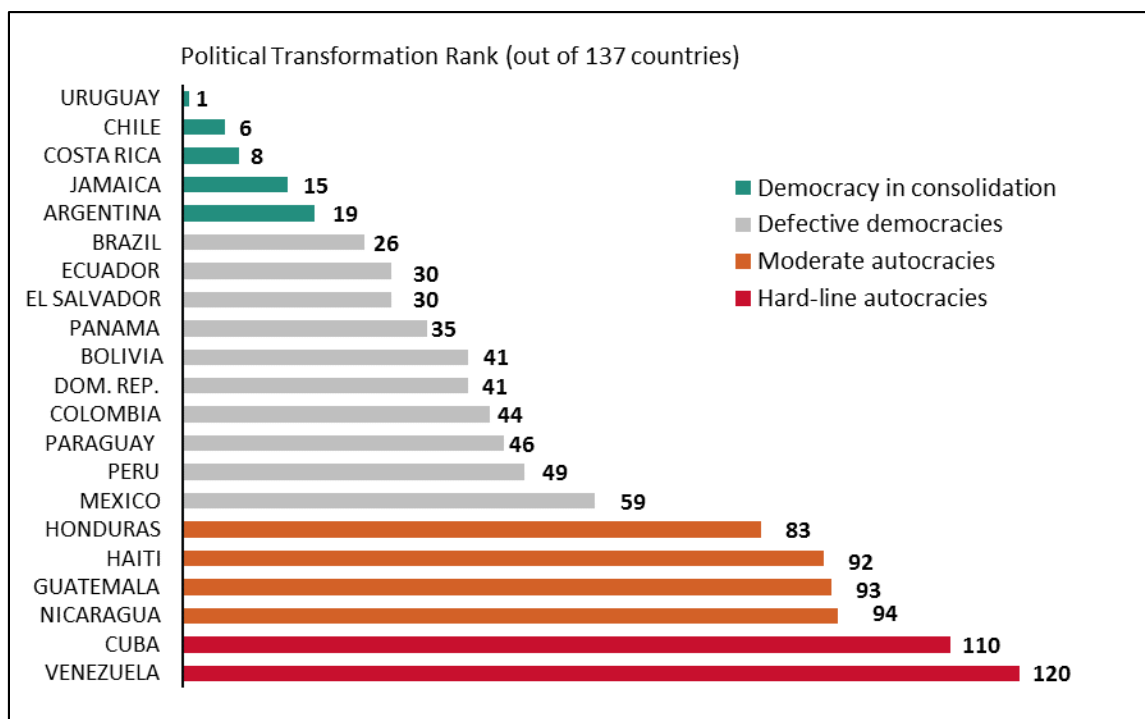
Source: Compiled by CRS using the U.S. State Department's *2019 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*, Bertelsmann Stiftung's 2020 Transformation Index, EIU's *Democracy Index 2019*, Freedom House's *Freedom in the World 2020*, and the Varieties of Democracy Institute's *Democracy Report 2020*.

- BTI classifies a country as an autocracy if one of seven political transformation indicators falls short of the relevant threshold. BTI considers failing states autocracies.
- The symbol "=" indicates a tying score or equal rank with another country.
- Definitions from EIU: Full democracies are countries where the "functioning of government is satisfactory. Media are independent and diverse.... effective checks and balances.... judiciary is independent and judicial decisions are enforced.... only limited problems." Flawed democracies have "free and fair elections ... basic civil liberties are respected. However, there are significant weaknesses in other aspects of democracy, including problems in governance, an underdeveloped political culture and low levels of political participation." Hybrid regimes have "substantial election irregularities.... government pressure on opposition parties and candidates.... corruption tends to be widespread and the rule of law is weak. Civil society is weak.... and the judiciary is not independent." In authoritarian regimes, "state political pluralism is absent or heavily circumscribed.... some formal institutions of democracy may exist, but these have little substance.... elections ... are not free and fair.... disregard for abuses and infringements of civil liberties.... repression of criticism of the government and pervasive censorship. There is no independent judiciary."
- Freedom House assigns each country 0 to 4 points on 25 indicators (10 political rights indicators and 15 civil liberties indicators) for a total of up to 100 points.

- e. Freedom House assigns each country a rating for political rights and one for civil liberties where 1 represents the greatest degree of freedom and 7 the smallest degree of freedom. The average of a country's political rights and civil liberties ratings determines the status of *free* (1.0 to 2.5), *partly free* (3.0 to 5.0), or *not free* (5.5 to 7.0).
- f. The symbol (-) indicates that, taking uncertainty into account, the country could belong to the lower category while (+) signifies that the country could belong to the higher category.
- g. From U.S. State Department's *2019 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Venezuela*: "Venezuela is formally a multiparty, constitutional republic, but for more than a decade, political power has been concentrated in a single party with an authoritarian executive exercising significant control over the judicial, citizens' power (which includes the prosecutor general and ombudsman), and electoral branches of government, and standing up a parallel, illegitimate legislative body alongside the existing elected one.."

Figure 1 shows the global rank and classification of all Central and South American and Caribbean countries according to the Political Transformation Rank, a component of the 2020 Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index (BTI).

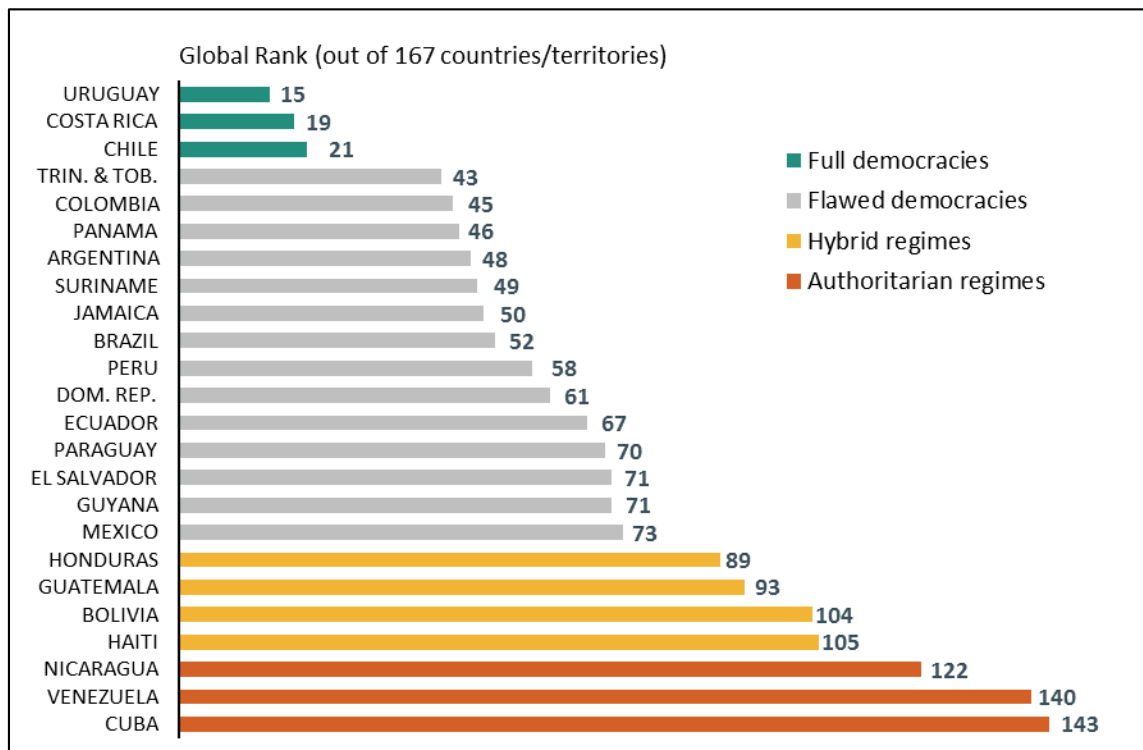
Figure 1. BTI's 2020 Political Transformation Global Ranking of Latin American and Caribbean Countries



Source: Created by CRS Graphics using Bertelsmann Stiftung's 2020 Transformation Index. According to BTI's analysis, no Latin American or Caribbean countries fell into the category of highly defective democracies.

Figure 2 shows the global rank and classification of Central and South American and Caribbean countries according to the EIU's *Democracy Index 2019*.

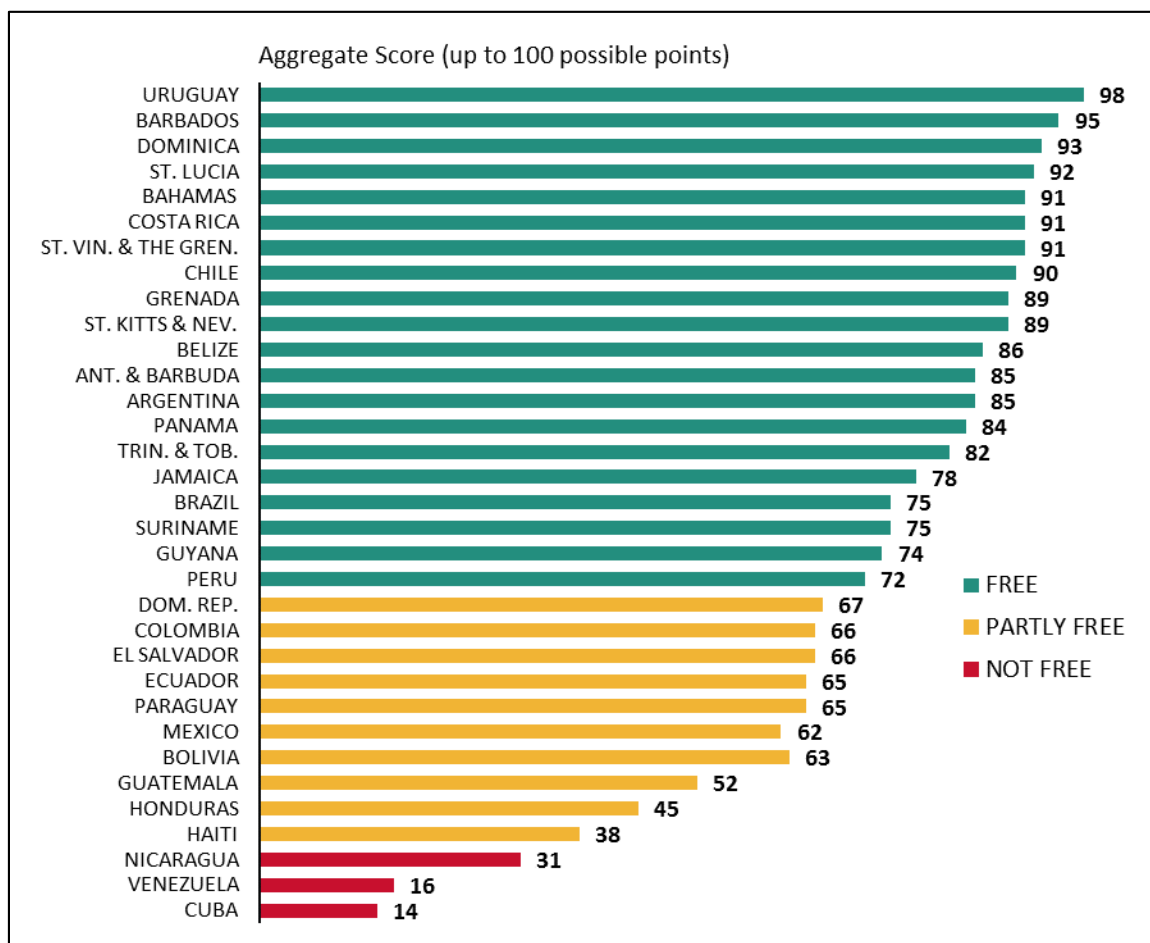
Figure 2. EIU *Democracy Index 2019* Global Ranking for Latin American and Caribbean Countries



Source: Created by CRS Graphics using EIU's *Democracy Index 2019*.

Figure 3 shows the aggregate scores of all Central and South American and Caribbean countries according to the Freedom House country web page for *Freedom in the World 2020*. Countries receive 0 to 4 points on 25 indicators (10 political rights indicators and 15 civil liberties indicators) for a total of up to 100 points.

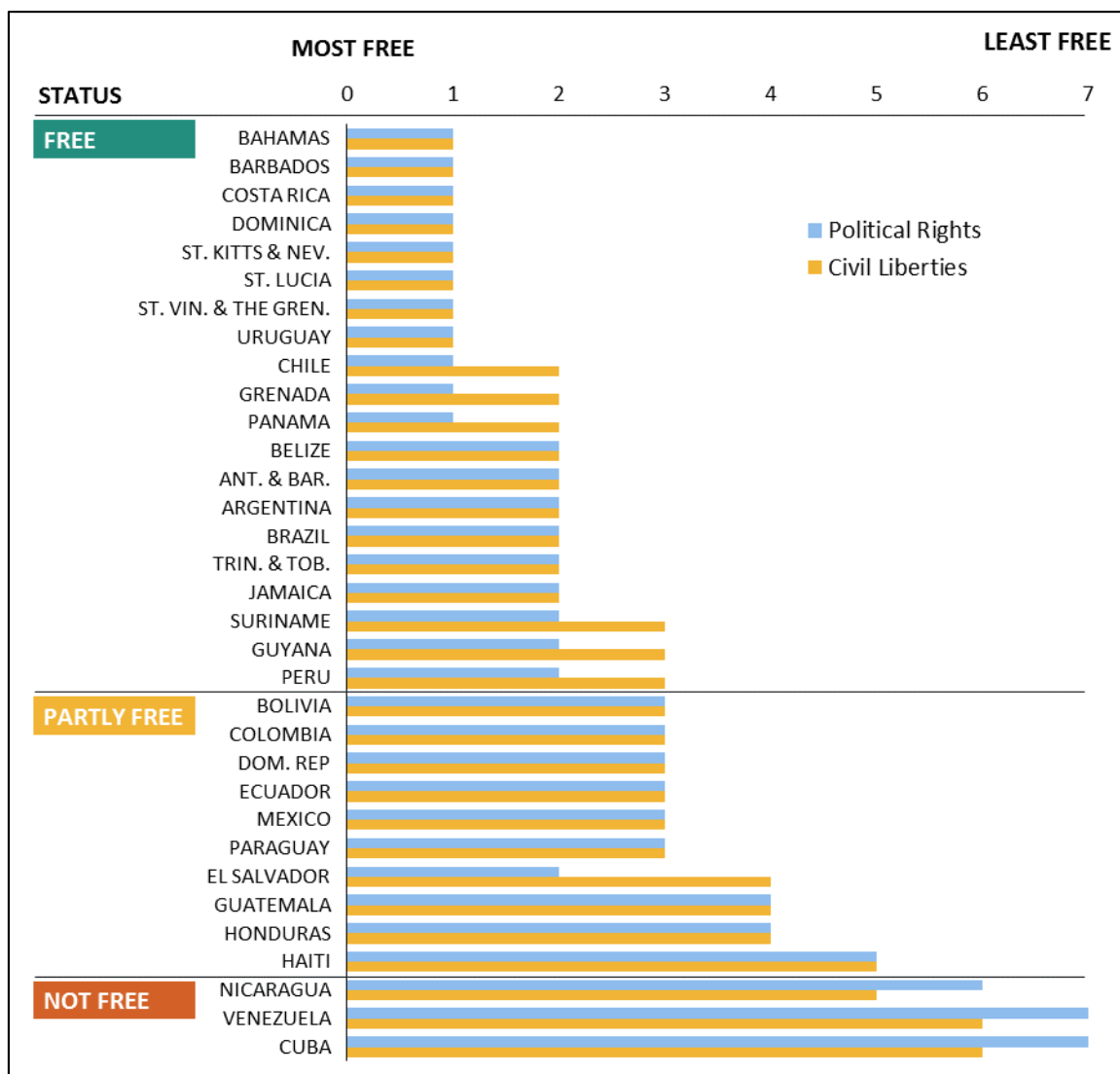
Figure 3. Freedom House, *Freedom in the World 2020* Aggregate Scores for Latin American and Caribbean Countries



Source: Created by CRS Graphics using Freedom House's *Freedom in the World 2020*.

Figure 4 shows the political rights and civil liberties scores of all Central and South American and Caribbean countries according to Freedom House's *Freedom in the World 2020*. The scale used is 1-7, with 1 indicating the most free conditions and 7 the least free.

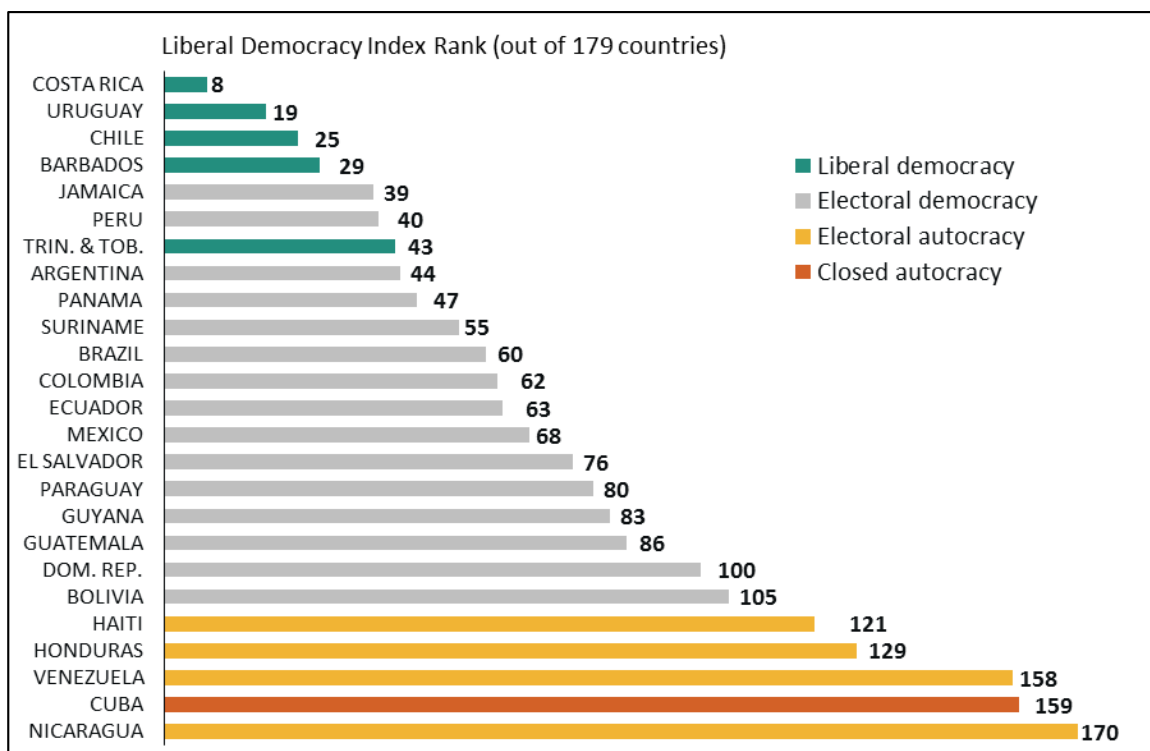
Figure 4. Freedom House, *Freedom in the World 2020* Political Rights and Civil Liberties Scores for Latin American and Caribbean Countries



Source: Created by CRS Graphics using Freedom House's *Freedom in the World 2020*.

Figure 5 shows the liberal democracy index rank and classification of all Central and South American and Caribbean countries according to the Varieties of Democracy Institute's *Democracy Report 2020*.

Figure 5. V-Dem Democracy Report 2020's Liberal Democracy Index Rank for Latin American and Caribbean Countries



Source: Created by CRS Graphics using the Varieties of Democracy Institute's *Democracy Report 2020*.

Table 4 provides resources for further information about democracy indicators in Central and South America and the Caribbean, although many cover other geographic areas as well. The sources are organized alphabetically by title. This is not an exhaustive list.

Table 4. Resources for Democracy Indicators

Title	Organization	Resource Type	URL
Bertelsmann Stiftung's 2020 Transformation Index	Bertelsmann Stiftung	Political Transformation Index ranks 137 countries	https://www.bti-project.org/en/index/political-transformation.html
	Bertelsmann Stiftung	Governance Index ranks 137 countries	https://www.bti-project.org/en/index/governance.html
	Bertelsmann Stiftung	Regional report on over 20 Latin American and the Caribbean countries	https://www.bti-project.org/content/en/reports/regional-reports/regional_report_LAC_2020_EN.pdf
	Bertelsmann Stiftung	Global report on 137 countries	https://www.bti-project.org/content/en/reports/global-report-d/global_findings_democracy_2020_EN.pdf
<i>Democracy Report 2020</i>	Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem)	Report covers 202 countries	https://www.v-dem.net/media/filer_public/f0/5d/f05d46d8-626f-4b20-8e4e-53d4b134bfb/democracy_report_2020_low.pdf
<i>Electoral Integrity Worldwide 2019</i>	Electoral Integrity Project, an independent academic project based at Harvard University and the University of Sydney	Report and data from cumulative study covering national presidential and parliamentary elections from July 1, 2012 to December 31, 2018	https://www.electoralintegrityproject.com/the-year-in-elections-2017
<i>Freedom in the World 2020</i>	Freedom House	Report	https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2020-02/FIW_2020_REPORT_BOOKLET_Final.pdf
	Freedom House	Map	https://freedomhouse.org/explore-the-map?type=fiw&year=2020
	Freedom House	Country ranking list	https://freedomhouse.org/countries/freedom-world/scores
Global State of Democracy Indices	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance's (International IDEA) Global State of Democracy Initiative	Interactive map looks at 97 indicators for 158 countries from 1975-2018	https://www.idea.int/gsod-indices/#/indices/world-map

<i>Global State of Democracy 2019</i>	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance	Report looks at global trends in democracy 1975-2015 across 158 countries	https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/the-global-state-of-democracy-2019.pdf
<i>Rule of Law Index 2020</i>	World Justice Project	Report measures how the rule of law is experienced and perceived in 128 countries and jurisdictions	https://worldjusticeproject.org/sites/default/files/documents/WJP-ROLI-2020-Online_0.pdf
	World Justice Project	Interactive map and data tables cover 128 countries and jurisdictions	https://www.worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index/
<i>Mexico States Rule of Law Index 2019-2020</i>	World Justice Project	A report on the adherence to the rule of law in Mexico's 32 states (also available in Spanish)	https://worldjusticeproject.org/sites/default/files/documents/MSI-eng-2.pdf
Worldwide Governance Indicators	World Bank	Data on 43 indicators of governance for 200+ countries from 1996-2018; in particular, see Voice and Accountability indicator	https://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/

Source: Compiled by the Congressional Research Service.

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