

Descriptive Political Representation of Latin Americans in Spanish Local Politics: Demographic Concentration, Political Opportunities, and Parties' Inclusiveness

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Abstract

Latin Americans represent one of the most sizable migrant communities in Spain. Yet, unlike other minority groups, they count with longer migration tradition, linguistic and cultural similarities with the Spanish population, and easier access to Spanish nationality. Drawing on original data covering a large number of candidates ($N = 5,055$), this article examines whether this apparently favorable configuration guarantees the nomination of candidates from this minority group at local elections in municipalities with strong demographic presence of Latin American residents. Our findings indicate that this group is still underrepresented in Spanish politics. Few Latin American candidates are fielded by political parties, and even fewer (<2%) manage to achieve elected office. To interpret these results, we examine the extent to which Spanish parties field minority candidates. We show that while some parties are proactively including these candidates, only few nominate them in secure positions of the electoral lists and that Spanish parties' inclusiveness does not seem to be aligned with Latin American voters' partisan preferences.

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