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Party System Institutionalization in Contemporary Latin America*

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This chapter has three purposes. First, I develop indicators of party system institutionalization (PSI) that reflect the reconceptualization in Chapter 1. Despite the proliferation of work on PSI, advances in measurement have not kept up with theoretical and other empirical contributions. Chapter 2 presents thirteen indicators of party system stability to measure the three different attributes of PSI discussed in Chapter 1 (stable membership, stable inter-party competition, and stable party linkages to society). These indicators stem directly from the theoretical discussion in Chapter 1. They are straightforward, informative, easy to operationalize, and comparable across cases and over time. They can be used for analyses of party system change and stability in all regions of the world.

Second, the chapter lays out the data for these measures for eighteen Latin American countries – all but Cuba and Haiti – and the United States as a benchmark case among the advanced industrial democracies. It begins with six measures for the stability of the *membership* of Latin American party systems. These party systems differ dramatically on all six measures.

The chapter then presents six measures for the stability of inter-party competition, beginning with the most widely used: electoral volatility, which I calculated for both presidential and lower chamber elections. I also created two indicators to measure cumulative change or stability in inter-party competition: cumulative electoral volatility since 1990, and the vote share in the most recent elections of parties that existed by 1990 for both presidential and lower chamber elections. Again, these party systems vary widely on all of these measures.

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The next section discusses change in parties' ideological positions. If parties undertake rapid ideological shifts, as occurred with many Latin American parties in the 1980s and 1990s, a system becomes less predictable. Conversely, stable ideological positions generate greater predictability and certainty regarding system dynamics.

Together, these thirteen indicators offer a broad overview of the degree to which Latin American party systems were, on average, institutionalized during the 1990–2015 period. Mexico, Uruguay, and Chile had, on average, the most stable systems in Latin America during this period. The systems of Guatemala, Peru, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Colombia were the least institutionalized.

Finally, the chapter discusses change in levels of institutionalization relative to the early to mid-1990s. Since the 1990s, there has been significant change in institutionalization in quite a few Latin American party systems. The erosion or collapse of once institutionalized systems in Argentina, Colombia, and Venezuela, and increasing institutionalization in Brazil, El Salvador, and Panama raise questions about how useful it is to discuss institutionalization in Latin America. Institutionalization implies a tendency toward self-reproduction – and in Latin America, some systems in the 1990s and 2000s deviated sharply from their historical tendencies. While recognizing this fact, I argue that the concept remains useful for theorizing about and comparing party systems.

DEVELOPING INDICATORS FOR PARTY SYSTEM INSTITUTIONALIZATION

The chapter follows three broad strategies in generating indicators for PSI. First, it employs thirteen indicators rather than relying on a parsimonious set. I preferred to be fairly inclusive in the kinds of data used to measure system stability – provided that the indicators reflected the definition and theoretical discussion in Chapter 1.

Second, I use data for both lower chamber and presidential elections because both capture important dynamics of party systems. Presidents set the policy agenda, and voters are more attuned to the presidential contest than congressional elections. Lower chamber elections reveal different but equally important information about a party system. Because strategic candidate entry and withdrawal and strategic voting are highly important in presidential elections and less so in elections with proportional representation and multimember districts, lower chamber results might tell us more about voters' "sincere" preferences. In this sense, the distribution of votes for the lower chamber might more fully capture citizen preferences.

Third, I use some indicators that capture change and stability in each electoral period and others that capture change and stability over the

medium-term, from 1990 to 2015. Previous work on PSI has focused almost exclusively on dynamics at the electoral period level. Both the short- and the medium-term indicators express important dynamics of change and stability. Two systems could be equally stable if we measure at the electoral period, but could have radically different levels of stability in the medium term. Measures of PSI should be attentive to both the short- and medium-term dynamics.

STABILITY OF THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE PARTY SYSTEM

Few previous discussions of PSI have addressed stability in the membership of the party system (i.e., the parties) (for an exception, see Sánchez 2009). Yet this issue should be central to analyses of party system change and stability. The most common indicator of PSI and of aggregate electoral stability is electoral volatility, which captures stability in parties' vote shares, but not other aspects of PSI. Two systems could have the same electoral volatility, but in one case new parties could emerge and become important contenders, while in the other the same parties could compete time after time. The predictability and stability of a party system are greater in the latter scenario.

Vote Share of New Parties

To assess stability in the membership of the party system, I use six indicators: the vote share of new parties in presidential and lower chamber elections, the stability of main contenders from one election to the next (again in both presidential and lower chamber elections), and the medium-term (1990–2015) stability of main contenders in presidential and lower chamber elections.

The vote share of new parties is an important indicator of change and stability. Party system dynamics are very different when new parties burst on the scene and grab an important share of the vote compared to a situation in which the established contenders are the same parties for generations. In the former situation, the very membership of the party system changes. Voters are expressing dissatisfaction not only with the governing party but with the entire set of existing options. Formerly major parties fade and new contenders sometimes capture a sizeable share of the vote.

Online Appendices 2.1 and 2.2 provide detailed rules for coding new parties in lower chamber and presidential elections, as well as the rules for coding electoral volatility. Figures 2.1 and 2.2 show the data for the mean vote share of new parties in eighteen Latin American countries (all but Cuba and Haiti) and the US from 1990 to 2015 in presidential and lower chamber elections.[1]

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[1] National-level data are not available for Argentine lower chamber elections from 2003 on. Because the party system underwent dramatic changes since 2003 that almost surely increased the vote share of new parties, I do not provide a mean score for Argentina's lower chamber.
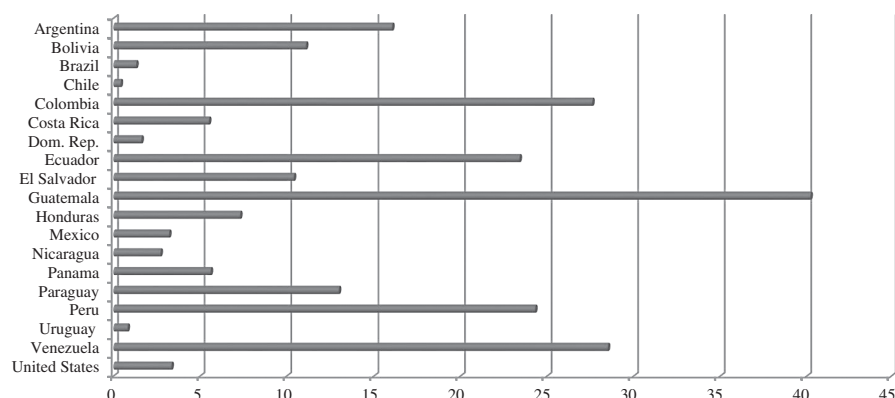
FIGURE 2.1 Mean Vote Share of New Parties, 1990–2015 – Presidential Elections
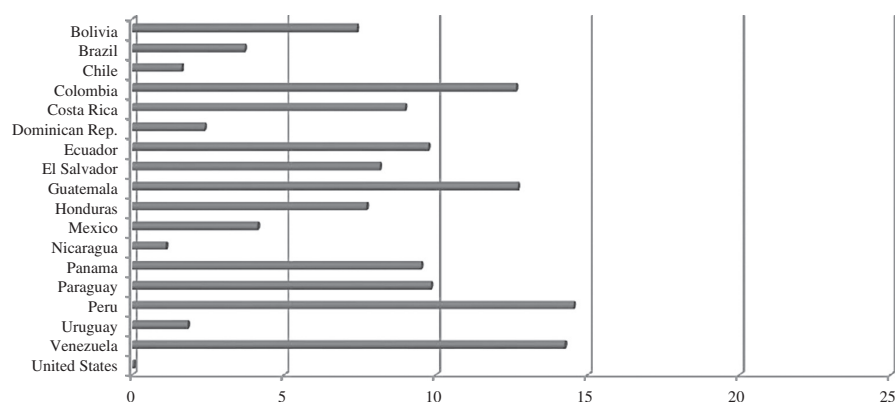

FIGURE 2.2 Mean Vote Share of New Parties, 1990–2015 – Lower Chamber Elections

The variance across countries is huge. In presidential elections, in Chile (0.4%), Uruguay (0.8%), Brazil (1.3%), and the Dominican Republic (1.6%), new parties have had very marginal impact since 1990. The highest mean, Guatemala (40.2%), is 100 times greater than Chile's. New parties have also enjoyed great success in presidential elections in Venezuela (28.5%), Colombia (27.6%), Peru (24.3%), and Ecuador (23.4%), all of which have averages more than fifty times greater than the Chilean. The country mean is high, 11.9% (12.4% for the eighteen Latin American countries) – slightly above the average *total* volatility of 10.7% in lower chamber elections in twenty advanced industrial democracies for the period from 1945 to 2006 (Mainwaring *et al.* 2016).

There is also huge variance in lower chamber elections. The US (0.1%), Nicaragua (1.1%), Chile (1.6%), Uruguay (1.8%), and the Dominican Republic (2.4%) anchor the low end, and Colombia (12.6%), Guatemala

(12.7%), Venezuela (14.2%), and Peru (14.5%) the high end. Venezuela's mean is almost fourteen times higher than Nicaragua's. The country mean for the vote share of new parties is 65% higher for presidential (11.9%) than lower chamber elections (7.2%). The country mean for lower chamber elections in Latin America was 7.7%, lower than for fourteen Eastern European and post-Soviet countries (20.4%), four African countries (14.0%), and eight Asian countries (12.5%), but much higher than the country mean for twenty advanced industrial democracies (2.2%) (Mainwaring *et al*. 2016).

Countries with a high vote share of new parties in presidential elections also tended to have a high vote share of new parties in lower chamber elections. At the country level, the average vote share of new parties in presidential elections is correlated with the vote share of new parties in lower chamber elections at 0.84 (*p* = 0.000).[2]

Figure 2.3 shows trends over time for the seven most populous Latin American countries, which are featured in Chapters 5 to 11 of this volume. The Venezuelan case shows especially dramatic change over time. In 1998, new parties won 99.5% of the presidential vote, as all previously existing parties were vanquished. In 2012 and 2013, by which time the opposition had consolidated into a stable coalition in presidential elections, new parties won a meager 0.6% and 0.1%, respectively, of the presidential vote.

Stability in the Main Contenders

The next indicators of stability in the membership of the party system are stability in the significant contenders from one election to the next in lower chamber and presidential elections. In a highly institutionalized system, the same main parties compete time after time. Conversely, in weakly institutionalized systems, recurrently, some leading contenders disappear while new ones burst on the scene (Sánchez 2009).

I operationalize a significant contender as one that won at least 10% of the vote. Parties or presidential candidates that win under 10% are not major contenders. A threshold much above 10%, however, would eliminate important parties for some countries. In Brazil, for example, no party won more than 14.2% of the vote in the 2014 lower chamber elections, so a 15% threshold would have eliminated all parties.

To illustrate an example of exceptional instability in the main contenders and to indicate how this index is constructed, Table 2.1 shows the parties that won at least 10% of the presidential vote in any election in Guatemala from 1990 to 2015. The final column, "Repeat Contenders," indicates for a certain election the number of parties that repeated as a significant contender from the previous election. For example, in 1990, four parties won at least 10% of the vote, and in 1995, only two of those four repeated. Of the nineteen times that a party won at

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[2] All correlations reported in this chapter are Pearson. All *p* values are two-tailed.

FIGURE 2.3 Vote Share of New Parties in Presidential and Lower Chamber Elections – Seven Countries

least 10% of the presidential vote between 1990 and 2011, only nine times did that party reach the 10% threshold in the next election. Hence the index of stability of main contenders is 0.47 (nine divided by nineteen).[3]

Column 3 of Table 2.2 shows the stability of main contenders from one lower chamber election to the next for eighteen Latin American countries. The variance across countries is huge. Reflecting frequent turnover in the membership in the party system, Peru (0.44), Bolivia (0.50), Venezuela (0.54),

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[3] For lower chamber elections that use a mixed (proportional/majoritarian) electoral system, I used a weighted average (by share of seats allocated to each portion of the electoral system) for the 10% threshold.

TABLE 2.1 *Stability of Main Contenders, Guatemalan Presidential Elections, 1990–2015*

Election/ Party	DCG	UCN	MAS	PAN	FRG	URNG	GANA	UNE	PP	LIDER	CREO	FCN	Repeat contenders
1990	X	X	X	X									
1995	X			X	X								2 of 4
1999				X	X	X							2 of 3
2003					X		X	X					1 of 3
2007							X	X	X				2 of 3
2011									X	X	X		1 of 3
2015								X		X		X	1 of 3
Total repeat contenders													9 of 19

TABLE 2.2 *Stability in Significant Contenders, Latin America and the United States, 1990–2015*

	Lower chamber elections			Presidential elections		
	Elections included	Stability from one election to the next	Medium-term stability	Elections included	Stability from one election to the next	Medium-term stability
Mexico	1991–2015	1.00	0.96	1994–2012	1.00	1.00
Uruguay	1994–2014	1.00	1.00	1994–2014	1.00	1.00
Dominican Republic	1990–2010	0.93	0.93	1990–2012	0.94	0.83
United States	1990–2014	1.00	1.00	1992–2012	0.91	0.67
Chile	1993–2013	0.96	0.96	1993–2013	0.80	0.56
El Salvador	1991–2015	0.85	0.43	1994–2014	0.89	0.50
Honduras	1993–2013	1.00	0.50	1993–2013	1.00	0.50
Brazil	1990–2014	0.88	0.58	1994–2014	0.79	0.48
Nicaragua	1990–2011	0.67	0.44	1990–2011	0.78	0.44
Costa Rica	1990–2014	0.86	0.43	1990–2014	0.93	0.43
Paraguay	1993–2013	0.75	0.45	1993–2013	0.58	0.33
Panama	1994–2014	0.82	0.45	1994–2014	0.58	0.29
Peru	1990–2011	0.44	0.22	1990–2011	0.54	0.29
Bolivia	1993–2014	0.50	0.28	1993–2014	0.53	0.28
Ecuador	1990–2013	0.65	0.30	1992–2013	0.63	0.27

TABLE 2.2 (*continued*)

	Elections included	Stability from one election to the next	Medium-term stability	Elections included	Stability from one election to the next	Medium-term stability
Colombia	1990–2014	0.89	0.40	1990–2014	0.53	0.18
Venezuela	1993–2015	0.54	0.18	1993–2013	0.42	0.15
Guatemala	1990–2015	0.64	0.17	1990–2015	0.47	0.14
Argentina	1991–2003*	0.92	0.67	1995–2015	0.41	0.13
Mean for 19 countries		0.81	0.54		0.72	0.45

*Note: National-level data for lower chamber elections for Argentina are not available past 2003. If data were available, the number would probably drop significantly.

Guatemala (0.64), Ecuador (0.65), Nicaragua (0.67), and Paraguay (0.75) exhibited the lowest stability. In Honduras (1.00), Mexico (1.00), the US (1.00), and Uruguay (1.00), there was perfect stability in the main contenders; Chile (0.96) was not far behind. In the most recent elections, the Honduran and Colombian party systems exhibited significant flux; their scores will almost certainly drop in the next election.

Column 6 of Table 2.2 shows the same indicator for presidential elections. Results are generally consistent with those for the lower chamber; the Pearson bivariate correlation is 0.81 (p = 0.000).[4] Again, Uruguay, Honduras, and Mexico exhibited complete stability. Argentina (0.41), Venezuela (0.42), and Guatemala (0.47) had the lowest scores.

The final two indicators of stability in the membership of party systems are the medium-term (1990–2015) regularity with which main contenders consistently won at least 10% of the vote for lower chamber (Column 4 of Table 2.2) and presidential elections (the last column), respectively.[5] This measure indicates the percentage of times that each party that reached the 10% threshold at least once reached it in all other elections.

$$\text{Medium term stability} = \frac{N}{P * (E - 1)}$$

where N is the *actual* number of times that all parties that won 10% of the vote at least once achieved this result in any other election, P is the number of parties that won at least 10% in any election between 1990 and 2015, and E is the number of elections between 1990 and 2015. The denominator is the maximum number of times that all parties that won at least 10% at least once could have achieved this result in all other elections during this period. With perfect stability in the significant contenders from 1990 until 2015, $\frac{N}{P*(E-1)} = 100\%$. The lowest possible score, which would obtain if no party ever repeated as a significant contender, is 0.

To illustrate, Guatemala had seven presidential elections from 1990 to 2015 (Table 2.1 above). Twelve different parties won at least 10% of the presidential vote at least once during this time. Combined, these twelve parties reached 10% of the presidential vote in any other election only ten times (PAN, UNE, and FRG two times each; DCG, GANA, PP, and LIDER once each). The numerator is therefore ten. The denominator (the maximum feasible value) is twelve times six, or seventy-two. Hence, the index is 10/72, or 0.14; on average, each party that

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[4] Appendix 2.1 shows the complete correlation matrix for the thirteen indicators used in this chapter.

[5] I chose 1990 as the starting point for measurement because in that year, for the first time ever, all eighteen Latin American countries analyzed in this chapter had competitive political regimes (democracies or semi-democracies). With an earlier starting point, some countries would have had a longer time series than others, making the measures non-commensurable (we expect greater stability over ten years than over twenty-five years). I also chose 1990 because this volume reflects on patterns of change and stability in Latin American party systems since around that time.

was a significant contender at least once reached the 10% threshold only 14% of the time in all other elections. Argentina (0.13) and Venezuela (0.15) also showed extremely low medium-term stability in the presidential contenders (Column 7 of Table 2.2). Uruguay and Mexico exhibited perfect stability; both countries had the same three significant contenders in every presidential election.

Column 4 shows the data for medium-term stability of the main contenders in lower chamber elections. Guatemala (0.17), Venezuela (0.18), and Peru (0.22) anchor the low end of the scale. Conversely, Uruguay (1.00), the US (1.00), Chile (0.96), and Mexico (0.96) had almost complete medium-term stability. The correlation between Columns 7 (medium-term consistency for presidential elections) and 4 (medium-term stability for lower chamber elections) is 0.89 (p = 0.000), excluding Argentina because of the lack of national-level data for lower chamber elections after 2003. The medium-term country-level indicators of stability of main contenders are highly correlated with the election-to-election measures: 0.78 for lower chamber and 0.85 for presidential elections.

All six indicators of the stability in the membership of the party system tap different angles of this concept, but all are faithful indicators of the underlying idea that an institutionalized system has a stable membership. For some purposes, it is useful to have a summary score for the stability in the membership of the party system. Accordingly, I transformed all six scores into standard deviations above and below the mean (Z-scores) for the nineteen countries. A score above 0 represents greater than average stability for this sample of cases. I inverted the vote share of new parties so that positive scores represented a low vote share and vice versa.

The results, shown in Table 2.3, summarize which systems have had the most stable set of parties. Because the Z-scores are constructed in relation to the mean for the nineteen countries, and because most Latin American party systems were volatile in this period, scores above 0 do not signify high stability in the main contenders.

The final column is a simple mean of the six Z-scores. Based on this mean, Uruguay, Mexico, the US, and the Dominican Republic had the most stability in the members of the party system. Systems with frequent entrance of electorally successful new parties and declines in major old parties include Guatemala, Venezuela, Peru, Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, and Bolivia.

STABILITY IN AGGREGATE PATTERNS OF INTER-PARTY COMPETITION

Electoral Volatility

Electoral volatility is a solid, widely used measure of the stability in aggregate patterns of inter-party competition. It is calculated by taking the change of each

TABLE 2.3 *Stability in the Membership of the Party System: Z-Scores, Latin America, and the US*

	Vote share of new parties		Stability of significant contenders, election-to-election		Stability of significant contenders, medium term		Average of Z-scores
	Presidential	Lower chamber	Presidential	Lower chamber	Presidential	Lower chamber	
Uruguay	0.95	1.11	1.31	0.78	2.06	1.47	1.28
Mexico	0.75	0.64	1.31	0.78	2.06	1.34	1.15
United States	0.74	1.47	0.88	0.78	0.82	1.47	1.03
Dominican Republic	0.89	1.00	1.02	0.52	1.44	1.26	1.02
Chile	0.99	1.15	0.37	0.63	0.43	1.35	0.82
Brazil	0.91	0.72	0.32	0.32	0.13	0.14	0.42
Honduras	0.40	−0.10	1.31	0.78	0.20	−0.12	0.41
Nicaragua	0.79	1.26	0.26	−0.51	−0.03	−0.32	0.24
Costa Rica	0.55	−0.36	0.98	0.24	−0.05	−0.34	0.17
El Salvador	0.13	−0.19	0.79	0.20	0.20	−0.36	0.13
Panama	0.54	−0.47	−0.66	0.08	−0.59	−0.28	−0.23
Paraguay	−0.09	−0.53	−0.66	−0.19	−0.42	−0.28	−0.36
Bolivia	0.07	−0.03	−0.91	−1.16	−0.63	−0.82	−0.58
Ecuador	−0.99	−0.51	−0.46	−0.56	−0.66	−0.76	−0.66
Colombia	−1.35	−1.11	−0.91	0.35	−0.97	−0.42	−0.73

TABLE 2.3 (*continued*)

	Vote share of new parties		Stability of significant contenders, election-to-election		Stability of significant contenders, medium term		
	Presidential	Lower chamber	Presidential	Lower chamber	Presidential	Lower chamber	Average of Z- scores
Argentina	–0.35	–	–1.47	–	–1.16	–	–0.99
Peru	–1.06	–1.49	–0.87	–1.40	–0.59	–1.01	–1.07
Venezuela	–1.43	–1.43	–1.44	–1.01	–1.10	–1.15	–1.26
Guatemala	–2.43	–1.12	–1.19	–0.63	–1.14	–1.18	–1.28

party's vote share from one election to the next as an absolute value, summing these changes for all parties, and dividing by two. Figures 2.4 and 2.5 provide data on mean electoral volatility for the period since 1990 (i.e., the second election of the electoral period took place in 1990 or thereafter) for lower chamber and presidential elections.
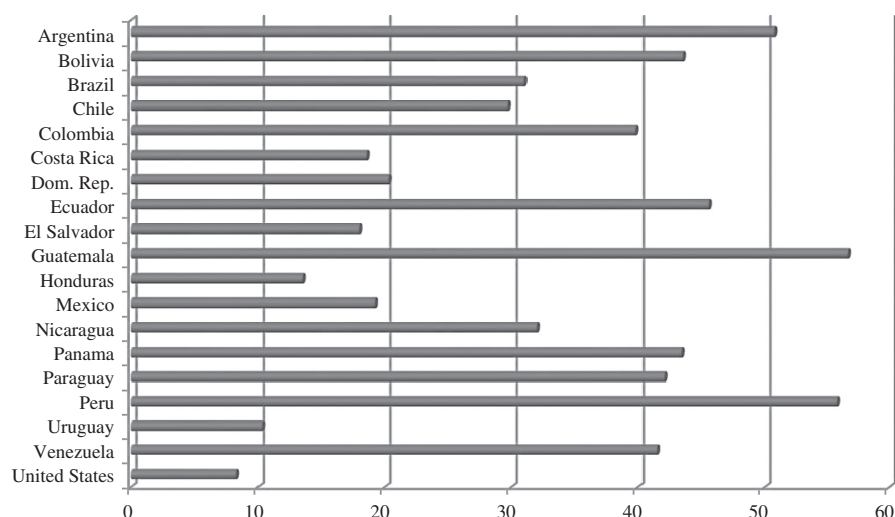

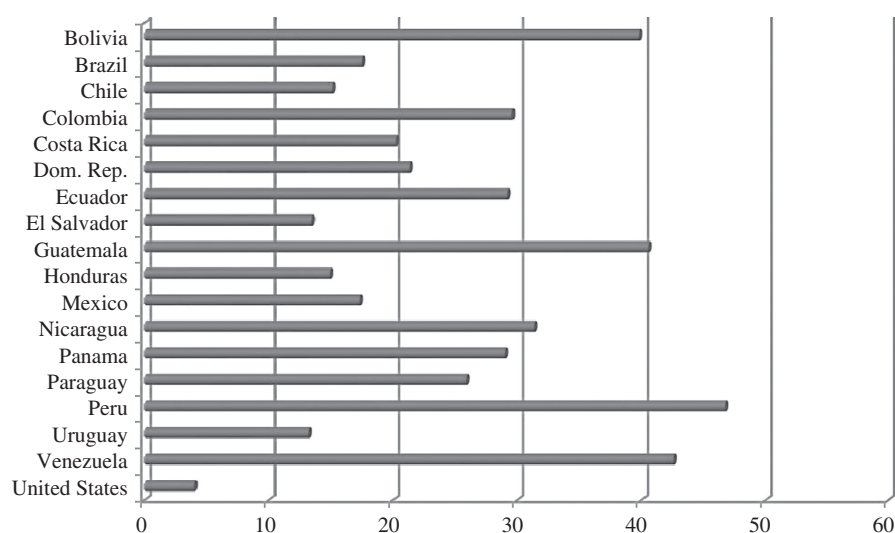FIGURE 2.4 Mean Electoral Volatility, 1990–2015 – Presidential Elections

FIGURE 2.5 Mean Electoral Volatility, 1990–2015 – Lower Chamber Elections

Calculations of electoral volatility hinge critically on establishing sound and transparent coding rules for party schisms, splits, mergers, changes of names, and coalitions. Online Appendices 2.1 and 2.2 detail these coding rules for lower chamber and presidential elections, respectively.

The variance across countries is great, ranging in presidential elections from a mean of 8.3 in the US to 56.6 in Guatemala, with a country mean of 32.6. Many countries had very high average volatility. In presidential elections, Guatemala (56.6%), Peru (55.7%), Argentina (50.8%), Ecuador (45.6%), Bolivia (43.5%), Panama (43.4%), Paraguay (42.1%), and Venezuela (41.5%) had very high average volatility. The US (8.3%), Uruguay (10.3%), Honduras (13.5%), El Salvador (18.0%), Costa Rica (18.6%), and Mexico (19.2%) were much lower.

In lower chamber elections, the country mean was 25.1%. Peru (46.7%), Venezuela (42.6%), Guatemala (40.5%), and Bolivia (39.8%) had very high means. The US (4.0%), Uruguay (13.2%), El Salvador (13.4%), Honduras (14.9%), Chile (15.1%), Mexico (17.3%), and Brazil (17.5%) anchored the stable end.

For purposes of comparison, mean (at the country level) electoral volatility for the lower chamber in twenty advanced industrial democracies from 1945 through 2006 was 10.7% (Mainwaring *et al.* 2016). Electoral volatility is thus far higher in most Latin American countries than in the advanced industrial democracies. But it is lower than it was in fourteen Eastern European countries (43.6%) and similar to the country means for eight Asian countries (25.6%) and four African countries (28.6%) (Mainwaring *et al.* 2016).

Volatility has accelerated in presidential elections in Latin America. Mean volatility (calculated in electoral periods rather than by the country) was 23.0% in the 1970s and 22.3% in the 1980s. It jumped to 33.4% in the 1990s, 36.3% in the 2000s, and 36.6% in the 2010s.

Three countries that once had stable party systems experienced dramatic volatility in the 1990s and 2000s. Venezuela, which had a fairly stable party system from 1968 until 1988, experienced a veritable earthquake in 1998. Previously existing parties won only 0.6% of the presidential vote. In Argentina, the Peronists and Radicals dominated electoral competition in every free and fair contest from 1946 until 1999. Volatility was consistently moderate until 1999, when it spiked to 44% in the presidential election, followed by 73% in 2003. In Colombia, a long stable system gave rise to consistently high volatility starting in 1990. Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, and Peru continued patterns of very high volatility. In contrast, three countries experienced declines in volatility and increasing aggregate stability: Brazil, El Salvador, and the Dominican Republic.

The means in Figures 2.4 and 2.5 again conceal sharp within-country differences. Figure 2.6 shows the trends over time for the seven countries featured in this volume.
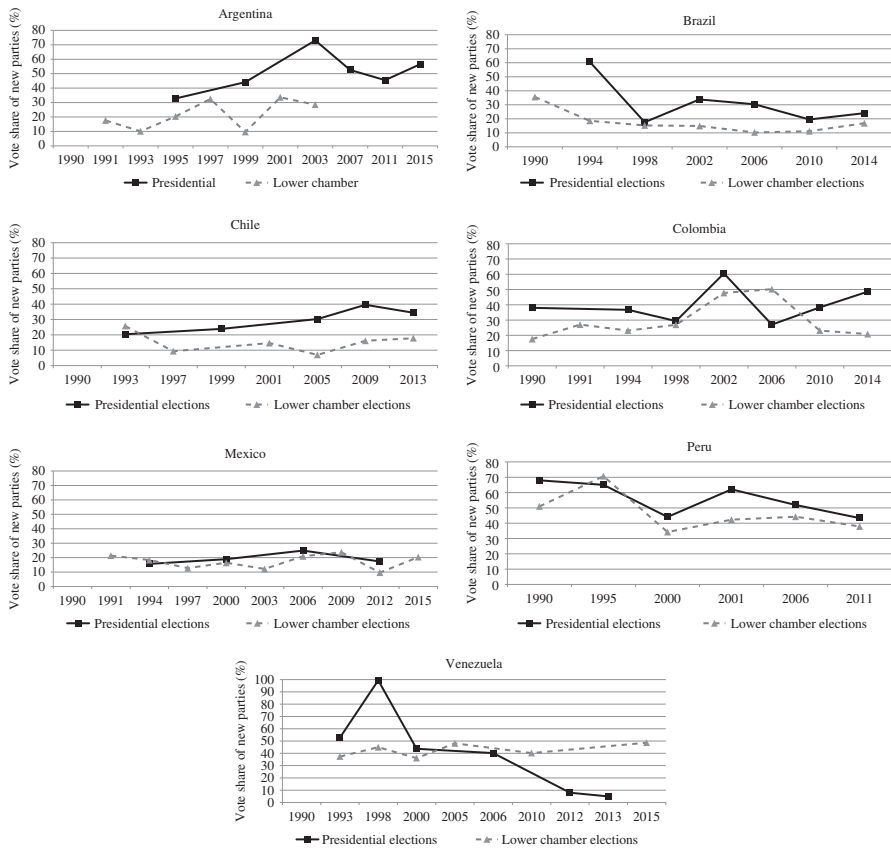
FIGURE 2.6 Electoral Volatility in Presidential and Lower Chamber Elections – Seven Largest Countries

Cumulative Change over Time I and II

The traditional measure of electoral volatility does not capture cumulative change over time. Imagine two systems that begin with parties A, B, C, D, and E in 1990; both have mean volatility of 20% from 1990 to 2015. In the first, A, B, C, D, and E consistently remain the sole contenders, and in 2015 they revert back to their 1990 vote shares. Mean volatility is 20%, but cumulative volatility from 1990 to 2015 is 0. In the second system, in the second election, F displaces A; in the third, G displaces B; in the fourth, H displaces C; and so forth. Mean electoral volatility in this second example is the same as in the first (20%), but five elections after the founding one, none of the original parties remain. The system has remained the same in the former case and changed entirely in the latter.

It is useful to capture these radically different levels of cumulative change and stability. Oddly, there is no widely used indicator to assess cumulative change and

stability in electoral patterns. For this purpose, I created two indices. The first (Columns 3 and 6 of Table 2.4) shows cumulative volatility from the first election that took place in 1990 or thereafter to the most recent election through 2015. It is measured in the same way as electoral volatility, but using two elections roughly twenty-five years apart instead of consecutive elections. Four countries had an almost wholesale replacement of the congressional party system since 1990: Bolivia (100% cumulative change), Guatemala (97.6%), Venezuela (97.1%), and Ecuador (80.9%). In presidential elections (Column 6), these four countries and Colombia (87.7%) experienced almost a complete turnover. Many other countries experienced massive change since the early 1990s.

The US (9.4%), Chile (24.1%), Uruguay (24.8%), and Paraguay (28.7%) exhibited much less change over time in lower chamber elections. In presidential elections, cumulative volatility was lowest in the US (18.9%), Mexico (19.3%), Paraguay (24.4%), Uruguay (24.5%), El Salvador (26.2%), and Chile (27.7%). For the eighteen countries for which we have lower chamber data, the correlation between cumulative and mean volatility is 0.82 (p = 0.000). For presidential elections, it is 0.69 (p = 0.001).

Columns 4 and 7 in Table 2.4 show the percentage of the vote in the most recent election that was won by parties that existed in the early 1990s in lower chamber and presidential elections, respectively. Whereas Columns 3 and 6 are indicators of cumulative change, Columns 4 and 7 show medium-term stability (1990–2015). Columns 3 and 4 and Columns 6 and 7 total 100% when the vote share lost by parties that existed in the early 1990s was won entirely by new parties. These two columns total more than 100% if some vote share shifted from one party that existed in 1990 to another that also existed then. Reflecting the fact that cumulative change usually approximates the inverse of the vote share of parties that existed in the early 1990s, Columns 3 and 4 are correlated at −0.97; Columns 6 and 7 are also correlated at −0.97.

The ability of older parties to continue thriving electorally has varied hugely across these nineteen countries. In the US (96.9%), Uruguay (94.9%), Chile (90.5%), and the Dominican Republic (90.4%), the most recent lower chamber elections were dominated by parties that existed by circa 1990. Older parties have entirely disappeared in Bolivia and nearly disappeared in Venezuela (2.1%) and Guatemala (3.5%). In presidential elections, older parties have continued to dominate in the US (99.2%), the Dominican Republic (98.2%), Mexico (95.2%), Uruguay (94.7%), Paraguay (93.8%), and El Salvador (87.9%). In the most recent elections, older parties did not even compete in Bolivia and Venezuela, and they won a paltry 1.2% of the vote in Ecuador. On average, massive electoral change has taken place since the early 1990s, though with a handful of exceptions.

Again, it is useful to create a summary of the six indicators for stability of inter-party competition. Because medium-term electoral volatility since 1990 and the percentage of the most recent vote won by parties that existed by 1990 are almost perfectly correlated (−0.97 for both lower chamber and presidential

TABLE 2.4 *Cumulative Electoral Volatility since 1990 and Most Recent Aggregate Vote Share of Parties that Existed by 1990 – Lower Chamber and Presidential Elections*

	Lower chamber elections			Presidential elections		
	Elections included	Cumulative electoral volatility since 1990	Percentage of most recent vote share won by parties that existed by 1990	Elections included	Cumulative electoral volatility since 1990	Percentage of most recent vote won by parties that existed by 1990
United States	1990–2014	9.4	96.9	1992–2012	18.9	99.2
Dominican Republic	1990–2010	34.8	90.4	1990–2012	43.0	98.2
Mexico	1991–2015	37.9	74.7	1994–2012	19.3	95.2
Uruguay	1994–2014	24.8	94.9	1994–2014	24.5	94.7
Paraguay	1993–2013	28.7	71.6	1993–2013	24.4	93.8
El Salvador	1991–2015	48.1	51.9	1994–2014	26.2	87.9
Brazil	1990–2014	42.1	75.1	1994–2014	39.0	75.9
Chile	1993–2013	24.1	90.5	1993–2013	27.7	74.5
Nicaragua	1990–2011	59.2	60.7	1990–2011	53.3	68.4
Panama	1994–2014	52.1	62.2	1994–2014	42.8	67.2
Honduras	1993–2013	46.3	54.1	1993–2013	42.5	57.5

TABLE 2.4 (*continued*)

	Lower chamber elections			Presidential elections		
	Elections included	**Cumulative electoral volatility since 1990**	**Percentage of most recent vote share won by parties that existed by 1990**	**Elections included**	**Cumulative electoral volatility since 1990**	**Percentage of most recent vote won by parties that existed by 1990**
Argentina	–	–	–	1995–2015	63.0	37.1
Costa Rica	1990–2014	64.2	35.7	1990–2014	64.6	35.7
Peru	1990–2011	62.7	43.8	1990–2011	76.4	23.6
Colombia	1990–2014	64.0	35.9	1990–2014	87.7	16.5
Guatemala	1990–2015	97.6	3.5	1990–2015	93.5	6.5
Ecuador	1990–2013	80.9	19.1	1992–2013	98.8	1.2
Bolivia	1993–2014	100.0	0.0	1993–2014	99.6	0.0
Venezuela	1993–2015	97.1	2.1	1993–2013	100.0	0.0
Mean for all 18 or 19 countries		54.1	53.5		55.0	54.4

Note: In 1993, the Bolivian system was proportional, but in 2014 it was mixed. We compared the 1993 vote share with the weighted 2014 vote share. Likewise, in 1990 in Nicaragua voters cast only one vote for a national list, but in 2011 there was a mixed system, whereby voters cast two votes – one for a national list and one for a departmental list. We compared the 1990 results with the weighted 2011 results. The same situation arises in Ecuador; we compared the 1990 PR results with the weighted 2013 results.

elections), it would effectively double count these scores to include both. Hence, I average the Z-scores for mean electoral volatility and cumulative volatility, for both lower chamber and presidential elections.

To use the same metrics as Table 2.3, I inverted the scores so that above average stability produces a Z-score above 0. Table 2.5 shows the Z-scores for electoral volatility and for cumulative volatility and the mean for these four scores. The US (1.50), Uruguay (1.10), Mexico (0.81), El Salvador (0.76), Chile (0.73), and Honduras (0.68) are at the high end, with fairly low electoral volatility and cumulative volatility. Guatemala (−1.39), Venezuela (−1.24), Bolivia (−1.24), Peru (−0.05), and Ecuador (−0.89) had very high volatility.

The mean Z-scores for stable membership of a party system (Table 2.3) and stable electoral results (Table 2.5) are empirically correlated at a very high level:

TABLE 2.5 *Stability in Inter-Party Competition: Z-Scores, Latin America, and the US*

	Electoral volatility		Cumulative electoral volatility		Average of Z-scores
	Presidential	Lower chamber	Presidential	Lower chamber	
United States	1.58	1.63	1.22	1.55	1.50
Uruguay	1.45	0.92	1.03	1.02	1.10
Mexico	0.87	0.60	1.20	0.56	0.81
El Salvador	0.95	0.90	0.97	0.21	0.76
Chile	0.19	0.77	0.92	1.04	0.73
Honduras	1.24	0.79	0.42	0.27	0.68
Dominican Republic	0.80	0.29	0.41	0.67	0.54
Brazil	0.11	0.59	0.54	0.42	0.41
Paraguay	−0.62	−0.06	1.03	0.88	0.31
Costa Rica	0.91	0.38	−0.32	−0.35	0.15
Panama	−0.70	−0.30	0.41	0.07	−0.13
Nicaragua	0.04	−0.48	0.06	−0.18	−0.14
Colombia	−0.47	−0.34	−1.10	−0.34	−0.56
Argentina	−1.18	–	−0.27	–	−0.72
Ecuador	−0.84	−0.32	−1.48	−0.93	−0.89
Peru	−1.50	−1.68	−0.72	−0.30	−1.05
Venezuela	−0.58	−1.35	−1.52	−1.49	−1.24
Bolivia	−0.71	−1.14	−1.50	−1.59	−1.24
Guatemala	−1.56	−1.20	−1.30	−1.51	−1.39

0.92 for the nineteen countries. One possible – but I believe mistaken – conclusion might be that these correlations are so high that political scientists could use electoral volatility as the sole indicator for PSI. This would neglect important attributes of PSI as a concept, and it would conceal interesting variance in the relationship among the multiple indicators of PSI. Stable membership in a party system and stable electoral competition are conceptually different, and both are integral parts of an institutionalized system.

CHANGE IN PARTIES' IDEOLOGICAL POSITIONS

The stability of parties' ideological positions is an integral part of PSI because systemic predictability and stability diminish if major parties undergo sudden and dramatic shifts. Lupu (2016, this volume) has highlighted this point, arguing that sudden ideological shifts are one of the two main ways (along with ideological or programmatic convergence) in which party brands can be diluted.[6]

Theoretically, ideological stability should tend to go hand in hand with the other two attributes of PSI. In Western Europe and Latin America, highly institutionalized systems are usually characterized by ideological or programmatic attachments between parties and many voters (Mainwaring and Torcal 2006), making it costly for parties to radically shift ideological positions (Berman 1998; Downs 1957; Kitschelt 1994: 254–79; Przeworski and Sprague 1986: 119–26). Moreover, if major parties shift ideological positions, this change might unhinge connections between voters and parties, leading to higher volatility.

To calculate the change in parties' ideological positions, I used survey data of Latin American legislatures:[7] the Latin American Parliamentary Elite (PELA) surveys for seventeen Latin American countries and Timothy Power and César Zucco's (2009) surveys of the bicameral Brazilian national congress.[8] The Latin American Parliamentary Elite surveys focus on the lower chamber or the unicameral chamber. For most countries, they go back to around 1994 and have been conducted for most legislatures since then. Power's (and later Power and Zucco's) surveys date back to 1990; they have surveyed every Brazilian legislature since then.

Both surveys ask legislators to locate parties, including their own, on a 1 to 10 scale. In some countries, including Brazil, legislators of conservative parties

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[6] Stokes (2001) also highlighted the unpredictability generated by sudden policy shifts. In a related vein, Downs (1957: 103–11) posited that parties must be ideologically consistent in order for citizens to vote rationally.

[7] Public opinion surveys are less valid for assessing parties' ideological positions because many respondents do not have a clear grasp of the left to right scale. This section does not include the US because of a lack of directly comparable data.

[8] For Brazil, Power and Zucco's surveys offer more complete coverage than the Latin American Parliamentary Elite.

locate their own organization considerably closer to the center than other legislators do.[9] Including the estimates of parties' own members therefore distorts the means for some conservative parties. Hence, I excluded these answers and included legislators' responses for all parties other than their own.

I measured change in ideological position at the party level by taking the absolute value of change from one legislature to the next for all parties for which there is an ideological score at both $T-1$ and T. Ideological change from one legislature to the next is

$$|(I_{A2} - I_{A1})|$$

where I_{A2} is the ideology score of Party A at T_2, I_{A1} is its ideology score at T_1, and $(I_{A2}-I_{A1})$ is the change in Party A's ideology score from T_1 to T_2. The possible scores range from 0 (no change from one legislature to the next) to 9 (a party shifted from the most extreme left to the most extreme right, or vice versa). It was relatively uncommon for a major party to shift more than one point on the 10-point scale from one legislature to the next; not surprisingly, ideological stability is the norm.

I measured change at the *system* level by first weighting each party's score for change from one legislature to the next by its vote share as a percentage of all parties for which there are ideology scores at both $T-1$ and T. For example, in 2002 in Colombia, the Liberals won 31.7% and the Conservatives won 11.4%. These are the only parties for which ideology scores are available for both the 1998–2002 and 2002–06 legislatures. Therefore, I weighted the Liberals' change in ideological position 31.7/(31.7+11.4) and the Conservatives' change 11.4/(31.7+11.4) to generate a score for the system.

I then weighted this system score for new parties. New parties can scramble voters' ability to decode ideological positions. A score for a system's ideological change should consider this fact. Because a new party that emerges at T did not exist at $T-1$, we need to adjust for the ideological dislocation caused by new party entry in a different way. Accordingly, I divided the country scores already weighted by party size by 1 minus the vote share of new parties. Ideological change at the party system level is

$$\frac{\sum\left(|(I_{i2} - I_{iI})| * \frac{V_{i2}}{V_{all2}}\right)^n}{1 - V_{new2}}$$

where $(I_{i2}-I_{i1})$ is the change in the ith's party ideology score from T_1 to T_2; V_{i2} is the vote share of the ith party at T_2; V_{all2} is the combined vote share at T_2 of all parties for which an ideology score is available at T_1 and T_2; n is the number of parties for which there are ideological scores at both T_1 and T_2; and V_{new2} is the combined vote share of all new parties at T_2. On average, new parties won 7.9%

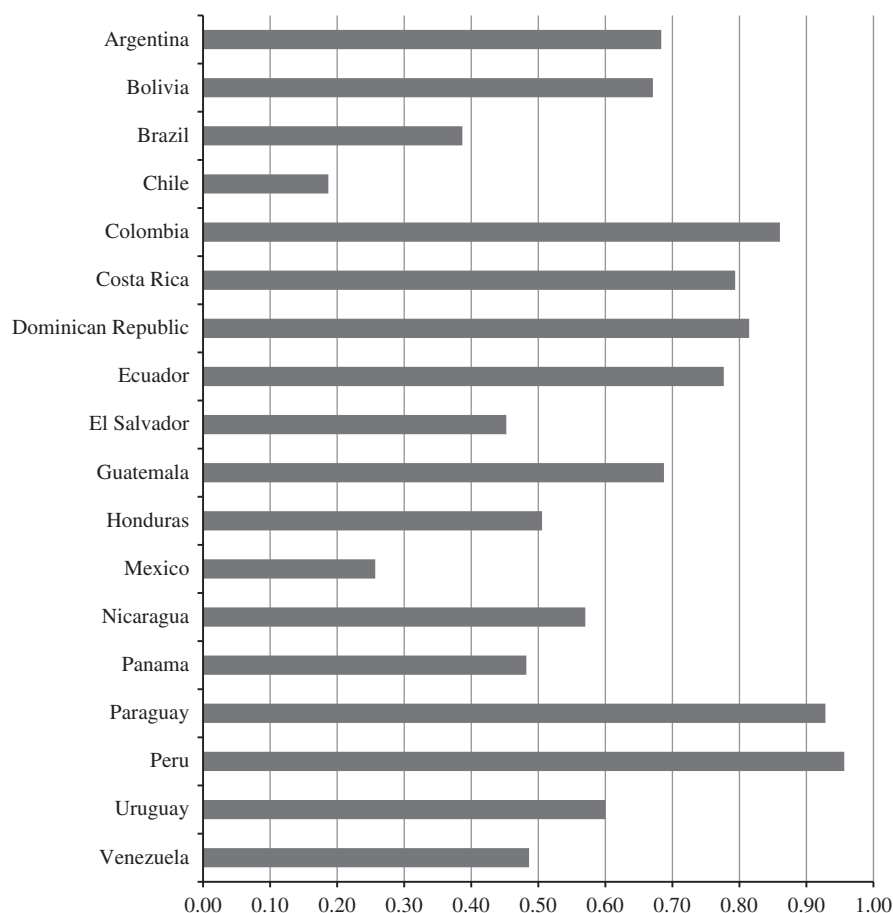[9] Power (2000) called this phenomenon in Brazil "the embarrassed right."

FIGURE 2.7 Average Ideological Change per Legislature

of the lower chamber vote, so the mean effect of accounting for new parties was to multiply the country score weighted by party size by (100/92.1), or 1.09.[10]

Figure 2.7 shows the country means. Variance in country scores is wide though less extreme than for the other indicators used in this chapter. Chile anchors the low of the spectrum, with a mean weighted ideological shift from one legislature to the next of only 0.19 on the 9-point scale. Peru had the highest score, about five times higher (0.96). Ideological stability is associated with low electoral volatility (the Pearson bivariate correlation with the Z-scores in Table 2.5 is −0.44) and with high stability of main contenders (the correlation

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[10] If a party existed at *T−1* but there was no ideological score for it at either *T−1* or at *T*, it counted as missing data.

with the Z-scores in Table 2.3 is −0.48).[11] Low volatility and ideological stability tend to be mutually reinforcing.

SUMMARY SCORES FOR PARTY SYSTEM INSTITUTIONALIZATION FOR 1990–2015

For synthetic purposes, it might be useful to have a summary score for PSI. To create this score, I averaged the Z-scores for the thirteen indicators used in this chapter. The third aspect of PSI, stability in party linkages with society, has only one indicator, so it is weighted much less than the other two characteristics of PSI (1/13 of the total). All of these indicators capture different aspects of PSI, and there is no clear theoretical or empirical rationale for weighting any one more than the other. Where necessary, Z-scores are inverted so that high stability yields a high score. Table 2.6 shows the results.

To facilitate looking at the three attributes of PSI in one table, Table 2.6 also includes the summary Z-scores for each of them. As noted previously, because these scores represent the number of standard deviations above and below the mean for the 19 countries, a score of 0 represents a volatile system compared to the mean for the advanced industrial democracies.

Based on Table 2.6, the US (an average Z-score of 1.27), Uruguay (1.16), Mexico (1.09), and Chile (0.90) had on average the most institutionalized systems for the 1990–2015 period. All four systems had high stability in the main contenders, high electoral stability, and average (Uruguay) to high (Mexico and Chile) continuity in parties' ideological positions.

The Dominican Republic (0.72), Honduras (0.55), Brazil (0.48), and El Salvador (0.42) also had institutionalized systems compared to the average. However, in the 2013 elections, the Honduran system showed signs of deep erosion in the wake of the 2009 coup. Costa Rica (0.09), Nicaragua (0.08), Panama (−0.13), and Paraguay (−0.19) scored around the mean. For generations, Costa Rica had an institutionalized system, but the collapse of the Social Christian Unity Party, the emergence of *Acción Ciudadana* in 2002 as an important new contender, high cumulative electoral volatility from 1990 to 2015, and high perceived ideological instability (from 5.57 to 8.29) for the country's largest party, the PLN, from the 2002–06 legislature to the 2006–10 legislature lowered the PSI score.

The party systems of Guatemala (−1.28), Peru (−1.16), Venezuela (−1.15), Bolivia (−0.85), and Argentina (−0.81) ranked as the least institutionalized according to Table 2.6. These scores have face validity. Peru's ranking is consistent with Steven Levitsky's analysis in Chapter 11 (see also Meléndez 2015). Guatemala has persistently had a very inchoate party system (Sánchez 2008, 2009). Peru, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Bolivia all experienced party

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[11] The *p* values are 0.07 and 0.04, respectively. As Online Appendix 2.1 shows, ideological change correlates with the other twelve indicators at a lower level than the rest.

TABLE 2.6 *Summary Score for PSI for Latin America and the US, 1990–2015 (Z-scores)*

Country	Stability of members of the party system	Stability in inter-party electoral competition	Stability of parties' ideological positions	Overall PSI score
United States	1.10	1.50	–	1.27
Uruguay	1.35	1.10	0.07	1.16
Mexico	1.21	0.81	1.63	1.09
Chile	0.88	0.73	1.95	0.90
Dominican Republic	1.07	0.54	−0.90	0.72
Honduras	0.46	0.68	0.50	0.55
Brazil	0.45	0.41	1.04	0.48
El Salvador	0.14	0.76	0.75	0.42
Costa Rica	0.18	0.15	−0.80	0.09
Nicaragua	0.21	−0.14	0.21	0.08
Panama	−0.23	−0.13	0.61	−0.13
Paraguay	−0.38	0.31	−1.42	−0.19
Colombia	−0.72	−0.56	−1.11	−0.69
Ecuador	−0.71	−0.89	−0.73	−0.78
Argentina	−0.99	−0.72	−0.30	−0.81
Bolivia	−0.67	−1.24	−0.25	−0.85
Venezuela	−1.34	−1.24	0.59	−1.15
Peru	−1.18	−1.05	−1.54	−1.16
Guatemala	−1.34	−1.39	−0.32	−1.28

system collapses in the 1990s or 2000s. In the latter three cases, new systems might be institutionalizing, but under regimes that have become less democratic over time.

In most cases, the three attributes of PSI worked in tandem, but with a few exceptions. Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic had above average scores for the stability of membership in the system and stability of inter-party electoral competition, but below average stability in parties' ideological positions. Panama had the reverse pattern: average stability of main contenders and stability of electoral competition, but higher than average ideological stability. In such cases, the summary score for PSI should not obscure the more differentiated scores for the different attributes of institutionalization.

CHANGE IN INSTITUTIONALIZATION SINCE THE 1990S

When Tim Scully and I (1995a) wrote the introduction to *Building Democratic Institutions*, nobody foresaw the extraordinary upheavals that would face so many Latin American party systems. We expected – and the world history of democracy until the 1990s supported this expectation – that most countries with relatively institutionalized party systems would remain in that category. Some classic works suggested that democratic longevity would favor PSI (Converse 1969). The decades since 1995 have dashed these expectations.

To assess change in PSI since 1995, I first present data about countries' mean PSI from 1970 to 1995, again using a twenty-five-year period. Of the thirteen indicators used to assess PSI for 1990–2015, for the 1970–95 period, I reproduce only six – the vote share of new parties in presidential and lower chamber elections, electoral volatility in lower chamber and presidential elections, and the two short-term indicators for continuity in main contenders. The six medium-term indicators do not work well for comparing data points from roughly 1970 to points from roughly 1995 because only Colombia, Costa Rica, and Venezuela had competitive political regimes during that entire period. The data for measuring ideological change from the mid-1990s to 2015 do not exist before the mid-1990s. Because the correlations among the thirteen indicators were mostly very high for the 1990–2015 period, most likely, using only six of them for 1970–95 will produce estimates of PSI that would be close to estimates based on all thirteen.

Table 2.7 shows the vote share of new parties, electoral volatility, and stability of the main contenders in presidential and lower chamber elections and the mean Z-scores for the 1970–95 period.[12] Because the means (based on averaging the scores for the nineteen countries) for all six variables are very close for 1970–95 and 1990–2015, the Z-scores for the two periods are almost comparable.

The ordering of the ten countries that had clearly established competitive political regimes by the early 1990s matches Mainwaring and Scully's (1995a) two main categories (institutionalized and inchoate party systems). They classified Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Uruguay, and Venezuela as having institutionalized systems. All of them had average Z-scores above the mean for 1970–95. They classified Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, and Peru as having inchoate systems. All four countries had less stable systems than the mean for 1970–95.

For purposes of showing more clearly how countries changed over time, Figure 2.8 shows the mean Z-scores for the 1990–2015 period (from Table 2.6) and the average Z-scores for 1970–95 (from Table 2.7). Since 1995, Argentina and Colombia shifted to inchoate systems, and the Venezuelan system collapsed only to later partially reinstitutionalize under a competitive authoritarian regime. As Carlos Gervasoni (on Argentina), Juan Albarracín *et al.*

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[12] The beginning point was all democratic elections that took place in 1970 or thereafter. The last election was 1995 or the one immediately before 1995.

TABLE 2.7 *Summary Scores for PSI, 1970–95*

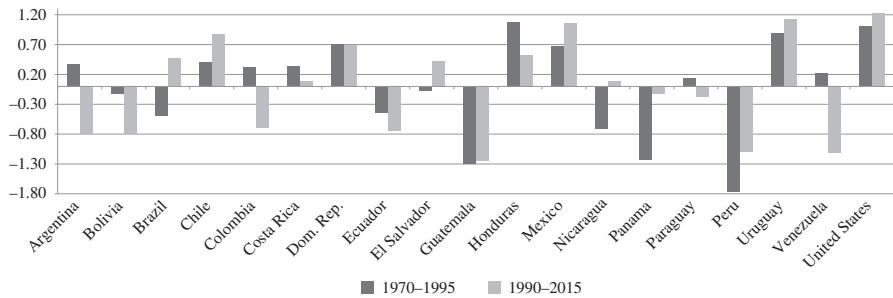| Country	Average vote share of new parties, presidential elections	Average vote share of new parties, lower chamber elections	Average electoral volatility, presidential elections	Average electoral volatility, lower chamber	Stability from one election to the next, presidential elections	Stability from one election to the next, lower chamber	Average of 6 Z scores, 1970–95
Honduras	0.0	0.0	7.0	7.0	1.00	1.00	1.08
United States	5.3	0.1	11.5	3.6	1.00	1.00	1.00
Uruguay	0.3	3.0	12.6	13.9	1.00	1.00	0.89
Dominican Republic	2.5	4.4	18.3	20.6	1.00	1.00	0.70
Mexico	3.9	6.7	15.7	19.9	1.00	1.00	0.67
Chile	0.0	3.2	20.38	25.7	0.80	0.88	0.41
Argentina	17.3	3.3	28.7	18.4	1.00	0.92	0.37
Costa Rica	4.6	7.8	18.9	23.6	0.87	0.87	0.35
Colombia	11.0	5.5	25.5	15.8	0.77	0.94	0.32
Venezuela	8.7	7.4	24.1	21.8	0.83	0.85	0.22
Paraguay	24.6	0.0	37.3	34.3	1.00	1.00	0.14
El Salvador	14.9	14.9	29.6	22.5	0.80	0.86	−0.08
Bolivia	15.7	11.4	36.6	34.3	0.86	0.92	−0.12
Ecuador	23.2	7.2	43.1	23.8	0.58	0.76	−0.45
Brazil	6.6	6.1	60.7	27.1	0.50	0.75	−0.49
Nicaragua	3.6	2.8	48.7	47.0	0.50	0.50	−0.72
Panama	19.2	39.2	38.3	57.2	1.00	0.50	−1.23
Guatemala	44.2	10.7	59.1	37.6	0.50	0.64	−1.30
Peru	32.4	17.6	61.1	57.1	0.38	0.44	−1.77
Average for 19 countries	12.5	8.0	31.4	26.9	0.8	0.8	

FIGURE 2.8 Average Z-Scores in Latin America and the US, 1970–95 and 1990–2015

(on Colombia), and Jana Morgan (on Venezuela) describe in their chapters in this volume, all three systems unraveled quickly and dramatically within years after the publication of *Building Democratic Institutions*. They are among the few cases of democracies with institutionalized party systems that experienced such profound change in such a short time.

Today, Chile and Uruguay still have institutionalized party systems. Costa Rica is an intermediate case, with greater stability in the main contenders and in electoral competition than the mean, but with moderately high ideological instability. Its system is less institutionalized than it was in the 1990s, but it has not radically de-institutionalized.

Three of the four systems that we regarded as inchoate in 1995 – Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru – were subsequently among the uncommon cases of party system collapse. Conversely, Brazil, El Salvador, and Mexico are cases of increasing institutionalization. Contrary to Converse (1969), institutionalization in these cases did not take generations. Panama shifted from a weakly institutionalized system to being close to the Latin American average.

In 1995, Mexico and Paraguay had hegemonic party systems in transition. Some aspects of these systems needed to be de-institutionalized before a democratic party system could be built. Subsequently, Mexico became a textbook case of a party system that emerged under authoritarian rule and institutionalized under democracy. In this respect, it is similar to the Taiwanese case (Cheng and Huang 2015), and it lends support to scholars who have argued that solid parties built under authoritarian rule can become an asset for PSI under democracy (Hicken and Kuhonta 2015a; Loxton forthcoming; Riedl 2014). The Paraguayan system is a case of intermediate institutionalization compared to the mean for the nineteen countries.

Contrary to my expectations and contrary to the impression that the collapse of many erstwhile major parties and four party systems could generate, for the region on average, the data do not support the idea of a tendency toward de-institutionalization. For the eighteen Latin American countries, the (country) mean vote share of new parties *decreased* from 12.9% for 1970–95 to 12.4%

for 1990–2015 in presidential elections and from 8.4% to 7.7% in lower chamber elections. Mean (at the country level) volatility in presidential elections increased from 32.5% for 1970–95 to 34.0% for 1990–2015, but mean volatility in lower chamber elections *declined* from 28.2% (1970–95) to 26.3% (1990–2015).

Figure 2.9 shows Latin American means (leaving out the US) by decade for the vote share of new parties, electoral volatility, and the short-term stability of main contenders for both presidential and lower chamber elections.[13] In contrast to the scores in the previous paragraph, which were based on country means, the means in Figure 2.9 are for electoral periods. Because three countries with institutionalized party systems were the only stable democracies in the 1970s and therefore had more electoral periods than the other countries, the data based on electoral period means in Figure 2.9 show a slightly different picture than the data based on country means.

The vote share of new parties in presidential elections peaked at 16.0% in the 1990s. Subsequently, it declined to 12.1% in the 2000s and 11.0% in the 2010s. Since the peak in the 1990s (8.0%), the vote share of new parties has also declined slightly in lower chamber elections (to 7.6% in the 2000s and 7.0% in the 2010s). In presidential elections, the stability of main contenders has declined steadily since peaking in the 1980s, but it is the only one of the six indicators that follows this pattern of increasing instability. The stability of main contenders in lower chamber elections in the 2010s (0.83) is only marginally lower than it was for the entire period from the 1970s to the 2010s (0.86). In both presidential and lower chamber elections, electoral volatility has been stable at high levels since the 1990s. Overall, then, against expectations, the data do not show a regional trend toward deinstitutionalization.

PATH DEPENDENCE, CHANGE, AND PARTY SYSTEM INSTITUTIONALIZATION

Much of the literature on parties and party systems has looked at long-term patterns and predicted that change would be gradual after an initial period of democracy. In Lipset and Rokkan's (1967) analysis, party systems in Western Europe formed as a result of conflicts that occurred over centuries (see also Bartolini and Mair 1990). After the incorporation of the working class, these

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[13] For purposes of calculating averages for each decade, I assigned all electoral periods to the second election of that period. I included all electoral periods from 1970 on for all competitive regimes. For Mexico 1985–88 and Brazil 1982–86, I counted the first election of the new competitive regime as the starting point; the first electoral period includes the last election of the authoritarian regime. The last congressional elections (1985 and 1982, respectively) under patently authoritarian regimes were competitive and reasonably fair. The party that supported the Brazilian government won only 43% of the lower chamber vote in 1982.

Vote Share of New Parties, Presidential and Lower Chamber

Election-To-Election Stability of Main Contenders, Presidential and Lower Chamber

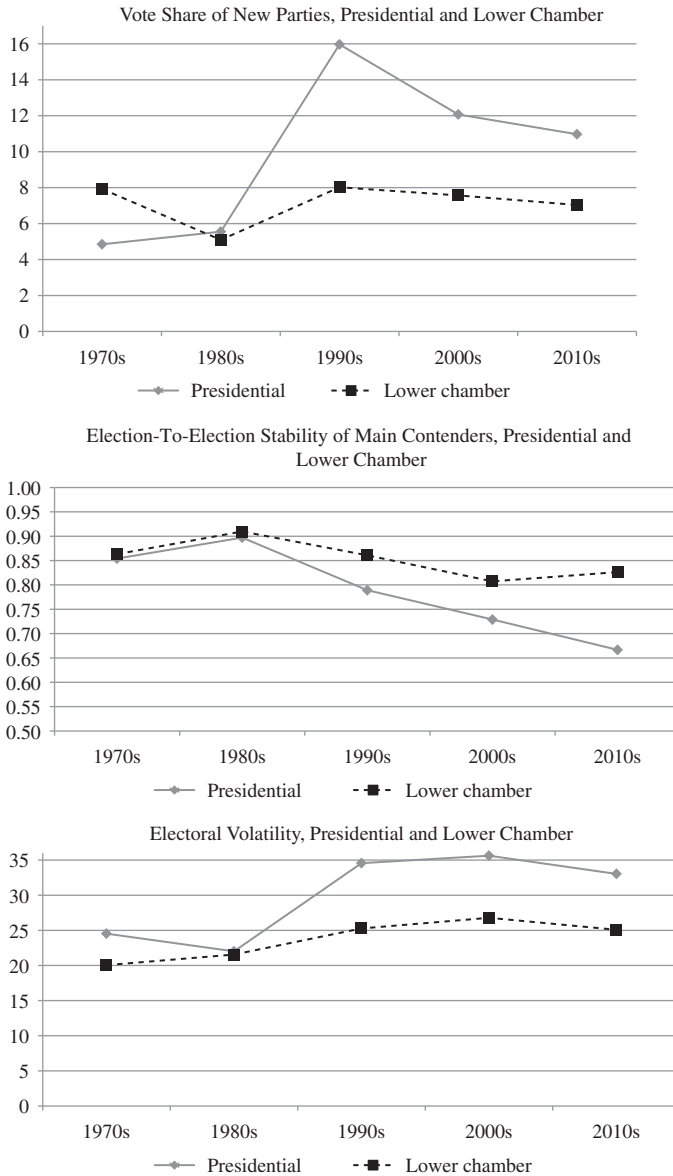Electoral Volatility, Presidential and Lower Chamber

FIGURE 2.9 Vote Share of New Parties, Election-to-Election Stability of Main Contenders, and Electoral Volatility in Latin America – Regional Mean by Decade, 1970–2010

systems remained stable for generations. Converse (1969) argued that it took a few generations for voters to identify with parties in large numbers; in turn, partisan identification was the micro foundation of party system stability. Shefter (1994) argued that long historical patterns of state and party building shape the degree to which parties engage in clientelism. Kitschelt *et al.* (2010) asserted that the development of programmatic competition in Latin America hinged on long historical processes. Some literature on party system change in the advanced industrial democracies links it to slow, gradual processes such as secular changes in values (Inglehart 1990).

The Latin American experience raises questions about these long-term approaches for understanding this region in this time. These approaches might be right for the advanced industrial democracies, but they presume contexts of less severe stress on institutions and more solid institutions than exist in most of Latin America. More than the social science and historical literature anticipated, extraordinary stress dramatically and quickly undermined major parties (Argentina and Colombia) and even entire party systems (Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela) that had been bedrocks of democratic politics, for decades (Ecuador) or generations (Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Peru, and Venezuela). Conversely, the transformation from an inchoate party system to an unevenly institutionalized one in Brazil also occurred over a few electoral cycles rather than generations.

In political science, sizable literature on path dependence and PSI emerged in the 1990s. They share an important commonality; both concepts rest on self-reproducing mechanisms once a system or a set of institutions has been consolidated.

Levi (1997: 28) defined path dependence as meaning that "once a country or region has started down a track, the costs of reversal are very high." Events in one historical moment greatly alter the distribution of possible and probable outcomes into the medium- and/or long-term future.[14] The two decades since the publication of *Building Democratic Institutions* undermined strong claims of path dependence in PSI in Latin America. Three systems (Argentina, Colombia, and Venezuela) became dramatically less institutionalized. The Honduran system has more recently moved in the direction of much less institutionalization. Conversely, three systems (Brazil, El Salvador, and Panama) became more institutionalized. The fact that seven countries underwent deep changes in PSI might call into question whether the concept is meaningful for Latin America and call into question how much the past shapes the present.

At the extreme, if countries' PSI fluctuated rapidly in random ways from one moment in time to the next, the concept would not be useful. A country's score for PSI in past elections would not help predict its score for the next. Systemic predictability and stability would be extremely low (0 in the event that a score

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[14] For a similar definition, see Pierson (2004: 20–22).

for PSI in one election did not correlate at all with its score in the previous elections). Such randomness is the opposite of institutionalization.

To look at whether indicators of party system stability have predictive capacity, I turned to the large dataset on electoral volatility that Mainwaring *et al.* (2016) developed based on sixty-seven countries and 618 electoral periods that met a threshold of democracy in the period since 1945. This dataset includes all major world regions. The question is whether earlier measures (at *T*–1) of the dependent variables help to predict the dependent variable at time *T*. To test this, I used, in addition to the dependent variable in the previous electoral period (*T*–1), the same covariates as Mainwaring *et al.* (2016): per capita GDP growth, inflation (logged), the effective number of parties, district magnitude (logged), the Birth Year of Democracy (logged), Age of Democracy (logged), and per capita GDP (logged). Because electoral volatility measures change (from one election to the next) rather than level, in principle, the value at *T*–1 is independent from the value at *T*. Mainwaring *et al.* used GEE (General Estimating Equations) models, which are appropriate for estimating coefficients for entire samples; cases need not be independent.

The results (Models 1 and 2 in Table 2.8) show that the previous score for total volatility is highly statistically significant. Volatility at *T*–1 is by far the most statistically significant covariate, and it has a powerful substantive effect. Every increase of 1% point in volatility at *T*–1 is associated with a predicted increase of 0.51% at *T*. Results are very similar in the OLS model with panel corrected standard errors (PCSE), which Beck (2001) recommended as a possible alternative approach to analyzing panel data. In this model, the substantive effect is slightly greater; every increase of 1% volatility at *T*–1 is associated with an increase of 0.56% at *T*. Results with Latin American data, based on a much smaller number of countries and electoral periods, are similar (Models 3 and 4 in Table 2.8). Electoral volatility varies in systematic ways.

In contrast, with the Mainwaring *et al.* dataset for sixty-seven countries, the vote share of new parties at *T*–1 has no predictive power for the vote share at *T* (Models 1 and 2 in Table 2.9). Thus, the vote share of new parties varies randomly for this broader sample of countries. For the Latin American sample, the vote share of new parties at *T*–1 is strongly associated with the vote share of new parties at *T* in the GEE model (Model 3) but not in the OLS-PCSE model (Model 4). Strikingly, *no* covariates are statistically significant in the Latin American sample in the OLS-PCSE model.

Perhaps this lack of impact of extra-system volatility at *T*–1 on the same variable at *T* is because even in weakly institutionalized party systems, major new parties do not come along every day. They make their entrance, and in the next election, the emergence of a major new party in the previous election does not increase the probability of yet another major new contender. Although the vote share of new parties varied randomly from one electoral period to the next, for the Latin American cases, it was integrally related to other aspects of PSI.

TABLE 2.8 *Effect of Electoral Volatility (T–1) on Electoral Volatility (T) – Lower Chamber*

	Model 1 GEE (Robust GE) World	Model 2 OLS (PCSE) World	Model 3 GEE (Robust GE) Latin America	Model 4 OLS (PCSE) Latin America
Volatility (T–1)	0.509***	0.561***	0.478***	0.509***
	(0.053)	(0.094)	(0.062)	(0.083)
District magnitude (ln)	–0.044	–0.030	–0.013	–0.228
	(0.324)	(0.235)	(0.877)	(1.040)
ENP	0.978**	0.877*	0.195	0.087
	(0.354)	(0.344)	(0.543)	(0.381)
GDP growth PC	–0.636**	–0.604**	–1.034*	–1.112**
	(0.223)	(0.222)	(0.430)	(0.389)
Inflation (ln)	0.032	0.077	–0.241	–0.232
	(0.414)	(0.402)	(0.625)	(0.633)
GDP PC (ln)	–2.153**	–1.904*	–1.656	–1.042
	(0.725)	(0.842)	(1.989)	(1.849)
Age of democracy (ln)	3.293**	3.045***	6.303***	5.836**
	(1.023)	(0.876)	(1.620)	(1.824)
Birth of democracy (ln)	–6.947***	–6.225***	–6.692**	–6.655*
	(1.651)	(1.401)	(2.517)	(2.622)
Type of government (ln)	0.492	0.436	33.640	30.042
	(0.997)	(0.891)	(18.626)	(18.348)
Constant	42.201***	37.173***	0.478***	0.509***
	(8.499)	(10.379)	(0.062)	(0.083)
r2		0.603		0.442
N	544	544	140	140

Notes: Robust standard errors in parentheses * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%.
R2 is not reported because this statistic is not defined for GEE models.
ENP = effective number of parties.

TABLE 2.9 *Effect of Extra-System Electoral Volatility (T–1) on Extra-System Electoral Volatility (T) – Lower Chamber*

	Model 1 GEE (Robust GE) World	Model 2 OLS (PCSE) World	Model 3 GEE (Robust GE) Latin America	Model 4 OLS (PCSE) Latin America
Extra-system vol. (*T*–1)	0.079	0.079	0.224***	0.120
	(0.063)	(0.149)	(0.063)	(0.137)
District magnitude (ln)	0.202	0.004	0.668	0.776
	(0.493)	(0.330)	(0.901)	(0.607)
ENP	1.599**	1.347***	–0.203	–0.137
	(0.515)	(0.386)	(0.273)	(0.442)
GDP growth PC	–0.417	–0.398	–0.608*	–0.586
	(0.215)	(0.217)	(0.283)	(0.338)
Inflation (ln)	–0.170	–0.021	0.429	0.396
	(0.383)	(0.449)	(0.398)	(0.414)
GDP PC (ln)	–2.401*	–2.554**	–0.816	–0.919
	(1.013)	(0.860)	(1.622)	(1.522)
Age of democracy (ln)	2.349*	3.157***	3.421*	3.417
	(1.120)	(0.648)	(1.670)	(1.909)
Birth of democracy (ln)	–5.397***	–5.821***	–2.694	–2.424
	(1.527)	(1.029)	(2.509)	(2.784)
Type of government (ln)	–1.259	–0.482		
	(1.549)	(0.911)		
Constant	36.187***	37.137***	11.398	11.592
	(9.178)	(7.371)	(16.071)	(15.689)
r2		0.212		0.081
N	544	544	140	140

Notes: Robust standard errors in parentheses * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%.

R2 is not reported because this statistic is not defined for GEE models.

TABLE 2.10 *Correlations between Party System Institutionalization Indicators at T–1 and T, 1970–95 and 1990–2015 (p values in parentheses if* p<0.10)

	1970–95		1990–2015	
	Correlation (Pearson)	*p* value (2-tailed)	Correlation (Pearson)	*p* value (2-tailed)
Vote share of new parties, presidential elections	0.26	–	0.25	0.02
Vote share of new parties, lower chamber	0.30	0.02	0.22	0.02
Electoral volatility, presidential elections	0.76	0.00	0.64	0.00
Electoral volatility, lower chamber	0.73	0.00	0.67	0.00
Stability of main contenders, presidential elections	0.19	–	0.41	0.00
Stability of main contenders, lower chamber	0.23	0.09	0.46	0.00
Ideological stability, lower chamber	Nd	nd	0.04	–

Table 2.10 shows the Pearson bivariate correlations between scores at *T–1* and *T* for all seven electoral period-specific variables used in this chapter for both 1970–95 and 1990–2015. Correlations for electoral volatility are consistently high for both presidential and lower chamber elections. Systems with high volatility at one time tend to continue exhibiting high volatility, and vice versa. Consistent with the regression results in Table 2.9, correlations for the vote share of new parties are much lower.

For 1990–2015 but not 1970–95, systems that had stable (or unstable) main contenders in one electoral period tended to have stability (or instability) in the next one. Finally, ideological stability varied randomly. When party systems experienced pronounced ideological shifts from one election to the next, they were not more likely to undertake another pronounced shift in the subsequent election.

In terms of institutionalization, party systems, including in Latin America, are neither immutable nor do they vary randomly. Several Latin American cases underwent deep change in PSI between the 1990s and 2015, but Table 2.8 shows

that deep change in some cases is compatible with a high predictive capacity of PSI for total volatility and, to a lesser degree, the stability of main contenders.

Although levels of institutionalization tend to persist, the Latin American experience suggests shortcomings of strong claims about path dependence in contexts of weak institutions. Some of the literature on historical institutionalism overstated path dependence and assumed that institutions are strong (Levitsky and Murillo 2005, 2014). A central point of this volume is that the institutionalization of party systems in Latin America (and around the world, as can be seen in Mainwaring *et al.* 2016) varies greatly. High and low levels of institutionalization *tend* to be self-reinforcing, but party systems do not always get stuck in immutable patterns.

CONCLUSION

This chapter had three goals. First, building on the reconceptualization of PSI proposed in Chapter 1, I created indicators to measure the three attributes of the concept. These indicators are logically derived from the concept; they measure phenomena that are by definition a part of PSI. They travel seamlessly across time and space. Most of these indicators are new, and they can fruitfully be used for studying other world regions and other historical periods.

Second, I provided data for PSI for eighteen Latin American countries for the period from 1990 to 2015 and for the US as a benchmark. On almost every indicator, the range in country means across cases was huge. Most Latin American party systems are not well institutionalized, but Mexico, Chile, Uruguay, El Salvador, Brazil, and Honduras until 2013 were exceptions. At the low end of the spectrum, Peru stood out for its low PSI in a democracy that has registered many successes since 2001 (see Levitsky's chapter). Guatemala stands out for persistently low institutionalization (Sánchez 2008, 2009), and Venezuela for a party system collapse in the wake of an institutionalized system from 1968 to 1988 (Morgan 2011, and this volume; Seawright 2012). Most Latin American party systems are not well institutionalized, and that has been true for a long time, but there is great variance across countries.

Third, in light of the fact that three systems (Argentina, Colombia, and Venezuela) that were once institutionalized underwent severe erosion or collapse, and that three countries (Brazil, El Salvador, and Panama) that once had weakly institutionalized systems became more stable, I addressed whether PSI in Latin America is so transitory as to make the concept useless. The answer is a resounding no. Countries do not remain forever at the same level of institutionalization, but PSI does not fluctuate randomly. These differences in institutionalization have important consequences for democratic politics, as I show in Chapter 3.