Country: Guatemala

Years: 1945-1950

Head of Government: Juan José Arévalo Bermejo

Ideology: left

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Arévalo’s party as PAR (Partido Acción Revolucionaria). DPI does not identify party ideology. Huber and Stephens do not identify party ideology. Di Tella describes Bermejo as an exiled teacher “with socialist ideas” who “started a program of radical reforms…in a climate of shared power between the military and a group of quite leftist intellectuals” (2004: 124). Political Handbook of the World (2005-2006) corroborates, writing, “Led initially by President Juan José Arevalo and then by Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán, the progressive movement was aborted in 1954 by rightist elements under Col. Carlos Castillo Armas.” Perspective monde (2019) and World Statesmen (2019) corroborate party affiliation as PAR and identify the party as leftist.

Years: 1951-1953

Head of Government: Jacobo Árbenz Guzmán

Ideology: left

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Árbenz Guzmán’s party as PAR (Partido Acción Revolucionaria). DPI does not identify party ideology. Huber and Stephens do not identify party ideology. Encyclopedia Britannica describes Árbenz as a president “whose nationalistic economic and social reforms alienated conservative landowners [and] conservative elements in the army”. He was supported by left-wing political parties, “including the Guatemalan Communist Party”. Political Handbook of the World (2005-2006) corroborates, writing, “Led initially by President Juan José Arevalo and then by Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán, the progressive movement was aborted in 1954 by rightist elements under Col. Carlos Castillo Armas.” Perspective monde (2019) and World Statesmen (2019) corroborate party affiliation as PAR and identify the party as leftist.

Years: 1954-1956

Head of Government: Carlos Castillo Armas

Ideology: right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Castillo Armas’ party as none. Di Tella identifies Armas’s party as Movimiento de Liberación Nacional (2014: 124). Huber and Stephens identify party’s ideology as rightist (2016: 15). Manzano (2017) also codes Castillo Armas as rightist. Political Handbook of the World (2005-2006) corroborates, writing, “Led initially by President Juan José Arevalo and then by Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán, the progressive movement was aborted in 1954 by rightist elements under Col. Carlos Castillo Armas. The stated reason for the coup was the elimination of Communist influence, Castillo Armas formally dedicating his government to this end until his assassination in 1957.” Perspective monde (2019) identifies MLN as rightist. Lentz (1994: 343) writes, “In June of 1954 [Castillo Armas] led an invasion of Guatemala that was supported by the United States Central Intelligence Agency. Arbenz was forced to resign, and Castillo continued the revolt against his successor, Colonel Carlos Enrique Díaz.” Lentz (342) previously describes the ouster of Arbenz as a “right-wing military coup” and a “right-wing revolt.” Lentz (343) also writes, “[Castillo Armas] was a vehement anti-Communist and purged the government and unions of those suspected of leftist sympathies.”

Years: 1957

Head of Government: Guillermo Flores Avendaño

Ideology: Right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Avendaño’s party as none. World Statesmen (2019) identifies Avendaño’s affiliation as Movimiento de Liberación Nacional de Guatemala (National Liberation Movement of Guatemala, MLN) and identifies the party as authoritarian far-right. Manzano (2017) also codes Avendaño as rightist. Perspective monde (2019) identifies the MLN as rightist. In V-Party (2020), 4 experts identify MLN’s ideology as “Far-right” (3.429) in 1970.

Years: 1958-1962

Head of Government: José Miguel Ramón Ydígoras Fuentes

Ideology: Right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHILSOLS identifies Ydígoras Fuentes’ party as PRDN (Partido Reconciliacion Democratica Nacional). DPI does not identify party ideology. Huber and Stephens do not identify ideology. Perspective monde (2019) and World Statesmen (2019) corroborate party affiliation as PRDN and identify the party as rightist. Political Handbook of the World (2005-2006) describes Ydígoras’s economic interests as conservative: “The PID (*Partido Institucional Democrático*) was formed in 1965 as a vehicle of conservative business interests led by former president Ydígoras Fuentes.” Lentz (1994: 344) writes, “Ydígoras led a Guatemalan exile group in opposition to Arbenz’s government and supported Carlos Castillo Armas’s rebellion in June of 1954,” which Lentz previously identified as right-wing.

Years: 1963-1965

Head of Government: Alfredo Enrique Peralta Azurdia

Ideology: right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS does not identify party. The University of Minnesota’s Human Rights Library identifies Peralta Azurdia’s party as the center-right PID (Partido Institucional Democrática) (1997). Huber and Stephens identify party ideology as rightist (2016: 15). Manzano (2017) codes Peralta as right. Political Handbook of the World (2005-2006) identifies Peralta Azurdia as right-wing. Perspective monde (2019) corroborates party affiliation as PID and identifies the party as rightist. Lentz (1994: 344-345) writes that Peralta Azurdia “led a military coup to oust Ydígoras on April 1, 1963, to prevent former president Juan José Arévalo from returning to power.” Lentz also writes, “Peralta Azurdia was the presidential candidate of the right-wing National Liberation Movement in 1978.”

Years: 1966-1969

Head of Government: Julio César Méndez Montenegro

Ideology: right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS does not identify party. The University of Minnesota’s Human Rights Library identifies Mendez Montenegro’s party as the PR (Partido Revolucionario) (1997). Huber and Stephens identify party ideology as rightist (2016: 15). Perspective monde (2019) corroborates party affiliation as PR but identifies the party as leftist. World Statesmen (2019) corroborates party affiliation as PR and identifies the party as conservative from 1967 onward.

Years: 1970-1973

Head of Government: Carlos Manuel Arana Osorio

Ideology: right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS does not identify party. Di Tella identifies Arana Osorio’s party as Partido Institucional Democrático (PID) (2004: 124). Huber and Stephens identify party as rightist (2016: 15). Political Handbook of the World (2005-2006) identifies the PID as rightist: “The PID (*Partido Institucional Democrático*) was formed in 1965 as a vehicle of conservative business interests led by former president Ydígoras Fuentes.” Perspective monde (2019) identifies party affiliation as Movimiento de Liberación Nacional (MLN) / Partido Institucional Democrático (PID) and identifies the parties as rightist. Lentz (1994: 345) writes that Araña Osorio “returned to Guatemala in 1970 to accept the presidential nomination of the rightist National Liberation Movement.” As president, “He initiated stringent censorship and curfew requirements, and right-wing death squads murdered many leftist-sympathizers and leaders of the democratic opposition.” World Statesmen (2019) identifies party affiliation as MLN and identifies the party as authoritarian far-right.

Years: 1974-1977

Head of Government: Kjell Eugenio Laugerud García

Ideology: right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS does not identify party. The University of Minnesota’s Human Rights Library identifies Laugerud García’s party as PID (Partido Institucional Democrática) (1997). Huber and Stephens identify party ideology as rightist (2016: 15). Political Handbook of the World (2005-2006) identifies the PID as rightist: “The PID (*Partido Institucional Democrático*) was formed in 1965 as a vehicle of conservative business interests led by former president Ydígoras Fuentes.” Political Handbook also identifies Laugerud García as “the candidate of the ruling right-wing coalition” in 1974. Perspective monde (2019) identifies party affiliation as Movimiento de Liberación Nacional (MLN) / Partido Institucional Democrático (PID) and identifies the parties as rightist. Lentz (1994: 345) identifies Laugerud García as Araña Osorio’s “hand-picked successor.” World Statesmen (2019) corroborates party affiliation as MLN/PID and identifies MLN as authoritarian far-right and PID as center-right.

Years: 1978-1981

Head of Government: Fernando Romeo Lucas García

Ideology: right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS does not identify party. The University of Minnesota’s Human Rights Library identifies Lucas García’s party as PID (Partido Institucional Democrática) (1997). Huber and Stephens identify party ideology as rightist (2016: 15). Political Handbook of the World (2005-2006) identifies the PID as rightist: “The PID (*Partido Institucional Democrático*) was formed in 1965 as a vehicle of conservative business interests led by former president Ydígoras Fuentes.” Political Handbook also identifies Lucas García as center-right. Perspective monde (2019) identifies party affiliation as Partido Democrático Institucional (PID) / Partido Revolucionario (PR) / Central Organizada Aranista and identifies the parties as center-right. World Statesmen (2019) corroborates party affiliation as PID/PR and identifies PID as center-right and PR as conservative from 1967.

Years: 1982

Head of Government: José Efraín Ríos Montt

Ideology: right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS does not identify party. The University of Minnesota’s Human Rights Library identifies Ríos Montt’s party as PDCG (Partido Democracia Cristiana Guatemalateca) (1997). Huber and Stephens identify party ideology as rightist (2016: 15). Manzano (2017) codes Ríos as right. Perspective monde (2019) identifies the PDCG as center-right. Lentz (1994: 346) writes that Ríos Montt “was considered a moderate and opposed the administration of President Carlos Araña Osorio.” Lentz also writes, “Ríos Montt attempted a political comeback in 1990 as a presidential nominee of a right-wing coalition, but his candidacy was declared invalid because of his involvement in the coup in 1982.”

Years: 1983-1985

Head of Government: Óscar Humberto Mejía Victores

Ideology: Right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Mejía Victores’s party as none. Manzano (2017) codes Victores as right. Rulers.org describes Victores as “a member of the ‘old guard’ – a supporter of former president Fernando Romeo Lucas García, whose government had been toppled in March 1982. Mejía was described by local politicians as a ‘pure’ military man, political unsophisticated and clumsy at public relations. He was a strong anti-Communist, highly critical of the Nicaraguan government, and spoke out on several occasions against the Contadora peace-seeking proposals.” Fernando Romeo Lucas García is identified as rightist.

Years: 1986-1990

Head of Government: Marco Vinicio Cerezo Arévalo

Ideology: right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Cerezo’s party as PDCG (Partido Democracia Cristiana Guatemalteca). DPI identifies PDCG’s ideology as rightist. Political Handbook of the World (2015) writes that the PDCG was “founded in 1955 as a centrist party of liberal and reformist views.” Huber and Stephens identify party ideology as rightist (2016: 15). Perspective monde (2019) corroborates party affiliation as PDCG and identifies the party as center-right. World Statesmen (2019) corroborates party affiliation as PDCG but identifies the party as center-left. In V-Party (2020), 4 experts identify PDCG’s ideology as “Center” (-0.051) in 1985 and 1990. In V-Party (2020), 4 experts identify “negligible visible disagreement” in PDCG in 1985.

Years: 1991-1992

Head of Government: Jorge Antonio Serrano Elías

Ideology: right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Serrano Elías’ party as MAS (Movimiento de Acción Solidaria). DPI does not identify party ideology. Huber and Stephens identify party ideology as Christian rightist (2016: 15). Perspective monde (2019) and World Statesmen (2019) corroborate party affiliation as MAS. Lentz (1994: 347) describes Serrano Elías as “a fundamentalist Christian” and writes, “He was a founder of the Solidarity Action Movement in 1990 and became the party’s presidential candidate when Ríos Montt’s candidacy was disqualified. Serrano led a coalition of right-wing parties to victory and took office on January 14, 1991.” In V-Party (2020), 4 experts identify MAS’s ideology as “Center-right” (1.032) in 1990.

Years: 1993-1995

Head of Government: José Ramiro de León Carpio

Ideology: Right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies León Carpio as non-party. World Statesmen (2019) and The Statesmen’s Yearbook (2016) identify him as non-party, and Perspective Monde (2019) identifies him as independent. Fry (Historical Dictionary: 2018) states that de León first became involved in politics as a member of the Movimiento de Liberación Nacional de Guatemala (National Liberation Movement of Guatemala, MLN). World Statesmen (2019) identifies MLN as far-right. Fry also mentions that later, De León Carpio “helped found the Unión del Centro Nacional (UCN) party”. Huber and Stephens (2016) code the UCN as right.

Years: 1996-1999

Head of Government: Álvaro Enrique Arzú Irigoyen

Ideology: right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Arzú Irigoyen’s party as PAN (Partido de Avanzada Nacional). DPI identifies PAN’s ideology as rightist. Political Handbook of the World (20015) elaborates, mentioning “a coalition of other rightist groups, among them the second-ranked National Advancement Party (*Partido de Avanzada* Nacional—PAN)”. Huber and Stephens concur (2016: 15). Perspective monde (2019) and World Statesmen (2019) corroborate party affiliation as PAN and identify the party as rightist. In V-Party (2020), 4 experts identify PAN’s ideology as “Right” (1.684) in 1995 and 1999.

Years: 2000-2003

Head of Government: Alfonso Antonio Portillo Cabrera

Ideology: right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Portillo’s party as FRG (Frente Republicano Guatemalteco). DPI identifies FRG’s ideology as rightist. Political Handbook of the World (2015) elaborates, writing that “the right-wing FRG” was “initially excluded from the new congressional directorate by a coalition of other rightist groups.” Huber and Stephens identify party as personalist (2016: 15). Perspective monde (2019) and World Statesmen (2019) corroborate party affiliation as FRG and identify the party as rightist. In V-Party (2020), 4 experts identify FRG’s ideology as “Center-right” (1.041) in 1999 and “Right” (2.125) in 2003.

Years: 2004-2007

Head of Government: Óscar José Rafael Berger Perdomo

Ideology: right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Berger’s party as GANA (Gran Alianza Nacional). DPI identifies GANA’s ideology as rightist, however, Huber and Stephens identify party ideology as centrist (2016: 15). Political Handbook of the World (2015) writes, “Launched in early 2003, the GANA is a center-right grouping that presidential aspirant Oscar Berger joined following his defection from the PAN.” Perspective monde (2019) corroborates party affiliation as GANA and identifies the party as centrist. World Statesmen (2019) identifies party affiliation as PSN and then GANA from 2005. PSN is identified as conservative, and GANA is identified as center-right. DPI identifies PAN’s ideology as rightist. Political Handbook of the World (20015) elaborates, mentioning “a coalition of other rightist groups, among them the second-ranked National Advancement Party (*Partido de Avanzada* Nacional—PAN)”. Huber and Stephens concur (2016: 15). Perspective monde (2019) and World Statesmen (2019) identify PAN as rightist. In V-Party (2020), 4 experts identify GANA’s ideology as “Center-right” (1.049) in 2003 and 2007. In V-Party (2020), 4 experts identify “virtually no visible disagreement” in GANA in 2003 and “negligible visible disagreement” in GANA in 2007.

Years: 2008-2011

Head of Government: Álvaro Colom Caballeros

Ideology: left

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Colom Caballeros’ party as UNE (Unidad Nacional de la Esperanza). DPI identifies UNE’s ideology as leftist. Political Handbook of the World (2015) elaborates, writing, “Center-left UNE was founded in 2001 by ANN (below) secessionist Álvaro Colom Caballeros, nephew of a leftist Guatemala City mayor killed in 1979.” Political Handbook also mentions “President Colom’s center-left agenda.” Huber and Stephens identify ideology as Christian leftist (2016: 15). Perspective monde (2019) corroborates party affiliation as UNE and identifies the party as leftist. World Statesmen (2019) corroborates party affiliation as UNE and identifies the party as social democratic. In V-Party (2020), 4 experts identify UNE’s ideology as “Center-left” (-0.926) in 2007.

Years: 2012-2014

Head of Government: Otto Fernando Pérez Molina

Ideology: right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS does not identify head of government. Political Handbook of the World identifies Molina’s party as PP (Partido Patriota) (2015: 567). DPI identifies PP’s ideology as rightist. Political Handbook of the World (2015) elaborates, writing that Molina was the party’s principal founder and referencing the PP as “his new center-right party.” Huber and Stephens do not identify party ideology. Perspective monde (2019) and World Statesmen (2019) corroborate party affiliation as PP and identify the party as rightist. In V-Party (2020), 4 experts identify PP’s ideology as “Right” (2.453) in 2011.

Years: 2015

Head of Government: Héctor Alejandro Baltazar Maldonado Aguirre

Ideology: Right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS does not identify head of government. World Statesmen (2019) identifies Maldonado as non-party, and Perspective Monde (2019) identifies him as independent. The Barcelona Centre for International Affairs states that he was a member of the National Liberation Movement (MLN) in the 1960s, and later in 2001, reactivated the Unionist Party (PU), described as a “center-right” group. World Statesmen (2019) identifies MLN as far-right. Perspective monde (2019) identifies MLN as rightist. Huber and Stephens (2016: 15) identifies MLN as rightist.

Years: 2016-2019

Head of Government: Jimmy Ernesto Morales Cabrera

Ideology: right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. The Independent identifies Morales’ party as Frente de Convergencia Nacional (FCN) (2016). DPI identifies FCN’s party ideology as rightist. Political Handbook of the World does not provide any information on party’s ideology. Huber and Stephens do not identify ideology. Perspective monde (2019) corroborates party affiliation as FCN but identifies the party as centrist. World Statesmen (2019) corroborates party affiliation as FCN and identifies the party as conservative. In the Global Party Survey 2019, 5 experts identify the average left-right (0-10) score of FCN as 7.5. In V-Party (2020), 4 experts identify FCN’s ideology as “Right” (2.463) in 2015 and 2019.

Years: 2020

Head of Government: Alejandro Giammattei

Ideology: rightist

Description: Hog does not identify ideology. Varieties of Democracy identifies party affiliation as Let’s Go for a Different Guatemala (Vamos) (Vamos por una Guatemala Diferente). World Statesmen (2021) corroborates party affiliation as Vamos and describes the party as “center-right” and “economic liberal”. Perspective Monde (2021) corroborates party affiliation as Vamos and identifies the party as rightist. In V-Party (2020), 4 experts identify Vamos’s ideology as “Right” (2.463) in 2019. DPI identifies Vamos’s ideology as rightist.

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