



TECHNICAL DETAILS.

Date of fieldwork:	March 6 to March 13, 2004.
Type of interview:	Personal, one per household.
Number of interviews:	1,212.
Margin of error:	± 2.8 points in the study's total results.
Respondent:	Guatemalan adult, resident in the country during the period of the study.
Type of sample:	Random. Representative of the country's adult population residing in private households.
Geographic area:	Entire country excluding Petén.

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Public opinion survey
GUATEMALA #39
March, 2004



INTRODUCTION

CID Gallup presents the results of its opinion survey #39. The present study is the most recent in a series of public opinion polls that have been conducted in the entire Central American region for over twenty-five years. One of the aims of the series is to evaluate changes in attitudes and opinions about politics, government, and public personalities, among others. This is made possible because the same methodology has been employed in all of the public opinion measurements carried out in the region since 1977. The principal objective of this survey is to probe the opinions and attitudes adult Guatemalans have about their lives and their country at the moment the study took place.

The consulting firm conducted the study between March 6th and 13th, 2004, polling 1,212 adult Guatemalans who reside in the entire national territory – excluding Petén- (general results have a margin of error of ± 2.8 points, calculated at a 95% confidence level) – see Summary Table. A total of 120 randomly selected segments were visited in the geographical area under study and only one interview per household was conducted. Some of the results allow the presentation of trends, when compared with previous results of CID Gallup polls.

CID is an international firm that specializes in marketing research and public opinion studies. It finances its opinion polling by selling the final reports of the studies it produces through the rigorous application of scientific research methods. In Guatemala, the reports are for sale to whichever organization wishes to purchase them, including embassies, educational organizations, companies, public institutions, and political parties.

This study takes into account events in the country up to March 13th, 2004. Actions that take place after this date and their effects on Guatemalan public opinion are not evaluated in this poll.



Table A:
Summary table: Characteristics of the study's sample. n= 1,212 ^{a)b)}

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>%</i>
<u>Residence</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>Respondent's education level</u>	<u>100</u>
Guatemala Metro	16	None	11
Other cities	10	Incomplete/compl primary	43
Rest of country	74	Incomplete/compl.high sch	33
		University	13
<u>Speaks indigenous tongue</u>	<u>100</u>		
Yes	29	<u>Age</u>	<u>100(c)</u>
No	71	18 – 24	26
		25 – 39	37
<u>Gender</u>	<u>100</u>	40 and over	38
Male	50		
Female	50		

a) n = 1,212 for all graphs and tables presented in the report unless otherwise stated.

b) Data are weighted to reflect real population values for gender and region.

c) Results may add up to “99” or “101” due to rounding. This is true for all graphs and tables presented in the document.



I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Guatemalan public is currently optimistic about the opportunities the country will have under the leadership of recently elected President Oscar Berger. This could be due largely to the “honeymoon” that is traditionally afforded to presidents at the start of administrations in the region and is hallmarked by a robust positive job performance evaluation. Berger is seen as the “strong man” in the government, and respondents believe that the last word on what can be or not done lies with him and not anybody else. Berger is perceived to have a firm and strong personality which appears to create a sense of trust among Guatemalans: they believe that he will be able to keep his campaign promises, in particular those related to job creation and crime fighting ability.

High expectations abound regarding the Berger Administration’s ability to change the direction in which the country is heading, and which could lead as a result to greater economic and social welfare. This support is based principally on the belief that he will be able to improve specific areas such as the country’s economic situation, solve problems associated with infrastructure, fight government corruption, and improve the financial situation of Guatemalan families in the short run. However, the public is not naïve: it recognizes that solving other specific problems such as the high cost of living, the use and traffic of drugs, and the lack of housing in the country are challenges that one single government may not be able to solve.

There are several points the country’s political figures should consider before the administration completes first 100 days in office. Even though the public places great expectations on Berger, there must be some restraint as to what the administration will offer Guatemalans, lest they succumb to falling expectations. During the “honeymoon” period, the government should consolidate support by offering short term and visible solutions. This may eventually help the administration earn a relatively permanent base of support that will prove useful when passing into law more strategic and larger-scaled policies.



II. PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

VIEWS OF THE FUTURE AND THE ECONOMIC SITUATION

- Two out of five (41%) respondents believe the country is “heading in the right direction.” Thirty-six percent indicate the country is “heading in the wrong direction.”
- Seven out of ten participants in the study (69%) indicate that the cost of living has increased “a great deal.”
- One out of four adult Guatemalans (24%), consider that their family’s financial situation is “better” today than twelve months ago. Half the population (52%) believes the opposite to be true.
- Two out of five respondents (42%) “somewhat” or “strongly” agree that their monthly household income is enough to satisfy their basic needs (food, housing, transport).
- Two out of five participants in the study (43%) have a positive outlook about their household’s financial situation in the coming twelve months.
- Half of the population (51%) considers that Guatemalans live “better today” than one year ago. One out of three believe that the country’s economic situation is “worse” now (31%).
- One in three respondents (33%) indicates that at least one member of his/her family is unemployed and has looked for a job in the last four months without being successful.
- In 44% of the homes surveyed, the head of household works in the informal sector of the economy. Thirty-seven percent report working in either the public or the private sectors.

NATIONAL PROBLEMS

- “Violence and crime” (72%), “lack of job opportunities” (43%) and “government corruption” (24%), are the three principal problems in Guatemala.
- There is at least one person in seventeen percent of the country’s households who has been robbed or assaulted in the last four months.



MASS MEDIA

- Practically half the respondents (45%) reports having read a newspaper the day prior to the interview.
- The most read newspaper is “Nuestro Diario”, mentioned by one out of five respondents. La Prensa Libre is cited by 13%.
- Two out of five households report having cable television.
- On average, Guatemalans watch approximately 2.11 hours of television every day.
- On television, channel 7 and channel 3 are the favorites among respondents. The former is cited by one in four participants in the study (26%), while the latter is mentioned by one out of five respondents (21%).
- Practically nine out of ten Guatemalans (87%) report watching news on television at least once a week.
- Notisiete is the favorite news program of respondents (43%), followed by Telediario, with 27%.

RELIGION IN GUATEMALA

- The majority of Guatemalans (57%) define themselves as “Catholic,” while one out of three respondents report belonging to Evangelical denominations (30%).
- Three in five respondents (59%) attend religious services once every seven days or more often.
- Evangelicals (71%) attend religious services more regularly than Catholics (60%).

POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

- One in three respondents (34%) support the Alianza GANA coalition, while half of the population (50%) reports they do not favor any political party.
- Oscar Berger is the most popular public figure in Guatemala. He receives 64% of favourable responses, while only obtaining 12% of unfavourable mentions.
- Efraín Ríos Montt and Alfonso Portillo are the least popular personalities in the country. They receive 74% and 71% of negative opinions, respectively.



THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH: PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT AND MAYOR'S OFFICE

- Seven out of ten respondents (72%) believe that Alfonso Portillo left the country “worse off” than it was when he became president after Álvaro Arzú stepped down.
- In general terms, Alvaro Arzú’s job performance as mayor of the capital city is perceived as “good” or “very good” by 27% of respondents. Guatemala City’s residents are more complacent: 36% consider his work as mayor is “good” or “very good.”

THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

- Seven out of ten respondents (69%) cite positive aspects about the current president, Oscar Berger. His “personality” (12%), “honesty” (12%) and his ability to “keep promises” (6%) are Berger’s most positive attributes. The negative aspects mentioned most frequently include that “he is a liar” (4%) and “promises too much” (3%).
- “More employment opportunities” is the promise that respondents cite most frequently when recalling the current president’s electoral campaign (20%). “Crime fighting” places second, receiving 18% of responses.
- Practically half of Guatemalans (49%) are “somewhat” or “very” confident that Óscar Berger will keep his campaign promises.
- Two in three participants in the study (66%) believe that the new president of Guatemala will be “somewhat” or “very successful” in reducing crime.
- Half of the Guatemalan population (50%) associate Óscar Berger with the image of the “strong man” in Government.
- Respondents believe that the problems that most urgently need to be addressed are “crime and violence,” “lack of employment opportunities,” and “government corruption.”
- In general terms, three out of five respondents (59%) consider that once Berger’s tenure as president finishes, Guatemala will be “better off” than it is at the present time. One out of three (34%) considers that “nothing will change.”
- The public perceives that “roads and infrastructure,” (57%) “basic hospital requirements,” (45%) “employment,” (45%) and “the elimination of government corruption” (43%), will improve after Berger’s administration finishes.



- Respondents do not believe the Berger administration will be able to solve problems that cause “the high cost of living,” nor “the use and traffic of drugs.”
- Berger is doing a “good” or “very good” job as president in the minds of 38% of participants in the study. The majority of respondents (54%) reserves judgement so far and indicates he is performing “regularly” as president.
- At a similar juncture in their administrations, the CID Gallup Presidential Job Performance Index is highest for Jorge Elías Serrano—he leads over Álvaro Arzú, Alfonso Portillo and Óscar Berger when they were all beginning their tenure as presidents. However, Berger obtains 30 positive percentage points, surpassing both Arzú and Portillo.



SAMPLE

The sample used in the poll is representative of the country's population aged 18 and over, and covers 96.7% of the Guatemalan population (excluding the Petén department). What follows is a detail of the sample's distribution and what it covers.

1. Sample specifications:

a) Description of Sample Frame:

The sample frame used for Guatemala, was created by CID based on information provided by the "Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censo de Guatemala", updated with the results of the "Censo de Población y Vivienda" conducted by that institution in 2002. The sample frame contains the municipalities for the entire country and is divided in the three previously established strata. The sample of each of these strata is obtained independently.

b) Stages of Sample Design:

It is important to define several concepts before explaining the stages of sample design. They are:

Geographic Area: Entire National Territory except for the Petén department. For purposes of analysis, this is divided into three regions: Guatemala Metropolitan Area, Cities with a population over 10,000; and Rest of country.

Primary Sampling Unit: Selection of municipalities inside the departments.

Secondary Sampling Unit: Census segments, which correspond to the colonies or neighborhoods inside the municipalities.

Tertiary Sampling Unit: Households inside the census segments.

Final Sampling Unit: Guatemalan male or female over 18, resident in a private household.

Unit of Information: In this case, it is the same as the final sampling unit.



Sampling design is conducted in four stages, which are detailed below:

First stage: Independently of each of the three strata selected according to the political distribution of Guatemala, a random selection is conducted by the probability proportional to size of municipalities. These strata are defined as:

Guatemala Metropolitan Area: Corresponds to zones 1 through 19 and zone 25, and the municipalities of Villa Nueva, Amatitlán, Santa Catarina, Chiantla, Mixto, and Antigua Guatemala.

Cities with a population of 10,000 and more: Correspond to those municipalities of Guatemala that have a population over 10,000. These are generally head of departments, and have a high proportion of urban population.

Rest of Country: This stratum includes all municipalities not included in the previous regions. Therefore, areas with a predominantly rural population are included here –excluding the Petén department.

Second stage: The conglomerate of household (colonies / neighborhoods / villages) is randomly sampled inside the municipalities that will be visited.

Third stage: The supervisor and the head of fieldwork - following a predetermined route - select households. To establish the route, each housing conglomerate is divided taking into consideration the four cardinal points (north, south, east and west). Conglomerates are assigned a consecutive number. In the first conglomerate, interviewers begin north, and walk through it following a clockwise direction. The second conglomerate begins east, the third south, and the fourth begins by the west. Each follows a clockwise direction. The fifth conglomerate begins by the north again, the sixth by the east, and so on until all conglomerates in the sample have been selected.

Fourth stage: The selection of adults to be interviewed is conducted through age and gender quotas, to reflect real population values. The exact number of interviews to be conducted is determined before going to the field.



DESIGN, SELECTION AND DISTRIBUTION:

Sampling Units employed: Municipalities.

Design: The country is divided into three previously established strata: Guatemala Metropolitan Area, Cities with a population of 10,000 and more, and Rest of Country (all defined above).

Selection: The primary sampling units – municipalities – are selected through the probability proportional to its size. The neighborhoods/colonies are randomly selected, and the households are visited following a predetermined route.

Distribution: In Guatemala, a total of 120 census segments were visited.

Method of selection of individuals:

Individuals that were to be interviewed are selected through gender and age quotas that reflect real population values.

Details about control of rejected interviews and substitution of interviews on each stage in the sample:

Replacements will be carried out after a randomly selected household has been visited at least three times. The replacement will be another person who shares the original's sociodemographic characteristics (gender, age, and place of residence). Previous experience has shown that an average of 5.5 households need to be contacted in order to carry out an effective interview.

Sampling error:

The study has a margin of error of ± 2.8 percentage points –calculated at a 95% confidence level— for total results. This varies according to the variability of estimators and internally between subgroups. In specific cases, the sampling error is indicated.