

Central American Research and Policy Institute - CARPI

California State University, Northridge

February 13-15, 2009

February 21-22, 2009

During several days in February 2009, the Central American Research and Policy Institute conducted public opinion polls on the Salvadoran elections with a group of students from California State University Northridge. The polls collected data to show the political opinion of Salvadoran immigrants living in different sections of Los Angeles. The surveys were collected in areas that are known for their large concentration of Salvadoran immigrants, for their commercial activity and for their high demographic density. The poll results have a margin of error of +/-5.73%.

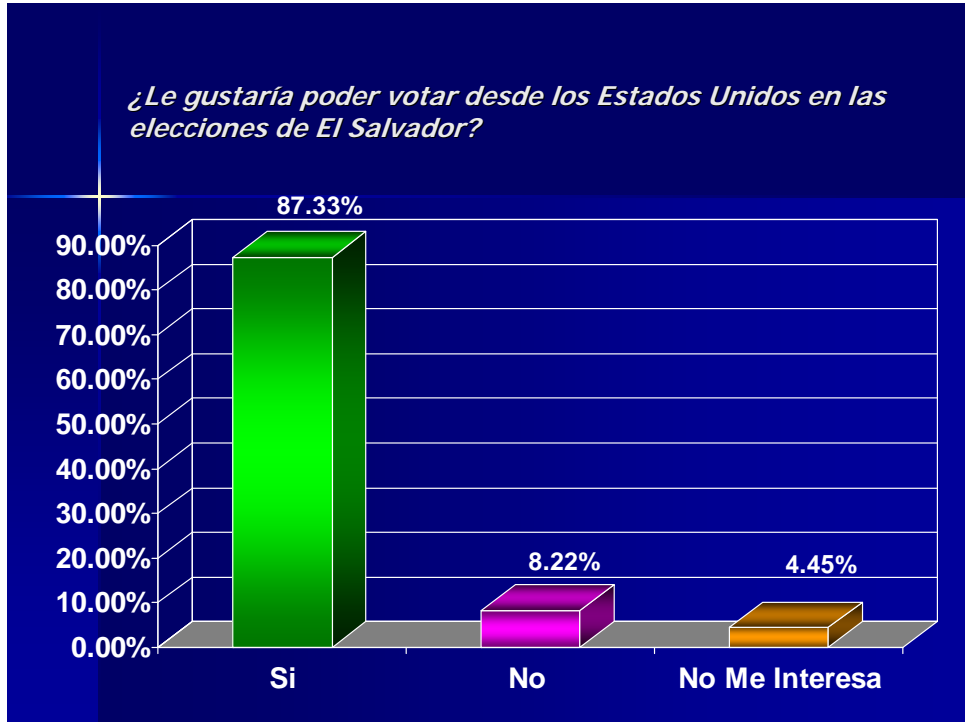
One of the primary goals of the polls conducted was to document the interest that this immigrant population continues to have in what the future holds for its home country. Significantly, this population of Salvadorans does not enjoy the right to vote in the elections in their

Student Participants

- Carlos Hernandez
- Jessica Hernandez
- Nancy Menjivar
- Fatima Orellana
- Jeremiah Ramirez
- Iris Rubio
- Jose Ruiz
- Roberto Saravia
- Cindy Von Quednow

- ***Faculty Supervisor: Douglas Carranza Mena, Ph.D.***

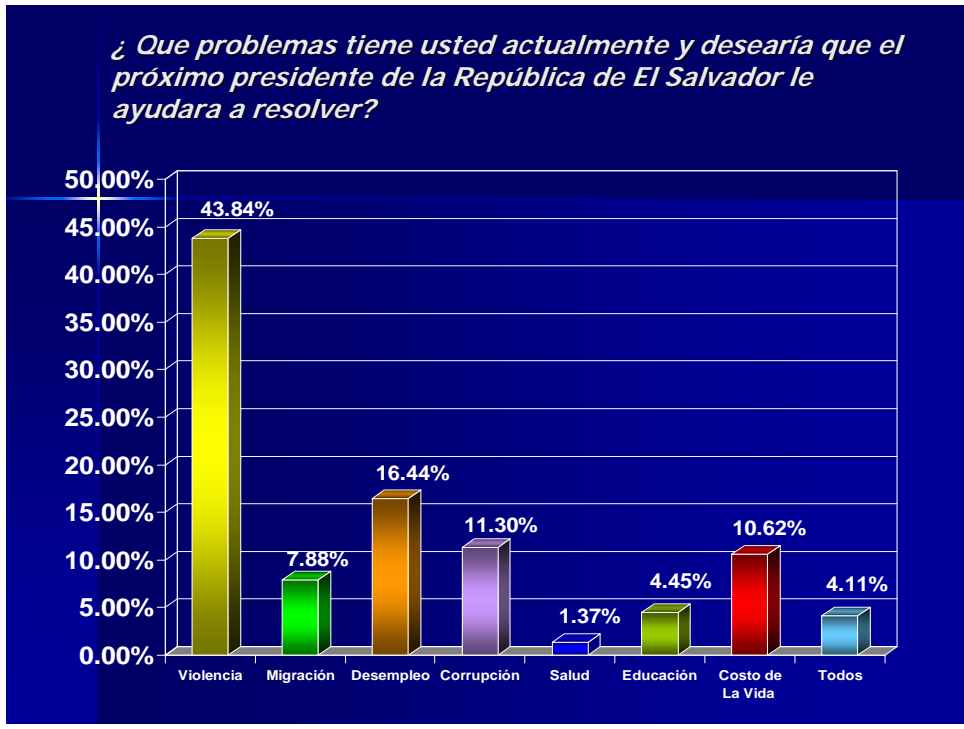
country of origin. In addition, a high percentage of these immigrants currently experience a situation of uncertainty with regards to their immigration status, preventing them from flying home in order to exercise their right to vote. In spite of this, this population, whose numbers are estimated between 2.5 and 3 million, continues to send almost \$3.5 billion annually in remittances to El Salvador, contributing to the stability of the country.



Although many of the immigrants who were polled have resided in the United States for more than a decade, a majority continues to closely follow the presidential campaign in El Salvador. 87.33% of those interviewed responded that they would like to vote from the US in the Salvadoran elections. 4.45% responded that that they weren't interested, and

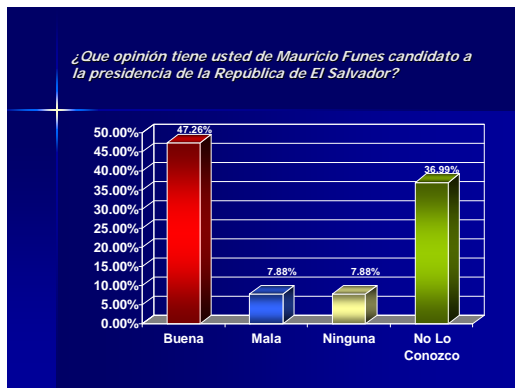
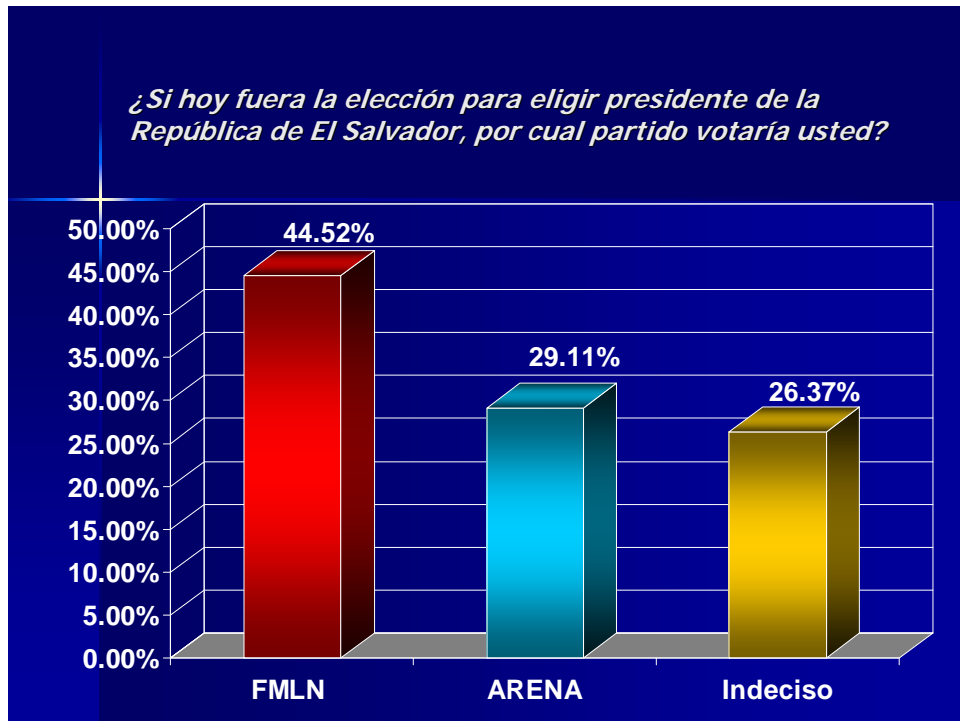
8.22% responded that they weren't interested in voting from the U.S in the Salvadoran elections.

Among those who were polled by CARPI, a majority, 43.84%, responded that the problem that they wish the next president of El Salvador would help resolve is violence.



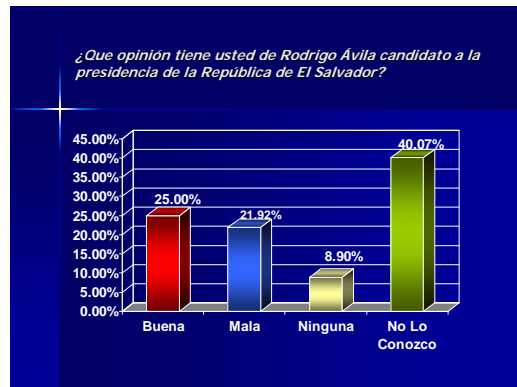
Among the other issues that concerned them they mentioned, in order of priority, unemployment (16.44%), corruption (11.30%), the cost of life (10.62%), immigration (7.88%), education (4.45%), and health (1.37%), among others (4.11%).

The Salvadoran immigrants polled responded that if the presidential elections were to be held on the day they were interviewed, 44.52% would have voted for the FMLN, 29.11% would have voted for ARENA, and 26.37% were still undecided less than a month before the day of the elections.

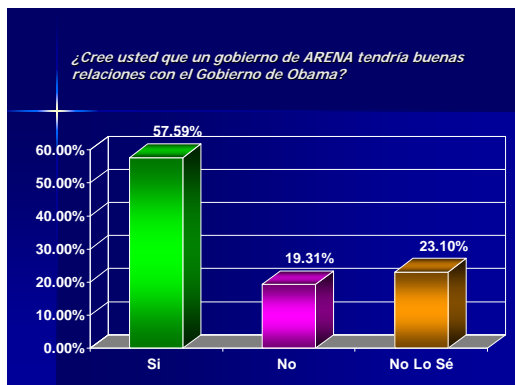


In addition, public opinion on the FMLN presidential candidate was favorable. The polls showed that 47% held a good opinion of Mauricio Funes, while 36.99% said they were not familiar with the candidate and 7.88% indicated they had no opinion of Funes. Only 7.88% expressed a negative opinion of the FMLN candidate.

positive opinion of Rodrigo Ávila, the presidential candidate for the party currently in power, ARENA, 40.07% indicated they did not know him, 8.90% expressed no opinion of the candidate and 21.92% had a negative opinion of Ávila.

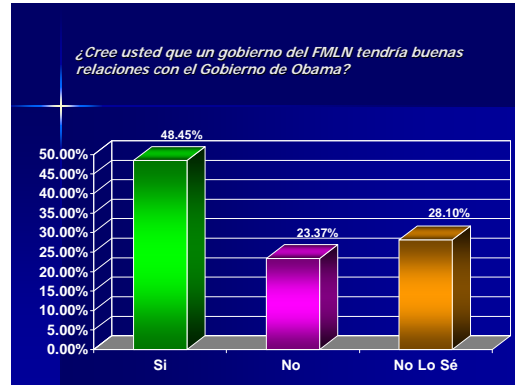


In contrast, 25% of the interviewees had a

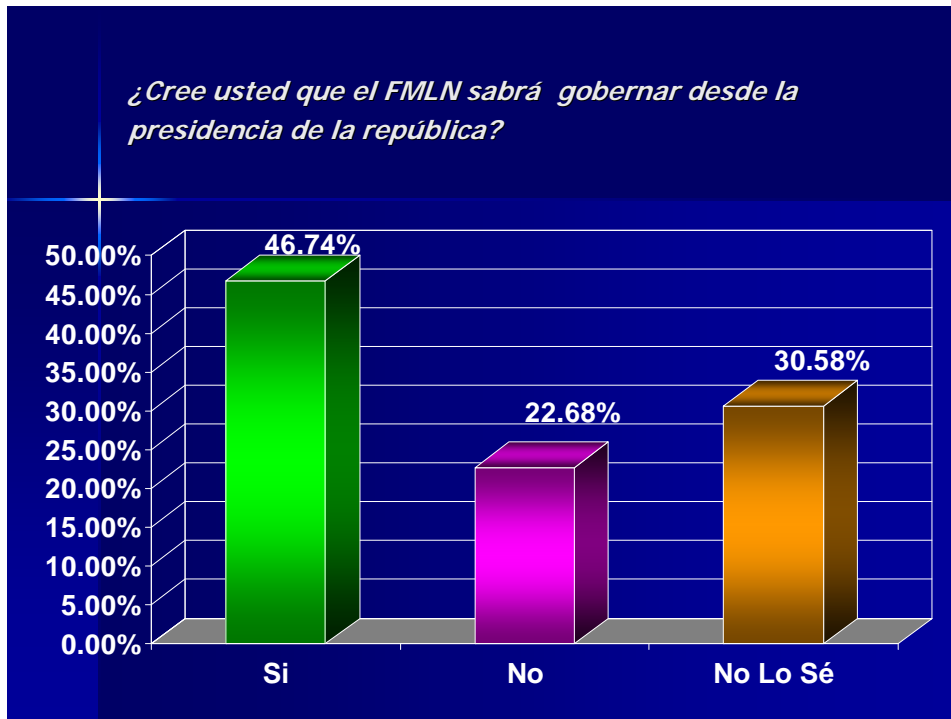


When asked if they thought the FMLN or ARENA would be able to maintain good relations with the government of Barack Obama, a great majority of the participants answered yes to both parties; 45% for the FMLN and 57.59% for ARENA. On the other hand, a considerable percentage of participants said they did not know for certain for either party, 28.10% if the FMLN was the future government of El Salvador, and

23.10% if ARENA continued in power. A considerable percentage of the polled immigrants also expressed that they did not think the future government of El Salvador would hold good relations with the government of President Obama, 23.37% for the case of the FMLN, and 19.31% for the case of ARENA.



Finally, 46.74% of the participants, expressed their conviction that if there were to be political change in El Salvador, the opposition party would



know how to govern from the presidency, while 30.58% said they did not know if the party would be able to govern, and 22.68% doubted they would be able to.