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Wide Ideological Divides on Most Major Issues as Venezuela's Elections Near

*Venezuelans not keen to embrace
Maduro or Chavez's legacy*

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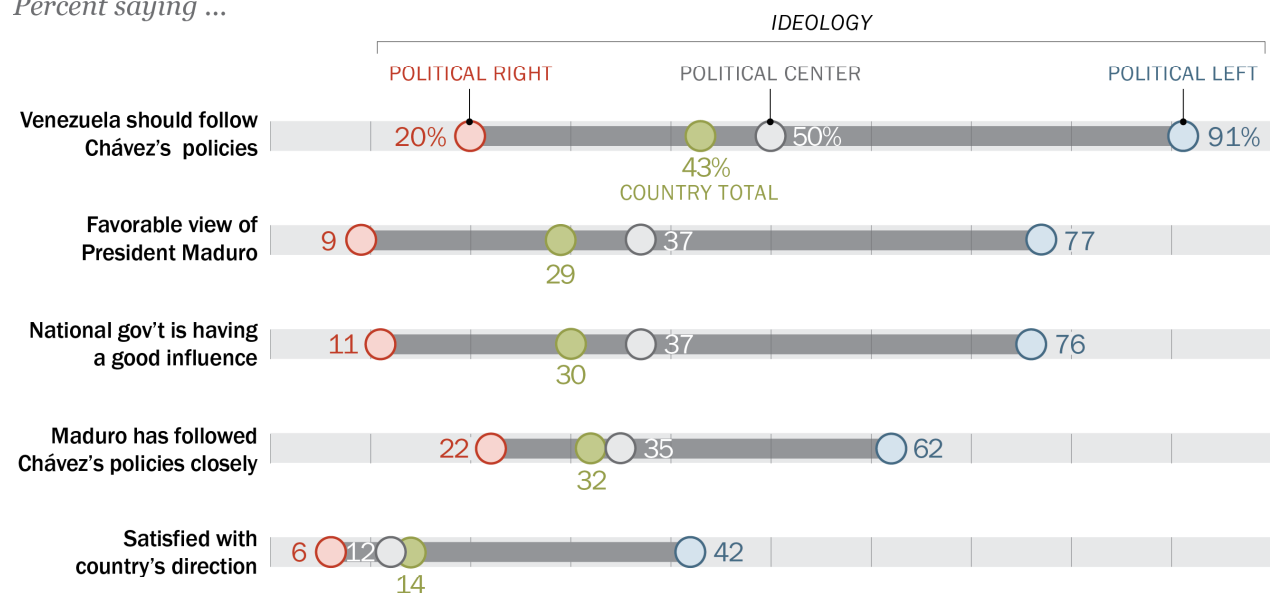
Wide Ideological Divides on Most Major Issues as Venezuela's Elections Near

Venezuelans not keen to embrace Maduro or Chávez's legacy

On December 6, Venezuelans will go to the polls to elect a new parliament. The elections are taking place during a time of economic and political crisis in Venezuela. President Nicolás Maduro has been widely criticized for some of his strong-arm tactics, [including jailing political opponents](#), while steep inflation and basic goods shortages threaten to wreak further havoc on the Venezuelan economy. And while overall public opinion is down on Maduro and the state of the country, there are wide ideological splits that point to a nation divided.

Large ideological divides in Venezuela

Percent saying ...



Source: Spring 2015 Global Attitudes survey. Q2, Q65, Q79a, Q102a & Q104.

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Venezuelans on the political left are consistently more supportive of government policies, more positive on Maduro and less concerned about major problems affecting the country compared with people on the political right. The left-leaning are also more keen to follow former President Hugo Chávez's policies and want Maduro (who was vice president under Chávez) to do the same. And people on the political left are more positive about the direction of the country. Still, fewer than half on the left say the country is on the right path.

Overall, ratings for Maduro are poor. Majorities disapprove of his handling of every national issue tested, including crime, corruption and relations with the United States. But while 68% of Venezuelans have an unfavorable opinion of Maduro, they are not fond of the opposition leaders either.

An overwhelming 85% of Venezuelans are dissatisfied with the way things are going in their country. In 2013, just after Chávez's death, dissatisfaction with the country was at 57%. In addition, Venezuelans are very concerned about the economy, especially rising prices, lack of jobs and shortages of basic goods.

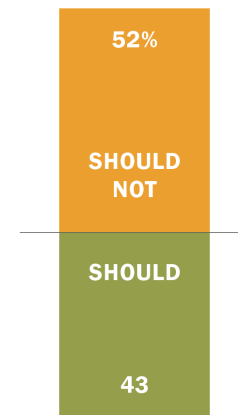
A majority of Venezuelans also have negative perceptions about major national institutions, such as the government, military and court system, though they still share faith in the media.

Meanwhile, Chávez's legacy continues to loom. When asked whether their country *should* follow Chávez's policies, 43% of the public says yes, while just about half (52%) say that Venezuela should not follow his policies.

These are among the major findings of a newly released Pew Research Center survey conducted in Venezuela from April 6 to May 6, 2015, among a nationally representative sample of 1,000 adults. All interviews were conducted face-to-face.

More say Venezuela should not follow the policies of Chávez

Do you think Venezuela generally ___ follow the policies of former President Hugo Chávez?



Source: Spring 2015 Global Attitudes survey. Q65.

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Dismal mood in Venezuela

Fully 85% of Venezuelans are dissatisfied with the direction of the country, up 28 percentage points from a 2013 poll conducted shortly after the death of Hugo Chávez. Currently, only 14% are satisfied with the way things are going in Venezuela.

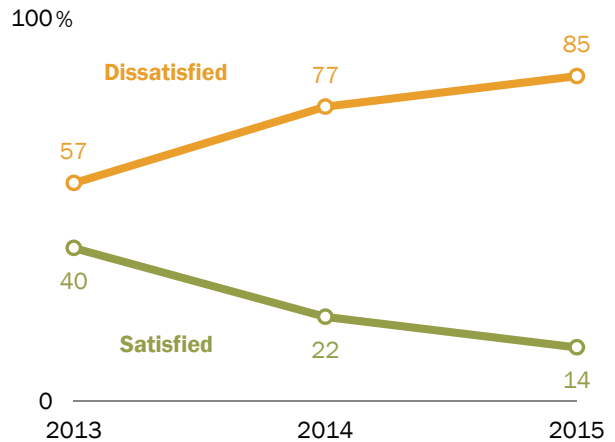
Venezuelans ages 50 and older are slightly more positive (21%) compared with the 8% of 18 to 29 year-olds who are happy with the country's situation. And those on the political left (42% satisfied) are much happier with the state of the nation than those on the political right (6%).

When it comes to top concerns in Venezuela, the list of problems is long and daunting. The foremost issue, and one that has plagued the country for years, is inflation. Roughly nine-in-ten (92%) say that rising prices are a *very* big problem. Inflation in Venezuela is [the highest in the world](#), and is [estimated to be well over 100%](#). The next most concerning issues are also economic – lack of job opportunities (85% very big problem) and shortages of basic goods (84%). The lack of basic goods is partially on [account of the high inflation rate](#).

Other serious issues also rank high among Venezuelans: Roughly seven-in-ten or more say that crime, public debt, health care, corrupt political leaders and poor quality schools are very big problems. In fact, worries about health care and poor quality schools have increased in just the past year (up 15 and 14 percentage points, respectively). Many

Venezuelans' dissatisfaction rising

Are you ___ with the way things are going in our country today?

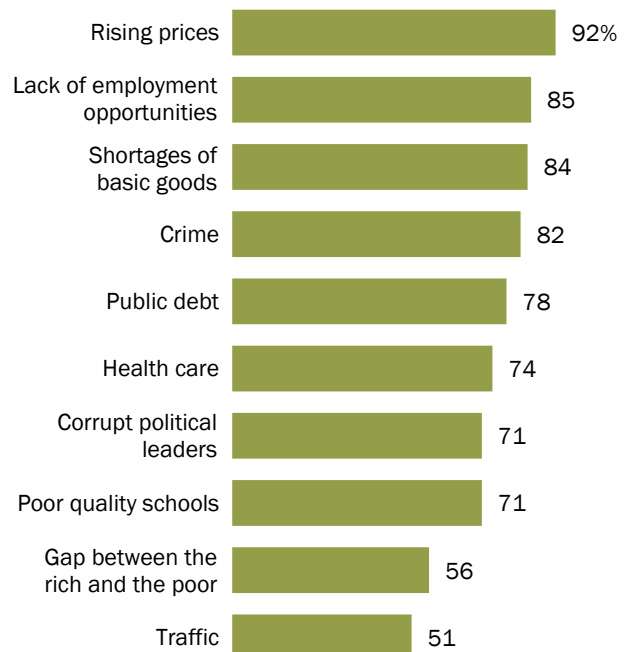


Source: Spring 2015 Global Attitudes survey. Q2.

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Inflation top concern in Venezuela

___ is/are a very big problem



Source: Spring 2015 Global Attitudes survey. Q60a-e, y & Q63a-d.

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people also say that inequality (56%) and traffic (51%) are significant problems, with intense concerns about traffic increasing 13 points since 2014.

For most of these issues, people who consider themselves on the right of the political spectrum are more concerned than those on the left. In other words, people who are more likely to follow Maduro's left-wing United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) are less concerned about these national issues. Still, majorities on the right and left say most of these issues are very big problems.

On a separate question, when asked which economic issue is most important for the government to address first, 47% of Venezuelans say rising prices should be the top priority. Around two-in-ten say lack of jobs is the top economic issue, with only 9% naming public debt and 1% saying inequality. About a quarter (24%) volunteer that *all* are top priorities. Since 2013, there has been a 10-percentage-point increase in those naming inflation and a 10-point decrease in those Venezuelans choosing unemployment, once again pointing to the seriousness of the inflation issue.

When it comes to where to place the blame for the dreary economic situation, Venezuelans are divided. Roughly equal shares name the government's economic policies (46%) and falling oil prices (43%). Only 6% pin domestic economic woes on the U.S.

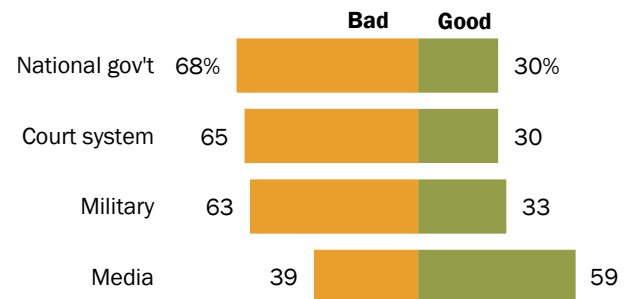
Little respect for government-run institutions

When asked about major national institutions in Venezuela, there is a clear consensus that government-run organizations are having a bad influence on the country. More than six-in-ten say the national government (68%), the court system (65%) and the military (63%) are having negative influences on the way things are going in Venezuela.

The media, such as television, radio, newspapers and magazines, is the most respected institution tested, with 59% of the public saying it is having a positive influence on the country.

Most Venezuelans see government entities as a negative influence

Influence on the way things are going in Venezuela



Source: Spring 2015 Global Attitudes survey. Q79a-c, e.

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Since last year, all of the national organizations tested have seen declines in the number of people saying they are having a good influence on Venezuela. This includes a 12-percentage-point decline

in the share saying the national government has a positive influence on the country, and 10-point declines each for the court system, the military and even the relatively well-liked media.

For all government-run organizations tested, those on the left of the political spectrum are more likely to describe them as a good influence on Venezuela compared with those on the political right. For example, 76% of those on the left say that the national government is having a good influence on Venezuela, while only 11% on the right say the same. There is also a slight education gap on the influence of national institutions, with Venezuelans who have less than a secondary education showing slightly more positive opinions of each of the institutions tested compared with more educated Venezuelans.

Maduro and his job performance seen negatively

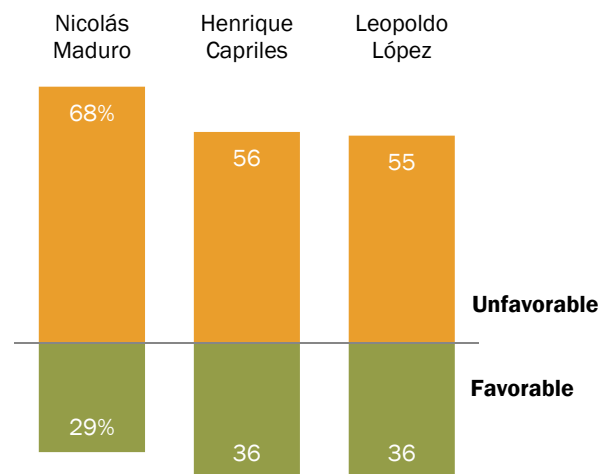
On balance, Venezuelans have an unfavorable view of President Maduro. Two years after being [voted into office in a special election following Hugo Chávez's death](#), Maduro receives only a 29% favorable rating, compared with 68% voicing an unfavorable view.

However, opposition party leaders do not fare much better. [Henrique Capriles](#), the current governor of Miranda and leader of the Justice First party, also receives a low 36% positive rating, and a majority views him unfavorably (56%). Similarly, [Leopoldo López](#), founder of the Popular Will party, receives just a 36% favorable review from the Venezuelan people, with a majority (55%) offering a negative review.

There are sharp ideological divides when it comes to views of these leaders. Maduro garners a 77% favorable rating from Venezuelans identifying themselves as on the left of the political spectrum, while just 9% of those on the right see him positively. Conversely, López and Capriles receive much support from the ideological right (64% and 65% favorable rating, respectively).

Maduro receives very negative marks from Venezuelans

Views of ...



Source: Spring 2015 Global Attitudes survey. Q102a-c.

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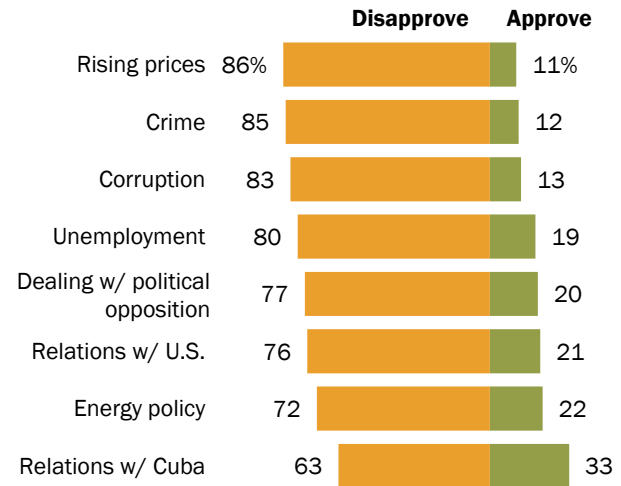
When it comes to how Maduro is handling various aspects of his job, Venezuelans offer harsh criticism. Maduro's worst issue ratings are on inflation (86% disapprove) and crime (85%). [Reports](#) indicate an increase in the country's crime rates, which some attribute to the shortages of basic goods plaguing the country. Roughly eight-in-ten also give Maduro poor marks for his handling of corruption (83%) and unemployment (80%). And 77% disapprove of how he is dealing with political opposition.¹

Roughly seven-in-ten or more also give Maduro negative ratings on handling of relations with the U.S. and energy policy. And 63% disapprove of his handling of relations with Cuba.

Ideological divides exist on Maduro's management of all the issues tested. The biggest difference in ratings between those on the right and left are on his dealings with Cuba: 85% on the right disapprove, while only 18% on the left say the same. Gaps are also large on disapproval of his handling of energy policy (-50 percentage points), relations with the U.S. (-44 points) and dealing with political opposition (-40 points).

Majorities disapprove of Maduro's handling of domestic and foreign issues

Do you ___ of the way President Maduro is handling ...



Source: Spring 2015 Global Attitudes survey. Q103a-h.

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Political right significantly more likely to disapprove of Maduro across issues

Disapprove of the way President Maduro is handling ...

	Political ___			Left-right diff
	Right	Center	Left	
	%	%	%	
Relations w/ Cuba	85	52	18	-67
Energy policy	87	65	37	-50
Relations w/ U.S.	88	67	44	-44
Dealing w/ political opposition	88	69	48	-40
Unemployment	90	72	51	-39
Corruption	93	82	58	-35
Crime	94	84	62	-32
Rising prices	92	82	67	-25

Source: Spring 2015 Global Attitudes survey. Q103a-h.

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¹ The spring 2015 survey was conducted after López was jailed for his role in last year's protests but before he was sentenced to prison. It was also conducted before the Venezuelan government began [issuing election ineligibility notices](#) to other opposition leaders.

Acknowledgments

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Methodology

About the Pew Research Center's Spring 2015 Global Attitudes Survey

Results for the survey are based on face-to-face interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. The results are based on national samples, unless otherwise noted. More details about our international survey methodology and country-specific sample designs are available on our [website](#).

For more detailed information on survey methods for this report, see here:

http://www.pewglobal.org/international-survey-methodology/?country_select=Venezuela&year_select=2015

For more general information on international survey research, see here:

<http://www.pewresearch.org/methodology/international-survey-research/>

Topline Questionnaire

Pew Research Center
Spring 2015 survey
December 3, 2015 Release

Methodological notes:

- Survey results are based on national samples. For further details on sample designs, see Methodology section and our [international survey methods database](#).
- Due to rounding, percentages may not total 100%. The topline “total” columns show 100%, because they are based on unrounded numbers.
- For some countries, trends for certain years are omitted due to differences in sample design or population coverage. Omitted trends often reflect less representative samples than more recent surveys in the same countries. Trends that are omitted include:
 - Venezuela prior to 2013
- Not all questions included in the Spring 2015 survey are presented in this topline. Omitted questions have either been previously released or will be released in future reports.

		Q2. Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in our country today?			
		Satisfied	Dissatisfied	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	14	85	1	100
	Spring, 2014	22	77	2	100
	Spring, 2013	40	57	3	100

		Q60a. As I read each one, please tell me if you think it is a very big problem, a moderately big problem, a small problem or not a problem at all. a. crime					
		Very big problem	Moderately big problem	Small problem	Not a problem at all	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	82	16	3	0	0	100
	Spring, 2014	86	11	2	0	0	100

		Q60b. As I read each one, please tell me if you think it is a very big problem, a moderately big problem, a small problem or not a problem at all. b. corrupt political leaders					
		Very big problem	Moderately big problem	Small problem	Not a problem at all	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	71	22	6	1	0	100
	Spring, 2014	69	23	7	1	0	100

		Q60c. As I read each one, please tell me if you think it is a very big problem, a moderately big problem, a small problem or not a problem at all. c. poor quality schools					
		Very big problem	Moderately big problem	Small problem	Not a problem at all	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	71	22	7	1	0	100
	Spring, 2014	57	28	12	4	0	100

		Q60d. As I read each one, please tell me if you think it is a very big problem, a moderately big problem, a small problem or not a problem at all. d. health care					
		Very big problem	Moderately big problem	Small problem	Not a problem at all	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	74	19	6	1	0	100
	Spring, 2014	59	25	12	4	0	100

		Q60e. As I read each one, please tell me if you think it is a very big problem, a moderately big problem, a small problem or not a problem at all. e. traffic					
		Very big problem	Moderately big problem	Small problem	Not a problem at all	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	51	30	17	2	0	100
	Spring, 2014	38	27	28	7	0	100

		Q60y. As I read each one, please tell me if you think it is a very big problem, a moderately big problem, a small problem or not a problem at all. y. shortages of basic goods				
		Very big problem	Moderately big problem	Small problem	Not a problem at all	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	84	12	4	0	100

		Q63a. Do you think ____ is a very big problem, a moderately big problem, a small problem or not a problem at all in our country? a. rising prices					
		Very big problem	Moderately big problem	Small problem	Not a problem at all	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	92	7	1	0	0	100
	Spring, 2014	89	8	2	1	0	100
	Spring, 2013	88	10	1	1	0	100

		Q63b. Do you think ____ is a very big problem, a moderately big problem, a small problem or not a problem at all in our country? b. a lack of employment opportunities					
		Very big problem	Moderately big problem	Small problem	Not a problem at all	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	85	12	2	1	0	100
	Spring, 2014	83	14	2	1	0	100
	Spring, 2013	85	11	3	1	1	100

		Q63c. Do you think ____ is a very big problem, a moderately big problem, a small problem or not a problem at all in our country? c. the gap between the rich and the poor					
		Very big problem	Moderately big problem	Small problem	Not a problem at all	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	56	22	13	6	3	100
	Spring, 2014	59	25	13	2	0	100
	Spring, 2013	61	21	14	4	1	100

		Q63d. Do you think ____ is a very big problem, a moderately big problem, a small problem or not a problem at all in our country? d. public debt					
		Very big problem	Moderately big problem	Small problem	Not a problem at all	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	78	17	3	2	0	100
	Spring, 2014	72	19	7	1	1	100
	Spring, 2013	74	17	6	2	3	100

		Q64. Which one of these issues is the most important for the government to address first — rising prices, a lack of employment opportunities, the gap between the rich and the poor or public debt?								
		Rising prices	Lack of employment opportunities	Gap between the rich and the poor	Public debt	All equally important (VOL)	None (VOL)	Other (VOL)	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	47	19	1	9	24	0	0	0	100
	Spring, 2013	37	29	3	5	24	1	1	0	100

		Q65. Now thinking about the future, do you think Venezuela generally should or should not follow the policies of former President Hugo Chavez?			
		Should	Should not	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	43	52	5	100

		Q79a. What kind of influence the group is having on the way things are going in (survey country). Is the influence of ____ very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad or very bad in (survey country)? a. our national government					
		Very good	Somewhat good	Somewhat bad	Very bad	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	7	23	23	45	2	100
	Spring, 2014	17	25	21	35	2	100

		Q79b. What kind of influence the group is having on the way things are going in (survey country). Is the influence of ____ very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad or very bad in (survey country)? b. the military					
		Very good	Somewhat good	Somewhat bad	Very bad	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	6	27	27	36	4	100
	Spring, 2014	15	28	24	31	2	100

		Q79c. What kind of influence the group is having on the way things are going in (survey country). Is the influence of ____ very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad or very bad in (survey country)? c. media - television, radio, newspapers, magazines					
		Very good	Somewhat good	Somewhat bad	Very bad	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	9	50	26	13	2	100
	Spring, 2014	18	51	20	10	1	100

		Q79e. Please tell me what kind of influence the group is having on the way things are going in (survey country). Is the influence of ____ very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad or very bad in (survey country)? e. court system					
		Very good	Somewhat good	Somewhat bad	Very bad	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	4	26	27	38	5	100
	Spring, 2014	12	28	24	32	3	100

		Q102a. Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of ____? a. President Nicolás Maduro					
		Very favorable	Somewhat favorable	Somewhat unfavorable	Very unfavorable	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	9	20	16	52	3	100

		Q102b. Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of ____? b. Leopoldo López					
		Very favorable	Somewhat favorable	Somewhat unfavorable	Very unfavorable	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	12	24	16	39	9	100

		Q102c. Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of ____? c. Henrique Capriles Radonski					
		Very favorable	Somewhat favorable	Somewhat unfavorable	Very unfavorable	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	14	22	17	39	8	100

		Q103a. Do you approve or disapprove of the way President Nicolás Maduro is handling each of the following areas? a. unemployment			
		Approve	Disapprove	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	19	80	2	100

		Q103b. Do you approve or disapprove of the way President Nicolás Maduro is handling each of the following areas? b. relations with the U.S.			
		Approve	Disapprove	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	21	76	3	100

		Q103c. Do you approve or disapprove of the way President Nicolás Maduro is handling each of the following areas? c. relations with Cuba			
		Approve	Disapprove	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	33	63	4	100

		Q103d. Do you approve or disapprove of the way President Nicolás Maduro is handling each of the following areas? d. dealing with political opposition			
		Approve	Disapprove	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	20	77	3	100

		Q103e. Do you approve or disapprove of the way President Nicolás Maduro is handling each of the following areas? e. corruption			
		Approve	Disapprove	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	13	83	3	100

		Q103f. Do you approve or disapprove of the way President Nicolás Maduro is handling each of the following areas? f. crime			
		Approve	Disapprove	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	12	85	3	100

		Q103g. Do you approve or disapprove of the way President Nicolás Maduro is handling each of the following areas? g. energy policy			
		Approve	Disapprove	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	22	72	6	100

		Q103h. Do you approve or disapprove of the way President Nicolás Maduro is handling each of the following areas? h. rising prices			
		Approve	Disapprove	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	11	86	2	100

		Q104. Since becoming president in 2013, do you think that Nicolás Maduro has followed the policies of former President Hugo Chavez very closely, somewhat closely, not too closely or not at all?					
		Very closely	Somewhat closely	Not too closely	Not at all	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	10	22	22	42	4	100

		Q105. In your opinion, which one of the following is the most to blame for our worsening economy? Falling oil prices, the United States or our government's economic policies?						
		Falling oil prices	United States	Our government's economic policies	Something else (VOL)	None of these (VOL)	DK/Refused	Total
Venezuela	Spring, 2015	43	6	46	1	1	4	100