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INSTITUTO DE CIÊNCIA POLÍTICA
PROGRAMA DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM CIÊNCIA POLÍTICA
DOUTORADO

AMANDA VITORIA LOPES MOREIRA DA SILVA

**THE SECOND SLOT: CHOOSING THE VICE-PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES IN
SOUTH AMERICA**

BRASÍLIA
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Tese apresentada como requisito parcial para obtenção do Título de Doutora em Ciência Política pelo Programa de Pós-Graduação em Ciência Política do Instituto de Ciência Política na Universidade de Brasília.

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Orientador: Prof. Dr. Adrián Albala

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“The vice-president must be taken very seriously in the relationship with the president, because the vice can become president. Moreover, the vice must be someone who adds to the president, not someone who diverges.”

(Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, former president of Brazil, statement at the European Parliament, Brussels, November 15, 2021).

RESUMO

A SEGUNDA VAGA: ESCOLHENDO OS CANDIDATOS À VICE-PRESIDÊNCIA NA AMÉRICA DO SUL

Frequentemente tratada como a sombra do presidente, a vice-presidência pode adquirir peso político, como mostram os impeachments no Paraguai (2012) e no Brasil (2016), nos quais quem ocupava o cargo influenciou os rumos dos governos. Sua relevância, porém, não se limita à sucessão ou a momentos de crise governamental: também se manifesta no processo eleitoral. Na formação das chapas presidenciais, a definição do vice pode desempenhar função estratégica, seja como recurso de negociação em coalizões pré-eleitorais, seja como espaço de inserção de candidaturas independentes em contextos de fragilidade partidária e regras permissivas. Diante disso, esta tese investiga como fatores institucionais, políticos e contextuais influenciam a seleção de candidatos à vice-presidência na América do Sul. A análise das regras eleitorais demonstra um vazio regulatório: são raras as diretrizes sobre o posto e, na prática, prevalece a preferência do presidenciável na decisão. Para compreender o processo sem reduzi-lo a atributos individuais, o estudo apresenta uma revisão das tipologias de fórmulas presidenciais, capturando as diferentes formas de composição. Além disso, este trabalho estabelece a distinção entre independentes e outsiders e examina as condições em que partidos aliados conseguem indicar o vice-presidente em fórmulas mistas, considerando sua coesão ideológica e força legislativa. O trabalho baseia-se em banco de dados original com todas as chapas de 54 eleições (1979–2022) em seis países (Argentina, Bolívia, Brasil, Colômbia, Equador e Paraguai), complementado por mapeamento sistemático da legislação sobre nomeação e condições que viabilizam candidaturas independentes. Os resultados mostram que partidos protagonistas e competitivos atraem aliados de média e grande força legislativa pela vice-presidência, ao passo que a maioria das fórmulas mistas agrega partidos pequenos em busca de visibilidade. Candidaturas independentes concentram-se nas fórmulas puras e combinam perfis de políticos experientes e outsiders. Assim, a pesquisa demonstra que a seleção de vices cumpre funções distintas, ora funcionando como mecanismo de coalizão, ora permitindo a presença de independentes, o que amplia as possibilidades de composição das chapas presidenciais e reposiciona a vice-presidência nos estudos comparados sobre o presidencialismo na América do Sul.

Palavras-chave: Presidencialismo; Eleições; Vice-presidência; Seleção de Candidato; América do Sul.

ABSTRACT

THE SECOND SLOT: CHOOSING THE VICE-PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES IN SOUTH AMERICA

Often described as the president's shadow, the vice-presidency may have major political implications. The impeachments in Paraguay (2012) and Brazil (2016) illustrate this, as the officeholder shaped the trajectory of governments. Yet its significance is not confined to succession or crises; it also figures prominently in the electoral arena. The nomination of a running mate can serve as a bargaining instrument in pre-electoral coalitions or open the door to independent candidacies when weak party systems coincide with permissive rules. This thesis examines how institutional, political, and contextual factors influence the selection of vice-presidential candidates across South America. An analysis of electoral regulations reveals a gap: few systems set legal provisions for the office, placing the decision largely with presidential candidates. To account for this process beyond individual candidate attributes, the study introduces a revised framework for classifying presidential tickets that captures how they are formed. In addition, the research draws a distinction between independents and outsiders and examines the conditions under which allied parties can nominate the vice-president, analyzing the role of ideological cohesion and legislative strength. This inquiry is based on an original dataset covering all presidential tickets in 54 elections held between 1979 and 2022 in six countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Paraguay), complemented by a systematic mapping of electoral legislation on nomination rules and provisions enabling independent candidacies. The findings indicate that protagonist and competitive parties use the vice-presidency to attract medium and large allies, while most mixed-partisan tickets bring together small parties seeking visibility. Independent candidacies, in turn, are concentrated in pure ticket format, which include both experienced politicians and outsiders. Overall, the study shows that vice-presidential selection serves multiple purposes: it can function as a mechanism of coalition-building, but also as an entry point for independents. In doing so, it broadens the range of options for ticket formation and recasts the vice-presidency within comparative studies of presidentialism in South America.

Keywords: Presidentialism; Elections; Vice-Presidency; Candidate Selection; South America.

LISTA DE ABREVIACÕES

Political Organizations

Argentina	CFI	Alianza Confederación Federalista Independiente (Alliance Independent Federalist Confederation)
Argentina	FC	Frente Cívico de Córdoba (Civic Front of Córdoba)
Argentina	GEN	Generación para un Encuentro Nacional (Generation for a National Encounter)
Argentina	MPN	Movimiento Popular Neuquino (Neuquén People's Movement)
Argentina	PCCE	Partido Comunista – Congreso Extraordinario (Communist Party – Extraordinary Congress)
Argentina	PDP	Partido Demócrata Progresista (Progressive Democratic Party)
Argentina	PJ	Partido Justicialista (Justicialist Party)
Argentina	PRO	Propuesta Republicana (Republican Proposal)
Argentina	PS	Partido Socialista (Socialist Party)
Argentina	UCEDE	Unión del Centro Democrático (Union of the Democratic Center)
Argentina	UCR	Unión Cívica Radical (Civic Radical Union)
Argentina	VALORES	Valores para mi País (Values for my Country)
Bolivia	ADN	Alianza Demócrata Revolucionaria (Revolutionary Democratic Action)
Bolivia	CONDEPA	Conciencia de Patria (Fatherland's Conscience)
Bolivia	FRI	Frente Revolucionario de Izquierda (Revolutionary Front of the Left)
Bolivia	MIR	Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionario (Movement of the Revolutionary Left)
Bolivia	MNR	Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (Revolutionary Nationalist Movement)
Bolivia	MRTKL	Movimiento Revolucionario Tupaj Katari de Liberación (Revolutionary Movement of Liberation Tupaj Katari)
Bolivia	PCD	Partido Demócrata Cristiano (Christian Democratic Party)
Bolivia	PDC	Partido Demócrata Cristiano (Christian Democratic Party)
Bolivia	UCS	Unión Cívica Solidaridad (Civic Union Solidarity)
Brazil	DEM	Democratas (Democrats)
Brazil	MDB	Movimento Democrático Brasileiro (Brazilian Democratic Movement)
Brazil	PCB	Partido Comunista Brasileiro (Brazilian Communist Party)
Brazil	PCdoB	Partido Comunista do Brasil (Brazil's Communist Party)

Brazil	PDN	Partido Democrático Nacional (National Democratic Party)
Brazil	PDT	Partido Democrático Trabalhista (Labor Democratic Party)
Brazil	PFL	Partido da Frente Liberal (Party of the Liberal Front)
Brazil	PL	Partido Liberal (Liberal Party)
Brazil	PMDB	Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro (Party of the Brazilian Democratic Movement)
Brazil	PP	Partido Progressista (Progressive Party)
Brazil	PPS	Partido Popular Socialista (Socialist Popular Party)
Brazil	PR	Partido da República (Party of the Republic)
Brazil	PRB	Partido Republicano Brasileiro (Brazilian Republican Party)
Brazil	PROS	Partido Republicano da Ordem Social (Republican Party of the Social Order)
Brazil	PRTB	Partido Renovador Trabalhista Brasileiro (Brazilian Labor Renewal Party)
Brazil	PSB	Partido Socialista Brasileiro (Brazilian Socialist Party)
Brazil	PSD	Partido Social Democrático (Democratic Social Party)
Brazil	PSDB	Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira (Party of Brazilian Social Democracy)
Brazil	PSL	Partido Social Liberal (Social Liberal Party)
Brazil	PSOL	Partido Socialismo e Liberdade (Socialism and Liberty Party)
Brazil	PSTU	Partido Socialista dos Trabalhadores Unificados (Unified Workers' Socialist Party)
Brazil	PT	Partido dos Trabalhadores (Worker's Party)
Brazil	PTB	Partido Trabalhista Brasileiro (Brazilian Labor Party)
Brazil	PV	Partido Verde (Green Party)
Brazil	REDE	Rede Sustentabilidade (Sustainability Network)
Brazil	UNIÃO	União Brasil (Brazil Union)
Colombia	ASI	Partido Alianza Social Independiente (Independent Social Alliance)
Colombia	CC	Compromiso Ciudadano (Citizen Commitment)
Colombia	CD	Centro Democrático (Democratic Centre)
Colombia	CH	Colombia Humana (Humane Colombia)
Colombia	CR	Colombia Renaciente (Colombia Reborn)
Colombia	DIGNIDAD	Dignidad y Compromiso (Dignity and Commitment)
Colombia	FC	Fuerza Ciudadana (Citizen Force)
Colombia	LIBRES	Colombia Justa Libres (Free and Fair Colombia)
Colombia	M-19	Alianza Democrática M-19 (Democratic Alliance M-19)

Colombia	MIRA	Movimiento Independiente de Renovación Absoluta (Independent Movement of Absolute Renovation)
Colombia	MOE	Movimiento Orientacion Ecologica (Ecological Orientation Movement)
Colombia	PC	Partido Conservador Colombiano (Colombian Conservative Party)
Colombia	PCR	Partido Cambio Radical (Radical Change Party)
Colombia	PL	Partido Liberal Colombiano (Colombian Liberal Party)
Colombia	PNL	Partido Nuevo Liberalismo (New Liberalism)
Colombia	POLO	Polo Democrático Alternativo (Alternative Democratic Pole)
Colombia	PU	Partido de la U (Party of the U)
Colombia	PV	Partido Verde (Green Party)
Colombia	SOMOS	Partido Somos Región Colombia (Somos Región Colombia Party)
Colombia	UP	Unión Patriótica (Patriotic Union)
Ecuador	APRE	Acción Popular Revolucionaria Ecuatoriana (Ecuadorean Revolutionary Popular Action)
Ecuador	CFP	Concentración de Fuerzas Populares (Concentration of Popular Forces)
Ecuador	CREO	Movimiento CREO, Creando Oportunidades (Creating Opportunities Movement)
Ecuador	FADI	Frente Amplio de Izquierda (Broad Front of the Left)
Ecuador	FNV	Federación Nacional Velasquista (Velasquista National Federation)
Ecuador	FRA	Frente Radical Alfarista (Alfarist Radical Front)
Ecuador	ID	Izquierda Democratica (Democratic Left)
Ecuador	MIRA	Movimiento Independiente por una República Auténtica (Independent Movement for an Authentic Republic)
Ecuador	MPD	Movimiento Popular Democrático (Democratic Popular Movement)
Ecuador	MSD	Movimiento Social Democrático (Social Democratic Movement)
Ecuador	PAIS	Patria Altiva i Soberana (Proud and Sovereign Homeland)
Ecuador	PCD	Pueblo, Cambio y Democracia (People, Change and Democracy)
Ecuador	PCE	Partido Conservador Ecuatoriana (Ecuadorean Conservative Party)
Ecuador	PLN	Partido Liberación Nacional (National Liberation Party)
Ecuador	PLRE	Partido Liberal Radical Ecuatoriano (Ecuadorean Radical Liberal Party)
Ecuador	PRE	Partido Roldosista Ecuatoriano (Ecuadorean Roldosista Party)
Ecuador	PSC	Partido Social Cristiano (Social Christian Party)

Ecuador	PSE	Partido Socialista Ecuatoriano (Ecuadorian Socialist Party)
Ecuador	RED	Movimiento Red Ética y Democracia (Ethics and Democracy Network Movement)
El Salvador	PDC	Partido Demócrata Cristiano (Christian Democratic Party)
Paraguay	ADR-PC	Asociación Nacional Republicana-Partido Colorado (National Republican Association – Colored Party)
Paraguay	FG	Frente Guasú (Guasú Front)
Paraguay	MNAP	Movimiento Nacional de Artistas del Paraguay (National Movement of Artists of Paraguay)
Paraguay	MPCNU	Movimiento Político Cívico Nacional Unámonos (National Civic Political Movement “Let’s Unite”)
Paraguay	PDC	Partido Demócrata Cristiano (Christian Democratic Party)
Paraguay	PDP	Partido Democrático Progresista (Progressive Democratic Party)
Paraguay	PEN	Partido Encuentro Nacional (National Encounter Party)
Paraguay	PLRA	Partido Liberal Radical Auténtico (Authentic Radical Liberal Party)
Paraguay	PRF	Partido Revolucionario Febrerista (Revolutionary Febrerista Party)

Other Abbreviations

CE	Código Eleitoral/Código Electoral (Electoral Code)
CNE (Colombia)	Consejo Nacional Electoral/ National Electoral Council of Colombia
CNE (Ecuador)	Consejo Nacional Electoral/ National Electoral Council of Ecuador
CONATEL (Ecuador)	Consejo Nacional de Telecomunicaciones (National Telecommunications Council)
ENPP	Effective Number of Parties at the Legislative Level
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FHC (Brazil)	Fernando Henrique Cardoso
GSC	Grupo Significativo de Ciudadanos (Significant Group of Citizens)
LE	Lei Eleitoral/Ley Electoral (Electoral Law)
OEP (Bolivia)	Órgano Electoral Plurinacional/ Plurinational Electoral Authority
PASO (Argentina)	Primarias Abiertas Simultáneas y Obligatorias (Simultaneous and Mandatory Open Primaries)
PEC	Pre-Electoral Coalition

STF (Brazil)	Supremo Tribunal Federal (Federal Supreme Court)
TRF4 (Brazil)	Tribunal Regional Federal da 4ª Região (Federal Regional Court of the 4th Region)
TSE (Brazil)	Tribunal Superior Eleitoral (Superior Electoral Court)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VP	Vice-President

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INTRODUCTION

One of the defining characteristics of South American political systems is their reliance on presidentialism as the predominant regime type. Under this system, the president serves as both head of state and head of government (Linz, 1990), an arrangement that, when combined with fixed presidential terms, renders the political system particularly vulnerable to instability in cases of vacancy due to death, resignation, or premature termination of the mandate. To mitigate this institutional fragility, many South American constitutions incorporated the office of the vice-president, drawing inspiration from the U.S. model (Mittelman, 2014).

Beyond its role as a constitutional safeguard against presidential absence, the vice-presidency in South America has acquired additional functions. Depending on the country, vice-presidents may preside over legislative chambers (as in Argentina and Bolivia), undertake diplomatic missions (as in Brazil, Colombia, and Paraguay), or contribute to policy formulation (as in Bolivia and Venezuela).

Although perceived as a symbolic extension of the presidency (Alencastro, 2018; Serrafiero, 1999), this view has been increasingly contested by political events. Recent cases of presidential succession following impeachment or resignation in Paraguay (2012) and Brazil (2016) have highlighted the office's importance as vice-presidents were not only next in line but also directly involved in the political crises that led to the removal of elected presidents. Likewise, the vice-presidency may also function as a pathway to the presidency, as illustrated by Lenín Moreno in Ecuador and Joe Biden in the United States. In contrast, Cristina Kirchner's election as vice-president in 2019, after two terms as president, marked a reversal of this trajectory.

This evolution in the vice-presidency's role and perception is mirrored in its institutional development and electoral processes. While not initially a consistent feature of all South American constitutions, the office became a recurring institutional arrangement during the 19th and 20th centuries. During this period, vice-presidents were selected through three primary mechanisms: (i) appointment, (ii) runner-up designation, and (iii) concurrent but separate election (Marsteintredet & Uggla, 2019). However, from the mid-1980s onward, the prevailing practice shifted toward electing vice-presidents as part of a joint presidential ticket¹.

¹ Except in Venezuela, where the elected president appoints the vice-president.

Over time, however, research attention has remained disproportionately focused on presidents, with vice-presidents receiving limited consideration. Traditionally, research on executive candidate selection in South America has centered on presidential and gubernatorial races (Siavelis & Morgenstern, 2008), with vice-presidential selection emerging only recently as a subject of inquiry (Lopes, 2022b).

Much of the existing literature on vice-presidential selection is based on the U.S. case, examining the criteria and strategic considerations behind running mate choices. These studies emphasize personal attributes, political experience, and the implications of such selections for electoral outcomes (Polsby *et al.*, 2016; Sigelman & Wahlbeck, 1997) and governing roles (Baumgartner, 2012, 2016; Hiller & Kriner, 2008).

The institutional design of most South American countries, characterized by multiparty systems and presidentialism, further complicates the formation of legislative majorities. Consequently, presidential candidates and parties frequently rely on inter-party alliances (Chasquetti, 2000; Ramírez, 2008). A recurrent observed strategy for securing such alliances involves offering the vice-presidential nomination to coalition partners (Bidegain, 2017; Olivares *et al.*, 2020; Serrafiero, 2018). Thus, the vice-presidency might serve as an instrument not only in intra-party bargaining but also in coalition-building efforts.

The selection of vice-presidential candidates in South America thus underscores the interplay between intra- and inter-party politics (Inácio & Llanos, 2020). Much of the literature, especially focused on North America, emphasizes candidate profiles such as personal background or political experience. However, evidence from South America suggests that selection processes are shaped by the strategies and circumstances of presidential candidates, unfolding within political and electoral arenas and under conditions shaped by coalition-building, electoral competition, and the party system. In this setting, vice-presidential nominations may reflect not only internal party preferences but also efforts to secure the support of coalition partners, broaden electoral appeal, and enhance political coherence.

The formation of presidential tickets comprising candidates from different political parties represents a significant feature of many democratic systems and is particularly prominent in the region. According to the data collected for this study, 13.5% of presidential tickets (70 out of 519) combined presidential and vice-presidential nominees from different parties. However, scholarly attention has disproportionately focused on candidate characteristics rather than investigating the mechanisms and rationale behind such selections (Lopes, 2020; 2022a; Mieres & Pampín, 2015; Pignataro & Taylor-Robinson, 2019).

Beyond inter-party bargaining processes, the region exhibits another distinctive feature: the presence of independent candidates in presidential elections. Figures such as Álvaro Uribe have achieved electoral success without party backing. Recent research suggests that even party-affiliated presidential candidates increasingly select independent running mates as a signal of openness to voters disillusioned with traditional parties, with the expectation of enhancing their electoral appeal (Pignataro & Taylor-Robinson, 2019; Thaha & Haryanto, 2017). Ugglá (2020) found that independent vice-presidential candidates appeared in 15% of the top two tickets in Latin American elections between 1978 and 2018.

The dataset compiled for this study shows that, when considering all presidential tickets in South America, 21% included independent running mates (109 out of 519), a proportion that surpasses Ugglá's (2020) findings. This evidence points out the need to incorporate independent candidacies into any analysis of the vice-presidency, as presidential contenders frequently turn to nonpartisan or cross-party candidates, whether as a deliberate electoral strategy or as a response to institutional environments that foster independent bids.

Despite these patterns, scholarly attention to the factors driving such selections remains limited. Pignataro and Taylor-Robinson (2019) analyze changes in vice-presidential selection in Costa Rica, including the rise of independent running mates, while Ugglá (2020) stands as the only study to examine the determinants of cross-party or independent vice-presidential nominations across Latin America. However, its focus on only the two most-voted tickets introduces a methodological inconsistency, as ticket formation occurs prior to elections and candidates can hardly anticipate their eventual ranking. This gap highlights the need for a more systematic investigation into the conditions shaping vice-presidential selection in South America.

In response, this study seeks to advance the literature by analyzing the institutional structures, political contexts, and electoral environments that influence running mate selection in the region's presidential regimes. It addresses the following research question: What factors shape the selection of vice-presidential candidates in South America? To answer this, the study pursues four objectives: (1) examining the institutional development and cross-national variation of the vice-presidency in the region, with particular attention to its historical diffusion, legal frameworks, and the evolving mechanisms of ticket formation; (2) identifying the factors driving presidential candidates to select running mates from other parties; (3) describing the characteristics of the parties that nominate vice-presidential candidates in mixed-partisan tickets, focusing on ideology and legislative strength, and examining the strategies that may

underlie these choices; and (4) analyzing independent vice-presidential nominations by examining the legal arrangements that enable them, the profiles of independent nominees, and the institutional and political factors behind their selection, which represents a distinctive feature of some South American democracies.

While prior studies focused on selected cases (Lopes, 2020; 2022a; Mieres & Pampín, 2015; Ugglá, 2020), this research encompasses the full universe of presidential tickets formed since the last wave of democratization. The analysis draws on an original dataset of 54 elections (1979–2022) across six countries: Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Paraguay. The following sections presents the research’s scope and the structure of this study, detailing the organization of each chapter.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This investigation applies a Most Similar Systems Design (MSSD) to identify factors that might influence the type of vice-presidential selection, comparing six South American democracies with similar political systems but divergent ticket formation patterns. For this purpose, the case selection follows three criteria. First, countries must constitutionally maintain an elected vice-presidential office, which excludes Chile. Second, the electoral system must require vice-presidents to be elected on a shared ticket with presidents, thereby excluding Venezuela’s appointment model. Third, institutional structures must feature a single vice-presidential position, which excludes systems with multiple vice-presidents like Peru. Uruguay was additionally excluded due to its uniform pattern of pure-partisan tickets across all observed elections, which offers no variation for analysis.

The resulting comparative framework encompasses Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Paraguay. The study draws on an original dataset comprising all democratic presidential elections in these countries since their respective democratic transitions, or since the implementation of shared-ticket rules where applicable². The Argentine case includes nine elections, from 1983 to 2019, yielding 103 presidential tickets. Bolivia contributes ten elections between 1985 and 2020, with a total of 97 observations. In Brazil, data cover nine elections held from 1989 to 2022, totaling 99 tickets. Ecuador, which underwent its democratic transition earlier, contributes twelve elections from 1979 to 2021, resulting in 116

² *The Presidential Tickets in South America Dataset* will be made publicly available upon publication of the articles derived from this thesis. Until then, all datasets and code used in the analyses are available from the author upon request (amanda_vilopes@hotmail.com).

observations. Paraguay is represented by six elections between 1993 and 2018, with 44 tickets. Finally, the case of Colombia requires special attention: although the country democratized earlier, the vice-presidency was only reinstated by the 1991 constitutional reform, and the first election to apply the shared-ticket rule took place in 1994. From that year through 2022, Colombia held eight presidential elections, comprising 60 tickets.

This original dataset includes 54 presidential elections and 519 presidential tickets, providing the empirical basis for this research. Its broad scope allows for comparison of ticket formation patterns across similar political systems, even with differing national institutional arrangements.

Chapter 3 introduces a supplementary dataset that reorganizes this information at the party level. By treating each party within pre-electoral coalitions in pure or mixed-partisan ticket as a distinct observation³. This restructuring allows for a fine-grained examination of intra-coalition dynamics, specifically focusing on the factors that influence which party gains the authority to nominate the vice-presidential candidate. The party-level analysis shows how coalition partners negotiate the second slot nomination, complementing the cross-national comparisons in the preceding chapter.

OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS

This research begins with a regional overview and advances to a detailed analysis of cross-party and independent ticket formations. Chapter 1 (Designing the Vice-Presidential Selection) lays the theoretical framework by examining the development of the vice-presidency in the continent constitutions and contrasting these arrangements with the U.S. model. It examines the interdependence between presidential and vice-presidential nominations, proposing that although parties and coalitions play important roles, the presidential candidate consistently emerges as the central actor in the selection process, whether as decision-maker, informal or formal approver, or negotiating partner. Then, it introduces a typology of presidential tickets, categorizes them according to the affiliation of the presidential and vice-presidential nominees, and provides an initial empirical overview of how these types have appeared in South American elections.

To place this typology in the empirical context of ticket formation in the region, the study points out the variety of presidential tickets formations observed between 1979 and 2022.

³ The supplementary dataset, *VP Nomination in South America*, is available from the author upon request.

During this period, 13.5% of tickets (70 of 519) combined nominees from different political parties, 17.3% (90 of 519) were composed entirely of independents without party affiliation, and 5% (26 of 519) paired a partisan candidate with an independent, whether at the presidential or vice-presidential level. Although less frequent, this last arrangement demonstrates that distinct affiliations extend beyond purely partisan or purely independent formulas.

Examples from different contexts illustrate this diversity. In Brazil's 1994 election, Fernando Henrique Cardoso of the PSDB selected Marco Maciel of the PFL, joining forces between two allied parties. In Bolivia's 2020 race, Carlos Mesa, representing the FRI, chose Gustavo Pedraza, an independent, as his running mate. Conversely, in Ecuador's 2006 election, independent León Roldós Aguilera partnered with Ramiro Gonzalez of the ID. Together, these cases underscore the coexistence of partisan coordination and nonpartisan experimentation in South American presidential elections.

Chapter 2 (Run with me: Formation of mixed-partisan presidential tickets) builds on this empirical foundation by asking under what conditions presidential candidates select running mates from other parties. Grounded in theories of coalition formation, the chapter develops four testable hypotheses regarding the institutional, political and electoral determinants of mixed-ticket compositions, focusing on the presence of pre-electoral coalitions, the degree of party system fragmentation, and the strategies that parties adopt when entering majoritarian contests. Drawing on an original dataset of 519 presidential tickets across six South American democracies, it first conducts a multivariate analysis to identify the most consistent predictors of mixed-partisan ticket formation and then examines how these factors manifested across elections over time.

Chapter 3 (The vice-presidential partner: Exploring party characteristics in mixed-partisan tickets) advances the analysis by examining the parties that nominate vice-presidential candidates in the mixed-partisan tickets. Based on an original dataset of 70 observations, the analysis focuses on the parties that join presidential formulas through the vice-presidency, examining their legislative strength, measured by share of legislative seats (%), and their ideological alignment with the presidential candidate's party. This dual perspective allows the study to assess how considerations of elections and coalition management might shape the selection of vice-presidential partners.

Having examined how parties enter presidential formulas through the vice-presidency, the study now turns to cases where party affiliation is absent. Chapter 4 (Unbound Tickets: The emergence of independent vice-presidential candidates) begins by tracing the institutional

arrangements that regulate independent candidacies, noting reforms and their implications. It then clarifies the analytical distinction between independents and outsiders, a necessary step for properly assessing the cases of independent vice-presidential nominees.

Building on this framework, the study combines multivariate analysis with comparative inquiry to investigate the determinants of independent vice-presidential nominations. It shows how legal constraints, such as restrictions on ballot access and the exclusion from public campaign financing, interact with features of party system institutionalization to shape the opportunities available to presidential contenders. In turn, these conditions help explain why some candidates deliberately – or by necessity – compose tickets with independent running mates. These candidacies thus emerge not as anomalies, but as outcomes conditioned by institutional incentives and partisan environments.

Finally, Chapter 5 (Conclusions) closes the study by revisiting the central argument and summarizing the main findings. It assesses how far the research objectives have been achieved, pointing to theoretical, methodological and practical contributions and the limitations of the analysis. Ultimately, it outlines a research agenda that seeks to bring the vice-presidency to the forefront of comparative politics, highlighting its relevance for understanding presidential ticket formation, coalition-building strategies, and the functioning of presidential regimes in South America and beyond.

1 DESIGNING THE VICE-PRESIDENTIAL SELECTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter establishes a framework for analyzing vice-presidential selection in South America. It begins by examining the historical transition from separate elections to unified presidential tickets, tracing the diffusion of this institutional model, which originated in the U.S. system and later became the regional standard. The analysis then turns to the formal rules governing contemporary selection processes. It focuses on how the sequencing of nominations, with presidential candidates chosen first, shapes subsequent running mate selection.

This sequencing structures the decision-making logic and helps explain why much of the existing literature, grounded in U.S.-centric frameworks, interprets running mate selection primarily through the lens of ticket-balancing. While this perspective emphasizes strategic complementarity between nominees, it neglects the distinct institutional environments of multiparty regimes. In such contexts, vice-presidential selection might be shaped by party-centered or candidate-centered selection, permissive electoral rules, and coalitional demands that extend beyond mere profile-balancing. Running mates might be chosen not only to diversify the ticket but also to secure electoral alliances. These observations help inform the typology proposed later in the chapter, which categorizes presidential tickets based on the party affiliations of their members.

The vice-presidency's historical trajectory in South America underscores its adoption as an instance of constitutional diffusion, influenced not only by emulation of the U.S. model but also by direct diplomatic pressure (Fix-Ferro & Salazar-Ugarte, 2012; Mittelman, 2021). In many cases, nineteenth-century constitutions incorporated the office with minimal domestic deliberation or functional justification, suggesting its adoption derived more from symbolic alignment with perceived global norms than from endogenous political demands. Originally designed to ensure executive continuity, the office gradually acquired additional political functions, including legislative mediation, coalition maintenance, and ceremonial representation, depending on the evolving national context and constitutional reforms (Bidegain, 2017).

Despite this institutional evolution, scholars have paid scant attention to how running mates are selected and under what institutional conditions these choices occur (except for Ugglá, 2020). While identifying the precise *selectorate* authority falls beyond this study's

primary scope, delineating its parameters establishes a necessary framework for analyzing ticket formation in South America. This approach diverges from dominant U.S.-centric scholarship, which prioritizes ticket-balancing selections based on candidate's profile. Such frameworks inadequately explain the diversity observed in the region, where vice-presidential nominations might result from cross-party negotiation or unilateral appointments by independent candidates operating in permissive institutional environments.

To address this gap in the literature, the following analysis examines the formal rules governing vice-presidential nominations across the cases. Through comparative institutional analysis, it traces the ascendancy of presidential candidates in determining running mate selection. While constitutional texts and electoral laws often remain silent or vague on this matter, informal norms and parties' practices indicate that the head of the ticket is an essential figure in naming the running mate.

Having outlined this approach, the analysis refines Serrafiero's (1999; 2007; 2018) typology to achieve enhanced analytical precision. The revised framework classifies tickets as pure or mixed, depending on whether the presidential and vice-presidential nominees belong to the same party, different parties, or no party at all. This refinement addresses limitations in prior classifications, which overlooked variation in how nominations occur and affect ticket composition.

The chapter is organized as follows. Section 1.2 reviews the origins of the vice-presidency in the United States. Section 1.3 examines the diffusion of the office across South America. Section 1.4 outlines the legal and procedural frameworks governing the ticket nomination. Section 1.5 analyzes the interdependence between presidential and vice-presidential selection. Section 1.6 discuss who drives the selection process. Section 1.7 presents the revised typology of presidential tickets and applies to the empirical data to evaluate the distribution of each type of ticket in the region. Finally, the conclusion discusses the consequences of these findings for the development of the next chapters.

1.2 "VICE"? WHAT IS IT?

The American framers established the office of the vice-president in 1787 not as a contingency for presidential absence but as a remedy for an electoral dilemma. Fearing that voters' disproportionate preference for candidates from their own states might lead to deadlock, the framers devised the Electoral College as the mechanism for selecting the president. To mitigate it, they stipulated that each elector would cast two votes, ensuring that at least one of

the chosen candidates would be nationally qualified and thus fostering political stability (Baumgartner, 2006; Milkis & Nelson, 2016).

While this system addressed concerns about electoral gridlock, it raised a new question: what role should the runner-up play in the government? The solution was to designate this individual as vice-president (Berns, 2004; Baumgartner, 2006; Mayer, 2000). In *The Federalist Papers*, Alexander Hamilton contended that the vice-president's election should mirror that of the president, given the possibility of succession. The framers viewed this continuity as vital to preserving stable leadership (Hamilton, Madison & Jay, 1952, p. 206).

Hamilton's rationale provided the theoretical underpinnings for the vice-presidency, which later evolved into a practical instrument for addressing succession and governance challenges. Initially, the office was conceived not as a safeguard against presidential vacancy but as an alternative method for presidential selection. Over time, however, the vice-president became the automatic successor in cases of death, resignation, or removal. Additionally, the U.S. Constitution made the vice-president the president of the Senate, a role intended to prevent any single senator from undermining their state's representation, since the vice-president had no voting power (Baumgartner, 2006; Berns, 2004).

As the American political and institutional landscape shifted, flaws in the original design of the vice-presidency became evident, particularly with the emergence of political parties in the 1790s. The practice of holding distinct votes for president and vice-president occasionally resulted in the election of leaders from opposing parties. This arrangement risked creating conflict, as a vice-president could oppose the president's agenda in the Senate. Moreover, should the vice-president assume the presidency, their policies might diverge sharply from those of their predecessor, eroding the administration's legitimacy among voters who had supported the original president (Mayer, 2000).

These tensions underscored the necessity for electoral reform, culminating in the pivotal changes of 1804. The Twelfth Amendment instituted the joint election of the president and vice-president, aligning their political fortunes. Over time, as party systems became more institutionalized, the vice-presidential selection process became increasingly tied to the objectives of the presidential candidate. Throughout the 19th century, political parties dominated the selection of running mates, often marginalizing presidential candidates in the decision. By the early 20th century, however, this dynamic had shifted: presidential candidates began asserting greater control over the selection process, prioritizing competence and ideological alignment. This shift signaled a new era for the vice-presidency, marked by

expanded governance responsibilities, contributions to domestic policy, integration into the National Security Council, active participation in campaigns, and deeper engagement in legislative affairs (Baumgartner, 2006; Mayer, 2000).

1.3 THE DIFFUSION OF THE VICE-PRESIDENCY IN LATIN AMERICA

Following independence in the early 19th century, newly sovereign states across Latin America looked to the United States as a constitutional model. These emerging states looked to the U.S. Constitution and *The Federalist Papers* as models, adopting presidential systems that would become the regional norm (Fix-Fierro & Salazar-Ugarte, 2012). Beyond adopting presidentialism itself, they incorporated fundamental U.S. constitutional principles including term limits, separation of powers, and individual rights protections (Mittelman, 2014).

This institutional borrowing from the U.S. model led these nations to adopt the vice-presidency as the president's automatic successor (Baumgartner & Case, 2009). Marsteintredet and Ugglå (2019) set out how Latin American constitutions progressively institutionalized the vice-presidency throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. However, this development followed an irregular pattern. Authoritarian regimes frequently abolished the office, as occurred in Colombia (1910-1991), Paraguay (1940-1992), Venezuela (1858-1999), and Brazil (1934-1946) (Bidegain, 2017). Chile eliminated its vice-presidency in the 1833 Constitution and never restored it, while Mexico permanently removed the position in its 1917 charter (Lopes, 2022b).

Notwithstanding these setbacks, most Latin American democracies ultimately reinstated and maintained the vice-presidency as a core institution (Bidegain, 2017). Today, 16 of the 18 presidential systems retain the office⁴, as detailed in Table 1.

While all countries in the region feature the vice-presidency, their institutional designs vary markedly. Most nations appoint a single vice-president, though three countries deviate from this standard: Costa Rica and Peru each elect two vice-presidents, while Honduras stands alone in selecting three⁵. Panama revised its constitution in 2009, transitioning from a dual vice-presidential system to the predominant single-vice-president model.

⁴ Although Peru is classified as a semi-presidential system (Elgie, 2011), this study includes the country among the presidential systems for the analysis of the vice-presidency in Latin America.

⁵ In 2006, the administration of President Manuel Zelaya enacted a constitutional reform that established there would be only one vice-president in Honduras. However, following the end of Zelaya's government in 2009, a new constitutional reform reinstated the original rule, returning to the model of three vice-presidents.

Table 1 – Number of vice-presidents by country in Latin America

Country	Number of VPs
Argentina	1
Bolivia	1
Brazil	1
Colombia	1
Costa Rica	2
El Salvador	1
Ecuador	1
Guatemala	1
Honduras	3
Nicaragua	1
Panama	1
Paraguay	1
Peru	2
Dominican Republic	1
Uruguay	1
Venezuela	1

Note. Elaborated by the author.

Regarding selection methods, a clear regional pattern has emerged. Since the 1990s, all Latin American presidential systems except Venezuela have adopted the joint presidential ticket system (Marsteintredet & Ugglå, 2019). This marks a decisive shift from earlier practices, which included independent vice-presidential elections and automatic appointment of presidential runners-up. Venezuela remains distinctive in granting its president unilateral authority to appoint, dismiss, and replace the vice-president.

1.4 HOW IS THE PRESIDENTIAL TICKET NOMINATED?

In the United States, within its two dominant parties – Democrats and Republicans –, candidates emerge through institutionalized primary elections, a process developed through political practice rather than constitutional mandate. South American systems, by contrast, have established diverse legal frameworks governing presidential and vice-presidential nominations. This section analyzes nomination processes across case studies, examining the electoral legislation.

Across all jurisdictions documented, presidential tickets must meet basic eligibility requirements, typically including age and citizenship criteria. However, the mechanisms for candidate nomination vary considerably, both across countries and over time. For a systematic year-by-year comparison of these variations, which are categorized by discretionary party candidate selection, regulated systems, and compulsory primaries (including ticket composition

rules), see in Table 15 in Appendix I. The most permissive systems, exemplified by Brazil, Colombia, Argentina (1983–2007), Ecuador (1998–2006), Paraguay (1993), and pre-reform Bolivia, delegated candidate selection entirely to political organizations operating under minimal electoral law constraints.

Brazil demonstrates how political parties can operate with minimal institutional constraints in candidate selection. Parties enjoy complete autonomy when choosing their candidates, as no legal framework regulates their internal nomination procedures. Although major parties sometimes hold informal primaries, these remain rare exceptions rather than standard practice. A notable case occurred in 2002 when the Workers' Party (PT) conducted a competitive primary between Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and Senator Eduardo Suplicy to select its presidential nominee. Lula won this internal election, secured the party's nomination, and ultimately won the presidency (Power & Mochele, 2008; Zanini & Traumann, 2001).

Similarly, in 2021, the Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB) held a presidential primary between São Paulo Governor João Doria and Rio Grande do Sul Governor Eduardo Leite. Though Doria won this nomination contest, his subsequent withdrawal left the party without a presidential candidate for the 2022 election (Garcia, Clavery & Gomes, 2021). These rare examples demonstrate that while primaries exist in Brazil, they remain voluntary and exceptional rather than institutionalized features of the nomination process.

Unlike Brazil's informal approach, Colombia presents a more institutionalized approach through Law 1475/2011. Since the 2014 election, Law 1475/2011 has provided a legal framework governing primary elections for political parties, movements, and coalitions selecting candidates for public office. While Articles 5-7 stipulate that such primaries remain optional (Colombia, 2011), Freidenberg's (2016) points out their consistent application in practice. The historical Conservative (PC) and Liberal (PL) parties have maintained this tradition since the 1990s, routinely using primaries to select their presidential nominees. This institutional practice has subsequently influenced pre-electoral coalitions, which have increasingly adopted primary elections as their preferred candidate selection method (Albala, 2021; Albala & Couto, 2023).

The institutionalization of primaries reached a new stage in 2018 when pre-electoral coalitions adopted this selection method. The Democratic Center (CD) coalition conducted a competitive three-round primary among five presidential aspirants. Iván Duque ultimately secured the nomination, first within the CD and subsequently in the broader Great Alliance for

Colombia (Gran Alianza por Colombia) coalition⁶. He subsequently invited the runner-up, Martha Lucía Ramírez, of the Significant Group of Citizens (GSC) For an Honest and Strong Colombia (Por una Colombia Honesta y Fuerte), to join the ticket as his vice-presidential candidate, a partnership that proved electorally successful.

This model gained wider adoption among other coalitions. The Social Inclusion for Peace (Gran Coalición por la Paz) coalition, for instance, selected Gustavo Petro of the Humane Colombia (CH) movement through its 2018 primary. Notably, Petro departed from the emerging convention by choosing Ángela María Robledo (CH) rather than primary runner-up, Carlos Caicedo from the Citizen Force (FC) movement, as his running mate (Elejade, 2018; Sarmiento, 2018). The pattern reemerged in 2022 when Petro, after winning the Historic Pact (Pacto Histórico) coalition primary, included runner-up Francia Márquez (Alternative Democratic Pole - POLO) on his successful presidential ticket.

Alongside these regulated processes, Colombian electoral law creates additional pathways to office through its provisions for independent candidates. Defined as those unaffiliated with formal political parties but supported by other political organizations (Bolleyer & Weeks, 2009; Uggla, 2020), independents must fulfill specific legal requirements. Law 130/1994 mandates to collect supporting signatures and submit monetary deposits to qualify for ballots (Colombia, 1994), creating an alternative route that diversifies the candidate pool⁷.

Like Colombia, Paraguay permits both party primaries and independent candidacies, but it distinguishes itself by making primaries compulsory for parties. Electoral Law No. 834 (1996) requires all political parties and alliances to hold primaries when selecting presidential and vice-presidential candidates, who must run on a joint ticket (Paraguay, 1996, Arts. 33, 44). Meanwhile, independent candidates face stricter requirements than in Colombia, including gathering signatures equivalent to 0.5% of the valid votes cast in the previous election for the relevant office (Art. 86, CE 834/1996). This requirement creates a hurdle that disadvantages political newcomers⁸.

⁶ The Great Alliance for Colombia (Grand Alliance for Colombia) coalition was composed of the Democratic Center (CD) party, Somos Región Colombia Party (SOMOS), Free and Fair Colombia (Colombia Justa Libres), Independent Movement of Absolute Renovation (MIRA), the GSC For an Honest and Strong Colombia (Por una Colombia Honesta y Fuerte), and the GSC La Patria de Pie Movement (La Patria de Pie).

⁷ Chapter 4 (Unbound Tickets: The emergence of independent vice-presidential candidates) provides a comprehensive discussion on independent candidacies and the rules governing their nomination.

⁸ Paraguayan legislation introduces innovations by establishing additional requirements for the participation of independent candidates in elections. Among these, it prohibits individuals who ran for the same office in the previous election or those who held party leadership positions in the years preceding the election from running (Paraguay, 1996). These and other aspects related to independent candidacies will be addressed in greater detail in Chapter 4 (Unbound Tickets: The emergence of independent vice-presidential candidates).

The compulsory model resembles Ecuador's 2009 reform, which introduced mandatory primary elections for candidate selection (Art. 94, CE 2009), though with distinctive institutional characteristics. Unlike Argentina's explicit requirement for joint selection of presidential and vice-presidential candidates (Art. 44, Law No. 26571/2009), Ecuadorian legislation remains silent on this matter⁹.

Where Ecuador leaves this unregulated, Argentina mandates joint selection through Law No. 26571/2009, creating Open, Simultaneous, and Mandatory Primaries (PASO) first implemented in 2011. This system requires all political groups – parties, confederations, and alliances – to submit one or more candidate lists for presidential tickets, with only those achieving at least 1% of valid votes qualifying for the general election (Argentina, 2009).

The Argentine legal framework defines political groups as any party, confederation, or alliance¹⁰ involved in electoral processes (Art. 18, Law No. 26571/2009), mandating their participation in PASO. This differs fundamentally from Colombia's system, where parties may conduct internal consultations before inter-party primaries. In Argentina, alliances must present their complete presidential tickets (president and vice-president) during PASO. Each political entity submits one or more candidate lists, with the 1% threshold serving as the gateway to the general election (Art. 21, Law No. 26571/2009).

In the inaugural 2011 PASO, each political group submit just one presidential ticket (Argentina, 2011), which confirmed the primaries as a qualification round rather than a competitive selection process. However, by 2015 the system had matured into a genuinely competitive arena, as demonstrated by the Let's Change (Cambiemos) coalition's submission of three competing tickets, ultimately selecting Mauricio Macri and Gabriela Michetti as their presidential ticket (Argentina, 2015).

Following the regional trend, Bolivia's 2018 Law on Political Organizations (No. 1096) mandated primary elections for selecting complete presidential tickets (Bolivia, 2018). However, its 2019 implementation diverged significantly from Argentina's model: political organizations presented single uncontested tickets, automatically qualifying all candidates for

⁹ Although Bolivia and Ecuador allow independent candidacies, their legislation does not establish specific requirements for registering these candidates, unlike the cases of Colombia and Paraguay. For this reason, this section excludes the analysis of independent candidacies in these two countries and explores them in greater depth in Chapter 4.

¹⁰ According to the Ley Orgánica de los Partidos Político (Law 23298/1985), alliances and confederations are composed of more than two parties. Alliances are temporary by nature, and parties form them exclusively to participate in elections, whereas confederations represent permanent unions of two or more parties. (Argentina, 1985).

the general election (Miranda, 2019). This contrasts sharply with Argentina’s competitive threshold-based system.

Table 2 synthesizes the comparative analysis developed in this section, by mapping the legal frameworks that structure presidential ticket nominations across cases. The table distinguishes between countries with mandatory primaries (requiring joint presidential and vice-presidential tickets or allowing separate selection), those with optional or unregulated processes, and the specific years these rules were in effect.

Table 2 – Timing of vice-presidential selection in electoral systems according to legal frameworks

Presidential ticket nomination process	Countries by nomination rules (Years of application)
Mandatory primaries with joint ticket	Argentina (2011-2019), Bolivia (2019-2020), and Paraguay (1998-2018)
Mandatory primaries without joint ticket	Ecuador (2013-2021)
No mandatory primaries	Argentina (1983-2007), Bolivia (1985-2014), Brazil (1989-2022), Colombia (1994-2022), Ecuador (1979-2009), and Paraguay (1993)

Note. Elaborated by the author. For detailed information, see Table 15, Appendix I.

1.5 INTERTWINED CHOICE: PICKING THE RUNNING MATE

The previous section detailed how legal frameworks for presidential ticket nominations vary significantly across electoral systems. While all cases require joint tickets with both presidential and vice-presidential candidates, legislators have focused regulatory attention primarily on presidential selection, providing little guidance about vice-presidential candidates. Conventional wisdom suggests political organizations first nominate their presidential candidate before choosing a running mate, but statutory laws do not mandate this sequence.

While this study cannot directly confirm the conventional view of sequential selection, the literature shows that parties typically follow a two-step process: first nominating the presidential candidate, then designating the running mate (Baumgartner, 2006; Hiller & Kriner, 2008; Sigelman & Wahlbeck, 1997). In primary elections, legal frameworks mandate joint candidacies but remain silent on internal sequencing, leaving a procedural gap that prevents

definitive conclusions. Even so, the widespread evidence of staged nomination in comparable contexts suggests that this pattern likely reflects reality, with vice-presidential choice operating as a secondary yet strategically significant decision.

Scholars broadly agree that presidential and vice-presidential selection are interdependent¹¹. Electoral incentives, especially ticket-balancing strategies, often drive the choice. Parties select running mates whose attributes, such as gender, ethnicity, experience, ideology, or regional ties, offset the presidential candidate's perceived weaknesses (Baumgartner, 2006; Polsby et al., 2016). This strategy serves two purposes: expanding electoral appeal and enhancing representational legitimacy. The 2022 Colombian election offers a clear example of gender balancing: Gustavo Petro, a white male presidential candidate, selected black activist Francia Márquez as his running mate to appeal to female voters. Similarly, parties frequently rely on ideological balancing, pairing ideologically extreme presidential candidates with centrist running mates. Uruguay's left-wing Frente Amplio exemplified this strategy in 2009, when presidential candidate José Mujica chose moderate Danilo Astori as his vice-presidential nominee (Mieres, 2012).

While gender and ideological balancing are widespread, territorial balancing tends to play a particularly decisive role in systems with electoral colleges, as exemplified by the United States. American parties typically select vice-presidential candidates from swing states or politically complementary regions to strengthen their electoral prospects. Since success depends on state-by-state outcomes, a running mate's potential to engage voters in competitive states frequently emerges as a decisive consideration¹².

Although South America lacks electoral colleges, regional balancing might similarly shape vice-presidential selection. Analysis of Brazil's two most-voted presidential tickets in each election (1989-2018) suggests that running mates represents regions distinct from their presidential candidates (Lopes, 2020; 2022a). The 1994 winning ticket of Fernando Henrique

¹¹ In the cases examined, there are outliers that deviate from the prevailing norm. A salient example of this phenomenon transpired during the 2019 Argentine electoral cycle, wherein the electoral ticket comprised Alberto Fernández as the presidential candidate and Cristina Kirchner as the vice-presidential candidate. Cristina Kirchner had previously served as Argentina's president for two consecutive terms. However, due to legislation prohibiting her from seeking a third consecutive term, she opted to run for vice-president instead. It is noteworthy that Cristina herself announced Alberto Fernández as the presidential candidate for the ticket (Infobae, 2019). This decision by Cristina exemplifies a notable deviation from the norm, as it represents an exceptional instance of her direct involvement in the selection of her party's presidential candidate. She surpassed Fernández in recognition, having already served as president and being constitutionally barred from running for a third presidential term.

¹² The literature extensively discusses the impact of regional balancing on presidential elections in the United States (Devine & Kopko, 2011; 2019; Dudley & Rapoport, 1989; Heersink & Peterson, 2016; Lewis-Beck & Rice, 1983).

Cardoso (São Paulo, Southeast) and Marco Maciel (Pernambuco, Northeast) exemplifies it when combining candidates from Brazil's two most populous regions.

Scholarship on U.S. elections has extensively examined how candidate-specific attributes shape vice-presidential selection (Baumgartner, 2006; 2008; 2012; 2016; Hiller & Kriner, 2008; Polsby *et al.*, 2016; Sigelman & Wahlbeck, 1997). However, this approach is insufficient for understanding vice-presidential choices in multiparty systems or in contexts that permit independent candidates, as in Latin America, where the criteria often extend beyond individual traits. For instance, Pignataro and Taylor-Robinson's (2019) longitudinal study of Costa Rica demonstrates how declining partisanship has led presidential candidates to increasingly select nonpartisan running mates to capture votes from citizens disillusioned with traditional party politics.

Within multiparty presidential systems, the need to constitute legislative majorities compels candidates to seek cross-party alliances (Albala, 2021; Chasqueti, 2000; Freudenreich, 2016; Kellam, 2017; Ramírez, 2008). This strategy serves three purposes: (1) expanding the ticket's electoral base, (2) maximizing coattail effects during concurrent elections (Borges & Turgeon, 2017), and (3) minimizing competition through pre-electoral coalition agreements. As a result, mixed tickets, in which presidential and vice-presidential candidates represent different political parties, have become a defining feature of South American politics (Bidegain, 2017; Lopes, 2020; 2022a; Serrafiero, 2018; Ugglá, 2020).

Altogether, these conditions indicate that vice-presidential selection in South America cannot be explained solely by personal characteristics. Institutional permissiveness toward independent candidacies and the pressures of multiparty competition foreground complex intra- and inter-party bargaining. This study therefore examines how institutional contexts shape running mate selection, challenging the personality-centered frameworks prevalent in existing literature.

1.6 WHO CHOOSES THE VICE-PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE?

As discussed in the preceding section, vice-presidential candidate selection can be driven by strategic imperatives, particularly the need to complement the presidential nominee's profile or enhance electoral coalitions. However, these decisions may be constrained by the interplay of formal rules (e.g., nomination procedures or electoral laws) and informal power structures (e.g., party elite influence and coalitional bargaining) that govern the selection

process. To fully explain why a particular running mate is chosen, we must also question how the selection occurs and who wields decisive influence over it.

The literature on presidential candidate selection delineates three primary models: party-centered selection, candidate-centered selection, and independent recruitment (Inácio & Llanos, 2020; Siavelis & Morgenstern, 2008).

In party-centered systems, party elites retain control over nominations (Inácio & Llanos, 2020). Even in regimes with primary elections, which are traditionally framed as candidate-centered mechanisms, party leaders often deploy institutional levers to safeguard their influence. These include restrictive internal rules, preemptive negotiations with preferred candidates, and centralized control over campaign resources to steer nomination outcomes (Cohen *et al.*, 2008; 2016).

As analyzed in Section 1.4 (How is the presidential ticket nominated?), most electoral systems examined in this study follow a party-dominant model where political parties determine both presidential and vice-presidential nominations. Although recent reforms have introduced more participatory mechanisms like primaries, these remain exceptional cases rather than standard practice (Freidenberg, 2016).

A distinct consideration involves independent (self-recruited) candidates, whose viability depends substantially on electoral law provisions (Brancati, 2008; Padilla, 2015; Siavelis & Morgenstern, 2008)¹³.

The main concern in this chapter is who holds the authority to select the running mate. This study assumes that the vice-presidential nominee is chosen after the presidential candidate, even in systems with primary elections. Yet the decision may rest with different actors: the presidential nominee, the party leadership, or a coalition partner. To examine these alternatives, the following subsections present four scenarios based on the partisan affiliation of the presidential candidate. Each configuration highlights a different mode of decision-making, ranging from choices made directly by the nominee to negotiated outcomes within parties or coalitions. Rather than advancing a single explanatory model, the analysis seeks to map these alternatives and underscore the political implications of each arrangement.

¹³ Chapter 4 (Unbound Tickets: The emergence of independent vice-presidential candidates) will analyze this phenomenon in depth.

1.6.1 Same-party tickets

When parties centralize presidential selection, the chosen candidate usually retains the leadership's confidence in their party loyalty as well as their electoral viability. The candidate represents the party's unified leadership in the presidential contest, embodying elite consensus and electoral strategy.

Even in primary elections, party elites frequently maintain considerable control over outcomes (Cohen *et al.*, 2008; 2016). Though primaries may appear more inclusive, the ultimate choice usually reaffirms the leading role of the presidential candidate on the selection of the running mate.

In intra-party vice-presidential selection, the influence of presidential candidates and party leadership often remains unclear. This interdependence manifests in two ways: the presidential nominee may directly choose their running mate or indirectly shape the outcome by rejecting options. While case studies with insider interviews could clarify the informal selection process, large-N comparative analyses of presidential tickets cannot realistically provide such operational detail.

The selection process described above finds clear illustration in Brazil's 1994 presidential campaign, when Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva sought election for the second time. Lula had established himself as the Workers' Party (PT) main leader through his participation in Brazil's inaugural post-authoritarian presidential election in 1989. His electoral performance that year solidified his position, making him the PT's uncontested choice for 1994 following the incumbent's impeachment.

The Brazilian Socialist Party (PSB) once more endorsed Lula's candidacy¹⁴, as in in 1989, initially proposing Senator José Paulo Bisol as vice-presidential candidate. However, Bisol withdrew before the campaign began¹⁵. When coalition partners like the Popular Socialist Party (PPS)¹⁶ suggested alternatives such as Roberto Freire, the PT leadership blocked these

¹⁴ The pre-electoral coalition Popular Brazil Front for Citizenship (Frente Brasil Popular pela Cidadania) was a leftist alliance that contested the 1994 presidential election. This coalition comprised a diverse array of political entities, including the Workers' Party (PT), the Brazilian Socialist Party (PSB), the Socialist Popular Party (PPS), the Green Party (PV), the Communist Party of Brazil (PCdoB), the Brazilian Communist Party (PCB), and the Unified Workers' Socialist Party (PSTU).

¹⁵ In April of 1994, the PSB confirmed Senator José Paulo Bisol (PSB-RS) as the vice-presidential candidate on Lula's (PT) ticket (Silva, E., 1994). However, in late June of that year, the newspaper *Folha de São Paulo* published a report accusing the senator of inflating four budget amendments for the following year (*Folha de São Paulo*, 1994). In the next month, new allegations emerged regarding irregular loans at Banco do Brasil (Krieger, 1994), which ultimately led to the withdrawal of his candidacy for the vice-presidency due to the resulting political damage (Silva, F. B., 1994).

¹⁶ In 2019, the Socialist Popular Party (PPS) changed its name to Cidadania.

nominations (Alves, 1994a). After internal discussions, Lula ultimately selected fellow party member Aloizio Mercadante (PT) (Alves, 1994b).

This case shows that, even during intra-party negotiations, the decisive voice often belongs to the presidential candidate, particularly when their position within the party is unchallenged. Party figures may suggest or oppose potential names, but the nominee usually has the last word, whether directly or through informal veto power. Vice-presidential selection in such contexts reflects a blend of party involvement and presidential authority. The next subsection examines a different situation: when the running mate has no party affiliation and the presidential candidate acts with greater independence from partisan structures.

1.6.2 Independent running mates

Although not the majority, independent vice-presidential candidates appear in roughly one-fifth of South American presidential elections, forming a significant share of cases. Following Bolleyer & Weeks (2009), King-Hall (1952), and Weeks (2016), this study defines such candidates as individuals lacking formal party affiliation and nomination through partisan channels. The data reveal that most independent candidacies appear in unified tickets where both presidential and vice-presidential nominees are unaffiliated with any party (90 of 519 cases, or 17.3%). By contrast, tickets where party-affiliated presidential candidates run with independent vice-presidential nominees are much less frequent (7 of 519 cases, or 1.3%). In total, vice-presidential independents appear in 18.6% of observed tickets (97 of 519)¹⁷. The presence of independent candidacies points to selection processes shaped less by partisan negotiation and more by the discretion of presidential contenders, as the subsequent cases indicate.

During Bolivia's contentious 2019 presidential election, former president Carlos Mesa launched a campaign against incumbent Evo Morales, who had held office since 2009 (El Deber, 2018a). Mesa, nominated by the Revolutionary Front of the Left (FRI), selected Gustavo Pedraza, a politically unaffiliated figure (e.g. independent), as his running mate. Pedraza had served as Minister of Sustainable Development under Mesa's administration (2002–2003) and possessed extensive experience collaborating with international organizations, including the UNDP, FAO, and World Bank (El Deber, 2018b). Their ticket ran unopposed in the January 2019 primaries, securing automatic qualification for the general election. Contemporary reports

¹⁷ These data will be presented in detail in Section 1.7 (Presidential tickets in South America).

confirmed that Mesa alone determined Pedraza's selection, highlighting his autonomy in selecting his partner (El Deber, 2018a; 2018b).

A parallel case emerged in Colombia, where independent candidate Enrique Gómez Martínez declared his presidential bid in early March 2022 (El Heraldo, 2022). Within days, he named Carlos Cuartas, another independent, as his running mate (Semana, 2022). The rapidity of this decision reinforces the latitude enjoyed by nonpartisan presidential candidates in assembling their tickets.

In Ecuador, Guillermo Lasso, an independent leading the Creating Opportunities Movement (CREO), made his third presidential bid in 2021. His vice-presidential pick, Alfredo Borrero, was also unaffiliated with any party. A physician with no political background, Borrero had directed the *Salvar Vidas* initiative during the pandemic, a project Lasso actively endorsed (La República, 2020). Their close professional ties suggest Borrero's selection reflected Lasso's personal preference rather than external pressures (García, 2021).

The cases from Bolivia, Colombia, and Ecuador suggest a common feature: presidential candidates who compete without party affiliation appear to enjoy greater autonomy in selecting their running mates compared to their party-affiliated counterparts. This recurrency points to the presidential agency in shaping electoral tickets. Unlike same-party nominations, where internal deliberations blur the weight of candidate preferences, the choice of independent running mates more clearly evidences the authority of the presidential nominee.

However, between these institutional and personal selection models lies a distinct coalitional approach: cross-party tickets that combine candidates from different political parties. The next section turns to this scenario, where the selection process must navigate in inter-party coordination and distribution of power within electoral coalitions.

1.6.3 Cross-party running mates

When the vice-presidential candidate represents a different party than the presidential nominee, this selection is a concession within pre-electoral bargaining. Pre-electoral coalitions (PECs), established prior to presidential contests, involve negotiated arrangements between parties. In these contexts, the presidential candidate's party may allow coalition partners to select the vice-presidential candidate, seeking to expand electoral appeal and improve competitive positioning (Bidegain, 2017; Couto, Soares & Livramento, 2021; Olivares *et al.*, 2020; Serrafiero, 2018; Uggla, 2020). Nevertheless, the presidential candidate and party

typically retain considerable oversight, whether through formal approval or informal negotiations.

The joint candidacy of presidential and vice-presidential nominees creates an inherent interdependence that extends beyond campaigning into potential governance collaboration. When presidential candidates are excluded from selecting their running mates, the resulting misalignment can undermine executive cohesion (Serrafero, 2018). Examples in Argentina and Brazil illustrate how such exclusions may precipitate executive fragmentation or even institutional crisis.

In Argentina, President Fernando de la Rúa's strained relationship with Vice President Carlos "Chacho" Álvarez, who was nominated as part of a coalition pact, deteriorated rapidly over disputes involving appointments and corruption allegations. Álvarez's resignation accelerated the collapse of the governing Alliance and intensified executive fragmentation. Similarly, Julio Cobos's opposition to Cristina Fernández de Kirchner's agenda, despite his nomination to expand electoral appeal, revealed their lack of programmatic cohesion and ultimately marginalized him within the administration (Serrafero, 2018).

In Brazil, Dilma Rousseff's reluctance to accept Michel Temer as her vice-presidential nominee, a decision reportedly forced by the PMDB during coalition talks, presaged the rupture that culminated in her impeachment (Dieguez, 2010). These cases suggest that sidelining presidential candidates in vice-presidential selection risks undermining governing cohesion.

Conversely, other examples indicate that presidential candidates frequently retain considerable sway in cross-party running mate selections, whether through direct nomination or negotiated approval mechanisms. Such practices reflect a pragmatic compromise: coalition partners may propose candidates, but the presidential nominees still retain veto power or approval rights to secure political compatibility.

This oversight proves essential given the ticket's shared electoral and governing mandate. When vice-presidential candidates are imposed without consultation, the gap in the coordination can lead to governance inefficiencies or instability. The following cases show how presidential candidates navigate coalitional constraints to assert influence over the selection of running mates from allies.

In Brazil's 1998 election, the entry of the Democratic Labor Party (PDT) into the PT-led coalition hinged on a decisive demand: the vice-presidential slot for Leonel Brizola. To secure the PDT's participation, Lula and his party conceded this nomination, showing how coalition building can require yielding control over ticket composition. Yet Brizola's inclusion

ultimately depended on Lula's approval, underscoring that even when parties make concessions, the presidential candidate retains the decisive voice in the choice of running mate (Tosta, 1998; Alves, 1998).

Presidential candidates hold considerable autonomy over the choice of running mate, as shown in Argentina's 2019 election. President Mauricio Macri chose Justicialist Party senator Miguel Ángel Pichetto, a figure outside the governing coalition, in a move aimed at courting moderate voters and reinforcing his anti-Kirchnerist stance (Mercado, 2019). Similarly, in Colombia's 2022 election, Hope Center Coalition (Coalición Centro Esperanza) primary winner Sergio Fajardo independently selected Luis Gilberto Murillo¹⁸ from the Colombia Reborn (CR) party, demonstrating the preservation of candidate agency even within negotiated coalition arrangements (Infobae, 2022; Michelsen, 2022). Even when alliances are pursued, these cases point out that the presidential candidate often influences the composition of the ticket.

Incumbency can expand a president's discretion in selecting a running mate, as in Macri's case in 2019, yet first-time candidates also exercise notable influence. In Brazil's 1994 election, Fernando Henrique Cardoso (PSDB) negotiated with the Liberal Front Party (PFL)¹⁹, which commanded substantial representation in Congress. Although the PFL obtained the right to nominate the vice-presidential candidate, Cardoso and the PSDB retained veto authority and rejected their initial proposal of Jorge Bornhausen (Faria, 1994; Faria & Wolthers, 1994).

Third parties might occasionally influence vice-presidential selection through coalition bargaining, as demonstrated during Brazil's 1989 election. When the Communist Party (PCdoB) vetoed the Green Party's (PV) preferred candidate Fernando Gabeira, a move that threatened coalition withdrawal and loss of electoral airtime, the Workers' Party (PT) was compelled to select consensus candidate José Paulo Bisol from the Brazilian Socialist Party (PSB) (Singer, 1989). This case underscores how coalition partners can leverage their participation to constrain presidential candidates' options.

Conversely, experienced candidates sometimes circumvent such constraints through anticipatory selection. Lula employed this strategy twice: first in 2002 by choosing José Alencar before finalizing the Liberal Party (PL) alliance (Cantanhêde, 2010; Fraga, 2002), and again in

¹⁸ The Dignity and Commitment Party (DIGNIDAD), the New Liberalism Party (PNL), the CR, the Independent Social Alliance (ASI), the Movement of Citizen Commitment (CC), and the Significant Group of Citizens: G.S.C. On the move! (¡En Marcha!), G.S.C. Colombia Has a Future (Colombia Tiene Futuro) and G.S.C. We Are Green Hope (Somos Verde Esperanza).

¹⁹ In 2007, the PFL changed its name to Democrats (Democratas). In 2022, it merged with the Social Liberal Party (PSL) to form Brazil Union (UNIÃO).

2022 by selecting Geraldo Alckmin prior to his formal affiliation with the Brazilian Socialist Party (PSB) (Lopes, 2022c; Ramalho, 2022).

The examples analyzed point to a recurring feature across different coalitional contexts: while partners may participate in vice-presidential selection, presidential candidates remain involved in the process. Whether through direct selection (Macri 2019 and Fajardo 2022), veto power (Cardoso 1994) or anticipatory nominations (Lula 2002/2022), presidential candidates appear to retain mechanisms to shape his running mate selection. Even in cases where partners secured nomination privileges, as with Brizola (1998), the presidential candidate's implicit or explicit approval seems to have been present.

These observations indicate that presidential candidates cannot be overlooked in vice-presidential selection processes. While the degree of their influence varies, their presence in the decision-making appears constant across observed cases. Based on this, the following section will present the different selection scenarios identified in the previous subsections, all of which reinforce the presidential candidate's persistent relevance in the process.

1.6.4 So, who chooses the vice-president? An explanatory proposal

Despite extensive work on presidential politics, one question remains largely overlooked: who effectively determines vice-presidential selection in South America? Who holds authority in the decision-making process depends on institutional rules, coalition arrangements, and electoral circumstances. In the absence of existing theoretical models addressing this question directly, this analysis develops a preliminary framework inductively from the empirical cases discussed earlier. Table 3 summarizes these scenarios and identifies the predominant actors in each nomination process.

This analysis identifies five scenarios through comparison of presidential and vice-presidential candidates' party affiliations. Each scenario reflects distinct patterns of actor involvement: (1) the presidential candidate, (2) the presidential candidate's party, and (3) the vice-presidential candidate's party. While these roles frequently overlap and informal influence often operates alongside formal procedures, the presidential candidate consistently emerges as a central figure, fulfilling roles that include primary decision-maker, formal approver, or negotiating partner.

Table 3 – Scenarios for vice-presidential candidate selection

Scenario	Party affiliation		Who chooses the VP candidate?
	Presidential Candidate	VP Candidate	
1	Party A	Party A	1. Party A 2. Presidential candidate
2	Party A	Party B	1. Party B 2. Presidential candidate 3. Party A
3	Independent	Independent	1. Presidential candidate
4	Independent	Party A	1. Party A 2. Presidential candidate
5	Party A	Independent	1. Party A 2. Presidential candidate

Note. Elaborated by the author.

In same-party tickets (Scenario 1), selection involves party bodies alongside the presidential nominee. Mixed-party tickets (Scenario 2) usually reflect coalition bargaining, though presidential candidates retain veto authority. Independent presidential candidates (Scenarios 3–4) face fewer institutional constraints, with decisions often concentrated around the nominee, even if party actors may still participate when the running mate is affiliated. When a party-affiliated presidential candidate chooses an independent running mate (Scenario 5), the process combines party consultation with presidential discretion, resembling Scenario 4 but preserving some institutional checks from Scenario 1. Together, these scenarios offer a framework for analyzing how vice-presidential candidates are selected.

The analysis proceeds from the premise that vice-presidential selection is consistently tied to presidential candidacies in the cases examined. For independent candidates, choosing a running mate is often an important step in building electoral viability. For party-affiliated candidates, the process may involve intra-party deliberation, inter-party negotiation, or a combination of both. In every scenario, the presidential candidate's preferences and choices remain central to the outcome.

Two dimensions appear particularly useful in accounting for variation across cases: (a) the presidential candidate's relative authority within their party or coalition, and (b) the formal and informal rules governing candidate nominations, including primary systems and regulations concerning independent candidacies.

The scenarios outlined here are not meant to be exhaustive or definitive. They offer an analytical lens to examine how different actors might influence the selection in diverse settings. A complete account of decision-making processes would require evidence currently beyond

this study's scope, such as internal party documents or interviews. Nevertheless, these scenarios provide a useful framework for examining selection mechanisms in South American presidential elections.

Having established this framework for understanding who selects vice-presidential candidates, the subsequent section analyzes how these selections manifest in ticket composition. The developed typology, which categorizes tickets by partisan alignment, not only identifies prevalent patterns but also informs the explanatory models advanced in later chapters.

1.7 PRESIDENTIAL TICKETS IN SOUTH AMERICA

Previous sections have outlined how South American presidential tickets demonstrate distinct institutional innovations compared to the United States model. In the U.S. system, parties usually nominate electoral tickets composed entirely of their own members, as exemplified by the 2020 Democratic ticket (Joe Biden and Kamala Harris) and Republican ticket (Donald Trump and Mike Pence). South American systems, however, display greater diversity in how presidential tickets are formed.

Beyond single-party tickets, two patterns appear frequently: cross-party pairings and the inclusion of at least one independent. In the original dataset, 186 of 519 tickets between 1979 and 2022, representing 35.8% of all cases in the region, fall into these categories.

The incidence of these alternative ticket arrangements differs markedly across South America's post-redemocratization contexts (see Table 5). Colombia shows the highest proportion at 68.3% of all presidential tickets during the study period (41 of 60 tickets), followed by Ecuador at 52.6% (61 of 116 tickets). Bolivia presents a more moderate occurrence, with 26.8% of tickets combining parties or including independents (26 of 97 tickets). Argentina's 24.3% (25 of 103 tickets) and Brazil's 21.2% (21 of 99 tickets) represent less frequent but still consistent adoption of these formats. Paraguay exhibits the lowest number: only 12 of 44 tickets.

Existing research has identified three main ticket types in these systems: (1) cross-party combinations (Serrafero 2018; Ugglá 2020), (2) fully independent tickets, and (3) hybrid tickets pairing independent and partisan candidates (Pignataro & Taylor-Robinson, 2019). Serrafero's (1999; 2007; 2018) pioneering typology, developed through analysis of the Argentinian case, distinguishes between "pure tickets" (*fórmula pura*), both candidates from the same party and "mixed tickets" (*fórmula mixta*), candidates from different parties, plus "impure tickets"

(*fórmula impura*) combining one independent and one party-affiliated candidate in either combination.

While this framework provides a useful starting point, it exhibits two limitations. First, it omits fully independent tickets. Second, the “impure tickets” category fails to differentiate between tickets featuring an independent presidential candidate with a partisan running mate versus the reverse composition. As the data gathered points out (see Table 5), the period under investigation includes seven instances of independent presidential candidates with partisan running mates, “Mixed-President Independent”, and nineteen cases of partisan presidential candidates with independent running mates, called “Mixed-VP Independent”.

These distinctions hold important theoretical implications, as the motivations and circumstances vary across compositions. Pignataro and Taylor-Robinson (2019) suggest that parties may pair their presidential candidates with independent running mates to reach voters without strong partisan attachments. Yet existing literature, including Ugglá’s (2020) analysis of vice-presidential candidate selection processes, lacks systematic examination of tickets headed by independent presidential candidates.

To address these gaps, this analysis proposes a modified typology that preserves Serrafiero’s core categories while incorporating additional distinctions. As shown in Table 4, the revised typology maintains the “pure ticket” designation for same-affiliation pairs (whether both partisan or both independent) and expands the “mixed ticket” category to account for all differential affiliation combinations.

Table 4 – Typology of presidential tickets

		Presidential candidate	
		Party A	Independent
VP candidate	Party A	Pure-partisan	Mixed-president independent
	Party B	Mixed-partisan	Mixed-president independent
	Independent	Mixed-VP independent	Pure-independent

Note. Elaborated by the author.

Presidential tickets in South America exhibit two distinct “pure” compositional types. The first, *pure-partisan tickets*, feature both candidates representing the same political party, as exemplified in Table 4 by a presidential candidate and vice-presidential candidate both from Party A. Empirical data from 54 elections across six countries since the third wave of

democratization (1979–2022) indicate that pure-partisan tickets account for 64.1% of cases (333 of 519 tickets), as shown in Table 5. Notably, even two elections, Bolivia in 2002 and Paraguay in 2003, featured exclusively pure-partisan tickets, with all other elections including at least one ticket that deviated from this traditional composition. When examined by country, pure-partisan tickets were most common in Brazil (78.8%, 78 of 99 tickets), followed by Argentina (75.8%, 78 of 103 tickets), Bolivia (73.2%, 71 of 97 tickets), and Paraguay (72.3%, 32 of 44 tickets).

Colombia presents a distinctive case where *pure-independent tickets*, rather than their pure-partisan counterparts, emerge as the dominant form. These tickets, characterized by two unaffiliated candidates running together, constitute 17.3% of all cases examined (90 of 519). Colombia’s proportion remains the highest at 51.7% (31 of 60 tickets), though its prevalence has declined over time, a trend that will be analyzed in Chapter 4 (Unbound Tickets: The emergence of independent vice-presidential candidates). In contrast, Ecuador demonstrates both the second-highest proportion (28.5%, 33 of 116 tickets) and a recent increase in independent vice-presidential candidates. Similar patterns appear in Bolivia (19.6%, 19 of 97 tickets) and Paraguay (15.9%, 7 of 44 tickets), though at lower levels.

Table 5 – Distribution and proportion of presidential tickets by type

Country	Election years	Number of elections	N	Pure-partisan	Mixed-partisan	Mixed-VP Indep	Mixed-president Indep	Pure-independent
Argentina	1983-2019	9	103	75.7% (78)	24.3% (25)			
Bolivia	1985-2020	10	97	73.2% (71)	3.1% (3)	4.1% (4)		19.6% (19)
Brazil	1989-2022	9	99	78.8% (78)	21.2% (21)			
Colombia	1994-2022	8	60	31.7% (19)	6.6% (4)	5% (3)	5% (3)	51.7% (31)
Ecuador	1979-2021	12	116	47.4% (55)	11.2% (13)	9.5% (11)	3.4% (4)	28.5% (33)
Paraguay	1993-2018	6	44	72.7% (32)	9.1% (4)	2.3% (1)		15.9% (7)
Total		54	519	64.1% (333)	13.5% (70)	3.7% (19)	1.4% (7)	17.3% (90)

Note. Elaborated by the author.

Table 5 shows no pure-independent tickets in Argentina and Brazil due to political parties' constitutional monopoly on candidate selection. Independent candidates became legally permissible in Ecuador only after the 1999 constitutional reform. While Table 5 provides aggregate data, subsequent chapters will examine the temporal development of these ticket types in greater detail.

The revised typology identifies three distinct mixed-ticket types based on party affiliation patterns. The first category, *mixed-partisan tickets*, consists of presidential and vice-presidential candidates from different political parties, as shown in Table 4: the combination of presidential candidate from Party A and VP candidate from Party B. With 70 observations between 1979 and 2022 (13.5% of all tickets), this represents the third most common arrangement. These tickets frequently emerge from electoral alliances, a phenomenon examined in depth in Chapter 2 (Run with me: Formation of mixed-partisan presidential tickets).

In Brazil and Argentina, where independent candidates are not allowed, only two ticket types appear: pure-partisan and mixed-partisan. While pure-partisan tickets dominate, mixed-partisan tickets still account for substantial proportions: 24.3% in Argentina (25 of 103 tickets) and 21.2% in Brazil (21 of 99 tickets). As Chapter 2 will explore, both countries exhibit cyclical patterns in mixed-partisan ticket prevalence, with alternating elections showing higher and lower frequencies of these compositions.

The second mixed-ticket configuration, *mixed-VP independent*, combines a partisan presidential candidate (Party A in Table 4) with an independent running mate. This arrangement accounts for 19 cases (3.7% of total tickets) across 13 elections, exemplified by Bolivia's 2020 Comunidad Ciudadana ticket featuring former president Carlos Mesa (FRI) and independent Gustavo Pedraza.

The distribution sets out distinct national patterns. Bolivia presented one mixed-VP independent ticket in each election between 2009 and 2020, mirroring Colombia's pattern in 2006, 2010, and 2018. Paraguay represents a more limited case with a single occurrence in 2013, when the PRF's Mario Ferrero selected independent bureaucrat Cynthia Brizuela Speratti. Ecuador emerges as the exceptional case, with multiple tickets appearing per election: four in 2002, two in 2006, one each in 2013 and 2017, and three in 2021. This variation suggests Ecuador's political actors have employed independent vice-presidential candidates more systematically than their regional counterparts, potentially as a strategy to attract electors with weak party loyalties (Pignataro & Taylor-Robinson, 2019).

The least common format, *mixed-president independent* tickets, combines an independent presidential candidate with a partisan running mate, as represented by Party A in Table 4. This arrangement occurs in a minority of cases, accounting for three times in Colombia (5% of 60 tickets) and four times in Ecuador (3.4% of 116 tickets).

In Colombia, the first recorded instance occurred in the 1994 election when Antonio Navarro Wolff of the Democratic Alliance M-19 (M-19) selected Jesús Piñacue from ASI as his running mate. More recently, in 2018, Sergio Fajardo (CC) ran with Green Party (PV) member Claudia López Hernández. In 2022, Gustavo Petro (CH) selected Francia Márquez from POLO as his vice-presidential candidate.

Ecuador presents a more consistent pattern of mixed-president independent tickets, with occurrences in 2002, 2006, 2013, and 2021. The most successful case emerged in 2006 when the coalition ticket of León Roldós Aguilera (RED) and Ramiro González (ID) secured 14% of the popular vote, demonstrating the viability of this unconventional arrangement. This ticket was formed through a coalition between the Ethics and Democracy Network Movement (RED), which nominated Roldós for president, and the Democratic Left (ID), which nominated Gonzalez for vice-president.

The data presented in this section indicate important differences between South American presidential ticket compositions and the U.S. model. Pure-partisan tickets continue to constitute the most common arrangement, maintaining their predominance in Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, and Paraguay. At the same time, pure-independent tickets have established themselves as a recurrent feature in Colombia and Ecuador, appearing with salient frequency.

Building on Serrafiero's foundational work, this study advances a typology through three innovations: it introduces pure-independent tickets as a distinct category, differentiates mixed tickets into three arrangements (mixed-partisan, mixed-VP independent, and mixed-president independent), and applies this classification to six countries across four decades (1979–2022). The result highlights broader institutional variation and uncovers dimensions of ticket formation that earlier accounts left aside.

Strikingly, the data show two meaningful findings. First, pure-independent tickets emerge as the second most frequent arrangement after pure-partisan tickets, suggesting growing political space for independent candidates in the region. Second, distinct national patterns are evident. Mixed-partisan tickets occur regularly in Brazil and Argentina, where they might reflect inter-party alliances. Ecuador shows relatively frequent use of mixed-VP independent

tickets, potentially appealing to less partisan voters, while mixed-president independent arrangements remain uncommon throughout the region.

These observations provide preliminary evidence that electoral rules, party systems and electoral strategies may collectively shape ticket formation. The following chapters will focus specifically on how these ticket arrangements have evolved over time and what factors influence the selection of running mates across different political contexts.

1.8 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This chapter has analyzed vice-presidential selection processes in South America, suggesting they involve a broader set of actors and decision-making arenas, as well as more diverse ticket arrangements, than recognized in the literature. While the United States maintains a predominantly pure-partisan model, South American ticket composition reflects both institutional flexibility and region-specific constraints and incentives, such as multiparty system and the need to build coalitions. The vice-presidency in this regional context operates not as a ceremonial position but as an active tool for coalition formation, electoral appeal, and intra-party negotiation.

The analysis first established how institutional frameworks shape nomination processes. Constitutional provisions and electoral regulations create varying opportunities for ticket composition, particularly in systems permitting independent candidates and encouraging inter-party coordination. However, while these institutional factors establish the boundaries of possibility, they cannot fully account for observed outcomes.

Beyond formal rules, the empirical evidence reveals candidate-centered selection as the prevailing practice. In most cases examined, presidential candidates or small elite circles exercise decisive control over vice-presidential nominations. This logic of concentration underscores the personalization of presidential campaigns in the region.

This logic can be observed in both the Bolivian and Brazilian cases. In Bolivia's 2020 election, Carlos Mesa (FRI) unilaterally selected select independent technocrat Gustavo Pedraza, demonstrating presidential autonomy in running mate selection. In contrast, Brazil's 1989 case exemplifies how coalition pressures shape selections. When the Communist Party vetoed Lula's initial vice-presidential choice, the Workers' Party (PT) selected José Paulo Bisol (PSB) to preserve the alliance, a decision that reflects negotiated coalition politics rather than unilateral candidate preference. These contrasting examples underscore how vice-presidential

selection serves either as an instrument of presidential prerogative or as a product of negotiated coalition politics, with implications for subsequent governance.

Drawing on original data, the findings reveal considerable variation in ticket composition, challenging assumptions of uniformity in presidentialism. Colombia stands out for its frequent use of pure-independent tickets, while Argentina and Brazil display cyclical alternation between pure-partisan and mixed-partisan formats. Bolivia and Ecuador exhibit stable patterns of mixed tickets that combine partisan and independent candidates, particularly featuring party-affiliated presidential candidates with unaffiliated running mates. These contrasts are not random but reflect responses to institutional incentives, party system fragmentation, and electoral pressures.

To organize this diversity, the chapter advances a refined typology, building on existing classifications but modified through empirical analysis. This advances prior models by recognizing pure-independent tickets as a distinct category and by distinguishing mixed types according to which candidate retains party affiliation. These distinctions matter analytically by indicating two logics: coalition building versus appeals to less partisan voters.

The framework's primary limitation lies in its exclusion of systems with multiple vice-presidential positions, including Peru's and Costa Rica's dual-VP systems and Honduras' single-VP arrangement. These cases entail distinct institutional patterns that fall outside the scope of the current analysis and may require a separate typological lens.

Often overlooked in electoral studies, vice-presidential nominations offer a privileged entry point for understanding how presidential systems manage fragmentation, negotiate alliances, and reshape institutional arrangements. The typology developed here is not a static taxonomy, but an analytical tool grounded in regional political contexts. By foregrounding ticket composition as both data and variation, this chapter encourages a reconsideration of how executive tickets are constructed and what they reveal about presidential politics in Latin America.

2 RUN WITH ME: FORMATION OF MIXED-PARTISAN PRESIDENTIAL TICKETS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The institutional diffusion of the U.S. political model in the region extended beyond presidentialism to include complementary executive offices such as the vice-presidency (Lopes, 2022b). In post-redemocratization contexts, most South American countries adopted the U.S. rule of electing presidential and vice-presidential candidates on a single ticket. While this arrangement originated in bipartisan systems, where presidential candidates typically exercise unilateral authority over running mate selection, its implementation in South America's multiparty has produced distinct institutional adaptations.

As Chapter 1 (Designing the Vice-Presidential Selection) established, these innovations include the emergence of mixed-partisan tickets comprising candidates from different political parties. Existing scholarship suggests that the occurrence of such tickets reflects responses to two structural conditions: the need to form pre-electoral coalitions (Serrafero, 2018) and the imperative to maximize electoral appeal (Uggla, 2020). In South America's fragmented party systems, where presidents frequently lack legislative majorities, pre-electoral coalition formation becomes particularly important (Albala, 2017; 2021; Chasquetti, 2000; Freudenreich, 2016; Golder, 2006a, 2006b; Kellam, 2017; Ramirez, 2008). This institutional context appears to encourage negotiated vice-presidential nominations, often resulting in cross-party ticket arrangements (Olivares *et al.*, 2020). Although systematic evidence remains limited, this pattern may explain the increasing frequency of mixed-partisan tickets in the region.

Scholarly work on Latin American ticket composition has traditionally emphasized candidates' personal attributes and political backgrounds, mirroring analytical frameworks developed for the U.S. context (Lopes, 2020; 2022a; Mieres & Pampín, 2015; Pignataro & Taylor-Robinson, 2019). Yet South American ticket formation reflects more complex institutional arrangements than the U.S. two-party model, as set out in the last chapter. This variation implies that exclusive focus on individual characteristics offers limited capacity to explain observed tickets formation patterns. These limits point to the need to consider the institutional, political, and electoral factors that underpin cross-party nominations. This raises the following question: What institutional and political conditions lead presidential candidates to select running mates from other parties?

The argument unfolds in three stages. It begins with a review of theoretical perspectives on pre-electoral coalitions (PEC) and the incentives that sustain them, showing how executive-oriented party strategies can encourage cross-party ticket formation. From this discussion emerge four hypotheses, translated into variables designed to capture the contexts in which mixed-partisan tickets are most likely to appear.

These propositions are then tested through multivariate analysis using data from 519 presidential elections in six South American countries between 1979 and 2022. All mixed-partisan tickets appear within pre-electoral coalitions, though some alliances produce no ticket with nominees from different parties. In fragmented systems, competitively viable parties with presidentialized orientations prove more likely to form mixed-partisan tickets when doing so strengthens both electoral prospects and coalition capacity. The chapter closes by tracing longitudinal variation in the frequency of such tickets and showing how party system fragmentation interacts with electoral strategies, suggesting that the vice-presidency has evolved into an institutional mechanism for alliance-building in multiparty presidential systems.

2.2 TO LAUNCH A PURE TICKET OR TO SHARE THE BALLOT? FRAMING WHY PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES TURN TO OTHER PARTIES FOR RUNNING MATES

In early South American constitutions, the vice-president was designated as the runner-up in presidential elections. This arrangement often led to conflicts and conspiracies surrounding the presidency, as the vice-president's ambition was to succeed the president. Following repeated disputes within the presidency, some countries chose to abolish the office, while others adopted the North American approach: an independent election for the vice-presidential position (Bidegain, 2017; Marsteintredet & Ugglå, 2019).

The separate election system functioned relatively effectively until the early twentieth century, when new political tensions emerged. Vice-presidents elected independently often lacked alignment with presidential agendas, particularly when representing opposing parties. This misalignment produced executive branch conflicts, leading multiple countries, including Colombia (1910-1991), Paraguay (1940-1992), and Brazil (1934-1946), to temporarily eliminate the vice-presidency entirely during these periods (Bidegain, 2017).

The third wave of democratization brought democratic restoration and institutional reconfiguration. Colombia and Paraguay reintroduced the vice-presidency. By the 1990s, this dual transformation had produced regional convergence on joint presidential and vice-

presidential tickets as the dominant electoral model (Marsteintredet & Ugglá, 2019). This institutional stabilization, however, introduced new considerations for ticket formation, particularly regarding cross-party selections that this study examines.

The analytical framework for studying vice-presidential selection emerges from U.S. studies. Since the 1980s, researchers have analyzed the political considerations underlying this process (Dudley & Rapaport, 1989; Hurwitz, 1980; Natoli, 1980; Nelson, 1988). These studies conceptualize running mate selection not merely as a personnel decision, but as a signal to electorates about the presidential candidate's judgment and decision-making capacity, essential qualities for an executive leadership (Goldstein, 2016). Later work has identified specific selection criteria through comparative analysis of vice-presidential nominees (Baumgartner, 2008; 2012; 2016; Hiller & Kriner, 2008; Sigelman & Wahlbeck, 1997).

Literature identifies two predominant selection strategies. The first emphasizes complementary attributes, where presidential candidates balance geographic, ideological, demographic, or experiential characteristics through their running mate choice (Baumgartner, 2006; Mieres & Pampín, 2015; Polsby *et al.*, 2016; Sigelman & Wahlbeck, 1997). The second prioritizes governing capacity, selecting candidates whose political experience suggests readiness to assume presidential duties and effectively discharge vice-presidential responsibilities (Baumgartner, 2008; 2012; 2016; Hiller & Kriner, 2008; Nelson, 1988; Pignataro & Taylor-Robinson, 2019).

So far, only Ugglá (2020) has examined the determinants of selecting running mates from outside the presidential candidate's party. Analyzing leading tickets, Ugglá points out how such choices may simultaneously serve electoral and governing objectives. While several scholars have noted the potential use of vice-presidential nominations as bargaining instrument in pre-electoral coalition formation (Bidegain, 2017; Couto, Soares & Livramento, 2021; Kellam, 2017; Olivares *et al.*, 2020; Serrafiero, 2018), this strategic dimension remains underexplored in empirical research.

Unlike two-party systems, South America's multiparty arrangement produces challenges for presidents seeking legislative majorities (Chasquetti, 2000; Ramírez, 2008). To address this, parties are compelled to form coalitions prior to elections (Albala, 2017; 2021; Albala, Borges & Couto, 2021; Kellam, 2017). To attract allies, parties may offer the vice-presidential nomination on the electoral ticket. Unlike ministerial or other appointments, they offer allied parties guaranteed executive representation through constitutionally fixed mandates.

The Brazilian case exemplifies this logic. During the 2010 election cycle, President Lula's Workers' Party (PT) offered the vice-presidential nomination to the Brazilian Democratic Movement (PMDB)²⁰, the largest congressional party at the time. This concession brought PMDB leader Michel Temer onto the ticket while securing legislative support for Lula's successor (Dieguez, 2010). Likewise, in Argentina's 2007 race, the PJ-led Front for Victory used the vice-presidential slot to cement an agreement with a dissident UCR faction – the “Radicales K” – by nominating Julio Cobos, thereby broadening the coalition's reach and signaling cooperative governance in Congress. In both cases, the vice-presidential nomination operated as a bargaining instrument that advanced immediate electoral goals and anticipated legislative support, even though significant conflicts within the governing coalition surfaced later (Marsteintredet & Ugglá, 2019).²¹

These examples demonstrate how vice-presidential nominations can institutionalize coalition agreements by incorporating support parties directly into electoral tickets (Olivares *et al.*, 2020; Serrafero, 2018). While Ugglá's (2020) analysis of leading tickets shows that cross-party vice-presidential selections may serve both electoral and governing aims, this study advances the discussion by identifying the conditions that favor such choices. The logic of mixed-partisan ticket formation suggests that presidential candidates and their parties face competing incentives when selecting running mates: the need to maintain party cohesion versus the potential benefits of incorporating external allies. When the calculus tilts toward coalition-building, whether to mobilize broader electoral support, secure legislative alliances, or both, the likelihood of mixed-partisan ticket formation increases substantially. These considerations lead to the following testable proposition:

Hypothesis 1: When establishing pre-electoral coalitions, presidential candidates demonstrate greater propensity to select vice-presidential candidates from partner parties compared to other forms of ticket composition.

These coalition-building incentives tend to intensify in fragmented party systems, which pose two distinct difficulties for presidential candidates. First, under majoritarian electoral rules, party system fragmentation reduces the viability of unilateral presidential bids. As the

²⁰ In 2017, the party renamed itself to Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB).

²¹ Few studies have examined the difficulties presidents face when working with vice-presidents from other parties. (see Marsteintredet & Ugglá, 2019; Mittelman, 2019). However, the present chapter does not concentrate on that subject.

number of viable competitors increases, the chances of a single party winning in the first round diminish (Bertholini, Pereira & Bugarin, 2022). In response, presidential candidates are more likely to seek pre-electoral coalitions, increasing the pool of potential allies from which running mates can be selected.

Second, fragmentation hinders post-electoral governability. When legislative seats are widely dispersed among parties, prospective presidents are pressured to secure coalition support in advance. In this context, the vice-presidential nomination may become a strategic tool to attract and commit governing partners. Accordingly, the hypothesis derives from coordination pressures faced by presidential candidates in fragmented systems, particularly in the composition of their tickets.

Hypothesis 2: As party system fragmentation increases, presidential candidates become more likely to select a vice-presidential running mate from a different party.

The obstacles of party system fragmentation emerge within a defining feature of presidential systems: their dual electoral logics. Whereas presidential elections demand the construction of nationwide campaigns, legislative races reward geographically targeted campaigns focused on specific constituencies (Samuels & Shugart, 2010). This institutional dichotomy leads parties to develop distinct orientations based on their electoral objectives (Samuels, 2002).

By the same token, the longitudinal analysis by Bertholini, Pereira, and Bugarin (2022) found a pattern of path dependence in presidential competition. Parties with previous experience contesting executive elections, regardless of electoral success, are more likely to compete again in presidential elections, representing entrenched organizational trajectories. This pattern characterizes Argentina's Justicialist Party (PJ), which has contested every presidential election since 1983, Paraguay's National Republican Association (ANR-PC), and Brazil's Workers' Party (PT). Even the Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB) maintained this pattern until its unprecedented withdrawal from the 2022 presidential race.

Within this strategic landscape, parties tend to choose between two electoral paths. *Presidential protagonist parties* concentrate their efforts on executive branch competition, while *legislative support parties* focus primarily on maximizing their parliamentary representation. The latter group exchanges legislative cooperation for policy influence and executive branch appointments, thereby facilitating governability (Bertholini *et al.*, 2022).

Further differentiation exists among protagonist parties, with West and Spoon (2012) distinguishing between electorally viable parties, established organizations with demonstrable winning potential based on historical performance, and visibility-seeking parties that utilize presidential campaigns mainly as vehicles for voter outreach and organizational maintenance.

In a presidential election, competitive parties adopt a vote-maximizing strategy to achieve their primary goal of winning office (Downs, 1957). In this context, this study argues that, with the presidential candidate's agreement, parties often face a trade-off: maintain programmatic coherence or use the vice-presidential nomination as a bargaining tool to attract allies and their votes. When they choose the latter, this can mean softening their policy platform and offering the position of presidential substitute (Müller & Strøm, 2000; Strøm, 1990). Therefore, these candidacies are more likely to form mixed-partisan tickets.

In Brazil, between 1994 and 2014, the Workers' Party (PT) and Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB) consistently fielded presidential candidates as protagonist parties, while the Liberal Front Party (PFL/DEM) and Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (PMDB) predominantly acted as supporting parties. Electoral records show PFL/DEM providing vice-presidential nominees for PSDB tickets in 1994, 1998, 2006, and 2010, while PMDB occupied the vice-presidential slot on both PSDB (2002) and PT (2010, 2014) tickets despite abstaining from presidential nominations in most elections. These cases point out how protagonist parties leverage vice-presidential positions to formalize pre-electoral coalitions.

As noted previously, among protagonist parties, an important distinction arises between those competing to win and those prioritizing visibility. In Brazil, for instance, while electorally competitive parties like PT and PSDB campaign with realistic winning prospects, smaller parties such as the Socialism and Liberty Party (PSOL) and Unified Socialist Workers' Party (PSTU) participate primarily for platform visibility, securing less than 1% of votes. This pattern justifies differentiating between parties that consistently engage in competitive presidential campaigns: those with a plausible path to victory, as evidenced by historical performance, and those whose participation serves primarily to amplify their ideological platforms despite minimal winning prospects.

In multiparty presidential systems, where executives rarely command a legislative majority, parties with chances to win the presidential election, based on the previous performance, often need to negotiate alliances before the election. In this context, protagonist parties and their candidates might leverage the vice-presidential nomination to secure allied support and strengthen their electoral position. Consequently, competitive parties, unlike their

not competitive counterparts, are more inclined to form mixed-partisan tickets, using the vice-presidency as a bargaining tool to broaden their electoral base and consolidate coalition agreements. These observations yield the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: Presidential candidates from protagonist parties that present repetitive records of competitiveness are more likely to run in a mixed-partisan ticket.

Politicians employ different instruments to signal their electoral intentions, and the formation of the ticket is one of them (Court & Lynch, 2015). The nomination of a second member of the electoral ticket provides an opportunity for the presidential candidacy to adopt vote-seeking strategies tailored to specific constituencies.

One conventional approach of campaigning strategies is to target the moderate median voter. As the median voter theorem posits, candidates who converge toward the ideological center tend to improve their electoral prospects (Congleton, 2004; Downs, 1957). Consequently, when a presidential candidate's ideological positioning limits their appeal to median voters, the vice-presidential nomination becomes a tool to counterbalance for this deficit. Candidates positioned at the ideological extremes may thus appoint a running mate in the expectation that this choice will widen the ticket's appeal and achieve balance. So, this choice aims to attract voters outside the presidential candidate's core base, shifting the ticket's perceived ideological center (Sigelman & Wahlbeck, 1997).

Parties positioned away from the ideological center are especially prone to form mixed-partisan tickets. By nominating a vice-presidential candidate from another party, they can signal moderation and appeal to voters beyond their core base. This strategy draws on the median voter theorem, which suggests that candidates closer to the center improve their electoral chances (Congleton, 2004; Downs, 1957). Yet mixed-partisan tickets might not always serve this balancing purpose. In some cases, their formation can reflect other considerations, such as coalition-building or regional representation.

Ideological balancing through vice-presidential selection proved decisive in Paraguay's 2008 presidential election. The Christian Democratic Party (PDC), a left-wing organization, broke the Colorado Party's (ANR-PC) six-decade electoral dominance by nominating Fernando Lugo for president while selecting Federico Franco from the center-right Authentic Radical Liberal Party (PLRA) as his running mate. This pairing resulted in an ideologically balanced ticket that expanded the coalition's potential voter base across Paraguay's political spectrum.

A similar pattern emerged in Brazil, where the Workers' Party (PT) demonstrated adaptive ticket formation strategies. In 1989, Lula and the PT formed a ticket with the Brazilian Socialist Party (PSB), which nominated José Paulo Bisol as vice-presidential candidate. The party repeated this ideologically aligned approach in 1998 by partnering with the Democratic Labor Party (PDT), whose member Leonel Brizola joined the ticket. This trend shifted in 2002 when Lula selected José Alencar, a right-wing candidate from the Liberal Party (PL) as running mate, marking the first time the PT deliberately constructed an ideologically diversified, mixed-partisan presidential ticket (Lopes, 2022a). This reconfiguration preceded Lula's electoral success after three previous attempts.

These cases suggest that non-moderate parties face incentives to pursue balanced-ticket strategies resulting in mixed-partisan arrangements. When extremist parties compete in presidential elections, the imperative to expand their electoral appeal makes them more likely to incorporate coalition partners from across the ideological spectrum. This leads to the fourth hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4: Presidential candidates from non-moderate parties are more likely to form mixed-partisan tickets as a strategy of ideological balancing.

Taken together, the literature suggests that mixed-partisan presidential tickets in South America emerge from an interplay of institutional incentives, party strategies, and contextual conditions. The theoretical framework indicates that three conditions particularly favor this type of vice-presidential selection: the need to form pre-electoral coalitions, fragmentation within party systems, and the adoption of presidentialized strategies by competitive parties. Additional situational variables, including founding elections or incumbent participation, may further influence the environment in which these decisions unfold, though these remain secondary to the core theoretical framework (Spoon & West, 2015). Whereas U.S. scholarship has emphasized candidate-centered ideological balancing, this study approaches the phenomenon as primarily a party-level strategy, reflecting both theoretical considerations and practical constraints in measuring individual politicians' ideological positions. The subsequent section details the research methodology and variable operationalization for empirically evaluating these propositions.

2.3 DATA AND METHODS

This chapter draws on the analysis of the 54 democratic elections in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Paraguay. The analysis focuses on presidential tickets, defined as the paired candidates nominated for president and vice-president in each election. This approach facilitates comparison of tickets across countries over time.

The original dataset was developed to examine and compare vice-presidential nomination patterns in South American presidential systems. Initial candidate information, including names, party affiliations, and ticket composition, was sourced from Wikipedia due to its comprehensive documentation of electoral results.

For supplementary variables referenced in subsequent chapters, including party ideology, institutionalization levels, and coalition characteristics, the research draws on previous studies and institutional databases. These sources are documented in the accompanying codebook²². The variables analyzed in this chapter are detailed in the following subsection.

This study investigates the conditions that prompt presidential candidates to form mixed-partisan tickets. These electoral formulas were analyzed by contrasting them with all other ticket types. Because the outcome variable has a binary classification (mixed versus others), the analysis employed logistic regression. This method estimates how party strategies, institutional contexts, and coalition arrangements shape the probability of mixed-ticket formation.

2.3.1 Operationalization

The dependent variable distinguishes mixed-partisan tickets from all other types, coded as 1 when presidential and vice-presidential candidates represent different parties, and 0 otherwise. This operationalization enables direct testing of cross-party ticket formation patterns.

To evaluate the role of coalitional coordination in ticket composition, the analysis uses a dichotomous indicator for pre-electoral coalitions (PECs). Following Golder (2006a; 2006b), PECs are defined as formal or informal public agreements between two or more parties to field a joint presidential ticket. Tickets labeled as alliances, fronts, coalitions, confederations, or federations are coded as 1; all others as 0.

²² The codebook accompanies the datasets used in this thesis.

For Hypothesis 2 concerning party system fragmentation effects, the model incorporates the Effective Number of Parties at the Legislative Level (ENPP) (Laakso & Taagepera, 1979). To address the skewed distribution of ENPP values, the model applies a logarithmic transformation, which better captures fragmentation's diminishing marginal effects on ticket composition. While most data originate from Gallagher (2019), recent elections use lower house seat distributions in bicameral systems or single chamber compositions in unicameral legislatures. Higher ENPP values, reflecting greater fragmentation, could increase mixed-partisan ticket likelihood.

Hypothesis 3 examines how party competitiveness influences mixed-partisan ticket formation. The theoretical framework suggests that parties demonstrating presidential ambitions through prior electoral performance are more likely to form cross-party tickets. The operationalization focuses on electorally viable parties, defined as those that both contested the previous presidential election and obtained at least 10% of first-round valid votes. These cases receive a code of 1 in the binary Protagonist Party variable, while all other parties are coded as 0. This threshold captures the minimum level of competitiveness required for a party to attract potential coalition partners.

Hypothesis 4 posits that ideologically non-moderate parties are more likely to form mixed-partisan tickets, potentially to achieve ideological balance with moderate partners. To test this proposition, the analysis employs Coppedge's (1997) classification²³ scheme to operationalize party positioning. The resulting binary variable, Non-Moderate Party, is coded as 1 for parties falling outside the moderate ideological spectrum and 0 for moderate parties.

Moreover, the research incorporates three control variables addressing potentially influential alternative explanations. First, a Founding Election control variable addresses the unique characteristics of initial post-transition elections, which constitute approximately 10% of observations. To preserve these cases while maintaining consistency, all presidential candidates' parties in founding elections receive non-protagonist coding (0) in the competitiveness variable.

Second, following Spoon and West's (2015) findings on incumbency advantage, an Incumbent variable controls for elections featuring sitting presidents. Due to the electoral

²³ Appendix II provides a thorough exposition of the ideological classification of parties.

advantage, the president's presence in the race might discourage competitors from entering. Coded as 1 when the incumbent runs for reelection and 0 otherwise.

Third, the VP Legislative variable captures institutional variations in vice-presidential roles. There are two types of VP constitutional assignments: Executive and Legislative. The VP is the president of one of the Legislative's houses. This also lumps together the cases where the VP must coordinate the relationship between the branches. Thus, the vice-president is elected for an executive post, although the person in charge transits, directly or indirectly, in the legislative sphere. If this is the case, it is assumed that the VP is on the Legislative on behalf of the Executive's interests (Goldstein, 2016). Hence, the Legislative assignment might have a positive effect on the result. So, it is coded 1 when the VP has any duties in or with the Legislative and 0 otherwise.

Table 6 presents complete specifications for all variables, including these controls. Descriptive statistics for all measures appear in Appendix II. The inclusion of these measures helps isolate the effects of the primary explanatory variables while accounting for relevant institutional and contextual factors.

Table 6 – Variables and measurements

Variables	Type	Measurement
DV: Mixed-partisan ticket	Dummy	1: If the president and the VP candidates are from different parties 0: Otherwise
H1: PEC	Dummy	1: If the presidential candidacy is based on a PEC 0: Otherwise
H2: ENPP	Continuous	Effective number of parties at the legislative level, or ENPP
H3: Protagonist party	Dummy	1: If the presidential candidate's party ran in the previous election for the national executive and reached $\geq 10\%$ of the votes 0: Otherwise
H4: Non-moderate party	Dummy	1: If the president's party reached -1 or 1 in Coppedge classification 0: Otherwise
Political controls		
Founding election	Dummy	1: If the election is the first since the return of democracy 0: Otherwise
Incumbent	Dummy	1: If the president's party is ideologically extremist 0: Otherwise
VP Legislative	Dummy	1: If the VP has any duties in or with the Legislative 0: Otherwise

Note. Elaborated by the author.

2.4 RESULTS

Based on previous studies, the first hypothesis (H1) posits that the vice-presidential nomination serves as a bargaining asset for presidential candidates to secure coalition agreements. Under such conditions, presidential candidates and their parties become more likely to select a running mate from another party, thereby producing mixed-partisan tickets. To evaluate this claim, the analysis examines the five types of presidential tickets and observed their support by pre-electoral coalitions (PEC).

Table 7 demonstrate that all mixed-partisan tickets are observed among PEC-backed formulas; none are observed outside that set. This pattern indicates an empirical concentration of mixed-partisan tickets within the coalitional context. At the same time, many PEC-backed

tickets remain same-party, meaning that PECs expand the feasible set for mixed-partisan composition but do not determine it.

Table 7 – Distribution and proportion of presidential tickets supported by pre-electoral coalitions (PEC)

	With PEC	Without PEC	N
Mixed-partisan	100% 70		70
Mixed-VP Independent	52.6% 10	47.4% 9	19
Mixed-president Independent	85.7% 6	14.3% 1	7
Pure-partisan	13.5% 45	86.5% 288	333
Pure-independent	16.6% 15	83.3% 75	90
N	146	373	519

Note. Elaborated by the author.

Strikingly, Table 7 also demonstrates that 76 of 146 PEC-backed tickets (52%) did not adopt a mixed-partisan format. Thus, although mixed-partisan tickets in these data appear exclusively within PEC-backed formulas, PECs are also common among other ticket types. In short, PECs mark the coalitional setting in which mixed-partisan composition can occur, but their presence alone does not imply that a ticket will be mixed.

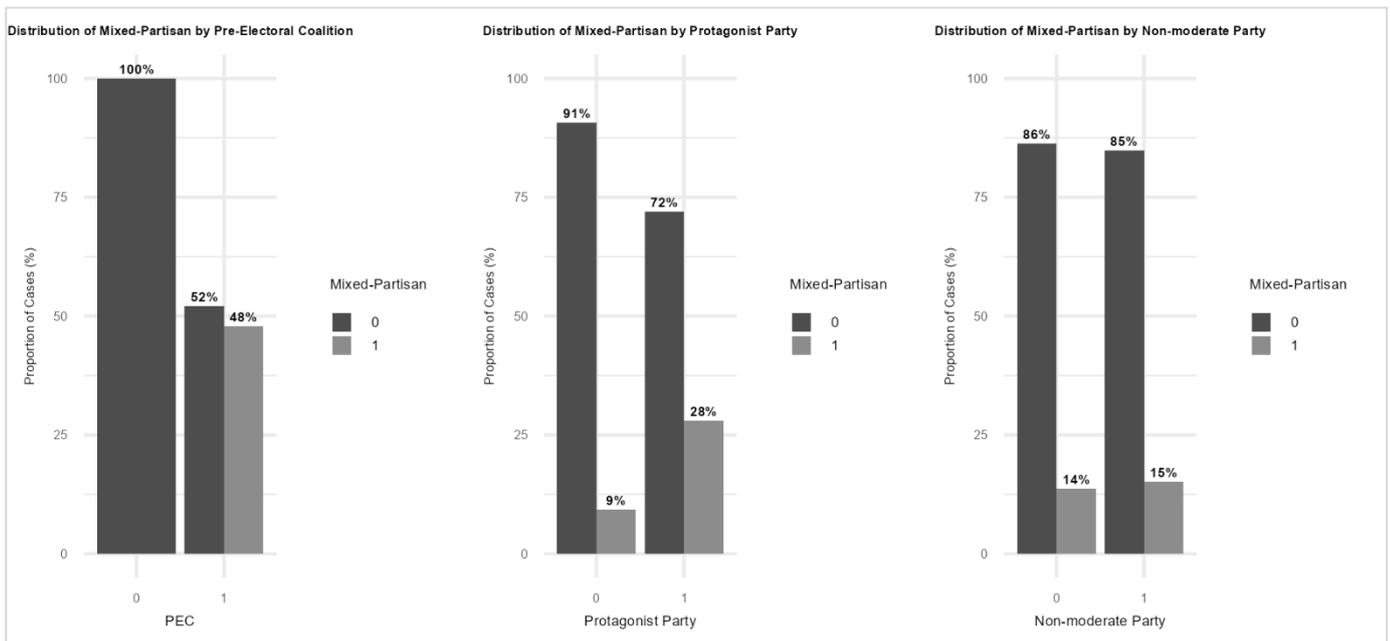
The data show ten cases where PEC-backed tickets included an independent (nonpartisan) vice-presidential candidate, resulting in what can be termed mixed VP-independent tickets. Among tickets led by independent presidential candidates, two distinct formats can be identified. In mixed-president independent tickets, where the president is unaffiliated, but the vice-presidential nominee comes from a party, coalition members often shaped the choice of running mate: six of these tickets received PEC support, indicating that partners negotiated the vice-presidential nomination. Pure-independent tickets, by contrast, paired two unaffiliated candidates. Even when these 15 tickets had PEC backing, coalition

parties played no role in the selection of the running mate, underscoring the autonomy of independent presidential candidates.

In Ecuador's 1996 election, bargaining over the vice-presidency was evident as independent presidential candidate Ricardo Noboa selected Francisco Huerta (PLRE) as his running mate. This ticket received support from both the Ecuadorian Radical Liberal Party (PLRE) and the Alfarist Radical Front (FRA). Noboa, a seasoned politician who had served as Minister of Industry under León Febres-Cordero's administration and as a National Assembly member in 1994, had disaffiliated from the Social Christian Party (PSC) two years earlier. His political stature enabled him to secure coalition support while offering the vice-presidential nomination to PLRE as part of the bargaining process.

The analysis identifies 45 cases where PEC formation did not lead to the selection of a running partner from another party, resulting instead in pure-partisan tickets. This outcome may indicate some factors: first, instances in which the vice-presidential nomination held insufficient value as a bargaining tool for coalition formation; second, institutional preferences for maintaining traditional same-party tickets. These findings reinforce the main argument: PECs are observed in all mixed-partisan tickets, but they also appear in other formula compositions; PECs therefore mark the coalitional setting in which mixed-partisan composition can occur, but their presence alone does not determine it.

Before presenting the statistical model, the analysis begins by assessing bivariate relationships between independent variables and the dependent one (mixed-partisan tickets). Figure 1 displays the distribution of binary independent variables (H1, H3, and H4). The first graph shows the proportion of mixed-partisan tickets with PEC support. As Table 7 demonstrates, demonstrates, the systematic absence of mixed-partisan tickets in cases lacking PEC involvement confirms coalition as a condition for their formation. However, among the 146 presidential tickets supported by a PEC, only 48% ($n = 70$) were mixed-partisan, while 52% ($n = 76$) remained single-party tickets. This suggests that coalition agreements often involve other considerations beyond vice-presidential nominations.

Figure 1 – Distribution of binary independent variables by mixed-partisan tickets

Note. Elaborated by the author.

Examining protagonist party status (second graph), 28% of the 118 presidential tickets launched by a protagonist party were mixed-partisan ($n = 33$). Among the 401 tickets where the presidential candidate's party lacked competitiveness or a majoritarian strategy, only 9% were mixed-partisan ($n = 37$). This disparity supports H3's expectation that recurrently competitive protagonist parties more often opt for cross-party vice-presidential nominations.

The non-moderate party variable (third graph) presents a more balanced distribution. Among the 234 presidential tickets headed by moderately positioned parties (coded 0), 14% ($n = 32$) were mixed-partisan. This proportion is nearly identical to that of non-moderate parties (coded 1), which formed mixed-partisan tickets in 15% of the 244 cases ($n = 37$). This minimal variation suggests that ideological positioning may exert limited influence on coalition ticket formation decisions.

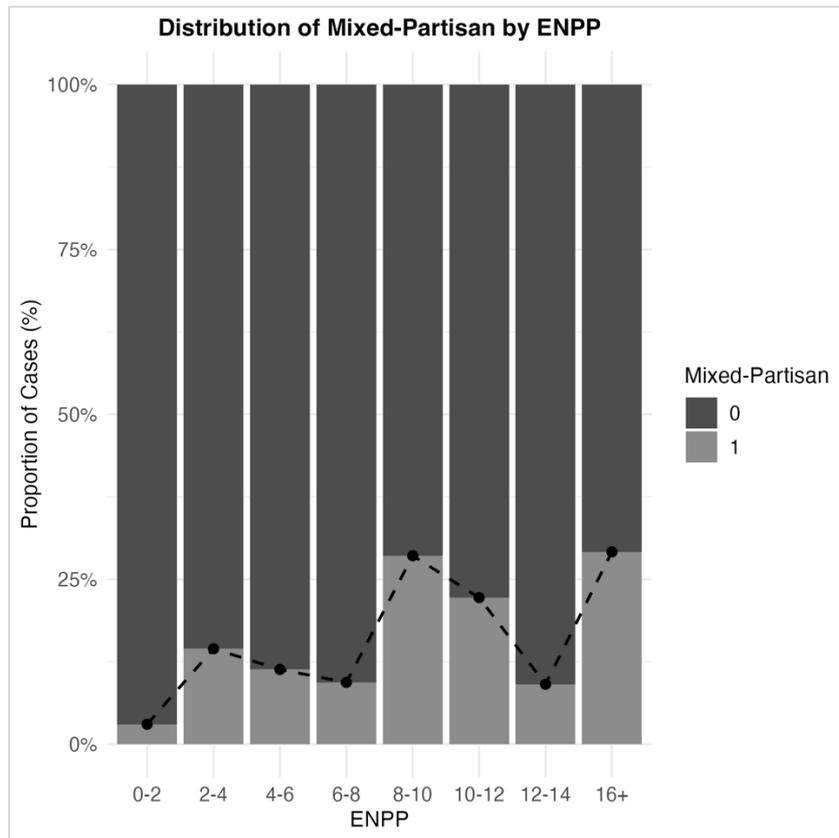
Figure 2 displays the distribution of the Effective Number of Parties at the Legislative Level (ENPP), the continuous measure of party system fragmentation. To enable meaningful interval comparisons, the ENPP values were categorized into discrete intervals. This approach indicates the theorized positive association between party system fragmentation and mixed-partisan ticket formation.

As established in Chapter 1 (Section 1.7 Presidential tickets in South America), mixed-partisan tickets do not constitute the most prevailing electoral arrangement among South

America's ticket types. The baseline distribution shows that other tickets (coded 0) are more common than mixed tickets (coded 1). Given this expected distribution, the analytical interest lies in examining how this proportion varies through different degrees of party system fragmentation.

The data demonstrate a consistent though imperfect trend: intervals showing lower fragmentation (ENPP 0-2 through 6-8) contain proportionally fewer mixed-partisan tickets than higher fragmentation ranges (8-10, 10-12, and 16+). One deviation emerges in the 12-14 interval, where mixed-ticket frequency reverts to levels observed in the least fragmented systems. This pattern supports H2's proposition that more fragmented party systems increase the likelihood of mixed-partisan tickets, with one notable exception to the overall linear trend.

Figure 2 – Distribution of the continuous independent variable by mixed-partisan tickets



Note. Elaborated by the author.

Table 8 displays the results of three analytical models. Models 1 and 2 employ logistic regression, the preferred method for dichotomous outcome variables like mixed-partisan ticket formation (Hair *et al.*, 2019). To account for potential country-level clustering effects, Model

3 implements a mixed-effects approach, which controls for temporal and cross-national variation (Bates, 2010).

The analysis draws on a universe of 519 presidential tickets. Missing data, primarily concerning party ideological positioning, reduced the sample size in some models²⁴. Complete model results appear in Table 8²⁵. In all models, multicollinearity was ruled out, as you can see in Appendix II.

Table 8 – Results model results for selecting vice-presidential candidates from other parties

	Logit (1)	Logit W/C (2)	Mixed effects (3)
PEC	20.351 (967.337)	20.496 (944.064)	21.908 (3,134.832)
ENPP	0.272 (0.285)	0.823** (0.402)	0.907** (0.426)
Protagonist party	0.489 (0.342)	0.764** (0.367)	0.786** (0.373)
Non-moderate party	0.116 (0.337)	0.223 (0.351)	0.226 (0.356)
Founding election		2.168** (0.930)	2.248** (0.967)
Incumbent		-0.345 (0.439)	-0.372 (0.468)
VP Legislative		0.731 (0.480)	0.781 (0.510)
Constant	-21.136 (967.337)	-22.698 (944.065)	-24.279 (3,134.833)
Observations	478	478	478
Log Likelihood	-98.692	-94.476	-94.392
Akaike Inf. Crit.	207.383	204.951	216.784
Bayesian Inf. Crit.			275.158
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01		

Note. Elaborated by the author.

The data points out an important constraint for testing Hypothesis 1: every mixed-partisan ticket in the sample formed with PEC backing (Table 7), while no mixed tickets

²⁴ The descriptive statistics can be found in the Appendix II.

²⁵ Appendix II includes the residual analysis of the main model (Model 2). It explores different approaches to addressing heteroscedasticity, such as removing outliers, applying robust standard errors, and excluding variables from the model. The appendix also evaluates the impact of these approaches, discusses model robustness, and presents model adjustments. Finally, the odds ratio calculations are provided to assess the probabilistic results.

occurred without PEC support. This complete separation in the data means the analysis can show that PECs appear in all mixed-ticket formation but cannot reliably estimate the strength of this relationship statistically. The regression results reflect this constraint (Table 8). Although PEC coefficients exceed 20 across all models, their inflated standard errors²⁶ indicate the models cannot determine whether PECs increase the likelihood of mixed tickets or simply occur universally when mixed tickets form.

Descriptive examination (Table 7) confirms two characteristics of this relationship. First, PECs are observed in all mixed-partisan tickets. Second, their presence alone does not determine it, with mixed-partisan outcomes materializing in only 48% of PEC-backed cases (71 of 147 presidential tickets with coalition support). This tendency toward other types of ticket composition implies that coalition partners might prioritize alternative concessions during bargaining processes.

Hypothesis 2 proposes that party system fragmentation increases the likelihood that presidential candidates will select a vice-presidential running mate from a different party. This expectation is grounded in two constraints: fragmentation discourages unilateral presidential bids under majoritarian electoral rules, and it creates post-electoral governability challenges that candidates seek to address during the campaign by building coalitions.

The results are in line with the theoretical expectation. In the main logistic regression model with controls (Model 2), the coefficient for party system fragmentation, measured as the log of the ENPP, is positive and statistically significant. A one-unit increase in fragmentation more than doubles the odds of selecting a vice-presidential candidate from another party, with an estimated odds ratio of 2.277 and a 95 percent confidence interval ranging from 1.053 to 5.154 (see Table 20 in Appendix II). While this estimate refers to a full-unit increase in the fragmentation index (on a logarithmic scale), even smaller changes are substantively meaningful: a 0.1-point increase is associated with a 7.9% rise in the odds of nominating a cross-party running mate. These findings support the theoretical argument that party system fragmentation generates incentives for inter-party cooperation and underscore how party system can shape presidential candidates' decision on selecting the running mate.

Nonetheless, this support should be interpreted with caution. The effect of fragmentation is statistically significant and in the expected direction only in the presence of control variables. Additionally, even in highly fragmented systems, there are presidential candidates that continue

²⁶ The treatments applied to correct heteroscedasticity did not alter the PEC coefficients. These analyses are detailed in Appendix II.

to nominate running mates from their own party. Finally, while the expectation rests on plausible coordination pressures induced by fragmentation, the models estimate associations with ticket composition rather than directly capturing the internal decision-making process.

Turning to party-level behavior, the results indicate that parties adopting a presidential strategy are more likely to form mixed-partisan tickets. Yet not all protagonist parties have the capacity to attract allies: only those that performed competitively in the previous presidential election – at least 10% of the vote – can do so. In these cases, presidential candidates seek supporting parties to boost their electoral prospects and establish agreements that may extend into future governance (Albala, Borges & Couto, 2023; Bertholini *et al.*, 2022).

The odds ratio, estimated at 2.148 in Model 1 of Table 19 (Appendix II), suggests that, when controlling for other institutional and contextual factors, presidential candidates affiliated with competitive protagonist parties are more than twice as likely to select a running mate from another party. The results indicate that parties with stronger electoral performance are more likely to nominate vice-presidential candidates from other parties, using this to expand their appeal and secure broader backing without relinquishing control over the presidential nomination.

The final supposition (Hypothesis 4) addresses gaps in the ticket-balancing literature by proposing that ideologically non-moderate parties would select moderate vice-presidential candidates to broaden their appeal. In short, non-centrist parties were expected to include another party on the ticket to achieve balance. However, the empirical results provide limited support for this proposition. While the coefficient direction aligned with theoretical expectations, it failed to achieve statistical significance across all model specifications (Table 8). Hence, the ideological balancing strategy alone does not adequately explain why candidates and their parties select a running mate from another party.

Regarding control variables, only Founding Elections showed statistical significance, suggesting that founding elections may be associated with a higher likelihood of forming mixed-partisan tickets for the presidency. The other variables did not show statistical significance but contributed to model specification by accounting for background institutional and contextual variation.

The mixed-effects model (Model 3) offers an advantage by accounting for unobserved cross-national and temporal variation. This specification confirms the robustness of the two most consistent predictors across the models: party system fragmentation (ENPP) and the presidential candidate's affiliation with a competitive protagonist party. Both variables retain

statistical significance and display coefficients of similar magnitude to those found in the logistic regression with controls (Model 2), reinforcing their explanatory power across contexts. The control variables show no meaningful change in significance or direction, suggesting that the core results are not driven by specific elections or countries.

Although the mixed-effects model confirms consistent results across contexts, it underscores the relevance of cross-national and temporal variation for interpreting the patterns underlying vice-presidential selection. One contextual factor is the support of a pre-electoral coalition (PEC) to the presidential candidacy. In the dataset, all mixed-partisan tickets are observed within PEC-backed formulas, indicating a tight empirical link between coalitional support and cross-party selection of running mates. Yet PECs coincide with a range of outcomes: over half of PEC-backed tickets are not mixed-partisan, underscoring that candidate strategy and party system fragmentation also shape ticket composition.

Mixed-partisan tickets emerge more often when presidential candidates belong to electorally competitive parties that pursue a presidentialized strategy in fragmented systems. In such settings, selecting a running mate from another party is not an improvised choice but rather a deliberate way to expand electoral appeal while retaining control over the presidential nomination. The next section follows how this logic has evolved over time, focusing on the interaction between party system fragmentation and protagonist party strategies in shaping ticket formation.

2.5 DISCUSSION: UNPACKING THE CASES

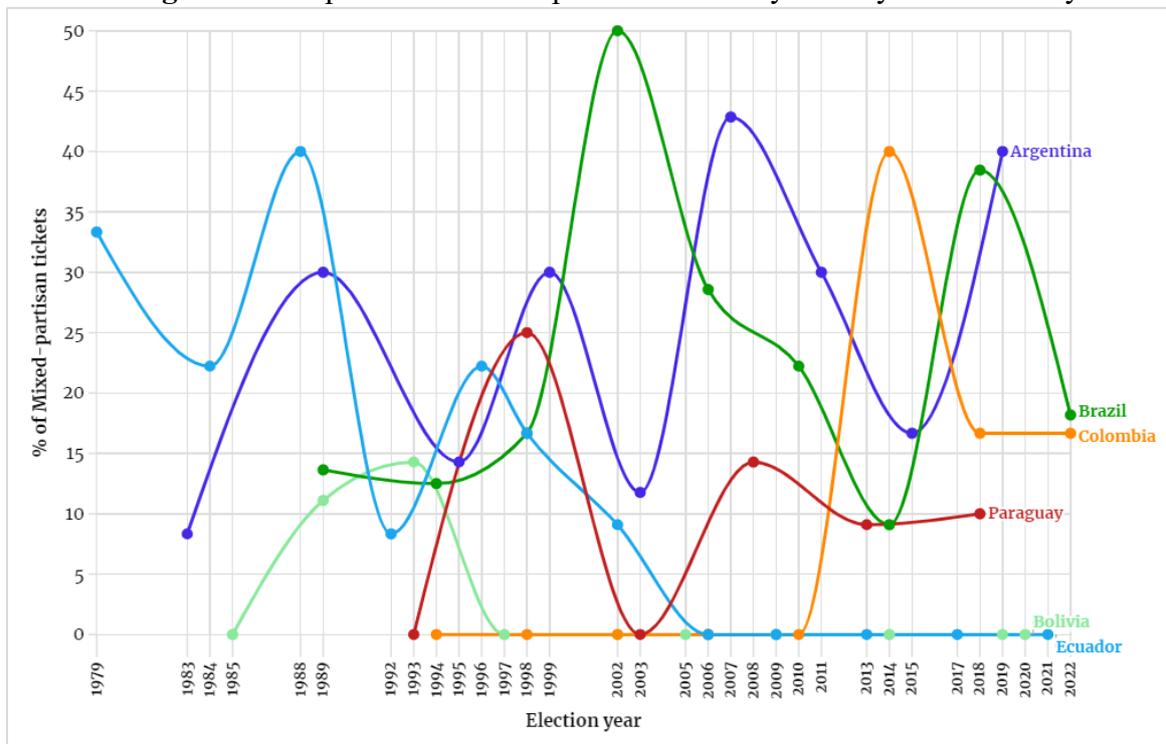
While existing scholarship usually frames vice-presidential nominations as concessions to coalition partners' demands (Bidegain, 2017; Couto, Soares & Livramento, 2021; Olivares *et al.*, 2020; Serrafiero, 2018; Ugglá, 2020) this question has not been empirically investigated by these authors. Ugglá (2020) is an exception, although his empirical focus differs from that adopted in this chapter, as previously noted. The findings of this chapter indicate that presidential candidates from electorally competitive and protagonist parties often employ the vice-presidency proactively to structure political alliances. In fragmented party systems, where no single party is likely to secure a legislative majority (Chasquetti, 2000; Albala, 2017; Golder, 2006a; Ramírez, 2008), presidential candidates and their parties allocate the vice-presidential nomination to cement coalition agreements, attract support, and reinforce the ticket's electoral viability. To secure pre-electoral coalitions, presidential candidates often offer the vice-

presidential position, a role that combines legitimacy as the president's successor with immunity from dismissal.

These conclusions stem from a panel data analysis of six countries and 54 elections, employing econometric models to identify behavioral patterns among parties and candidates. The analysis shows how factors such as party system fragmentation and coalition bargaining have influenced the prevalence of mixed-partisan tickets over time. Yet these effects vary across cases, pointing to the importance of examining how shifts in electoral rules and party system configurations shape outcomes in different settings.

The data illustrated in Figure 3 demonstrated longitudinal and cross-national trends in mixed-ticket frequency. Ecuador represents an early outlier, with mixed-partisan tickets constituting one-third of presidential candidacies in 1979. In 1984, the Social Christian Party (PSC) pursued this approach by presenting a mixed-partisan ticket. However, as the overall number of competing tickets increased, the proportional share of mixed-partisan candidacies declined ²⁷.

Figure 3 – Proportion of mixed-partisan tickets by country and election year



Note. Elaborated by the author.

²⁷ In the 1979 election, the PSC launched a presidential ticket with the Velasquista National Federation (FNV). In the following election, the party designated the vice-presidential position to the Ecuadorean Radical Liberal Party (PLRE).

The 1988 election recorded the highest number of mixed-partisan tickets in Ecuador (four): Jaime Hurtado González of the Democratic Popular Movement (MPD) with Efraín Álvarez Fiallo of the Broad Front of the Left (FADI); Frank Vargas Pazzo of the Ecuadorean Revolutionary Popular Action (APRE) with Enrique Ayala Mora of the Ecuadorean Socialist Party (PSE); Sixto Durán-Ballén Cordovez (PSC) with Pablo Baquerizo Nazur of the Ecuadorean Conservative Party (PCE); and Abdalá Bucaram Ortiz of the Ecuadorean Roldosista Party (PRE) with Hugo Caicedo of the Social Democratic Movement (MSD)²⁸. After this peak, only the presidential candidates from PRE continued to run with vice-presidents from other parties until 2002, thereby establishing the final instance of a mixed-partisan ticket in Ecuador's presidential elections²⁹.

Since 2002, Ecuador's party system has become more concentrated³⁰, diminishing the incentives to form mixed-partisan tickets. Chapter 4 (Unbound Tickets: The emergence of independent vice-presidential candidates) explores the rise of independent candidacies as a reflection of the crisis in Ecuador's party system.

By contrast, Bolivia relied less on mixed-partisan tickets. In 1989, former dictator Hugo Banzer of Revolutionary Democratic Action (ADN) was the only candidate to choose a vice-presidential nominee from another party, Luis Ossio Sanjinés of the Christian Democratic Party (PDC). Banzer repeated this strategy in the subsequent election, partnering with Óscar Zamora of the Revolutionary Left Movement (MIR). In that election, Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada of the Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNR), who had won in 1988, adopted a mixed-partisan ticket strategy to widen his electoral appeal. He replaced Walter Guevara Arze of the MNR with Víctor Hugo Cárdenas Conde of the Revolutionary Movement of Liberation Tupaj Katari (MRTKL). By the 2000s, Bolivia's party system had contracted, stabilizing in subsequent elections³¹.

In Colombia, mixed-partisan tickets were absent until 2010. The gradual fragmentation of the party system during the 2000s appears to have prompted presidential candidates to pursue

²⁸ The MSD emerged from a split within the ID during the nomination process for the 1988 presidential election. During the primary elections held to select the presidential candidate, the party became divided between Rodrigo Borja, who had previously run in 1984, and Raúl Baca. Borja emerged victorious in the internal consultation; however, the outcome proved unsatisfactory to a faction of the party, leading to their departure and the subsequent formation of the MSD. This new organization joined the campaign of Abdala Bucaram (PRE) and nominated Hugo Caicedo, one of the founders of the ID, as Bucaram's running mate (Conaghan, 1995; Freidenberg & Sáez, 2001).

²⁹ The sole exception to this pattern occurred in 1992, when Abdala Bucaram did not establish a pre-electoral coalition around his candidacy. Instead, he selected National Deputy Marco Proaño Maya from the PRE as his running mate.

³⁰ For a visual representation of the evolution of ENPP by year and country, consult Appendix II.

³¹ For a visual representation of the evolution of ENPP by year and country, refer to Appendix II.

cross-party alliances³². This shift became evident in 2014 when nearly 40% of presidential candidates adopted mixed-partisan tickets. Subsequent elections maintained this practice at a lower but consistent rate of approximately 16%, suggesting an institutionalized response to the party system's increasing complexity.

The cases of Paraguay, Argentina, and Brazil exhibit cyclical patterns in mixed-ticket adoption. Paraguay represents the most intermittent case, with no mixed-partisan tickets in 1993 and 2003, though all other elections featured at least one such arrangement. In Argentina during the 1990s, two to three parties often competed in this ticket format. The frequency of these tickets fluctuated with the number of candidacies. The proportion peaked in 2007 when six of fourteen presidential candidacies (over 40%) employed this strategy. Subsequent elections mirrored this variability while only one candidate selected a running mate from another party in 2015, four of ten did so in 2019. These fluctuations likely point to shifts in coalition strategies, as party alliances in Argentina are frequently restructured between electoral cycles.

Since the return of popular elections in Brazil, at least one presidential candidate per cycle has chosen a vice-president from another party. This points out the centrality of inter-party alliances in Brazilian elections. Brazil's steadily expanding party system³³ illustrates the findings of this research: as the party system grows, presidential candidates increasingly rely on mixed-partisan tickets to broaden electoral support or, as Ugglá (2020) argues, to secure governance.

The chapter's second argument concerns the distinctive strategies of electorally viable protagonist parties compared to those playing a legislative supporting role (Bertholini *et al.*, 2022). Parties that play the majoritarian game and having demonstrated competitive performance in previous presidential contests are more likely to be succeed in offering the vice-presidency to attract allies. This behavior becomes especially common in fragmented party systems, where building coalitions is a stronger prerequisite for electoral viability.

The data collected for this research (Figure 4) show how often presidential candidates from protagonist parties selected vice-presidents from other parties³⁴. Which were identified based on electoral performance, requiring participation in prior presidential elections and

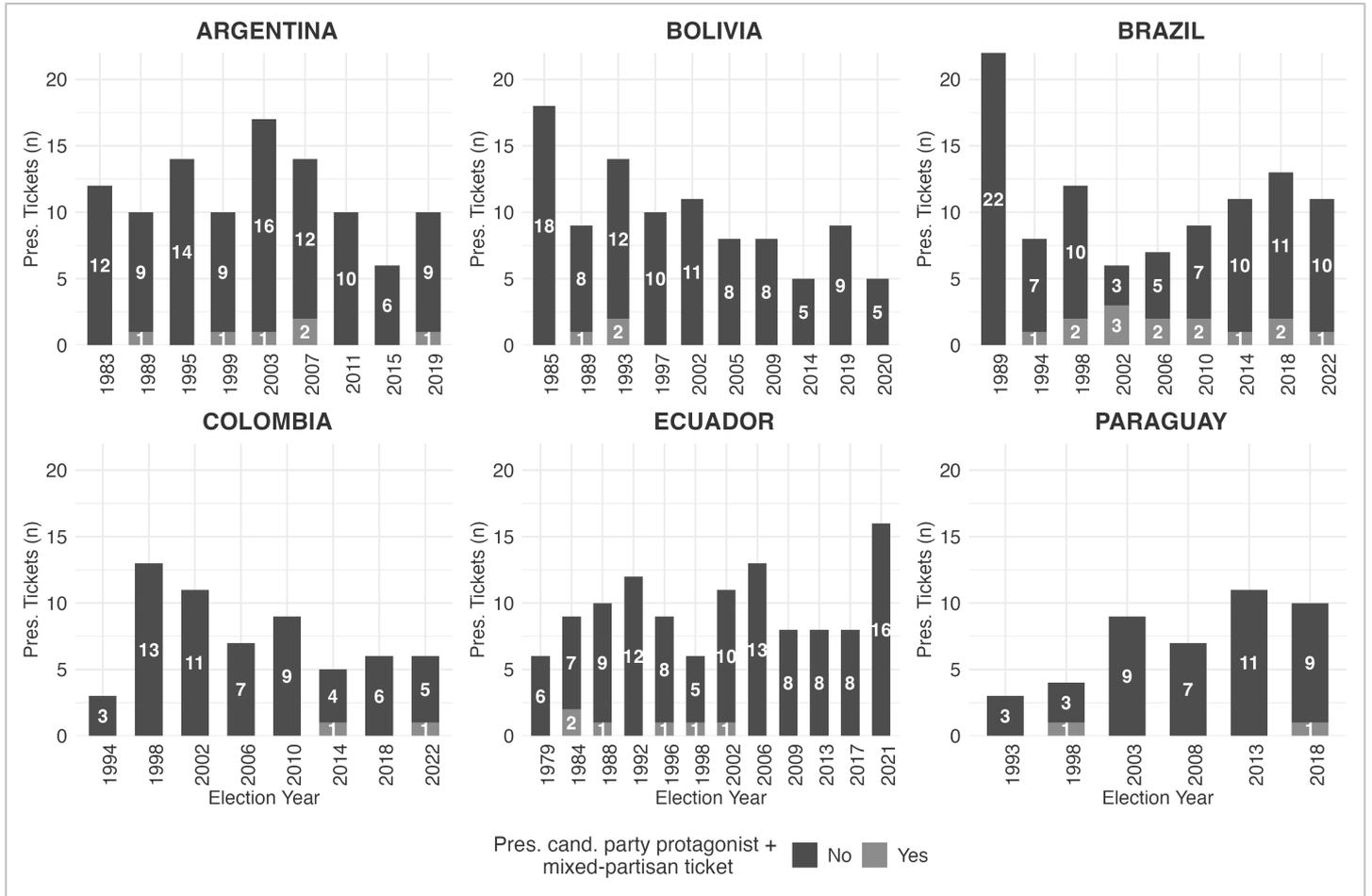
³² For a visual representation of the evolution of ENPP by year and country, refer to Appendix II.

³³ For a visual representation of the evolution of ENPP by year and country, refer to Appendix II.

³⁴ In this study, protagonist parties running on mixed-partisan tickets were coded as 1, while all other parties were coded as 0. The definition of protagonist parties required evaluating their performance in the previous election. Parties participating in the first election after democratization were coded as 0, except in Colombia, where the study's timeframe begins with the reinstatement of the vice-presidency as a constitutional office.

achieving at least 10% of the vote. This definition distinguishes nationally relevant parties from smaller ones.

Figure 4 – Distribution of presidential tickets by type, protagonist party, country and election year



Note. Elaborated by the author.

According to the results (Figure 4), in Argentina, presidential candidates from protagonist parties ran on mixed-partisan tickets in half of all presidential elections, with notable cases in 1989, 1999, 2003, 2007, and 2019. Brazil followed a similar trajectory, as competitive protagonist parties regularly chose running mates from other parties to secure pre-electoral coalitions and enhance their prospects in office. In every election, at least one major candidate attracted an ally by ceding the vice-presidential nomination, a practice that reached its peak in 2002, when all leading contenders from electorally competitive parties (those with at least 10% of the previous vote) presented mixed-partisan tickets.

That year, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (PT), who had received 31% in the previous election, selected José Alencar of the Liberal Party (PL). José Serra (PSDB), whose party had

secured 53% with Fernando Henrique Cardoso's reelection in 1998, chose Rita Camata of the Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (PMDB). Ciro Gomes (PDT), who had obtained nearly 11% in the prior contest, nominated Paulo Pereira da Silva (PTB). Together, these choices illustrate how the vice-presidency was used to consolidate coalitions and expand electoral appeal.

From 1994 to 2014, PT and PSDB dominated Brazil's presidential races, often running with allies from their coalitions. Each party, however, made one exception: PT in 1994³⁵ and PSDB in 2014, when Aécio Neves selected Senator Aloisio Nunes from within his own party. Overall, Brazil shows how competitive protagonist parties repeatedly allocated the vice-presidential nomination to coalition partners. This practice stemmed from incentives created by party system fragmentation and the need to assemble inclusive coalitions. While its intensity varied, the Brazilian experience mirrors trends across South America, reflecting responses to evolving electoral demands.

Colombia's recent adoption of mixed-partisan tickets illustrates their growing relevance in the region. In 2014, incumbent Juan Manuel Santos of the Party of the U (PU) broke with the tradition of pure-partisan bids by bringing in the Radical Change Party (CR) as an ally. Ecuador had earlier experiences, as protagonist parties frequently formed mixed-partisan tickets until the 2000s: in 1984, 1998, and 2002 all leading contenders did so, while in 1988 and 1996 half of the tickets were mixed. Candidates from the PSC and PRE were especially prone to this practice. In Paraguay and Bolivia, all instances of mixed-ticket formation also originated with protagonist parties. Although less common overall, these examples show how competitive actors relied on cross-party running mates to strengthen their electoral prospects.

This comparative analysis indicates that the selection of vice-presidential candidates is closely tied to coalition-building imperatives. As highlighted in the literature (Albala, 2017; 2021; Chasqueti, 2000; Freudenreich, 2016; Golder, 2006a; 2006b; Kellam, 2017; Ramirez, 2008), party system fragmentation creates institutional incentives for pre-electoral coordination, while the electoral viability of protagonist parties increases their capacity to attract allies (Bertholini *et al.*, 2022). In Brazil and Argentina, these factors contributed to the recurrent use of mixed-partisan tickets by competitive parties seeking to expand their appeal. In other cases, such as Bolivia, Colombia, and Paraguay, the same incentives led to a more intermittent adoption of this strategy, potentially due to variations in party system

³⁵ Chapter 1 (1.6.1 Same-party tickets) discussed how Aloizio Mercadante (PT) was selected by Lula (PT) in 1994.

characteristics. Taken together, these observations point to vice-presidential nominations as flexible instruments through which parties respond to varying institutional constraints and political opportunities, rather than as standardized or purely reactive decisions.

2.6 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

There is a growing and solid body of literature on pre-electoral coalition formation (Albala 2017; 2021; Albala & Couto 2023), though there is still a gap around the vice-presidential nomination. It is not enough to understand why parties and their presidential candidates coordinate in a presidential election or what strategies they follow when running for the national executive without considering that parties must nominate someone to run with the presidential candidate. To date, few scholars have considered that the running mate nomination must be included in this calculation.

Building on the typology of presidential ticket formats presented in Chapter 1 (Designing the Vice-Presidential Selection), which distinguishes five types of ticket formation including provisions for independents, this chapter turns specifically to mixed-partisan tickets. The analysis investigated whether these decisions were influenced by party system fragmentation, party strategy, or the need to construct PEC agreements.

The findings indicate that presidential candidates often collaborate with other parties to secure a PEC by forming a joint ticket. However, not all PECs result in mixed-partisan tickets; some candidates, even with PEC support, choose pure-partisan or mixed VP-Independent tickets. Consequently, while all such arrangements emerge from PECs, not all agreements yield them. This discrepancy raises the question: Why do some pre-electoral coalitions form without incorporating the vice-presidential nomination into the negotiation process?

Furthermore, the size of the party system seems to influence whether the vice-presidential candidate is selected from the president's party or another party. The results suggest that the availability of parties willing to join a presidential ticket encourages presidential candidates and their parties to nominate vice-presidential candidates from outside their own ranks.

Regarding party's strategy, the goal of ideologically balancing the ticket does not appear to be a primary objective for non-moderate presidential parties. One possible explanation is that low performance expectations may fail to attract potential allies. As a result, presidential candidates from non-moderate parties are less likely to run with another party on the electoral ticket.

Finally, the findings set out that the trajectory of the president's party in executive elections and its previous electoral performance often shape the decision to form a mixed-partisan ticket. Presidential systems present unique challenges to parties and candidates, such as the separation of Executive and Legislative elections. These difficulties have driven parties and presidential candidates to adopt diverse strategies. When constructing tickets, majoritarian-focused parties aim to win, rather than merely gain credibility. They pursue mixed-partisan tickets to expand their electoral appeal and solidify PEC agreements. Case analyses further underscore it, illustrating that presidential candidates from protagonist parties actively seek external partners to enhance their electoral prospects. This evidence reinforces the argument that vice-presidential nominations serve as a unique bargaining tool to attract allies, coordinate campaigns, and negotiate prospective governance arrangements.

The complexity of mixed-ticket formation cannot be captured solely by the determinants tested in this chapter. Beyond institutional and contextual factors, closer attention is needed to the organizations that put forward vice-presidential nominees. The analysis indicates that ideological distance alone does not account for these outcomes; it therefore becomes necessary to identify which parties gain the prerogative of nominating the vice-presidential candidate. Chapter 3 addresses this directly, examining their parliamentary weight and ideological profile to clarify who they are and why they hold this role.

This chapter contributes to the literature by examining how the vice-presidential nomination operates in multiparty presidential systems, showing that its role is conditioned by party strength and institutional context. The prevalence of mixed-partisan tickets in Argentina and Brazil, and their more recent though uneven appearance in Colombia and Paraguay, illustrates how parties respond to fragmentation by turning the vice-presidency into a mechanism for coalition-building. These experiences reveal how nomination choices adapt to changes in party system structure. By contrast, the decline of mixed-partisan tickets in Bolivia and Ecuador points to shifting priorities, where the growing presence of independent candidacies has proved more advantageous. The next chapter (Unbound Tickets: The emergence of independent vice-presidential candidates) turns to this development directly.

3 THE VICE-PRESIDENTIAL PARTNER: EXPLORING PARTY CHARACTERISTICS IN MIXED-PARTISAN TICKETS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Vice-presidential selection has long been a neglected subject in comparative politics, particularly in studies of Latin America. Although presidential candidates dominate scholarly attention, the identity of the party that secures the vice-presidential nomination often determines not only who occupies the second-highest office but also how electoral coalitions are constructed and sustained. In South America, where fragmented multiparty systems render presidential majorities uncommon, the vice-presidency holds particular significance. It offers one of the few institutional guarantees available to coalition partners, given that the vice-president cannot be dismissed once elected. This attribute makes the selection process for the second position a central component of ticket formation and a revealing site for analyzing coalition politics, as highlighted in the previous analysis. Whereas the previous chapter identified the conditions under which presidential candidates form mixed-partisan tickets, this chapter advances the inquiry by examining which parties secure the vice-presidential nomination.

Scholarship on pre-electoral coalitions does investigate which parties join alliances and under what incentives (Alemán & Tsebelis, 2011; Borges, Turgeon & Albala, 2020; Budge & Laver, 1986; Couto, Soares & Livramento, 2021; Freudenreich, 2016; Kellam, 2017; Silva, 2022). Studies on vice-presidential selection, in turn, have focused on the drivers of presidential candidates' parties to select external running mates (Uggla, 2020), but have seldom analyzed the attributes of the parties that receive the nomination power. This chapter addresses that gap by asking: which parties obtain the prerogative to nominate the vice-presidential candidate? Until now, no study had examined this question, even though Chapter 2 (Run with me: Formation of mixed-partisan presidential tickets) established that pre-electoral coalitions are always present in mixed-partisan tickets. The second slot thus becomes a bargaining instrument of exceptional weight: it formalizes a coalition agreement in a way that cannot be easily altered after the election.

To explore this question, the analysis focuses on two dimensions chosen for their analytical relevance. First, legislative weight: existing research demonstrates that smaller parties are more likely to enter pre-electoral coalitions (Alemán & Tsebelis, 2011; Kellam,

2017). In some instances, presidential candidates from similarly small parties ally with external partners to broaden their electoral appeal (Uggla, 2020). Larger parties, when not holding the presidency themselves, may leverage their legislative strength to secure the vice-presidential nomination, thereby reducing the prospective costs of governing (Borges *et al.*, 2020). Second, ideological alignment: candidates may prefer ideologically proximate allies to preserve cohesion (Alemán & Tsebelis, 2011; Budge & Laver, 1986; Kellam, 2017) or opt for more distant partners when the potential for electoral expansion outweighs the risks of programmatic divergence (Court & Lynch, 2015; Lopes, 2022a; Sigelman & Wahlbeck, 1997). By integrating these dimensions into the study of coalition politics, this chapter contends that vice-presidential nominations are not tangential but one of the institutional devices through which coalition bargains are often formalized before voters go to the polls.

The study draws on seventy mixed-partisan tickets identified across six countries and reorganized in a party-level dataset: the VP Nomination in South America. This design enables the analysis to observe not only how presidential candidates compose their tickets but also how coalition partners convert electoral alliances into nomination rights. The approach is primarily descriptive and analytical rather than causal; it aims to map empirical patterns across countries and over time and to identify how ideological alignment and legislative strength influence the allocation of this strategic prize. This descriptive focus is particularly warranted given the absence of prior comparative research on which parties secure the vice-presidential slot in mixed-partisan formulas.

The chapter begins by engaging the literature on pre-electoral coalitions to extend its findings toward the composition of presidential tickets, outlining guiding expectations for the descriptive exploration. It then examines the two dimensions introduced above: the ideological distance between presidential and vice-presidential parties, and the legislative seat share (%) in the lower or only chamber of the vice-presidential party. The discussion section interprets the findings in light of the trends: ideological proximity appears to have prevailed over balancing, and smaller parties frequently secured the second position. Outcomes varied, however, depending on the electoral strategy of the presidential candidate's party. Protagonist and competitive parties tended to attract medium or large allies within a zone of moderate ideological proximity, whereas candidates from non-protagonist parties relied mainly on small partners to gain visibility and niche resources, such as localized organizational networks or access to voter segments. The chapter concludes that vice-presidential nominations in presidential regimes with multiparty systems provide a unique lens for examining coalition

politics. They reveal not only how alliances are formed but also which actors are entrusted with a guaranteed executive position, thereby linking electoral bargains directly to future governance.

3.2 WHICH PARTY CHOOSES THE VICE-PRESIDENT? A VIEW FROM PRE-ELECTORAL COALITION STUDIES

A pre-electoral coalition (PEC) constitutes a public agreement among multiple political parties to pool electoral resources (Albala, 2021; Borges *et al.* 2020). In presidential systems, this arrangement involves parties coordinating their electoral strategies behind a single candidacy rather than competing independently for the executive office (Golder, 2006a; 2006b). For the presidential candidate's party, these agreements mainly aim to maximize electoral support, while also potentially lowering the future costs of forming a legislative majority (Albala, Clerici & Olivares, 2024; Borges *et al.*, 2020). This latter concern might gain importance for candidates with a competitive track record and a credible chance of victory. Coalition partners, in turn, join in pursuit of policy influence and positions within the future government (Albala, 2021; Couto, Soares & Livramento, 2021; Freudenreich, 2016).

However, the benefits of coalition agreements come with costs, which are easier to manage among ideologically proximate parties. Kellam (2017) contends that policy compromises entail particularly high costs, as the dominant party must cede agenda control to another entity. Such agreements are also more likely among ideologically proximate parties, which helps mitigate coordination problems and policy inconsistencies within the coalition (Alemán & Tsebelis, 2011; Budge & Laver, 1986). In short, ideological proximity may make cooperation more sustainable.

Beyond ideology, the leverage of coalition partners depends not only on the electoral resources they contribute but also on their legislative strength. This matters not simply for whether parties join a coalition, as highlighted in previous scholarship, but for which party secures the vice-presidential nomination within it. Evidence shows that smaller parties are more likely to take part in pre-electoral coalitions (Kellam, 2017), yet this propensity has limits: parties with less than 1% of seats rarely play a meaningful role, as they lack legislative representation (Freudenreich, 2016). Their value lies in the electoral resources they might provide, such as organizational infrastructure and social roots, which allow the coalition to reach segments of the electorate otherwise less accessible to the dominant party (Freudenreich, 2016) as well as activists and campaign workers who can expand the campaign's outreach and

mobilization capacity (Silva, 2022). Medium-sized parties, however, remain important partners. When the presidential candidate's party falls short of a legislative majority, securing an ally with enough seats to approach that threshold can reduce the costs of building a governing coalition once in office (Borges *et al.*, 2020). Ultimately, the relative strength of coalition partners shapes the feasibility of assembling a majority and may also influence which nominate the vice-presidential candidate.

As highlighted in Chapter 2 (Run with me: Formation of mixed-partisan presidential tickets) all mixed-partisan tickets have pre-electoral coalitions. Moreover, among presidential tickets backed by such coalitions, in most cases the presidential candidate selected a running mate from another party (47.9%, 70 of 146 tickets; see Table 7). Within the negotiation of benefits for coalition partners, which include cabinet positions and policy influence, the vice-presidency stands out as the most secure high-ranking office the presidential candidate can offer. Unlike other promises made during the campaign, this one cannot be undone after the election. One of the driving arguments of this research is precisely the use of the vice-presidency as a bargaining instrument to attract allies into pre-electoral coalitions. While the previous chapter examined the political and institutional contexts in which presidential candidates form mixed-partisan tickets, the focus now shifts to analyzing the characteristics of the parties that gain the authority to nominate the vice-president in coalitions led by another party.

As emphasized earlier, the presidential candidate's influence over the vice-presidential nomination remains significant, even when coalition partners are involved in the negotiation (see Chapter 1). In the 1994 Brazilian election, for instance, the decision on Marco Maciel (PFL) was only possible after Fernando Henrique Cardoso (PSDB) intervened to reject other nominees and approve Maciel's candidacy. Nevertheless, entrusting the vice-presidency to another party entails risks. Studies show that when the president and vice-president hail from different parties, the likelihood of political crisis increases, particularly during periods of inter-party tension (Marsteintredet & Ugglå, 2019; Mittelman, 2019). This risk underscores the dual nature of the nomination: while it strengthens the coalition electorally and legislatively, it can also generate vulnerabilities in governance.

Ideological congruence can reduce coordination costs and contribute to greater message coherence. Offering the vice-presidency to an ideologically aligned party can therefore mitigate some of the risks associated with cross-party nominations, as noted by Kellam (2017). In this sense, vice-presidential selection also operates as a mechanism for signaling ideological

commitments to the electorate (Kellam, 2017). Allowing a coalition partner to nominate the running mate communicates an alliance that reflects the coalition's aggregated policy position, making ideologically proximate parties particularly attractive nominees. From the perspective of the presidential candidate, such signals are expected to shape voter perceptions during the campaign. Yet there is no evidence from Latin America confirming that this expectation is realized.

Chapter 2 tested a hypothesis derived from U.S. scholarship, which suggests that presidential candidates sometimes seek to broaden their appeal by selecting a running mate from another party – that is, when non-moderate parties attempt to balance their ticket by aligning with more centrist allies. However, the analysis found no statistically significant evidence for this proposition. In adapting this framework to South America, the test necessarily relied on party-level indicators of ideology, given the lack of candidate-level data. These results suggest that the operationalization of non-moderation used in the earlier analysis may not fully capture the role of ideology in vice-presidential selection³⁶. Building on this, the present chapter shifts from multivariate analysis toward a descriptive exploration of the ideological distance between presidential and vice-presidential parties within coalitions. The goal is not to assume balance or alignment as universal strategies, but rather to examine how different degrees of ideological proximity are reflected in the selection of a vice-presidential candidate from another party, since members of the ticket, if elected, are expected to remain together throughout the mandate.

Turning to the size of the party that nominates the vice-presidential candidate, this aspect has not been directly examined in the literature, despite its clear implications for both electoral strategy and coalition bargaining. Ugglá (2020) approached the issue from the perspective of the presidential candidate, highlighting that the choice of a partner may reflect an attempt to offset the limitations imposed by the size of the presidential candidate's own party. As discussed earlier, smaller parties are more likely to participate in pre-electoral coalitions (Kellam, 2017). Yet previous research also shows that presidential candidates may at times favor partners with more substantial representation, as this can facilitate the formation of a legislative majority and reduce the costs of governing (Borges *et al.*, 2020).

³⁶ The operationalization of non-moderation relied on Coppedge's five-category party ideology scores (-1, -0.5, 0, +0.5, +1). This measure captures not only extreme ideological positions but also parties clearly identified as left or right, while excluding those closer to the moderate spectrum. To facilitate interpretation in logistic models, these were recoded into a binary variable distinguishing non-moderate (-1, +1) from moderate parties, as mentioned in Chapter 2 (2.3.1 Operationalization). Appendix II details the transformation of other ideology scales into Coppedge's measure.

Although the literature on pre-electoral coalitions has discussed the incentives for presidential candidates and the general conditions under which parties join these agreements, it has not examined the characteristics of coalition partners that obtain the vice-presidential nomination. To address this gap, the chapter draws on two dimensions underscored in studies of coalition formation. Ideological proximity is often associated with lower coordination costs and greater programmatic coherence, while party size relates to the representational weight that partners contribute to coalition bargaining. These perspectives provide a basis for examining whether parties that secure the vice-presidential slot are more frequently ideologically aligned with the presidential party and whether they tend to be small, medium, or large in terms of legislative representation.

The analysis that follows adopts a descriptive approach, shifting the focus from presidential candidates' incentives to the characteristics of the parties that nominate vice-presidential candidates in mixed-partisan formulas. Rather than testing causal claims, it examines variation across contexts and describes how the legislative representation and ideological alignment of these parties are reflected in the distribution of the vice-presidential slot.

3.3 DATA AND METHODS

The analysis relies on the original dataset VP Nomination in South America, which compiles information on presidential tickets across the region and reorganizes it at the party level. While the dataset includes both pure and mixed-partisan tickets, the examination here focuses exclusively on the 70 mixed-partisan cases identified during the period under study. The following paragraphs outline the criteria for case selection, the operationalization of the two dimensions, ideological distance and legislative seat share (%) in the lower or only chamber, and the treatment of missing cases.

Before turning to these attributes, it is necessary to clarify the criteria for case exclusion. Tickets in which either the presidential or vice-presidential candidate's party was not formally part of the electoral alliance backing the ticket were removed from the dataset. This instance occurred most frequently in Argentina, where the electoral system permits candidates to run together even if their parties are not officially aligned within a pre-electoral coalition.

In total, nine tickets were excluded on this basis. A notable example is Miguel Ángel Pichetto's candidacy in the 2019 election. Although the Justicialist Party (PJ) was part of the Everyone's Front (Frente de Todos), led by Alberto Fernández with Cristina Kirchner as the

vice-presidential candidate, Pichetto accepted an invitation from then-president Mauricio Macri to join his ticket. This decision represented a departure from his longstanding affiliation with the PJ, which at the time supported the opposition³⁷. Such cases are not classified as independent candidacies in this study because the candidates retained formal party affiliations. As will be explained in more detail in Chapter 4 (Unbound Tickets: The emergence of independent vice-presidential candidates), the definition adopted here excludes scenarios which candidates are affiliated with a political party but operate outside the primary coalition during the election.

The distribution of cases across countries is uneven. In total, Brazil accounts for 20 of the mixed-partisan tickets in the dataset, followed by Argentina with 14, Ecuador with 8, Paraguay with 4, Colombia with 3, and Bolivia with 2. This asymmetry reflects the varying frequency with which mixed-partisan formulas emerged in each national context. It also requires caution in the comparative analysis: while the Brazilian and Argentine cases allow for a broader exploration of variation, findings for Bolivia, Colombia, and Paraguay rely on very small numbers and should therefore be understood as illustrative rather than generalizable. In addition, sample sizes vary across the analysis of the dimensions because some tickets lack

³⁷ In the 2003 election, Adolfo Rodríguez Saá ran for president without the support of the Justicialist Party (PJ), which had endorsed Néstor Kirchner's candidacy. Adolfo, a former member of the PJ, garnered support from the alliance Front of the Popular Movement – Unity and Liberty (Frente Movimiento Popular – Unión y Libertad). Notably, Adolfo selected a member of the UCR as his running mate, despite the party's lack of formal endorsement for the ticket. Officially, the UCR supported the pure-partisan ticket of Deputy Leopoldo Moreau (UCR) and Senator Mario Losada (UCR).

In 2007, Jorge Asís (PJ) was the vice-presidential candidate on a ticket led by Jorge Sobisch (MPN), while the PJ was part of the Frente Para la Victoria coalition, which nominated Cristina Kirchner, also from the PJ, for the presidency. Conversely, Kirchner selected Julio Cobos of the UCR as her running mate. The Unión Cívica Radical (UCR), however, provided support for the Lavagna-Morales ticket in that election. Lavagna, the presidential candidate for the Consensus for an Advanced Nation (Una Nación Avanzada), was a member of the Justicialist Party (PJ), which opposed Kirchner's candidacy.

In the subsequent electoral cycle, Alberto Rodríguez Saá once again sought the presidency, once more lacking the backing of the PJ. He selected José María Vernet, also affiliated with the PJ, as his running mate. During this election, the PJ was part of the coalition that supported Cristina Kirchner's reelection.

In 2015, Miguel Ángel Olaviaga was the vice-presidential candidate on the ticket led by Margarita Stolbizer (GEN). However, the Unión Cívica Radical (UCR), Olaviaga's political party, provided support for the Macri-Michetti ticket in that election.

In 2019, aside from the Macri-Pichetto ticket, two other tickets were excluded from the analysis: Lavagna-Urtubey and Centurión-Hotton. Lavagna, who maintained an independent status, established his presidential candidacy with Governor Juan Manuel Urtubey (PJ) as his running mate. In that election, the PJ expressed support for the Fernández-Fernández ticket. The second excluded ticket was that of Juan José Gómez Centurión and Cynthia Hotton. Gómez Centurión, the presidential candidate, had previously served as vice-president of the Banco de la Nación Argentina and was not affiliated with any party within the coalition supporting the US Alliance (Frente NOS). Cynthia Hotton, the vice-presidential candidate, was a member of the VALORES party, which was also not part of the US Alliance.

information for the measures (e.g., ideological placement; participation in the prior legislative election); reported Ns in figures and tables refer to observations for the attribute under analysis.

The unit of analysis is the political party of the vice-presidential candidate. As previously discussed, two primary characteristics are examined: (1) the ideological distance between the presidential candidate's party and the vice-presidential candidate's party, referred to as Ideological Distance, and (2) legislative seat share of the vice-presidential candidate's party, defined as Legislative Strength.

To measure ideological distance, the dataset compiles party position data from various sources³⁸. Ideological positions were unavailable for 19 parties, either of the presidential or vice-presidential candidates, which reduced the sample to 42 cases³⁹. Ideological distance was calculated using a 20-point scale (Baker & Greene, 2011; Wiesehomeier, Singer & Ruth-Lovell, 2021). Consistent with Kellam's (2017) methodology, the distance between the parties on a presidential ticket was calculated as the square root of the difference between the presidential candidate's party (PA) and the vice-presidential candidate's party (PB):

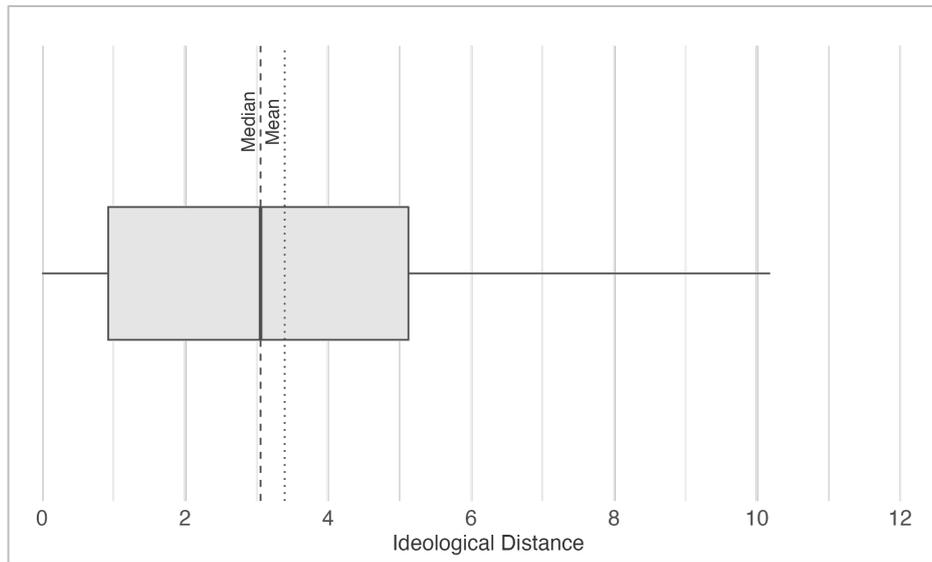
$$(\text{Position } P_B - \text{Position } P_A)^2$$

Figure 5 shows a boxplot of the ideological distance between the presidential candidate's party and the vice-presidential nominee's party. Distances range from 0 to 10.19; the mean is 3.39 and the median 3.05⁴⁰. To contextualize the decisions underlying the selection of running mates, the study categorizes ideological distance into quartiles and the interquartile range (IQR). Values below the first quartile fall under *Ideological Alignment*, values between the first and third quartiles as *Moderate Ideological Alignment*, and distances above 1.5 times the IQR under *Ticket-Balancing*.

³⁸ Appendix II provides a detailed explanation of the ideological classification of political parties.

³⁹ The ideological alignment of nine tickets in Argentina, one ticket in Bolivia, three in Brazil, one in Colombia, and five in Ecuador could not be verified.

⁴⁰ Appendix III contain the general measures of ideological distance between the parties in the presidential ticket.

Figure 5 – Boxplot of ideological distance

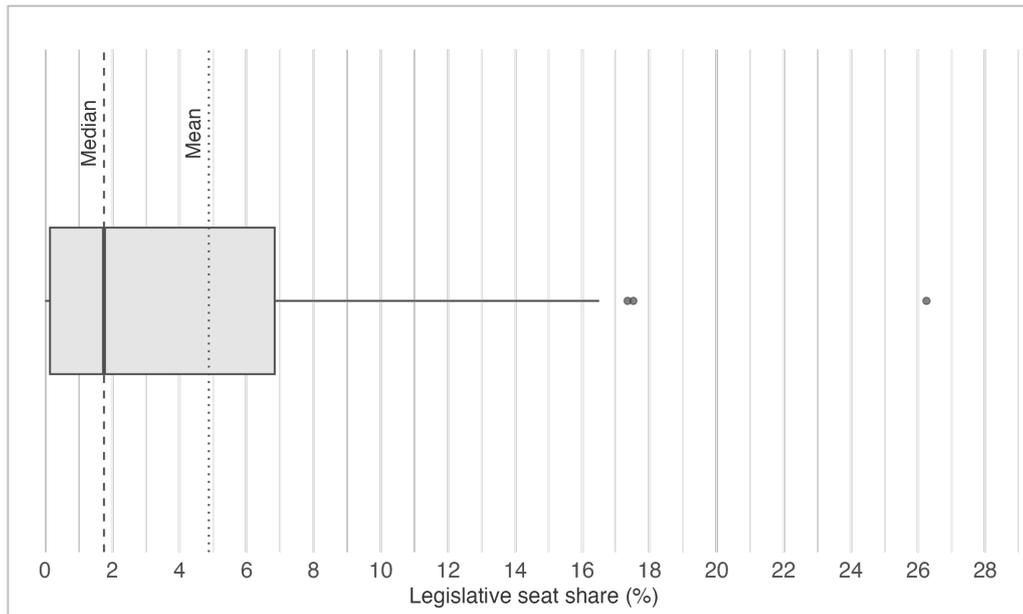
Note. Elaborated by the author.

Legislative strength is measured as the share of seats held by the vice-presidential nominee's party in the lower (or only) chamber in the legislative election immediately preceding the presidential race. This measure captures the party's proportion of seats relative to the chamber's total. This captures the parliamentary weight of potential allies at the pre-election stage, when presidential candidates and their parties evaluate coalition partners.

In some instances, this measure cannot be calculated because no legislative election preceded the presidential contest, as occurred during democratic transitions. Argentina's 1983 election, held after the end of military rule, and Ecuador's 1979 election, marking the restoration of democratic governance, both lacked prior legislative contests. In addition, ten vice-presidential parties did not compete in the preceding legislative election⁴¹ and were therefore coded as missing. The final dataset includes 48 presidential tickets.

Presidential candidates selected running mates from parties that varied widely in their legislative strength. Figure 6 displays a boxplot of the vice-presidential nominee's party seat share. The distribution is highly skewed, with many small values and a few large ones that stretch the upper tail: the median is 1.75%, the interquartile range runs from 0.14% to 6.83%, and outliers reach 26.25%. These figures indicate that most parties nominating vice-presidential candidates held only a small fraction of the chamber's seats.

⁴¹ Two cases were noted in Argentina (CFI in 1989 and PCCE in 1999), one in Bolivia (FRI in 1993), one in Brazil (PDN in 1989), two in Colombia (UP in 2014 and CR in 2022), and four in Ecuador (PCD in 1984, MSD in 1988, MIRA in 1996, and PLN in 1998).

Figure 6 - Boxplot of VP nominee's party seat share (%)

Note. Elaborated by the author.

To summarize this heterogeneity, the vice-presidential party's legislative seat share is grouped into four descriptive tiers: tiny (0 to 1%), small (1–5%), medium (5–10%), and large (>10%). A complete list of the mixed-partisan tickets considered in this analysis, including country, electoral cycle, party affiliation of presidential and vice-presidential candidates, whether the presidential party was a protagonist, the legislative size of the vice-presidential party, and the type of ideological distance, is provided in Appendix III.

3.4 ATTRIBUTES OF NOMINATION PARTIES

The analysis now turns to a descriptive exploration of the parties that nominated running mates in mixed-partisan tickets. The focus lies on two dimensions introduced earlier: ideological alignment between the presidential candidate's party and that of the nominee for vice-president, and the legislative seat share of the latter's party. The following subsections present the overall distribution of these characteristics and then examine how they vary across countries, identifying recurrent features in the allocation of the vice-presidential nomination.

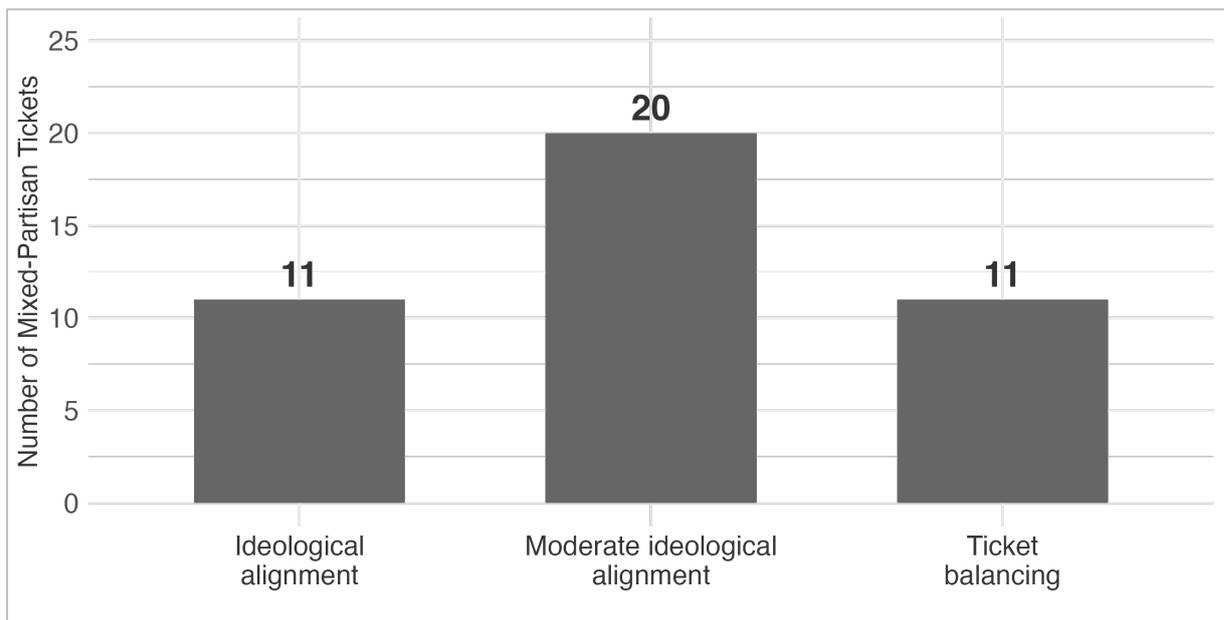
3.4.1 Ideological distance

Scholarship on pre-electoral coalitions suggests that ideological proximity frequently facilitates inter-party cooperation by lowering coordination costs and minimizing policy divergence (Alemán & Tsebelis, 2011; Budge & Laver, 1986; Kellam, 2017). When the

presidency is held by one party and the vice-presidency by another, such proximity becomes particularly relevant: granting the nomination to an ideologically aligned partner may help mitigate the risk of intra-coalition conflict and bolster the alliance's unity.

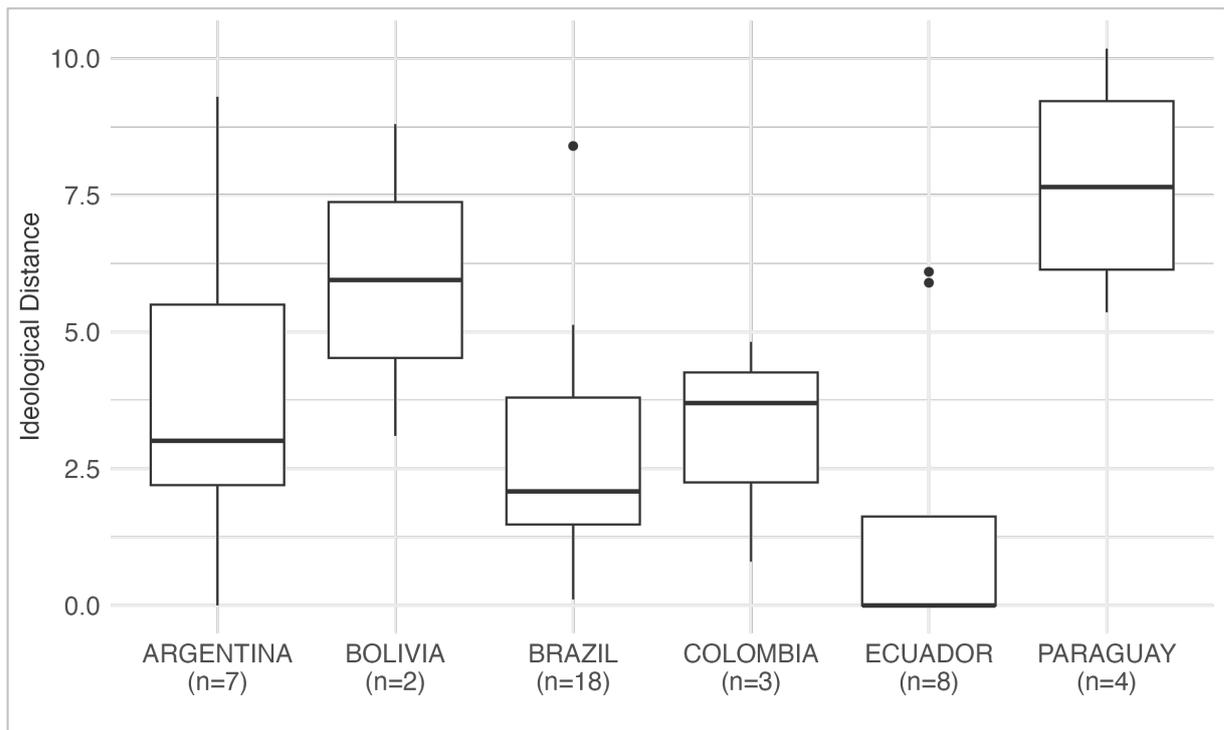
The data indicate that moderate ideological alignment was the most common configuration, presenting 47.6% (20 of 42) of mixed-partisan tickets. Ideological alignment and ticket-balancing strategies each appeared in 11 instances, as shown in Figure 7. This distribution points to a general tendency toward moderation, with deliberate alignment and balancing occurring at comparable frequencies.

Figure 7 – Distribution of ideological distance types in mixed-partisan tickets



Note. Elaborated by the author.

Figure 8 displays a boxplot of the ideological distance between presidential and vice-presidential parties across country. The labels indicate the number of mixed-partisan tickets analyzed per case. As previously noted, ideological distance ranges from 0 to 10.19. The distributions show marked cross-national differences: Ecuador exhibits the closest proximity, with most tickets showing little to no ideological distance, while Paraguay and Bolivia present the highest levels of divergence. Brazil and Argentina display greater heterogeneity, ranging from nearly aligned tickets to more distant pairings, whereas Colombia occupies an intermediate position. The figure also shows that while Ecuador and Paraguay lie at opposite ends of the spectrum, one with near-complete alignment and the other with consistently wide distances, Brazil and Argentina demonstrate greater internal variation, suggesting a more diverse set of coalition arrangements over time.

Figure 8 – Ideological distance between presidential and VP candidate’s party by country

Note. Elaborated by the author.

In Ecuador, presidential tickets display the smallest ideological distances among the cases studied, with an average of 1.53 and a median of 0. This distribution also displays limited dispersion, indicating greater consistency in how presidential tickets were formed. In more than a half of the observed cases (6 of 8), the presidential and vice-presidential parties held identical positions on the ideological scale. Unlike Brazil and Argentina, which demonstrated considerable variation, Ecuadorian tickets remained largely concentrated within the category of ideological alignment, with only two exceptions. The first occurred in the 1988 election, when Frank Vargas Pazzos of the center-right APRE ran with Enrique Ayala Mora of the leftist PSE. A second exception emerged a decade later, in 1998, when Álvaro Noboa (PRE, center-right) partnered with Alfredo Castillo (PLN, leftist).

As hypothesized in Chapter 2 (Run with me: Formation of mixed-partisan presidential tickets), non-moderate parties would balance their tickets by selecting centrist allies. The Ecuadorian cases, however, present a counterexample. In both exceptions, the presidential candidates represented centrist parties and selected running mates from the left, a strategy that may have aimed to attract voters from that segment of the ideological spectrum. These instances thus run contrary to the initial expectation, indicating a reversed balancing objective where centrist candidates reached toward more ideological allies.

Paraguay, on the other hand, shows a different pattern, exhibiting the highest average ideological distance (7.71) and a median of 7.65. Paraguayan presidential candidates seldom grant vice-presidential nominations to other parties. However, when they do, they predominantly adopt ticket-balancing strategies. Between 1993 and 2018, only four of Paraguay's 44 presidential tickets included a vice-presidential candidate from a different party. For instance, the 1998 ticket featured Domingo Laino of the center-right PLRA with Carlos Filizzola of the center-left PEN. A similar cross-ideological alliance formed in 2008, when Fernando Lugo of the leftist PDC ran with Federico Franco of the center-right PLRA. Subsequent mixed-partisan tickets emerged in 2013 through a PLRA-PDP (center-right/center-left) alliance and in 2018 between the PLRA and the leftist FG.

The center-right PLRA often pursued this balancing approach. In 1998 and 2013, the party allied with center-left partners, and in 2018, it formed a ticket with a leftist party. Even in 2008, when the PLRA did not hold the presidential nomination, it secured the vice-presidential slot through an alliance with the leftist PDC. Mirroring the Ecuadorian cases, Paraguayan presidential candidates, often from moderate parties, repeatedly partnered with ideologically distant allies, apparently seeking to expand their electoral appeal.

Brazil shows an intermediate level of ideological alignment within presidential tickets, with an average ideological distance of 2.81 and a median of 2.08. Among the 18 cases analyzed, most fell into the category of moderate alignment (13), while only three displayed close alignment and two relied on ticket-balancing strategies. The predominance of moderate cases indicates that, when Brazilian presidential candidates ceded the vice-presidential nomination to a coalition partner, they most frequently selected parties that were neither ideologically congruent nor positioned at the extremes.

Two Brazilian tickets exemplify instances where both positions were filled by leftist parties. In 1989, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of the Workers' Party (PT) selected a running mate from the Brazilian Socialist Party (PSB). A similar pattern occurred in 2018, when Marina Silva of the Sustainability Network (Rede, left) partnered with Eduardo Jorge of the Green Party (PV, left). These selections projected a coherent ideological identity to the electorate, reinforcing the ticket's profile rather than attempting to broaden its appeal.

In contrast, a prominent example of ticket-balancing emerged in 2002, when Lula's PT formed an alliance with the Liberal Party (PL, right). The nomination of José Alencar as the vice-presidential candidate has been interpreted as an effort to reach beyond the PT's traditional

base. This choice likely aimed to signal moderation and a broader policy agenda⁴². This move may also be understood in the context of Lula's three prior presidential defeats and the imperative to prevent the incumbent Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB) from securing a third consecutive term.

Beyond these exceptions, major parties such as the PT and PSDB predominantly formed ideologically compatible tickets. While this approach potentially limited electoral expansion on programmatic grounds, it enhanced coalition cohesion and secured allies who provided important resources, such as extended television advertising time and legislative coalitions that lowered the costs of governing.

In comparative perspective, Brazil occupies an intermediate position: presidential candidates regularly included allies from other parties, but these arrangements preserved a degree of ideological proximity. As a result, Brazilian tickets appeared less cohesive than those in Ecuador yet more cohesive than the alliances formed in Paraguay or Bolivia.

Like Brazil, Argentine presidential candidates tend to favor moderate ideological alignment in their tickets. Yet the median ideological distance is higher in Argentina (3.01) than in Brazil (2.085), reflecting a wider ideological range. The 1989 UCEDE–PDP ticket, the only case of strict alignment, brought together two right-wing parties. By contrast, the 1989 UCR–CFI alliance, uniting a center-left party (UCR) with a right-wing partner (CFI), and the 2011 PS–FC ticket, combining a leftist party (PS) with a center-right party (FC), illustrate attempts at ticket-balancing designed to broaden electoral appeal. Such arrangements indicate an enduring trade-off: they expand voter reach but create challenges for post-electoral coordination.

The Argentine case shows that presidential candidates and their parties often forge highly integrated alliances to safeguard political stability and internal cohesion. At the same time, some vice-presidential selections clearly aim to attract new electoral partners, even though this choice can later strain governing.

Bolivia features only two instances of mixed-partisan tickets in the dataset. As discussed in Chapter 2 (Run with me: Formation of mixed-partisan presidential tickets), Bolivian presidential campaigns moved away from mixed-partisan tickets after the 1990s. For example, the 1989 ticket led by Hugo Banzer (ADN) included a vice-presidential candidate from PDC,

⁴² In the context of the presidential electoral process, the Workers' Party (PT) has demonstrated a propensity to establish broad coalitions. For example, in the 1998's election, when the party conceded the nomination of the vice-presidential candidate to the Labor Democratic Party (PDT), a party with which it was in competition for leadership on the left (Limongi & Cortez, 2010).

creating a broad ideological composition: ADN leaned right, while PDC positioned itself in the center-left. By 1993, Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada (MNR) and Victor Hugo Cárdenas Conde (MRTKL) shifted toward greater ideological cohesion, as MNR occupied the center-right and MRTKL the center.

Colombia's more recent experience, though based on a limited number of cases (2014, 2018, and 2022), suggests a potential shift toward mixed-partisan tickets. These three instances display varying levels of ideological alignment. For instance, the 2014 PU-PCR alliance united two right-leaning parties, while the 2018 PL-ASI and 2022 ASI-CR tickets combined center and center-left forces. These outcomes situate Colombia between the consistent alignment observed in Ecuador and the frequent ticket-balancing strategies prevalent in Paraguay. The data in Figure 8 further indicate that these Colombian tickets maintained greater ideological cohesion than those in Bolivia.

The finding aligns with the null hypothesis presented in Chapter 2: ideological balance did not prevail, and mixed-partisan tickets generally preserved a minimum level of proximity between partners. Scholarship on presidentialism emphasizes the risks of executive instability when the president and vice-president are from distinct parties, as such arrangements often required political concessions and can foster intra-executive conflict (Marsteintredet & Ugglå, 2019; Mittelman, 2019). The evidence here suggests that a concern with cohesion, even if moderate, has guided the composition of mixed-partisan tickets across countries.

This feature appears in Brazil, Argentina, and Colombia, whereas Ecuador relied more on ideological alignment and Paraguay on ticket-balancing. Rather than universal approaches, these outcomes reflect the different patterns observed in national contexts, demonstrating that the literature on pre-electoral coalitions provides a relevant framework for explaining which parties secure the vice-presidential nomination.

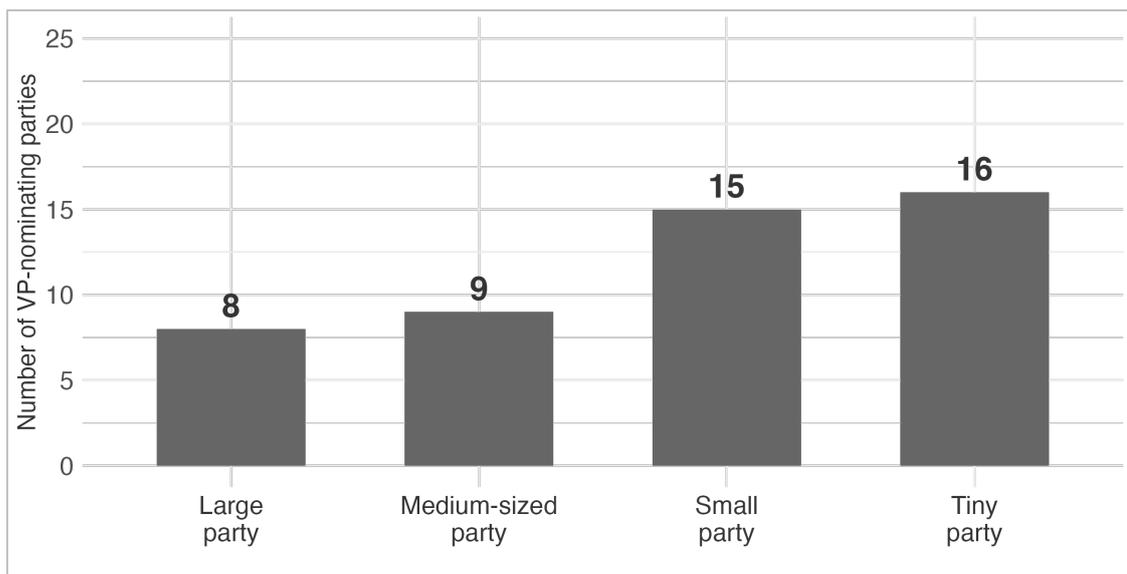
3.4.2 Legislative strength

The literature on pre-electoral coalition found that smaller parties are more prone to join coalitions by contributing organizational resources and electoral networks, yet their limited representation (Kellam 2017; Silva, 2022). Consequently, one might expect such parties to frequently feature in mixed-partisan tickets. However, this propensity is constrained by a party's minimal electoral viability. Existing research argues that parties holding less than 1% of legislative seats are less prone to integrate pre-electoral coalitions (Freudenreich, 2016). As a result, such tiny parties are not often expected to appear in the vice-presidential position.

Conversely, alliances with medium or large parties are often pursued for their greater potential to help presidential candidates approach a legislative majority and reduce the costs of governing (Borges *et al.*, 2020), making them strong competitors in negotiations over the running mate.

The data indicate that vice-presidential nominations were often allocated to parties with limited parliamentary strength (see Figure 9). Among the 48 mixed-partisan tickets analyzed, 16 featured tiny parties (holding up to 1% of seats) and 15 involved small parties (1% to 5%). This distribution partially contradicts theoretical expectations. Although small parties were prominent, parties considered potentially too tiny to hold representational value still secured the vice-presidential slot in nearly a third of instances. The numerical dominance of these minor allies becomes evident when contrasted with the allocation to larger parties: only nine nominations went to medium-sized parties (up to 10% of seats) and eight to large parties (above 10%).

Figure 9 – Distribution of VP nominating parties by party strength category



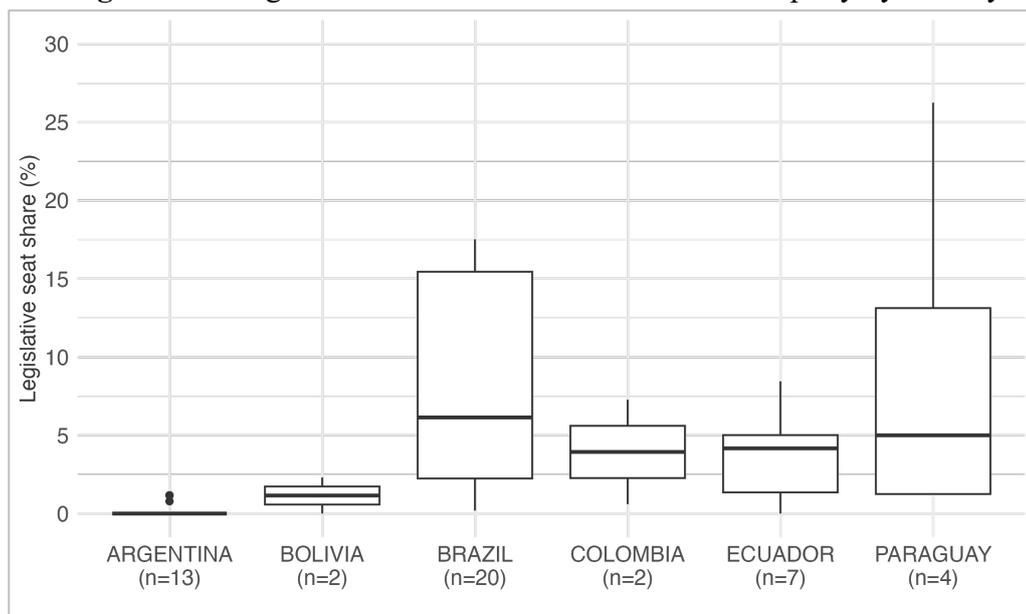
Note. Elaborated by the author.

Several interpretations could explain this outcome. First, the vice-presidency may function as a bargaining concession to secure the organizational resources and electoral networks of smaller allies, notwithstanding their limited parliamentary contribution. Alternatively, small parties may form joint tickets to co-launch a single slate, what can amplify their platform's visibility. A further consideration is that larger parties may be less available for coalitional agreements, as they often opt to launch their own presidential candidates, thereby restricting the pool of potential partners to smaller parties.

Figure 10 shows the distribution of the vice-presidential nominee's party legislative seat share (%) by country⁴³. As previously noted, legislative representation ranges from 0% to 26.25% of seats. The small sample sizes for Bolivia (2), Colombia (3), and Paraguay (4) limit the reliability of cross-national comparisons, as individual cases or outliers can disproportionately influence the distribution. Nevertheless, some contrasts are observable. In Argentina, most nominations originated from tiny parties, with the median also falling within this category; only two instances involved small parties. Both of Bolivia's cases featured those ones. Colombia, Ecuador, and Paraguay also cluster within the small-party range, whereas Brazil is the only country where the median rises above this threshold into the medium-party category. This pattern does not indicate that most Brazilian nominations came from medium-sized allies but may instead reflect the upward influence of several large-party nominations on the distribution.

The range of legislative seat share also varies across countries. In Paraguay, the apparent dispersion results from a single large party nomination, which inflates the boxplot's spread. Brazil, by contrast, exhibits greater variability, with presidential candidates conceding the vice-presidential nomination to entities ranging from tiny organizations with minimal legislative weight to large parties with substantial representation.

Figure 10 – Legislative seat share of the VP nominee's party by country



Note. Elaborated by the author.

⁴³ Appendix III reports a similarity calculation between the president's and vice-president's parties based on their legislative seat shares. The resulting correlation is small and not statistically significant at conventional levels.

In Bolivia, the dataset includes two cases, from 1989 and 1993. Both presidential candidates, Hugo Banzer of ADN and Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada of MNR, headed parties with a record of competitive performance in prior presidential elections, and each controlled approximately one-third of the legislative seats. Despite their considerable parliamentary strength, Banzer conceded the vice-presidential nomination in 1989 to a small ally, the PDC, which held only 2.3% of seats. Similarly, in 1993, Sánchez de Lozada partnered with MRTKL, an indigenous party that held no legislative seats at the time.

These nominations might pursued distinct objectives. Banzer's choice may be interpreted as an attempt at ideological balancing, pairing his right-leaning party with the PDC's center-left orientation. Sánchez de Lozada, by contrast, seems to have prioritized the symbolic and representational appeal of his running mate over legislative support, aligning with an indigenous party despite its negligible political weight. This decision suggests a concern with inclusivity rather than with legislative support⁴⁴.

In Argentina, vice-presidential nominees on mixed-partisan tickets were overwhelmingly drawn from tiny parties: of the thirteen cases, ten involved organizations with no lower-house seats in the previous legislative election. Frequently, the presidential candidates also represented parties with minimal parliamentary presence. Even in the three instances where vice-presidential nominees came from parties with legislative representation, their seat share was minimal, never exceeding 1.5% of the lower chamber. Notably, this included cases where presidential candidates from electorally competitive parties selected running mates from tiny organizations, demonstrating the limited legislative relevance accorded to vice-presidential partners in Argentina. In 1999, Fernando de la Rúa (UCR) led La Alianza, a coalition controlling 44% of the Chamber of Deputies, yet selected Carlos "Chacho" Álvarez from Frente Grande (FG), which had won no seats in 1997. In 2007, Elisa Carrió (ARI), whose party held 11% of lower-house seats, chose Rubén Giustiniani of the Socialist Party (PS), likewise without representation in the Chamber.

⁴⁴ Víctor Hugo Cárdenas was a Bolivian politician of Aymara indigenous origin. Having received his training in social sciences in Europe, he gained a reputation of respect within Bolivia's academic community. In 1989, he pursued a presidential candidacy with the MRTKL, garnering a mere 1.62% of the vote. According to Gamarra and Malloy (1995, p. 422), Cárdenas's inclusion on the MNR ticket was an attempt to mobilize social sectors sympathetic to the party but previously drawn to populist parties. The vice-presidential candidate's efforts were instrumental in ensuring victory in the La Paz department and attracting votes that might otherwise have gone to UCS or CONDEPA.

Colombia, like Bolivia, appears with limited representation in this analysis due to the small number of cases, including only two mixed-partisan tickets. In 2014, incumbent President Juan Manuel Santos of the Party of the U (PU) selected Germán Vargas Lleras from Radical Change (PCR) as his running mate for reelection. Vargas Lleras, who had run against Santos in 2010 and finished third with 10.1% of the vote, later joined the administration as a minister. At the time, PCR was the fourth-largest party in the Chamber of Representatives, holding 7.2% of seats. Another coalition partner, the Colombian Liberal Party (PL), was considerably larger, controlling 22% of seats. Together with the PU, which held 29%, this alliance aimed to secure a legislative majority for Santos's second term.

In 2018, the Liberal Party (PL) nominated Humberto de la Calle as its presidential candidate. Rather than allying with a mid-sized party as in 2014, the PL partnered with the Independent Social Alliance (ASI), a tiny party holding only 0.6% of parliamentary seats. This ticket demonstrated moderate ideological alignment but struggled to mobilize electoral support. De la Calle's selection of Clara López as his running mate seemed driven less by the ASI's organizational capacity than by López's personal profile. A former Minister of Labour, presidential and vice-presidential candidate, and high-ranking official in Bogotá, her nomination offered political visibility and prestige that the ASI itself lacked.

The Ecuatorian cases show a distinct pattern: in three of the eight mixed-partisan tickets, presidential candidates delegated the vice-presidential nomination to allies with a comparable level of legislative weight. For instance, in 1984, León Febres-Cordero of the PSC (4.3% of seats) partnered with the PLRE (5.79%), both medium-sized parties. Similarly, in 1988, Jaime Hurtado of the MPD, which held three seats, granted the vice-presidential nomination to FADI, another party of identical size. The 1996 FRA-PLRE ticket marked the last instance in which two small organizations, with 1.2% and 1.5% of seats respectively, joined forces for a presidential bid.

One observation, however, diverged from these cases through an alliance of asymmetric strength. In 1988, APRE, a party with no parliamentary representation, secured a coalition with the PSE, a mid-sized party that controlled 8.5% of the seats. APRE's capacity to attract such a partner might be explained by the profile of its presidential candidate, Commander Frank Vargas Pazzos.

Pazzos, a former military officer and Commander of the Ecuatorian Air Force, had previously served as Chief of the Joint Armed Forces Command. In 1986, he gained national prominence by leading a rebellion against President Febres-Cordero's authoritarian regime,

which earned him widespread public support during a period of economic and institutional crises (Montufar, 1990). His personal reputation provided APRE with a political asset that compensated for the party's lack of legislative strength, thereby facilitating an alliance with the PSE⁴⁵.

Overall, Ecuadorian presidential candidates rarely managed to attract allies with relevant representation. Most mixed-partisan tickets relied on minor or small parties, with only two exceptions mentioned earlier: León Febres-Cordero (PSC) in 1984 and Frank Vargas Pazzos (APRE) in 1988, both of whom secured the support of mid-sized allies. The absence of large parties in these arrangements reflects their preference for launching their own presidential candidates in pure-partisan tickets⁴⁶.

Paraguay displays a more bipartisan structure than most South American countries. Between 1993 and 2018, the effective number of parties (ENPP) ranged from a low of 1.94 in 1998 to a peak of 3.43 in 2008⁴⁷. The political arena has been dominated by two major parties: the Colorado Party and the PLRA.

The Colorado Party consistently fielded single-party tickets and won nearly every election in this period, with the sole exception of 2008. The PLRA, usually in second place, adopted a different strategy. To broaden its electoral appeal, the party often delegated the vice-presidential nomination to allies with divergent policy agendas, even when these partners were small or medium-sized. Such cross-ideological nominations occurred in 1998, 2013, and 2018.

Paraguay's limited party system fragmentation constrained the PLRA's pool of potential coalition partners. In 1998, it allied with PEN, a medium-sized party that held 8.75% of parliamentary seats. In 2013, the vice-presidential candidate came from PDP, a small party with 1.25% representation. Similarly, in 2018, the PLRA partnered with Guasú Front (FG), another small party also holding 1.25% of the seats. Figure 10 shows that Paraguay's median legislative

⁴⁵ The APRE illustrates a political party created, and in this instance revived, solely for the convenience of a political figure seeking the presidency. A case in point is Frank Vargas Pazzos, who not only ran in 1988 but also contested the presidency in 1992 and 1996. In 1998, Pazzos initiated his candidacy, but subsequently withdrew in support of Álvaro Noboa (PRE). Subsequently, Pazzos ran as a vice-presidential candidate in 2002, on a ticket led by Jacobo Bucaram Ortiz of the PRE, the same party he had supported in the previous election.

⁴⁶ In the 1984 election, among the major parties, CFP, ID, and PCE, only the latter chose not to field its own presidential candidate. Instead, it aligned itself with the National Reconstruction Front (Frente de Reconstrucción Nacional), endorsing León Febres-Cordero's (PSC) candidacy. By 1988, however, all major parties, including ID, PSC, and CFP, had presented their own candidates in the presidential race. The challenges inherent in the formation of electoral coalitions can be ascribed to the constraints imposed by the 1978 Party Law. Specifically, the 1978 Party Law stipulated that a presidential ticket could only be publicly represented by a single party, thereby preventing official disclosure of electoral alliances. Additionally, the law stipulated that credit for a presidential candidacy could only be attributed to a single party, thereby discouraging other parties from participating in electoral alliances (Conaghan, 1995).

⁴⁷ See Figure 18 in Appendix II for the evolution of ENPP by country.

strength for vice-presidential parties is higher to those of Colombia and Ecuador. However, the third quartile and upper whisker indicate an outlier: the PLRA's 2008 vice-presidential nomination in a ticket head by PDC, when the PLRA held 26% of the seats. This effect is amplified by the limited number of Paraguayan cases in the dataset, only four.

The PLRA's recurrent reliance on small and medium-sized allies reflects its adaptation to a bipartisan framework. Within the constraints of a system dominated by two major parties, the PLRA repeatedly sought to expand its electoral base through ideologically diverse alliances, often prioritizing this coalitional logic over the parliamentary weight of its partners.

Brazil stands out as the country with the largest number of vice-presidential nominations in mixed-partisan tickets within the dataset (20 cases). Brazil also exhibits the highest median among the analyzed countries, suggesting that presidential candidates frequently relied on allies with meaningful representation in parliament. Unlike Paraguay, where the number of cases is limited, the Brazilian sample is large enough to capture variation across legislative weight.

As indicated in Figure 18 (Appendix II), Brazil presents the most fragmented party system within the sample. Between 1998 and 2018, the effective number of parties (ENPP) consistently increased, producing a highly competitive electoral environment. This fragmentation compelled presidential candidates to seek alliances to fill the vice-presidential slot, as argued in Chapter 2 (Run with me: Formation of mixed-partisan presidential tickets). Nevertheless, these candidates often prioritized allies with a minimum level of representation in the Chamber of Deputies.

Figure 10 points out a variation in the size of vice-presidential allies in the parliament. The smallest party to nominate a vice-presidential candidate controlled only 0.2% of the seats, while the largest held 17.5%. Among the 20 mixed-partisan tickets, two involved alliances with tiny parties (below 1% of seats). In 1989, for example, the Workers' Party (PT) selected the Socialist Party (PSB), then holding just 0.2% of seats, as Lula's running mate. At that time, PT itself was a small party (3.3%) seeking national recognition, yet the ticket finished second. In 2018, the Social Liberal Party (PSL) partnered with the tiny PRTB, and despite the limited legislative presence of both organizations, the ticket ultimately won the presidential election⁴⁸.

⁴⁸ Jair Bolsonaro, the PSL's presidential candidate, encountered numerous rejections before selecting Hamilton Mourão as his vice-presidential running mate. Among those who declined the invitation were Senator and evangelical leader Magno Malta, General Augusto Heleno, lawyer Janaina Paschoal (responsible for President Dilma Rousseff's impeachment), and Luiz Philippe de Orleans e Bragança, a descendant of Brazil's royal family. Ultimately, Bolsonaro selected retired military officer Hamilton Mourão, affiliated with the PRTB (Audi, 2018).

Six presidential candidates selected running mates from small parties (1% to 5% of seats). Half of these instances involved the Workers' Party (PT). In 2002, Lula partnered with the Liberal Party (PL), which held 2.3% of the seats, to nominate José Alencar as his running mate. By 2006, Alencar, then Vice President, had joined the Brazilian Republican Party (PRB), which controlled 4.2% of the Chamber of Deputies. The last case occurred in 2018, when Fernando Haddad (PT) allied with the Communist Party of Brazil (PCdoB), which held 1.9% of the seats.

This 2018 ticket marked a departure from the PT's earlier strategy of broadening its appeal through ideologically balanced alliances. Historically one of Brazil's dominant parties, the PT had competed in every presidential election since democratization. By 2018, however, it faced a profound political crisis. The impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff in 2016, the Mensalão convictions, and extensive media coverage of the Operation Car Wash investigations severely undermined the party's reputation. The process culminated in the imprisonment of former president Lula, fueling a sharp wave of anti-PT sentiment among the electorate (Limongi, 2023).

Amid this isolation, the PT encountered significant obstacles in forming alliances. Even long-standing partners, such as the PSB and PDT, refrained from associating with the party (Venaglia, 2018). In this context, the party sought to reaffirm its ideological commitments by forming an alliance with the PCdoB, a small but historically loyal leftist party (Partido dos Trabalhadores, 2018; Schaffner, 2018).

Among the five cases in which medium-sized parties (holding 5% to 10% of seats) nominated the vice-presidential candidate, four involved presidential contenders from protagonist and electorally competitive parties. In 2002, Ciro Gomes of the PPS, who had competed in the previous election, securing 10.9% of the vote, formed a mixed-partisan ticket with the PTB, which held 6% of the Chamber of Deputies seats.

In 2018, following the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff and the deeply unpopular administration of her vice-president, Michel Temer (MDB), Brazil's party system reached its highest level of fragmentation. In this context, Geraldo Alckmin (PSDB) relied on a wide coalition to overcome the PT's electoral dominance⁴⁹. Given the high party system fragmentation, few large parties without their own presidential candidates were left to support

⁴⁹ In the 2018 electoral contest, the "To Unite Brazil" coalition (Para Unir o Brasil) encompassed a total of nine political parties, constituting the most extensive alliance in that electoral cycle. The coalition comprised the following political parties: PSDB, PP, PTB, PSD, PRB/Republicanos, PR/PL, DEM, Solidariedade, and PPS.

him⁵⁰. Ultimately, Alckmin conceded the vice-presidential nomination to the Progressive Party (PP), a medium-sized party holding 7.4% of the Chamber seats and the fourth-largest caucus at the time.

Two other instances involved the PT granting the vice-presidential slot to medium-sized allies. The first was in 1998, when Lula selected the PDT, which controlled 6.7% of seats, to provide his running mate. The second was in 2022, when Lula ran alongside his former rival, Geraldo Alckmin, who by then had joined the PSB, a party with 6.2% of the seats.

The 2022 election is notable for its ticket composition. It marked Lula's return as a candidate following the restoration of his political rights⁵¹. Early discussions focused on selecting a running mate capable of broadening his electoral appeal to defeat incumbent Jair Bolsonaro (PL). Former São Paulo governor Geraldo Alckmin had left the PSDB after the 2018 election. With extensive experience as a governor and presidential contender, choosing him reinforced Lula's narrative of building a broad and inclusive coalition (Costa, 2023). Lula officially announced the decision after Alckmin joined the PSB, although the choice had already been decided (Ramalhoso, 2022). As in 2002, when Lula selected his running mate before the ally's formal nomination by a coalition party (Lopes, 2022c).

After its defeat in 2018, the PSDB faced internal divisions regarding its 2022 nominee. João Doria, then governor of São Paulo, narrowly defeated Eduardo Leite, governor of Rio Grande do Sul, in the party's primaries. However, internal discord and weak leadership support compelled Doria to withdraw from the race (Linhares & Tavares, 2022). Subsequently, the PSDB joined the Brazil for Everyone (Brasil para Todos)⁵² coalition, led by Simone Tebet (MDB), and nominated senator Mara Gabrilli as the vice-presidential candidate. This case represents the fifth instance of a presidential candidate conceding the vice-presidential

⁵⁰ In 2014, the PT was the most prominent political force in the Chamber of Deputies, with a total of 69 seats, constituting 13.9% of the total seats in the chamber. The PMDB followed in second place, with 66 seats (12.67%), while the PSDB held 10.5% of the seats. By 2018, the PT and the PMDB had each launched their own presidential candidates, leaving the PSDB to align with medium-sized parties.

⁵¹ In 2018, the Superior Electoral Court (TSE) of Brazil, the authority responsible for overseeing electoral procedures, invalidated the candidacy of former President Lula for that year's election. This decision was predicated on the provisions enshrined within the Lei da Ficha Limpa, legislation which stipulates that individuals convicted by a collegiate court are to be disqualified from running for office for a period of eight years. Lula had been convicted by a federal court for passive corruption and money laundering, and the ruling was upheld by the Federal Regional Court of the 4th Region (TRF4). In 2021, the Supreme Federal Court (STF) annulled the convictions, citing a lack of jurisdiction by the 13th Federal Court in Curitiba to hear the charges. After this, the STF upheld this decision, thereby restoring Lula's eligibility (Pinotti, 2023).

⁵² The coalition included PMDB/MDB, PSDB, PPS/Cidadania, and Podemos.

nomination to a medium-sized ally. Unlike the others, however, the MDB was not a traditional presidential contender and had performed poorly in the previous election⁵³.

In the eight cases where presidential candidates granted the vice-presidential nomination to large parties (controlling over 10% of legislative seats), one occurred in Paraguay, when the PLRA nominated the vice-president, while the remaining seven took place in Brazil. Among these, the PSDB brought large parties to the ticket in five times and the PT twice. In every instance, the allied party was either the PMDB/MDB or the PFL/DEM.

Between 1994 and 2014, both the PMDB/MDB and the PFL/DEM controlled more than 10% of the Chamber of Deputies, which positioned them as dominant actors in negotiations over vice-presidential nominations and consolidated their status as supporting parties (Bertholini, Pereira & Bugarin, 2022). This period of intense polarization between the PT and the PSDB shaped electoral alliances and, to some extent, vice-presidential selection strategies (Limongi & Cortez, 2010; Limongi & Guarnieri, 2014).

The PFL/DEM maintained a long-standing alliance with the PSDB. In 1994, as the second-largest party in the Chamber, the PFL became an indispensable partner for Fernando Henrique Cardoso's (PSDB) presidential bid. Meanwhile, the PMDB, which held the largest number of seats, launched its own presidential candidate, leaving the PFL available to join a ticket. In 2002, however, the PFL fielded its own presidential candidate, prompting the PSDB to seek support from the PMDB; combined, the two parties controlled roughly one quarter of the Chamber of Deputies. By 2006, Geraldo Alckmin (PSDB) re-established the PSDB-PFL partnership, as the PFL remained the second-largest party in the legislature (Gois, 2006). In 2010, after rebranding as DEM, the party nominated its last vice-presidential candidate on a PSDB ticket led by José Serra.

The PT's approach to vice-presidential nominations evolved during this period (Lopes, 2020). In 1989, Lula selected an ideologically aligned running mate, reflecting the party's early objective of consolidating its base. By 2002, however, the PT shifted course and formed an alliance with the PL, a right-leaning party, in a move intended to broaden the ticket's electoral appeal and secure victory against the incumbent PSDB government.

⁵³ Since 1994, the PMDB/MDB fielded a presidential candidate for the first time in 2018, with former Central Bank president Henrique Meirelles. However, the joint candidacy received a mere 1.20% of the vote. As discussed in Chapter 2, the PMDB/MDB was historically a supporting party (Bertholini, Pereira & Bugarin, 2022). Despite its sizeable congressional representation, the party has chosen to prioritize the vice-presidential race, instead of seeking the presidency.

Prior to 2010, the PT had not formed a ticket with strong legislative allies, as noted earlier. By that year, after two consecutive terms in office, the party recognized the need to forge wider legislative coalitions to advance its policy agenda. It thus turned to the PMDB, the largest party in the Chamber of Deputies, which also held the presidency of the lower house. In 2010, the PT-PMDB alliance held nearly one third of its seats, a partnership that was renewed in the 2014 election.

The Brazilian cases shows that presidential candidates could draw vice-presidential partners from tiny to large parties, with large supporting parties such as the PMDB/MDB and PFL/DEM playing a decisive role. This sets Brazil apart from the other cases in the region. In Argentina, vice-presidential nominees were overwhelmingly selected from tiny parties, even when presidential contenders themselves belonged to protagonist and competitive parties. In Ecuador, most alliances relied on small partners with limited representation, with only occasional exceptions involving mid-sized parties. In Paraguay, a party system dominated by two major actors constrained options, leading the PLRA to delegate the vice-presidency to small or mid-sized allies in efforts to expand its base. Bolivia and Colombia, represented by only a handful of cases, present a different picture: while Banzer (1989) and Sánchez de Lozada (1993) allied with small partners despite their strong legislative bases, Santos and De la Calle relied either on mid-sized parties such as Radical Change (CR) or on very small allies like ASI.

Unlike the other cases, Brazil stands out for the presence of allies at all representation levels, including large parties recurrently incorporated into presidential tickets. Their participation underscores the attractiveness of the vice-presidency as a bargaining instrument, since even parties with the capacity to launch their own candidacies accepted the vice-presidential slot in mixed-partisan tickets. The discussion that follows connects these findings to the literature and the results presented in Chapter 2.

3.5 DISCUSSION

The vice-presidency represents one of the few institutions that connects electoral competition with governance. In mixed-partisan tickets, the decision to grant this position to another party reveals how candidates balanced the pursuit of coalition cohesion against the limited availability of partners. This chapter examines those choices through two dimensions, ideological proximity and legislative strength, both shaped by fragmented systems that often left only minor allies within reach.

Mixed-partisan tickets are inherently fragile, as the president and vice-president come from different parties and the latter remains a permanent potential successor (Marsteintredet & Ugglá, 2019; Serrafero, 1999). In most observed cases, the allied parties maintained a moderate ideological distance: sufficiently close to signal compatibility yet distinct enough to retain potential sources of tension. Closer alignments might reduce, though never fully eliminate, the vulnerabilities built into such arrangements.

Moderate proximity also allowed for a discernible programmatic distinction between the presidential and vice-presidential parties. This differentiation supported the goal of expanding electoral appeal beyond the presidential party's base, while avoiding combinations so ideologically distant that they risked undermining the partnership's stability. The findings only partially align with the literature, which emphasizes that cooperation is more sustainable when parties are ideologically proximate (Alemán & Tsebelis, 2011; Budge & Laver, 1986; Kellam, 2017). While the literature highlights the costs of governing with divergent allies, the evidence here suggests that presidential candidates often pursued an intermediate path: maintaining enough proximity to ensure coherence while leaving space for programmatic distinction to signal breadth.

The results also qualify the null hypothesis tested in Chapter 2. While ticket-balancing occurred, it never emerged as the dominant strategy. Instead, moderate ideological proximity prevailed, including among electorally competitive parties. More than 70% of moderately proximate tickets (14 of 20) were led by presidential candidates from this group, implying that moderation was not merely a consequence of weak candidates but a recurrent decision when forming mixed-partisan tickets.

Regarding legislative strength, nearly two-thirds of vice-presidential nominations in mixed tickets were allocated to tiny or small parties. Reliance on small partners was anticipated; however, the frequent inclusion of tiny parties contravenes theoretical expectations (Freudenreich, 2016; Kellam, 2017). These allies contributed minimal legislative weight, and their capacity to attract votes remains unclear. Some scholarship notes, however, that such parties can provide organizational networks, campaign workers, and localized visibility during elections (Silva, 2022). These findings are consistent with Ugglá (2020), who demonstrates that presidential candidates from minor parties are more likely to form mixed tickets and, consequently, tend to attract allies of comparable or smaller size.

Argentina offers a notable case. Most mixed-partisan tickets relied on small or tiny parties, with few exceptions. For candidates from parties with limited electoral weight, aside

from two competitive cases, the vice-presidency functioned less as an instrument for coalition building and more as a mechanism for achieving national visibility and recognition (West & Spoon, 2012). The introduction of Simultaneous and Mandatory Open Primaries (PASO) in 2011, which established a minimum support threshold for entering the presidential race, altered this pattern (Argentina, 2009). Following the reform, tickets lacking legislative backing became increasingly rare: only two participated in the 2011 PASO, none qualified in 2015, and only one reached the general election in 2019.

Paraguay demonstrates a distinct trajectory. Even presidential candidates from parties with substantial parliamentary representation occasionally selected small allies for the vice-presidential slot. Within its predominantly bipartisan system, the PLRA, the main opposition party, frequently eschewed single-party tickets and delegated this position to smaller partners. These allies contributed minimal legislative strength, but the strategy sought to mobilize their available resources to expand the electoral base. This approach also reflected the PLRA's tendency to partner with ideologically diverse actors, leading it to adopt ticket-balancing selections despite the higher governance costs such arrangements impose.

Medium and large parties appeared less frequently in vice-presidential nominations, but their inclusion often provided parliamentary weight that could lower the costs of governing and expand electoral appeal. As presented in Chapter 2, electorally competitive parties were more likely to form mixed-partisan tickets, particularly in fragmented systems where pre-electoral coalitions become necessary. Within this group, most nominations came from these better-represented allies (58%, 14 of 24). This distribution suggests that competitive presidential candidates were especially attractive to partners with substantial legislative presence, who may have perceived them as viable contenders. In Colombia in 2014, for instance, President Juan Manuel Santos of the Party of the U selected Germán Vargas Lleras of Radical Change (CR) as his running mate, pairing a dominant force with a mid-sized coalition partner. Brazil likewise featured several cases where mid-level parties occupied the vice-presidential slot.

As Borges, Turgeon, and Albala (2020) contend, presidential candidates in fragmented systems often seek electoral allies to reduce prospective governing costs. Although tiny and small parties constituted most vice-presidential nominations, medium and large parties remained essential for constructing coalitions, and the evidence indicates that the vice-presidency also attracted partners with considerable parliamentary weight.

Brazil provides clear examples of this. The PMDB/MDB and PFL/DEM were supporting parties and consistently held the largest or second-largest delegations in the

Chamber of Deputies between the 1990s and 2010s (Bertholini *et al.*, 2022). While primarily focused on subnational contests, they became indispensable to protagonist competitive parties like the PT and PSDB, which offered them the vice-presidency many times. Although these parties possessed limited capacity to mobilize votes nationally, they could leverage local electoral machines, enhance the visibility of presidential campaigns within their regions of influence, and thereby improve overall electoral performance (Borges & Turgeon, 2017).

Allocating the vice-presidency to a coalition partner not only reduced the number of electoral competitors and consolidated campaign resources but also established a binding commitment. Unlike cabinet appointments, the vice-president's position is irrevocable once elected. For the party accepting the nomination, association with a national ticket could strengthen its local campaigns and, in some contexts, help mitigate intra-coalition competition in concurrent legislative races⁵⁴.

The prevalence of vice-presidential candidates from tiny and small parties also raises the question of partner availability. Larger, more viable parties may have been less inclined to accept a secondary role or may have preferred to launch their own single-party tickets. In the dataset of 519 cases⁵⁵, 118 of protagonist parties with electoral competitiveness; among these, 58% (69 of 118) competed on pure-partisan tickets, while an additional 16 formed pre-electoral coalitions without conceding the vice-presidency. Most of these cases (11) occurred in Argentina, which also featured the highest number of presidential candidates allied with small or tiny partners. The predominance of minor allies in mixed-partisan tickets may therefore reflect not deliberate preference but rather the limited set of partners available.

Comparing across countries shows how the two dimensions intersected in different ways. In Ecuador, presidential candidates usually relied on ideologically aligned partners of small or comparable size. In Paraguay, the PLRA often adopted a ticket-balancing selection, delegating the vice-presidency to small or medium allies. Brazil displayed the widest variation: most cases involved moderate proximity, but the vice-presidential slot ranged from tiny organizations to the largest parties in parliament. Argentina, by contrast, relied heavily on tiny allies, even when presidential candidates came from protagonist parties. Bolivia and Colombia, though represented by only a few cases, confirm this diversity: protagonists with substantial legislative bases sometimes selected very small partners for symbolic or strategic reasons, while

⁵⁴ Since 2022, Brazilian parties have been barred from forming pre-electoral coalitions in proportional races, though still allowed in majoritarian contests (Brasil, 2017).

⁵⁵ These cases are in the Presidential Tickets in South America Dataset.

mid-sized allies also appeared in some Colombian tickets. Overall, mixed formulas preserved a minimum of ideological compatibility but were built mainly on allies with limited parliamentary strength.

As established in Chapter 2, mixed-partisan tickets occurred more commonly in fragmented party systems and when presidential candidates came from protagonist parties with electoral competitiveness. The evidence from Chapter 3 indicates how these conditions shaped the allocation of the vice-presidency. In fragmented systems, presidential candidates often had only tiny or small partners available, which helps explain their predominance. Protagonist candidates were more likely to attract medium or large allies, reflecting their greater bargaining power. Ideologically, these protagonists favored moderate proximity over balancing, suggesting that electoral strength translated into formulas that preserved minimum cohesion while still signaling breadth. Overall, the results indicate that the systemic context and the profile of the presidential party not only increased the likelihood of mixed tickets but also shaped the kinds of parties that secured the vice-presidency. This conclusion is most robust for Brazil and Argentina, which account for the largest number of cases, while the evidence from Bolivia, Colombia, and Paraguay should be interpreted with greater caution given the limited observations available.

3.6 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Vice-presidential nominations in mixed-partisan tickets were uncommon among parties with greater legislative weight. More commonly, they went to small or even tiny parties, showing that the office functioned less as a mechanism for securing parliamentary support and more as an instrument for pooling campaign resources among minor allies. This recurrent reliance on minor partners indicates that the second slot served as a channel for less competitive parties to enter presidential race, even when their prospects of electoral victory remained limited.

Outcomes were not the same across candidates but reflected their position in the party system. Presidential candidates from protagonist parties have greater capacity to attract medium or large allies, though these partnerships remained within a zone of moderate ideological proximity. In contrast, candidates from non-protagonist parties relied almost exclusively on small or tiny partners. In these cases, the vice-presidency served primarily to provide national visibility rather than to enhance governing capacity. In both scenarios, and ideology operated

in tandem: stronger contenders attracted larger allies, while weaker ones attracted smaller partners. In neither instance, however, did nominations extend to ideologically distant parties.

These findings must be interpreted with caution. The Brazilian case constitutes nearly half of the dataset, potentially influencing the overall results. Furthermore, the analysis includes only parties that successfully secured the vice-presidential nomination, excluding other coalition members who may have competed for the slot. These asymmetries constrain the generalizability of the conclusions and highlight the need for complementary methodological approaches.

Future research should address these limitations by examining parties that participated in presidential coalitions but failed to secure the vice-presidential nomination. Inferential methods could assess how the discussed attributes affected their selection prospects. This expanded focus would shift the analytical lens from successful outcomes to the bargaining process itself, offering a more comprehensive understanding of coalition formation.

Finally, Chapters 2 and 3 contribute to the scholarship on vice-presidential selection and pre-electoral coalitions. This work represents the first systematic analysis focused exclusively on mixed-partisan tickets. It identifies the conditions under which such tickets emerge, delineates the strategies pursued by presidential candidates, and examines which parties are ultimately selected for the vice-presidential slot. By shifting the focus from the presidential to the vice-presidential party, the analysis introduces a novel perspective on candidate selection. Regarding pre-electoral coalitions, these chapters move beyond theoretical assumptions to provide empirical evidence of how the vice-presidency operates as a mechanism for attracting coalition partners. Collectively, they point out that the second position is not merely a residual post but a useful site of coalitional politics. The subsequent chapter examines other unconventional arrangement: the nomination of independent candidates. This analysis raises further questions about how actors operating outside formal party structures come to occupy the vice-presidency.

4 UNBOUND TICKETS: THE EMERGENCE OF INDEPENDENT VICE-PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Unlike the United States, where presidential candidates almost always run with a vice-presidential partner from the same party, South American elections often feature more varied arrangements. One recurrent practice has been the formation of mixed-partisan tickets, in which presidential nominees turn to allied parties when selecting their running mates, a pattern examined in Chapter 2 (Run with me: Formation of mixed-partisan presidential tickets). Yet mixed-partisan tickets are not the only difference with the U.S. model. Another striking feature of the region is the presence of independent vice-presidential candidates, individuals unaffiliated with any political party. This chapter turns to these cases, asking what factors driving the selection of candidates not affiliated with political parties.

Although independent candidacies exist in the United States, their electoral significance remains limited under its two-party dominance. In contrast, some Latin American systems permit nonpartisan candidacies, enabling independents to compete more prominently. Ugglá (2020) identifies a growing trend of independent vice-presidential candidacies in Latin America since democratization. Among the most competitive tickets, defined as those that resulted in the first and second-place finishes, 15% involved independent vice-presidents. According to scholars such as Pignataro and Taylor-Robinson (2019), the increasing detachment of citizens with traditional political parties has led to a rise in the number of partisan presidential candidates choosing independent running mates. Hence, the inclusion of an independent vice-president in a presidential race has the potential to mobilize these voters. Remarkably, no leading tickets included independent vice-presidential candidates during the initial wave of re-democratization (1978–1987). The first recorded case emerged in El Salvador's 1989 election, when Christian Democrat Fidel Chávez Mena from Christian Democratic Party (PDC) selected an independent running mate (Gordon, 1990).

Building on this contrast, the discussion now turns to the cases where presidential candidates nominate independent running mates. Unlike mixed-partisan tickets, which rely on alliances across parties, these candidacies involve figures without partisan affiliation and invite questions about the conditions that allow their inclusion. To investigate this phenomenon, the analysis focuses on elections that have permitted independent vice-presidential nominations

since democratization: Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador (2002–2021), and Paraguay. Argentina and Brazil are excluded, as their constitutional frameworks reserve nominations exclusively for political parties. By narrowing the scope in this way, this comparative approach allows for focused analysis of institutional environments that facilitate independent candidacies.

It also addresses the distinction between independent candidates and political outsiders, an essential step for interpreting the findings. While independent candidates lack formal party affiliation, they are not necessarily political outsiders, as many possess political experience despite their nonpartisan status (Bolleyer & Weeks, 2009; King-Hall, 1952; Weeks, 2016). Political outsiders, by contrast, emerge from outside political circles and generally lack experience in elected office.

The chapter proceeds in five stages. First, it defines independent candidacies and outlines the legal frameworks regulating their eligibility, nomination and funding in four South American countries, noting reforms over time. Second, it uses biographical data to distinguish independents from outsiders, mapping the political backgrounds of vice-presidential candidates. Third, it examines contextual and institutional factors that may influence the likelihood of selecting an independent running mate, focusing on how party system weakness, higher entry barriers, the presidential candidate's own independent status, and the aftermath of recent impeachment episodes affect such nominations. Fourth, it presents the research design, combining cross-national statistical analysis with case studies of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Paraguay. Fifth, it reports the empirical findings. Sixth, the discussion interprets these findings considering national institutional and political contexts, including the political backgrounds of those candidates. The chapter concludes by summarizing the main contributions, situating them within the literature on vice-presidential selection, and outlining limitations and directions for future research.

4.2 DEFINITION AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES IN SOUTH AMERICA

Understanding the presence of independent vice-presidential candidates in South America requires a clear definition of what “independent” means, both conceptually and legally. The concept “independent,” as defined by the Cambridge Dictionary, refers to individuals or entities not influenced or controlled by external forces, such as organizations or events. In elections, an independent candidate is someone that compete without formal party affiliation and foregoing a party structure support. This conceptualization aligns with King-

Hall's (1952, p. 54) definition of independents as candidates completely detached from party apparatuses. Such candidates are not nominated by parties and represent an alternative to party-driven candidacies (Bolleyer & Weeks, 2009)⁵⁶.

The legal landscape governing candidacies has evolved significantly since the wave of democratization in South America. Where political parties once held exclusive nomination rights, constitutional and electoral reforms have gradually expanded access to ballot access (De La Peza, 2007). Many jurisdictions now permit alternative nomination mechanisms through citizen associations (*agrupaciones ciudadanas*) or indigenous organizations (*organizaciones de pueblos indígenas*). Following Astudillo (2017) and Gouveia (2019), candidates nominated through these channels may still qualify as independent when they maintain no formal party ties.

The legal recognition of independent candidacies in South America embodies democratic principles that have evolved alongside legal reforms. Scholars, as Velásquez (2004) and De La Peza (2007), argues that these provisions institutionalized two types of democratic values: (1) equal political opportunity for all citizens regardless of organizational affiliation, and (2) direct access to electoral competition through multiple channels. This framework included both unaffiliated candidates and those nominated through citizen associations or indigenous organizations. By doing so, it ensures electoral systems recognize diverse forms of representation beyond traditional party structures.

The first instance of independent candidacies in Latin America was recorded in Honduras in 1977, with the publication of Decree n. 572 by the Advisory Council of the Head of State. This decree governed the electoral process held in April 1980 (Velázquez, 2004). Bolivia later became the first South American country to institutionalize independent candidacies through its 1967 Constitution, allowing citizen groups to nominate candidates in alliances with political parties (Zovatto, 2006).

In the period following re-democratization, independent candidacy regulations evolved across South America. As documented in Table 9, Argentina and Brazil continue to maintain party-exclusive nomination systems, while Ecuador's 1998 Constitution explicitly permitted unaffiliated individuals to compete in presidential and vice-presidential elections. However, the 2008 constitutional reform introduced a requirement for such candidates to be nominated by political parties, movements, or alliances (Art. 112, Ecuadorian Constitution, 2008).

⁵⁶ This minimal definition of independents has been adopted by several other studies, including those by Thaha and Haryanto (2017) and Tkacheva and Turchenko (2022).

Table 9 – Rules for independents candidates to run for presidency and vice-presidency

Country	Period	Permission for independent candidate	Conditioning	Legislation
Argentina	1985 - 2019	No	-	Art. 38°, Constitución de la Nación Argentina (1994); Art. 2°, Ley Orgánica de los Partidos Político (Ley 23298/1985)
Bolivia	1967 - 2009	Yes	Yes, the candidate must be nominated by a group of citizens or an indigenous group to be launch by an alliance.	Art. 223, Constitución Política de la República de Bolivia (1967)
Bolivia	2009 - 2020	Yes	Yes. The candidate must be nominated by a group of citizens or an indigenous people group.	Art. 209, Constitución Política Del Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia (2009); Art. 46, Ley del Régimen Electoral (Ley 26/2010)
Bolivia	2025	No	-	Art. 5°, Ley de Organizaciones Políticas (Ley 1096/2018); Segunda Disposiciones Transitorias, Ley de Organizaciones Políticas (Ley 1096/2018)
Brazil	1965 - 2022	No	-	Art. 14, § 3°, inciso V, Constituição Federal (1988); Art. 87, Código Eleitoral (Lei 4737/1965); Art. 11, § 14 da Lei de Eleições (Lei 9504/1997)
Colombia	1991 - 2022	Yes	Yes, the candidate must be nominated by a political or social movement or a group of citizens.	Art. 9°, Ley de Partidos e Movimientos Políticos (Ley 130/1994); Art. 108, Constitución Política de la República de Colombia (1991)
Ecuador	1979 - 1998	No	-	Art. 37 y 74, Constitución Política (1979)
Ecuador	1999 - 2008	Yes	No	Art. 98, Constitución de 1998
Ecuador	2008 - 2021	Yes	Yes, the candidate must be nominated by a political party, a political movement, or an alliance.	Art. 31, Ley Orgánica de Partidos Políticos (Ley 196/2000); Art. 94, de la Ley Orgánica Electoral y de Organizaciones Políticas de la República del Ecuador; Art. 112, de la Constitución de la República del Ecuador (2008)

Paraguay	1992 - 2018	Yes	Yes, the candidate must be nominated by a political party, a political movement or an alliance.	Art. 85, Código Electoral Paraguayo (Ley 834/1996) Art. 125, Constitución Paraguaya de 1992
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Note. Elaborated by the author

Countries such as Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Paraguay have adopted regulatory frameworks that permit candidates without party affiliation to contest presidential elections, though under different conditions, which take two forms:

- i) Candidates must be endorsed by a political or citizen group: Bolivia (until 2020), Colombia, Ecuador (2008 – 2021), and Paraguay.
- ii) Candidates can run without nomination by a political or citizen group: Ecuador (1999-2008).

In the case of Bolivia, the 1967 Constitution (Article 223) authorized “agrupaciones cívicas representativas de las fuerzas vivas del país” to nominate nonpartisan candidates. These groups often formed pre-electoral coalitions with political parties to present an unaffiliated candidate for the presidential ticket. The 2004 Law on Citizen Groups and Indigenous Peoples (Law 2771) expanded nominating authority to include indigenous organizations, with Article 7 specifically granting these groups presidential nomination rights. However, the 2018 Law on Political Organizations (Law 1096) reversed these provisions by terminating independent presidential candidacies.

Importantly, Bolivian electoral laws and constitutions do not explicitly reference “independent candidacy”. While some scholars interpret this silence as preserving parties’ exclusive nomination privileges (Centellas, 2015), others contend that Bolivia’s pre-2018 framework enabled candidacies independent of party structures when applying minimalist definitions (Zovatto, 2006). This work is following the second interpretation.

Ecuador stands as a unique case in its explicit constitutional recognition of “unaffiliated candidates”. Article 98 of the 1998 Constitution granted citizens the right to stand for election without party sponsorship (Ecuador, 1998). From 1999 to 2008, electoral legislation implemented this provision by allowing individuals to run for office independently, without requiring formal nomination by a political party or citizen group. It changed in the 2008 Constitution. Although it preserved the recognition of independent candidacies, Article 112 introduced a nomination requirement: candidates, whether affiliated or independent, must now be endorsed by a political party, a political movement, or an alliance. In practice, this reform redefined independent candidacies as those without partisan membership, but not without organizational backing.

Other South American countries require the same conditions. For example, the Paraguayan Constitution of 1992 mandated that independent candidates be nominated by

political or citizen groups. Conversely, Colombia stands out as the only country where individuals can run without the intermediation of any political organization.

These legal arrangements start to clarify under which conditions independent candidates can take part in presidential races. The next section draws on this foundation to examine how such candidacies have emerged. It begins by identifying the presence of independents in presidential tickets across South America and then turns to the institutional rules that shape their participation, particularly nomination procedures and access to public funding. This descriptive overview also informs the theoretical discussion developed in the following section.

4.3 INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES IN PRESIDENTIAL TICKETS IN SOUTH AMERICA

Building on the previous discussion, this section maps the presence of independent candidates in presidential and vice-presidential tickets across the countries where such candidacies are legally permitted: Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Paraguay. The analysis adopts the minimalist definition of independent candidacy presented earlier, which refers to candidates not formally affiliated with or nominated by political parties. Information on data collection procedures and classification criteria is available in Appendix IV. Table 10 summarizes the frequency and proportion of independent candidacies across the selected countries.

Table 10 – Distribution and proportion of independent candidates in presidential tickets by country

Country	Period	N	Without independent		Mixed-VP independent		Mixed-president independent		Pure-independent	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Bolivia	1985-2020	97	74	76%	4	4%			19	20%
Colombia	1994-2022	60	23	38%	3	5%	3	5%	31	52%
Ecuador	2002-2021	64	16	25%	11	17%	4	6%	33	52%
Paraguay	1993-2018	44	36	82%	1	2%			7	16%
Total		265	149	56%	19	7%	7	3%	90	34%

Note. Elaborated by the author.

Among the 265 tickets identified in these countries during the periods covered⁵⁷, a majority (56%) did not include any independent candidate, while 44% featured at least one

⁵⁷ The Ecuadorian elections held in 1979, 1984, 1988, 1992, 1996, and 1998 were excluded due to the provisions outlined in articles 37 and 74 of the 1979 Constitution, which prohibited the participation of candidates not nominated by political parties.

independent, either for president or vice-president. The most common type of formation was the pure-independent ticket, in which both presidential and vice-presidential candidates were independents. These accounted for 90 occurrences (34% of all tickets), with Colombia and Ecuador leading in absolute and relative terms, each registering 52% of their tickets as pure-independent.

Mixed-independent tickets were less recurrent. In 19 cases (7%), the vice-presidential candidate was independent while the presidential candidate was affiliated with a party (mixed-VP independent). These cases were concentrated in Ecuador (11), with smaller numbers in Bolivia (4), Colombia (3), and Paraguay (1). Mixed-president independent tickets, where only the presidential candidate was independent, were rare, occurring just 7 times (3% of all tickets).

Bolivia and Paraguay show limited adoption of independent candidacies overall. In both countries, more than three-quarters of presidential tickets were composed exclusively of party-affiliated candidates. Still, the occurrence of pure-independent tickets in these cases is not negligible: nearly one in five tickets in Bolivia and about 16% in Paraguay featured both presidential and vice-presidential candidates without party affiliation. By contrast, Colombia and Ecuador stand out for the prevalence of independents, with over half of all tickets including at least one independent candidate.

Among the different configurations, pure-independent tickets stand out as the most common type involving independents in all four countries. This common feature is not marginal: in Colombia and Ecuador, more than half of the presidential tickets were composed entirely of candidates without party affiliation. Even in Bolivia and Paraguay, where independent candidacies are generally less frequent, this format still appeared in a meaningful share of elections. The recurrence of this configuration indicates that presidential candidates opting for independents may find it more coherent or viable to extend this logic to both positions, especially in contexts where partisan backing is weaker or fragmented.

Conversely, mixed tickets involving a single independent, either for the presidency or vice-presidency, were relatively rare. When they occurred, independents appeared more often in the vice-presidential slot. Their limited use signals potential barriers to integrating independents into coalitions built around party-affiliated candidates. To better understand it, the next two sections examine the rules on the nomination of independents candidates and whether they have access to public resources for campaigns.

4.3.1 Nomination rules for independent candidates

The requirements for nominating independent candidates can either encourage or constrain individuals who lack the backing of a party structure (Siavelis & Morgenstern, 2008). Examining changes and continuities in electoral norms is important for understanding the barriers and incentives faced by independent candidates⁵⁸.

Following re-democratization, Bolivia adopted a relatively inclusive approach by applying the same criteria to independent candidates as to those nominated by political parties, without imposing additional requirements (Bolivia, 1967; 2004; 2009). Similarly, Ecuador's electoral framework generally refrains from setting additional barriers for independent candidacies (Ecuador, 1998). An exception occurred during the 2009 elections, conducted under a transitional constitutional regime. The 2008 Ecuadorian Constitution required organizations other than political parties to present signatures equivalent to at least 1% of the electoral register to validate their candidacies for the 2009 general elections (Ecuador, 2008, Art. 4)⁵⁹.

Whereas Colombia and Paraguay have consistently implemented stricter requirements for independent candidates, including mandatory signatures. Colombia also distinguishes itself by requiring a financial deposit to formalize candidacies. These additional requirements have a significant impact on the accessibility of the electoral process for individuals outside political party structures.

Paraguay's electoral system maintains several restrictions on independent candidates. Article 270 of the 1990 Electoral Code (n. 1/90) required independent candidates to gather signatures equivalent to 0.5% of the valid votes from the most recent election for the same office. The original legislation established three additional restrictions: (1) each voter could endorse only one candidate, (2) individuals were barred from running if they had either voted or stood as candidates in the prior election for the same office, and (3) former party leaders (within two years of the election) were ineligible to run as independents (Paraguay, 1990).

⁵⁸ Appendix IV provides a summary table of the nomination rules for independent candidates by election.

⁵⁹ "Art. 4.- (Presentación de candidaturas) En estas elecciones, las organizaciones políticas y alianzas que participaron en la elección de asambleístas podrán presentar candidaturas. Podrán también hacerlo otras organizaciones políticas, para lo cual deberán presentar el uno por ciento (1%) de firmas de adhesión de los ciudadanos y ciudadanas del correspondiente registro electoral. Al efecto, el Consejo Nacional Electoral entregará los formularios necesarios. Las candidaturas pluripersonales se presentarán en listas completas con candidatos principales y sus respectivos suplentes. Las listas se conformarán paritariamente con secuencia de mujer, hombre u hombre, mujer hasta completar el total de candidaturas" (Ecuador, 2008).

The 1996 electoral reform (Law 834/96) partially liberalized these provisions by eliminating the voting prohibition while maintaining restrictions on previous candidacies and recent party leadership roles (Paraguay, 1996). Nevertheless, these cumulative requirements continue to present an obstacle for independent aspirants, effectively preserving the dominance of party system in Paraguay's electoral system.

Colombia imposes even more stringent regulations. Article 9 of the Law on Political Parties and Movements (n. 130/1994) required associations or citizen groups to present signatures equivalent to 20% of registered voters, capped at 50,000 signatures for majoritarian elections (Colombia, 1994). Additionally, the Colombian legislation uniquely mandates a financial deposit as part of its "seriousness of candidacy policy" (póliza de seriedad de la candidatura), which aims to deter unserious or opportunistic bids. Candidates who fail to secure the minimum number of votes necessary for reimbursement of campaign expenses forfeit this deposit, as discussed further in the next section (Colombia, 1994). This deposit, forfeited by candidates failing to meet minimum vote thresholds, creates additional financial risks for nonpartisan aspirants.

The 2020 Electoral Code (CE/2020) introduced even stricter requirements for independent candidates. Article 65 increased the signature threshold to 3% of valid votes, while Article 73 maintained the financial deposit requirement (Colombia, 2020). These changes increased both the organizational capacity and financial resources needed to launch independent campaigns.

This comparison underscores the obstacles for independent candidacies. While Bolivia and Ecuador offer relatively open paths for nonpartisan entrants, the cumulative legal and procedural demands in Colombia and Paraguay create higher constraints. Such disparities may shape not only the overall presence of independents, but also the decision process of the presidential candidates when considering whether to run independently or to nominate an independent running mate, especially under more demanding systems. These entry barriers operate alongside other institutional factors, including the availability of campaign resources, which further condition the viability of independent bids.

4.3.2 Public financing for electoral campaigns

Public campaign financing is a crucial mechanism for equalizing electoral competition, particularly for independent candidates who lack the financial backing provided by political parties (Siavelis & Morgenstern, 2008). When independent candidacies were first introduced

in most South American countries, Colombia being the exception, state funding was not included. This omission placed nonpartisan contenders at a disadvantage compared to their party-affiliated counterparts.

In Bolivia, prior to the 2004 Law on Citizen Groups and Indigenous Peoples (Law 2771), independent candidates received no public campaign support. In the 1985 and 2002 elections, independent candidates were excluded from accessing public resources for their campaigns. Article 28 of the 2004 reform marked a turning point by extending funding eligibility to nominating organizations representing independent candidates. Subsequent modifications under the 2018 Law on Political Organizations (Law 1096) introduced a hybrid financing model (Article 69), combining limited private donations with indirect public subsidies for campaign materials and media access (Article 73).

Paraguay's experience has similar exclusionary effects. The 1993 elections offered no public financing for independents, and while the 1996 Electoral Code (Law 834) introduced state subsidies (Article 276), these remained inaccessible to presidential candidates unless they won the election. This financial exclusion severely limited the competitiveness of independent candidates, hindering their ability to fund campaigns, gain visibility, and mobilize voters. These barriers likely may explain why no independent presidential ticket has achieved electoral success in Paraguay.

In Ecuador, public funding for independent candidacies was initially unavailable during the 2002 election, as funds were exclusively allocated to political parties (Ecuador, 2000). The 2005 electoral reform (n. 3153/2005) extended public funding to campaigns by citizen groups and Indigenous peoples. However, Article 53 stipulated that political organizations failing to secure at least 3% of valid votes must return the subsidized funds (Ecuador, 2005).

The 2008 Ecuadorian Constitution introduced further reforms affecting the 2013, 2017, and 2021 elections. The Electoral Law and Political Organizations (n. 578/2009) set new criteria for public funding eligibility. Under Article 355, organizations had to meet at least one of the following requirements: 1) secure 4% of valid votes in two consecutive national elections; 2) elect three representatives to the National Assembly; 3) win 8% of mayoral positions; or 4) have one councilor in at least 10% of the country's cantons⁶⁰ (Ecuador, 2009). These stringent criteria created significant obstacles for new candidacies, making support from organizations with a baseline level of institutionalization a necessary condition.

⁶⁰ Cantons (cantones) constitute administrative units within Ecuador, serving as subdivisions of provinces. These cantons are further delineated into parishes, which are then classified as either urban or rural.

Colombia, in contrast, has consistently provided public funding for electoral campaigns, including independent candidacies. The Colombian model is similar to Paraguay's vote-based reimbursement system. Electoral authorities reimburse candidates based on the number of votes obtained⁶¹, with each vote assigned a fixed monetary value. To qualify it, presidential tickets must secure at least 5% of valid votes (Colombia, 1994).

Since the 2006 election, the 2005 reform (Ley 996/2005) introduced provisions for pre-campaign funding. To access these resources, a presidential candidate must be nominated by a social movement or a significant group of citizens presenting signatures equivalent to 3% of votes from the previous presidential election (Article 10, Ley 996/2005). However, Article 11 stipulates that reimbursement depends on securing at least 4% of valid votes. Any pre-campaign funds received must be returned if this threshold is not met (Colombia, 2005).

As discussed, campaign finance regulations interact with nomination rules to create varying degrees of access for independent candidates. Mechanisms such as minimum vote thresholds and financial deposits might disadvantage less-resourced contenders by limiting liquidity, imposing repayment risks, and favoring organizations with established territorial reach. While these provisions do not fully determine electoral outcomes, they help shape the electoral context in which independents compete, including the decision made by presidential candidates when assembling their tickets.

This comparative mapping clarifies the institutional conditions under which independent candidates are allowed to compete in presidential elections across South America. Although this section does not yet assess the impact of these rules, it builds the foundation for the analytical framework developed later in the chapter, where these legal arrangements will be considered in the formulation and testing of hypotheses regarding the selection of independent running mates.

4.4 DISTINGUISHING INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE FROM POLITICAL OUTSIDER: EXPLORING THE PROFILES OF INDEPENDENT CONTENDERS

Despite being frequently designated as political outsiders, independent candidates exhibit a wide range of experience and motivation. While many emerge as political outsiders with limited experience, often reflecting public dissatisfaction with established parties, others

⁶¹ According to Article 13 of Law No. 130/1994, during presidential campaigns, each valid vote received in the first round was converted into 400 pesos for campaign financing, while in the second round, each vote was equivalent to 200 pesos (Colombia, 1994).

constitute experienced politicians who decide to pursue independent candidacies. This distinction is important for comprehending the heterogeneity among independent candidacies. Brancati (2008) proposes a categorization of political newcomers into three groups: a) candidates driven by unconventional political goals, b) those with defined platforms advocating specific policies, and c) individuals seeking personal or professional publicity rather than electoral success.

Hence, the label “independent” does not inherently indicate political outsider status. Experienced politicians may opt to run independently when existing party structures no longer align with their objectives or deny them nominations. This distinction between independent newcomers and political independents is significant. *Independent newcomers* often lack political experience and represent the “outsiders” in this context, whereas *political independents* are established politicians who leverage independent candidacies to advance their careers or ideological goals. As Brancati (2008, p. 650) notes, such candidates often depart from parties due to ideological disagreements, internal conflicts, or failed nomination bids. These career politicians often use independent campaigns to maintain political relevance after losing party support (Thaha & Haryanto, 2017).

In other instances, technocrats who previously held cabinet-level positions may enter presidential races directly as independents, without prior electoral experience or party nomination. This was the case of Andrés Arauz, who served as Coordinating Minister of Knowledge (Ministro Coordinador de Conocimiento) under Rafael Correa, and Juan Fernando Velasco, who was Minister of Culture (Ministro de Cultura) in Lenín Moreno’s administration, both of whom launched presidential bids in Ecuador’s 2021 election.

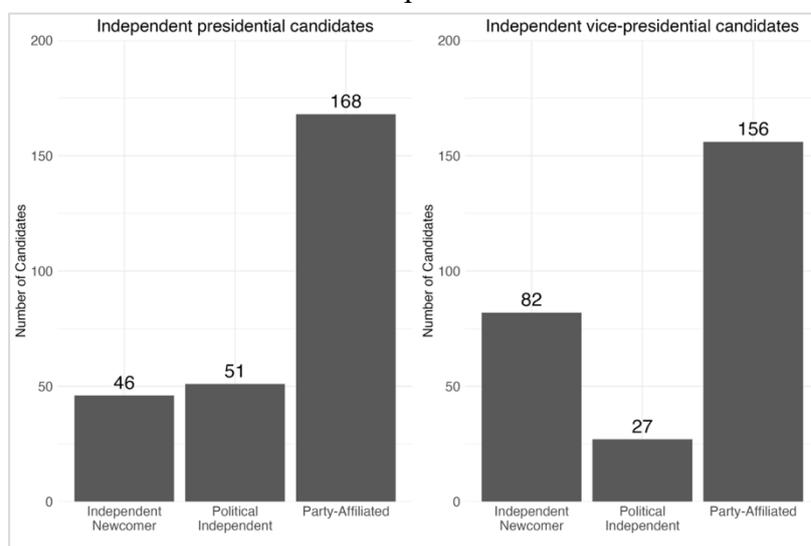
These variations demonstrate that independent candidacies emerge from distinct pathways. Given this, this section compares the political and professional trajectories of presidential and vice-presidential candidates to examine how campaigns construct balanced tickets. The comparison of independent candidates’ trajectories indicates some selection patterns: presidential candidates often rely on political careers to project credibility and leadership, while vice-presidential candidates are chosen to attract specific voter groups or complement the presidential candidate’s profile.

The data illustrated in Figure 11 presents this pattern quantitatively, with 45 presidential candidates classified as independent newcomers compared to 52 political independents⁶².

⁶² In some cases, information on a candidate’s professional background could not be located; in Table 11, these cases are recorded as “Unregistered.” Consequently, such candidates were classified as independent newcomers.

Independent newcomers are those who had neither participated in a previous election nor held an elected office or a political/appointed position at the national or regional level, whereas political independents met at least one of these criteria. The distribution among vice-presidential candidates shows greater disparity: 82 independent newcomers versus 27 political independents. This imbalance indicates that vice-presidential nominations may function as an appeal in response to weakening partisan ties (Pignataro & Taylor-Robinson, 2019; Thaha & Haryanto, 2017). The predominance of newcomer vice-presidential candidates points to efforts to present outsider credentials while maintaining experienced leadership at the top of the ticket.

Figure 11 – Distribution of presidential and vice-presidential candidates by type of independent



Note. Elaborated by the author.

The findings presented here challenge the conventional conflation of independent status with political outsider status. Independent candidates exhibit considerable variation in their political backgrounds, ranging from experienced officeholders to complete lack of political involvement. This underscores the need to distinguish between independents and political outsiders.

To deepen the analysis, Table 11⁶³ presents data on the occupations of presidential ticket members at the time of the election. The distribution set out that a significant proportion of independent candidates held elected or senior government positions (*political office*) prior to

⁶³ The category *unregistered* encompasses instances where pertinent information regarding candidates' professional trajectories was not available, thereby presenting a significant challenge for studies that analyze older elections or candidates with limited electoral significance. The other categories are further explained in Appendix IV.

their campaigns. The data show that 47 presidential candidates possessed political experience, compared to only 25 vice-presidential candidates. This disparity aligns with the pattern illustrated in Figure 11, where political independents (experienced candidates) appear more often in presidential than vice-presidential nominations.

Table 11 – Independent candidacies by occupation

Occupation	Indep. Pres. Candidate	Indep. VP Candidate
Bureaucrat	2	12
Business Industry	1	4
Financial Sector	1	5
Intellectual	5	8
Judiciary	3	1
Media Sector	1	1
Military	5	0
Political Activist	5	8
Political Office	47	25
Productive Sector	3	1
Public Person	1	5
Religious Leadership	4	2
Self-Employed Professional	6	9
Unregistered	14	28
Total	98	109

Note. Elaborated by the author.

The data shows a concentration of bureaucratic professionals (*bureaucrats*) among vice-presidential candidates, contrasting sharply with presidential nominations. Only two presidential candidates emerged from public administration backgrounds, compared to twelve vice-presidential candidates recruited directly from national bureaucracy, mainly from national agencies. This trend was most pronounced in Ecuador, where bureaucrats ran as independent vice-presidential candidates in nearly every election cycle except 2017. Notable examples include Juan Carlos Solines, executive president of the National Telecommunications Council (CONATEL), who ran as Guillermo Lasso's running mate in 2013 (El Comercio, 2013). This ticket ultimately secured second place behind Rafael Correa's winning slate.

Beyond Ecuador, only one comparable instance emerges: Paraguay's 2013 election, when Mario Ferreiro of the Revolutionary Febrerista Party (PRF) chose independent Cynthia Brizuela Speratti as his running mate. Cynthia had served as deputy minister of education for educational management during the Fernando Lugo administration (ABC, 2013). These

examples suggest that while formally independent, many candidates maintain institutional connections, suggesting strategic rather than ideological independence (Thaha & Haryanto, 2017).

The occupational distribution further shows that after bureaucrats, independent vice-presidential candidates most frequently come from three professional backgrounds: *intellectuals* (8 occurrences), *political activists* (8 occurrences), and *self-employed professionals* (9 occurrences). These categories consistently show higher representation among vice-presidential than presidential candidates, with most individuals lacking prior political experience.

The intellectual category encompasses candidates with backgrounds as university rectors⁶⁴, researchers⁶⁵, and professors⁶⁶. Political activists in the sample gained recognition through advocacy work and social movements, though none possessed prior electoral experience. For example, Lenín Moreno (Ecuador, 2006) and Francisco Santos (Colombia, 2002), whose vice-presidential nominations derived from their established public profiles as activists rather than political credentials.

In the 2006 Ecuadorian elections, Lenín Moreno was part of the PAIS Alliance (Proud and Sovereign Homeland) presidential ticket alongside Rafael Correa. Moreno's advocacy for mobility-impaired citizens brought focus to social inclusion policies during the campaign. Similarly, Colombia's 2002 election featured peace activist Francisco Santos as Álvaro Uribe's running mate, capitalizing on Santos' reputation for supporting violence victims. These cases show that presidential candidates may choose activist running mates in the expectation that their public visibility and advocacy credentials will expand the ticket's appeal, although this analysis does not assess the extent to which such selections influence voter support.

Among *self-employed professionals*, such as doctors and lawyers, independent status often indicates political newcomer status. As Pignataro and Taylor-Robinson (2019) argues,

⁶⁴ In the 1993 Bolivian election, Pablo Ramos Sanchez, the rector of Universidad Mayor de San Andrés, ran for vice-president alongside Jerjes Justiniano Talavera, who also served as a university rector. In Ecuador's 2009 election, Eduardo Delgado, the rector of Universidad Politécnica Salesiana, ran alongside Martha Roldós, the daughter of former President Jaime Roldós Aguilera. Roldós Aguilera was the first president elected by popular vote following the period of military rule.

⁶⁵ In the 2002 presidential election in Ecuador, Eva García Fabre, who was the Director of Economic Studies at the Guayaquil Chamber of Commerce, ran with former President Rodrigo Borja Cevallos. The electoral ticket received 13% of the vote, ultimately placing fourth. In 2007, Monserratt Bustamante, who was the Director of Institutional Planning and Development at Universidad Ecotec, ran alongside Paco Moncayo.

⁶⁶ Academics Ricardo Díaz Caballero and Felipe Cárdenas Tamara pursued electoral candidacy in the 2002 and 2006 presidential elections, respectively. In Ecuador, University of Guayaquil professor Modesto Vela and biologist Virna Cedeño ran for the position of vice-president in the 2002 and 2021 elections, respectively. Virna Cedeño's electoral performance was notable, with her garnering 19% of the vote, placing her in third position.

presidential candidates usually select such professionals during periods of anti-establishment sentiment. For instance, in the 2021 Ecuadorian election, Guillermo Lasso chose Alfredo Borrero, a neurosurgeon with no political background, as his vice-presidential candidate. Borrero's medical credentials offered a way to signal responsiveness to public health demands and potentially widen the ticket's appeal during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The selection of public figures as vice-presidential candidates (*public persons*) might be another electoral mobilization strategy. This approach capitalizes on media recognition and, in some cases, existing political experience. The data demonstrate an imbalance: while just one presidential candidate qualified as a public figure, five vice-presidential candidates met this criterion. Notably, three were television personalities who competed in highly contested elections.

In Bolivia (2005), former President Jorge Quiroga selected Maria Rene Duchen, a television host, as his vice-presidential candidate. The ticket placed second. Similarly, Ecuador's 2021 election, Andres Arauz selected prominent TV interviewer Carlos Rabascall⁶⁷ as his running mate, though they lost in the runoff to Guillermo Lasso's ticket. Colombia's 2006 election provides another example, where journalist Patricia Lara Salive ran as vice-presidential candidate for the Alternative Democratic Pole, finishing second to incumbent Álvaro Uribe's coalition.

The selection of a vice-presidential candidate offers presidential contenders an opportunity to complement their campaign and expand its electoral reach. Choosing an independent running mate with social, technical, or symbolic capital may serve as an attempt to attract new segments of the electorate. However, understanding who these independents are is only part of the puzzle. The next section shifts the focus to a core question of this study: under what conditions do presidential candidates opt to nominate an independent vice-president? It formulates testable hypotheses that connect contextual and institutional factors to this decision.

4.5 WHY CHOOSE AN INDEPENDENT VICE-PRESIDENT?

Presidential systems, unlike parliamentary ones, concentrate authority and representation in the individual officeholder (Linz, 1990). The fixed term and absence of legislative confidence votes reinforce this leader-centered tendency (Carey & Shugart, 1995). As a result, the office fosters a direct connection between voters and candidates (Carreras,

⁶⁷ Rabascall was chosen as a substitute for former President Rafael Correa, who was barred from running by a court decision (Bocacci, 2020).

2017), attracting “ambitious politicians who are often distinguished only by their personal support networks buttressed by personal charisma” (Kitschelt, 2000, p. 860).

Some authors argue that candidate-centered presidential elections and majority rule can weaken the bond between voters and political parties (Bolleyer & Weeks, 2009; Padilla, 2015). In systems permitting nonparty candidacies, this creates opportunities for independent candidates, whether political outsiders or established figures adopting independent status, to gain electoral traction.

Anti-establishment sentiment further exacerbates party-voter disconnection when citizens perceive traditional parties as failing to represent their interests (Avendaño & Escudero, 2022; Bolleyer & Weeks, 2009; Thaha & Haryanto, 2017; Weeks, 2016). Declining trust in parties stems from multiple factors: governance failures, weakened representative capacity (Astudillo, 2017), and inability to articulate voter preferences during governance (Mayorga, 2006). As a result, unaffiliated candidates often emerge as alternatives, aiming to restore trust in the electoral process.

Economic crises intensify this dynamic, rendering governing parties vulnerable to performance-based backlash (Benton, 2005; Fiorina, 1981). Periods of political disillusionment often generate demand for anti-establishment candidates promising alternative governance approaches (Carreras, 2012; 2017; Corrales, 2008; Mayorga, 2006). Thus, voters use their ballots as a mean to protest against established political groups (Ehin *et al.*, 2013).

In electoral systems that permit nonparty candidates, independent candidacies may emerge as responses to anti-party sentiment. Existing research indicates a potential positive correlation between party system decline and the prevalence of independent candidates (Carter, 2020; Corrales, 2008; Levitsky & Cameron, 2003; Seligson, 2002).

Scholars argue that similar factors driving independent presidential bids may also explain the selection of independent vice-presidential candidates (Uggla, 2020, p. 2). Current literature posits that including nonpartisan running mates helps to appeal to voters disenchanted with traditional parties (Pignataro & Taylor-Robinson, 2019; Thaha & Haryanto, 2017). This suggests that presidential candidates may strategically select independent running mates to attract voters alienated from established party politics. Thus, these considerations lead to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: When parties lose their capacity to connect with voters and structure ticket formation, presidential candidates are more likely to include independent running mates.

As detailed in Section 4.3 (Independent candidates in presidential tickets in South America) and Appendix IV, South American electoral systems impose distinct registration requirements on independent candidates. The most prevalent provisions involve signature collection mandates and financial deposit obligations. Some jurisdictions implement additional restrictions, such as Paraguay's prohibition on candidates who participated in the immediately preceding election. These requirements constitute the foundational threshold for electoral participation, though presidential candidates must first satisfy basic eligibility criteria including age and nationality qualifications. Importantly, the stringency of these nomination requirements has not remained fixed⁶⁸: both the threshold and the qualifying mechanisms for independent candidacies have shifted across countries and over successive electoral cycles.

The signature requirement presents a relevant initial obstacle for candidates lacking party affiliation. The financial deposit condition creates an even more restrictive barrier, particularly disadvantaging resource-constrained individuals and groups seeking to compete outside traditional party structures.

In addition to these institutional filters, the lack of access to public campaign financing adds a further difficulty. In most region's countries, especially in early elections that permitted independents, public funds were either unavailable to nonpartisan candidacies or allocated in ways that favored party-backed tickets. Even where partial funding mechanisms existed, they often excluded losing candidates or offered only indirect support, such as subsidies for media advertising. This unequal distribution of campaign resources amplifies the organizational and financial burdens of including an independent candidate on a presidential ticket.

These constraints on independent candidacies, not imposed on party-affiliated candidates, significantly increase the costs of selecting independent running mates (Brancati, 2008; Thaha & Haryanto, 2017). Conversely, reducing entry barriers could facilitate the emergence of independent candidacies (Padilla, 2015; Siavelis & Morgenstern, 2008). In the context of the vice-presidency, a presidential candidate who wishes to pair with an independent vice-presidential candidate, may face institutional constraints when attempting to launch such candidacies. Building on this, the following hypothesis posits:

⁶⁸ See Sections 4.3.1 (Nomination rules for independent candidates) and 4.3.2 (Public financing for electoral campaigns) for country-specific trajectories and Appendix IV (Table 25) for a systematic overview of regulatory changes.

Hypothesis 2: Higher electoral access barriers decrease the probability of presidential candidates selecting independent running partners.

In section 4.3 (Independent candidates in presidential tickets in South America), it is demonstrated that most formulas featuring independent vice-presidential candidates consisted of both a presidential and vice-presidential candidate without partisan affiliations. In contrast, instances where an independent presidential candidate selects a party-affiliated running mate appear exceptional. Survey data reveal that only seven independent presidential candidates gave the nomination of the running mate to a political party. As outsiders to the party system, independent candidates are less likely to seek alliances with political parties and often select running mates without affiliations, forming purely independent tickets. This leads to the hypothesis that:

Hypothesis 3: Independent presidential candidates are more likely to form pure-independent tickets.

Since re-democratization, South America's presidential regimes have faced thirteen interruptions, leading to vice-presidents assuming the presidency⁶⁹. Unlike cabinet ministers, the president cannot dismiss the vice-president during their term, even in cases of overt political conflict, as exemplified by the tensions between Cristina Kirchner and Julio Cobos during her first presidential term in Argentina (Serrafero, 2018). Both the president and vice-president are elected officials and can only be replaced through resignation or subsequent elections. When vice-presidents belong to a different party, they often prioritize loyalty to their own political base rather than the executive. Consequently, during moments of presidential instability, a politically influential and party-aligned vice-president may lack incentive to defend the administration (Marsteintredet & Uggla, 2019).

These examples follow the same logic. Paraguayan President Fernando Lugo was removed in 2012 after an impeachment trial lasting just two days, while Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff faced a similar fate in 2016. In both instances, vice-presidents played pivotal roles in the political crises that precipitated these removals (Marsteintredet, Llanos, & Nolte, 2013; Marsteintredet & Uggla, 2019).

⁶⁹ The frequency of these events ranged from four occurrences in Ecuador, three in Brazil, two in Bolivia, and once in Guatemala, Paraguay, Peru, and Venezuela (Bidegain, 2017; Lopes, 2020).

As Ugglá (2020) argues, historical precedent, particularly interruptions of the presidency unrelated to health, may incentivize candidates to select independent running mates. To minimize the risk of disloyalty, presidential contenders could prefer vice-presidential candidates without strong party ties. This reasoning supports the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4: Past impeachment cases may lead presidential candidates to prefer independent VP candidates, reducing the risk of disloyalty tied to strong partisan affiliations.

4.6 DATA AND METHODS

To evaluate the hypotheses outlined above, the dataset previously described in Chapter 2 serves as the basis for the analysis⁷⁰. This analysis focuses on the institutional and political conditions that contribute to the selection of independent vice-presidential candidates.

Given that prohibiting independent candidates represents a significant barrier to their inclusion in elections, this study is restricted to cases where independent candidates were legally permitted. The dataset encompasses all presidential tickets from Bolivia (1985–2020), Colombia (1994–2022), Ecuador (2002–2021), and Paraguay (1993–2018), comprising 265 total tickets. As indicated in Table 12, independent vice-presidential candidates appeared on 41% of these tickets, while political party nominees accounted for the remaining 59%. A comprehensive country-by-country distribution of ticket types appears in Table 10 (4.3 Independent candidates in presidential tickets in South America).

Table 12 – Distribution and proportion of independent VP candidates in presidential tickets

Did the presidential ticket have an independent candidate for VP?	N	%
No	149	56.3%
Yes	116	43.7%
Sample	265	100.0%

Note. Elaborated by the author.

This chapter investigates the institutional and political conditions that lead presidential candidates to nominate independent running mates. Unlike the analysis in Chapter 2, it systematically compares tickets with independent nominees to those with party-affiliation.

⁷⁰ The *Presidential Tickets in South America Dataset* and its codebook accompany this thesis.

Given the binary outcome, logistic regression estimates how legal barriers, party system characteristics, the presidential candidate's independent status, and recent episodes of presidential interruption shape the probability of selecting an independent running mate.

4.6.1 Operationalization

The analysis employs a dichotomous variable (*VP Independent Candidate*) to assess factors affecting the selection of independent vice-presidential candidates. This variable is coded as 1 for vice-presidential candidates running without party nomination and 0 for those nominated by political parties.

To test Hypothesis 1 regarding party system weakening effects, the model incorporates the Party Institutionalization Index (PII) from V-Dem (Coppedge *et al.*, 2023). This index captures the institutional robustness of party systems by aggregating five dimensions: the organizational strength of major parties, their linkages to civil society, patterns of voter identification, ideological consistency, and legislative discipline. In line with the theoretical framework, lower PII scores, signaling weaker party institutionalization, are expected to be associated with a higher likelihood of selecting independent vice-presidential candidates.

Although survey-based indicators of party distrust may capture short-term fluctuations in voter attitudes, the PII offers a structural proxy of the party system's capacity to sustain enduring linkages between parties and society. By measuring organizational depth and partisan embeddedness, the index reflects broader institutional decay that constrains parties' ability to recruit, discipline, and integrate political actors through partisan channels. In this sense, lower levels of institutionalization indicate not just weak party cohesion but a political environment where presidential candidates face fewer partisan constraints and greater incentives to appeal directly to voters through the nomination of independent figures.

Regarding Hypothesis 2 on electoral barriers, the analysis focuses on supplementary constraints beyond the basic allowance of independent candidacies. Barriers include requirements such as support signatures, financial deposits, or restrictions on participation in previous elections. Additionally, institutional obstacles, such as the lack of access to public financing, performance clauses for campaign reimbursement, or repayment of granted funds, were also analyzed.

To assess these barriers, the analysis operationalizes electoral constraints through the *Index of Constraints on Independent Candidacies* (ICIC), a composite measure ranging from 0 to 5 points. This index evaluates five distinct institutional barriers, each coded dichotomously

(1 = present, 0 = absent): (1) signature requirements for candidacy registration, (2) mandatory financial deposits, (3) additional eligibility conditions beyond these basic requirements, (4) exclusion from public campaign financing, and (5) performance-based conditions for accessing public funds⁷¹. The theoretical framework anticipates that electoral environments with lower ICIC scores (indicating fewer constraints) will show higher probabilities of independent vice-presidential candidates appearing on tickets.

The third hypothesis suggests that when the presidential candidate is independent, the likelihood of their running mate also being independent increases. This relationship is examined using a dichotomous indicator (*Presidential Independent Candidate*), where tickets with independent presidential candidate receive a value of 1 and party-nominated presidential candidates are coded 0. The theoretical expectation is that this predictor will have a positive effect on the dependent variable.

The study examines whether historical presidential crises and distrust toward partisan running mates influence the selection of independent vice-presidential candidates. Specifically, it focuses on cases where a presidential mandate was forcibly interrupted (excluding health-related or natural causes) and the vice-president assumed office (Uggla, 2020).

While the vice-president's constitutional role is to succeed the president, if necessary, Marsteintredet & Uggla (2019) highlight the risk of vice-presidents seeking to terminate the president's mandate and permanently assume office, particularly when they belong to different parties. In such contexts, selecting an independent running mate may mitigate this risk.

To capture this, the dichotomous variable *Mandate Interruption* was constructed, coded as 1 if the prior presidential term ended in a forced interruption (with the vice-president assuming power) and 0 otherwise. This narrow temporal scope, limited to the most recent term, accounts for fading institutional memory, as illustrated by cases like Bolivia and Ecuador. In Bolivia, President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada resigned in 2003, and Vice President Carlos Mesa assumed the presidency. In Ecuador, Congress approved the impeachment of Lucio Gutiérrez in 2005, with Vice President Alfredo Palacios taking office. Theoretically, such events should increase the probability of selecting independent vice-presidential candidates.

Three additional control variables were incorporated to account for alternative explanations. First, *Democratic Age* measures years since the last democratic transition, addressing the tendency for newer democracies to exhibit higher rates of independent

⁷¹ Appendix IV includes a list of nomination rules and access to public campaign financing for independent candidacies by country and election.

candidacies (Carreras, 2012; 2017; Corrales, 2008). Second, the binary *Incumbent Presence* indicator accounts for situations where the sitting president is running for reelection, capturing the incumbency advantage that may deter independent bids (Ishiyama, Batta & Sortor, 2011). Third, economic conditions were operationalized through two metrics: three-year GDP growth averages and inflation rates, controlling for the established relationship between economic volatility and outsider candidate appeal (Carreras, 2012; Mayorga, 2006). Logarithmic transformations were applied to these economic variables to normalize distributions and mitigate outlier effects. Complete variable definitions and operationalizations are systematically presented in Table 13⁷².

Table 13 – Variables and measurements

Variables	Type	Measurement
VP Independent VP Candidate	Dummy	1: If the VP ran as an independent, that is, was not nominated by a political party 0: Otherwise
H1: Party Institutionalization Index (PII)	Continuous	Party Institutionalization Index from V-Dem (Coppedge, 2023)
H2: Index of Constraints on Independent Candidacies (ICIC)	Discrete	The index ranges from 0 to 5 and indicates the level of constraint for launching an independent candidacy
H3: Presidential Independent Candidate	Dummy	1: If the presidential candidate ran as an independent 0: Otherwise
H4: Mandate Interruption	Dummy	1: If there was an interruption of the last presidential term, and the vice-president assumed the presidency, except in the case of death. 0: Otherwise
Political Controls		
Democracy Age	Discrete	Years since the return of the democratic system
Incumbent	Dummy	1: If the incumbent president is participating in the election 0: Otherwise
Economic Controls		
Economic Growth	Continuous	Logarithm of the mean GDP growth in the three years before (World Bank)
Inflation	Continuous	Logarithm of the inflation index in the election year (World Bank)

Note. Elaborated by the author.

⁷² Appendix IV presents a table with descriptive statistics of the variables used in this chapter. It also details the standardization of continuous variables.

4.7 RESULTS

This chapter investigates the determinants of independent vice-presidential candidate selection in South American presidential elections. The analysis distinguishes between two types of running mates: those formally nominated by political parties and independent candidates who compete without party affiliation, as operationalized in Section 4.2 (Definition and regulatory framework for independent candidates in South America). The study employs logistic regression to analyze factors affecting the probability of selecting an independent versus party-affiliated vice-presidential candidate, given the dichotomous nature of the dependent variable.

Table 14 presents three distinct regression models⁷³. Models 1 and 2 are binary logistic regressions, with Model 2 estimated without control variables. Model 3 applies a mixed-effects specification (Bates, 2010) with random intercepts for countries and election years, capturing cross-national clustering and temporal structure in the data.

Table 14 – Regression model results for selecting independent VP candidates

	Logit W/C (1)	Logit (2)	Fixed effects (3)
(Intercept)	1.157 (1.416)	1.211 (1.349)	1.157 (1.416)
Party Inst. Index (PII)	-4.770** (2.139)	-4.669** (1.989)	-4.770** (2.139)
Index Const. (ICIC)	-2.269** (0.901)	-1.802** (0.823)	-2.269** (0.901)
Pres. Indep. Cand.	4.582*** (0.520)	4.641*** (0.508)	4.582*** (0.520)
Mandate Interrup.	0.741 (0.622)	0.274 (0.548)	0.741 (0.622)
Democracy Age	0.639** (0.319)		0.639** (0.319)
Incumbent	0.864 (0.725)		0.864 (0.725)
Economic Growth	-0.313 (0.338)		-0.313 (0.338)
Inflation	-0.234 (0.415)		-0.234 (0.415)
Observations	265	265	265
Log Likelihood	-75.828	-80.238	-75.828
Akaike Inf. Crit.	169.657	170.477	173.657
Bayesian Inf. Crit.			213.034
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01		

Note. Elaborated by the author.

⁷³ Appendix IV discusses the suitability of independent variables for the model. It includes a residuals analysis for continuous independent variables and a contingency table for categorical predictors. Additionally, a heterogeneity test complements the analysis. The appendix also covers model adjustments and odds ratio calculations, which are used to assess results probabilistically.

The results indicate that weaker party systems tend to coincide with a greater presence of independent running mates. Across all model specifications in Table 14, the Party Institutionalization Index (PII)⁷⁴ enters with a negative and statistically significant coefficient, suggesting that lower levels of organizational depth, civil-society linkage, and partisan identification are associated with a higher likelihood of selecting an independent vice-presidential candidate.

The estimated odds ratio is 0.008, with a 95% confidence interval ranging from below 0.001 to 0.533 (Table 32 in Appendix IV). This indicates a strong inverse association between the Party Institutionalization Index (PII) and the likelihood of selecting an independent vice-presidential candidate. For example, a 0.1-point decline increases the odds of nominating an independent candidate by approximately 61%.

These findings align with existing scholarship on how weakening party systems create opportunities for independent candidates (Carter, 2020; Corrales, 2008; Levitsky & Cameron, 2003; Seligson, 2002). They further corroborate Pignataro and Taylor-Robinson's (2019) argument that presidential candidates may select independent running mates to appeal to voters alienated from traditional partisan structures. Declining party system institutionalization, marked by weak societal linkages, low partisan identification, and organizational fragility, thus creates favorable conditions for presidential candidates to bypass traditional party channels and include independent figures on the ticket as a strategy to attract voters disillusioned with partisan politics.

In countries where candidates are allowed to run without party affiliation, institutional rules governing ballot access for independents vary widely. According to Hypothesis 2, more restrictive electoral environments should reduce the likelihood that presidential candidates select independent running mates. The analysis supports this expectation.

The Index of Constraints on Independent Candidacies (ICIC), a composite measure capturing five types of electoral barriers, shows a negative and statistically significant association with the presence of independent vice-presidential candidates in the presidential tickets. As presented in Table 14, higher values on the index are associated with a lower probability of nominating an independent VP. This result holds across model specifications,

⁷⁴ A supplementary model replacing the PII with a survey-based measure of party distrust is presented in Appendix IV (Table 30). The alternative specification does not yield statistically significant results and presents substantially worse model fit, reinforcing the choice of an institutional measure for this analysis.

with the coefficient for the ICIC variable remaining negative and significant at the 5% level (Model 2).

The odds ratio helps clarify this result. As shown in Table 31 (Appendix IV), the odds ratio of 0.103 ($p < 0.05$) indicates that a one-point increase in the Index of Constraints on Independent Candidacies (ICIC), such as the introduction of signature requirements, financial deposits, or the exclusion from public financing, reduces the odds of nominating an independent vice-presidential candidate by nearly 90%. This effect highlights the deterrent power of institutional barriers. Even smaller shifts are consequential: a reduction of just 0.1 standard deviation in the index increases the odds by approximately 25.5% (see Table 32 in Appendix IV).

These results provide empirical evidence that legal access rules significantly constrain presidential candidate behavior in South America. In contrast to Brancati's (2008) findings in legislative elections, where institutional barriers had limited effect, the strong negative association observed here suggests that such constraints play a meaningful role in shaping the composition of presidential tickets. In this context, stringent entry rules raise the cost of nominating nonpartisan candidates, making presidential contenders more likely to discard the option of selecting independent running mates.

The third hypothesis posits that presidential candidates without party affiliation are more likely to select equally independent vice-presidential candidates, forming what this study defines as pure-independent tickets. Descriptive evidence aligns with this expectation: as shown in Table 10, 90 out of 265 cases (34%) featured pure-independent formulas, and this arrangement was particularly prevalent in Colombia and Ecuador, where over half of all presidential tickets included two nonpartisan candidates.

Regression results reinforce this pattern. As shown in Table 14, the coefficient for the Presidential Independent Candidate variable is positive and statistically significant ($p < 0.01$). The odds ratio of 97.75 (see Table 31, Appendix IV) indicates that when the presidential candidate is independent, the odds of selecting an independent running mate increase by approximately 9675% compared to tickets led by party-affiliated candidates (see Table 32, Appendix IV).

Overall, these findings align with the expectation that independent presidential candidates tend to form pure-independent tickets. However, rather than pointing to a distinct strategic logic, this outcome may stem from both the limited willingness of parties to join

independent-led coalitions and the desire of independent candidates to reinforce their political detachment and message consistency.

The fourth hypothesis posits that when the preceding presidential term ends in a forced interruption, with the vice-president assuming office, presidential candidates may become more cautious when selecting their running mates, favoring those without party affiliations to mitigate potential risks of disloyalty. This reasoning draws on Ugglá's (2020) argument that political instability and partisan tensions during presidential crises can shape candidate strategies in subsequent elections.

Empirical results, however, offer limited support for this expectation. The Mandate Interruption variable displayed a positive coefficient in all three model specifications (see Table 14), suggesting a potential increase in the likelihood of selecting an independent vice-presidential candidate. Nonetheless, the effect is not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). Thus, while the direction of the association is consistent with the hypothesis, there is insufficient evidence to confirm that prior episodes of presidential removal systematically influence the decision to nominate nonpartisan running mates.

The inclusion of control variables did not alter the main findings. Core predictors retained their direction and statistical significance even in the simpler model without controls (Model 2), suggesting robust associations with the presence of independent vice-presidential candidates. An exception emerged with the Democracy Age variable, which showed a statistically significant but unexpected association: more established democracies exhibited a higher likelihood of independent vice-presidential candidacies. This result runs counter to prior expectations (Carreras, 2012; 2017; Corrales, 2008) and may warrant further investigation.

Model 3 incorporated mixed effects to account for unobserved heterogeneity by country and election year. The consistency of the main explanatory variables across all models confirms that the observed patterns are not driven by country or time-specific factors.

Collectively, the results indicate that weak party institutionalization and the presence of presidential independents contribute to the selection of nonpartisan vice-presidential candidates. Legal barriers also play a meaningful role: easing access rules for independents is associated with greater inclusion of these figures on presidential tickets. These patterns point to a combination of party system fragility, institutional barriers, and the relative isolation of independent candidates from formal partisan networks.

While the statistical models offer robust evidence of general patterns, a closer look at individual elections is necessary to capture the nuances of candidate selection. The following

section draws on descriptive statistics to explore country-specific trajectories, shedding light on institutional and political conditions that may elude aggregate analyses.

4.8 DISCUSSION: UNPACKING THE CASES

As examined in Section 4.4 (Distinguishing independent candidate from political outsider: Exploring the profiles of independent contenders), conflating “independent” with “political outsider” obscures meaningful variation in candidates’ career trajectories. Independence does not necessarily denote political inexperience; many candidates pursue office without party backing after established careers. The biographical data compiled in this study reveal that most independent vice-presidential candidates were newcomers, individuals contesting their first election or lacking prior senior government roles. Yet a non-trivial share qualified as political independents, defined here as those with previous electoral or institutional engagement before their vice-presidential bids. These results reinforce the point that independence is not synonymous with outsider status.

Most newcomer vice-presidential candidates in the dataset were drawn from state bureaucracies, while others came from civil society, including intellectuals and activists, or from professional and public figures (e.g., artists), often associated with anti-establishment rhetoric (see Table 11).

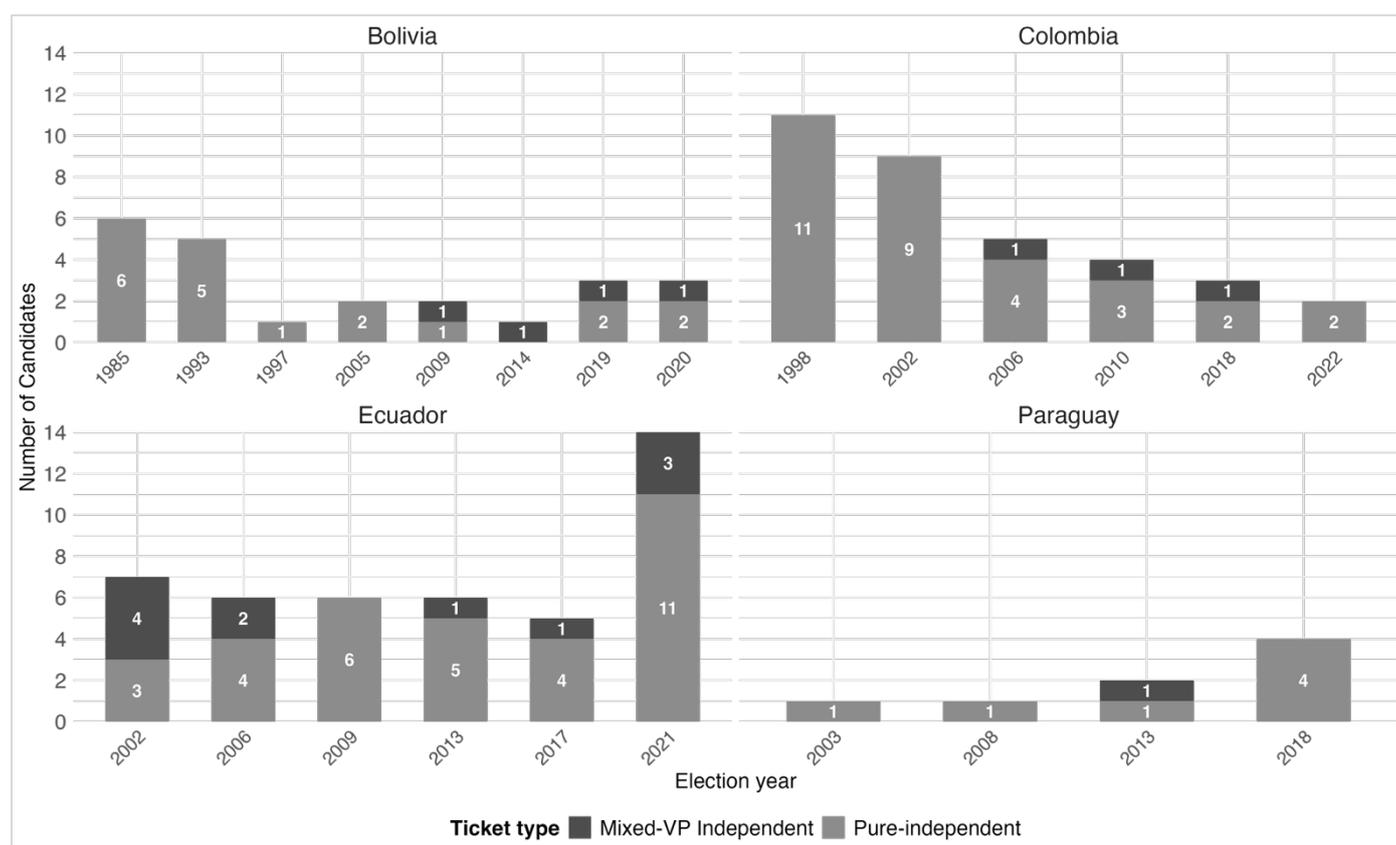
Research suggests that running mate selection serves to amplify a presidential candidate’s appeal, either by reinforcing their political brand or mobilizing underrepresented voter segments (Baumgartner, 2006; Hiller & Kriner, 2008; Lopes, 2020, 2021). Partisan presidential candidates often recruit independent running mates to court voters disillusioned with traditional party politics (Pignataro & Taylor-Robinson, 2019; Thaha & Haryanto, 2017). In both newcomer and experienced profiles, the selection of independent running partner serves to complement the presidential candidate’s appeal. For newcomers, independence is often deployed to project political renewal, convey civic legitimacy, or supply technocratic credentials that contrast with the candidate’s partisan background. For experienced independents, it can signal a break from party structures while preserving political capital and governing expertise. In either case, presidential candidates often view the running mate’s independence to expand the ticket’s electoral reach.

Section 4.3 (Independent candidates in presidential tickets in South America) examines the distribution of independent vice-presidential candidates across different ticket types. As Table 10 shows, Colombia and Ecuador exhibit the highest prevalence of such candidates.

Colombia recorded 34 independent vice-presidential candidates, representing 31.2% of the 109 such cases identified in the dataset. Ecuador's share is even higher, with 44 candidates (40.4% of the total). Bolivia appears further behind, with 23 cases (21.1%), while Paraguay registered only 8 (7.3%).

Behind these numbers lie three factors that shape candidate selection, Section 4.7 (Results) indicate that party system institutionalization, restrictions on independent candidacies, and the presidential candidate's independent status and the tendency to form pure-independent tickets are salient factors in the selection of independent vice-presidential candidates. A comprehensive explanation of independent vice-presidential candidate distribution requires examining how institutional and electoral conditions shaped their emergence across electoral cycles. This comparative analysis clarifies patterns observed in the case studies, identifying contextual variations in vice-presidential candidate selection.

Figure 12 – Independent VP candidates by ticket type and election year



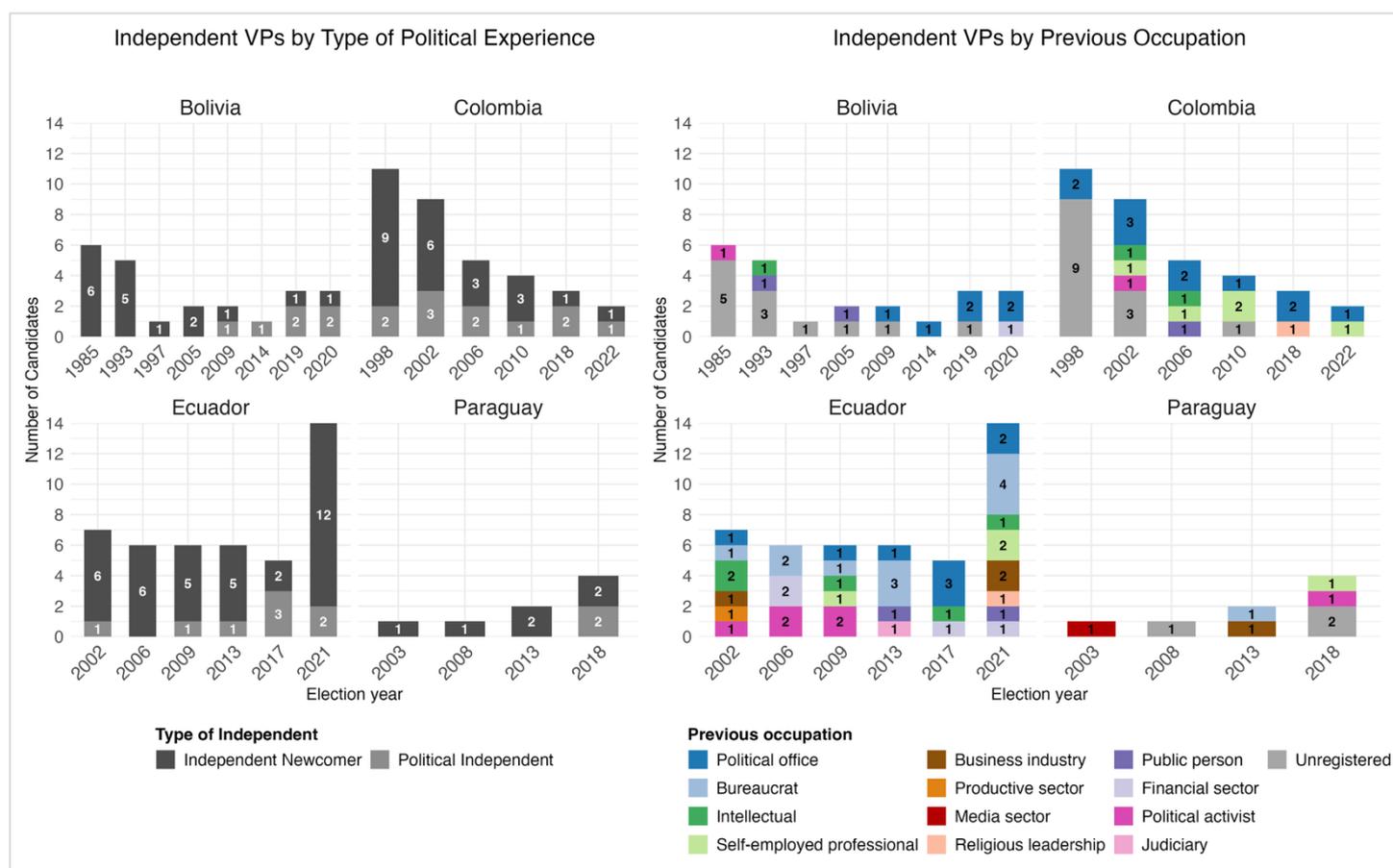
Note. Elaborated by the author.

The Bolivian case demonstrates variation in independent vice-presidential candidacies across electoral cycles. The dataset shows an initial peak of six independent running mates in 1985, with five more appearing in 1993. During this early period (1985-2005), all vice-

presidential candidates were political newcomers whose prior trajectories remain undocumented in available records (Figure 13). These candidates ran alongside independent presidential contenders, forming pure-independent tickets (Figure 12).

After 2005, a new pattern emerged with the appearance of mixed tickets featuring partisan presidential candidates paired with independent running mates. This shift may reveal attempts to appeal to voters disillusioned with established parties (Pignataro & Taylor-Robinson, 2019). Remarkably, most early-period independent vice-presidential candidates were true political outsiders. The inclusion of experienced politicians in these positions started in the 2009's electoral cycle, with all six post-2009 independent running mates holding political office at the time of their nomination (Figure 13).

Figure 13 – Profiles of independent VP candidates: political experience and previous occupation



Note. Figure elaborated by the author.

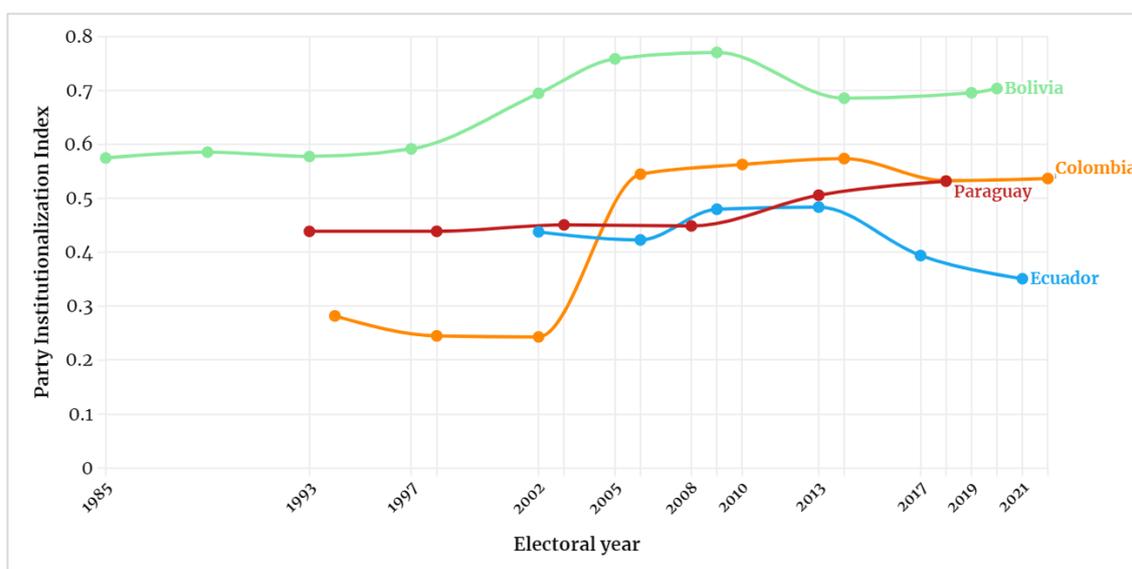
As examined in Section 4.3 (Independent candidates in presidential tickets in South America), Bolivia had no eligibility requirements for independent candidates throughout most

of the study period⁷⁵. The 2004 reform introducing public funding for independent candidates showed limited immediate effects, with increased participation becoming visible only in the 2019 election. Despite this change, the number of independent vice-presidential candidates never regained the levels observed in the immediate post-transition elections of 1985 and 1993.

The broader institutional context helps explain this trajectory. As shown in Figure 14, Bolivia consistently ranks among the highest in the Party Institutionalization Index (PII) within the sample, indicating comparatively stable party system development relative to other cases examined. Such institutional stability may help limit opportunities for independent candidates, as institutionalized party systems tend to constrain the entry of nonpartisan contenders.

Within this context, the occasional appearance of mixed tickets with independent running mates and the selection of experienced independents (political independents) can be interpreted as the result of situational considerations, such as efforts to enhance electoral appeal or capitalize on the personal popularity of certain figures, rather than signaling systemic movement toward independent political participation.

Figure 14 - Party Institutionalization Index (PII) by country and election year



Source. Data from V-Dem (Coppedge *et al.*, 2023).

Note. Elaborated by the author.

Colombia points out a parallel decline in independent vice-presidential candidates. Mirroring the patterns identified in this study, most Colombian independents joined presidential candidates who were themselves nonpartisan, forming pure-independent tickets (Figure 12).

⁷⁵ Appendix IV presents a summary table detailing the nomination rules for independent candidates in each election.

While political newcomers predominated, Colombia differed from Bolivia in featuring experienced independents in every electoral cycle, including the earliest contests (Figure 13). Limited biographical data for the 1998–2002 period constrain analysis of early outsider candidates, but all identifiable political independents during this phase held government positions. Since the 2002 election, the profile of independent vice-presidential candidates became more diverse, encompassing intellectuals, self-employed professionals, activists, public figures, and religious leaders. Among these groups, self-employed professionals stood out as the second most frequent background after officeholders (Figure 13).

The waning presence of independents is associated with changes in Colombia's party system (Figure 14). During the 1990s, fragile party-voter connections, organizational fragmentation, and weak discipline created space for independent candidates to emerge. In the case of mixed tickets, selecting an independent running mate implies an effort to reach voters disenchanted with traditional parties. Conversely, pure-independent tickets might indicate either cohesion within outsider campaigns or the absence of partisan allies. Colombia stands out as one of the few countries in the dataset where a pure-independent ticket won the presidency: the 2002 victory of Álvaro Uribe and Francisco Santos. Subsequent party system stabilization and partial institutional strengthening coincided with diminishing numbers of independent vice-presidential candidates.

In line with the regression results, institutional rules appear to have further contributed to this decline. Before the 2020 reforms, independent candidates needed to gather 50,000 signatures for ballot access, a requirement that tightened in 2022 to 3% of valid votes from the previous election. Furthermore, public campaign funding became contingent on securing at least 4% of presidential votes, creating additional financial hurdles. This regulatory environment correlates with stark numerical changes: while 1998 saw 11 independent vice-presidential candidates (approximately 80% of all contenders), 2022 saw only two. These escalating requirements increased the institutional constraints facing independents, helping explain their dwindling presence.

Ecuador's 1998 opening of nominations to nonparty organizations initially encouraged a mixed composition of presidential tickets. The 2002 election stands out as the only case in which mixed-VP independent tickets outnumbered pure-independent ones (Figure 12), potentially reflecting an intention to incorporate new figures into politics and appeal to voters with weak partisan attachments. However, subsequent elections reverted to the dominant

pattern observed throughout this study: independent presidential candidates remained the primary selectors of nonpartisan running mates.

Regarding candidate backgrounds, Ecuador's independent vice-presidential nominees were predominantly newcomers in politics, though every electoral cycle except 2006 featured at least one experienced political figure. The data presented in Figure 13 reveals exceptional diversity among these candidates, spanning state bureaucrats, former officeholders, civil society activists, intellectuals, finance professionals, and independent entrepreneurs. The 2021 vice-presidential race proved particularly noteworthy, combining a surge in independent candidates with unprecedented variety in their professional backgrounds.

The 2005 reform made public funding available to independent candidacies. The subsequent decline in party system institutionalization after 2013 (Figure 14) created a fertile context for introducing independent running mates, as reflected in the results. Like in the 2021 election, when Guillermo Lasso's selected Alfredo Borrero, a physician and political newcomer, as his vice-presidential candidate combined a message of political renewal with technocratic credibility. In a context with no eligibility prerequisites, access to public funding, and a weakened party system, this choice signaled a break from the long-standing dominance of the Rafael Correa–Lenín Moreno formula and resonated with an electorate fatigued by partisan polarization and facing the COVID-19 crisis.

Paraguay presents a contrasting case of stricter constraints on independent candidacies. The 1990 electoral code imposed multiple barriers to independent candidacies: beyond signature requirements, eligibility required that the prospective candidate had not participated in the previous election, as a candidate, voter, or party leader, within the preceding two years. As Figure 12 demonstrates, these restrictive measures correlated with exceptionally low numbers of independent vice-presidential candidates. Although the voting prohibition was rescinded in the 1996 electoral reform, most limitations persisted. The funding system, which allocated public resources exclusively to winning tickets, created additional disincentives for nonpartisan campaigns.

Notwithstanding these obstacles, independent vice-presidential candidates grew from one (10% of candidates) in 2003 to four (40%) in 2018. This expansion coincided with mounting public disillusionment with traditional political elites. As Villalba (2017) argue, practices like clientelism, misuse of state resources, and lack of transparency undermined confidence in established parties, fostering receptivity to nonpartisan alternatives.

Moreover, the failed attempt to reform the constitution for presidential reelection in 2017 exacerbated public dissatisfaction, sparking a legitimacy crisis and fragmenting the political landscape (Bozzolasco, 2017). Emerging civic movements like the National Artists' Movement (Movimiento Nacional de Artistas del Paraguay) and Patriotic Reserve Movement (Movimiento Nacional Reserva Patriótica) (Delgadillo & Villagra, 2019) capitalized on this momentum, challenging the historic dominance of the Colorado Party and PLRA while creating space for independent candidacies.

Paraguay represents a unique case in the dataset: none of its independent vice-presidential candidates had previously held elected or appointed office. Figure 13 identifies two such candidates, a private-sector professional and an activist, both with prior electoral experience but no government service. This absence of officeholders running for the vice-presidency as independents distinguishes Paraguay from other cases examined.

The comparative analysis shows that the relationship between institutional context and the selection of independent vice-presidents is neither uniform nor automatic. While the multivariate analysis identifies the presidential candidate's partisan status as the strongest predictor, case studies illustrate how this effect depends on longitudinal interactions between institutional design and political conditions.

In Colombia, for instance, the increasing on party system institutionalization, stringent eligibility rules, and restricted public funding collectively constrained independent participation. Conversely, Ecuador's combination of absence of specific prerequisites, available funding, and declining institutionalization facilitated an expansion of independent candidacies, peaking with their dominance in 2021. Paraguay's moderately institutionalized system maintained consistently low numbers through rigid requirements, with 2018's atypical increase reflecting exceptional legitimacy crises. Bolivia's experience further underscores this variability: the 1980s witnessed peak independent participation during the party system's least institutionalized phase, followed by decline as institutions strengthened, and only partial recovery after the extension of the funding to independents, but without returning to the levels of the 1980s.

These patterns underscore a two-step mechanism. First, institutional and political conditions shape independent presidential candidates' entry decisions. Second, once they do, they are far more likely to choose independent running mates, either to reinforce their detachment from traditional parties or because no partisan allies are available or willing to join

the ticket. In weakened party systems, partisan presidential candidates may also turn to independents to signal renewal and appeal to voters disengaged from established parties.

An examination of candidate backgrounds further clarifies that “independent” does not necessarily mean “outsider”. Although independent newcomers constitute the majority, most elections feature political independents, often experienced officeholders, with Paraguay remaining the sole exception until 2018. Even then, Paraguay’s lone case involved electoral (though not governmental) experience. Beyond these, bureaucrats and activists, though the absence of electoral experience, remain closely linked to political activity and likely entered the race due to that connection. This distinction reinforces the need to separate true outsiders from independents with political trajectories.

By examining both the institutional conditions under which presidential candidates choose their running mates and the backgrounds of those selected, this chapter shows that the selection of independent vice-presidents results from the interaction between rules, the level of party system institutionalization, and the presidential nominee’s own status. Candidate profiles are central to this process: newcomers can signal renewal, while politically experienced independents often are party system defectors aiming to maintain their political careers. The evidence indicates that institutional arrangements establish the boundaries of possibility for independent candidacies, but presidential candidates’ agency ultimately determines whether these possibilities materialize in vice-presidential selections.

4.9 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This chapter examined the selection of independent vice-presidential candidates in South America, combining multivariate analysis with comparative case studies of four countries to identify the institutional and political conditions under which these nominations occur. The objective was to move beyond aggregate measures to understand not only when independents are selected but also who they are, clarifying the distinction between independents and outsiders.

The theoretical framework engages with a literature predominantly focused on the United States and the logic of ticket-balancing, though the hypotheses advanced here derive mainly from research on Latin America (Pignataro & Taylor-Robinson, 2019; Uggla, 2020) and other regions (Brancati, 2008; Thaha & Haryanto, 2017). While these studies highlight institutional and contextual incentives influencing candidate selection, none systematically

examine independent vice-presidential nominations. This chapter contributes to filling that gap by integrating the legal and political feasibility of independents with their biographical profiles.

The results indicate that the presidential candidate's partisan status, eligibility requirements, access to public funding, and the level of party system institutionalization are significant predictors of independent vice-presidential nominations. The case studies then set out how these factors combine differently across countries, shaping distinct national trajectories. In Ecuador, permissive regulations, minimal prerequisites, state financing, and declining institutionalization encouraged independent nominations, culminating in their dominance in 2021. Conversely, Colombia and Paraguay show how restrictive rules and sustained or elevated institutionalization often constrain independents, though Paraguay's 2018 exception tied to a legitimacy crisis. Bolivia illustrates that even moderate changes in institutionalization, when paired with rule changes, can alter opportunities for independents.

The findings also confirm that the use of independent running mates by partisan presidential candidates occurs in low-institutionalization settings, where such nominations can attract voters with weak ties to traditional parties, an effect that Pignataro & Taylor-Robinson (2019) observed in Costa Rica. For independent presidential candidates, the choice of an independent running mate serves to some purposes: reinforcing their detachment from established parties, aligning with an anti-establishment campaign image, or simply filling the position when no partisan allies are available or willing to join the ticket.

The background analysis further shows that "independent" does not necessarily mean "outsider". While newcomers are more common, politically experienced independents appear in nearly every election cycle, often following ideological disagreements, intra-party conflicts, or failed nomination bids within parties. Bureaucrats and activists, though not classified as experienced politicians, remain closely connected to political activity and likely entered the race due to these ties.

This study advances four main contributions: (i) it is the first comparative analysis dedicated exclusively to the selection of independent vice-presidential candidates; (ii) it traces the legal reforms governing independent nominations and campaign financing across multiple countries and electoral cycles, demonstrating their recurrent adaptation; (iii) it maps candidates' political experience, delineating the difference between independents and outsiders; and (iv) it identifies how institutional design and party system conditions interact with presidential candidate status to shape these nominations.

Future research could move in three directions. First, examine whether independent running mates influence vote choice or turnout, as explored in existing studies on vice-presidential impact (Court & Lynch, 2015; Devine & Kopko, 2011; 2019; Heersink & Peterson, 2016). Second, integrating additional ticket-balancing considerations (e.g., gender, ideology, regional representation, or generational appeal) could clarify how these dimensions interact with independent vice-presidential selection. Third, explore in greater depth the role of financing rules, nomination procedures, and pre-campaign bargaining. This third agenda would necessitate qualitative case-study methodologies, which this study's design did not encompass and which account for the limited treatment of these factors here.

Limitations remain. The analysis covered only four countries and electoral periods during which independents were legally allowed to run, which narrows the range of contexts to which the findings can be applied. Biographical data were incomplete for some candidates, creating potential classification errors. Additionally, unobserved factors such as informal bargaining or media influence may also affect candidate selection but could not be incorporated here. Finally, the multivariate analysis did not incorporate candidate profiles as predictors; backgrounds were examined descriptively rather than modeled jointly with institutional variables.

In summary, the chapter shows that independent vice-presidential nominations are the product of a two-step process: institutional and political conditions shape the emergence of independent presidential candidates, and these candidates, alongside some partisan contenders, decide whether to extend that independence to the running mate. By linking institutional conditions, candidate backgrounds, and the comparative analysis of four cases, this study offers new evidence on when independent vice-presidential candidates are viable and who they tend to be.

5 CONCLUSIONS

Recent political events have reminded South Americans of the weight carried by the vice-presidency. The impeachments of Fernando Lugo in Paraguay (2012) and Dilma Rousseff in Brazil (2016) thrust their vice-presidents into the center of power, revealing to electorates the consequential nature of an office frequently dismissed as merely ceremonial. In both episodes, figures with limited national recognition, despite having been elected alongside the president, assumed the presidency and governed until the next election. These episodes set out that understanding who becomes vice-president, and under what conditions, is not only a matter of electoral strategy but also essential for assessing how ticket choices can reverberate in government, at times precipitating crises when presidential and vice-presidential agendas diverge (Marsteintredet & Ugglå, 2019; Serrafiero, 2018).

The vice-presidency also serves as one of the safeguards of democratic stability. Despite its widespread presence across presidential regimes, scholarship on the institution has long remained at the margins of comparative politics (Bidegain, 2017). Since redemocratization, vice-presidents have assumed the presidency in Brazil, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Paraguay following impeachments, resignations, illness, or death, demonstrating the office's role in managing political crises (Lopes, 2018). In highly personalized regimes, where executive authority is often tied to individual leaders, the presence of a legitimately elected successor reduces uncertainty by providing predictability in moments of presidential vacancy. This stabilizing function exists in tension with the risks of intra-ticket conflict, yet together these dimensions underscore why the vice-presidency should not be treated as a secondary feature of presidential systems.

Prevailing scholarly approaches, heavily shaped by the U.S. case, have reinforced the assumption that running mates are selected primarily for personal attributes, such as regional ties, demographic appeal, or experience, within a context of bipartisan competition and fixed partisan duos (Hiller & Kriner, 2008; Polsby *et al.*, 2016; Sigelman & Wahlbeck, 1997). This focus fails to capture the diversity of ticket formation in South America's multiparty systems, where party system fragmentation and permissive rules for independent candidacies generate a more varied set of ticket formats. Mixed formulas and independent candidacies likewise raise questions about the conditions under which parties concede the vice-presidency to coalition partners, the circumstances that enable independents to join presidential tickets, and how these choices are shaped by institutional and political contexts. These issues require a comparative

perspective, leading this thesis to its central research question: what institutional, political, and electoral conditions shape the selection of vice-presidential candidates in South America?

This study moves beyond the predominant focus on candidate attributes by integrating institutional incentives and political context into the analysis of vice-presidential selection. In doing so, it contributes to a wider understanding of how presidential aspirants navigate electoral rules, party system fragmentation, and coalition-building. Rather than considering the vice-presidency as a residual office, the thesis argues that it represents an important resource that can be mobilized for bargaining, coalition management, and adaptation in contexts of party system weakening. The conclusion integrates the research findings to demonstrate how vice-presidential nominations operate at the crossroads of presidentialism, coalitions, and candidate selection, while also opening space for reflection on their practical and research implications.

5.1 MAIN RESULTS, CONTRIBUTIONS AND BOUNDARIES

In South America, the joint election of president and vice-president binds both figures to a single mandate, making the nomination of a running mate more than a procedural requirement. This system frames the presidential ticket as an indivisible unit of electoral competition. The choice of who occupies the second slot often serves as an instrument for alliance negotiation and campaign image formation, though it may at times reflect the more immediate need to complete the ticket. This range of possibilities underscores the importance of analyzing the conditions under which these selection decisions are made.

Grasping this process requires attention to the diversity of ticket formats across South America. It also calls for an analysis that goes beyond the most prominent candidacies to include the full set of contenders, to trace how running mates are selected and how ticket arrangements have evolved over time. Previous studies concentrated mainly on the most competitive tickets (Lopes, 2020; 2022a; Mieres & Pampín, 2025; Uggla, 2020). By doing so, they overlooked candidacies that, while less competitive, nonetheless reveal how presidential tickets are assembled by parties of different profiles. Moreover, competitiveness is determined by electoral outcomes, that is, after vice-presidential nominees have already been chosen. Using this criterion as an explanatory variable therefore relies on an outcome defined only once the phenomenon has occurred. To address this limitation, this research built the first comprehensive dataset covering every presidential ticket in six South American countries between 1979 and 2022. By incorporating the full universe of candidacies, the dataset avoids the outcome bias of

earlier studies and uncovers patterns that would otherwise remain obscured, laying the groundwork for comparative research on vice-presidential selection.

In addition to the dataset, the study compiled original longitudinal records detailing the rules governing ticket nominations by country and year, the classification of political organizations, regulations for independent candidacies and their access to public funding, and the prior careers of independent candidates. By tracking legal reforms across decades, these records establish a transparent basis for replication and facilitate the analysis of vice-presidential selection across time. Collectively, these materials constitute the most extensive empirical foundation to date for the comparative study of running mate selection in South America.

An examination of the full range of tickets revealed that prevailing classifications inadequately captured the presidential candidate's role in shaping these arrangements. To address this gap, the research introduces a refined typology of presidential tickets. Prior scholarship categorized running mates solely by their partisan or independent status, an approach that overlooks the presidential candidate's own political affiliation (Serrafero, 1999; 2007; 2018; Uggla, 2020). The new typology, which distinguishes among pure-partisan, pure-independent, mixed-partisan, mixed-president independent, and mixed-VP independent formulas, more accurately reflects the diversity of tickets observed in systems with a single vice-president. This framework offers a more precise basis for analyzing candidate selection and situates ticket formation within its political and institutional context.

This typology allows the research to distinguish, for instance, whether a female candidate was recruited directly by the presidential candidate and their party, nominated by a coalition partner, or included on an independent ticket. Each of these scenarios points to a different interpretation of the motives behind the selection. In the first and third scenarios, the agency of the presidential candidate appears paramount; in the second, inter-party negotiations tend to play a decisive role. It is important to note that this typology applies exclusively to countries that elect a single vice-president. Consequently, it excludes systems featuring multiple vice-presidential offices or appointment mechanisms, as these operate under distinct institutional rules and incentives and would multiply the possible ticket configurations. Although such cases remain a minority, their exclusion is a boundary of the framework, clarifying the specific scope of the present analysis.

Existing literature on vice-presidential selection rarely specifies the principal actor behind the choice for the second position. In practice, the sequence of nomination clarifies this

relationship: the presidential candidate is selected first, and the running mate is chosen subsequently. Whether the goal is to balance the ticket, ensure loyalty, or secure approval from the candidate themselves, this analysis treats the presidential candidate as the explicit or implicit decision-maker. This approach aligns with debates on candidate selection, supporting the view that vice-presidential nominations tend to be candidate-centered rather than party-centered processes (Siavelis & Morgenstern, 2008; Inácio & Llanos, 2020).

This perspective also constitutes a deliberate methodological choice. Given the scope of the dataset, it was not feasible to trace the informal negotiations or internal party procedures preceding each nomination. Although available evidence strongly indicates that presidential candidates dominate the selection process, the data cannot ascertain the precise decision-making chain for every case. Resolving this question would require qualitative research involving interviews, access to party archives, and detailed case studies, which falls beyond the proposed design of this project. Acknowledging this limitation clarifies that the findings should be interpreted as evidence of recurring outcomes in selection, rather than as definitive accounts of the selection process behind each individual nomination.

Within these parameters, the results indicate how presidential candidates utilized the vice-presidential nomination to secure coalition partners or enhance electoral attractiveness. Scholarship on Latin America frequently posits that the vice-presidency serves as a central instrument of pre-electoral coalition bargaining (Bidegain, 2017; Couto, Soares & Livramento, 2021; Kellam, 2017; Olivares *et al.*, 2020). The results of this study offer systematic support for this proposition, which had previously received limited empirical validation, except for Ugglá (2020). Specifically, candidates from protagonist parties with a record of electoral success, especially in highly fragmented systems, tend to concede the second slot to an allied party to bind it to the coalition. Offering the vice-presidency to attract another party not only maximizes votes but also reinforces the alliance's durability by guaranteeing the partner a permanent seat in the executive.

The observed outcomes, however, varied according to the size of the party leading the ticket. Presidential candidates from parties with greater electoral strength were best positioned to attract medium and large parties to their tickets. Yet, because this study considered the full population of candidacies, the results indicate that most mixed-partisan formulas involved tiny or small parties. The results reinforce arguments concerning credibility and platform-seeking (Spoon & West, 2012): smaller parties utilize the presidential race to promote their program and elevate their candidates for other offices. As anticipated, presidential candidates from tiny

parties must combine forces to remain competitive, often seeking allies with similarly limited legislative representation (Uggla, 2020). This study contributes to the literature on candidate selection and pre-electoral coalitions by demonstrating that the allocation of the vice-presidential nomination reflects the bargaining power of large parties and the visibility-seeking strategies of small parties within fragmented systems. In both scenarios, coalitions generally preserved a degree of ideological compatibility, a condition often regarded as necessary for governing.

These tendencies were most evident in Brazil, which represents a typical case. The Brazilian example substantiates existing scholarship by illustrating how protagonist and competitive parties relied on allied parties to occupy the vice-presidential slot (Bertholini *et al.*, 2022; Samuels, 2002). Its highly fragmented party system and the consistent distinction between protagonist parties and their supporting allies resulted in the recurrent use of mixed-partisan tickets, particularly during the period when the PT and PSDB were the main contenders. These parties possessed the electoral strength to attract medium and large partners, most prominently the PMDB and the PFL/DEM, thereby transforming the vice-presidential nomination into a consistent instrument for bargaining.

Argentina also exhibited a relatively high incidence of mixed-partisan formulas, though under distinct conditions. Its party system was less fragmented, and most vice-presidential nominees originated from tiny or small parties, reflecting candidacies with limited resources for which securing visibility was a more immediate objective than ensuring the ticket's viability or any realistic expectation of electoral success. Over time, protagonist parties increasingly opted against including coalition partners on the ticket, a tendency consistent with interpretations in the Argentine literature that emphasize how legacies of intra-executive conflict influence candidate selection and discourage parties with majoritarian strategies from forming shared tickets (Serrafero 2007; 2018).

Evaluating this ideological alignment presents a specific methodological obstacle. Although the personalist nature of the vice-presidential role makes individual-level assessment most appropriate, the lack of systematic data on candidates' personal positions and agendas necessitates reliance on party-level measures. This approach, common in the limited literature on vice-presidential selection (Lopes, 2020; 2022a), inherently constrains the analysis's capacity to capture personal motivations behind selection decisions.

Interpreting the results also warrants caution due to the endogenous relationship between pre-electoral coalitions and vice-presidential nominations. These processes are not

independent: coalition agreements often determine who gains access to the second slot, while the inclusion of a particular running mate can be a precondition for a coalition's viability. The coalition and the nomination exert mutual influence, complicating efforts to isolate a unidirectional causal effect. This simultaneity underscores that vice-presidential selection is deeply embedded within coalition bargaining, rather than invalidating the analysis.

Another consideration is the influence of the Brazilian and Argentine cases, which together account for most mixed-partisan tickets in the dataset. This geographic concentration, particularly the predominance of Brazil, delineates a scope condition for the findings on which parties secure vice-presidential nominations. As comparative research emphasizes, significant reliance on a few cases limits generalizability and necessitates caution when extending conclusions to other contexts.

Not all presidential candidacies relied on party-based bargaining. Another pattern emerged with the rise of independent nominations. In these cases, the choice of a running mate often stemmed from the decision of a presidential contender to run outside party structures, a path made possible where institutional barriers were lower. This study defined independents as candidates without a formal party affiliation. This categorization required distinguishing them from party outsiders and differentiating registered political parties from other political organizations. This conceptual clarification was essential not only for establishing the boundaries of independent candidacies but also for enabling an analysis of how institutional rules shape their viability.

This study introduces an original Index of Constraints on Independent Candidacies to measure how formal electoral rules condition the viability of independent candidates across countries and over time. This measure was developed through the systematic compilation of electoral legislation for all cases under review, which captured post-redemocratization reforms that altered the opportunity structure for independent entrants. The resulting index provides a replicable framework for assessing how institutional design shapes the available range of candidacy types.

After accounting for these institutional barriers and applying the definition of independents, the results indicate that when a presidential candidate runs as an independent, the vice-presidential nominee is also most frequently an independent. Consequently, pure-independent tickets constitute the second most common type of presidential formula in the dataset, surpassed only by pure-partisan ones. This finding implies that the degree of institutional openness first influences the decision to launch an independent presidential

candidacy and subsequently affects the selection of a running mate. In such instances, the vice-presidential nomination appears to be mainly determined by the presidential contender's personal choice.

In addition to institutional rules and candidate type, prior scholarship identifies the weakening of party systems as a condition that facilitates the inclusion of independents on presidential tickets. In Costa Rica, for example, Pignataro and Taylor-Robinson (2019) document contenders selecting running mates from business, activism, or other nonpartisan spheres. Such choices have been interpreted as an electoral signal to voters who are increasingly skeptical of established parties (Pignataro & Taylor-Robinson 2019; Thaha & Haryanto, 2017), a rationale that also applies to the South American cases examined here.

It is necessary to acknowledge the potential endogeneity between party system weakening and the reduction of barriers for independent candidacies. In contexts where party systems are fragile, legislators and political elites may reform electoral rules to expand opportunities for political participation beyond traditional parties. Conversely, less restrictive rules can further diminish the centrality of parties by enhancing the viability of nonpartisan candidacies. This analysis does not seek to disentangle this causal relationship but rather to situate independent vice-presidential nominations within contexts where both conditions are present. In such an environment, partisan contenders may include independents as running mates to diversify the ticket and connect it to constituencies outside traditional party structures. A complete understanding of these nominations, however, also requires attention to the candidates' backgrounds, as an 'independent' designation does not necessarily signify a complete outsider status.

Although an independent label can project an image of renewal, the evidence indicates that many such nominees are political insiders with prior governmental or electoral experience. Even among those classified as newcomers, most possess indirect ties to the political sphere, often through bureaucratic service or civic activism. These results imply that 'independent' candidates frequently represent a partial, rather than a complete, break from established political circles, thereby complicating assumptions about their status as outsiders.

The country cases further reveal distinct trajectories for independent vice-presidential nominations. Ecuador represents a typical case, where permissive electoral rules and weak party organizations made independents a standard option for presidential tickets. Paraguay constitutes a consistent outlier, maintaining a restrictive legal framework that afforded minimal opportunity for independent candidates throughout the period under study. Colombia, in

contrast, underwent a notable shift: initially resembling the typical pattern, successive legal reforms progressively restricted the system and reduced openings for nonpartisan nominations. In Bolivia, independent candidacies appeared only intermittently, primarily in the early post-transition years, as stronger party institutionalization subsequently limited their viability.

When compared to the mixed-partisan experiences of Brazil and Argentina, these cases illustrate that the vice-presidential selection process can function through mechanisms other than inter-party bargaining. In certain contexts, the position served as a recurrent instrument for coalition-building among established partisan actors; in others, it provided an entry point for candidacies operating outside the political party system. These comparative contrasts underscore the demand on examining unconventional formulas to comprehend fully how the vice-presidency is utilized across South America.

Collectively, this research repositions the vice-presidency within the comparative study of presidential systems. It shows how the office operates both as a bargaining chip for partisan negotiations and, within permissive institutional settings, as a vehicle for the inclusion of independent figures on presidential tickets. This moves the analytical focus beyond frameworks centered exclusively on candidate attributes. While acknowledging the relevance of individual profiles and strategies of electoral balancing, the study demonstrates that in South American presidential systems, these factors are rarely sufficient alone. Specific institutional and political contexts shape the selection of a running mate, and the choices of candidates subsequently help explain the emergence of atypical ticket formats alongside conventional partisan ones. Consequently, this research contributes to the study of candidate selection, coalition politics, and presidentialism by showing that vice-presidential nominations are not governed by a single logic. Instead, they must be analyzed by considering the interplay of institutional incentives, party strategies, and the existence of unconventional electoral formulas. These interactions, in turn, confront presidential contenders and parties with practical dilemmas when deciding how to compose their tickets.

5.2 CONSIDERATIONS FOR PRESIDENTIAL CONTENDERS AND PARTIES

For presidential contenders and parties, this research underscores that the vice-presidential nomination constitutes more than a marginal office; it represents a significant institutional commitment forged during an election campaign. Unlike ministerial appointments, the vice-presidency is irrevocable, making it a credible guarantee for allies but also a potential source of institutional vulnerability if the partnership is misaligned. This ambivalent nature

necessitates decisive involvement from the presidential candidate. Extending the vice-presidential nomination to expand alliances will likely strengthen the ticket only if internal unity is established initially, as such unity mitigates the risk of future executive rifts that could weaken the government or precipitate a political crisis.

In countries where independent candidacies are institutionally viable, presidential candidates and party leaders must navigate a more intricate array of options: independents may join tickets as running mates to attract disenchanted voters, or they may emerge as competitors capable of altering the electoral contest. Consequently, electoral legislation and its constraints must be integrated into considerations for ticket formation, altering the conventional process of ticket formation.

The binding nature of the vice-presidency is particularly evident in contexts of pre-electoral coalition formation. Conceding the office is not merely a symbolic gesture to broaden electoral appeal but constitutes a mechanism that directly integrates partners into the governing project. By allocating the second position, presidential candidates offer allies a durable stake in executive authority, which can enhance the stability of pre-electoral commitments. However, the permanence that makes the office a reliable guarantee also intensifies the potential costs of internal conflict. Consequently, ideological compatibility and rigorous presidential oversight in the selection process are essential to mitigate interpersonal friction and prevent the vice-presidency from becoming a source of internal instability.

Therefore, this analysis indicates that presidential candidates and parties should approach the vice-presidential nomination as a central strategic decision rather than an ancillary one. It presents both an opportunity and a constraint: a means of securing allies with considerable firmness, coupled with an institutional commitment that can complicate governance if mismanaged. Acknowledging this dual character places the vice-presidency at the core of coalition management, indicating that the durability of political alliances is often determined by the choice of who fills the second position.

5.3 THE FUTURE AHEAD: WHAT AWAITS US?

The dilemmas outlined above also resonate within academic debates, pointing to gaps in the literature that this study could not fully address. Following earlier works that have proposed research agendas on the vice-presidency (Bidegain, 2017; Lopes, 2022b), this study advances the discussion by focusing on the process of candidate selection. Bidegain highlighted to institutional variation and the role of the office in political careers, while Lopes emphasized

performance in office, gender representation, and legislative ties. This research extends these agendas by examining how running mates are chosen across the entire range of presidential tickets in South America, using this comparative perspective to outline new questions for future investigation.

Previous scholarship frequently centered on highly competitive candidacies (Lopes, 2020; 2022a; Ugglá, 2020) or case studies of conflict between presidents and vice-presidents (Serrafero, 2007; 2018). These approaches explored the episodes but did not account for the wide range of candidacies that also shaped coalition formation and electoral competition. By covering the entire set of tickets since redemocratization, this study provides a different starting point for identifying new research directions.

The research agenda outlined below emerges from the findings of this study and the identification of less traditional presidential tickets, some of which warrant deeper future analysis. It is organized around three topics: (a) exploring the circumstances in which the vice-presidency is not used as a bargaining tool, whether through pure-partisan arrangements or through the inclusion of independents; (b) examining how and why parties sometimes decide to nominate the vice-presidential candidate on tickets led by independent contenders; and (c) revisiting the role of individual attributes, political, economic, and symbolic capital, by asking how they interact with institutional and partisan contexts in shaping different types of presidential formulas.

a) When the vice-presidency remains outside electoral bargaining

The evidence presented in Chapter 2 indicates that presidential candidates do not invariably employ the vice-presidential nominations as tools for electoral bargaining within pre-electoral coalitions (PECs). Of the 146 presidential tickets supported by PECs, 45 featured running mates from the presidential candidate's own party, constituting pure-partisan tickets. As the results detailed, Argentina followed a distinct trajectory: although mixed-partisan tickets were frequent in earlier decades, most involved tiny and small parties. In subsequent periods, presidential contenders increasingly reserved the vice-presidency for their own party. This practice was particularly evident among winning tickets, including those of Carlos Menem (1989, 1995, 2003), Cristina Kirchner (2011), Mauricio Macri (2015), and Alberto Fernández

(2019)⁷⁶. These recurrent choices suggest that Argentina's most electorally competitive presidential candidates frequently opted against sharing the ticket, a preference likely reinforced by past experiences with coalition breakdowns.

One such episode was the collapse of Fernando de la Rúa's government after Vice President Carlos "Chacho" Álvarez, nominated from Frepaso to secure the Alliance pact, resigned in 2000 following disputes over appointments and corruption allegations. His departure was a prelude to the political crisis that resulted in de la Rúa's resignation the following year. For political actors in Argentina, this event highlighted the potential risks of mixed-partisan tickets and may have encouraged a stronger preference for pure-partisan arrangements as a means of promoting governmental cohesion and stability (Serrafero, 2018).

The formation of pure-partisan tickets within pre-electoral coalitions was not, however, unique to Argentina. In Brazil's 2014 election, Aécio Neves (PSDB) selected a running mate from his own party despite leading a pre-electoral coalition of eight parties. This instance represented the only occasion a PSDB presidential candidate campaigned on a pure-partisan ticket, diverging from the party's established tradition of mixed-partisan formulas. This case illustrates that a politically strong contender could maintain control of the vice-presidential nomination without conceding it to a coalition ally.

This trajectory suggests that future research could investigate the conditions under which presidential contenders retain the autonomy to select a running mate from their own party rather than allocate the position to a coalition partner. In some instances, such autonomy may originate from the contender's considerable electoral prospects or their party's dominant position; in others, it may reflect lessons drawn from previous coalition failures that made pure-partisan tickets appear more viable. Determining the circumstances that grant presidential candidates this latitude is necessary to understand when the vice-presidency functions as an extension of the contender's preference rather than as a concession in coalition bargaining.

In some coalition-backed candidacies, the vice-presidency was allocated not to a party ally but to an independent nominee, what happened in ten tickets within the dataset. These nominations occurred amid weakened party systems and a crisis of representation that enhanced the appeal of independents to electorates disenchanted with traditional parties, as well as following reforms that reduced barriers to nonpartisan candidacies (Pignataro & Taylor-

⁷⁶ As was mentioned, in the 2019 ticket led by Alberto Fernández, Cristina Kirchner, the incumbent president, took the initiative to choose her own role as the vice-presidential candidate. Unable to run for a third consecutive term, she decided to run for vice-president and selected the former Casa Rosada advisor as the presidential candidate (González, 2019).

Robinson, 2019; Thaha & Haryanto, 2017). In this case, a central question, therefore, is not only why independents were included but also why coalition partners acquiesced to such arrangements rather than demanding the position for their own party. This puzzle underscores the need to examine whether these outcomes stem from the political strength of the presidential contender, the specific assets of the independent nominee, or an interaction of both factors.

b) *What drives parties to nominate the vice-president in presidential tickets led by independent candidates?*

Across the region, there are instances where political parties have supplied vice-presidential nominees for tickets led by independent presidential contenders. This study identifies seven such cases, which raises the question: why would parties align with presidential candidates who lack a formal partisan affiliation? Although this analysis does not resolve that question directly, it does map out directions for future investigation.

These cases occurred in Colombia (two instances) and Ecuador (four instances), each involving independent contenders who were already established political figures. In Colombia, Antonio Navarro's 1994 candidacy relied on his prior service as Minister of Health (1990–1992). Similarly, Sergio Fajardo's 2018 campaign drew on his public recognition as mayor of Medellín (2004–2007) and governor of Antioquia (2012–2015). Gustavo Petro's 2022 bid reflected his extensive political career, which included two prior presidential campaigns and a term in the Senate. Parallel examples emerge in Ecuador: Osvaldo Hurtado, president from 1981 to 1984, ran as an independent in 2002 with the Partido Social Cristiano (PSC) nominating his running mate; former Vice President León Roldós Aguilera secured the support of Izquierda Democrática (ID) in 2006; and former legislator César Montúfar received backing from the Partido Sociedad Ecuatoriana (PSE) in 2021.

Viewed collectively, these cases suggest that parties join tickets headed by independents when such contenders possess sufficient political capital to be electorally viable. Rather than implying a reversal of the usual logic of ticket formation, these situations highlight the decision of parties to affiliate with an independent candidate by supplying the vice-presidential nominee. This viewpoint shifts the analytical focus from candidate-centered choices to the incentives that encourage parties to participate in these alliances. It remains unclear why parties occasionally judge this option more advantageous than nominating their own presidential candidate. Is the decision primarily explained by the stature of the independent, by short-term electoral

considerations, or by institutional contexts that constrain partisan alternatives? Given the limited number of cases identified, future inquiry using qualitative, case-study methods may help elucidate the conditions under which parties pursue this course of action.

c) *How to advance the analysis of vice-presidential candidate selection? Revisiting personal attributes*

Existing scholarship on vice-presidential selection frequently emphasizes candidate attributes. In South America, such an approach is insufficient unless examined within institutional frameworks and the diverse ticket types observed in the region. Because tickets often diverge from the standard pure-partisan format, analysis must first attend to contextual and partisan factors before turning to individual considerations. Within this framework, candidate attributes remain relevant for future inquiry.

Earlier contributions on vice-presidential nomination (Mieres & Pampín, 2015; Lopes, 2020; 2022a) identified recurrent selection criteria, including prior political experience, socio-demographic balancing, and partisan or ideological alignment. These works emphasized how observable attributes served ticket-balancing purposes but often examined such traits in relative isolation. Advancing this literature, Rojas (2023) proposes a taxonomy of social capital, classifying attributes as political, economic, technical, familial, or popularity-based, which provides a more integrated basis for comparison across Latin American cases. While this contribution helps structure the analysis of attributes, its empirical focus on elected vice-presidents leaves aside unsuccessful contenders and underplays how electoral campaigns and independent candidacies can alter how these forms of social capital are valued. Future research could extend this approach by incorporating candidates without prior office and examining what makes independents attractive to traditional parties: whether professional background, organizational capacity, or their ability to connect with constituencies beyond the reach of established partisan networks.

A further avenue for research involves examining whether the influence of attributes varies across ticket types. Pure-partisan and mixed-partisan formulas may assign different importance to personal characteristics. Comparative analysis of political backgrounds, party activism, bureaucratic experience, and forms of social capital could help elucidate such variation. This agenda points to the need for inquiry into how different kinds of personal resources are valued depending on the partisan and institutional context.

This thesis has shown that vice-presidential nominations in South America are shaped by institutions, parties, and coalitions, but they also return us to the personal dimension that marks presidential politics in the region. The vice-presidency emerges as a structural resource and a position whose weight derives from the backgrounds and attributes of individuals. By bringing institutions and personalism together, the study demonstrates that understanding the vice-presidency requires moving beyond single explanations to grasp the interaction of structures, strategies, and individual profiles.

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APPENDIX I

Table 15 – Nomination rules for presidential ticket candidates by country

Country	Nomination of presidential candidates	Legislation	For primaries, are presidential and vice-presidential candidates included on the same ticket?	Legislation
Argentina [1983-2007]	Delegated to political organizations	-	-	-
Argentina [2011-2019]	Mandatory primaries	Art. 19, LE 26571/2009	Yes	Art. 44, LE 26571/2009
Bolivia [1985-1997]	Delegated to political organizations	-	-	-
Bolivia [2002-2014]	Delegated to political organizations	Art. 21, LE 1983/1999	-	-
Bolivia [2019-2020]	Mandatory primaries	Art. 29, LE 1096/2018	Yes	Art. 29, LE 1096/2018
Brazil [1989-1994]	Delegated to political organizations	-	-	-
Brazil [1998-2022]	Delegated to political organizations	Art. 7º, LE 9504/1997	-	-
Colombia [1994-2002]	Delegated to political organizations	Art. 10º, LE 130/1994	-	-
Colombia [2006-2010]	Delegated to political organizations	Art. 5º LE 996/2005	-	-
Colombia [2014-2018]	Delegated to political organizations with primary regulations	Art. 5º LE 996/2005; Arts. 5º ao 7º, LE 1475/2011	No	-
Colombia [2022]	Delegated to political organizations with primary regulations	Art. 68, CE/2020; Art. 5º LE 996/2005; Arts. 5º ao 7º, LE 1475/2011	No	-
Ecuador [1979-1984]	Delegated to political organizations	-	-	-
Ecuador [1988]	Delegated to political organizations	Art. 46, LE 59/1986	-	-
Ecuador [1992-1998]	Delegated to political organizations	Art. 46, LE 59/1986; Art. 27, LE 1257-A/1990	-	-
Ecuador [2002-2009]	Delegated to political organizations	Art. 46, LE 59/1986; Art. 27, LE 1257-A/1990; Art. 31, LE 196/2000	-	-
Ecuador [2013-2021]	Mandatory primaries	Art. 94, CE/2009	-	-
Paraguay [1993]	Delegated to political organizations	-	-	-
Paraguay [1998-2018]	Mandatory primaries	Art. 33, CE 834/1996	Yes	-

Note. Elaborated by the author.

APPENDIX II

Ideological classification of political parties in South America

To measure the ideological orientation of political parties, the study primarily relied on Coppedge's (1997) expert survey. The Coppedge scale categorizes ideology into five distinct groups: left (-1), center-left (-0.5), center (0), center-right (0.5), and right (1). This survey encompasses the cases of Argentina (1912–1995), Bolivia (1956–1993), Brazil (1945–1994), Colombia (1931–1994), and Ecuador (1947–1994).

For Paraguay and subsequent periods not covered by Coppedge's data, Baker and Greene's (2011) study was employed, drawing on Wiesehomeier and Benoit's (2009) continuous scale. This scale ranges from 0 (left) to 20 (right). For the most recent elections, updated party policy positions were compiled using data from the PREPPS 2018–2019 expert surveys⁷⁷.

To ensure consistency across the datasets, the 20-point Wiesehomeier and Benoit scale was converted into Coppedge's five-point scale. This transformation was based on the methodology outlined in Borges, Turgeon, and Albala (2021, Appendix, p. 1). The conversion followed the steps detailed below:

For each of Coppedge's categories, we calculated intervals measured in the W-B scale by estimating the mean point between the means for the category itself and the next category. For instance, the means for the left and centre-left category were 5.7 and 7.9, respectively. Therefore, we established as the upper limit of the left category the mean point between 5.7 and 7.9, which is equal to $(5.7+7.9)/2=6.8$. The lower limit of the subsequent category (centre-left) was set as the upper limit of the left category plus 0.01. Once we set the intervals using this simple procedure, we were able to code a very substantial number of missing observations for which there was no available score in the original Coppedge dataset. Overall, the combination of these different sources allowed to attribute ideological scores to over 90% of our party-year observations.

Through this process, it derived the following ideological transformations:

⁷⁷ Wiesehomeier, Singer & Ruth-Lovell (2021) are responsible for the Political Representation, Executives, and Political Parties Survey (PREPPS).

Table 16 – Party ideology scale transformation

20-point WB scale	5-point Coppedge scale	Ideology
15.86 – 20	1	Right
13.31 – 15.85	0.5	Center-right
9.76 – 13.3	0	Center
6.81 – 9.75	-0.5	Center-left
0 – 6.8	-1	Left

Note. Elaborated by the author.

Descriptive statistics

Table 17 provides an overview of the descriptive statistics for each variable included in the study's model. Except for the Effective Number of Parliamentary Parties (ENPP), all variables are categorical. The dataset initially comprises 519 presidential tickets; however, in certain models, the number of observations decreases to 478. This reduction is due to missing data on the ideological positions of political parties in 41 cases, despite the application of the ideological classification.

Table 17 – Descriptive statistics of regression model variables: selection of VP candidates from other parties

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Mixed partisan tickets	519	0.135	0.342	0	1
PEC	519	0.281	0.450	0	1
ENPP	519	5.232	3.433	1.400	16.542
Ideological Party	478	0.510	0.500	0	1
Incumbent	519	0.229	0.421	0	1
VP Legislative	519	0.470	0.500	0	1
Founding Election	519	0.083	0.276	0	1
Protagonist Party	519	0.227	0.420	0	1

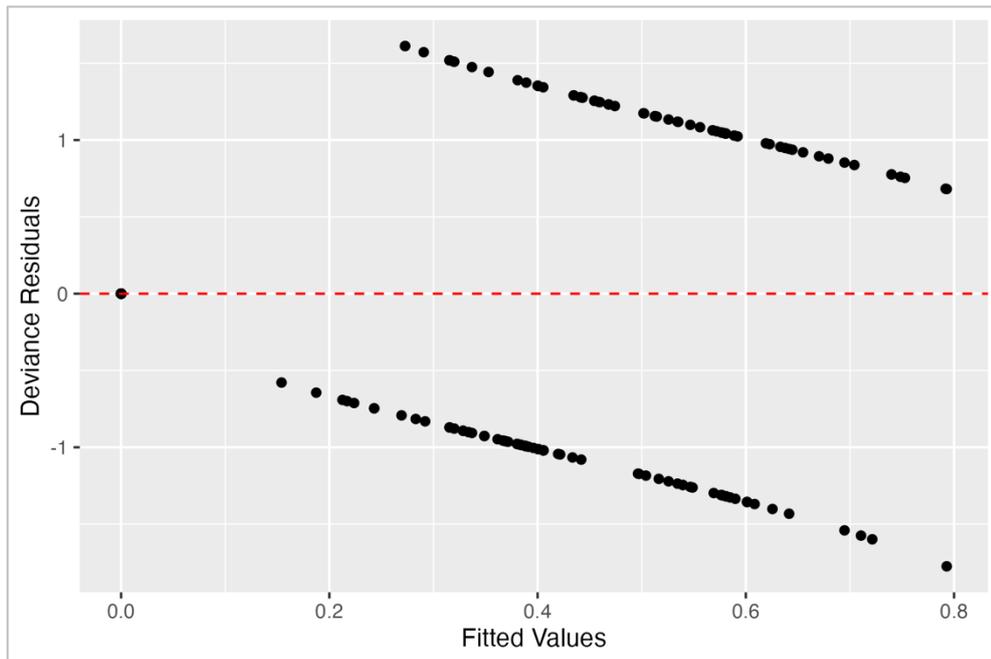
Note. Elaborated by the author.

Fitting independent variables to models

Residual analysis was conducted using the logistic regression model (Model 4) presented in Section 2.4 (Results) as a reference. Figure 15 illustrates the Deviance Residuals vs. Fitted Values from this model. The residuals display a funnel-shaped pattern, indicative of

heteroscedasticity, where the variance of residuals is not constant across the range of fitted values. Residuals are more concentrated around intermediate fitted values (approximately 0.4) and become more dispersed at the extremes, suggesting potential underestimation or overestimation at the distribution's tails. These patterns suggest that the model may not fully capture the relationships among variables.

Figure 15 – Deviance residuals vs fitted values



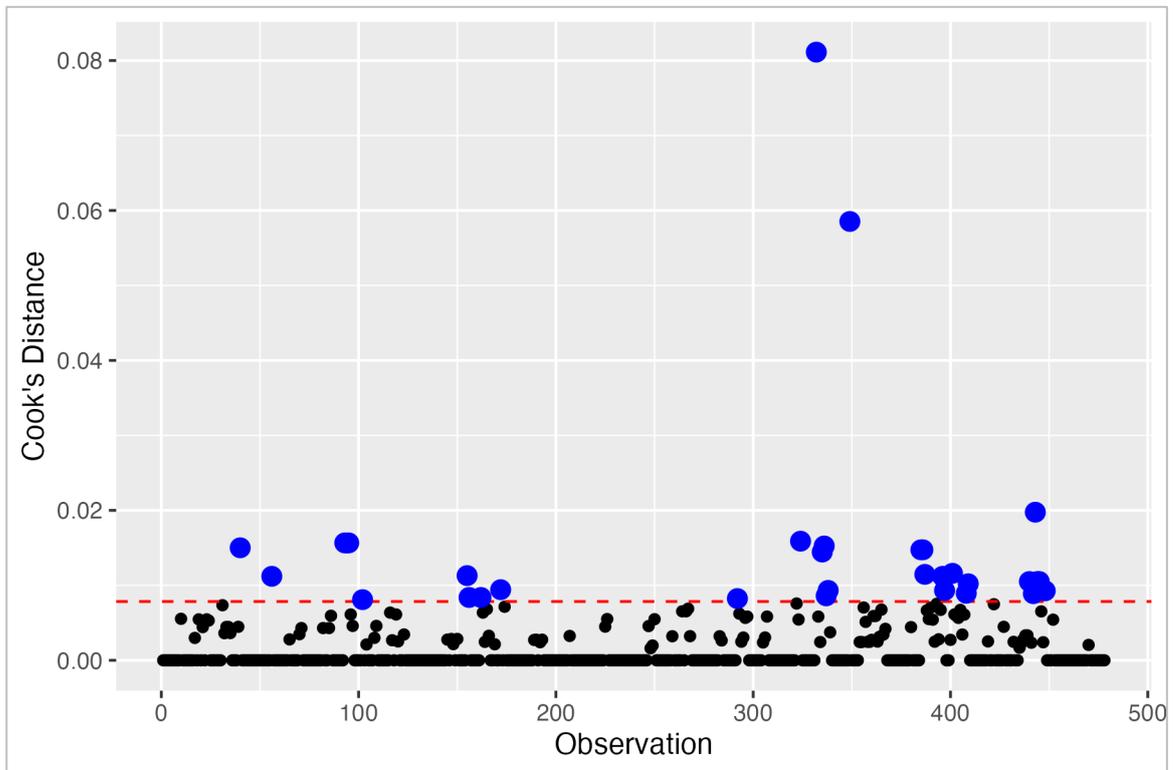
Note. Elaborated by the author.

Despite this, the residuals' symmetry around zero suggests no systematic bias, but the increasing spread near the extremes (fitted values close to 0 or 0.8) indicates departures from linearity. Few outliers also deviate significantly from the residual pattern, which may disproportionately affect the model's parameters.

To identify these influential data points, Cook's Distance was adopted to measure the influence of individual data points on the overall regression model by quantifying how much the model's coefficients would change if a particular observation were excluded (Figueiredo Filho, Silva & Pires, 2023).

In Figure 16, the Cook's Distance plot highlights a threshold (dashed line) used to identify observations with unusually high influence on the regression coefficients. Fourteen observations exceeded this threshold, indicating their potential to significantly affect the model's results. The impact of excluding these outliers will be analyzed in subsequent sections.

Figure 16 – Outliers identified by Cook’s Distance



Note. Elaborated by the author.

Even after removing the outliers, the dataset continued to exhibit heteroscedasticity. This presents a significant challenge, as heteroscedasticity implies inconsistency in the variance of model errors across different ranges of fitted values. Such inconsistency can lead to inaccurate variance estimates, thereby compromising the reliability of statistical results (Figueiredo Filho *et al.*, 2011).

To address this issue, robust standard errors were applied, allowing the model to estimate parameters while adjusting standard errors to reflect heteroscedasticity without altering the model itself (Wooldridge, 2023). The effectiveness of this adjustment was evaluated using the Breusch-Pagan test (BP test), which confirmed the persistence of heteroscedasticity, with a p-value below 0.05 (p-value < 0.0000000000000022).

Further testing involved the removal of specific variables. Excluding the variable PEC (formation of a pre-electoral coalition around the presidential ticket) improved the BP test results marginally (p-value = 0.000005216). However, this improvement was insufficient to eliminate heteroscedasticity entirely.

Model estimation

Based on the interventions proposed in the previous section, Table 18 summarizes the estimated models. The first model serves as the reference and includes all independent and control variables. In the second model, the same parameters as Model 1 were applied, but a mixed-effects approach was introduced to account for time and cross-country variations in the coefficients. The third model incorporates the first treatment for heteroscedasticity by removing 14 outliers and applying robust standard errors. Finally, the fourth model excludes both the outliers and the PEC variable, applying robust standard errors.

Table 18 – Supplementary regression model results for selecting vice-presidential candidates from other parties

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
PEC	20.496 (944.064)	21.908 (3,134.832)	20.465 (962.349)	
ENPP	0.823** (0.402)	0.907** (0.426)	0.901** (0.434)	0.854** (0.360)
Protagonist party	0.764** (0.367)	0.786** (0.373)	1.020*** (0.395)	1.605*** (0.312)
Non-moderate party	0.223 (0.351)	0.226 (0.356)	-0.014 (0.373)	0.322 (0.295)
Founding election	2.168** (0.930)	2.248** (0.967)	2.168** (0.941)	1.297** (0.571)
Incumbent	-0.345 (0.439)	-0.372 (0.468)	-0.713 (0.504)	-0.857** (0.419)
VP Legislative	0.731 (0.480)	0.781 (0.510)	0.707 (0.499)	0.499 (0.376)
Constant	-22.698 (944.065)	-24.279 (3,134.833)	-22.654 (962.350)	-4.022*** (0.796)
Observations	478	478	448	448
Log Likelihood	-94.476	-94.392	-83.571	-165.498
Akaike Inf. Crit.	204.951	216.784	183.142	344.996
Bayesian Inf. Crit.		275.158		

Note: * p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01

Note. Elaborated by the author.

In all models, multicollinearity was ruled out, as demonstrated by acceptable Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values ($VIF < 2$) (Figueiredo Filho, Silva & Domingos, 2015). Regarding model fit, differences emerged across the models. Following the rule of thumb, which

prioritizes lower AIC values for better model fit, Model M3 exhibited the best fit (AIC = 183.142). It was followed by Models M1 (AIC = 204.951), M2 (AIC = 216.784), and M4 (AIC = 344.996), with M4 displaying the poorest fit. These results suggest that the model incorporating outlier removal and robust standard errors (M3) is the most suitable, whereas the exclusion of PEC (M4) negatively affected the model's performance.

Model M2 revealed that temporal and cross-country variation had a minimal impact on the results. For ENPP and Protagonist Party, the two variables that exhibited statistical significance and the expected direction of association, changes in coefficient values were negligible, and both maintained their statistical significance and the direction of their association with the response variable.

In Model M3, despite the application of treatments to address heteroscedasticity, the Breusch-Pagan Test confirmed its persistent presence (p-value < 0.0000000000000022). While the coefficients for ENPP and Protagonist Party remained stable and significant, the persistence of heteroscedasticity suggests that applying robust standard errors and excluding outliers was insufficient to fully resolve the issue. This may affect the reliability of statistical inferences.

In Model M4, the PEC variable was omitted, the Breusch-Pagan Test indicated improvement, with the p-value decreasing to 0.000003686. Although heteroscedasticity was not eliminated, the improvement was notable. The variables of ENPP and Protagonist Party remained significant (p < 0.05), underscoring their robust effects even in the absence of PEC.

Overall, the adjustments made in Models M3 and M4 highlight that heteroscedasticity had been underestimating the effects of the predictors on the response variable. Compared to Model M1, the treated models yielded higher coefficients with greater statistical significance for Protagonist Party, while maintaining stability for ENPP. This reinforces the robustness of these variables in explaining the response variable.

Despite these findings, the persistence of heteroscedasticity, even after the treatments applied, raises concerns about its potential impact on p-values. Consequently, conclusions drawn from the models should be interpreted with caution, particularly considering residual heteroscedasticity.

Odds ratio calculation

The odds ratio improves the interpretation of logistic regression models, particularly when the dependent variable is binary. In the model presented in Chapter 2 (Run with me: Formation of mixed-partisan presidential tickets), the dependent variable, Mixed-Partisan, is

coded as 1 when the vice-presidential candidate belongs to a different party than the presidential candidate, and 0 otherwise. The odds ratio quantifies the relationship between the presence or absence of an independent variable and the likelihood of the event of interest. In this context, it helps to interpret the relative impact of the independent variables on the composition of a mixed-partisan ticket.

Model M1 is the reference specification and includes all explanatory variables. Model M2 incorporates mixed effects, while Model M3 excludes outliers and applies robust standard errors. The estimated odds ratios of Model 1 for these three models are presented in Table 19. For variables that achieved statistical significance and displayed the expected directional effect, Table 20 complements this information by presenting confidence intervals and estimated marginal changes based on a 0.1-unit decrease (for continuous predictors).

Table 19 – Odds ratios for selecting vice-presidential candidates from other parties

	(1)	(2)	(3)
PEC	796,721,629.000 (752,156,399,820.000)	21.908 (3,134.832)	20.465 (962.349)
ENPP	2.277** (0.915)	0.907** (0.426)	0.901** (0.434)
Protagonist party	2.148** (0.788)	0.786** (0.373)	1.020*** (0.395)
Non-moderate party	1.250 (0.438)	0.226 (0.356)	-0.014 (0.373)
Founding election	8.744** (8.134)	2.248** (0.967)	2.168** (0.941)
Incumbent	0.709 (0.311)	-0.372 (0.468)	-0.713 (0.504)
VP Legislative	2.077 (0.997)	0.781 (0.510)	0.707 (0.499)
Constant	0.000 (0.00000)	-24.279 (3,134.833)	-22.654 (962.350)
Observations	478	478	448
Log Likelihood	-94.476	-94.392	-83.571
Akaike Inf. Crit.	204.951	216.784	183.142
Bayesian Inf. Crit.		275.158	
<i>Note:</i>	* p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01		

Note. Elaborated by the author.

In Model 1, the odds ratio for ENPP (Effective Number of Parliamentary Parties), which enters the model in logarithmic form, is 2.277 and statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). This implies that a one-unit increase in log (ENPP) more than doubles the odds of selecting a vice-

presidential candidate from another party. Put differently, a modest 0.1-unit decrease in the log of ENPP is associated with a 7.9% reduction in the odds of cross-party nominations (see Table 20). This finding supports the expectation that greater party system fragmentation increases the likelihood of mixed-partisan presidential tickets.

Table 20 - Confidence intervals and marginal effects for selected odds ratios

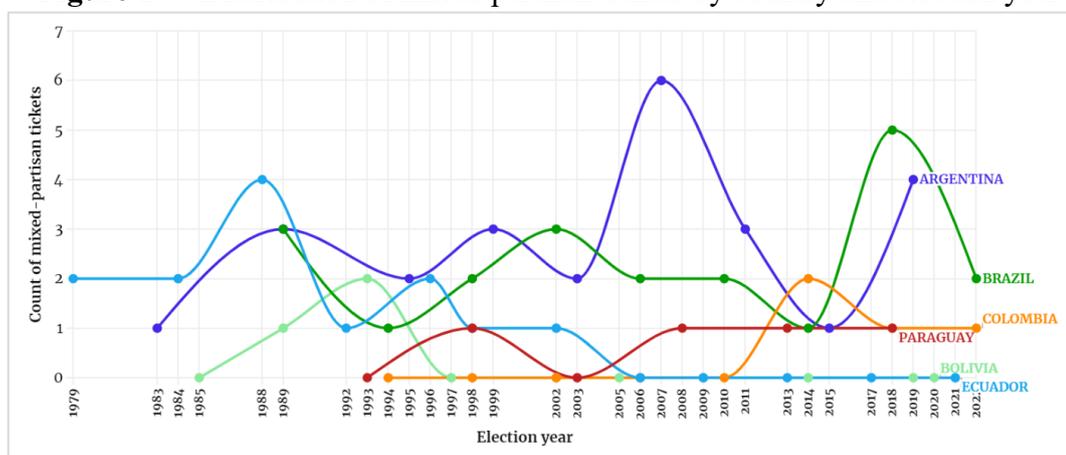
	ENPP	Protagonist Party
Odds Ratio	2,2772	2,1476
Standard Error	0,4019	0,3668
z-value	2,0477	2,0836
p-value	0,0406	0,0372
95% CI (Lower Bound)	1,0539	1,0546
95% CI (Upper Bound)	5,1541	4,4643
Odds Ratio for - 0,1 SD Change	0,9210	
Odds Change (%) for - 0.1 SD	-7.9%	
Odds Ratio Change (%) – Dummy Variable		114,8%

Note. Elaborated by the author.

For the Protagonist Party variable, the odds ratio is 2.148 in Model 1, meaning that when the presidential candidate belongs to a party that obtained at least 10% of the vote in the previous election, the odds of selecting a running mate from another party increase by approximately 115% ($p < 0.05$). This result aligns with the idea that electorally viable parties have stronger incentives or more flexibility to build cross-party coalitions. The 95% confidence interval for this estimate ranges from 1.054 to 4.464 (Table 20), indicating a statistically robust effect in this model.

Mixed-partisan tickets through elections

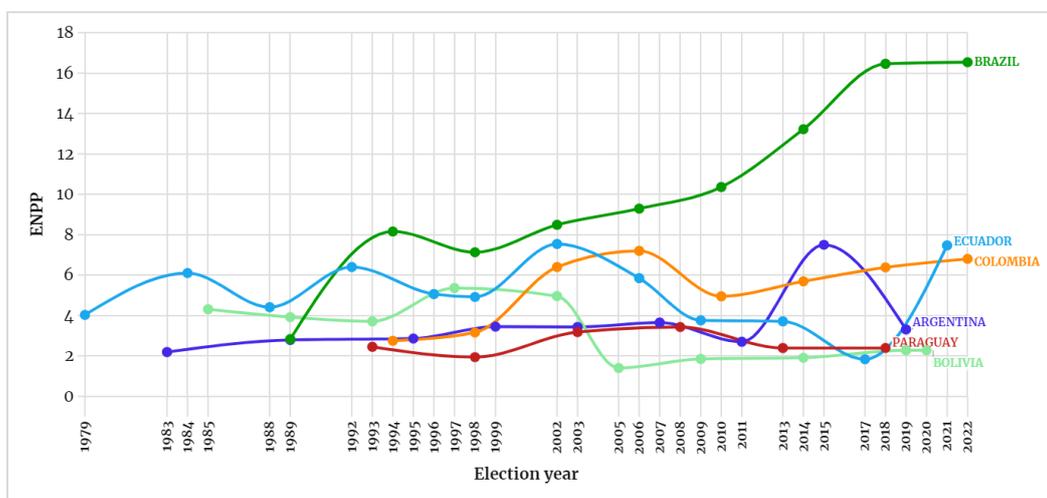
Figure 17 – Distribution of mixed-partisan tickets by country and election year



Note. Elaborated by the author.

Effective Number of Parties at the Legislative Level

Figure 18 – ENPP by country and election year



Note. Elaborated by the author.

APPENDIX III

Table 21 – Composition of mixed-partisan presidential tickets

Country	Election Year	Presidential Candidate	Protagonist Party	VP Candidate	Party Size	Type of Ideological Distance
ARGENTINA	1989	NESTOR VICENTE (IDEPO)	No	LUIS ZAMORA (MAS)	Tiny party	-
	1989	ALVARO ALSOGARAY (UCEDE)	No	ALBERTO NATALE (PDP)	Tiny party	Ideological Alignment
	1989	EDUARDO ANGELOZ (UCR)	Yes	MARIA C. GUSMAN (CFI)	-	Ticket-balancing
	1995	ALCIDES CHRISTIANSEN (MAS)	No	JOSE MONTES (PTS)	Tiny party	-
	1995	JOSE OCTAVIO BORDON (PAIS)	No	CARLOS ALVAREZ (FG)	Small party	Moderate ideological alignment
	1999	PATRICIA WALSH (MST)	No	ROGELIO DE LEONARDI (PC)	Tiny party	-
	1999	FERNANDO DE LA RÚA (UCR)	Yes	CARLOS ALVAREZ (FG)	Tiny party	Moderate ideological alignment
	2003	RICARDO L. MURPHY (RECREAR)	No	RICARDO GOMES DIEZ (PR)	Tiny party	-
	2007	LUIS ALBERTO AMMANN (PH)	No	ROGELIO DE LEONARDI (PC)	Tiny party	Moderate ideological alignment
	2007	JOSE MONTES (PTS)	No	HECTOR HEBERLING (MAS)	Tiny party	-
	2007	ELISA CARRIO (ARI)	Yes	RUBEN GIUSTINIANI (PS)	Tiny party	Moderate ideological alignment
	2011	JORGE ALTAMIRA (PO)	No	CHRISTIAN CASTILLO (PTS)	Tiny party	-
	2011	HERMES BINNER (PS)	No	NORMA MORANDINI (FC)	Small party	Ticket-balancing
	2019	NICOLAS DEL CANO (PTS)	No	ROMINA DEL PLA (PO)	Tiny party	-
BOLIVIA	1989	HUGO BANZER SUAREZ (ADN)	Yes	LUIS OSSIO SANJINES (PDC)	Small party	Ticket-balancing
	1993	GONZALO S. DE LOZADA (MNR)	Yes	VICTOR H. CARDENAS (MRTKL)	Tiny party	Moderate ideological alignment
BRAZIL	1989	AFIF DOMINGOS (PL)	No	ALUÍSIO PIMENTA (PDC)	Small party	Moderate ideological alignment
	1989	LULA (PT)	No	JOSÉ PAULO BISOL (PSB)	Tiny party	Ideological Alignment
	1994	FHC (PSDB)	Yes	MARCO MACIEL (PFL)	Large party	Moderate ideological alignment
	1998	LULA (PT)	Yes	LEONEL BRIZOLA (PDT)	Medium-sized party	Moderate ideological alignment
	1998	FHC (PSDB)	Yes	MARCO MACIEL (PFL)	Large party	Moderate ideological alignment
	2002	JOSÉ SERRA (PSDB)	Yes	RITA CAMATA (PMDB)	Large party	Moderate ideological alignment

	2002	CIRO GOMES (PPS)	Yes	PAULO P. DA SILVA (PTB)	Medium-sized party	Moderate ideological alignment
	2002	LULA (PT)	Yes	JOSÉ ALENCAR (PL)	Small party	Ticket-balancing
	2006	LULA (PT)	Yes	JOSÉ ALENCAR (PRB)	Small party	-
	2006	GERALDO ALCKMIN (PSDB)	Yes	JOSÉ JORGE (PFL)	Large party	Moderate ideological alignment
	2010	DILMA ROUSSEFF (PT)	Yes	MICHEL TEMER (PMDB)	Large party	Moderate ideological alignment
	2010	JOSÉ SERRA (PSDB)	Yes	INDIO DA COSTA (DEM)	Large party	Moderate ideological alignment
	2014	DILMA ROUSSEFF (PT)	Yes	MICHEL TEMER (PMDB)	Large party	Ticket-balancing
	2018	MARINA SILVA (REDE)	No	EDUARDO JORGE (PV)	Small party	Ideological Alignment
	2018	GERALDO ALCKMIN (PSDB)	Yes	ANA AMÉLIA (PP)	Medium-sized party	Moderate ideological alignment
	2018	FERNANDO HADDAD (PT)	Yes	MANUELA D'AVILA (PCdoB)	Small party	Moderate ideological alignment
	2018	JAIR BOLSONARO (PSL)	No	HAMILTON MOURÃO (PRTB)	Tiny party	-
	2018	ALVARO DIAS (PODEMOS)	No	PAULO RABELLO (PSC)	Small party	Moderate ideological alignment
	2022	SIMONE TEBET (PMDB)	No	MARA GABRILLI (PSDB)	Medium-sized party	Ideological Alignment
	2022	LULA (PT)	Yes	GERALDO ALCKMIN (PSB)	Medium-sized party	Moderate ideological alignment
COLOMBIA	2014	JUAN MANUEL SANTOS (PU)	Yes	GERMAN VARGAS LLERAS (PCR)	Medium-sized party	Ideological Alignment
	2018	HUMBERTO DE LA CALLE (PL)	No	CLARA LOPEZ (ASI)	Tiny party	Moderate ideological alignment
	2022	SERGIO FAJARDO (ASI)	Yes	GILBERTO MURILLO (CR)	-	Moderate ideological alignment
ECUADOR	1984	LEON FEBRES-CORDERO (PSC)	Yes	BLASCO PENAHERRERA (PLRE)	Medium-sized party	Ideological Alignment
	1988	SIXTO DURAN BALLEEN (PSC)	Yes	PABLO B. NAZUR (PCE)	Small party	Ideological Alignment
	1988	JAIME HURTADO (MPD)	No	EFRAIN ALVAREZ (FADI)	Small party	Ideological Alignment
	1988	FRANK V. PAZZOS (PAPRE)	No	ENRIQUE AYALA (PSE)	Medium-sized party	Ticket-balancing
	1992	SIXTO DURAN BALLEEN (PUR)	No	ALBERTO DAHIK (PCE)	Small party	Ideological Alignment
	1996	RICARDO NOBOA (FRA)	No	FRANCISCO HUERTA (PLRE)	Small party	Ideological Alignment
	1998	ALVARO NOBOA (PRE)	Yes	ALFREDO CASTILLO (PLN)	-	Ticket-balancing
	2002	JACOBO BUCARAM (PRE)	Yes	FRANK V. PAZZOS (APRE)	Tiny party	Ideological Alignment
PARAGUAY	1998	DOMINGO LAINO (PLRA)	Yes	CARLOS FILIZZOLA (PEN)	Medium-sized party	Ticket-balancing
	2008	FERNANDO LUGO (PDC)	No	FEDERICO FRANCO (PLRA)	Large party	Ticket-balancing
	2013	EFRAIN ALEGRE (PLRA)	No	RAFAEL FLIZZOLA (PDP)	Small party	Ticket-balancing
	2018	EFRAIN ALEGRE (PLRA)	Yes	HERMES L. R. GODOY (FG)	Small party	Ticket-balancing

Ideological distance between the parties in the presidential ticket

Table 22 – Descriptive statistics of ideological distance by country

	n	1 st quartil	Mean	Median	Minimum	3 rd quartil	Maximun
GENERAL	42	0,95	3,39	3,05	0	5,12	10,19
ARGENTINA	7	2,20	3,96	3,01	0	5,50	9,3
BOLIVIA	2	4,52	5,95	5,95	3,1	7,37	8,8
BRAZIL	18	1,48	2,81	2,085	0,11	3,80	8,4
COLOMBIA	3	2,25	3,11	3,7	0,8	4,26	4,82
ECUADOR	8	0	1,53	0	0	1,62	6,1
PARAGUAY	4	6,14	7,71	7,65	5,36	9,22	10,19

Note. Elaborated by the author.

Legislative seat share of the VP nominee's party

Table 23 – Descriptive statistics on VP nominee's party seat share by country

	n	1 st quartil	Mean	Median	Minimum	3rd quartil	Maximun
GENERAL	48	0,14	4,87	1,75	0	6,83	26,25
ARGENTINA	13	0	0,24	0	0	0	1,17
BOLIVIA	2	0,58	1,16	1,155	0	1,73	2,31
BRAZIL	20	2,24	7,9	6,14	0,19	15,45	17,52
COLOMBIA	2	2,27	3,93	3,935	0,6	5,61	7,27
ECUADOR	7	1,35	3,62	4,16	0	5,01	8,45
PARAGUAY	4	1,25	9,38	5	1,25	13,13	26,25

Note. Elaborated by the author.

Size similarity between presidential and VP-nominating parties (% seat shares)

The analysis pairs the presidential party's legislative seat share with that of the VP-nominating party for each ticket. Pearson's correlation equals $r = 0.112$ (95% CI $[-0.198, 0.402]$, $p = 0.479$), and an OLS regression of VP party size on presidential party size yields $\beta = 0.052$ (SE = 0.073, $p = 0.479$; $R^2 = 0.013$), which indicates no statistically significant linear association. Spearman's rank correlation equals $\rho = 0.295$ ($p = 0.058$), suggesting a weak, marginally positive monotonic association. An ordinal check that bins party size into $\leq 1\%$, 1–5%, 5–10%, and $>10\%$ returns Kendall's $\tau_b = 0.330$, which points to moderate alignment but does not overturn the lack of a robust linear relationship in the raw, untransformed specification.

APPENDIX IV

Classification of the political organizations in South America

To classify the political organization of presidential and vice-presidential candidates, national legislation was first reviewed to identify which actors held the prerogative to nominate candidates for the presidential race at the time of the election. Table 24 lists the political organizations with the power to nominate presidential candidates by country and election.

Using these parameters, the political organizations participating in the presidential competition in each country were coded. In countries where political parties monopolized election participation (e.g., Argentina and Brazil), no external sources were required for classification.

For other cases (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Paraguay), the following procedures were adopted to code political organizations. Electoral records and registers provided by each country's electoral authority were examined. In Bolivia, information on active political organizations was gathered from the Plurinational Electoral Authority (OEP)⁷⁸. In Colombia, records of active and inactive organizations were accessed through the National Electoral Council (CNE)⁷⁹. In Ecuador, the National Electoral Council provided a list of active political parties and movements⁸⁰. In Paraguay, the Superior Court of Electoral Justice (Tribunal Superior de Justicia Electoral de Paraguay) made information on political organizations participating in elections available online⁸¹.

Because the analysis covers elections beginning with democratization, cases arose where official channels did not provide information on inactive political organizations. To address these gaps, data available in Wikipedia archives were consulted. When this source was insufficient, Weeks' (2017, p. 42) framework for differentiating political party groups was employed.

Building on LaPalombara and Weiner's (1966, p. 6) definition of political parties, Weeks (2017, p. 6) proposes a framework to identify organizations that do not qualify as political parties. Finally, if the answer to at least one of the following questions was affirmative,

⁷⁸ Available at: <https://www.oep.org.bo/organizaciones-politicas/>

⁷⁹ Available at: <https://www.cne.gov.co/informacion-sobre-partidos-y-movimientos-politicos>

⁸⁰ Available at: <https://www.cne.gob.ec/organizaciones-politicas-aprobadas-por-el-pleno/>

⁸¹ Available at: <https://www.datos.gov.py/group/tribunal-superior-de-justicia-electoral-tsje>

the organization was classified as something other than a political party. For this study, the questions were adapted as follows:

- I. Did the organization nominate only the presidential ticket in that election?
- II. Did the organization participate only in that specific election?
- III. Did newspapers of the time describe the organization's multiple candidates as independent?
- IV. Was the organization centered around a single individual, with its public activities ending when that individual left?

Table 24 – Types of political organizations in South American electoral systems

Country	Terminology	Codification	Legislation	Elections
Argentina	Partido Político	POLITICAL PARTY	Art. 38°, Constitución de la Nación Argentina (1994) Art. 2°, Ley Organica de los Partidos Politico (Ley 23298/1985)	1983; 1995; 1999; 2003; 2007; 2011; 2015; 2019
Brazil	Partido Político	POLITICAL PARTY	Art. 14, § 3°, inciso V, Constituição Federal (1988) Art. 87, Código Eleitoral (Lei 4737/1965)	1989; 1994; 1998; 2002; 2006; 2010; 2014; 2018; 2022
Bolivia	Partido Político	POLITICAL PARTY	Art. 209, Constitución Política Del Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia (2009) Art. 5°, Ley de Organizaciones Políticas (Ley 1096/2018)	1985; 1989; 1993; 1997; 2002; 2009; 2014; 2019; 2020
	Agrupaciones Ciudadanas	GROUP OF CITIZENS	Art. 223, Constitución Política de la República de Bolivia (1967) Art. 4°, Ley de Agrupaciones Ciudadanas y Pueblos Indigenas (Ley 2771/2004)	1985; 1989; 1993; 1997; 2002; 2009; 2014; 2019; 2020
	Pueblos Indígenas	INDIGENOUS GROUPS	Art. 5°, Ley de Agrupaciones Ciudadanas y Pueblos Indigenas (Ley 2771/2004)	2009; 2014; 2019; 2020
Colombia	Partido Político	POLITICAL PARTY		
	Movimientos Políticos	POLITICAL MOVEMENT	Art. 108, Constitución Política de la República de Colombia (1991)	1994; 1998; 2002; 2006; 2010; 2014; 2018; 2022
	Movimientos Sociales	SOCIAL MOVEMENT		
	Grupos Significativos de Ciudadanos	GROUP OF CITIZENS II		
Ecuador	Partido Político	POLITICAL PARTY	Art. 319, Constitución Política del año 1979 Art. 98, Constitución Política de la República de Ecuador (1998) Art. 112, Constitución de la República del Ecuador (2008)	1979; 1984; 1988; 1992; 1996; 1998; 2002; 2006; 2009; 2013; 2017; 2021
	Movimientos Políticos	POLITICAL MOVEMENT	Art. 94, Ley Orgánica Electoral y de Organizaciones Políticas de la República del Ecuador (Ley 578/2009)	2002; 2006; 2009; 2013; 2017; 2021

Paraguay	Partido Político	POLITICAL PARTY	Art. 125, Constitución Paraguaya de 1992	1993; 1998; 2003; 2008;
	Movimientos Políticos	POLITICAL MOVEMENT	Art. 85, Código Electoral Paraguayo (Ley 834/1996)	2013; 2018

Note. Elaborated by the author.

Regulations for the nomination of independent candidates and public funding for electoral campaigns

Table 25 – Rules for independent candidates by country

Country	Election year	Registration of independent candidates				Public funding for electoral campaigns			
		Are there special conditions for the registration of independent candidates in the election?	Does it require signatures of support?	Does it require a monetary deposit?	Are there additional requirements?	Legislation	Do independent candidates have access to public funding?	Is there a performance threshold for access to public funding?	Legislation
Bolivia	1985	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	-	No	N/A	-
Bolivia	1989	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	-	No	N/A	-
Bolivia	1993	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	-	No	N/A	-
Bolivia	1997	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	-	No	N/A	-
Bolivia	2002	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	Art. 104, CE 1984/1999	No	N/A	-
Bolivia	2009	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	Art. 104, CE 1984/1999	Yes	No	Art. 28, Ley 2771/2004
Bolivia	2014	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	Art. 46; LE 26/2010	Yes	No	Art. 28, Ley 2771/2004
Bolivia	2019	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	Art. 46; LE 26/2010	Yes	No	Arts. 69 e 73, Ley 1096/2018
Bolivia	2020	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	Art. 46; LE 26/2010	Yes	No	Arts. 69 e 73, Ley 1096/2018
Colombia	1994	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Art. 9, Ley 130/1994	Yes	Yes	Art. 13, Ley 130/1994
Colombia	1998	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Art. 9, Ley 130/1994	Yes	Yes	Art. 13, Ley 130/1994
Colombia	2002	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Art. 9, Ley 130/1994	Yes	Yes	Art. 13, Ley 130/1994
Colombia	2006	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Art. 9, Ley 130/1994	Yes	Yes	Art. 13, Ley 130/1994; Arts. 10 e 11, Ley 996/2005
Colombia	2010	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Art. 9, Ley 130/1994	Yes	Yes	Art. 13, Ley 130/1994; Arts. 10 e 11, Ley 996/2005
Colombia	2014	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Art. 9, Ley 130/1994	Yes	Yes	Art. 13, Ley 130/1994; Arts. 10 e 11, Ley 996/2005; Art. 22, Ley 1475/2011

Colombia	2018	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Art. 9, Ley 130/1994	Yes	Yes	Art. 13, Ley 130/1994; Arts. 10 e 11, Ley 996/2005; Art. 22, Ley 1475/2011
Colombia	2022	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Arts. 65 e 73, CE/2020	Yes	Yes	Art. 13, Ley 130/1994; Arts. 10 e 11, Ley 996/2005; Art. 22, Ley 1475/2011
Ecuador	2002	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	-	No	N/A	Art. 60, Ley 196/2000
Ecuador	2006	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	-	Yes	Yes	Art. 53, Ley 3153/2005
Ecuador	2009	Yes	Yes	No	No	Art. 4°, CP/2008-A	Yes	Yes	Art. 53, Ley 3153/2005; Art. 13, CP/2008-A
Ecuador	2013	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	Art. 94, Ley 578/2009	Yes	Yes	Arts. 353 e 355, Ley 578/2009
Ecuador	2017	No	N/A	N/A	N/A		Yes	Yes	Arts. 353 e 355, Ley 578/2009
Ecuador	2021	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	-	Yes	Yes	Arts. 353 e 355, Ley 578/2009
Paraguay	1993	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Arts. 162 e 270, CE 1/1990	No	N/A	Arts. 59, 62 e 63, CE 1/1990
Paraguay	1998	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Art. 86, CE 834/1996	Yes	No	Arts. 276, CE 834/1996
Paraguay	2003	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Art. 86, CE 834/1996	Yes	No	Arts. 276, CE 834/1996
Paraguay	2008	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Art. 86, CE 834/1996	Yes	No	Arts. 276, CE 834/1996
Paraguay	2013	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Art. 86, CE 834/1996	Yes	No	Arts. 276, CE 834/1996
Paraguay	2018	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Art. 86, CE 834/1996	Yes	No	Arts. 276, CE 834/1996

Note. Elaborated by the author.

Classification of the candidates past life

To categorize the personal backgrounds of independent candidates who did not run under political parties, classifications were established based on their previous experience. Each category is explained below:

- a) **Bureaucrat:** Candidates who worked within the administrative structure of the State.
- b) **Business Industry:** Candidates who came from the business sector.
- c) **Financial Sector:** Candidates with a background in the financial sector.
- d) **Intellectual:** Candidates with an academic trajectory, such as professors, writers, or university rectors.
- e) **Judiciary:** Candidates from the legal field, such as judges or prosecutors.
- f) **Media Sector:** Candidates who worked in media or communications.
- g) **Military:** Candidates who are or were active or retired members of the armed forces.
- h) **Political Activist:** Candidates who engaged in social or political movements or advocated for political causes.
- i) **Political Office:** Candidates who held elected positions or high-ranking roles in national or subnational governments.
- j) **Productive Sector:** Candidates who came from the productive sector, such as industry or agribusiness.
- k) **Public Figure:** Media-oriented candidates, such as artists, singers, actors, or digital influencers.
- l) **Religious Leadership:** Candidates who are religious leaders, such as pastors, priests, or church leaders.
- m) **Self-Employed Professional:** Candidates who worked in independent professions, offering specialized services autonomously, such as lawyers, doctors, or dentists.

Descriptive statistics

Table 26 shows the descriptive statistics for each variable in the model. Most variables are categorical, except for Party Institutionalization Index, Index of Constraints on Independent Candidacies, Democracy Age, Economic Growth, Inflation, and ENPP.

Most variables range between 0 and 1, but those outside this range required normalization to fit the statistical models. The Index of Constraints on Independent Candidacies was standardized using min-max normalization due to its ordinal nature. The continuous

variables Democracy Age, Economic Growth, and Inflation were likewise normalized, bringing them within the 0-to-1 scale.

Table 26 – Descriptive statistics of regression model variables: selection of independent VP candidates

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Independent VP Cand.	265	0.411	0.493	0	1
Party Inst. Index (PII)	265	0.512	0.138	0.243	0.771
Index Const. (ICIC)	265	1.577	1.042	0	3
Pres. Indep. Cand.	265	0.366	0.483	0	1
Mandate Interrup.	265	0.162	0.369	0	1
Democracy Age	265	28.970	15.864	3	65
Incumbent	265	0.257	0.438	0	1
Economic Growth	265	2.699	2.369	-2.727	5.707
Inflation	265	843.668	3,108.971	-2.420	12,338.620

Note. Elaborated by the author.

Adjusting independent variables to the model

Residual analysis for continuous independent variables

Residual analysis evaluates how well the model fits the data. Table 27 summarizes the minimum, maximum, mean, median, and first and third quartiles of deviance and Pearson residuals. The logistic regression model (Model 1) from Section 4.7 (Results) was used as reference.

Table 27 – Residuals analysis

	Min.	1st Qu.	Median	Mean	3rd Qu.	Max.
Deviance Residuals	-2.8853	-0.4044	-0.2869	-0.0555	0.35455	2.43054
Pearson Residuals	-7.9523	-0.2919	-0.205	-0.0704	0.2547	4.26355

Note. Elaborated by the author.

The deviance residuals, which measure the overall discrepancy between observed and predicted values, ranged from -2.88 to 2.43. The median deviance residual was -0.28, indicating a good average alignment between the observed data and the model.

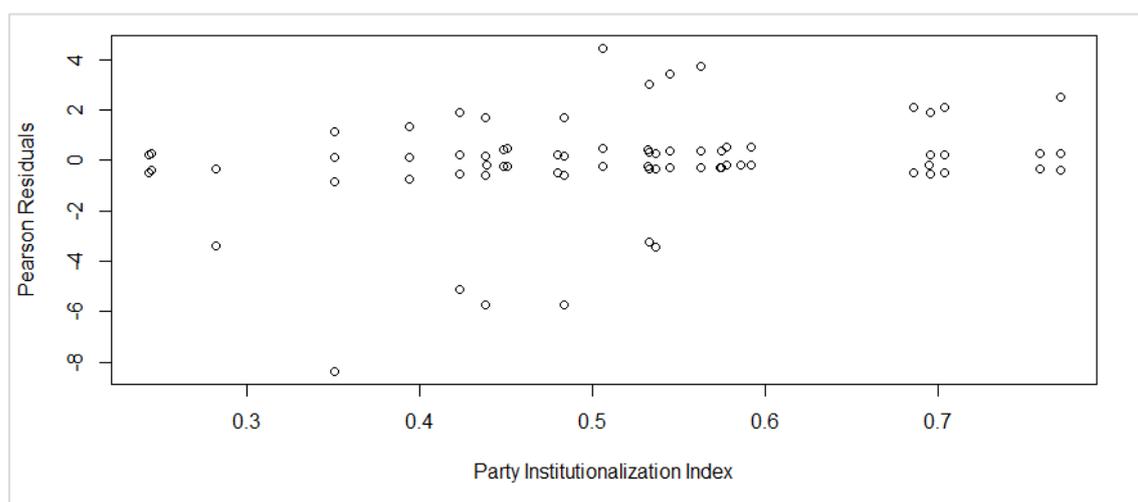
The Pearson residuals, which highlight observation-specific discrepancies, ranged from -7.95 to 4.26. The mean Pearson residual was -0.07, showing adequate model calibration

relative to the average trend. The third quartile (Q3) was 0.25, meaning 75% of the Pearson residuals were below this value, which demonstrates good agreement with the central tendency.

In Figure 19, the Pearson residuals are plotted against the Party Institutionalization Index, the only continuous variable in the model. This variable should not exhibit systematic patterns, as such patterns would suggest that the model fails to capture its relationship with the response variable. The scatter plot confirms the absence of systematic patterns in the residuals.

The results from Table 27 and Figure 19 indicate that Model 1 effectively explains variability in the dependent variable (Independent VP Candidate). The residuals approximate a normal distribution and show no signs of heteroscedasticity or systematic bias.

Figure 19 – Pearson residuals and party institutionalization index



Note. Elaborated by the author.

Contingency Table Analysis for Categorical Independent Variables

A chi-square test was applied to assess the association between the categorical independent variables and the dependent variable, which is also categorical. Table 28 presents the contingency table with chi-square values, degrees of freedom, and p-values.

Table 28 – Contingency table

Variable	X ²	Degrees of Freedom	P-value
Index of Constraints on Independent Candidacies (ICIC)	2.57	3	0.4626
Presidential Independent Candidate (PII)	165.23	1	0.0000
Mandate Interruption	7.81	1	0.0052

Note. Elaborated by the author.

The results show no significant association between the dependent variable and the Index of Constraints on Independent Candidacies, as the p-value exceeds 0.05. However, the predictors Presidential Independent Candidate and Mandate Interruption exhibit statistically significant associations with the dependent variable (Independent VP Candidate). These findings confirm the suitability of these two variables for the model.

Heterogeneity Test

Based on the contingency table results, which showed no statistically significant association between the dependent variable and the Index of Constraints, a heterogeneity test was conducted to evaluate whether adding explanatory variables significantly improves the model's fit.

Table 29 – Results of the Heterogeneity Test

Terms	Degrees of Freedom	Deviance	Residual Degrees of Freedom	Residual Deviance	P-value
NULL			264.00	358.99	
Party Institutionalization Index (PII)	1.00	31.38	263.00	327.60	0.0000
Index of Constraints on Independent Candidacies (ICIC)	1.00	6.06	262.00	321.54	0.0138
Presidential Independent Candidate	1.00	160.82	261.00	160.72	0.0000
Mandate Interruption	1.00	0.25	260.00	160.48	0.6203
Democracy Age	1.00	6.85	259.00	153.62	0.0088
Incumbent	1.00	1.09	258.00	152.53	0.2955
Economic Growth	1.00	0.55	257.00	151.98	0.4578
Inflation	1.00	0.32	256.00	151.66	0.5714

Note. Elaborated by the author.

Table 29 presents the heterogeneity test results. The first row represents the null model without explanatory variables, and each subsequent row shows the sequential addition of a variable. The deviance value and corresponding p-value indicate whether including a variable improves the model's fit. The results show that the first three explanatory variables (Party Institutionalization Index, Index of Constraints, and Presidential Independent Candidate) significantly improve the model's fit, as their p-values are below 0.05. In contrast, Mandate Interruption was the only variable with a p-value above 0.1. Among the control variables, Democracy Age showed a statistically significant p-value ($p < 0.01$), while the others had low p-values. However, this evaluation holds limited relevance for control variables, whose primary purpose is to stabilize the model.

Although the Index of Constraints did not show statistical significance in the contingency table analysis, it resulted in a significant p-value in the heterogeneity test, indicating its relevance to the model. This contradiction arises from the different purposes of the two techniques. The heterogeneity test assesses the joint contribution of variables to the model, while the chi-square test evaluates the isolated relationship between each variable and the dependent variable. A variable's effect may change when combined with other variables in the model. Therefore, interpreting these results jointly is essential to understanding the role of each variable in the model.

Model fitting and estimation

Table 30 presents the statistical models estimated for the selection of an independent vice-presidential candidate. Models 1, 2, and 3 use binary logistic regression, while Model 4 applies a fixed-effects approach. Model 1 includes the Party Institutionalization Index (PII) alongside all predictors and control variables described in Chapter 3. Model 2 replaces the institutional index with a survey-based variable measuring voter distrust in political parties. Model 3 replicates the baseline model without control variables. Model 4 reintroduces the institutional index in a multilevel specification to account for unobserved country- and time-level variation.

The survey-based variable was constructed using Latinobarómetro data from 1995 to 2018. The question "How much confidence do you have in political parties?", ranging from 1 ("A lot of confidence") to 4 ("No confidence"), was used. For each country-year observation, the mean level of party distrust was calculated using responses from the year prior to each presidential election. If increasing voter disaffection influences candidates to select independent

running mates, we should expect this variable to be positively associated with the dependent outcome.

The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was calculated for all models, and the results showed acceptable values (< 2) (Figueiredo Filho, Silva & Domingos, 2015), ruling out multicollinearity. Regarding model fit, Model 2, with the distrust variable, performs substantially worse than the baseline specification. Its AIC value is 213.034, compared to 169.657 in Model 1. Moreover, the coefficient for party distrust is negative and statistically insignificant. These results suggest that structural indicators of party system strength, captured by the institutional index (PII), offer a more consistent and theoretically grounded explanation for the nomination of independent running mates than short-term attitudinal shifts captured by survey responses.

Among the three models with comparable specifications (Models 1, 3, and 4), the model fit statistics show minimal variation. The Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) values are 169.657, 170.477, and 173.657, respectively, while log-likelihood values also remain close. These small differences indicate that all three models fit the data similarly, suggesting that the choice between including control variables or adopting a multilevel structure does not substantially alter overall model performance.

Table 30 – Supplementary regressions model results for selecting independent VP candidates

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
(Intercept)	1.157 (1.416)	31.139 (63.845)	1.211 (1.349)	1.157 (1.416)
Party Inst. Index (PII)	-4.770** (2.139)		-4.669** (1.989)	-4.770** (2.139)
Parties Distrust		-0.407 (0.293)		
Index Const. (ICIC)	-2.269** (0.901)	-1.585 (0.993)	-1.802** (0.823)	-2.269** (0.901)
Pres. Indep. Cand.	4.582*** (0.520)	4.504*** (0.569)	4.641*** (0.508)	4.582*** (0.520)
Mandate Interrup.	0.741 (0.622)	0.937 (0.721)	0.274 (0.548)	0.741 (0.622)
Democracy Age	0.639** (0.319)	0.833* (0.434)		0.639** (0.319)
Incumbent	0.864 (0.725)	0.496 (0.702)		0.864 (0.725)
Economic Growth	-0.313 (0.338)	-0.624* (0.358)		-0.313 (0.338)
Inflation	-0.234 (0.415)	120.423 (235.472)		-0.234 (0.415)
Observations	265	212	265	265
Log Likelihood	-75.828	-66.733	-80.238	-75.828
Akaike Inf. Crit.	169.657	151.466	170.477	173.657
Bayesian Inf. Crit.				213.034

Note: * p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01

Note. Elaborated by the author.

Odds ratios calculus

Odds ratios provide a more intuitive interpretation of logistic regression results, especially when the dependent variable is binary. In this case, the dependent variable is coded as 1 when the vice-presidential candidate is independent and 0 otherwise. This transformation expresses how each independent variable affects the likelihood of selecting an independent running mate.

Table 31 presents the odds ratios estimated in two binary logistic regression models: Model 1 includes the full set of controls, while Model 2 excludes them. For variables with statistically significant coefficients and expected direction, Table 32 reports the 95%

confidence intervals and the change in odds resulting from a 0.1 standard deviation decrease in the predictor for selected variables.

Table 31 – Odds ratios for selecting independent VP candidates

	Logit W/C (1)	Logit (2)
(Intercept)	3.180 (4.503)	1.211 (1.349)
Party Inst. Index (PII)	0.008** (0.018)	-4.669** (1.989)
Index Const. (ICIC)	0.103** (0.093)	-1.802** (0.823)
Pres. Indep. Cand.	97.755*** (50.823)	4.641*** (0.508)
Mandate Interrup.	2.098 (1.304)	0.274 (0.548)
Democracy Age	1.895** (0.605)	
Incumbent	2.372 (1.719)	
Economic Growth	0.732 (0.247)	
Inflation	0.791 (0.328)	
Observations	265	265
Log Likelihood	-75.828	-80.238
Akaike Inf. Crit.	169.657	170.477

Note: * p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01

Note. Elaborated by the author.

The Party Institutionalization Index (PII) shows a strong and statistically significant inverse association with the outcome (odds ratio = 0.0085; 95% CI: [0.0001, 0.5326]; $p = 0.0258$). Substantively, a 0.1 standard deviation decrease in the PII increases the odds of selecting an independent vice-presidential candidate by approximately 61.1%. The Index of Constraints on Independent Candidacies (ICIC) also displays a significant negative effect (odds ratio = 0.1034; 95% CI: [0.0163, 0.5692]; $p = 0.0118$), with a 0.1 standard deviation decrease associated with a 25.5% increase in the odds. Lastly, the variable Presidential Independent Candidate has a highly significant and sizable effect: when the presidential candidate is independent, the odds of selecting an independent running mate are nearly 98 times greater

(odds ratio = 97.75; 95% CI: [37.99, 296.83]; $p < 0.001$). Since this variable is binary, no standardized marginal effect is reported.

Table 32 – Confidence intervals and marginal effects for selected odds ratios

	Party Inst. Index (PII)	Index Const. (ICIC)	Pres. Indep. Cand
Odds Ratio	0,0085	0,1034	97,7546
Standard Error	2,1391	0,9007	0,5199
z-value	-2,2298	-2,5187	8,8140
p-value	0,0258	0,0118	0,0000
95% CI (Lower Bound)	0,0001	0,0163	37,9874
95% CI (Upper Bound)	0,5326	0,5692	296,8337
Odds Ratio for - 0.1 SD Change	1,6112	1,2547	
Odds Change (%) for - 0.1 SD	+61.1%	+25.5%	
Odds Change (%) for + 1 Unit	-99.2%	-89.7%	
Odds Ratio Change (%) – Dummy Variable			9675,5%

Note. Elaborated by the author.