

Party Membership in Latin America Party Strategies and the Role of Party Members

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Abstract

Contrary to the situation in Europe, comparative study of party membership in Latin America is virtually nonexistent. The goal of this essay is to fill this gap in the study of party politics and the internal organization of parties in the region. This essay examines the statutes of the principal political parties in Latin America and analyzes the role given to party members in fifty-one political parties in the region. This information is organized into three categories: entry requirements; members' rights; and members' duties (in formal terms). The essay argues that these aspects are rather homogenous among Latin American countries; unlike the situation in Europe, they cannot explain differences in party membership growth rates. The essay evaluates six alternative hypotheses, concluding that the varying levels of party membership in Latin American countries are the result of a combination of historical factors, candidate selection procedures, and party strategies.

Keywords: Latin America, party members, party statutes, party strategies, political parties.

The study of party membership has been limited largely to Western Europe, Australia, Canada, and the United States.¹ Some of the more recent investigations also have included post-communist Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries.² Comparatively little attention has been paid to

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¹ For an overview, see Knut Heidar, "Party Membership and Participation," in *Handbook of Party Politics*, ed. Richard S. Katz and William J. Crotty (London: Sage Publications, 2006), 301-316.

² Peter Mair and Ingrid van Biezen, "Party Membership in Twenty European Democracies,

party membership in the Latin American context. The goal of this essay is to fill this gap through an analysis of party membership (*militancia*) in this region. The essay examines the meaning of party membership within Latin American political parties, according to the statutes of those parties. Although the essay adopts a rather formal interpretation of that reality, it takes a first step toward greater knowledge of party membership levels in Latin America and what party membership entails outside the traditionally studied regions.

Party members (*afiliados/militantes*) in Latin America have received little academic attention.³ This situation could be explained partly because the topic of internal party structure remains somewhat understudied⁴ and our knowledge of the decision process inside the “black box”⁵ of political parties is still insufficient.⁶ Other reasons originate in the consideration of political parties in Latin America as less important due to the presence of clientelistic structures,⁷ party system crises,⁸ and the dilution of party brands.⁹ Yet another explanation could be that no party members exist; if so, it is almost impossible to study

1980-2000.” *Party Politics* 7, no. 1 (2001): 5-21; Steven Weldon, “Downsize My Polity? The Impact of Size on Party Membership and Member,” *Party Politics* 12, no. 4 (2006): 467-481; Paul F. Whiteley, “Is the Party Over? The Decline of Party Activism and Membership across the Democratic World,” *Party Politics* 17, no. 1 (2011): 21-44; and Ingrid van Biezen, Peter Mair, and Thomas Poguntke, “Going, Going, ... Gone? The Decline of Party Membership in Contemporary Europe,” *European Journal of Political Research* 51, no. 1 (2012): 24-56.

³ For some exceptions, see H el ene Combes, “‘Tomar partido’. Para una sociolog a de los militantes desde los cierres de campa a” [“Taking the party”: For a sociology of party members from the perspective of party campaign meetings], *Revista de Sociolog a*, no. 25 (2011): 113-138; Mar a do Socorro Sousa Braga, Rodrigo Rodrigues-Silveira, and Tiago Borges, “Organizaci n, territorio y sistema partidario: difusi n territorial de la organizaci n de los partidos y sus potenciales impactos sobre la estructura del sistema partidario en Brasil” [Organization, territory and party system: Territorial diffusion of party organization and its impacts on the structure of the party system in Brazil], *Am rica Latina Hoy*, no. 62 (2012): 15-45; Aldo Mu oz-Armenta, Leticia Heras-G omez, and Amalia Pulido-G omez, “Una aproximaci n a la militancia partidista en M xico: el caso de los partidos emergentes” [An exploratory analysis of political party membership in Mexico: The case of the emergent parties], *Convergencia. Revista de Ciencias Sociales* 20, no. 63 (2013): 177-205; and Aldo Ponce, “Meet the Militante: The Configuration of Grassroots Party Membership in Latin America,” paper presented at the 7th Congress of CEISAL, Porto, Portugal, June 12-15, 2013.

⁴ Steven Levitsky, “Inside the Black Box: Recent Studies of Latin American Party Organizations,” *Studies in Comparative International Development* 36, no. 2 (2001): 92-110, and Laura Wills-Otero, “From Party Systems to Party Organizations: The Adaptation of Latin American Parties to Changing Environments,” *Journal of Politics in Latin America* 1, no. 1 (2009): 123-141.

⁵ Levitsky, “Inside the Black Box.”

⁶ Juan Pablo Luna and Crist bal Rovira Kaltwasser, “Las derechas gobernantes en Am rica Latina” [The governing rights in Latin America], *LASA Forum* 42, no. 3 (2011): 16-19.

⁷ Tina Hilgers, ed., *Clientelism in Everyday Latin American Politics* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

⁸ Scott Mainwaring, Ana Mar a Bejarano, and Eduardo Pizarro Leong omez, eds., *The Crisis of Democratic Representation in the Andes* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006).

⁹ Noam Lupu, “Brand Dilution and the Breakdown of Political Parties in Latin America,” *World Politics* 66, no. 4 (2014): 561-602.

membership due to its informality and the fact that it is limited or restricted to participation in campaigns.

The scant academic interest contrasts with the recent efforts of some of Latin American political parties to increase their membership numbers as well as frequent exhortations for members' participation in internal candidate selection and during the election process itself. In Mexico, for example, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (*Partido Revolucionario Institucional*-PRI) claimed that it was going to have ten million party members in the months following the registration of its 5.85-million-member census¹⁰ with the official electoral body, the Federal Electoral Institute (*Instituto Federal Electoral*) in March 2014.¹¹ For its part, in Bolivia, the Movement toward Socialism (*Movimiento al Socialismo*-MAS) claimed to celebrate its nineteenth anniversary with one million party members.¹² In Chile, the country in the region with the lowest levels of citizen identification with political parties, the absolute number of party members grew between 2001 and 2011 by 44 percent, from 567,000 to 816,000 party members¹³ (though still not even reaching 10 percent of all registered voters). In the Dominican Republic, the two main parties, the Dominican Liberation Party (*Partido de la Liberación Dominicana*-PLD) and the Dominican Revolutionary Party (*Partido Revolucionario Dominicano*-PRD), estimate their party membership levels to be almost half of the voters in the last presidential election in 2012.

The numbers and trends look quite different from what we know about party membership in Europe, where the issue of “decline” has dominated the research agenda in recent years;¹⁴ the mean percentage of party members is around 5 percent of the electorate;¹⁵ and the research has moved toward

¹⁰ Raúl Muñoz, “PRI busca 10 millones de militantes” [PRI seeks to have 10 million members], *Terra Noticias* (March 29, 2014), <http://noticias.terra.com.mx/mexico/politica/pri-busca-10-millones-de-militantes.f95cc18de2015410VgnVCM3000009af154d0RCRD.html> (accessed June 20, 2015).

¹¹ The electoral voters register reflects about eighty million persons.

¹² “MAS celebrará 19 aniversario con un millón de militantes” [MAS will celebrate 19th anniversary with one million party members], *Erbol* (March 29, 2014), http://www.erbol.com.bo/noticia/politica/28032014/mas_celebrara_19_aniversario_con_un_millon_de_militantes (accessed June 11, 2015).

¹³ “El PSC intenta fortalecerse fuera de Guayaquil” [The PSC seeks to get stronger outside of Guayaquil], *El Comercio* (October 5, 2015), <http://www.elcomercio.com/actualidad/psc-jaimenebot-guayaquil-politica-afiliacion.html> (accessed December 16, 2015).

¹⁴ Susan E. Scarow, “Parties without Members? Party Organization in a Changing Electoral Environment,” in *Parties without Partisans: Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies*, ed. Russell J. Dalton, J. Russell, and Martin P. Wattenberg (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 79-101; Mair and van Biezen, “Party Membership in Twenty European Democracies, 1980-2000”; Heidar, “Party Membership and Participation”; Susan E. Scarow and Burcu Gezgor, “Declining Memberships, Changing Members? European Political Party Members in a New Era,” *Party Politics* 16, no. 6 (2010): 823-843; and van Biezen et al., “Going, Going, ... Gone?”

¹⁵ van Biezen et al., “Going, Going, ... Gone?”

analyzing the transformation of the meaning of party membership.¹⁶ Nevertheless, in the European context, we know much more about who party members are, why they join political parties, what the nature of their ideological positions is compared to the rest of the citizens, what their rights and duties are, and how they participate.

Consequently, this essay takes on the rather limited task of analyzing party statutes in Latin America to determine the requirements for persons who are interested in becoming party members and the rights and duties they enjoy as members. It also evaluates whether these formal requirements explain levels of party membership in the region. This review is complemented with secondary literature and information from mass media, party elite opinion about the rank-and-file members, and national legislation, in order to assess six alternative hypotheses. The essay argues that the varying aggregate levels of party membership in Latin American countries are the result of a combination of historical context, party strategies, and, to a lesser extent, candidate selection procedures.

This essay is divided into four sections. First, there is a review of the recent literature on the internal organization of political parties in Latin America, with particular emphasis on party membership in a broad context. Second, there is critical discussion of the official numbers of party members in the principal Latin American parties. Third is analysis and classification of the content of national party and electoral laws, focusing on minimum levels of membership for new parties as well as the requirements that parties enforce for persons who are interested in becoming party members. There is discussion of party members' rights and duties, as well. Fourth is an evaluation of some alternative hypotheses concerning the relatively high number of party members in the region and the differences among countries. The essay concludes with a brief outline of the research agenda for Latin American political party membership.

Party Membership in Latin America: State of the Art

More than a decade ago, Steven Levitsky reminded us that we know surprisingly little about the internal functioning of Latin American political parties.¹⁷ At the same time, Manuel Alcántara Sáez and Flavia Freidenberg¹⁸ edited three volumes that focused directly on the internal organization of these parties, shedding some light on this forgotten aspect of political party studies in the region. As pointed out by the editors,¹⁹ until then, very little comparative work

¹⁶ Susan Scarrow, *Beyond Party Members: Changing Approaches to Partisan Mobilization* (Oxford: ECPR and Oxford University Press, 2015).

¹⁷ Levitsky, "Inside the Black Box."

¹⁸ Manuel Alcántara Sáez and Flavia Freidenberg, eds., *Partidos Políticos en América Latina* [Political parties in Latin America] (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica and IFE, 2001).

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 11-15.

had been conducted on this topic, with the exception of some case studies. Political parties typically had been studied from their external dimension, with a focus on their electoral, governmental, and legislative performance, as well as their relation to the process of democratization taking place in the region.

Almost a decade after the path-breaking contribution by Alcántara Sáez and Freidenberg,²⁰ Laura Wills-Otero claimed that the research agenda focused more directly on party internal organization, including the study of party adaptation to changing environments, new conditions and challenges, and differences that existed among the parties of the region, which frequently had been treated as if they were the same. In this sense, the book edited by Alcántara,²¹ reviewed by Wills-Otero,²² calls attention specifically to the role of both politicians and party members within parties.²³ Overall, Wills-Otero²⁴ found that the focus shifted from the structural analysis to a more party-centered approximation (i.e., taking parties as units of analysis), theory building, and explications.

All these authors as well as the books reviewed by Levitsky²⁵ and Wills-Otero²⁶ have contributed greatly to our knowledge of the internal working of Latin American political parties. One of the aspects that Levitsky²⁷ highlights is the lack of knowledge regarding party membership levels, organizational densities, and the party members themselves. This absence might be due to the dearth of comparative data, either from cross-national public opinion surveys (either a lack of the corresponding questions and/or the surveys themselves) or from party registers (and the lack of confidence in them), the low importance of party members, or the presence of (neo-)populist leaders who allegedly do not need parties at all (and, consequently, do not need party members). Besides, Latin American parties have been viewed as weakly institutionalized, without roots in society and having a rather limited membership base. Yet, they have been treated as highly centralized structures in which party elites predominate

²⁰ Alcántara Sáez and Freidenberg, *Partidos Políticos en América Latina* [Political parties in Latin America].

²¹ Manuel Alcántara Sáez, ed., *Políticos y política en América Latina* [Politicians and politics in Latin America] (Madrid: Fundación Carolina and Siglo XXI, 2006).

²² Wills-Otero, "From Party Systems to Party Organizations."

²³ See the chapter by Leticia Ruiz Rodríguez, "La organización de los partidos políticos latinoamericanos: niveles de vida partidista" [The organization of Latin American political parties: Levels of internal party life], in *Políticos y política en América Latina* [Politicians and politics in Latin America], ed. Manuel Alcántara Sáez (Madrid: Fundación Carolina and Siglo XXI Editores, 2006), 139-174, on the perception of party elites of the internal democracy and the roles of party members.

²⁴ Wills-Otero, "From Party Systems to Party Organizations."

²⁵ Levitsky, "Inside the Black Box."

²⁶ Wills-Otero, "From Party Systems to Party Organizations." See also the respective articles in volume 62 of *América Latina Hoy, Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, dedicated to "Party Organizations."

²⁷ Levitsky, "Inside the Black Box."

and rank-and-file members play a minimal role.²⁸

Seemingly, few attempts have been made to comparatively estimate party membership rates in Latin America. Arguably, the first effort was carried out in the aforementioned volume by Alcántara Sáez and Freidenberg,²⁹ in which each country chapter includes one section that addresses party membership, membership levels, and the role of members within the parties. However, hard data on party membership are difficult to find. Exact numbers are rather scarce. When they do appear, the authors treat them with caution. As a result, those sections rely instead on qualitative data, interviews, secondary literature, and a survey conducted among party members (which also included some party leaders). The major finding is that great heterogeneity exists with respect to the requirements facing party members, as well as their rights, duties, and levels of participation.

Other authors have focused on selected countries or sub-regions. Rafael Roncagliolo and Carlos Meléndez³⁰ edited a volume on the internal structure of Andean political parties. Regarding the role of party members, the general rule seems to be that the numbers (where available) are overestimated.³¹ In Bolivia, Ecuador, and Colombia, direct data either do not exist or party leaders have no estimations. Whereas in Bolivia and Ecuador parties were undergoing deep transformations and a crisis of representation at the time of Roncagliolo and Meléndez's writing, in Colombia, there was almost no communication between the national and local level.³² In Venezuela, there was a downward trend in party membership size in the traditional parties, and a relatively large number of party members in the Fifth Republic Movement (*Movimiento V República*, commonly called *chavismo*)³³ of about two million people, according to the authors' estimates.³⁴ In Peru, the majority of the parties have some estimate of

²⁸ Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully, eds., *Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995).

²⁹ Alcántara Sáez and Freidenberg, *Partidos Políticos en América Latina* [Political parties in Latin America].

³⁰ Rafael Roncagliolo and Carlos Meléndez, eds., *La política por dentro. Cambios y continuidades en las organizaciones políticas de los países andinos* [Politics within: Changes and continuities in the political organizations of the Andean countries] (Stockholm: International IDEA and Asociación Civil Transparencia, 2007).

³¹ The estimations are made by the politicians interviewed by each author.

³² Felipe Botero and David Alvira, "Fulano de tal va por su aval. Desconexión entre los niveles nacionales y locales de los partidos políticos en Colombia" ["Fulano de tal va por su aval": Disconnection between national and local levels within Colombian political parties], in *Política y territorio. Análisis de las elecciones subnacionales en Colombia, 2011* [Politics and territory: An analysis of the 2011 subnational elections in Colombia], ed. Laura Wills Otero and Margarita Batlle (Bogotá: UNDP, International IDEA and NIMD, 2012), 131-161.

³³ Today, MVR is integrated into the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (*Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela*-PSUV).

³⁴ Margarita López Maya and Carlos Meléndez, "Partidos y Sistema de Partidos en Venezuela" [Parties and the party system in Venezuela], in *La política por dentro. Cambios y continuidades*

party membership, although these numbers seem to be inflated.³⁵

In a recent volume on political parties in new democracies (Central and Eastern Europe and Latin America), five countries from Latin America were included: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, and Mexico.³⁶ The authors of the related chapters approach party membership from the perspective of party organizational strength. Confirming the trend from the Andean region, these five countries also evince diverging tendencies both among the countries and political parties. For example, in Mexico, all three parties possess an important internal structure, even though the National Action Party (*Partido Acción Nacional*-PAN) operates with a smaller number of members and a higher party-entry threshold,³⁷ and recently has initiated a process to clean up its party membership register. In Brazil, according to Ames and Power,³⁸ only the Workers' Party (*Partido dos Trabalhadores*-PT) has a significant internal structure, with member numbers comparable to the Mexican PRI. In Chile, Alan Angell³⁹ observed centralist parties, with a high predominance of Santiago-based party elites in the decision-making process and a growing campaign to professionalize and personalize party politics. The case of Costa Rica follows the European trend of declining membership⁴⁰ and weakening of the traditional political parties. Argentina has seen an upward trend of party membership since 1983 that reached around 30 percent of the registered electorate in 1999, but Cecilia Szusterman argues that these numbers are fictitious.⁴¹

en las organizaciones políticas de los países andinos [Politics within: Changes and continuities in the political organizations of the Andean countries], ed. Rafael Roncagliolo and Carlos Meléndez (Stockholm: International IDEA and Asociación Civil Transparencia, 2007), 273-302.

³⁵ Carlos Meléndez, "Partidos y Sistema de Partidos en el Perú" [Parties and the party system in Peru], in *La política por dentro. Cambios y continuidades en las organizaciones políticas de los países andinos* [Politics within: Changes and continuities in the political organizations of the Andean countries], ed. Rafael Roncagliolo and Carlos Meléndez (Stockholm: International IDEA and Asociación Civil Transparencia, 2007), 213-271.

³⁶ Paul Webb and Stephen White, eds., *Party Politics in New Democracies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

³⁷ Joy Langston, "Strong Parties in a Struggling Party System: Mexico in the Democratic Era," in *Party Politics in New Democracies*, ed. Paul Webb and Stephen White (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 243-272.

³⁸ Barry Ames and Timothy J. Power, "Parties and Governability in Brazil," in *Party Politics in New Democracies*, ed. Paul Webb and Stephen White (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 179-212.

³⁹ Alan Angell, "The Durability of the Party System in Chile," in *Party Politics in New Democracies*, ed. Paul Webb and Stephen White (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 275-303.

⁴⁰ John Booth, "Political Parties in Costa Rica: Democratic Stability and Party System Change in Latin American Context," in *Party Politics in New Democracies*, ed. Paul Webb and Stephen White (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 305-344.

⁴¹ Cecilia Szusterman, "'Que se Vayan Todos!' [All of them must go!] The Struggle for Democratic

Kay Lawson and Jorge Lanzaro⁴² have assembled a volume with chapters on political parties in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Peru, and Uruguay. In general, there is little information about the number and role of party members. However, Jairo Nicolau⁴³ discusses the number of party members in Brazil. On the one hand, he argues that PT is not the only party with a significant number of party members, or even the party with the most numerous members. On the other hand, he cautions that such data should be treated carefully, given the strict membership requirements established by electoral legislation. It is plausible to think that the majority of party members join the party only to meet the legal requirement and that further participation within the internal life of the party is quite limited.

Finally, there are few articles that include Latin American countries in a comparative perspective by using public opinion data;⁴⁴ a paper by Aldo Ponce,⁴⁵ focusing exclusively on the region, tries to explain why people become party members in Latin America, using data from the World Value Survey (WVS), *Latinobarómetro*, and the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP). There also have been several case studies dealing with party membership in Mexico⁴⁶ and Brazil,⁴⁷ arguably the two countries where membership rates are among the highest in the region and in which party members play the most significant role.

The brief overview of the existing literature shows that there is great heterogeneity in our knowledge of Latin American party membership levels (and their causes), membership requirements, the roles of party members within political parties, and party members' rights and duties. The following section presents numbers and tendencies that contrast with the experience of Western European countries, and underscores the need to study party membership in Latin America and place it in comparative perspective.

Party Politics in Contemporary Argentina,” in *Party Politics in New Democracies*, ed. Paul Webb and Stephen White (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 213-242.

⁴² Kay Lawson and Jorge Lanzaro, eds., *Political Parties and Democracy: The Americas* (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2010).

⁴³ Jairo Nicolau, “Parties and Democracy in Brazil, 1985-2006: Moving toward Cartelization,” in *Political Parties and Democracy: The Americas*, ed. Kay Lawson and Jorge Lanzaro (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2010), 106-109.

⁴⁴ Whiteley, “Is the Party Over?”

⁴⁵ Ponce, “Meet the Militante.”

⁴⁶ Combes, “‘Tomar partido’” [“Taking the party”]; Muñoz-Armenta et al., “Una aproximación a la militancia partidista en México” [An approach to political party membership in Mexico].

⁴⁷ Nicolau, “Parties and Democracy in Brazil, 1985-2006”; Sousa Braga et al., “Organización, territorio y sistema partidario” [Organization, territory and party system]; Pedro Floriano Ribeiro, “El modelo de partido cartel y el sistema de partidos de Brasil” [The cartel party model and the Brazilian party system], *Revista de Ciencia Política* 33, no. 3 (2013): 607-629; and Oswaldo E. do Amaral, “As transformações nas formas de militância no interior do PT: Maior inclusão e menor intensidade” [The changes in the forms of militancy within the PT: Greater inclusion and less intensity], *Revista Brasileira de Ciências Sociais* 28, no. 82 (2013): 67-86.

Party Membership Sizes in Latin America

Indeed, one of the reasons why party membership is understudied in Latin America is the lack of reliable data on the subject. There are basically two sources for estimates on the number of party members in Latin America. Both suffer from important deficiencies. On the one hand, official data presented by electoral bodies or political parties themselves have been criticized for the lack of reliability due to inflated numbers that include dead people, people living abroad, double membership, deliberate manipulation, or simply the absence of a formal register. On the other hand, the recent comparative data on the region derived from public opinion surveys⁴⁸ either do not cover all the countries in the region or suffer from methodological problems such as social desirability, confusion between current or former membership, limited questioning regarding membership, and a culturally conditioned understanding of party membership. Besides, data from public opinion surveys normally do not provide percentages for individual parties, rather only aggregate country-level data.

Within the study of party membership in Europe, there is an agreement that both types of data are correlated, arguably because both tend to be inflated;⁴⁹ thus, it should be possible to use them interchangeably, depending on the research goal. There already has been some preliminary work carried out with survey data in Latin America.⁵⁰ Here, the essay explores the official data in order to: (1) compare levels of party membership among countries and individual parties; (2) offer a complementary vision of party membership in Latin America; and (3) provide some possible explanations for aggregate and party-level numbers.

The official data are based on the information available on the websites of electoral bodies, from key informants, and from political party websites. Where official data were not directly available, party leader estimations or newspaper reviews have been used, checking at least two distinct sources. Where divergent numbers were found, the lower number has been used. The data are presented disaggregated by political party, which permits comparison among parties across countries, and as a percentage of all registered voters. The numbers also are compared to secondary data from the comparative literature

⁴⁸ This comes mainly from the World Values Survey (WVS) that in its fifth wave (2005) included Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, and Uruguay, or from the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) Citizenship Study conducted in 2004 in Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Uruguay, and Venezuela. The most comprehensive public opinion study—Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP)—that covers all of the countries in the region, does not ask specifically about party membership, though there is a question whether the surveyed person attends party meetings.

⁴⁹ Scarrow and Gezgor, “Declining Memberships, Changing Members?” and van Biezen et al., “Going, Going, ... Gone?”

⁵⁰ Ponce, “Meet the Militante.”

and, where possible, preliminary trends are sketched. Geographically, the data cover countries from both newer and older democracies, institutionalized party systems and those that have suffered a party system crisis, federal and unitary countries, and those with strongly and weakly organized parties.

As previously mentioned, official party data show a great diversity in the size of party memberships in Latin America. Concerning data availability, there are basically three groups of countries: (1) countries where the information is published on the webpages of electoral institutions; (2) countries where there are rough estimates available on newspaper and party websites; and (3) countries in which there are no accessible data (normally because not even the parties operate with a register). In these later countries, however, the figure of party members is present in public discourse, but arguably more in the sense of voters or supporters.

The first group of countries includes Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Panama, and Peru. The data demonstrate great heterogeneity, ranging from 5.94 percent (Peru) to 59.71 percent (Panama) of membership as a proportion of the registered electorate in the previous presidential elections (table 1). Strikingly, the lowest value is comparable to the mean of the same indicator among European countries. However, the rest of the values are higher than in Europe, reaching almost 30 percent in the case of Argentina. These data are taken from the websites of the official electoral bodies. Parties in these countries generally do not publish such information on the Internet.

The second group contains the rest of the countries for which data are available (table 1): Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, the Dominican Republic, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Numerically, it is also possible to appreciate great diversity across both countries and parties, as values range from 6.09 percent in Chile to 46.13 percent in the Dominican Republic, where only the two most important parties are included. In some cases, the data have been obtained from local newspapers (Bolivia, Chile), supposedly based on the official data from electoral institutions; in another, from key informants (Ecuador); and in still others, the data are incomplete and available only for some parties in the system (the Dominican Republic, Uruguay, Venezuela). Nevertheless, the rates reach higher levels than in Western European countries. There also are two extreme outliers. One is Peru, where the size of party membership is quite low, though well documented by the national electoral body, the National Electoral Board (*Jurado Nacional Electoral*). The low numbers could be explained by the “crisis of political parties” experienced in that country and the consequent emergence of a “democracy without parties.”⁵¹ The second outlier is Paraguay, where “official data,” as documented in the local newspaper, when summed up, returns more than 100 percent, which could mean either that the data are

⁵¹ Steven Levitsky and Maxwell A. Cameron, “Democracy Without Parties? Political Parties and Regime Change in Fujimori’s Peru,” *Latin American Politics and Society* 45, no. 3 (2003): 1-33.

Table 1. National Levels of Party Membership in Latin America

Country	Year	Total Party Membership (TPM)	TPM % of Electorate
Argentina ¹⁾	2012	8,099,186	28.08
Bolivia ²⁾	2013	1,093,776	21.28
Brazil ³⁾	2012	15,300,000	10.88
Chile ⁴⁾	2011	816,014	6.09
Colombia		N/A	
Costa Rica		N/A	
Ecuador ⁵⁾	2014	3,293,483	28.36
El Salvador		N/A	
Guatemala		N/A	
Honduras		N/A	
Mexico ⁶⁾	2014	9,508,782	11.96
Nicaragua		N/A	
Panamá ⁷⁾	2013	1,467,428	59.71
Paraguay ⁸⁾	2013	3,834,672	109.06
Peru ⁹⁾	2014	1,184,277	5.94
Dominican Republic ¹⁰⁾ , +	2011-2013	3,000,000	46.13
Uruguay ¹¹⁾ , *	2012	410,000	15.99
Venezuela ¹²⁾ , †	2009	7,250,000	38.35
<i>Mean</i>			31.82

Sources:

- 1) National Electoral Chamber (*Cámara Nacional Electoral*), <http://www.electoral.gob.ar/> (accessed July 29, 2015), and Julia Pomares, personal communication, 2014;
- 2) Carlos Corz, “TSE registra 1 millón de militantes de partidos políticos [TSE registers one million party members]; ADN lidera la lista” [ADN leads the list], *La Razón* (May 2, 2013), http://www.la-razon.com/nacional/TSE-militantes-partidos-politicos-ADN_0_1825617442.html (accessed June 15, 2015);
- 3) Ribeiro, “El modelo de partido cartel y el sistema de partidos de Brasil” [The cartel party model and the Brazilian party system], and Supreme Electoral Court (*Tribunal Supremo Eleitoral*), <http://www.tse.jus.br/> (accessed August 25, 2015);
- 4) “Militancias políticas aumentan en 10 años” [Party membership increments in the last 10 years], *La Tercera* (January 21, 2012), <http://papeldigital.info/ltrep/2012/01/21/01/paginas/002.pdf> (accessed June 6, 2015), and Patricio Santamaría, personal communication, 2014;
- 5) Roxana Silva, personal communication, 2014;
- 6) Web pages of the political parties;
- 7) Electoral Court of Panamá (*Tribunal Electoral de Panamá*), <http://www.tribunal-electoral.gob.pa/> (accessed June 19, 2015);
- 8) “La ANR tiene 881.729 afiliados más que el PLRA en su padrón actualizado” [The ANR has 881,729 more party members than the PLR according to updated registers], *ABC Color* (December 6, 2012), <http://www.ultimahora.com/la-anr-tiene-881729-afiliados-mas-que-el-plra-su-padrón-actualizado-n575101.html> (accessed June 11, 2015);
- 9) National Electoral Board (*Jurado Nacional de Elecciones*), www.jne.gob.pe (accessed June 19, 2015);
- 10) “PLD válida padrón de más de 2.2 millones de militantes para primarias” [PLD validates the register with more than 2.2 million], *Noticias Sin* (June 7, 2011), <http://www.noticiassin.com/2011/06/pld-valida-padrón-de-mas-de-2-2-millones-de-militantes-para-primarias> (accessed April 28, 2015), and “Dice número de militantes en el PRD sorprenderá a Hatuey” [Says the number of PRD party members will surprise Hatuey], *Hoy Digital* (May 20, 2005), <http://hoy.com.do/dice-numero-de-militantes-en-el-prd-sorprendera-a-hatuey-2/> (accessed April 28, 2015);
- 11) “Puja entre el PCU y el MPP por las bases” [The rivalry between PCU and MPP for party bases], *El País* (May 27, 2012), http://historico.elpais.com.uy/12/05/27/pnacio_643261.asp (accessed April 21, 2015);
- 12) AFP, “Partido de Chávez llega a 7.2 millones de afiliados según sus directivos” [Chávez’s party reaches 7.2 million party members according to its leaders], *Terra noticias*, <http://www.terra.com.ve/actualidad/articulo/html/act1813791-aumenta-el-numero-de-afiliados-a-partid-de-cavez.htm> (accessed March 16, 2015).

Note: +Only PLD and PRD; *Only Broad Front (*Frente Amplio*-FA); †Only the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (*Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela*-PSUV)

erroneous or that double membership is normal (or both).⁵²

The remainder of the countries can be lumped into the third group. No data are available, nor can estimates be found in local newspapers (except for some individual parties). This absence is probably explained by the nonexistence of party enrollment lists,⁵³ the low importance placed on membership by the parties⁵⁴ (despite the existence of formal requirements to have member lists in order to create a new party), the disconnect between the national and local levels within political parties,⁵⁵ or the consequent lack of control over the membership numbers at the party elite level,⁵⁶ as can be seen in the Colombian case.

In some countries, data are available for two (or more) points in time, which makes it possible to sketch some trends in enrollment numbers within political parties. This is particularly true in the cases of Chile and Brazil. In Chile, between 2001 and 2011, in aggregate terms, membership rose from 567,101 to 816,014 party members,⁵⁷ an increase of 44 percent.⁵⁸ As for Brazil, the aggregate data grew only slightly from 9.7 percent to 10.9 percent as a percentage of the total electorate.⁵⁹ For Argentina, data are available for the two main national parties: the Radical Civic Union (*Unión Cívica Radical-UCR*) and the Justicialist Party (*Partido Justicialista-PJ*). On an aggregate level, the number of enrolled persons increased between 1983 and 1999 from 2,966,472 to 8,137,809⁶⁰ and remained almost stable in 2012 (8,099,186).⁶¹

⁵² Thanks are owed to Marcos Pérez Talía, a member of the Authentic Radical Liberal Party (*Partido Liberal Radical Auténtico-PLRA*), for pointing this out.

⁵³ Álvaro Artiga, personal communication, 2014.

⁵⁴ Salvador Romero Ballivián, personal communication, 2014.

⁵⁵ Botero and Alvira, “Fulano de tal va por su aval. Desconexión entre los niveles nacionales y locales de los partidos políticos en Colombia” [“Fulano de tal va por su aval”: Disconnection between national and local levels within Colombian political parties].

⁵⁶ Fernando Giraldo, “Partidos y sistemas de partidos en Colombia” [Parties and party system in Colombia], in *La política por dentro. Cambios y continuidades en las organizaciones políticas de los países andinos* [Politics within: Changes and continuities in the political organizations of the Andean countries], ed. Rafael Roncagliolo and Carlos Meléndez (Stockholm: International IDEA and Asociación Civil Transparencia, 2007), 123-157.

⁵⁷ “Militancias políticas aumentan en 10 años” [Party membership increments in the last 10 years], *La Tercera*.

⁵⁸ Recent data compiled by the Electoral Service (*Servicio Electoral-SERVEL*) show a certain decrease in the number of party members in the Chilean parties over the last few years, mainly due to the crisis of legitimacy and recent corruption scandals. See “Todos los partidos políticos perdieron militantes en 2015” [All political parties have lost party members in 2015], *La Tercera* (February 13, 2016), <http://www.latercera.com/noticia/politica/2016/02/674-668212-9-militantes-en-fuga.shtml> (accessed February 15, 2016).

⁵⁹ The data are taken from Ribeiro, “El modelo de partido cartel y el sistema de partidos de Brasil” [The cartel party model and the Brazilian party system], based on the official information from the Supreme Electoral Court.

⁶⁰ Szusterman, ““Que se Vayan Todos!”” [All of them must go!], 224. It is worth repeating that Szusterman does not consider these numbers real because the register has not been purged since

Overall, the data show that the party membership levels revealed, here, are significantly higher than in European countries. This finding underscores the necessity of further study into the reasons behind this phenomenon, the nature of party membership in Latin America, and the quality of the official data. Though in Europe the survey data indicate generally higher values, in Latin America, the contrary seems to be the norm, as can be observed when comparing the percentages shown here and the numbers offered by Ponce from different public opinion surveys.⁶²

Basic Characteristics of Party Membership According to Party Statutes

The following section explores some basic characteristics of party membership as expressed in national legal frameworks (electoral and/or political party laws) and party statutes. First, the legal requirements are examined that are related to the number of signatures or party members necessary to either create a new party or sustain a current one. Second, the review of some of the requirements, rights, and duties that parties stipulate for their (new) members is offered.

Party Members as an Entry Barrier for New Parties and a Condition for Survival

All legal electoral frameworks of the eighteen Latin America countries included in this analysis involve some type of requirements regarding the number of signatures of new members that must be presented in order to register the political party with the official electoral body. Barriers vary significantly among countries, as do the margins by which the parties exceed them. Basically, the thresholds are related either to the whole electorate (all registered voters) or the number of (valid) votes cast in the last national (legislative or presidential) elections. To make the margins clearer, the thresholds are translated into percentages of the whole electorate, using data from the previous elections in each country.

The countries in this study can be divided into two groups, higher and lower thresholds, and, subsequently, into four sub-groups, taking into account the margins reached by the principal parties in the system with respect to the minimum threshold. The main dividing line can be located at a 0.8 percent party membership rate as a proportion of the electorate. There are countries with rather low requirements (lower than 0.8 percent), including Argentina,

1983, party de-affiliation is a complex process, and parties themselves prefer to be seen as having more members than they have in reality.

⁶¹ In 2009, when electoral legislation reform was passed, a discussion about resetting the party registers also was held, but the initiative was not undertaken (Pomares, personal communication, 2014).

⁶² Ponce, "Meet the Militante."

Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, and Uruguay (table 2). These countries include both federal and unitary systems, with a diverse level of party system institutionalization.⁶³ In the rest of the states (Bolivia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Panama, the Dominican Republic, Venezuela), the barrier is higher (> 0.8 percent) and, thus, it should be more demanding for the parties to be founded or to survive from one election to another.

Considering the first group of countries with smaller thresholds, in countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Paraguay, and Uruguay, the principal parties seem to safely exceed the legal barrier. It is true, however, that PAN in Mexico and the Socialist Party (*Partido Socialista*-PS) and Republican Proposal (*Propuesta Republicana*-PRO) in Argentina have some difficulties complying with legal requirements. In the other countries of this group (e.g., Chile), parties struggle to surpass the threshold, even if it is relatively low, with small differences among parties in the system. In this sense, Chile is a paradoxical case. Although it shows an upward trend in party membership, Chilean parties are considered to be some of the most centralist in the region.⁶⁴ Party identification is declining, and some authors claim that a process of party system deinstitutionalization and a crisis of representation are occurring.⁶⁵

In the second group of countries with higher barriers, it is also possible to identify two sub-groups. First, in countries such as Panama, the Dominican Republic, and Venezuela, most parties exceed the legal barrier by a large margin. Second, there are countries such as Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru where the principal parties are edging the threshold by very small margins (some of them are even below it) and, therefore, need to retain old members or attract new ones.

In sum, the descriptive exercise (table 3) shows that in countries where the margin is small, parties either have problems recruiting new party members or have suffered through a crisis of representation. Conversely, as will be shown in the next section, parties in countries where the margin is relatively large share a number of characteristics: they have had historically important party membership bases, they need their members for internal candidate selection processes, or they have invested in affiliation campaigns.

⁶³ See J. Mark Payne, "Sistemas de partidos y gobernabilidad democrática" [Party systems and democratic governability], in *La política importa. Democracia y desarrollo en América Latina* [Democracies in development: Politics and reform in Latin America], ed. J. Mark Payne, Daniel G. Zovatto, and Mercedes Mateo Díaz (Washington, DC: Inter-American Development Bank and International IDEA, 2006), 165-196.

⁶⁴ Angell, "The Durability of the Party System in Chile."

⁶⁵ Tomáš Došek and Flavia Freidenberg, "Voto hacia nuevos candidatos en sistemas de partidos (des)institucionalizados: el caso de Marco Enríquez-Ominami en Chile 2009" [Vote for new parties in (de-) institutionalized party systems: The case of Marco Enríquez-Ominami in Chile in 2009], *Revista SAAP* 8, no. 1 (2014): 11-42.

Table 2. Party/Electoral Law Requirements for Party Membership and Total Party Membership

Country	Year	Party Law Requirement	TPM % of Electorate
Argentina	2012	0.42	28.08 12.47 7.79 0.55 0.43 0.37
Justicialist Party (<i>Partido Justicialista-PJ</i>) Radical Civic Union (<i>Unión Cívica Radical-UCR</i>) Big Front (<i>Frente Grande-FG</i>) Socialist Party (<i>Partido Socialista-PS</i>) Republican Proposal (<i>Propuesta Republicana-PRO</i>)			
Bolivia	2013	1.78	21.28 1.85 1.64 4.24 1.95 1.84 1.69
Movement toward Socialism (<i>Movimiento al Socialismo-MAS</i>) Movement without Fear (<i>Movimiento Sin Miedo-MSM</i>) Nationalist Democratic Action (<i>Acción Democrática Nacionalista-ADN</i>) National Convergence (<i>Convergencia Nacional-CN</i>) Progress Plan for Bolivia (<i>Plan Progreso para Bolivia-PPB</i>) Civic Solidarity Union (<i>Unión Cívica Solidaridad-UCS</i>)			
Brazil	2012	0.35	10.88 1.85 1.14 1.00 0.78 1.00 0.85 0.85
Party of Brazilian Democratic Movement (<i>Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro-PMDB</i>) Workers' Party (<i>Partido dos Trabalhadores-PT</i>) Party of Brazilian Social Democracy (<i>Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira-PSDB</i>) Democrats (<i>Democratas-DEM</i>) Progressive Party (<i>Partido Progressista-PP</i>) Democratic Labor Party (<i>Partido Democrático Trabalhista-PDT</i>) Brazilian Labor Party (<i>Partido Trabalhista Brasileiro-PTB</i>)			
Chile	2011	0.50	6.09 0.70 0.85 0.58 0.73 0.82 0.35 0.63 0.63 0.29
National Renovation (<i>Renovación Nacional-RN</i>) Christian Democratic Party (<i>Partido Demócrata Cristiano-PDC</i>) Independent Democratic Union (<i>Unión Demócrata Independiente-UDI</i>) Party for Democracy (<i>Partido por la Democracia-PPD</i>) Socialist Party (<i>Partido Socialista-PS</i>) Communist Party (<i>Partido Comunista-PC</i>) Radical Social Democratic Party (<i>Partido Radical Socialdemócrata-PRSD</i>) Humanist Party (<i>Partido Humanista-PH</i>) Broad Social Movement (<i>Movimiento Amplio Social-MAS</i>)			

Table 2. Party/Electoral Law Requirements for Party Membership and Total Party Membership (con't.)

Country	Year	Party Law Requirement	TPM % of Electorate
Colombia	-	0.15	-
Costa Rica	-	0.10	-
Dominican Republic	2011-2013	1.40	46.13
Dominican Liberation Party (<i>Partido de la Liberación Dominicana</i> -PLD)			33.83
Dominican Revolutionary Party (<i>Partido Revolucionario Dominicano</i> -PRD)			12.30
Ecuador	2014	1.50	1.74
Institutional Renewal Party of National Action (<i>Partido Renovador Institucional Acción Nacional</i> -PRIAN)			
Progress Party (<i>Partido Avanza</i> -PA)			1.59
Creating Opportunities (<i>CREO</i>)			1.63
Proud and Sovereign Fatherland Alliance (PAIS Alliance) (<i>Alianza Patria Altiva I Soberana</i> -PAIS)			7.81
El Salvador	-	1.01	-
Guatemala	-	0.30	-
Honduras	-	1.16	-
Mexico	2014	0.26	11.96
Institutional Revolutionary Party (<i>Partido Revolucionario Institucional</i> -PRI)			7.19
Party of the Democratic Revolution (<i>Partido de la Revolución Democrática</i> -PRD)			4.17
National Action Party (<i>Partido Acción Nacional</i> -PAN)			0.55
Green Ecologist Party of Mexico (<i>Partido Verde Ecologista de México</i> -PVEM)			0.63
Party of New Alliance (<i>Partido Nueva Alianza</i> -PANAL)			0.63
Citizens' Movement (<i>Movimiento Ciudadano</i> -MC)			0.48
Nicaragua	-	0.03	-

Table 2. Party/Electoral Law Requirements for Party Membership and Total Party Membership (con't.)

Country	Year	Party Law Requirement	TPM % of Electorate
Panama	2013	2.66	59.71 20.61 9.75 20.68
Revolutionary Democratic Party (<i>Partido Revolucionario Democrático-PRD</i>)			
Popular Party (<i>Partido Popular-PP</i>)			
Democratic Change (<i>Cambio Democrático-CD</i>)			
Paraguay	2013	0.30	109.06 58.58
National Republican Association - Colorado Party (<i>Asociación Nacional Republicana-Partido Colorado-ANR-PC</i>)			
Authentic Radical Liberal Party (<i>Partido Liberal Radical Auténtico-PLRA</i>)			31.50
National Union of Ethical Citizens (<i>Unión Nacional de Ciudadanos Éticos-UNACE</i>)			12.70
Peru	2014	0.84	5.94 0.91 1.13 0.57 1.29 0.85
Popular Action (<i>Acción Popular-AP</i>)			
Peruvian Aprista Party (<i>Partido Aprista Peruano-PAP</i>)			
Peruvian Nationalist Party (<i>Partido Nacionalista Peruano-PNP</i>)			
Popular Christian Party (<i>Partido Popular Cristiano-PPC</i>)			
Possible Peru (<i>Perú Posible-PP</i>)			
Uruguay	2012	0.50	15.99 15.99
Broad Front (<i>Frente Amplio-FA</i>)			
Venezuela	2009	0.80	38.35 38.35
United Socialist Party of Venezuela (<i>Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela-PSUV</i>)			

Source: Prepared by the author based on national legislation and calculated according to national electoral results. See also table 1.

Table 3. Legal Threshold vs. Party Membership Margin

		Party Membership Margin above Legal Threshold	
		Small	Large
Legal Threshold (%)	Low (>0.8)	Chile	Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Paraguay, Uruguay
	High (<0.8)	Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru	Panama, Dominican Republic, Venezuela

Source: Prepared by the author.

Party Membership in the Statutes: Entry Requirements, Rights, and Duties

In general, party statutes in Latin America are quite similar in their formal structure and in terms of the requirements they impose on new members, the rights they grant to them, and the duties with which members must comply.⁶⁶ Nevertheless, this section briefly characterizes these statutes and calls attention to some of the exceptions from these general trends. Certainly, this kind of analysis does not consider the extent to which these formal aspects are reflected in the real practice of each party/country, but it allows for a first general approximation. Furthermore, case studies or small N comparative studies are needed to appreciate the differences between formal and informal membership practices.⁶⁷

Entry Requirements

Political parties in Latin America do not differ significantly in terms of requirements for new members. Normally, the person interested in joining a political party must enjoy citizen political rights, demonstrate trust in democracy and other basic values, and adopt party principles and statutes; the individual cannot be a member of any other party and must join the party voluntarily. Apart from the Brazilian case, where the intake process is strict and described in detail by the party statutes, in the majority of the countries, the enrolling process is defined rather vaguely, including regarding the expected terms for each step. The process typically involves the presentation of an application, inclusion in the register of the local party unit, and an issuing of a party credential.

⁶⁶ This analysis is based on the review of party statutes of the parties included in table 2, with the exception of UDI and PRSD (both Chile) and the Citizens’ Movement (*Movimiento Ciudadano*) of Mexico, where the statutes were not found. Also the party statutes of PJ and UCR (both Argentina) are very vague and refer to specification of the provincial party statutes and, thus, give discretion to party units on that level, although they are still restricted by the national party statutes and political party law.

⁶⁷ See Flavia Freidenberg and Steven Levitsky, “Organización informal de los partidos en América Latina” [Informal institutions and party organization in Latin America], *Desarrollo Económico* 46, no. 184 (2007): 539-568.

There are exceptions to the above general rule, consisting basically of two additional requirements. The first is that the entering member must complete a training course or period of observation as a “pre-member” (normally between three and six months), as is the case of the Peruvian Aprista Party (*Partido Aprista Peruano*-PAP) and the Peruvian Nationalist Party (*Partido Nacionalista Peruano*), PAN in Mexico, the Christian Democratic Party (*Partido Democracia Cristiana*-PDC) in Chile, and the PLD in the Dominican Republic. The second is that some parties such as the Party for Democracy (*Partido por la Democracia*-PPD), National Renovation (*Renovación Nacional*-RN), and Radical Social Democratic Party (*Partido Radical Socialdemócrata*-PRSD) in Chile and the National Republican Association—Colorado Party (*Asociación Nacional Republicana—Partido Colorado*-ANRPC) in Paraguay require an “endorsement” or “sponsorship” from persons who are already members of that political party.⁶⁸ In the extreme case of the Party of the Democratic Revolution (*Partido de la Revolución Democrática*-PRD) in Mexico, the party statutes also require that the entering member sign a commitment to pay the party membership fee.

Rights of Party Members

The rights of party members represent perhaps the most diverse aspect of the three elements reviewed in this essay (entry requirements, rights, and duties). There is a general consensus that party members have the right to receive ideological and academic training, participate in the design of the party program, express opinions and critiques about the functioning of the party, obtain counseling, and also, more importantly, select party leaders and candidates for elections.

It is with regard to the penultimate selection of leaders and candidates where a divergence among and within the majority of the countries can be identified. An important number of political parties place conditions on the right to vote for the post of party leader. These conditions relate to active as well as passive voting rights, although the conditions are more commonly applied to the latter. Thus, parties such as PAN in Mexico, the Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (*Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro*-PMDB) and the Party of Brazilian Social Democracy (*Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira*-PSDB), PPD in Chile, Possible Peru (*Perú Posible*-PP), Popular Party (*Partido Popular*-PP) in Panama, and the Authentic Radical Liberal Party (*Partido Liberal Radical Auténtico*-PLRA) in Paraguay determine the right to stand as a candidate for a party leadership post based upon the length of party membership. Normally, the more important the post, the more restrictive the statute. The required period varies from six months to three years. An

⁶⁸ In the past, this was also the case of the National Action Party (*Partido Acción Nacional*) in Mexico.

alternative used by some parties is to demand higher instruction levels, as does the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (*Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela*-PSUV), or to show (vaguely defined) merits, such as required by the Civic Solidarity Union (*Unión Cívica Solidaridad*-UCS) in Bolivia and Creating Opportunities (*CREO*) in Ecuador.

Another source of variation in the rights and duties of Latin American party members is differentiated membership stipulated in the statutes.⁶⁹ The majority of parties establish the figure of “sympathizers” (*simpatizantes*)⁷⁰ as the most basic way to collaborate with the party. Sympathizers are people who are close to the party program and its principles and may support the party during campaigns, but who are not formal party members. The next step is to become an affiliated (*afiliado/miembro*) party member, either directly or after a period of pre-affiliation, as in the case of the Christian Democratic Party (*Partido Demócrata Cristiano*-PDC) in Chile and Popular Action (*Acción Popular*-AP) in Peru. For the most active members, some parties reserve the term militant (*militante*), either formally according to the statutes (e.g., the Green Ecologist Party of Mexico [*Partido Verde Ecologista de México*-PVEM], or PLD and PRD in the Dominican Republic), or informally for those who decide to run for a political-partisan career, as in the case of Argentina.⁷¹ The PRI in Mexico also distinguishes party cadres (*cuadros*) and party leaders (*dirigente*) as the most advanced stage of party membership.

Duties of Party Members

Political parties in Latin America impose a number of duties on their members. These normally include attendance at party meetings; collaboration with the party both during the campaign period and between elections; respect for and loyalty to the party program, principles, and internal norms; promotion of the party doctrine; and also financial contributions. This last aspect differs to a degree among the parties in the region.

Most parties require their members to contribute a monthly or annual fee, either by obligation or voluntarily according to the financial capabilities of their members (for example, the majority of the Bolivian parties have this expectation). There is also a small minority of political parties that do not require the payment of a membership fee or do not include it formally in their

⁶⁹ There is a great divergence in the use of the Spanish translation of party members that normally has to do with the level of implication in the party activities and the post held by the members. But there is also difference in the meaning of the same word among the countries. Normally, in the party statutes, party members are referred to as party members (*miembros de partido*) or affiliates (*afiliados*). Often, the word adherent (*adherente*) is used in the same meaning. In public discourse (mass media), the word militant (*militante*) is employed for all the categories discussed in this essay without any distinction.

⁷⁰ Also called “activist” (*activistas*) or “allies” (*aliados*).

⁷¹ Thanks are extended to Mara Pegoraro for pointing this out.

statutes. This last group includes parties such as the Communist Party (*Partido Comunista*) in Chile, PRO and Big Front (*Frente Grande*) in Argentina, and the Democrats (*Demócratas-DEM*) in Brazil.⁷² Some parties such as PRD in Mexico and PT in Brazil include this condition directly in party membership requirements. There are other requirements among various parties (e.g., the Popular Christian Party [*Partido Popular Cristiano-PPC*] in Peru, and the Brazilian Labor Party [*Partido Trabalhista Brasileiro-PTB*]), for example, for members who have been elected on their candidate lists to national legislative bodies to make a greater financial contribution than others to the political party.

Why Party Members? Discussing Possible Hypotheses Concerning Party Membership Size in Latin America

The panorama of Latin American party membership presents a heterogeneous and complex picture. The data available make it impossible to offer a plausible and convincing explanation about the varying levels of party enrollment, or to be sure that the data faithfully reflect the political reality of the countries in question. As the previous section demonstrates, formal requirements, rights, and duties fall short of explaining party membership levels. This section examines alternative hypotheses concerning varying party membership sizes in the region. It argues that historical factors, the participation of party members in candidate selection processes, and party strategies make for a better explanation than the formal rules (see table 4 for an overview).

Data Reliability and Historical Trajectories

When comparing the data for Latin American countries with those of European counterparts, more so with those of CEE countries, the first question is whether the data are reliable. The obvious response would be no, but that is only a part of the answer. Indeed, in cases such as Paraguay, where total party members comprise more than 100 percent of the electorate, there certainly is a problem with the quality of the data. Such figures can be explained by the inflated data provided by the parties themselves, but they are more probably due to double membership (mostly in ANR-PC and PLRA),⁷³ as well as to the need for parties to purge their member registers of dead people and those who have left the country. In the same way, the numbers for Argentina are likely

⁷² For the purposes of this text, only the statutes of Broad Front (*Frente Amplio-Uruguay*), a coalition party, but not the statutes of the respective parties that form it. The FA document does not indicate anything about financial contribution, though it is probable that some fees are required by the member parties (*sectores*).

⁷³ “Más de 643.000 personas tienen múltiple afiliación” [More than 643,000 people have multiple affiliations], *ABC Color* (November 11, 2012), <http://www.abc.com.py/edicion-impresa/politica/mas-de-643000-personas-tienen-multiple-afiliacion-476334.html> (accessed March 8, 2015).

Table 4. National Levels of Party Membership and Explanatory Factors

Country	TPM % of Electorate	Data Reliability and Historical Trajectories	Territorial Presence and Internal Organization	Candidate Selection Procedures	Intraparty Democracy	Party Strategies/ Funding	Political Clientelism and Patronage
Argentina	28.08	Traditional parties (PJ, UCR) & inflated numbers of party members	Territorial party organization & independent local party units	For all registered voters		Yes (MAS)	Yes
Bolivia	21.28				Highest (PT); Among the lowest (PSDB); Lowest (PTB)	Yes (PT)	Yes
Brazil	10.88		Territorial party organization & independent local party units		Among the lowest (other than PS); Lowest (PS)		
Chile	6.09	Traditional parties (PS, PC)			Among the lowest (PRIAN)	Yes (PSC)	
Ecuador	28.36				Among the lowest (PRI)	Yes (PRI)	
Mexico	11.96	Former hegemonic/regime party (PRI)	Territorial party organization & independent local party units	Differences among parties and electoral processes			
Panama	59.71	Former hegemonic/regime party (PRD)		Only for party members		Yes (CD)	Yes
Paraguay	109.06	Traditional parties (ANR-PC, PLRA) & former hegemonic/regime party (ANR-PC) & double membership		Only for party members			Yes
Peru	5.94	Inflated party member numbers & traditional party (PAP)			Highest (PPC)		
Dominican Republic	46.13			Only for party members	Among the lowest (PLR, PRD)		
Uruguay	15.99			For all registered voters			
Venezuela	38.35					Yes (PSUV)	

Source: See table 1 for membership data and the discussion below for information regarding explanatory factors.

inflated, as the party member register was designed in 1983, during a moment of social mobilization and enthusiasm as the country returned to democracy. The register has not been purged since. Furthermore, the deaffiliation process was at that time quite complicated,⁷⁴ although deaffiliation, contrary to a few years ago, is currently quite simple.⁷⁵ Similar criticisms have been leveled in Peru,⁷⁶ the country in the region with the smallest total party membership (TPM) per electorate share. Common sense holds that there are almost no real party members; the data, though officially registered, are inaccurate and overestimated because the registers have not been purged.⁷⁷

In contrast, ANR-PC and PLRA (Paraguay), PJ and UCR (Argentina), and parties such as PRI (Mexico) and PAP (Peru) are among the most traditional organizations, with long electoral histories and cultures of party membership.⁷⁸ Moreover, PRI, ANR-PC, as well as the Revolutionary Democratic Party (*Partido Revolucionario Democrático*-PRD) in Panama were for a long time hegemonic regime parties that not only co-opted the political system but also permeated the social sphere. Finally, should the data be inflated, deliberately or not, it is reasonable to ask why the parties would commit inaccuracies on such a scale. Besides, the data presented in this essay come from official sources, implying a certain degree of control over their veracity. The high numbers are most probably due to what has been called “legitimacy benefits.”⁷⁹ This concept refers to a deliberate strategy to keep the numbers (artificially) high in order to be seen as a strong, attractive, participatory party and thus appeal

⁷⁴ Szusterman, ““Que se Vayan Todos!”” [“All of them must go!”].

⁷⁵ Pomares, personal communication, 2014. According to the review of party statutes, clear conditions for ending party membership are not the norm in the region but are to be found in around one-third of the party statutes. In the rest of the party documents, no special mention is made for this process.

⁷⁶ María Isabel Remy, “Los partidos políticos nacionales y las elecciones regionales” [The national political parties and regional elections], *Gestión* (Peru) (October 3, 2014), <http://gestion.pe/opinion/partidos-politicos-nacionales-y-elecciones-regionales-2110318> (accessed July 10, 2015).

⁷⁷ Meléndez, “Partidos y Sistema de Partidos en el Perú” [Parties and party systems in Peru], 246-247.

⁷⁸ According to Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP), which conducts public opinion surveys in the Americas region, the Dominican Republic (23.8 percent), Paraguay (11.1 percent), and Panama (8.1 percent) (among the countries analyzed in this essay) are the leading countries in terms of citizen participation in political party meetings. (See Margarita Corral, “Participación en reuniones de partidos políticos” [Participation in the meetings of political parties], *Serie Perspectivas desde el Barómetro de las Américas: 2009* [AmericasBarometer Insights Series 2009], <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/insights/I0820es.pdf> (accessed March 19, 2015), which, at least in the case of the Dominican Republic, lends further support to the reliability of the official information presented here.

⁷⁹ Susan Scarrow, *Parties and Their Members: Organizing for Victory in Britain and Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), and Brandon Van Dyck, “Why Party Organization Still Matters: The Workers’ Party in Northeastern Brazil,” *Latin American Politics and Society* 56, no. 2 (2014): 1-26.

to the electorate and obtain more support in the elections, particularly from undecided voters.

Territorial Presence, Conditions for Local Party Units, and Internal Party Disputes

Some of the countries with the largest party membership size are federal states, with high levels of decentralization and a paramount need for parties to establish territorial presence. Thus, the control of a territory and the opportunity to conquer new electoral ground could be part of the explanation for high party membership rates in countries such as Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico.⁸⁰ This is more likely in countries where district (sub-national level) parties are allowed to field candidates for national legislatures, candidacies that, at the same time, require the endorsement of party members.

Furthermore, Latin American parties are prone to internal disputes and fragmentation. An increased number of party members would thus be the best strategy of party leaders and internal factions to dominate the party and strengthen their positions. This tendency would be more pronounced in federal settings, with high levels of decentralization, big parties, and powerful intermediate political leaderships. Some parties, such as PRD (Mexico), even recognize, in their party statutes, the right of members to form internal factions.

Candidate Selection Procedures

Another possible explanation for high party membership levels would be the need for party members to participate in candidate selection processes and their role and influence in such processes. Latin America in recent years has been tending generally toward more inclusive procedures as a solution to a growing distrust in political parties. Nevertheless, there are still some differences among countries and political parties. According to Freidenberg,⁸¹ who reviewed legislation and presidential selection procedures in the region over the last twenty-five years, in Brazil, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Guatemala there were no internal selection processes of any kind.⁸² In Paraguay, Panama, Peru, and the Dominican Republic, the principal parties held closed (i.e., only

⁸⁰ For this point in the Brazilian case, see, for example, Sousa Braga et al., “Organización, territorio y sistema partidari,” [Organization, territory and party system], and Alfred P. Montero, “No Country for Leftists? Clientelist Continuity and the 2006 Vote in the Brazilian Northeast,” *Journal of Politics in Latin America* 2, no. 2 (2010): 113-153.

⁸¹ Flavia Freidenberg, “La reina de las reformas. Las elecciones internas a las candidaturas presidenciales en América Latina” [The queen of the reform: Presidential candidate election in Latin America], in *Reformas a las Organizaciones de Partidos en América Latina (1978-2015)* [Reforms of party organizations in Latin America (1978-2015)], ed. Flavia Freidenberg and Betilde Muñoz-Pogossian (Lima: Escuela de Gobierno y Políticas Públicas and Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú), 31-91.

⁸² In Venezuela, President Chávez’s movement (*chavismo*) never held internal presidential candidate selections.

for party members) internal elections. In Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras, and Uruguay, the main parties organized open candidate selection processes for all registered citizens. In this context, Mexico is a hybrid case, with PRI organizing open selection process in 1999 and 2005 but not in 2011; PAN operating with internal closed selection at all opportunities; and PRD choosing its candidate through party convention.⁸³

In Panama, Paraguay, the Dominican Republic, and to an extent in Mexico, the parties have organized a closed selection process in which only its members can participate. That would suggest the important role played by party members in deciding who will be the party's candidate for the most powerful post in the political system, the president. Thus, parties have additional incentive to summon party members in order to increase their chances in internal disputes in which there is more than one competitive candidate.⁸⁴ Also, party factions are strengthened when higher numbers of members participate in such processes. In this context, the Peruvian case is rather odd as it seems to have the lowest enrollment levels among the countries studied here. Low enrollment might be explained by the crisis experienced by Peruvian political parties and the concomitant crisis of representation in the 1990s, in which political organizations lost their roots in society, leading some scholars to characterize Peru as a "democracy without parties."⁸⁵

Intraparty Democracy

The Latin American Party Elites Project (PELA 1994-2014),⁸⁶ conducted by the University of Salamanca team, gathers data from interviews with party elites (members of national congresses) for each new legislature. One of the questions asked relates to intraparty democracy and decision-making processes. Specifically, party deputies are asked to rate (from one, absolutely disagree, to five, absolutely agree) the statement: "In my party, the political decisions are made by the party elite. The party members are not taken into account." It is to be expected that, in parties in which there is greater room for the rank-and-file and the power is not totally controlled by the party elites, the number of party members will be higher.

Among the parties analyzed here, the answers range from 1.67 in the case of PT (Brazil) and 1.89 for PPC (Peru) to 4.14 for PTB in Brazil and 4.25 for

⁸³ Flavia Freidenberg and Tomáš Došek, "La selección de candidaturas presidenciales en México: una propuesta metodológica para medir el nivel de democracia interna de los partidos" [Presidential candidate selection in Mexico: A new methodology to measure the level of parties' internal democracy], *Política y gobierno* 23, no. 2 (2016): 365-408.

⁸⁴ In these cases, but also more broadly in the regional context, a minimum number of party members must support each candidacy (Pomares, personal communication, 2014).

⁸⁵ Levitsky and Cameron, "Democracy Without Parties?"

⁸⁶ Manuel Alcántara, Director, PELA: Latin America's Parliamentary Elites (*PELA: Elites parlamentarias latinoamericanas*), Universidad de Salamanca, Salamanca, Spain, 1994-2014.

the Socialist Party (*Partido Socialista*-PS) in Chile. These results show that the leftist parties are not the most inclusive, as both PTB and PS are broadly controlled by party elites. Furthermore, some of the parties with the largest numbers of party members, such as PRI in Mexico, the Institutional Renewal Party of National Action (*Partido Renovador Institucional Acción Nacional*-PRIAN) in Ecuador, PSDB in Brazil, the two Dominican parties, and all Chilean parties are among the most controlled by the elites, at least according to the perception of the elites themselves.

Party Strategies and Party Funding

Some of the parties included in this essay recently have launched deliberate campaigns to enroll more new members and thus strengthen their position vis-à-vis their competitors. The aims are quite ambitious. For example, PRI (Mexico), already the party with the largest number of party members in Mexico, sought to expand its membership to ten million as of the 2015 mid-term elections and thus secure a clear triumph.⁸⁷ MAS in Bolivia wanted to celebrate its nineteenth anniversary by having one million members by 2014.⁸⁸ Other cases that have employed similar strategies include PSUV (Venezuela),⁸⁹ Democratic Change (*Cambio Democrático*-CD) in Panama,⁹⁰ and the Social Christian Party (*Partido Social Cristiano*-PSC) in Ecuador.⁹¹

The above parties have specific goals. First and foremost is to recruit more party members, avoid problems with legal barriers, and increase their chances to win elections with the best possible results. Second, is to “flex their muscles,” obtain popular legitimacy, and position themselves in society to show their strength to adversaries. In this vein, CD, a relatively new party founded at the end of 1990s and also the party of the former president of Panama, Ricardo Martinelli, has overtaken the PRD, traditionally the strongest

⁸⁷ Mariana Otero, “El PRI va por 2015 con 10 millones de afiliados” [PRI aims for 10 million party members in 2015], *Milenio* (March 28, 2014), http://www.milenio.com/politica/PRI-va-millones-afiliados_0_270572971.html (accessed April 16, 2015).

⁸⁸ “MAS celebrará 19 aniversario con un millón de militantes” [MAS will celebrate 19th anniversary with one million party members], *Erbol*.

⁸⁹ In October 2012, before the regional elections, PSUV started a campaign “1x10” that aimed at enrolling ten new party members for each *militante*. See Telesur, “PSUV pone en marcha estrategia electoral para regionales” [PSUV puts in work electoral strategy for regional elections], *Telesur* (October 17, 2012), <http://www.telesurtv.net/articulos/2012/10/17/psuv-asegura-que-estrategia-electoral-en-comicios-regionales-sera-similar-a-las-presidencial-6445.html> (accessed April 20, 2015).

⁹⁰ Democratic Change (*Cambio Democrático*), Ricardo Martinelli’s incumbent party, also initiated a “multiplicative” party membership campaign. See Luis Burón-Barahona and Eduardo Mendoza, “Datos oficiales para campaña” [Official data for electoral campaigning], *La Prensa* (February 3, 2014), <http://www.prensa.com/impreso/panorama/datos-oficiales-campana/27024> (accessed April 18, 2015).

⁹¹ El PSC intenta fortalecerse fuera de Guayaquil” [PSC seeks to get stronger outside of Guayaquil], *El Comercio*, October 5, 2015.

party in the system, in terms of the number of party members. Third, these parties reinforce their mobilization capacity and enhance their possibilities to capture new members with multiplicative effects, as in the case of the PSUV (Venezuela). Fourth, some parties search for new sources of funding through membership registration fees. This is especially true in cases where no public funding is stipulated, such as Bolivia⁹² and Venezuela.⁹³ It has been claimed that, in Brazil, PT is the only party that has important revenue from membership dues, as opposed to public funding.⁹⁴

Political Clientelism and Patronage

The last factor that may influence levels of party membership is patronage, defined as a “selective distribution of public goods to followers (‘clients’),” which manifests itself in the practical realm as a “distribution of favors in the form of jobs in public agencies.”⁹⁵ This practice has been criticized as one of the main reasons for joining a political party in Latin America, in general, and specifically in those countries with large party memberships, such as Argentina, Panama, Brazil, and Paraguay.⁹⁶

The case of Brazil is especially illustrative, as some empirical data are available. As Ribeiro describes it:

The State also provides ample spaces within the bureaucracy for the maintenance and training of party supporters and members, and for the attainment of other important organizational resources through mechanisms of patronage. The federal government operates with approximately 21,000

⁹² Paulo Cuiza, “MAS apunta recaudar Bs 5 millones en inscripción-reinscripción de militantes para campaña electoral” [MAS aims to collect 5 million bolivianos in inscription-rescription of party members for the election campaign], *La Razón Digital* (February 4, 2014), http://la-razon.com/index.php?url=/nacional/Bs-millones-inscripcion-reinscripcion-militantes-electoral_0_1992400806.html (accessed April 23, 2015).

⁹³ Alfredo Joignant, “La democracia y el dinero. Vicios privados, fallas públicas y evoluciones institucionales de los sistemas regulatorios de financiamiento político en 18 países latinoamericanos” [Democracy and money: Private vices, public failures, and the institutional evolution of political finance regulatory systems in 18 Latin American countries], *Política y gobierno* 20, no. 1 (2013): 159-196.

⁹⁴ See Nicolau, “Parties and Democracy in Brazil, 1985-2006”; Ames and Power, “Parties and Governability in Brazil”; and Ribeiro, “El modelo de partido cartel y el sistema de partidos de Brasil” [The cartel party model and the Brazilian party system].

⁹⁵ Jorge Gordin, *La sustentabilidad política del clientelismo: Teoría y observaciones empíricas en América Latina* [The political sustainability of clientelism: Theory and empirical observations from Latin America] (Barcelona: CIDOB, 2006), 7-8.

⁹⁶ See Gerardo Scherlis, “The Contours of Party Patronage in Argentina,” *Latin American Research Review* 48, no. 3 (2013): 63-84, for Argentina, or Jan Němec, “Všeobecné volby v Paraguaji 2013: Návrat starých pořádků?” [2013 general elections in Paraguay: The return of old orders?], *Politologická revue*, no. 1 (2013): 133-147, for Paraguay.

political appointees across the country, 14% of which were occupied by party members in 2010. Data recently collected registered 105,000 freely appointed positions in the 27 state governments and around 500,000 in local councils. The distribution of these positions is the main reward that parties and their deputies receive for their legislative support to the mayor, governor or president.⁹⁷

In this kind of scenario, parties promise their supporters (party members) future jobs in the state apparatus. Once they win elections, they have some discretionary power (depending on both formal and informal rules) to appoint “their people” to the public administration. Indeed, similar mechanisms work on a more micro-level in local public administration and related sectors.

Conclusions

This essay aimed to contribute to current knowledge regarding party membership in Latin America, which presently is rather limited as this topic is one of the least studied in the region. This research gap is surprising, given that the aggregate numbers of party members in Latin America are higher than in Europe and much higher than in the new CEE democracies. This essay argues that the relatively high numbers are owed to a combination of historical, institutional, and strategic factors. Furthermore, it contends that there is a great heterogeneity among Latin American countries and that the explanation of the levels of party enrollment must address national idiosyncrasies rather than a general regional rationale.

Historical factors help to explain higher levels of party membership in traditional or former regime parties in Mexico, Paraguay, Argentina, Uruguay, and even Panama. In countries such as Bolivia and Ecuador where the margin of party members over the legal threshold is relatively low, parties have suffered crises of representation, or have been traditionally weak. The legal frameworks of both countries stipulate relatively high thresholds for maintenance of party registration (1.78 percent and 1.5 percent of the electorate, respectively), which inherently oblige parties that want to compete in elections to actively search for new party members, just in order to surpass the threshold. The party-centered variables underscore the recent deliberate efforts (affiliation campaigns) of some parties, such as PRI (Mexico), MAS (Bolivia), PSUV (Venezuela), CD (Panama), and the Social Christian Party (Ecuador), to attract new party members, expand their party member base, and reap “legitimacy benefits.” Parties also commonly compensate party members with positions in

⁹⁷ Ribeiro, “El modelo de partido cartel y el sistema de partidos de Brasil” [The cartel party model and the Brazilian party system], 612.

public administration, which provides an important incentive for militants to affiliate with parties, or at least participate in campaign activities.

Other variables such as candidate selection procedures also help to explain party membership size. These processes are becoming more and more open and party members are losing their privileged position. Panama, the Dominican Republic, and Paraguay are exceptions in which closed internal selection processes explain the need for large numbers of party members and the prevalence of vote buying.⁹⁸ Party entry requirements, members' duties and rights, and intraparty democracy constitute less powerful explanatory factors. Party statutes differ on aspects such entry conditions, possibilities to occupy party leadership posts, and the payment of membership fees. In general, however, statutes are rather uniform and the exceptions found do not coincide in any discernible pattern with aggregate membership levels. As regards intraparty democracy, for the limited sample for which data are available, there are some exceptions in which the party members perceive a relatively important role by the party elite in party decision-making processes, but these perceptions do not appear to be strong enough to explain enrollment levels.

Indeed, this exploratory essay, by making use of official data published by electoral bodies and media outlets, does not produce an explanation for party membership on an individual level, and also raises suspicions about the veracity of the data. The situation of PAN (Mexico) is an exemplary case. The party purged its member register during the last two years and the number of party members has decreased by about 70 percent.⁹⁹ This unexpected occurrence caused a big surprise, as there had been a general trust in official party data.

Consequently, future investigations should focus on the veracity of the data as well as the role of electoral bodies in verifying party membership registers. Increases in available public opinion survey data should facilitate greater knowledge about what motivates individual Latin Americans to join political parties. Certainly, more fieldwork also is necessary to evaluate the roles of party members and their different forms (e.g., football fans [*barras bravas*] or twitter followers who do not appear in the official data but can accomplish some of the traditional tasks of party members), how parties maintain their member lists, and the differing concepts of party membership among countries. Further, it is increasingly important to explore the role that new technologies and social media play regarding the importance of party members and, more generally, the relationship that political parties maintain

⁹⁸ See “Más de 643.000 personas tienen múltiple afiliación” [More than 643,000 people have multiple affiliations], *ABC Color*, for the Paraguayan case.

⁹⁹ “Pierde el PAN 80% de militantes, admite dirigencia” [PAN loses 80% of its party members, leaders admit], *AristeguiNOTICIAS* (January 6, 2013), <http://aristeguinoticias.com/0601/mexico/se-reduce-a-menos-de-la-mitad-la-cifra-de-miembros-activos-del-pan/> (accessed March 11, 2015).

with their followers both virtually and on the ground.