

**The Kids Are Alright:
Political Generations, Authoritarian Legacies, and
Democratic Attitudes in Latin America***

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Observers of Latin American public opinion regularly raise alarms about the commitment of the region’s young people to democracy. Like elsewhere in the world (Foa and Mounk 2016; Foa et al. 2020; Tsatsanis et al. 2021; but see Cammaerts et al. 2014), surveys in Latin America consistently find that younger citizens express less support for democracy in principle, less satisfaction with how democracy works, and more tolerance for authoritarian alternatives to democracy (Lupu, Rodríguez, and Zechmeister 2021; Pignataro et al. 2021). One recent headline declared, “Young Latin Americans are unusually open to autocrats.”¹ Scholars also find that younger people participate less in democratic politics (Bargsted et al. 2019; Madrid 2005), prompting one recent study of youth attitudes toward democracy in the region therefore concludes that, “socialization under democracy does not produce more democrats” (Espí Hernández 2022: 78; see also Fuks et al. 2018; Moreno and Lagos 2016). Coming to grips with the attitudes of this younger cohort is a critical component in any effort to understand the general contours of democratic attitudes across Latin America (Kessler and Murillo, this volume).

Figure 1 shows examples of this pattern from AmericasBarometer data. Pooling across the countries in the region and the surveys fielded between 2004 and 2021, we can see clear differences between age cohorts. Smaller proportions of the younger age groups – those aged between 18 and 35 – express support for democracy in the abstract or trust in elections, and larger proportions of these groups say that a military coup would be justifiable in times of crisis.²

At first glance, this does seem alarming. Figures like these give the impression that the public’s overall commitment to democracy is likely to decline as these younger respondents replace the older generations over time (see also Hooghe 2004). And studies consistently show that public support can be critical to democratic survival (e.g., Booth and Seligson 2009; Claasen 2020; Diamond 1999). A recent report by Freedom House noted in its summary of global ills that, “[p]erhaps worst of all, *and most worrisome for the future*, young people, who have little memory

¹ *The Economist*. 2023. “Young Latin Americans are unusually open to autocrats.” July 22.

² The wording of these items and the coding of response options is described below.

of the long struggles against fascism and communism, may be losing faith and interest in the democratic project” (Abramowitz 2018: 1, emphasis added).

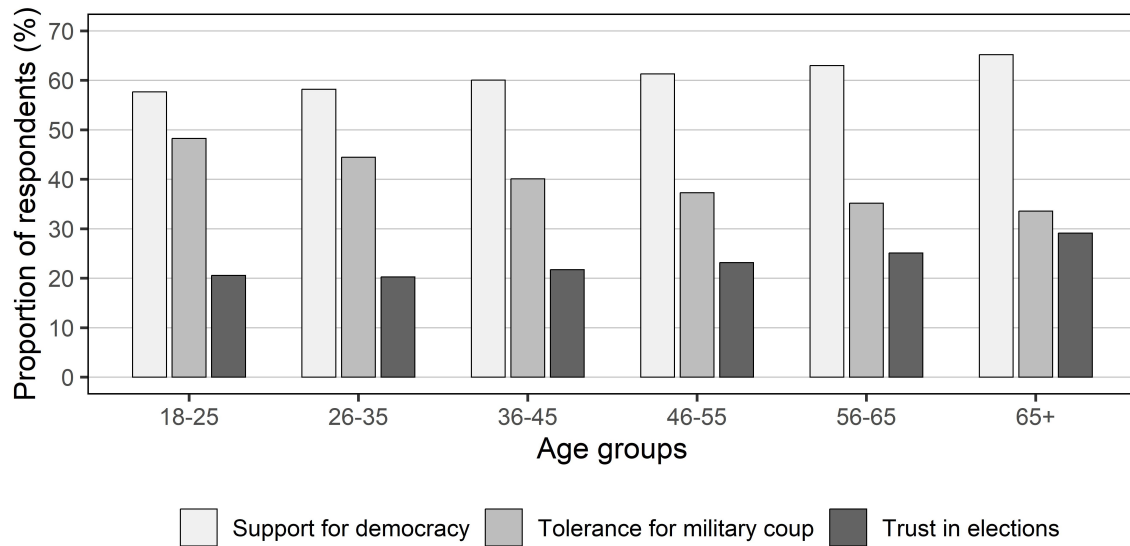


Figure 1: Democratic attitudes by age group. Bars represent the proportion of each age group who express support for democracy in the abstract, say that a military coup would be justifiable in times of crisis, or express trust in elections, among Third-Wave democracies. Age group differences are statistically significant (see Table A1). *Source:* AmericasBarometer, 2004-2021.

Scholars of social change are well aware of the problems with these kinds of interpretations. They effectively assume that attitudes are fixed, that individuals do not change their attitudes as they age. And yet we know that attitudes do change as people age. If people become more committed to democracy as they age, for instance, then there may be no reason to worry about today’s youth at all: they will simply catch up over time. It’s even possible that today’s youth are more committed to democracy than their elders were when they were younger, suggesting that the public’s commitment to democracy will actually grow as younger generations replace older ones – precisely the opposite of most observers’ dire expectations. Both of these possibilities would still be consistent with observing the proportions we see in Figure 1. Simply comparing today’s youth to today’s older cohorts is not an apples-to-apples comparison: instead, the right counter-factual for today’s youth is those older cohorts *when they were younger*. That comparison requires more data and more sophisticated models.

This chapter contributes just such an analysis. I turn to canonical age-period-cohort models that help distinguish among the effects of aging, membership in a particular cohort, and specific time periods. I use AmericasBarometer survey data from 15 Latin American countries that democratized during the Third Wave and examine the differences between the pre-transition generations, the democratic transition generation, and the post-transition generation. Using surveys conducted between 2004 and 2021, I examine a variety of democratic attitudes as well as forms of civic participation.

Contrary to the contemporary narrative about the democratic values of Latin America's youth, I find that the post-transition generation is in fact substantially more committed to democracy than are prior generations. I also find that they are more likely to participate in politics in certain ways. My results with regard to political attitudes are more mixed, depending on the analytical approach I take. Finally, I find no evidence that generational effects are driven by the changing socio-demographic compositions of different cohorts. This suggests that generational effects are driven instead by socialization: one legacy of authoritarianism is that it left citizens less committed to democracy than those who came of age after the transition period. Together, these results further emphasize that generational effects are an important and understudied determinant of public opinion in Latin America.

Political Generations and Democratic Attitudes

Political scientists typically study generational effects on political attitudes in one of two ways: either by examining the transmission of certain political attitudes across generations within families (e.g., Jennings et al. 2009; Jennings and Niemi 1981; Lupu and Peisakhin 2017), or by interrogating the distinctive political attitudes individuals from a particular cohort or political generation (e.g., Alwin and McCammon 2003; Mishler and Rose 2007).³ This chapter centers on

³ For an overview of these literatures, see Stoker (2014).

the latter, focusing particularly on democratic attitudes and the generations that came of age before, after, and during Latin America's Third-Wave transitions to democracy.

This idea, of distinctive political generations, dates back at least to Mannheim (1952 [1928]) and even earlier sociological thinkers (see Braungart and Braungart 1986). As Stoker (2014) highlights in her review of the literature, it rests on two claims. The first is that political attitudes are fairly unstable during adolescence and early adulthood – a period Mannheim (1952 [1928]) calls the “impressionable years” – but solidify thereafter (see Jennings and Niemi 1974). This could be because earlier life experiences are more important than later ones or because early experiences structure and shape how we interpret later ones (Searing et al. 1973, 1976). It need not mean that adults never change their attitudes, but especially for deep-seated political commitments and identities (most notably, partisanship in the US), it often makes sense to think of a Bayesian learning process in which attitudes strengthens curvilinearly over time (e.g., Bartels and Jackman 2014; Green et al. 2005).

The second claim is that certain historical periods and events leave lasting legacies on the people who experience them during their adolescence and early adulthood, such that we can think of these individuals as a group with a shared characteristic.⁴ Mannheim (1952 [1928]: 291) argues that belonging to a particular generation provides individuals with “a common location in the social and historical process, and thereby limit[s] them to a specific range of potential experience, predisposing them for a certain characteristic mode of thought and experience, and a characteristic type of historically relevant action.” If these two claims hold up empirically – and there is evidence that they do (e.g., Pop-Eleches and Tucker 2013; Schuman and Corning 2012) – then it makes sense to think of political generations as distinctive groups of individuals within a polity, and to consider how generations differ.

In the Latin American context, one major political event that scholars think shaped individuals in this way is the set of democratic transitions that began in 1978 during the global

⁴ The idea that political events shape individuals in ways that then solidify and persist is of course also related to the growing body of work on historical legacies (e.g., Simpser et al. 2018).

Third Wave of democratization (Fuks et al. 2018; Moreno and Lagos 2016; Toro Maureira 2008). As countries across the region transitioned away from repressive military regimes and civil conflicts, the new democratic era promised renewed civil liberties and political representation. It also meant renewed efforts by politicians, civil society, and the public to sustain democratic institutions and to guard against authoritarian reversals while democracy was being consolidated.⁵

There are good reasons to think that the generation that came of age during this triumphalist era of democratization and the early consolidation of democracy would have become deeply committed to it. Unlike most prior democratic transitions in the region, the Third Wave transitions emerged from highly repressive authoritarian predecessors and involved founding elections that drew high levels of participation and “moments of great drama” (O’Donnell and Schmitter 1986: 62). These were widely celebrated political transitions that entailed landmark elite negotiations and mass mobilizations. Indeed, scholars have examined democratic transition generations in other Third-Wave democracies for similar reasons (Dalton and Shin 2014; Mishler and Rose 2007; Montero et al. 1997; Neundorf 2010).⁶

What might we expect of the generation that came of age once democracy was consolidated? If political socialization is partly a function of the political and educational context during adolescence and early adulthood, then the post-transition generation may in fact be more committed to democracy than its predecessors. After all, this generation came of age at a time when democracy was “the only game in town” and procedural democratic norms were largely consolidated. Prior generations, would have been socialized at least partly during authoritarian regimes, leaving them with weaker commitments to democratic norms, something comparative

⁵ One recent analysis of survey data from around the world divides respondents everywhere (including in Latin America) into the familiar political generations often discussed in the US context (Silent Generation, Baby Boomers, Gen X, and Millennials) (Foa et al. 2020). These generational distinctions make sense for the US context given particular historical moments in US politics, such as involvement in the World Wars and the fertility boom of the postwar era. But the approach seems less applicable to Latin America where, for instance, the postwar baby boom was far from uniform.

⁶ In contrast to these expectations, there are also studies that find that generational effects dissipate over time (e.g., Demartini 1985).

scholars have documented in other contexts (e.g., [Neundorf 2010](#); [Neundorf and Pop-Eleches 2020](#); [Pop-Eleches and Tucker 2014](#)).

Yet, there are also good reasons to think that the post-transition generation might be less committed to democracy. Pundits often suggest that this younger cohort has more critical views of democracy and more positive views of potential alternatives to it because its members never experienced the repression of authoritarianism. By the time democracies consolidated, the Cold War had also ended, weakening the geopolitical pressure to embrace democratic values. In many countries, the post-transition generation also came of age and entered the workforce during periods of high unemployment, economic booms and busts, high-profile corruption scandals ([Castorena et al. Forthcoming](#)),⁷ and weakening party systems ([Lupu 2016](#)). The post-transition generation came of age in an era in which democracy is taken for granted and therefore may feel less deeply committed to it.⁸

The question, then, is whether the younger, post-transition generation in Latin American is in fact less committed to democracy than its predecessors. We know that younger Latin Americans are today less committed to democracy than their elders, but does this reflect a generational shift that ought to concern us about the region's future?

Data from Latin America

To answer this question, I turn to AmericasBarometer data from 2004 to 2021 in the region's 15 major Third-Wave democracies.⁹ These cross-sectional surveys are fielded roughly

⁷ See Miller, Ben, and Fernanda Uriegas, 2019, "Latin America's Biggest Corruption Cases: A Restrospective," *Americas Quarterly*, July 11.

⁸ Observers also note that this generation tends to be more active on social media, which regularly platforms misinformation and highly critical views of political institutions ([Del Vicario et al. 2016](#); see also Fisher, Max, and Amanda Taub (2019), "How YouTube Radicalized Brazil," *The New York Times*, August 11). However, other studies of social media in the region offer more sanguine views of its effects on the public ([Mitchelstein et al. 2020](#); [Valenzuela et al. Forthcoming](#)), with some explicitly finding that frequent social media users are not less committed to democracy ([Lupu et al. 2020](#)). Regardless, the spread of social media in the region is so recent that it can hardly explain generational effects at this point.

⁹ These are Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay.

every other year to nationally representative samples of 1,500 individuals through face-to-face interviews, leaving me with a combined dataset of over 230,000 observations.¹⁰ The questionnaire includes a number of items measuring democratic attitudes and values – along with many other items related to governance and political attitudes – and the consistency of these items over time makes this a particularly attractive source of data for this kind of study.¹¹

In order to study the attitudes of different generations within these surveys, we first need to set criteria for classifying individuals into generations. Most scholars studying political generations suggest that political events mark individuals particularly if they are experienced during adolescence and early adulthood (see [Jennings and Niemi 1974](#)). But exactly what years of the life-cycle are included in these categories varies somewhat by author, and these choices are somewhat arbitrary. Following [Denemark et al. \(2016\)](#), I define them as the ages between 14 and 22, but note that the online appendix reports some analyses with different age thresholds, with very similar substantive results (see [Figures A1-A4](#)).

To identify the transition generation, I rely on the coding of transition years provided by [Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán \(2014\)](#).¹² I then identify the transition generation as those individuals who spent any part of their impressionable years during the transition year and the subsequent 15 years. I also identify those who spent all of their impressionable years before the democratic transition as the pre-transition generation(s) and those whose impressionable years all came after the transition period (i.e., after the first 15 years of democracy) as the post-transition generation.

¹⁰ The exception was the 2021 round of the AmericasBarometer, which was fielded by telephone because of the COVID-19 pandemic. For more information about sampling methodologies and data collection, go to www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop.

¹¹ A fundamental assumption underlying this kind of analysis is that the survey questions themselves are understood similarly across generational cohorts (or, to the extent that there is some distribution of understandings, the distributions are similar across cohorts). This might be especially important with regard to the questions on democracy, if different cohorts conceptualize democracy differently. But the survey data themselves are reassuring: across generational cohorts, support for democracy and satisfaction with democracy appear to be similarly correlated with trust in elections and trust in other political institutions (see [Table A6](#)).

¹² The same coding of transitions is used by [Fuks et al. \(2018\)](#). The only exception I take with this coding is that I code Peru's democratic transition as 2001 rather than 1995.

To get a sense of how this coding works, consider the case of Argentina, which returned to democracy in 1983. Survey respondents born before 1961 would be considered part of the pre-transition generations; those born between 1961 (i.e., they would have been 22 the year of the transition) and 1984 (i.e., they would have been 14 years old in 1998, 15 years into the democratic period) are classified as the transition generation; and those born after 1984 are considered the post-transition generation. Across the countries and years in the data, this classification places 28.3% of AmericasBarometer respondents into the pre-transition generations, 37% into the transition generation, and 48.1% into the post-transition generation. It also means that during the period of surveys I analyze, the post-transition generation was between the ages of 16 and 41 – a reasonable approximation of the younger age groups in Figure 1.

I want to examine whether the commitments, behaviors, and attitudes of these political generations in Latin America differ and measure each using a number of survey items. For the sake of comparability, each survey item is recoded to be dichotomous. To measure individuals' democratic commitments, I rely on five items: a standard measure of support for democracy in the abstract,¹³ the degree to which individuals would tolerate a military coup during a crisis,¹⁴ satisfaction with the functioning of democracy,¹⁵ trust in the country's elections,¹⁶ and government responsiveness to voters.¹⁷ The conventional wisdom would suggest that the post-transition generation is less committed to democracy, suggesting lower levels of support for

¹³ This item measures agreement with the statement, "Democracy may have problems, but it is better than any other form of government." Agreement is measured on a seven-point scale and I code responses of 5, 6, or 7 as democratic support.

¹⁴ This binary item asks, "Some people say that under some circumstances it would be justified for the military of this country to take power by a coup d'état (military coup). In your opinion would a military coup be justified when there is a lot of corruption?"

¹⁵ This question asks, "In general, would you say that you are very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the way democracy works in (country)?" I group together those who responded "very satisfied" or "satisfied" as positive responses.

¹⁶ This item, part of series of items on trust in institutions asks, "To what extent do you trust elections in this country?" Responses are on a seven-point scale and I code responses of 5, 6, or 7 as trust.

¹⁷ This item asks respondents their level of agreement with the statement, "Those who govern this country are interested in what people like you think." Agreement is measured on a seven-point scale and I code responses of 5, 6, or 7 as positive assessments.

democracy, satisfaction with democracy, trust in elections, and perceptions of government responsiveness, and higher levels of tolerance for coups.

A second set of outcomes that we might expect to differ across generations has to do with political participation of various forms. To study these expectations, I use three measures of participation: one asking respondents if they voted in the most recent presidential election,¹⁸ another asking whether they participated in a protest in the prior year,¹⁹ , and a final index of civic participation constructed from a set of items asking how frequently the respondent participates in the meetings of a set of civic organizations.²⁰ Self-reports of participation are of course known to suffer from social desirability bias (e.g., [Karp and Brockington 2005](#)), but verified measures are unavailable in these contexts. And while the bias may be most acute when it comes to self-reported turnout, it is less clear that we would expect much social desirability when it comes to reporting other forms of participation. For this bias to affect my analysis, it would also need to be the case that members of different political generations are affected differently by social desirability, which seems less likely.

Perhaps more problematic is the possibility that the nature of civic participation has changed over time and that the standard measure, based on frequency of meeting attendance, fails to capture the kinds of civic activities that younger cohorts engage in, such as digital advocacy or cyberactivism ([McCaughey and Ayers 2003](#)). If this is true, then what looks like a decline in civic participation may simply be younger cohorts shifting their mode of participation. Since the available data do not measure newer forms of participation, this limits the interpretation of my results: instead of an encompassing statement on generational differences in civic participation

¹⁸ The question simply asks, “Did you vote in the last presidential elections of (year of last presidential elections)?”

¹⁹ The item asks, “In the last 12 months, have you participated in a demonstration or protest march?”

²⁰ The wording of this module is as follows: “I am going to read you a list of groups and organizations. Please tell me if you attend meetings of these organizations at least once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year, or never. (1) Meetings of any religious organization? (2) Meetings of a parents’ association at school? (3) Meetings of a community improvement committee or association? (4) Meetings of a political party or political organization?” The factored index uses principal components and has an eigenvalue of 1.50. The factor loadings are: religious organization (0.48), parents’ association (0.61), community improvement (0.73), and political party (0.59). The index is then recoded to range from 0 to 1.

writ large, my results should be interpreted as differences in these traditional forms of participation.

I also examine a final set of attitudinal measures from the AmericasBarometer that derive less from the expectations of prior studies and instead offer an exploratory look at how political attitudes may have changed in the region. To do this, I rely on three measures: the classical self-placement on the left-right scale,²¹ support for same-sex marriage,²² and an index aimed at a general measure of political tolerance or liberal values.²³ Left-right measures suffer from well-known issues of comparability across space and time (see [Zechmeister 2006](#); [Zechmeister and Corral 2013](#)), as well as high levels of item nonresponse.²⁴ Still, they may allow us to explore one aspect of political self-conceptions among the subset of respondents (e.g., [Lupu, Oliveros, and Schiumerini 2021](#)).

Estimating the effects of political generations requires overcoming an important methodological challenge. By definition, members of more recent political generations and younger than members of political generations that came before. As a result, an individual's political generation and age may be highly, or even perfectly, correlated. If democratic attitudes

²¹ This item, which uses a visual aid in the face-to-face surveys, is worded as follows: "On this card there is a 1-10 scale that goes from left to right. The number 1 means left and 10 means right. Nowadays, when we speak of political leanings, we talk of those on the left and those on the right. In other words, some people sympathize more with the left and others with the right. According to the meaning that the terms 'left' and 'right' have for you, and thinking of your own political leanings, where would you place yourself on this scale? Tell me the number." The 10-point response scale is recoded to range from 0 to 1.

²² This item asks, "How strongly do you approve or disapprove of same-sex couples having the right to marry?" Responses are on a 10-point scale and I code responses of 7 or above as support.

²³ These items begin with an introduction of the response scale: "Now we are going to use another card. The new card has a 10-point ladder, which goes from 1 to 10, where 1 means that you strongly disapprove and 10 means that you strongly approve. I am going to read you a list of some actions that people can take to achieve their political goals and objectives." Respondents are then asked to use this scale in responding to the following four items: (1) "There are people who only say bad things about the (country) form of government, not just the current (incumbent) government but the system of government. How strongly do you approve or disapprove of such people's right to vote?" (2) "How strongly do you approve or disapprove that such people be allowed to conduct peaceful demonstrations in order to express their views?" (3) "Still thinking of those who only say bad things about the (country) form of government, how strongly do you approve or disapprove of such people being permitted to run for public office?" (4) "How strongly do you approve or disapprove of such people appearing on television to make speeches?" The factored index uses principal components and has an eigenvalue of 2.66. The factor loadings are: voting (0.75), demonstrations (0.80), run for office (0.86), and making speeches (0.85). The index is then recoded to range from 0 to 1.

²⁴ In my data, 11.4% of the sample did not respond to this item.

are different across generations, but also change as people get older, we will not be able to distinguish these two effects. In other words, studies that fail to consider both factors cannot tell us whether different generations hold particular attitudes or those attitudes simply change over an individual's life-cycle (Fuks et al. 2018; Moreno and Lagos 2016; Toro Maureira 2008).

To address this problem, scholars often turn to age-period-cohort models, which seek to parse out age effects, period effects, and cohort/generational effects.²⁵ The challenge is that in any single survey, age and cohort are perfectly correlated and therefore indistinguishable. And in most applications, age, period, and cohort are each an exact linear combination of the other two variables, so scholars must make strong assumptions in order to derive estimates (see Achen and Wang 2019; Glenn 2005; Winship and Harding 2008).²⁶

I address these issues in two ways. First, I use cross-national data from across Latin America so that I can leverage the fact that democratic transitions took place in different years across countries. In a pooled analysis, members of each generation I examine are in fact different ages across countries in any given survey, ensuring that age and cohort are not equivalent in my models (see also Pop-Eleches and Tucker 2014, 2017, 2019). Even so, in this analysis, the relationship between age and cohort is indistinguishable from country fixed-effects. Put differently, age and cohort remain correlated within countries in this analysis.

A second analysis instead uses the design-based approach suggested by Dinas and Stoker (2014). This approach identifies a control group that is also observed in each survey and adapts familiar difference-in-differences estimation techniques to compare cases with and without the generation-defining political event (Angrist and Pischke 2009). In my case, I use Colombia and Costa Rica, two countries in the AmericasBarometer that transitioned to democracy well before the Third Wave and therefore would not be expected to have a democratic transition generation from this era.²⁷

²⁵ The standard estimation model is $y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{age}_i + \beta_2 \text{age}_i^2 + \beta_3 \text{time}_i + \beta_4 \text{time}_i^2 + \beta_j \text{cohort}_i + \epsilon$ for j cohorts.

²⁶ Alternative, Bayesian approaches are proposed by Bartels and Jackman (2014) and Stegmüller (2014).

²⁷ Venezuela was also surveyed in the AmericasBarometer for some time, but I do not include it as a control case because it has not been surveyed since 2017.

The assumption required for making inferences from this kind of analysis is that the trends in my outcomes in these two countries represent what average trends would have looked like in the Third-Wave democracies had they transitioned earlier. If that assumption holds, then these cases serve as a kind of control group such that we can see how age affects democratic attitudes in the absence of generational effects, and use that information to estimate the generational effects in the treatment group of Third Wave countries.²⁸ To identify comparable generations in these control cases, I use 1986 – the median transition year across the Third Wave countries – as the cutoff for what these same three political generations might look like in Colombia and Costa Rica.

Who Are the Uncommitted Youth?

Before turning to the analysis of generational effects, I begin with a simple descriptive exercise to examine what types of Latin Americans in the younger, post-transition generation express lower commitments to democracy. Table 1 correlates the democracy items with a set of demographic characteristics: gender, age, ethnicity, religion, religiosity, wealth, and education.²⁹

The results suggest a number of general patterns. Among the post-transition generation, women are less likely than men to be committed to democracy across the positive indicators, but not more likely to support a military coup. Non-White Latin Americans are also less committed to democracy across most of the indicators. Religious affiliations appear to be less consistently correlated with these attitudes, although Evangelicals do appear to be more committed to democracy than Catholics on some indicators. Meanwhile, the relationship between religiosity and democratic attitudes seems to vary by indicator, with the more religious expressing more

²⁸ In additional analyses, I use Colombia (Tables A7 and A8) and Costa Rica (Tables A9 and A10) individually as control groups; such a multiple control-group design adds robustness to the results and reduces concerns about treatment-group unobservables (Lu and Rosenbaum 2004). My analysis also assumes age and period fixed effects across the treatment and control cases, but this assumption can be relaxed. The additional analyses in Tables A11 and A12 report estimates from models that allow age and period effects to vary across treatment and control, with no changes to my substantive findings.

²⁹ Education, ethnicity, and religion are measured using standard self-reports. Wealth quintiles are calculated by country-year from a factored index of ownership of household goods, following (Filmer and Pritchett 2001). Religiosity is based on responses to the question, “How often do you attend religious services?”

Table 1: Correlates of democratic commitments among post-transition generation

Variable	Support for democracy	Tolerance for military coup	Satisfaction with democracy	Trust in elections
Education	0.037* (0.006)	-0.033* (0.007)	-0.015* (0.006)	0.006 (0.006)
Wealth	-0.000 (0.003)	0.006* (0.003)	-0.019* (0.003)	-0.018* (0.002)
Religiosity	-0.004 (0.003)	0.019* (0.003)	0.006* (0.003)	-0.006* (0.003)
Catholic	–	–	–	–
Mainline Protestant	-0.014 (0.015)	-0.026 (0.019)	-0.018 (0.014)	-0.009 (0.013)
Evangelical	-0.007 (0.009)	-0.035* (0.012)	0.015 (0.009)	0.040* (0.009)
No religion	0.048* (0.013)	0.011 (0.015)	0.005 (0.013)	-0.026* (0.012)
Other religion	-0.028 (0.018)	-0.096* (0.023)	-0.001 (0.018)	0.024 (0.017)
White	–	–	–	–
Mestiza	-0.028* (0.009)	0.083* (0.011)	-0.011 (0.009)	-0.027* (0.009)
Indigenous	-0.054* (0.010)	0.048* (0.013)	-0.040* (0.010)	-0.027* (0.010)
Age	-0.002* (0.001)	-0.004* (0.001)	-0.007* (0.001)	0.002* (0.001)
Woman	-0.024* (0.007)	-0.009 (0.009)	-0.045* (0.007)	-0.018* (0.007)
Constant	0.584* (0.024)	0.483* (0.030)	0.710* (0.024)	0.352* (0.023)
Observations	21,501	14,506	21,501	21,501
R ²	0.007	0.011	0.011	0.005

Notes: Linear regression estimates. * $p < 0.05$.

tolerance for a military coup and less trust in elections, but also more satisfaction with democracy. Notably, wealth and education reveal fairly consistent relationships with democratic attitudes. Those with higher levels of formal education appear more likely to be committed to democracy in principle, but also less satisfied with their own democracies – like the critical citizens in [Norris \(1999\)](#). At the same time, more affluent post-transition Latin Americans appear to be less committed to democracy and also less satisfied with it.

These patterns, however, do not compare the post-transition generations to older cohorts – the comparison we need to be able to determine whether this generation is indeed less committed to democracy. Applying more sophisticated approaches to estimating this comparison, do we still see declining commitments to democracy and participation in the younger, post-transition generation?

Is the Post-Transition Generation Less Democratic?

Figure 2 suggests that we do not. On nearly every measure, the post-transition generation appears to be more, not less, committed to democracy and more, not less, likely to participate. This generation, which came of age within democracy, is more likely to say that they support democracy in the abstract, less likely to think a military coup might be justified, more satisfied with democracy in their country, more likely to trust elections, and more likely to think that governments respond to them. They are also more likely to say that they voted in the last election, and more likely to report participating in a protest, although they appear to participate in civic groups less frequently. Given the large size of the sample, it is unsurprising that all of these differences are statistically significant.

These effects are not massive, but they are sizable relative to the variation in these measures. For instance, the difference between the pre-transition generations and the post-transition generation is roughly 9 percentage points. To put this into context, across the countries in my sample in 2021, the proportion of citizens who support democracy in the abstract

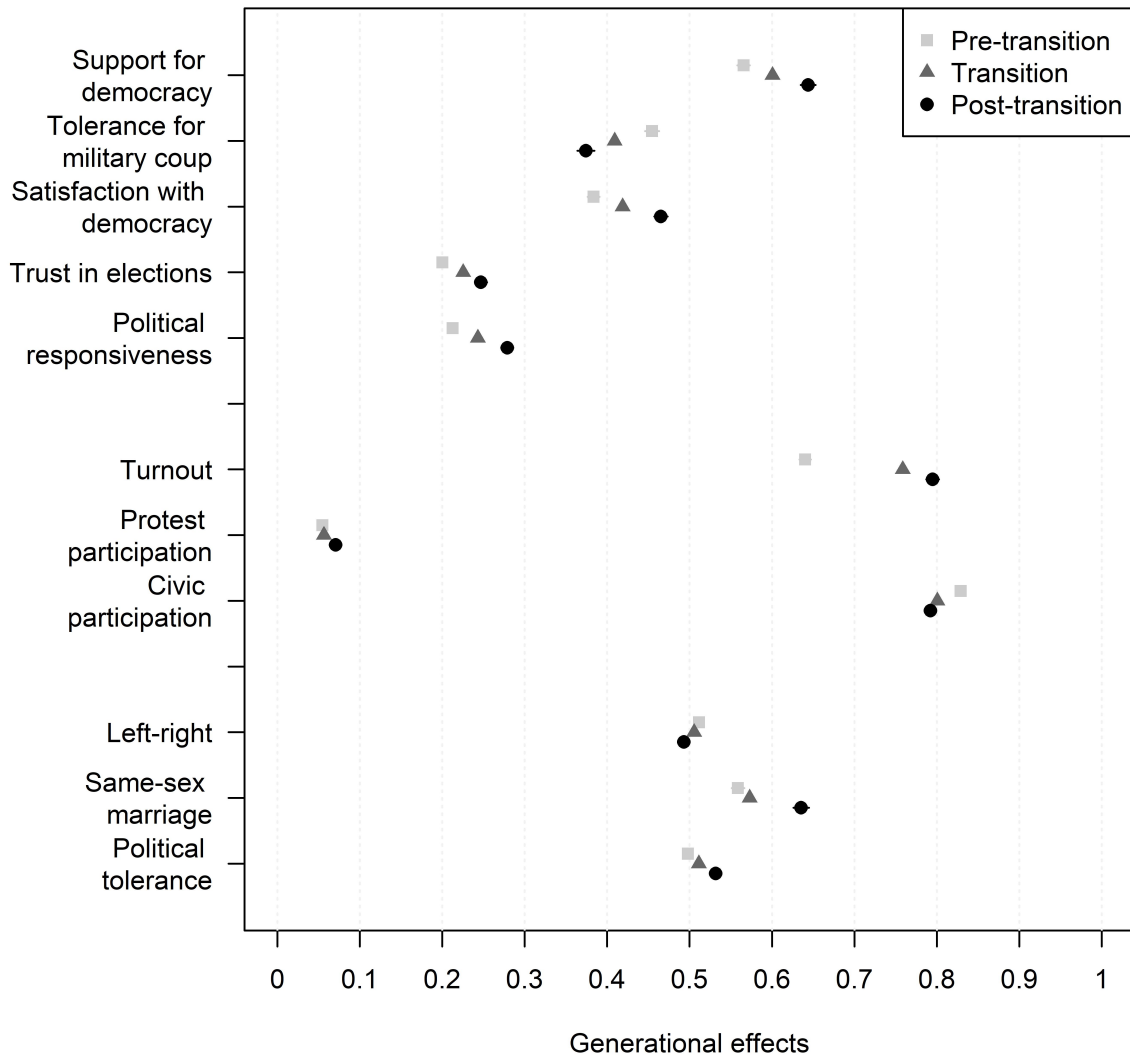


Figure 2: Generational effects in Latin America among Third-Wave democracies. Points represent estimated effects of political generations on democratic commitments, behaviors, and attitudes in models that control for age and period effects. Lines represent 95% confidence intervals, although many are not visible given the high precision of the estimates. Full results are provided in Tables A2 and A3.

goes from 80% in Uruguay to 49% in Honduras, a range of 31 percentage points. In other words, the generational effect is nearly a third as large as the cross-country variation in 2021.

Consider also the generational effect on protest participation. In any given year, protest participation is of course relatively rare: only 5.7% of respondents in my data report having participated in a protest in the prior year. The difference in the rate of protest participation

between the pre-transition generations and the post-transition generation is only 1.6 percentage points, but this represents a nearly 30% increase. Notably, this is one case in which the pre-transition generations and the transition generation do not themselves significantly differ.

Finally, with respect to political attitudes, I find that the post-transition generation is slightly more left-leaning, much more likely to support same-sex marriage, and somewhat more tolerant politically. The two more muted attitudinal effects are perhaps unsurprising given that they may be more driven by more contingent political preferences and partisan leanings. The sizable generational effect on support for same-sex marriage, on the other hand, seems more likely to be driven by the social context in which people came of age, and is consistent with findings in other parts of the world (e.g., [Pew Research Center 2015](#)).

Figure 3 revisits these findings using the design-based approach, comparing the generational effects in Third-Wave democracies to those with prior democratic transitions. Here the measures of interest are the differences in generational effects between the treated (Third-Wave democracies) and control (Colombia and Costa Rica) groups of countries. So negative values mean that a generational cohort in the Third-Wave democracies on average expresses lower values on a variable than the same cohort in the control countries. But the substantively relevant question is the direction in which those differences shift from one generation to the next.

With regard to support for democracy, for instance, Figure 3 shows a generational shift to the right, meaning that larger proportions of the post-transition generation support democracy than do prior generations. The fact that the values are negative means that all three cohorts in the Third-Wave democracies support democracy less than their peers in Colombia and Costa Rica, but the differences across the generations suggest that the Third-Wave democracies look more and more like the older democracies over the generations.

The results in Figure 3 are largely consistent with those in Figure 2. In fact, the differences between the post-transition generation and the other two are quite a bit more stark in this analysis. Still, there are notable substantive deviations among these results. With regard to

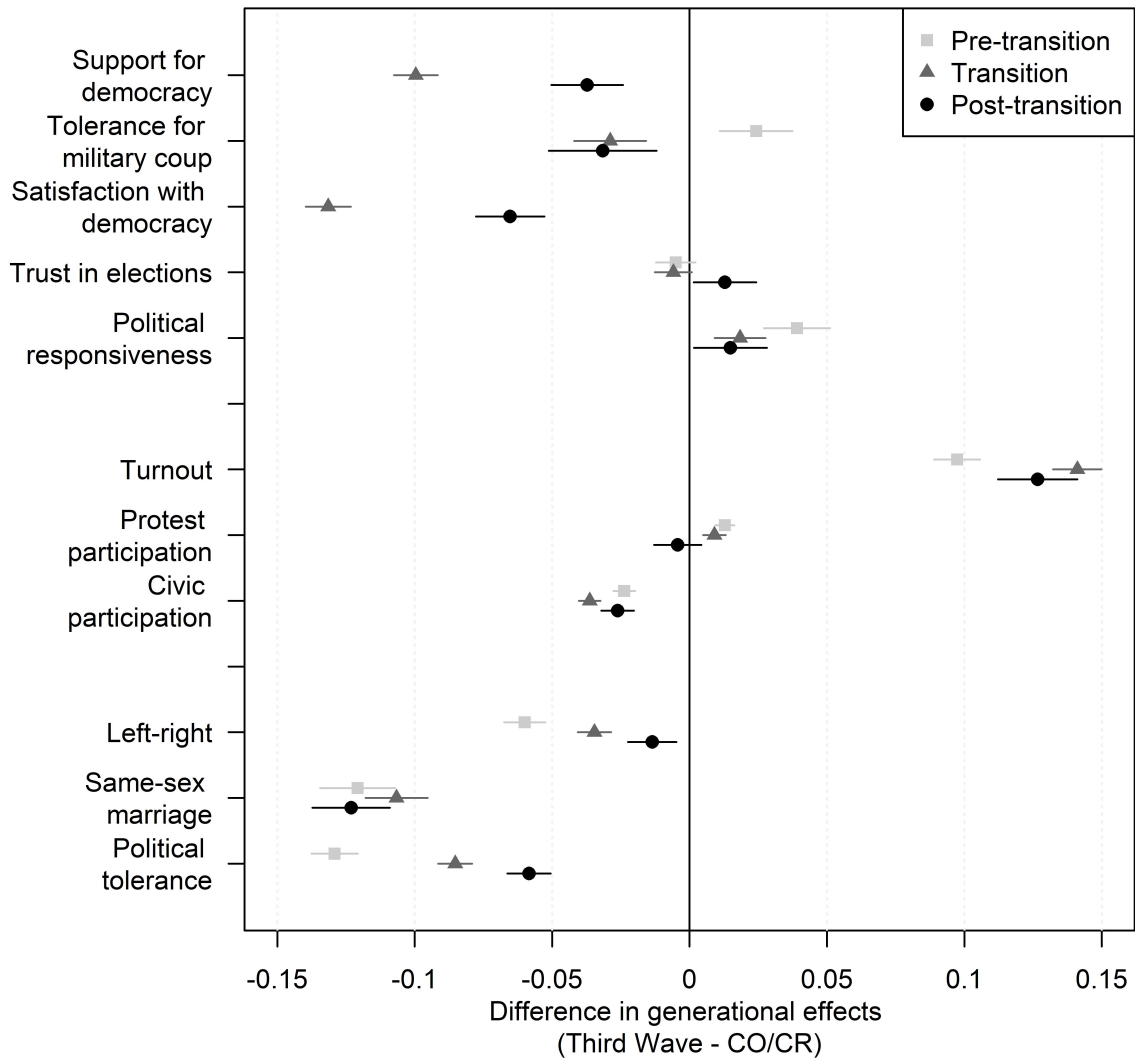


Figure 3: Generational effects in Latin America, comparing Third-Wave democracies to Colombia and Costa Rica. Points represent estimated differences in the effects of political generations on democratic commitments, behaviors, and attitudes between Third-Wave democracies and Colombia and Costa Rica. Models also control for age and period effects. Lines represent 95% confidence intervals. Full results are provided in Tables A4 and A5.

democratic commitments, relative to their contemporaries in the control countries, the post-transition generation appears no less willing to tolerate a military coup than the transition generation, although both are significantly less likely than the pre-transition generations. There is also less evidence in this analysis that the post-transition generation engages more in protests and less frequently in civic groups, although the generational effect on turnout remains.

The attitudinal results seem to differ most between this design-based analysis and the approach in Figure 2. Here, the post-transition generation appears to place itself more to the right of the left-right spectrum and to be less supportive of same-sex marriage than prior generations, relative to the same cohorts in the control countries. This group also seems not to be any more politically tolerant than the transition generation in relative terms. This does not imply that the post-transition generation is ideologically more conservative than prior generations. Rather, what it suggests is that while this post-transition generation is more progressive than prior generations in the Third-Wave democracies (see Figure 2), did not keep up with the generational differences we see in Colombia and Costa Rica.

Still, regardless of the analytic approach, these analyses show that the post-transition generation is largely more committed to democracy and more likely to participate, at least in elections, than prior political generations. The observation that Latin American youth are less committed to democracy appears to be a product of age effects rather than generational differences. This is very reassuring: it suggests that we should be less concerned about the future of public support for democracy and democratic participation in the region. In fact, my findings suggest that these will instead increase as generational replacement proceeds.

Socialization or Demographics?

What explains these generational differences in the region? Most studies of political generations assume, implicitly or explicitly, that generational effects must be due to the context in which different cohorts came of age and became socialized. Indeed, my classification of survey respondents into generations was based on this idea, suggesting that democratic transitions were particularly salient contexts and that socialization under dictatorships may differ from socialization under consolidated democracy.

Yet, this assumption overlooks the fact that the demographic compositions of different generations also varies. For instance, if younger generations are more likely to attain a university

education and if additional formal education makes individuals more committed to democracy, then this demographic difference could manifest as a generational effect. We would observe that the post-transition generation is more committed to democracy, but this would be a result of its different educational composition rather than the political context in which its members were socialized.³⁰

Three principal socio-demographic changes have taken place across Latin America in recent decades that could drive generational effects on democratic commitments and political behavior (see Kessler and Murillo, this volume). Both educational attainment and wealth have increased across much of the region, and people with more formal education and higher levels of wealth tend toward higher levels of support for democracy and greater political participation. The region has also undergone some important changes in terms of religion, although in ways that are potentially countervailing. On the one hand, the region has become more secular over time, with fewer people identifying with a religion and declining attendance at religious services. On the other hand, and particularly in certain countries, evangelicalism has grown dramatically.³¹

To illustrate these changes, Figure 4 shows the composition of the three generations I analyze with respect to education, relative wealth, religion, and religiosity. Consistent with the demographic trends noted in prior studies, the three generations I analyze differ on all of these dimensions. In particular, the post-transition generation has more formal education, is relatively wealthier, is both more evangelical and more likely to identify as not having a religion, and is less observant than the prior generations.

Do these differences explain the differences in their commitment to democracy, political behaviors, and attitudes? If we assume that all of these demographic characteristics are unaffected

³⁰ Since educational decisions are made during adolescence and early adulthood, we might think of them as potentially driven by the political context (making education post-treatment, in a causal framework). Addressing these kinds of questions about mechanisms is always challenging, so my analysis here should be taken as suggestive.

³¹ Additional changes may have to do with the economic opportunities available to different generational cohorts. In particular, the post-transition generation may be confronting less stable employment opportunities (the so-called gig economy) and more likely to work in sectors associated with the knowledge economy. The AmericasBarometer surveys do not consistently include occupational information sufficient to identify these differences. Moreover, these developments are relatively recent and still represent a small portion of the labor market in the region.

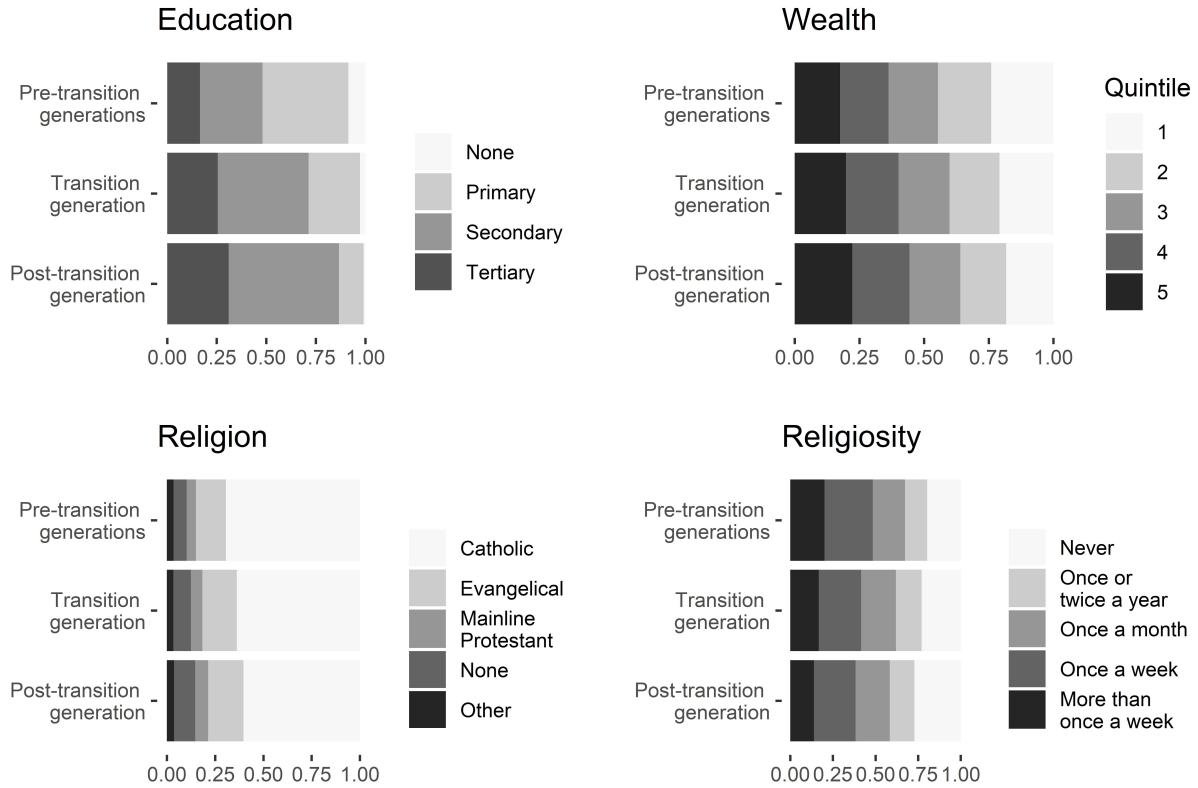


Figure 4: Compositional change across generations. Bars represent the proportion of respondents in each generation who fall into each category.

by the political context that underlies political generations, then one way to answer this question is to include these variables in the age-period-cohort models and examine whether they attenuate the relationship between the generation indicators and each outcome variable. The online appendix reports just such an analysis (see Figure A5), showing no substantive change to the generational effects. This suggests that these demographic compositional changes do not explain the different attitudes of political generations in Latin America. Instead, it seems the political context itself – being socialized politically in contexts of non-democracy, transitional democracy, or more consolidated democracy – is a more likely explanation of these generational effects.

Political Generations and the Future of Democracy

The conventional wisdom, among both scholars and pundits, is that generational replacement in Latin America will usher in an era of withered public commitment to democracy and declining participation. But this conclusion is based on inferences that have well-known problems. Once we correct for those issues in our analysis of public opinion, the picture is actually much more reassuring. Far from being anti-democratic and apathetic, the generation of Latin Americans who came of age after the early years of Third-Wave democracy in the region is in fact more committed to democracy and more likely to participate in some respects. If anything, generational replacement in the region will bolster, rather than weaken, public support for democracy.

These generational effects by no means imply that public support for democracy in Latin America is on the rise, nor even that it will rise in the future. In fact, the public's commitment to democracy in the region has clearly been in decline in recent years ([Lupu, Rodríguez, and Zechmeister 2021](#)), and electoral participation has also declined in many countries. What these findings suggest is simply that these very real declines are not being driven by generational replacement, by the entry of a more skeptical youth less committed to democratic values. Declining support for democracy in Latin America is not, it seems, a youth-related issue.

This is not to deny the fact that younger Latin Americans do tend to be less committed to democracy. That empirical regularity is evident in [Figure 1](#). My analysis addresses the implications of this empirical regularity for the future of democracy in the region. And it reveals that we need to account for the substantial effect of socialization when comparing the attitudes of different political generations. As in other parts of the world, the generations that came of age during authoritarian periods are less committed to democracy.

These findings also highlight two important conceptual points about public opinion in Latin America. They show that political generations do matter for a range of attitudes and behaviors, even though this phenomenon receives very little attention in scholarly work in this field. My focus on democratic transition periods as particularly important points of inflection in

political socialization in the region also adds to research on such transitions and their lasting impact on public opinion.

Since so little research has been done on generational effects in the region, these findings only begin to scratch the surface, leaving many questions outstanding. My analysis pools across the major countries in the region, setting aside variation across countries, which could well reveal important differences. For instance, it might be that periods of democratic transition socialize individuals more deeply when they come out of more repressive dictatorships than when they emerge from more benign ones. Or perhaps transitions following polarizing civil wars produce different effects than those that follow from peaceful contexts. Similarly, nondemocratic regimes that generated good economic outcomes may have socialized generations differently than those who oversaw economic declines.

What we know about the lasting effects of political generations remains limited, both substantively and geographically. As Latin American societies and polities continue to change, scholars ought to pay greater attention to the different ways those generations of citizens respond.

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Online Appendix

A Reported Results

Table A1: Democratic attitudes by age group

Variable	Support for democracy	Tolerance for military coup	Trust in elections
Age group	0.015* (0.001)	-0.032* (0.001)	0.015* (0.001)
Constant	0.558* (0.003)	0.507* (0.003)	0.180* (0.002)
Observations	238,235	157,199	238,235
R^2	0.002	0.010	0.003

Notes: Estimated results from regressing each dependent variable on age group. * $p < 0.05$.

Table A2: Generational effects in Latin America among Third-Wave democracies

Variable	Support for democracy	Tolerance for military coup	Satisfaction with democracy	Trust in elections	Political responsiveness
Age	0.004* (0.000)	-0.009* (0.001)	-0.001* (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	0.001* (0.000)
Age ²	-0.000* (0.000)	0.000* (0.000)	0.000* (0.000)	0.000* (0.000)	0.000* (0.000)
Time	0.015* (0.002)	-0.013* (0.002)	0.018* (0.001)	0.079* (0.001)	0.067* (0.001)
Time ²	-0.001* (0.000)	0.000* (0.000)	-0.002* (0.000)	-0.003* (0.000)	-0.003* (0.000)
Pre-transition gen.	– –	– –	– –	– –	– –
Transition gen.	0.035* (0.005)	-0.045* (0.005)	0.035* (0.004)	0.025* (0.004)	0.031* (0.004)
Post-transition gen.	0.078* (0.007)	-0.080* (0.008)	0.082* (0.007)	0.047* (0.006)	0.066* (0.006)
Constant	0.397* (0.013)	0.789* (0.015)	0.386* (0.012)	-0.253* (0.010)	-0.163* (0.010)
Observations	238,235	157,199	238,235	238,235	192,774
R ²	0.005	0.016	0.026	0.119	0.072

Notes: Estimated results from age-period-cohort models. * $p < 0.05$.

Table A3: Generational effects in Latin America among Third-Wave democracies, contd.

Variable	Turnout	Protest participation	Civic participation	Left-Right	Same-sex marriage	Political tolerance
Age	0.044* (0.000)	0.002* (0.000)	-0.010* (0.000)	-0.002* (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)
Age ²	-0.000* (0.000)	-0.000* (0.000)	0.000* (0.000)	0.000* (0.000)	-0.000* (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)
Time	0.024* (0.002)	0.016* (0.001)	0.011* (0.001)	-0.010* (0.001)	-0.151* (0.001)	-0.008* (0.001)
Time ²	-0.001* (0.000)	-0.000* (0.000)	-0.001* (0.000)	0.000* (0.000)	0.006* (0.000)	0.000* (0.000)
Pre-transition gen.	–	–	–	–	–	–
Transition gen.	0.118* (0.004)	0.002 (0.002)	-0.028* (0.002)	-0.006* (0.003)	0.014* (0.004)	0.013* (0.003)
Post-transition gen.	0.155* (0.007)	0.016* (0.003)	-0.037* (0.003)	-0.018* (0.005)	0.077* (0.008)	0.034* (0.004)
Constant	-0.493* (0.013)	-0.066* (0.006)	1.012* (0.005)	0.589* (0.009)	1.324* (0.013)	0.542* (0.008)
Observations	192,774	195,728	172,767	153,564	195,668	177,847
R ²	0.138	0.028	0.034	0.009	0.283	0.005

Notes: Estimated results from age-period-cohort models. * $p < 0.05$.

Table A4: Generational effects in Latin America, comparing Third-Wave democracies to Colombia and Costa Rica

Variable	Support for democracy	Tolerance for military coup	Satisfaction with democracy	Trust in elections	Political responsiveness
Age	0.004*	-0.009*	-0.002*	-0.001*	0.000
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Age ²	-0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Time	0.010*	-0.017*	0.009*	0.074*	0.058*
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Time ²	-0.001*	0.001*	-0.001*	-0.002*	-0.002*
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Pre-transition gen.	–	–	–	–	–
	–	–	–	–	–
Transition gen.	-0.050*	0.007	-0.009	0.020*	0.042*
	(0.005)	(0.009)	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Post-transition gen.	-0.067*	-0.025*	-0.031*	0.009	0.072*
	(0.009)	(0.013)	(0.009)	(0.008)	(0.009)
Third Wave	-0.185*	0.024*	-0.174*	-0.005	0.039*
	(0.004)	(0.007)	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.006)
Transition gen. × Third Wave	0.086*	-0.053*	0.043*	-0.001	-0.021*
	(0.005)	(0.008)	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Post-transition gen. × Third Wave	0.148*	-0.056*	0.109*	0.018*	-0.024*
	(0.008)	(0.011)	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.008)
Constant	0.610*	0.782*	0.603*	-0.223*	-0.157*
	(0.012)	(0.015)	(0.012)	(0.009)	(0.010)
Observations	290,168	179,633	290,168	290,168	237,237
R ²	0.020	0.018	0.037	0.129	0.073

Notes: Estimated results from age-period-cohort models. * $p < 0.05$.

Table A5: Generational effects in Latin America, comparing Third-Wave democracies to Colombia and Costa Rica, contd.

Variable	Turnout	Protest participation	Civic participation	Left-Right	Same-sex marriage	Political tolerance
Age	0.039*	0.001*	-0.010*	-0.001*	0.000	0.001*
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Age ²	-0.000*	-0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	-0.000*	-0.000*
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Time	0.007*	0.018*	0.012*	-0.010*	-0.153*	-0.006*
	(0.001)	(0.000)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Time ²	-0.000*	-0.001*	-0.001*	0.000*	0.006*	0.000*
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Pre-transition gen.	—	—	—	—	—	—
	—	—	—	—	—	—
Transition gen.	0.073*	0.003	-0.018*	-0.028*	-0.003	-0.032*
	(0.006)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.004)
Post-transition gen.	0.105*	0.030*	-0.035*	-0.055*	0.061*	-0.036*
	(0.009)	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.011)	(0.006)
Third Wave	0.097*	0.013*	-0.024*	-0.060*	-0.121*	-0.129*
	(0.004)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.004)	(0.007)	(0.004)
Transition gen. × Third Wave	0.044*	-0.004	-0.013*	0.025*	0.014*	0.044*
	(0.006)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.004)	(0.005)	(0.004)
Post-transition gen. × Third Wave	0.029*	-0.017*	-0.002	0.046*	-0.002	0.071*
	(0.009)	(0.005)	(0.003)	(0.006)	(0.009)	(0.005)
Constant	-0.423*	-0.067*	1.023*	0.630*	1.438*	0.650*
	(0.012)	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.009)	(0.012)	(0.008)
Observations	236,626	241,073	200,597	179,555	240,997	217,247
R ²	0.119	0.027	0.036	0.014	0.260	0.025

Notes: Estimated results from age-period-cohort models. * $p < 0.05$.

B Additional Tables and Figures

Table A6: Democracy item correlations, by generation

Variable	Support for democracy	Tolerance for military coup
Trust in elections		
Pre-transition gen.	0.145	-0.083
Transition gen.	0.141	-0.072
Post-transition gen.	0.136	-0.052
Tolerance for military coup		
Pre-transition gen.	-0.094	
Transition gen.	-0.084	
Post-transition gen.	-0.050	

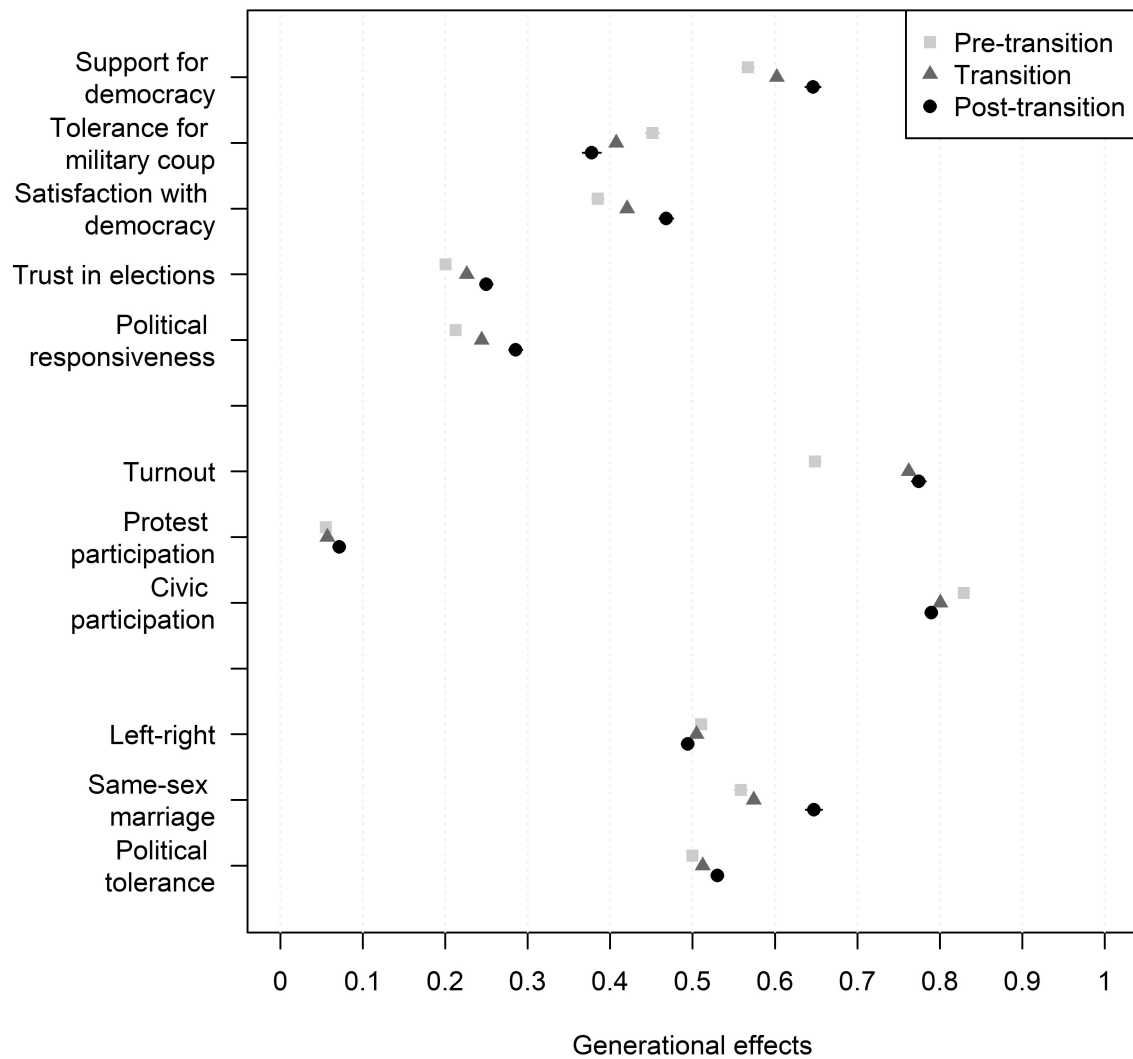


Figure A1: Generational effects in Latin America among Third-Wave democracies (impressionable years defined as 12-22). Points represent estimated effects of political generations on democratic commitments, behaviors, and attitudes in models that control for age and period effects. Lines represent 95% confidence intervals, although many are not visible given the high precision of the estimates.

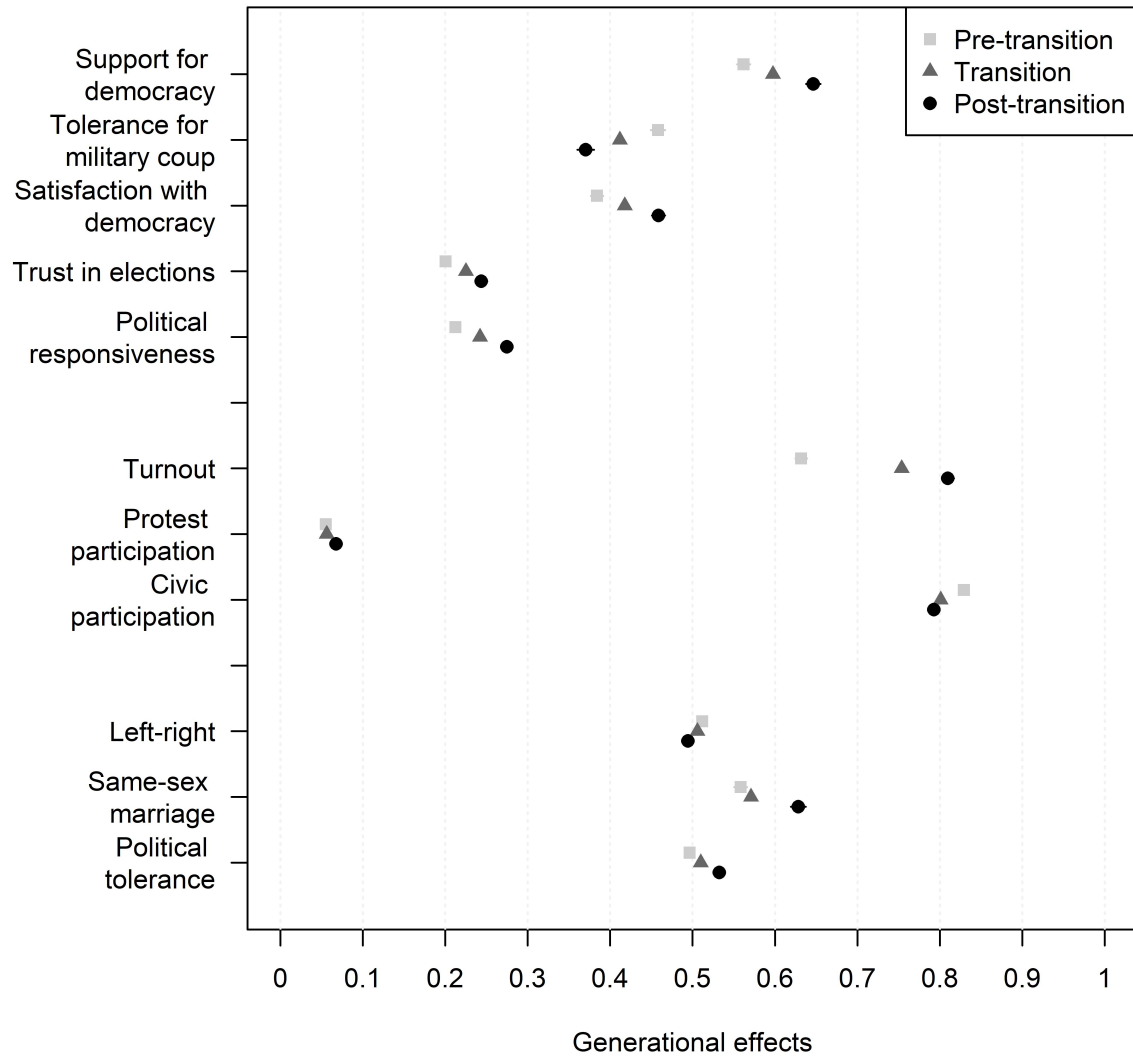


Figure A2: Generational effects in Latin America among Third-Wave democracies (impressionable years defined as 16-22). Points represent estimated effects of political generations on democratic commitments, behaviors, and attitudes in models that control for age and period effects. Lines represent 95% confidence intervals, although many are not visible given the high precision of the estimates.

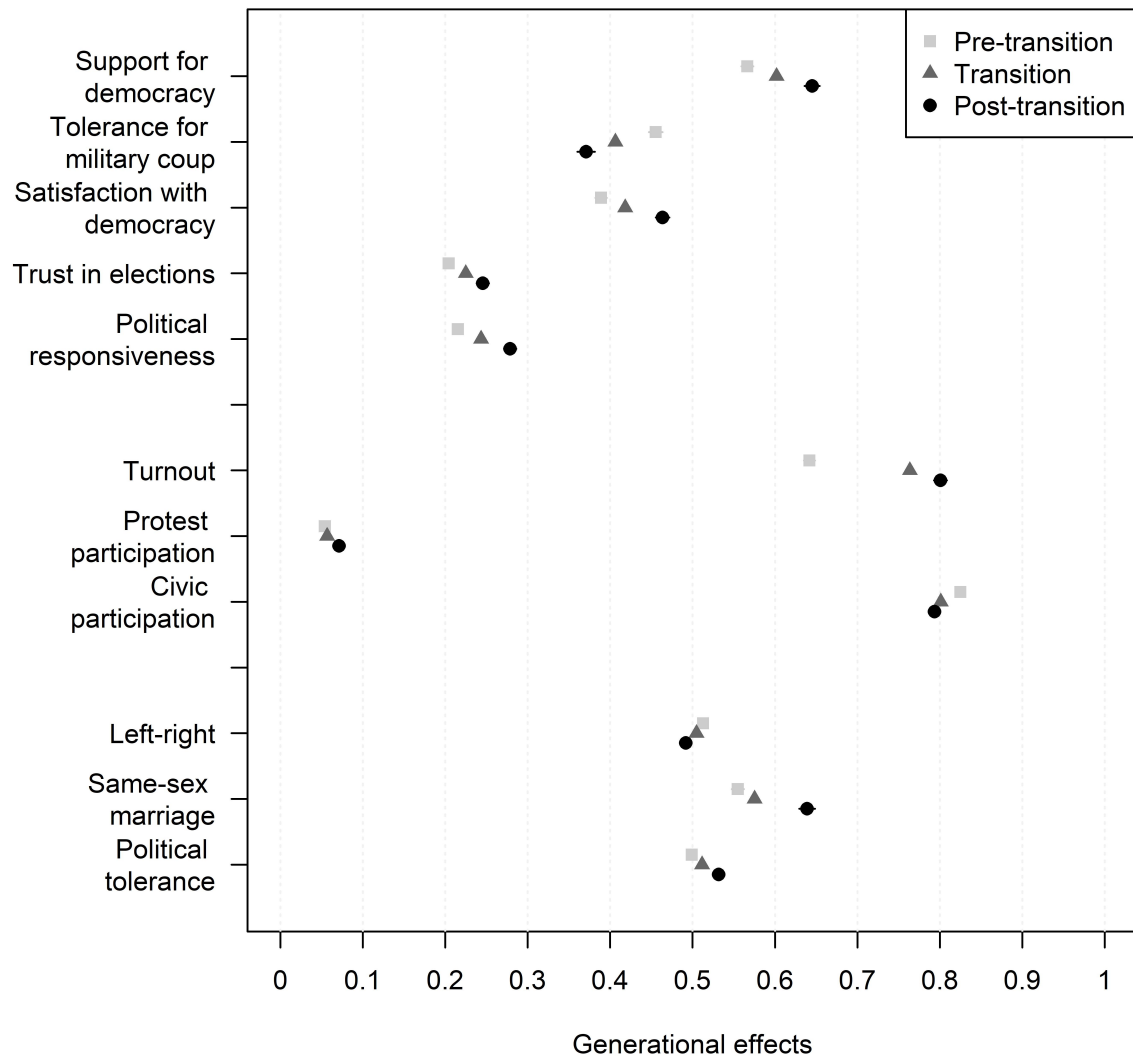


Figure A3: Generational effects in Latin America among Third-Wave democracies (impressionable years defined as 14-20). Points represent estimated effects of political generations on democratic commitments, behaviors, and attitudes in models that control for age and period effects. Lines represent 95% confidence intervals, although many are not visible given the high precision of the estimates.

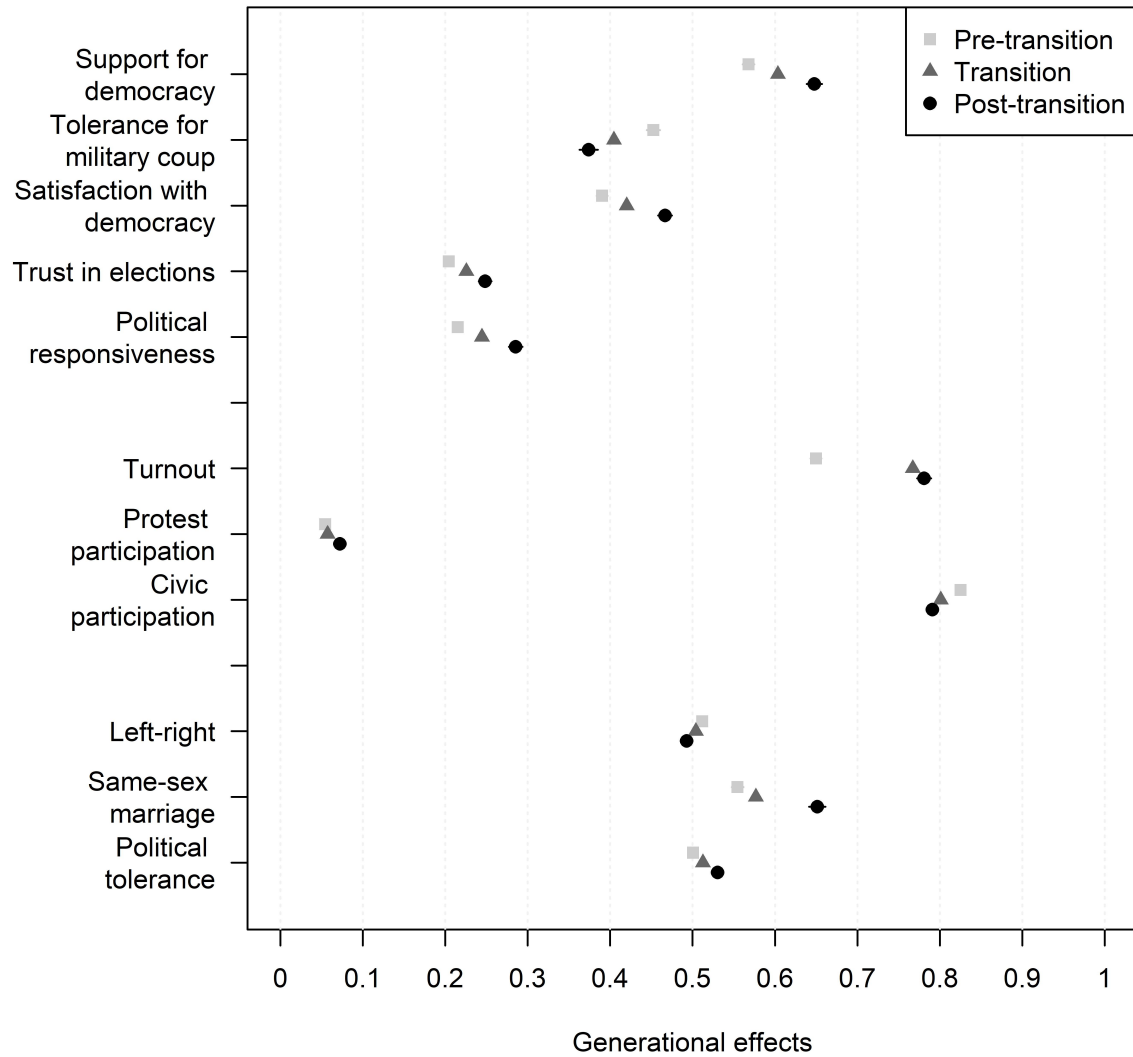


Figure A4: Generational effects in Latin America among Third-Wave democracies (impressionable years defined as 12-20). Points represent estimated effects of political generations on democratic commitments, behaviors, and attitudes in models that control for age and period effects. Lines represent 95% confidence intervals, although many are not visible given the high precision of the estimates.

Table A7: Generational effects in Latin America, comparing Third-Wave democracies to Colombia

Variable	Support for democracy	Tolerance for military coup	Satisfaction with democracy	Trust in elections	Political responsiveness
Age	0.004*	-0.009*	-0.002*	-0.000	0.001
	(0.000)	(0.001)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Age ²	-0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Time	0.013*	-0.013*	0.015*	0.077*	0.066*
	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Time ²	-0.001*	0.000*	-0.001*	-0.003*	-0.003*
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Pre-transition gen.	–	–	–	–	–
	–	–	–	–	–
Transition gen.	0.003	-0.021	0.027*	0.017*	0.005
	(0.010)	(0.014)	(0.011)	(0.007)	(0.009)
Post-transition gen.	-0.017	-0.065*	0.001	-0.018	0.019
	(0.014)	(0.019)	(0.014)	(0.010)	(0.013)
Third Wave	-0.066*	-0.008	0.018	0.051*	-0.030*
	(0.009)	(0.012)	(0.009)	(0.007)	(0.008)
Transition gen. × Third Wave	0.030*	-0.025	0.007	0.007	0.025*
	(0.010)	(0.014)	(0.010)	(0.007)	(0.009)
Post-transition gen. × Third Wave	0.095*	-0.017	0.079*	0.064*	0.045*
	(0.013)	(0.018)	(0.013)	(0.009)	(0.012)
Constant	0.478*	0.805*	0.399*	-0.286*	-0.125*
	(0.015)	(0.019)	(0.015)	(0.011)	(0.013)
Observations	253,372	165,765	253,372	253,372	204,918
R ²	0.005	0.017	0.028	0.119	0.072

Notes: Estimated results from age-period-cohort models. * $p < 0.05$.

Table A8: Generational effects in Latin America, comparing Third-Wave democracies to Colombia, contd.

Variable	Turnout	Protest participation	Civic participation	Left-Right	Same-sex marriage	Political tolerance
Age	0.043*	0.001*	-0.010*	-0.002*	0.000	-0.000
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Age ²	-0.000*	-0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	-0.000*	-0.000
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Time	0.022*	0.017*	0.011*	-0.010*	-0.149*	-0.008*
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Time ²	-0.001*	-0.001*	-0.001*	0.000*	0.006*	0.000*
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Pre-transition gen.	—	—	—	—	—	—
	—	—	—	—	—	—
Transition gen.	0.109*	0.003	-0.007	-0.055*	0.038*	0.020*
	(0.010)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.006)
Post-transition gen.	0.031*	0.045*	-0.018*	-0.111*	0.119*	0.054*
	(0.014)	(0.008)	(0.005)	(0.009)	(0.014)	(0.008)
Third Wave	0.068*	0.006	0.005	-0.103*	0.034*	0.031*
	(0.009)	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.007)	(0.009)	(0.006)
Transition gen. × Third Wave	0.006	-0.002	-0.021*	0.052*	-0.026*	-0.009
	(0.010)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.006)
Post-transition gen. × Third Wave	0.117*	-0.031*	-0.018*	0.098*	-0.045*	-0.024*
	(0.013)	(0.008)	(0.005)	(0.009)	(0.013)	(0.008)
Constant	-0.530*	-0.068*	1.006*	0.683*	1.288*	0.519*
	(0.014)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.011)	(0.015)	(0.010)
Observations	204,918	210,865	183,294	163,902	207,812	189,224
R ²	0.138	0.028	0.034	0.014	0.286	0.006

Notes: Estimated results from age-period-cohort models. * $p < 0.05$.

Table A9: Generational effects in Latin America, comparing Third-Wave democracies to Costa Rica

Variable	Support for democracy	Tolerance for military coup	Satisfaction with democracy	Trust in elections	Political responsiveness
Age	0.004*	-0.009*	-0.001*	0.000	0.001
	(0.000)	(0.001)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Age ²	-0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Time	0.012*	-0.016*	0.017*	0.081*	0.066*
	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Time ²	-0.001*	0.001*	-0.002*	-0.003*	-0.003*
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Pre-transition gen.	–	–	–	–	–
	–	–	–	–	–
Transition gen.	0.010	0.004	0.023*	0.014	0.019*
	(0.009)	(0.014)	(0.010)	(0.009)	(0.008)
Post-transition gen.	0.016	-0.016	-0.032*	-0.009	0.019
	(0.013)	(0.017)	(0.014)	(0.013)	(0.013)
Third Wave	-0.145*	0.023*	-0.157*	-0.061*	-0.003
	(0.008)	(0.011)	(0.009)	(0.007)	(0.007)
Transition gen. × Third Wave	0.022*	-0.049*	0.010	0.010	0.010
	(0.009)	(0.013)	(0.010)	(0.008)	(0.008)
Post-transition gen. × Third Wave	0.058*	-0.064*	0.113*	0.053*	0.045*
	(0.012)	(0.016)	(0.013)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Constant	0.554*	0.776*	0.556*	-0.202*	-0.149*
	(0.014)	(0.018)	(0.014)	(0.011)	(0.012)
Observations	253,215	165,095	253,215	253,215	204,777
R ²	0.009	0.017	0.032	0.125	0.072

Notes: Estimated results from age-period-cohort models. * $p < 0.05$.

Table A10: Generational effects in Latin America, comparing Third-Wave democracies to Costa Rica, contd.

Variable	Turnout	Protest participation	Civic participation	Left-Right	Same-sex marriage	Political tolerance
Age	0.042*	0.002*	-0.010*	-0.002*	0.000	0.000
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Age ²	-0.000*	-0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	-0.000*	-0.000*
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Time	0.020*	0.016*	0.011*	-0.011*	-0.155*	-0.008*
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Time ²	-0.001*	-0.000*	-0.001*	0.000*	0.006*	0.000*
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Pre-transition gen.	—	—	—	—	—	—
	—	—	—	—	—	—
Transition gen.	0.100*	0.002	-0.010*	-0.052*	0.020*	-0.000
	(0.011)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.007)	(0.009)	(0.007)
Post-transition gen.	0.118*	0.001	-0.010*	-0.083*	0.135*	-0.008
	(0.015)	(0.007)	(0.005)	(0.010)	(0.013)	(0.009)
Third Wave	0.045*	0.006*	-0.030*	-0.060*	0.004	-0.068*
	(0.008)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.006)
Transition gen. × Third Wave	0.016	-0.000	-0.019*	0.048*	-0.007	0.012
	(0.010)	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.007)
Post-transition gen. × Third Wave	0.026	0.014*	-0.027*	0.070*	-0.065*	0.041*
	(0.014)	(0.006)	(0.004)	(0.009)	(0.012)	(0.008)
Constant	-0.488*	-0.067*	1.039*	0.643*	1.336*	0.612*
	(0.014)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.010)	(0.014)	(0.009)
Observations	204,777	207,731	182,457	162,807	210,648	189,285
R ²	0.131	0.028	0.038	0.012	0.283	0.008

Notes: Estimated results from age-period-cohort models. * $p < 0.05$.

Table A11: Generational effects in Latin America, comparing Third-Wave democracies to Colombia and Costa Rica (fully interacted models)

Variable	Support for democracy	Tolerance for military coup	Satisfaction with democracy	Trust in elections	Political responsiveness
Age	0.004* (0.001)	-0.011* (0.002)	-0.005* (0.001)	-0.002* (0.001)	-0.003* (0.001)
Third Wave	-0.278* (0.037)	-0.108* (0.047)	-0.336* (0.038)	-0.093* (0.026)	-0.167* (0.029)
Age × Third Wave	-0.000 (0.001)	0.002 (0.002)	0.003* (0.001)	0.002* (0.001)	0.004* (0.001)
Age ²	-0.000* (0.000)	0.000* (0.000)	0.000* (0.000)	0.000* (0.000)	0.000* (0.000)
Age ² × Third Wave	0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.000* (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.000* (0.000)
Time	-0.009* (0.002)	-0.031* (0.004)	-0.008* (0.003)	0.077* (0.002)	0.054* (0.003)
Time × Third Wave	0.024* (0.003)	0.018* (0.004)	0.027* (0.003)	0.003 (0.002)	0.013* (0.003)
Time ²	0.000 (0.000)	0.001* (0.000)	-0.001* (0.000)	-0.003* (0.000)	-0.002* (0.000)
Time ² × Third Wave	-0.001* (0.000)	-0.001* (0.000)	-0.001* (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.001* (0.000)
Pre-transition gen.	–	–	–	–	–
Transition gen.	-0.038* (0.011)	-0.010 (0.015)	-0.008 (0.013)	-0.016 (0.009)	-0.010 (0.010)
Post-transition gen.	-0.029 (0.019)	-0.038 (0.025)	-0.019 (0.020)	-0.058* (0.014)	-0.026 (0.016)
Transition gen. × Third Wave	0.073* (0.012)	-0.035* (0.016)	0.044* (0.014)	0.041* (0.009)	0.040* (0.011)
Post-transition gen. × Third Wave	0.107* (0.020)	-0.042 (0.026)	0.101* (0.021)	0.105* (0.015)	0.092* (0.017)
Constant	0.675* (0.034)	0.898* (0.044)	0.722* (0.036)	-0.160* (0.024)	0.005 (0.027)
Observations	268,352	173,661	268,352	268,352	216,921
R ²	0.009	0.018	0.033	0.123	0.073

Notes: Estimated results from age-period-cohort models. * $p < 0.05$.

Table A12: Generational effects in Latin America, comparing Third-Wave democracies to Colombia and Costa Rica, contd. (fully interacted models)

Variable	Turnout	Protest participation	Civic participation	Left-Right	Same-sex marriage	Political tolerance
Age	0.024* (0.001)	-0.001 (0.000)	-0.008* (0.000)	0.004* (0.001)	-0.003* (0.001)	-0.002* (0.001)
Third Wave	-0.596* (0.038)	-0.076* (0.015)	0.023 (0.015)	0.106* (0.024)	-0.112* (0.030)	-0.107* (0.023)
Age × Third Wave	0.020* (0.001)	0.003* (0.001)	-0.003* (0.000)	-0.006* (0.001)	0.004* (0.001)	0.002* (0.001)
Age ²	-0.000* (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	0.000* (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)
Age ² × Third Wave	-0.000* (0.000)	-0.000* (0.000)	0.000* (0.000)	0.000* (0.000)	-0.000* (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)
Time	-0.020* (0.003)	0.018* (0.001)	0.010* (0.002)	-0.006* (0.002)	-0.163* (0.002)	-0.002 (0.002)
Time × Third Wave	0.044* (0.004)	-0.002 (0.001)	0.001 (0.002)	-0.004 (0.003)	0.013* (0.003)	-0.007* (0.003)
Time ²	0.001* (0.000)	-0.001* (0.000)	-0.001* (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	0.007* (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)
Time ² × Third Wave	-0.003* (0.000)	0.000* (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	0.001* (0.000)	-0.001* (0.000)	0.001* (0.000)
Pre-transition gen.	–	–	–	–	–	–
Transition gen.	0.038* (0.012)	-0.017* (0.005)	-0.017* (0.005)	0.001 (0.008)	-0.008 (0.010)	-0.027* (0.008)
Post-transition gen.	-0.086* (0.021)	-0.008 (0.009)	-0.012 (0.007)	0.007 (0.013)	0.042* (0.016)	-0.024* (0.012)
Transition gen. × Third Wave	0.080* (0.013)	0.018* (0.005)	-0.012* (0.005)	-0.007 (0.009)	0.022* (0.011)	0.040* (0.008)
Post-transition gen. × Third Wave	0.240* (0.022)	0.024* (0.010)	-0.025* (0.008)	-0.026 (0.014)	0.035 (0.018)	0.058* (0.013)
Constant	0.103* (0.036)	0.010 (0.014)	0.989* (0.014)	0.484* (0.023)	1.436* (0.028)	0.649* (0.022)
Observations	216,921	222,868	192,984	173,145	222,792	200,662
R ²	0.135	0.029	0.036	0.016	0.286	0.007

Notes: Estimated results from age-period-cohort models. * $p < 0.05$.

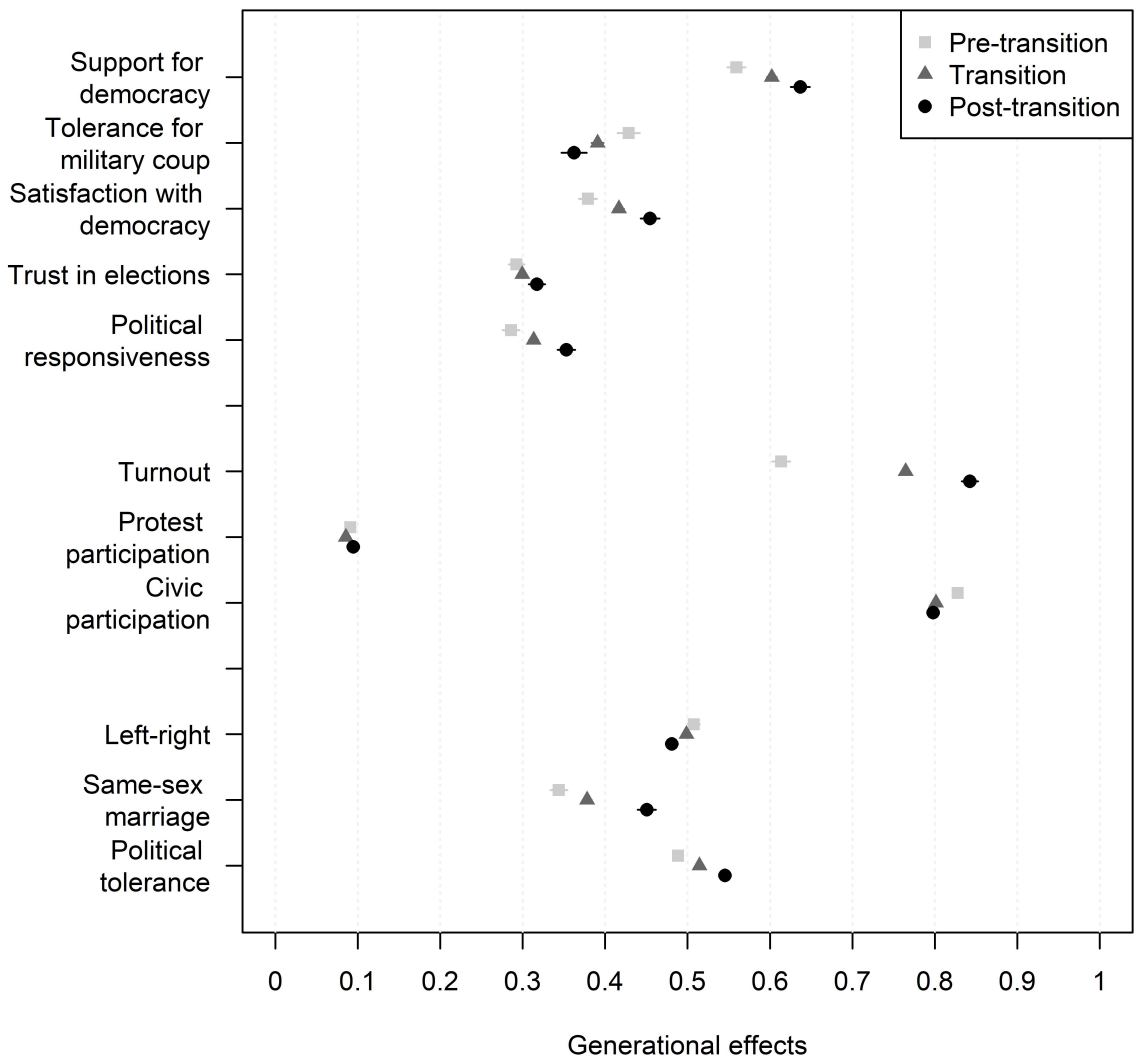


Figure A5: Generational effects in Latin America among Third-Wave democracies, accounting for compositional differences. Points represent estimated effects of political generations on democratic commitments, behaviors, and attitudes in models that control for age and period effects as well as education, wealth, religion, and religiosity. Lines represent 95% confidence intervals, although many are not visible given the high precision of the estimates.