

Models of Democracy in Ecuador

The example of the Democracy Barometer

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Democracy Barometer: an introduction

Objectives:

- Provides a tool for researchers
- Free and transparent
- Adapted to goals / dimensions
- Not normative !

Developped by the NCCR / University of Zurich

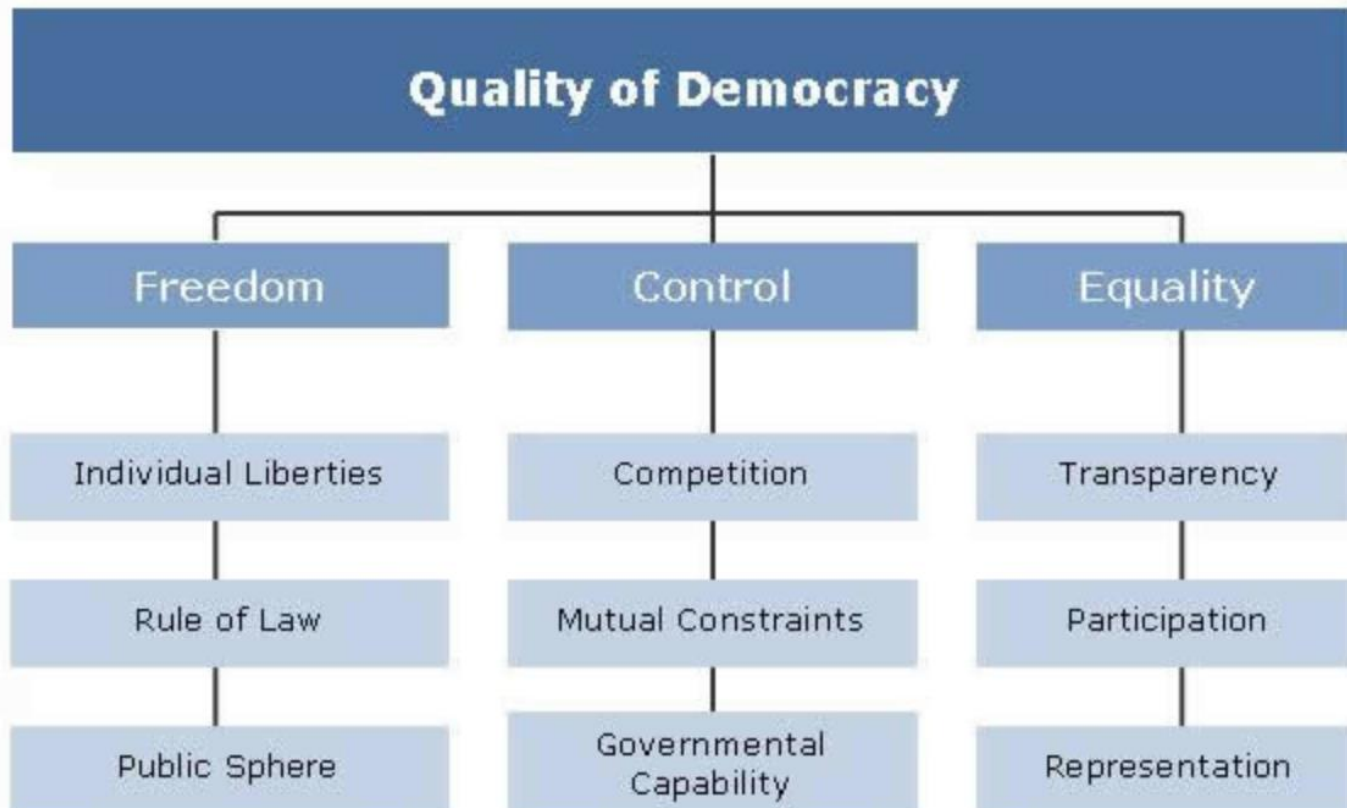
- Website: <http://www.democracybarometer.org/>
- Data available to download for free
- Possibility to create graphs on-line
- Possibility to 'play' with the data

Democracy Barometer: an introduction

Concept:

- There is no perfect democracy
- Democracy is complex
- Democracy is composed of a large set of phenomena / dimensions
- Democracy requires a balance between these dimensions (the barometer gives a bonus to balanced systems)

Democracy Barometer: 9 dimensions



Democracy Barometer: Advantages

- No universal definition of democracy
- Rather: Adaptation to national specificities (eg. ethnic minorities)
- Adaptation to evolution of democratic practices
- Not focused on 1 or 2 dimensions
- Rather: Large amount of dimensions / indicators
- Not based on experts / subjectivity
- Rather: objective and quantitative measures / official statistics / public opinion survey
- Ideally: 3 indicators for each phenomenon: rules, results and public opinion
- Free and transparent (data, sources, etc.)

Democracy Barometer: Disadvantages

- Focus on democratic countries (democratic threshold)
- Only from 1990
- Missing data for several indicators (eg. for Latin America)
- Focus on the national level
- ! No data interpretation. Often: misinterpretation

Democracy Barometer: Data

- 74 countries (OECD, CEEC, Latin America, some Asian countries)
- 23 years (1990-2012)
- 112 quantitative indicators
- Indexes between 0 and 100
- Aggregation formula
- Permanent update:
 - Over time
 - New countries
 - New / revised data
 - New / revised indicators

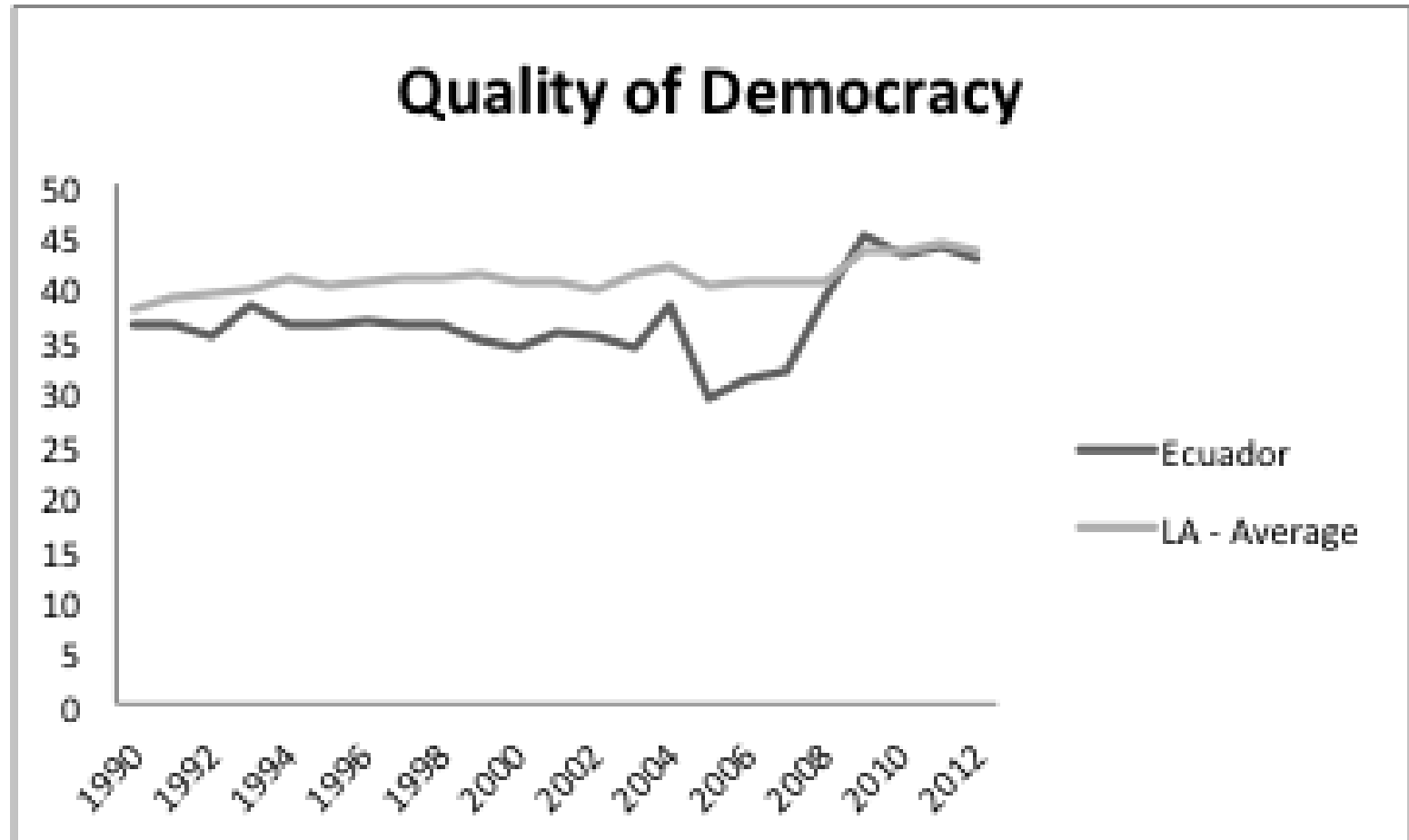
Top 15 democracies in 2012...

1	Denmark	73,69
2	Sweden	69,99
3	Switzerland	69,31
4	Norway	67,95
5	Finland	67,94
6	Netherlands	65,85
7	Iceland	65,03
8	Belgium	64,55
9	Germany	62,75
10	Luxembourg	62,27
11	Canada	61,18
12	New Zealand	61,07
13	Austria	60,93
14	Slovenia	59,32
15	Australia	59,23

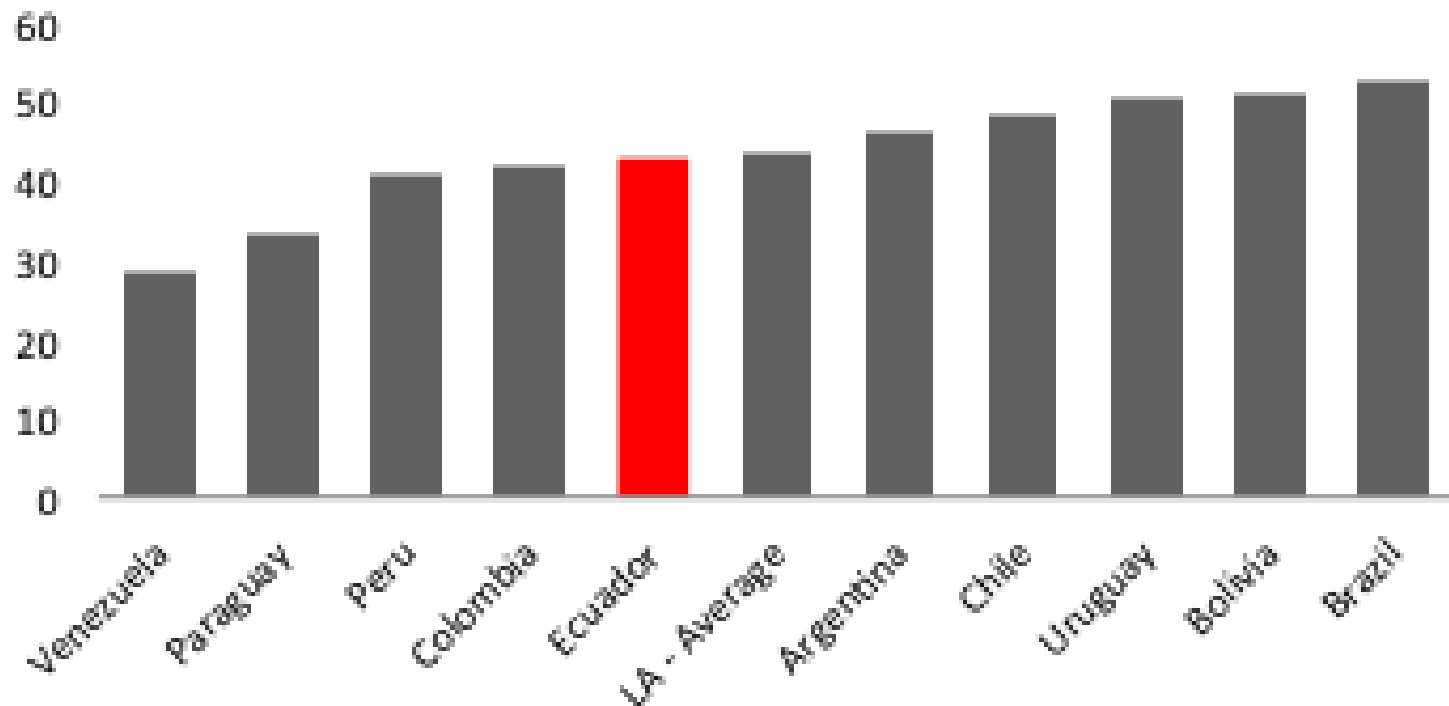
Results for Latin America

Data:

- 1990-2012
- Overall score + 9 dimensions
- 10 Countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela



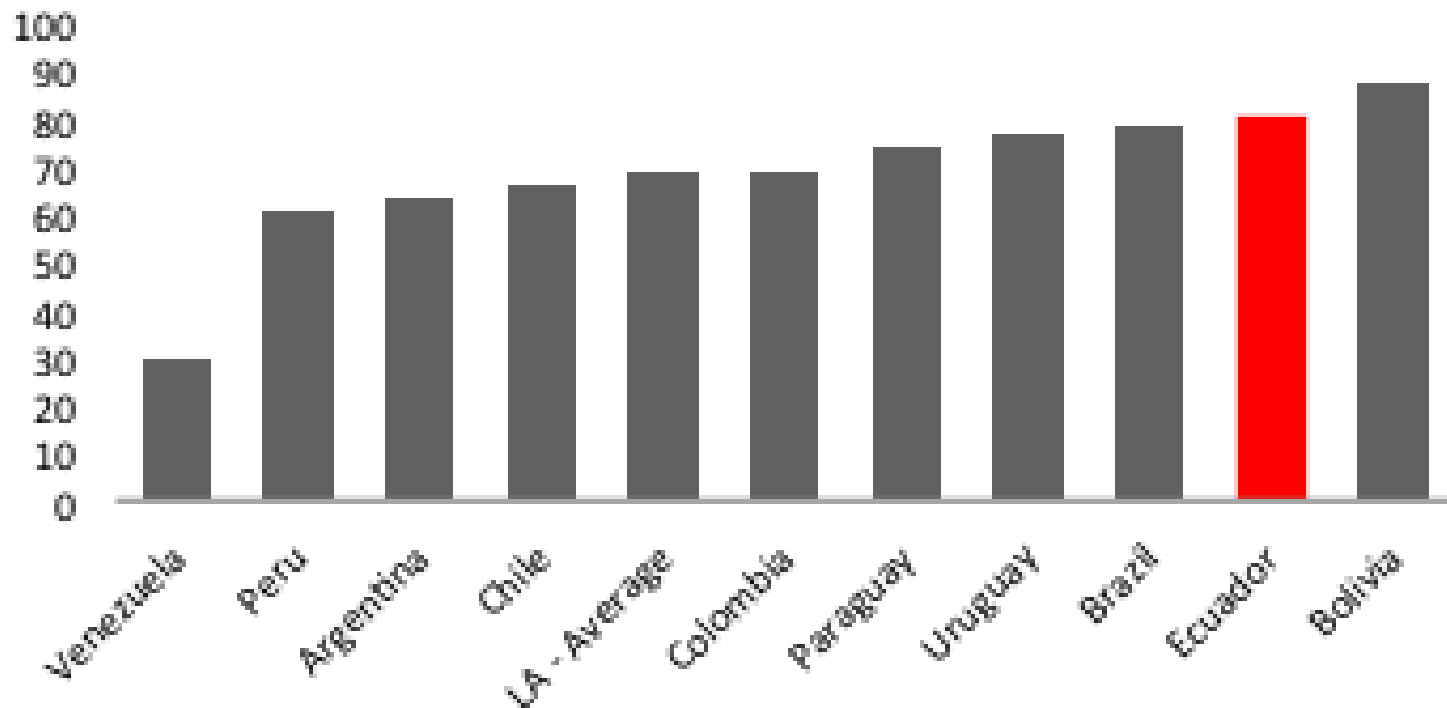
Quality of Democracy (2012)



Dimension 1: Individual Liberties

= physical integrity (state torture, political assassinations),
religious freedom, freedom of movements, property rights,
etc.

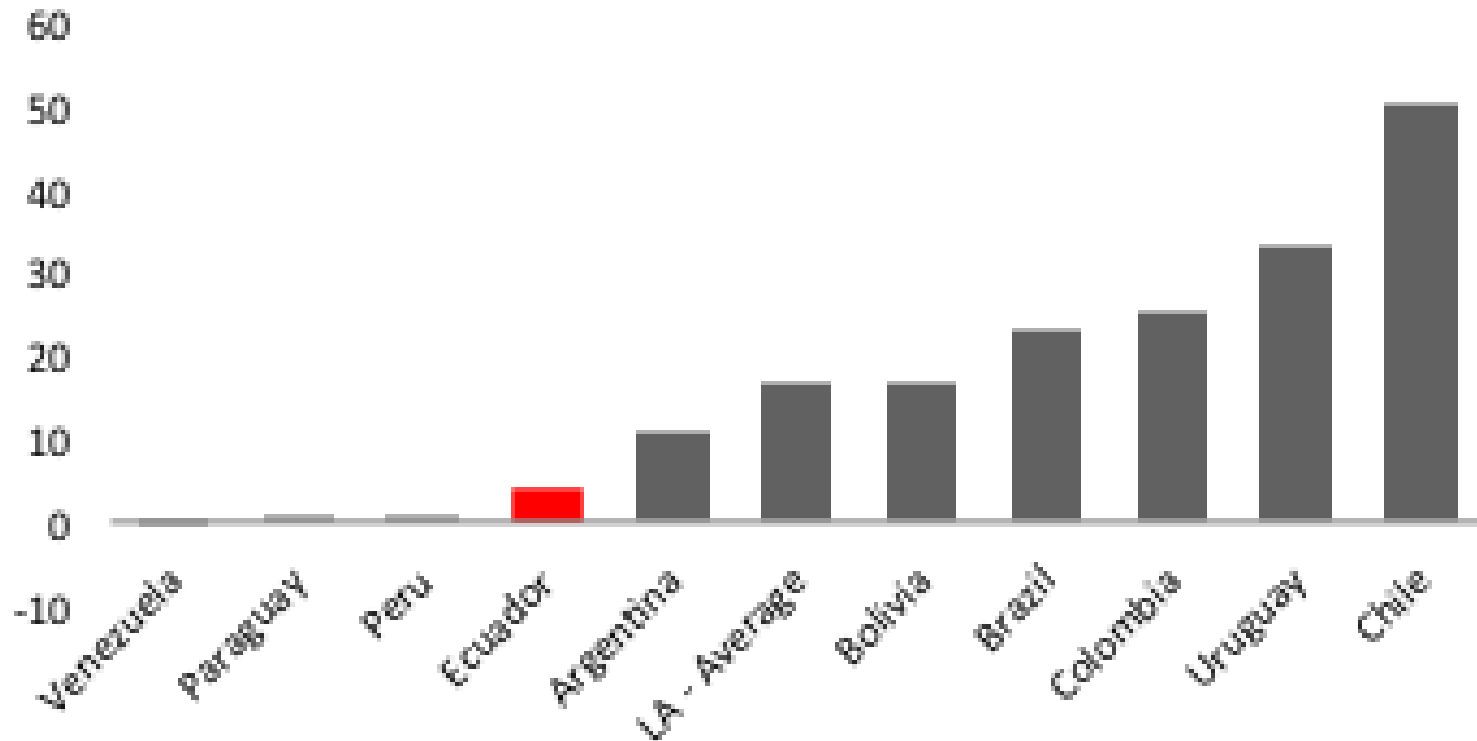
Individual Liberties (2012)



Dimension 2: Rule of Law

= impartial courts, independence in the Judiciary,
Professionalism of judges, trust in legal system, trust in
police, effectiveness of police, etc.

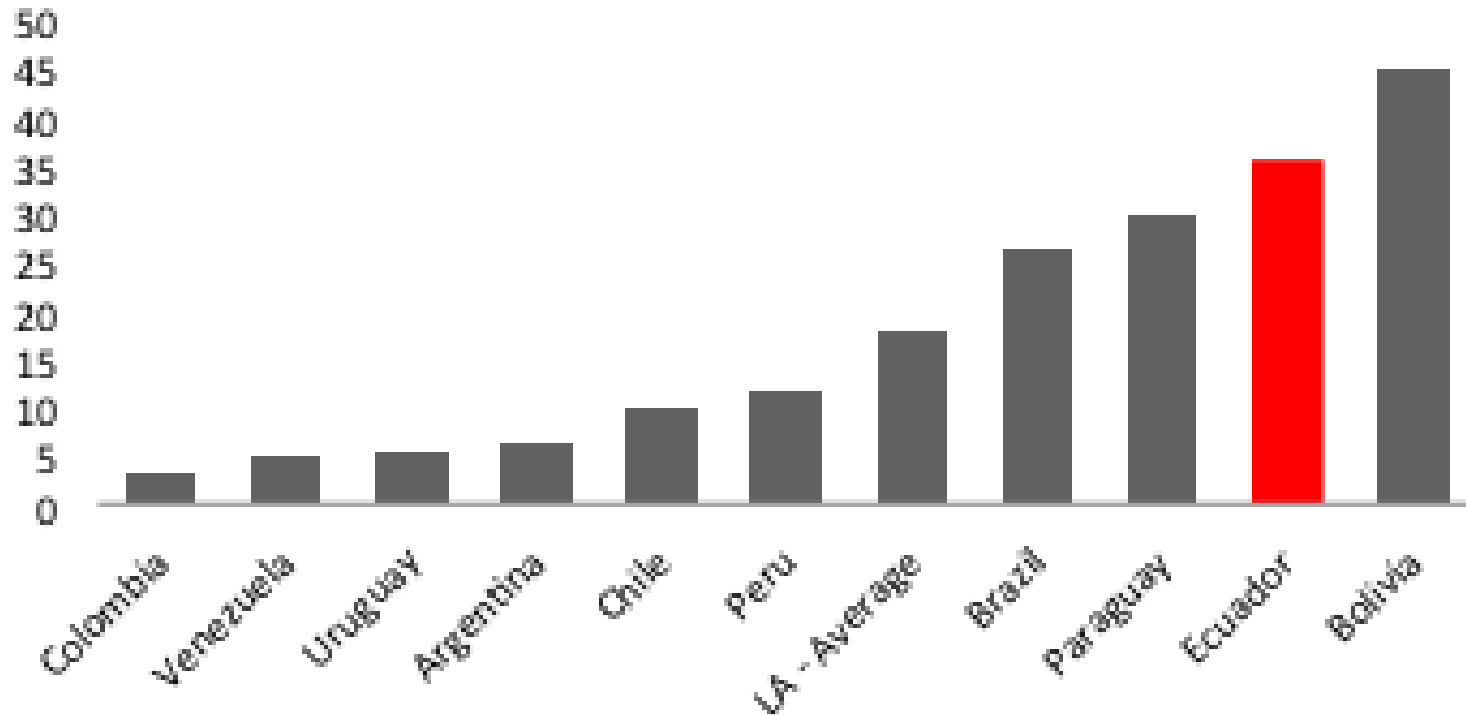
Rule of Law (2012)



Dimension 3: Public sphere

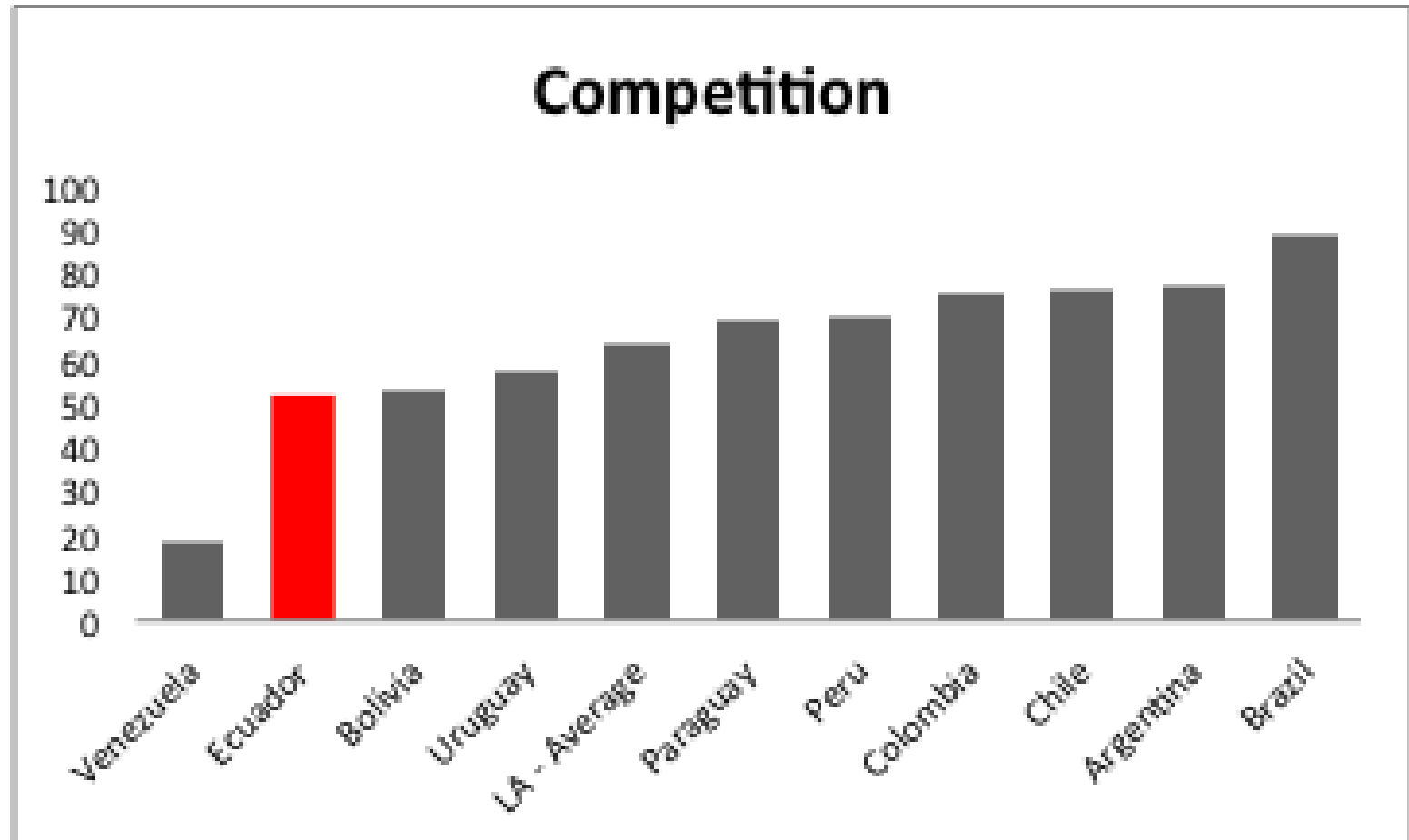
= freedom of association, membership in trade unions, membership in environmental organizations, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, sales of newspapers, independent newspapers

Public sphere (2012)



Dimension 4: Electoral competition

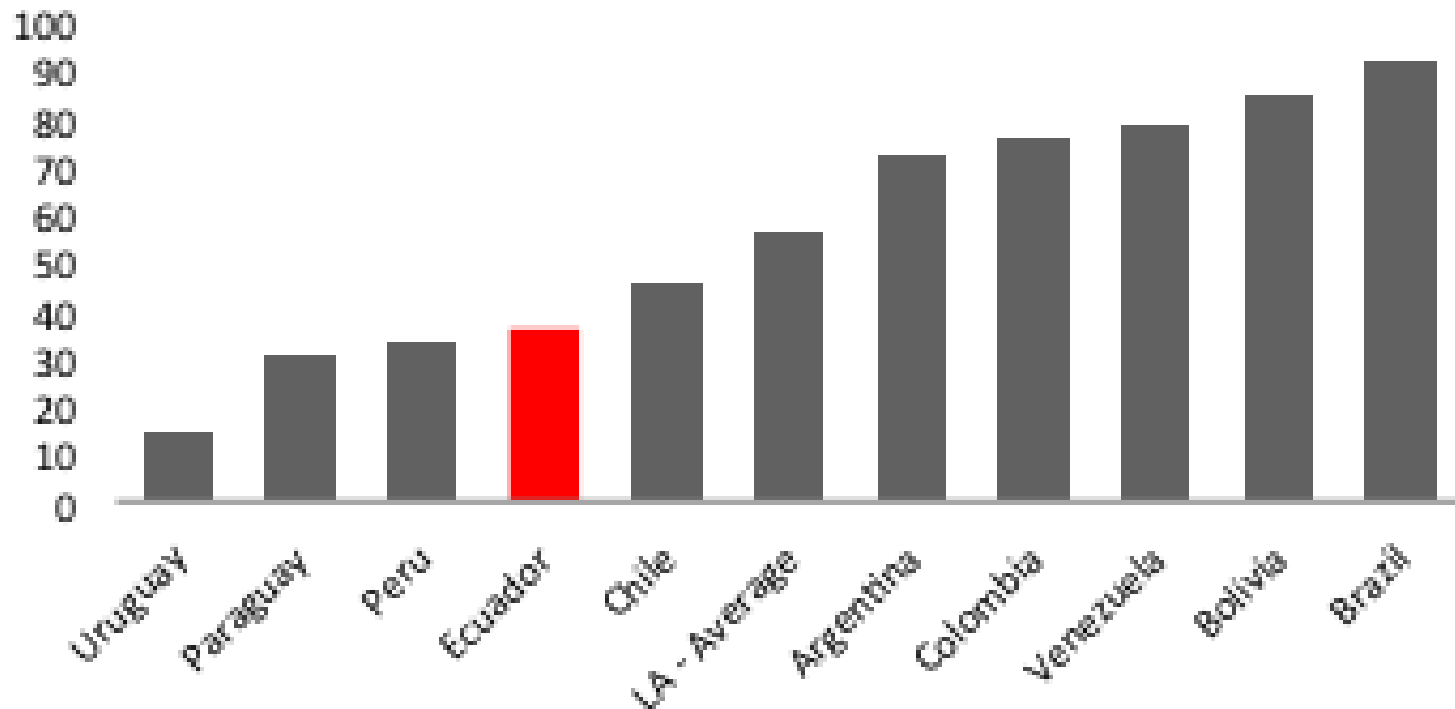
= district magnitude, electoral concentration of votes, barriers for registration, electoral threshold, number of parties, etc.



Dimension 5: Mutual constraints of constitutional powers

= relations between legislative and executive, power of judiciary, strength of opposition in parliament, degree of decentralisation / federalism, bicameralism, subnational autonomy, etc.

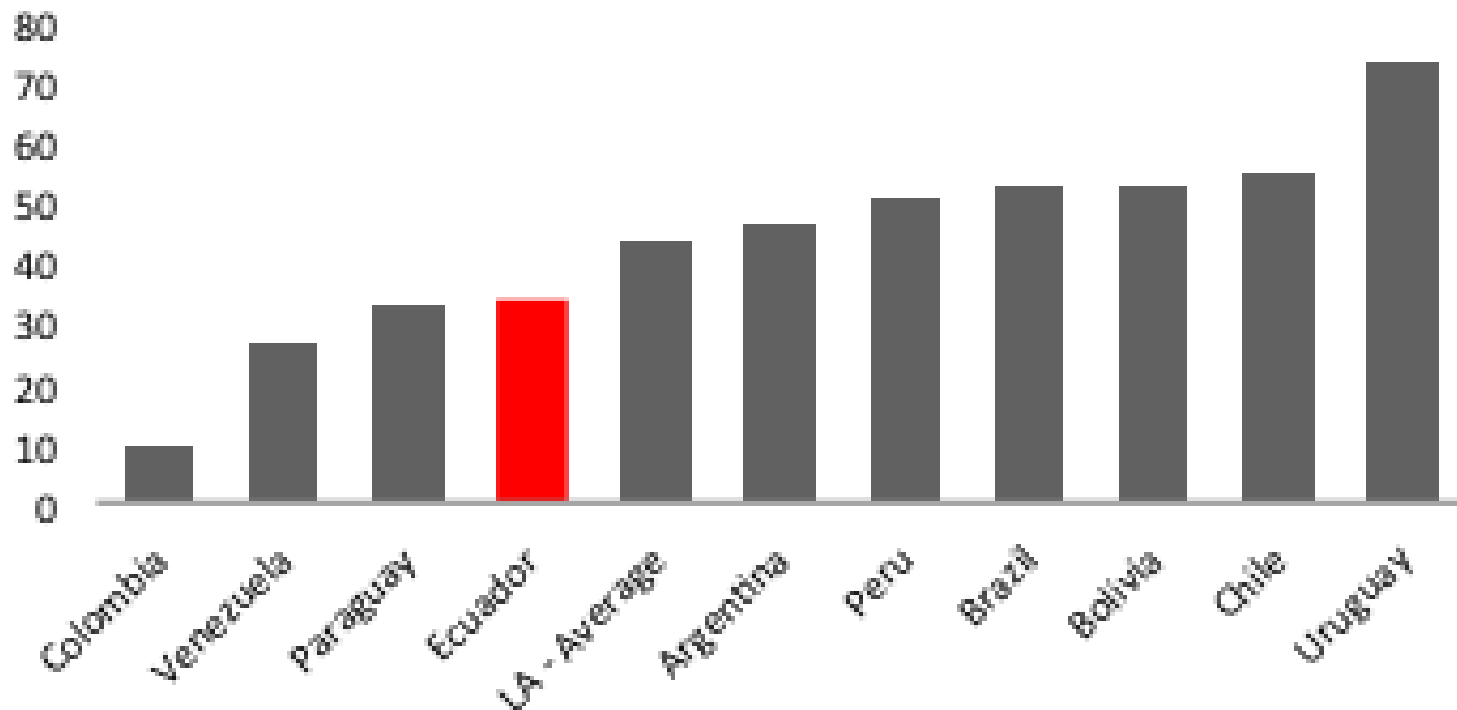
Mutual constraints (2012)



Dimension 6: Governmental capability

= length of political terms, trust in the government, stability of the government, anti-government actions, political interference by the military, political interference by religion, implementation of government decisions, quality of bureaucracy, etc.

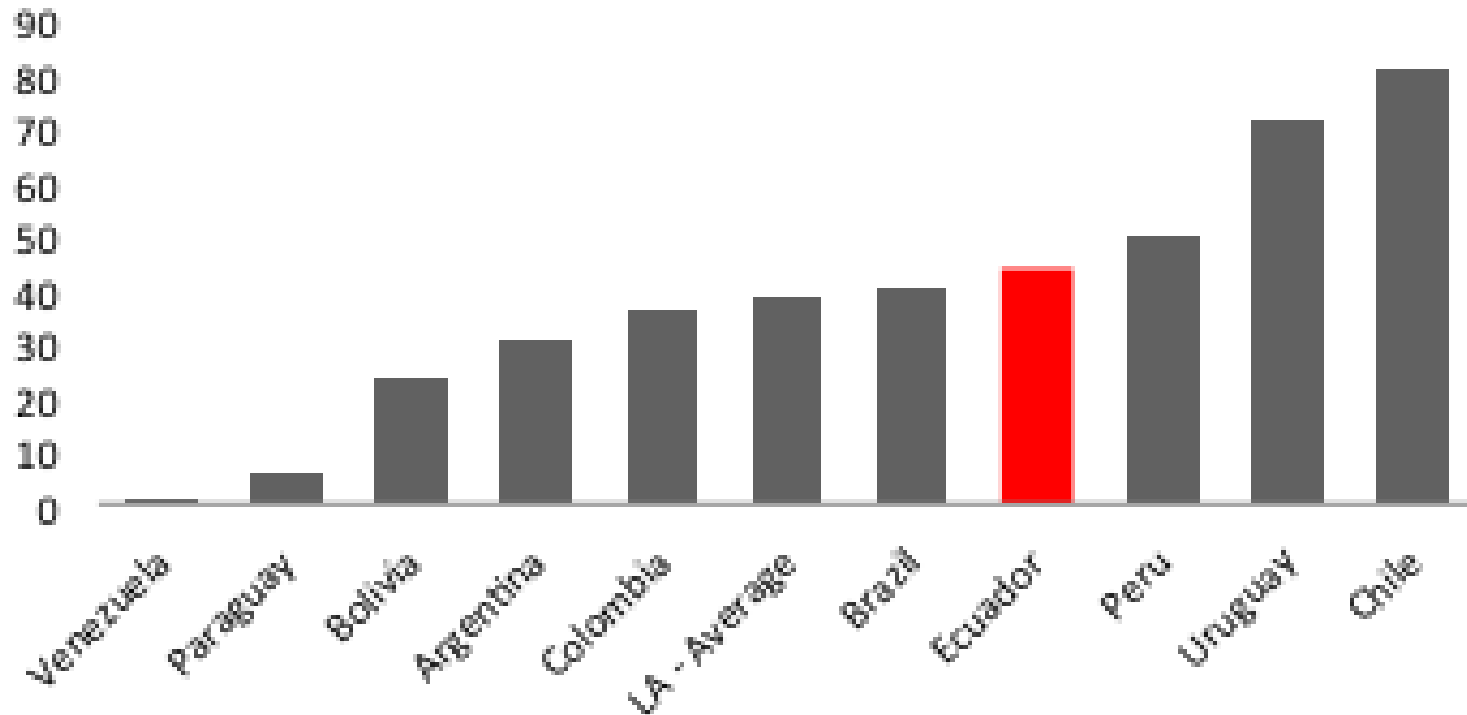
Government Capability (2012)



Dimension 7: Transparency

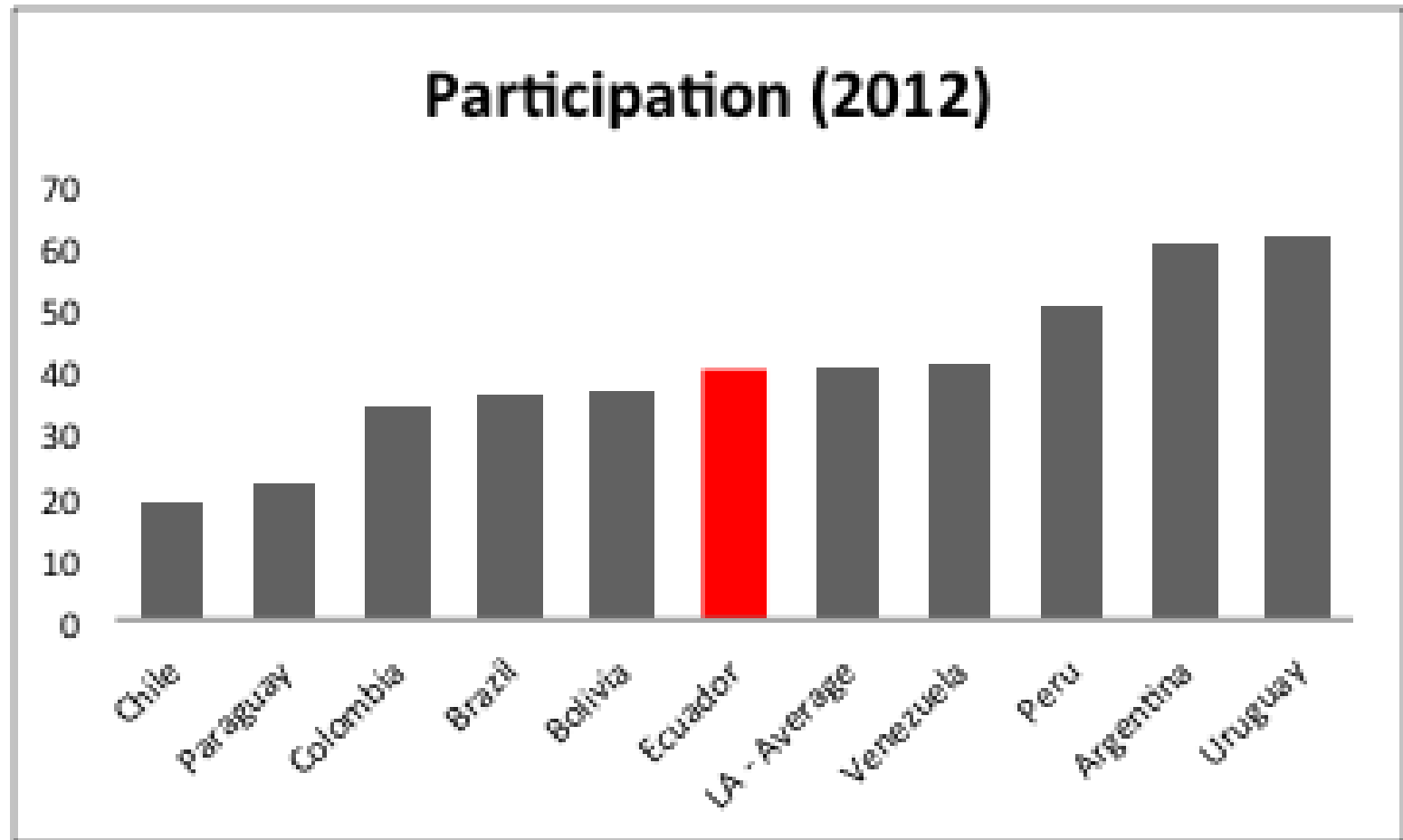
= public disclosure of income by political parties, corruption, freedom of information, transparency of government policy, etc.

Transparency (2012)



Dimension 8: Participation

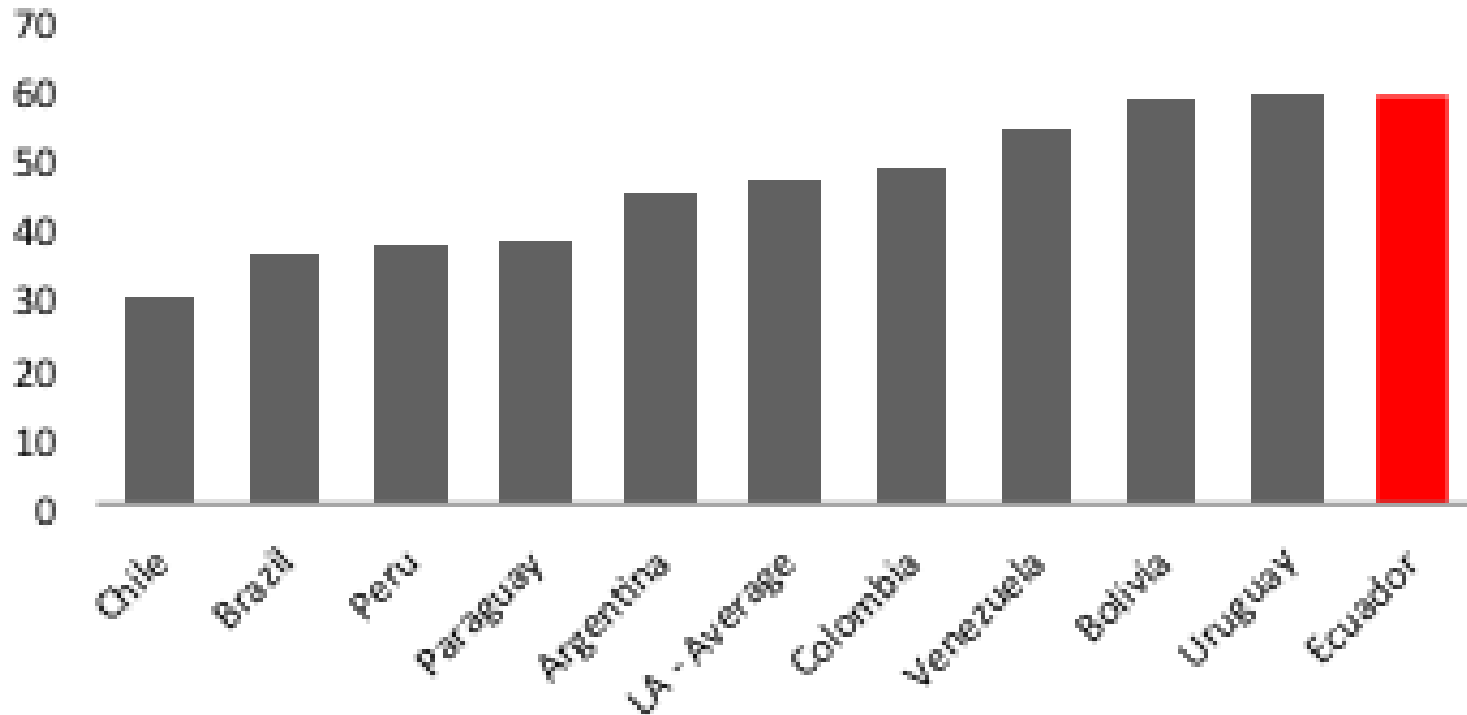
= turnout in elections and in referendums, representative turnout, participation in alternative forms of participation, petitions, demonstrations, etc.



Dimension 9: Representation

= referendums, disproportionality between vote and seats, political rights of women, inclusion of minorities, etc.

Representation (2012)



9 dimensions: conclusions for Ecuador

Strengths:

- Individual Liberties
- Public sphere
- Transparency
- Participation
- Representation

Weaknesses:

- Rule of Law
- Electoral competition
- Mutual constraints
- Governmental capability

One (of the numerous) future of democracy studies...

Democracy is often measured at the national level

But: variations at the sub-national level

1. Variation of national democracy at the sub-national level

Examples in Ecuador:

- Differences in turnout
 - Example: Presidential elections 2013: Cañar 64%, Santa Elena 92%
- Differences in decentralisation / sub-national asymmetry
 - Example: Galapagos: specific regime ; no provincial elections

One (of the numerous) future of democracy studies...

2. Variation of sub-national democracy

Examples in Ecuador:

- Provincial, cantonal, parochial elections
- Sub-national referendums
- Recall (*revocatoria de mandato*)
- Differences in number of candidates
- No election for provincial councils
- Etc.