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**Ecuador** ([Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en) [Template:Respell](/wiki/Template:Respell), [Template:IPA-es](/wiki/Template:IPA-es)), officially the **Republic of Ecuador** ([Template:Lang-es](/wiki/Template:Lang-es), which literally translates as "Republic of the [Equator](/wiki/Equator)"), is a [representative democratic](/wiki/Representative_democratic) republic in northwestern [South America](/wiki/South_America), bordered by [Colombia](/wiki/Colombia) on the north, [Peru](/wiki/Peru) on the east and south, and the Pacific Ocean to the west. Ecuador also includes the [Galápagos Islands](/wiki/Galápagos_Islands) in the Pacific, about [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) west of the mainland.

What is now Ecuador was home to a variety of [Amerindian](/wiki/Indigenous_peoples_in_Ecuador) groups that were gradually incorporated into the [Inca Empire](/wiki/Inca_Empire) during the 15th century. The territory was [colonized by Spain](/wiki/Spanish_colonization_of_the_Americas) during the 16th century, achieving independence in 1820 as part of [Gran Colombia](/wiki/Gran_Colombia), from which it emerged as its own sovereign state in 1830. The legacy of both empires is reflected in Ecuador's ethnically diverse population, with most of its 15.2 million people being [mestizos](/wiki/Mestizos), followed by large minorities of European, [Amerindian](/wiki/Indigenous_people_of_Ecuador), and [African](/wiki/Afro-Ecuadorian) descendants.

[Spanish](/wiki/Spanish_language) is the official language and is spoken by a majority of the population, though 13 Amerindian languages are also recognized, including [Quichua](/wiki/Quichua_language) and [Shuar](/wiki/Shuar_language). The capital city is [Quito](/wiki/Quito), while the largest city is [Guayaquil](/wiki/Guayaquil). In reflection of the country's rich cultural heritage, the historical center of Quito was declared a UNESCO [World Heritage Site](/wiki/World_Heritage_Site) in 1978.[[1]](#cite_note-1)[[2]](#cite_note-2) [Cuenca](/wiki/Cuenca,_Ecuador), the third-largest city, was also declared a [World Heritage Site](/wiki/World_Heritage_Site) in 1999 as an outstanding example of a planned, inland Spanish-style colonial city in the Americas.[[3]](#cite_note-3) Ecuador has a [developing economy](/wiki/Developing_economy) that is highly dependent on commodities, namely petroleum and agricultural products. The country is classified as a medium-income country. Ecuador is a democratic [presidential](/wiki/Presidential_system) republic. The new constitution of 2008 is the first in the world to recognize legally enforceable [Rights of Nature](/wiki/Rights_of_Nature), or ecosystem rights.[[4]](#cite_note-4) Ecuador is also known for its rich ecology, hosting many [endemic](/wiki/Endemism) plants and animals, such as those of the [Galápagos Islands](/wiki/Galápagos_Islands). It is one of 17 [megadiverse countries](/wiki/Megadiverse_countries) in the world.[[5]](#cite_note-5)[[6]](#cite_note-6)

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## History[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

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### Pre-Inca era[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

Before the arrival of the [Incas](/wiki/Incas), the area was settled by various peoples. Some likely sailed to Ecuador by [rafts](/wiki/Raft) from [Central America](/wiki/Central_America), others came to Ecuador via the Amazon tributaries, others descended from northern [South America](/wiki/South_America), and others ascended from the southern part of South America through the Andes or by sailing on rafts. They developed different languages while emerging as unique ethnic groups.

Even though their languages were unrelated, these groups developed similar cultures because they lived in the same environment. The people of the coast developed a fishing, hunting, and gathering culture; the people of the highland Andes developed a sedentary agricultural way of life; and the people of the Amazon basin developed a nomadic hunting and gathering way of life.

Over time these groups began to interact and intermingle with each other so that groups of families in one area became one community or tribe, with a similar language and culture. Many civilizations arose in Ecuador, such as the [Valdivia Culture](/wiki/Valdivia_Culture) and [Machalilla Culture](/wiki/Machalilla_Culture) on the coast, the [Quitus](/wiki/Quitus) (near present-day Quito), and the [Cañari](/wiki/Cañari) (near present-day [Cuenca](/wiki/Cuenca,_Ecuador)). Each civilization developed its own distinctive architecture, pottery, and religious interests.

In the highland Andes mountains, where life was more sedentary, groups of tribes cooperated and formed villages; thus, the first nations based on agricultural resources and the domestication of animals were formed. Eventually, through wars and marriage alliances of their leaders, a group of nations formed confederations. One region was consolidated under a confederation called the [Shyris](/wiki/Shyris), which exercised organized trading and bartering between the different regions. Its political and military power was under the rule of the Duchicela blood line.

### Inca era[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

When the [Incas](/wiki/Incas) arrived, they found that these confederations were so developed that it took the Incas two generations of rulers - [Topa Inca Yupanqui](/wiki/Topa_Inca_Yupanqui) and [Huayna Capac](/wiki/Huayna_Capac) - to absorb them into the [Inca Empire](/wiki/Inca_Empire). The native confederations that gave them the most problems were deported to distant areas of Peru, Bolivia, and north Argentina. Similarly, a number of loyal Inca subjects from Peru and Bolivia were brought to Ecuador to prevent rebellion. Thus, the region of highland Ecuador became part of the [Inca Empire](/wiki/Inca_Empire) in 1463 sharing the same language.

In contrast, when the Incas made incursions into coastal Ecuador and the eastern Amazon jungles of Ecuador, they found both the environment and indigenous people more hostile. Moreover, when the Incas tried to subdue them, these indigenous people withdrew to the interior and resorted to [guerrilla](/wiki/Guerrilla) tactics. As a result, Inca expansion into the Amazon basin and the Pacific coast of Ecuador was hampered. The indigenous people of the Amazon jungle and coastal Ecuador remained relatively autonomous until the Spanish soldiers and missionaries arrived in force. The Amazonian people and the [Cayapas](/wiki/Cayapas) of Coastal Ecuador were the only groups to resist Inca and Spanish domination, maintaining their language and culture well into the 21st century.

Before the arrival of the Spaniards, the Inca Empire was involved in a [civil war](/wiki/Inca_Civil_War). The untimely death of both the heir Ninan Cuchi and the Emperor Huayna Capac, from a European disease that spread into Ecuador, created a power vacuum between two factions. The northern faction headed by Atahualpa claims that Huayna Capac gave a verbal decree before his death about how the empire should be divided. He gave the territories pertaining to present-day Ecuador and northern Peru to his favorite son Atahualpa, who was to rule from Quito; and he gave the rest to [Huáscar](/wiki/Huáscar), who was to rule from [Cuzco](/wiki/Cuzco). He willed that his heart be buried in Quito, his favorite city, and the rest of his body be buried with his ancestors in Cuzco.

Huáscar did not recognize his father's will, since it did not follow Inca traditions of naming an Inca through the priests. Huáscar ordered Atahualpa to attend their father's burial in Cuzco and pay homage to him as the new Inca ruler. Atahualpa, with a large number of his father's veteran soldiers, decided to ignore Huáscar, and a civil war ensued. A number of bloody battles took place until finally Huáscar was captured. Atahualpa marched south to Cuzco and massacred the royal family associated with his brother.

A small band of Spaniards headed by Francisco Pizarro landed in Tumbez and marched over the Andes Mountains until they reached Cajamarca, where the new Inca Atahualpa was to hold an interview with them. Valverde, the priest, tried to convince Atahualpa that he should join the Catholic Church and declare himself a vassal of Spain. This infuriated Atahualpa so much that he threw the Bible to the ground. At this point the enraged Spaniards, with orders from Valverde, attacked and massacred unarmed escorts of the Inca and captured Atahualpa. [Pizarro](/wiki/Pizarro) promised to release Atahualpa if he made good his promise of filling a room full of gold. But, after a mock trial, the Spaniards executed Atahualpa by strangulation.

### Spanish Rule[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

New infectious diseases, endemic to the Europeans, caused high fatalities among the Amerindian population during the first decades of Spanish rule, as they had no [immunity](/wiki/Immunity_(medical)). At the same time, the natives were forced into the [*encomienda*](/wiki/Encomienda) labor system for the Spanish. In 1563, [Quito](/wiki/Quito) became the seat of a [real audiencia](/wiki/Royal_Audience_of_Quito) (administrative district) of Spain and part of the [Viceroyalty of Peru](/wiki/Viceroyalty_of_Peru) and later the [Viceroyalty of New Granada](/wiki/Viceroyalty_of_New_Granada).

After nearly 300 years of Spanish rule, Quito was still a small city numbering 10,000 inhabitants. On August 10, 1809, the city's [*criollos*](/wiki/Criollo_people) called for independence from Spain (first among the peoples of Latin America). They were led by Juan Pío Montúfar, Quiroga, Salinas, and Bishop Cuero y Caicedo. Quito's nickname, "[*Luz de América*](/wiki/Luz_de_América)" ("Light of America"), is based on its leading role in trying to secure an independent, local government. Although the new government lasted no more than two months, it had important repercussions and was an inspiration for the independence movement of the rest of Spanish America. <gallery> File:Ecuador ingapirca inca ruins.jpg|[Ingapirca](/wiki/Ingapirca) ruins northeast of Cañar canton, [Cañar Province](/wiki/Cañar_Province,_Ecuador) File:Luis Montero - The Funerals of Inca Atahualpa - Google Art Project.jpg|One of the main events in the conquest of the Incan Empire was the death of [Atahualpa](/wiki/Atahualpa), the last [Sapa Inca](/wiki/Sapa_Inca) on August 29, 1533 File:Quito-San Diego-01.jpg|Spanish Historical Center in [Quito](/wiki/Quito) File:Pizarroshipbuilding.jpg|[Shipwrights](/wiki/Shipwright) from Francisco de Orellana's expedition building a small [brigantine](/wiki/Brigantine), the *San Pedro*. </gallery>

### Independence[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|left|The States of Ecuador, Cundinamarca, and Venezuela formed The Republic of Great Colombia.](/wiki/File:Mapa_de_Venezuela,_N._Granada_y_Quito,_1821.jpg) [thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:AJSucre.jpg)[Antonio José de Sucre](/wiki/Antonio_José_de_Sucre)

On October 9, 1820, [Guayaquil](/wiki/Guayaquil) became the first city in Ecuador to gain its independence from Spain. The people were very happy about the independence and celebrated, which is now Ecuador's independence day, officially on May 24, 1822. The rest of Ecuador gained its independence after [Antonio José de Sucre](/wiki/Antonio_José_de_Sucre) defeated the Spanish Royalist forces at the [Battle of Pichincha](/wiki/Battle_of_Pichincha), near [Quito](/wiki/Quito). Following the battle, Ecuador joined [Simón Bolívar's](/wiki/Simón_Bolívar) [Republic of Gran Colombia](/wiki/Republic_of_Gran_Colombia), also including modern-day [Colombia](/wiki/Colombia), [Venezuela](/wiki/Venezuela) and [Panama](/wiki/Panama). In 1830 Ecuador separated from Gran Colombia and became an independent republic.

The 19th century was marked by instability for Ecuador with a rapid succession of rulers. The first president of Ecuador was the Venezuelan-born [Juan José Flores](/wiki/Juan_José_Flores), who was ultimately deposed, followed by several authoritarian leaders, such as [Vicente Rocafuerte](/wiki/Vicente_Rocafuerte); [José Joaquín de Olmedo](/wiki/José_Joaquín_de_Olmedo); [José María Urbina](/wiki/José_María_Urbina); [Diego Noboa](/wiki/Diego_Noboa); [Pedro José de Arteta](/wiki/Pedro_José_de_Arteta); [Manuel de Ascásubi](/wiki/Manuel_de_Ascásubi); and Flores's own son, [Antonio Flores Jijón](/wiki/Antonio_Flores_Jijón), among others. The conservative [Gabriel Garcia Moreno](/wiki/Gabriel_Garcia_Moreno) unified the country in the 1860s with the support of the Roman Catholic Church. In the late 19th century, world demand for [cocoa](/wiki/Cocoa_bean) tied the economy to commodity exports and led to migrations from the highlands to the agricultural frontier on the coast.

Ecuador [abolished](/wiki/Abolition_of_slavery_timeline) [slavery](/wiki/Slavery_in_Latin_America) and freed its black slaves in 1851.[[7]](#cite_note-7)

### Liberal Revolution[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

[thumb|Antique](/wiki/File:Historic_Center_of_Quito_-_World_Heritage_Site_by_UNESCO_-_Photo_437.jpg) [dug out canoes](/wiki/Dugout_(boat)) in the courtyard of the Old Military Hospital in the [Historic Center of Quito](/wiki/Historic_Center_of_Quito) [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) The Liberal Revolution of 1895 under [Eloy Alfaro](/wiki/Eloy_Alfaro) reduced the power of the clergy and the conservative land owners. This liberal wing retained power until the military "Julian Revolution" of 1925. The 1930s and 1940s were marked by instability and emergence of populist politicians, such as five-time President [José María Velasco Ibarra](/wiki/José_María_Velasco_Ibarra).

### Loss of claimed territories since 1830[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:Campaignbox Ecuadorian-Peruvian](/wiki/Template:Campaignbox_Ecuadorian-Peruvian) [thumb|left|250px|Presidencia of Quito in 1740 in Yellow, according to President Juan José Flores' territorial claims for Ecuador](/wiki/File:Presidencias_de_Santafé_y_Quito.jpg)

#### President Juan José Flores de Jure Territorial Claims for Ecuador[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

Since Ecuador's separation from Colombia in May 13, 1830, its first President, General [Juan José Flores](/wiki/Juan_José_Flores), laid claim to the territory that was called the Real Audiencia of Quito, also referred to as the Presidencia of Quito. He supported his claims with Spanish Royal decrees or *Real Cedulas,* that delineated the borders of Spain's former overseas colonies. In the case of Ecuador, Flores-based Ecuador's [*de jure*](/wiki/De_jure) claims on the following cedulas - Real Cedula of 1563, 1739, and 1740; with modifications in the Amazon Basin and Andes Mountains that were introduced through the Treaty of Guayaquil (1829) which Peru reluctantly signed, after the overwhelmingly outnumbered Gran Colombian force led by [Antonio José de Sucre](/wiki/Antonio_José_de_Sucre) defeated President and General La Mar's Peruvian invasion force in the [Battle of Tarqui](/wiki/Battle_of_Tarqui). In addition, Ecuador's eastern border with the Portuguese colony of [Brazil](/wiki/Brazil) in the Amazon Basin was modified before the wars of Independence by the [First Treaty of San Ildefonso](/wiki/First_Treaty_of_San_Ildefonso) (1777) between the [Spanish Empire](/wiki/Spanish_Empire) and the [Portuguese Empire](/wiki/Portuguese_Empire). Moreover, to add legitimacy to his claims, on February 16, 1840, Flores signed a treaty with Spain, whereby Flores convinced Spain to officially recognize Ecuadorian independence and its sole rights to colonial titles over Spain's former colonial territory known anciently to Spain as the Kingdom and Presidency of Quito.

Ecuador during its long and turbulent history has lost most of its contested territories to each of its more powerful neighbors, such as Colombia in 1832 and 1916, Brazil in 1904 through a series of peaceful treaties, and Peru after a short war in which the Protocol of Rio de Janeiro was signed in 1942.

#### Struggle for independence[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

During the struggle for independence, before Peru or Ecuador became independent nations, a few areas of the former Vice Royalty of New Granada - Guayaquil, Tumbez, and Jaén - declared themselves independent from Spain. A few months later, a part of the Peruvian liberation army of San Martin decided to occupy the independent cities of Tumbez and Jaén with the intention of using these towns as springboards to occupy the independent city of Guayaquil and then to liberate the rest of the Audiencia de Quito (Ecuador). It was common knowledge among the top officers of the liberation army from the south that their leader [San Martin](/wiki/José_de_San_Martín) wished to liberate present-day Ecuador and add it to the future republic of Peru, since it had been part of the Inca Empire before the Spaniards conquered it.

However, [Bolívar's](/wiki/Simón_Bolívar) intention was to form a new republic known as the Gran Colombia, out of the liberated Spanish territory of New Granada which consisted of Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador. San Martin's plans were thwarted when [Bolívar](/wiki/Simón_Bolívar), with the help of Marshal Antonio José de Sucre and the Gran Colombian liberation force, descended from the Andes mountains and occupied Guayaquil; they also annexed the newly liberated Audiencia de Quito to the Republic of [Gran Colombia](/wiki/Gran_Colombia). This happened a few days before San Martin's Peruvian forces could arrive and occupy Guayaquil, with the intention of annexing Guayaquil to the rest of Audiencia of Quito (Ecuador) and to the future republic of Peru. Historic documents repeatedly stated that San Martin told Bolivar he came to Guayaquil to liberate the land of the Incas from Spain. Bolivar countered by sending a message from Guayaquil welcoming San Martin and his troops to Colombian soil.

#### Peruvian occupation of Jaén, Tumbes, and Guayaquil[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

In the south, Ecuador had *de jure* claims to a small piece of land beside the Pacific Ocean known as [Tumbes](/wiki/Tumbes_Region) which lay between the [Zarumilla](/wiki/Zarumilla_River) and [Tumbes](/wiki/Tumbes_River) rivers. In Ecuador's southern Andes Mountain region where the Marañon cuts across, Ecuador had *de jure* claims to an area it called [Jaén de Bracamoros](/wiki/Jaén,_Perú). These areas were included as part of the territory of Gran Colombia by Bolivar in December 17, 1819, during the [Congress of Angostura](/wiki/Congress_of_Angostura) when the Republic of Gran Colombia was created. Tumbes declared itself independent from Spain on January 17, 1821, and Jaen de Bracamoros on June 17, 1821, without any outside help from revolutionary armies. However, that same year, 1821, Peruvian forces participating in the Trujillo revolution occupied both Jaen and Tumbes. Some Peruvian generals, without any legal titles backing them up and with Ecuador still federated with the Gran Colombia, had the desire to annex Ecuador to the Republic of Peru at the expense of the Gran Colombia, feeling that Ecuador was once part of the Inca Empire.

On July 28, 1821, Peruvian independence was proclaimed in Lima by the Liberator San Martin and Tumbes and Jaen which were included as part of the revolution of Trujillo by the Peruvian occupying force, had the whole region swear allegiance to the new Peruvian flag and incorporated itself into Peru, even though Peru was not completely liberated from Spain. After Peru was completely liberated from Spain by the patriot armies led by Bolivar and Antonio Jose de Sucre at the [Battle of Ayacucho](/wiki/Battle_of_Ayacucho) dated December 9, 1824, there was a strong desire by some Peruvians to resurrect the [Inca Empire](/wiki/Inca_Empire) and to include Bolivia and Ecuador. One of these Peruvian Generals was the Ecuadorian-born [José de La Mar](/wiki/José_de_La_Mar), who became one of Peru's presidents after Bolivar resigned as dictator of Peru and returned to Colombia. Gran Colombia had always protested Peru for the return of Jaen and Tumbes for almost a decade, then finally Bolivar after long and futile discussion over the return of Jaen, Tumbes, and part of Mainas, declared war. President and General [José de La Mar](/wiki/José_de_La_Mar), who was born in Ecuador, believing his opportunity had come to annex the District of Ecuador to Peru, personally, with a Peruvian force, invaded and occupied Guayaquil and a few cities in the Loja region of southern Ecuador on November 28, 1828.

The war ended when a triumphant heavily outnumbered southern Gran Colombian army at [Battle of Tarqui](/wiki/Battle_of_Tarqui) dated February 27, 1829, led by [Antonio José de Sucre](/wiki/Antonio_José_de_Sucre), defeated the Peruvian invasion force led by President La Mar. This defeat led to the signing of the Treaty of Guayaquil dated September 22, 1829, whereby Peru and its Congress recognized Gran Colombian rights over Tumbes, Jaen, and Maynas. Through protocolized meetings between representatives of Peru and Gran Colombia, the border was set as Tumbes river in the west and in the east the Maranon and Amazon rivers were to be followed toward Brazil as the most natural borders between them. However, what was pending was whether the new border around the Jaen region should follow the Chinchipe river or the Huancabamba river. According to the peace negotiations Peru agreed to return Guayaquil, Tumbez, and Jaén; despite this, Peru returned Guayaquil, but failed to return Tumbes and Jaén, alleging that it was not obligated to follow the agreements, since the Gran Colombia ceased to exist when it divided itself into three different nations - Ecuador, Colombia, and Venezuela.

#### The dissolution of The Gran Colombia[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

[thumb|260px|The](/wiki/File:Gran_Colombia_map_1824.jpg) [Gran Colombia](/wiki/Gran_Colombia) showing all Colombian Land Claims outlined in red [thumb|left|250px|Ecuador in 1830](/wiki/File:Ecuador1830.png) The Central District of the Gran Colombia, known as Cundinamarca or New Granada (modern Colombia) with its capital in Bogota, did not recognize the separation of the Southern District of the Gran Colombia, with its capital in Quito, from the Gran Colombian federation on May 13, 1830. After Ecuador's separation, the [Department of Cauca](/wiki/Department_of_Cauca) voluntarily decided to unite itself with Ecuador due to instability in the central government of Bogota. President Juan José Flores with the approval of the Ecuadorian congress annexed the Department of Cauca on December 20, 1830, since the government of Cauca had called for union with the District of the South as far back as April 1830. Moreover, the Cauca region throughout its long history had very strong economic and cultural ties with the people of Ecuador. Also, the Cauca region which included such cities as [Pasto](/wiki/Pasto), [Popayan](/wiki/Popayan), and [Buenaventura](/wiki/Buenaventura,_Valle_del_Cauca) had always been dependent on the Presidencia or Audiencia of Quito.

Fruitless negotiations continued between the governments of Bogota and Quito, where the government of Bogota did not recognize the separation of Ecuador or that of Cauca from the Gran Colombia until war broke out in May 1832. In five months, New Granada defeated Ecuador due to the fact that the majority of the Ecuadorian Armed Forces were composed of rebellious angry unpaid veterans from Venezuela and Colombia that did not want to fight against their fellow countrymen. Seeing that his officers were rebelling, mutinying, and changing sides, President Flores had no option but to reluctantly make peace with New Granada. The Treaty of Pasto of 1832 was signed by which the Department of Cauca was turned over to New Granada (modern Colombia), the government of Bogota recognized Ecuador as an independent country and the border was to follow the Ley de División Territorial de la República de Colombia (Law of the Division of Territory of the Gran Colombia) passed on June 25, 1824. This law set the border at the river Carchi and the eastern border that stretched to Brazil at the Caquetá river. Later, Ecuador contended that the Republic of Colombia, while reorganizing its government, unlawfully made its eastern border provisional and that Colombia extended its claims south to the Napo River because it said that the Government of Popayan extended its control all the way to the Napo River.

#### Struggle for possession of the Amazon Basin[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[thumb|left|South America (1879): All land claims by Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and Bolivia in 1879](/wiki/File:South_America_1879.png) When Ecuador seceded from the Gran Colombia, Peru decided not to follow the treaty of Guayaquil of 1829 or the protocoled agreements made. Peru contested Ecuador's claims with the newly discovered *Real Cedula* of 1802, by which Peru claims the King of Spain had transferred these lands from the Viceroyalty of New Granada to the Viceroyalty of Peru. During colonial times this was to halt the ever-expanding Portuguese settlements into Spanish domains, which were left vacant and in disorder after the expulsion of Jesuit missionaries from their bases along the Amazon Basin. Ecuador countered by labeling the Cedula of 1802 an ecclesiastical instrument, which had nothing to do with political borders. Peru began its de facto occupation of disputed Amazonian territories, after it signed a secret 1851 peace treaty in favor of Brazil. This treaty disregarded Spanish rights that were confirmed during colonial times by a Spanish-Portuguese treaty over the Amazon regarding territories held by illegal Portuguese settlers.

Peru began occupying the defenseless missionary villages in the Mainas or Maynas region which it began calling Loreto with its capital in [Iquitos](/wiki/Iquitos). During its negotiations with Brazil, Peru stated that based on the royal cedula of 1802, it claimed Amazonian Basin territories up to Caqueta River in the north and toward the Andes Mountain range, depriving Ecuador and Colombia of all their claims to the Amazon Basin. Colombia protested stating that its claims extended south toward the Napo and Amazon Rivers. Ecuador protested that it claimed the Amazon Basin between the Caqueta river and the Marañon-Amazon river. Peru ignored these protests and created the Department of Loreto in 1853 with its capital in Iquitos which it had recently invaded and systematically began to occupy using the river systems in all the territories claimed by both Colombia and Ecuador. Peru briefly occupied Guayaquil again in 1860, since Peru thought that Ecuador was selling some of the disputed land for development to British bond holders, but returned Guayaquil after a few months. The border dispute was then submitted to Spain for arbitration from 1880 to 1910, but to no avail.

In the early part of the 20th century Ecuador made an effort to peacefully define its eastern Amazonian borders with its neighbors through negotiation. On May 6, 1904, Ecuador signed the Tobar-Rio Branco Treaty recognizing Brazil's claims to the Amazon in recognition of Ecuador's claim to be an Amazonian country to counter Peru's earlier Treaty with Brazil back in October 23, 1851. Then after a few meetings with the Colombian government's representatives an agreement was reached and the Muñoz Vernaza-Suarez Treaty was signed July 15, 1916, in which Colombian rights to the Putumayo river were recognized as well as Ecuador's rights to the Napo river and the new border was a line that ran midpoint between those two rivers. In this way Ecuador gave up the claims it had to the Amazonian territories between the Caquetá River and Napo River to Colombia, thus cutting itself off from Brazil. Later a brief war erupted between Colombia and Peru, over Peru's claims to the Caquetá region, which ended with the Peru reluctantly signing the Salomon-Lozano Treaty on March 24, 1922. Ecuador protested this secret treaty, since Colombia gave away Ecuadorian claimed land to Peru that Ecuador had given to Colombia in 1916.

In July 21, 1924 the Ponce-Castro Oyanguren Protocol was signed between Ecuador and Peru where both agreed to hold direct negotiations and to resolve the dispute in an equitable manner and to submit the differing points of the dispute to the United States for arbitration. Negotiations between the Ecuadorian and Peruvian representatives began in Washington on September 30, 1935. These negotiations were long and tiresome. Both sides logically presented their cases, but no one seemed to give up their claims. Then on February 6, 1937, Ecuador presented a transactional line which Peru rejected the next day. The negotiations turned into intense arguments during the next 7 months and finally on September 29, 1937 the Peruvian representatives decided to break off the negotiations without submitting the dispute to arbitration because the direct negotiations were going nowhere.

Four years later in 1941, amid fast-growing tensions within disputed territories around the Zarumilla River, war broke out with Peru. Peru claimed that Ecuador's military presence in Peruvian-claimed territory was an invasion; Ecuador, for its part, claimed that Peru had recently invaded Ecuador around the Zarumilla River and that Peru since Ecuador's independence from Spain has systematically occupied Tumbez, Jaen, and most of the disputed territories in the Amazonian Basin between the Putomayo and Marañon Rivers. In July 1941, troops were mobilized in both countries. Peru had an army of 11,681 troops who faced a poorly supplied and inadequately armed Ecuadorian force of 2,300, of which only 1,300 were deployed in the southern provinces. Hostilities erupted on July 5, 1941, when Peruvian forces crossed the Zarumilla river at several locations, testing the strength and resolve of the Ecuadorian border troops. Finally, on July 23, 1941, the Peruvians launched a major invasion, crossing the Zarumilla river in force and advancing into the Ecuadorian province of [El Oro](/wiki/El_Oro_Province).

[thumb|left|Map of Ecuadorian Land Claims after 1916](/wiki/File:Ecuador-peru-land-claims-01.png)

During the course of the [Ecuadorian–Peruvian War](/wiki/Ecuadorian–Peruvian_War), Peru gained control over part of the disputed territory and some parts of the province of El Oro, and some parts of the [province of Loja](/wiki/Loja_Province), demanding that the Ecuadorian government give up its territorial claims. The Peruvian Navy blocked the port of [Guayaquil](/wiki/Guayaquil), almost cutting all supplies to the Ecuadorian troops. After a few weeks of war and under pressure by the United States and several Latin American nations, all fighting came to a stop. Ecuador and Peru came to an accord formalized in the [Rio Protocol](/wiki/Rio_Protocol), signed on January 29, 1942, in favor of hemispheric unity against the [Axis Powers](/wiki/Axis_Powers) in [World War II](/wiki/World_War_II) favoring Peru with the territory they occupied at the time the war came to an end.

The 1944 [Glorious May Revolution](/wiki/Glorious_May_Revolution) followed a military-civilian rebellion and a subsequent civic strike which successfully removed Carlos Arroyo del Río as a dictator from Ecuador's government. However a post-Second World War recession and popular unrest led to a return to populist politics and domestic military interventions in the 1960s, while foreign companies developed oil resources in the Ecuadorian Amazon. In 1972, construction of the Andean pipeline was completed. The pipeline brought oil from the east side of the Andes to the coast, making Ecuador South America's second largest oil exporter. The pipeline in southern Ecuador did nothing to resolve tensions between Ecuador and Peru, however. [thumb|Ecuadorian troops during the Cenepa War](/wiki/File:Relevo-ecu.JPG) [right|thumb|The](/wiki/File:Mirage_F.1JA.JPG) [Mirage F.1JA](/wiki/Dassault_Mirage_F1) (FAE-806) was one aircraft involved in the claimed shooting down of two Peruvian [Sukhoi Su-22](/wiki/Sukhoi_Su-22) on February 10, 1995. The [Rio Protocol](/wiki/Rio_Protocol) failed to precisely resolve the border along a little river in the remote *Cordillera del Cóndor* region in southern Ecuador. This caused a long-simmering dispute between Ecuador and Peru, which ultimately led to fighting between the two countries; first a border skirmish in January–February 1981 known as the [Paquisha Incident](/wiki/Paquisha_Incident), and ultimately full-scale warfare in January 1995 where the Ecuadorian military shot down Peruvian aircraft and helicopters and Peruvian infantry marched into southern Ecuador. Each country blamed the other for the onset of hostilities, known as the [Cenepa War](/wiki/Cenepa_War). [Sixto Durán Ballén](/wiki/Sixto_Durán_Ballén), the Ecuadorian president, famously declared that he would not give up a single centimeter of Ecuador. Popular sentiment in Ecuador became strongly [nationalistic](/wiki/Nationalism) against Peru: graffiti could be seen on the walls of Quito referring to Peru as the "*Cain de Latinoamérica*", a reference to the murder of [Abel](/wiki/Abel) by his brother [Cain](/wiki/Cain) in the [Book of Genesis](/wiki/Book_of_Genesis).[[8]](#cite_note-8) Ecuador and Peru signed the [Brasilia Presidential Act](/wiki/Brasilia_Presidential_Act) peace agreement on October 26, 1998, which ended hostilities, and effectively put an end to the Western Hemisphere's longest running territorial dispute.[[9]](#cite_note-9) According to [Human Rights Watch](/wiki/Human_Rights_Watch) (HRW) President Correa has intimidated journalists and subjected them to "public denunciation and retaliatory litigation". The sentences to journalists have been years of imprisonment and millions of dollars of compensation, even though defendants have been pardoned.<ref name=hrw/> Correa has stated he was only seeking a retraction for slanderous statements.[[18]](#cite_note-18) According to HRW, Correa's government has weakened the [freedom of press](/wiki/Freedom_of_press) and [independence of the judicial system](/wiki/Judicial_independence). In Ecuador's current judicial system, judges are selected in a contest of merits, rather than government appointments. However, the process of selection has been criticized as biased and subjective. In particular, the final interview is said to be given "excessive weighing." Judges and prosecutors that have made decisions in favor of Correa in his lawsuits have received permanent posts, while others with better assessment grades have been rejected.<ref name=hrw/><ref name=Reformahasta2015>[Reforma judicial en Ecuador debe hacerse hasta el 2015](http://web.archive.org/web/20131102052404/http://diariodigitalcentro.com/index.php/455-reforma-judicial-en-ecuador-debe-hacerse-hasta-el-2015), diariodigitalcentro.com</ref>

[thumb|300px|Adult](/wiki/File:Sea_lion_sleeping_on_bench_in_Puerto_Baquerizo_Moreno_2013.JPG) [Galápagos sea lion](/wiki/Galápagos_sea_lion) resting on a park bench in Puerto Baquerizo Moreno . The laws also forbid articles and media messages that could favor or disfavor some political message or candidate. In the first half of 2012, twenty private TV or radio stations were closed down.<ref name=hrw/>

In July 2012 the officials warned the judges that they would be sanctioned and possibly dismissed if they allowed the citizens to appeal to the protection of their constitutional rights against the state.<ref name=hrw/>

People engaging in public protests against environmental and other issues are prosecuted for "terrorism and sabotage", which may lead to an eight-year prison sentence.<ref name=hrw/>

Human Rights Watch [has been criticized](/wiki/Criticism_of_Human_Rights_Watch) for bias on its reports on Ecuador.[[19]](#cite_note-19)[Template:Failed verification](/wiki/Template:Failed_verification)

### Foreign affairs[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Ecuador's principal foreign policy objectives have traditionally included defense of its territory from external aggression and support for the objectives of the [United Nations](/wiki/United_Nations) and the OAS. Ecuador's membership in the OPEC in the 1970s and 1980s allowed Ecuadorian leaders to exercise somewhat greater foreign policy autonomy. In Antarctica, Ecuador has maintained a peaceful research station for scientific study as a member nation of the [Antarctica Treaty](/wiki/Antarctica_Treaty). Ecuador has often placed great emphasis on multilateral approaches to international issues. Ecuador is a member of the United Nations (and most of its specialized agencies) and a member of many regional groups, including the [Rio Group](/wiki/Rio_Group), the [Latin American Economic System](/wiki/Latin_American_Economic_System), the [Latin American Energy Organization](/wiki/Latin_American_Energy_Organization), the [Latin American Integration Association](/wiki/Latin_American_Integration_Association), the [Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America](/wiki/Bolivarian_Alliance_for_the_Americas), the [Andean Community of Nations](/wiki/Andean_Community_of_Nations), the Union of South American Nations ([UNASUR](/wiki/UNASUR)), and The Bank of the South (Spanish: Banco del Sur or BancoSur).

## Administrative divisions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Ecuador is divided into 24 [provinces](/wiki/Provinces_of_Ecuador) ([Template:Lang-es](/wiki/Template:Lang-es)), each with its own administrative capital: [thumb|right|Map of Ecuador](/wiki/File:Ecuadorenumerado.PNG) [right|thumbnail|Extent of Ecuador's western](/wiki/File:Localisation_de_l'ile_de_Clipperton.png) [EEZ](/wiki/EEZ) in the Pacific

{|class="wikitable sortable" "text-align:left;font-size:100%;"| |+ style="text-align:center;"|**Administrative divisions of Ecuador** |- ! style="height:17px; width:15px;"| ! style="width:200px;"|Province ! style="width:70px;"|Surface (km²) ! style="width:70px;"|Population (2010)[[20]](#cite_note-20)! style="width:200px;"|Capital |- |1 |[Azuay](/wiki/Azuay_Province) |8,639 |702,893 |[Cuenca](/wiki/Cuenca,_Ecuador) |- |2 |[Bolivar](/wiki/Bolívar_Province_(Ecuador)) |3,254 |182,744 |[Guaranda](/wiki/Guaranda) |- |3 |[Cañar](/wiki/Cañar_Province) |3,908 |223,463 |[Azogues](/wiki/Azogues) |- |4 |[Carchi](/wiki/Carchi_Province) |3,699 |165,659 |[Tulcán](/wiki/Tulcán) |- |5 |[Chimborazo](/wiki/Chimborazo_Province) |5,287 |452,352 |[Riobamba](/wiki/Riobamba) |- |6 |[Cotopaxi](/wiki/Cotopaxi_Province) |6,569 |406,798 |[Latacunga](/wiki/Latacunga) |- |7 |[El Oro](/wiki/El_Oro_Province) |5,988 |588,546 |[Machala](/wiki/Machala) |- |8 |[Esmeraldas](/wiki/Esmeraldas_Province) |15,216 |520,711 |[Esmeraldas](/wiki/Esmeraldas,_Ecuador) |- |9 |[Galápagos](/wiki/Galápagos_Province) |8,010 |22,770 |[Puerto Baquerizo Moreno](/wiki/Puerto_Baquerizo_Moreno) |- |10 |[Guayas](/wiki/Guayas_Province) |17,139 |3,573,003 |[Guayaquil](/wiki/Guayaquil) |- |11 |[Imbabura](/wiki/Imbabura_Province) |4,599 |400,359 |[Ibarra](/wiki/Ibarra,_Ecuador) |- |12 |[Loja](/wiki/Loja_Province) |11,027 |446,743 |[Loja](/wiki/Loja,_Ecuador) |- |13 |[Los Ríos](/wiki/Los_Ríos_Province) |6,254 |765,274 |[Babahoyo](/wiki/Babahoyo) |- |14 |[Manabí](/wiki/Manabí_Province) |18,400 |1,345,779 |[Portoviejo](/wiki/Portoviejo) |- |15 |[Morona-Santiago](/wiki/Morona-Santiago_Province) |25,690 |147,886 |[Macas](/wiki/Macas_(city)) |- |16 |[Napo](/wiki/Napo_Province) |13,271 |104,047 |[Tena](/wiki/Tena,_Ecuador) |- |17 |[Orellana](/wiki/Orellana_Province) |20,773 |137,848 |[Puerto Francisco de Orellana](/wiki/Puerto_Francisco_de_Orellana) |- |18 |[Pastaza](/wiki/Pastaza_Province) |29,520 |84,329 |[Puyo](/wiki/Puyo,_Pastaza) |- |19 |[Pichincha](/wiki/Pichincha_Province) |9,494 |2,570,201 |[Quito](/wiki/Quito) |- |20 |[Santa Elena](/wiki/Santa_Elena_Province) |3,763 |301,168 |[Santa Elena](/wiki/Santa_Elena,_Ecuador) |- |21 |[Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas](/wiki/Santo_Domingo_de_los_Tsáchilas_Province) |3,857 |365,965 |[Santo Domingo](/wiki/Santo_Domingo_(Ecuador)) |- |22 |[Sucumbíos](/wiki/Sucumbíos_Province) |18,612 |174,522 |[Nueva Loja](/wiki/Nueva_Loja) |- |23 |[Tungurahua](/wiki/Tungurahua_Province) |3,334 |500,775 |[Ambato](/wiki/Ambato,_Ecuador) |- |24 |[Zamora-Chinchipe](/wiki/Zamora-Chinchipe_Province) |10,556 |91,219 |[Zamora](/wiki/Zamora,_Ecuador) |}

The provinces are divided into [cantons](/wiki/Cantons_of_Ecuador) and further subdivided into parishes (*parroquias*).

### Regions and planning areas[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]

Regionalization, or zoning, is the union of two or more adjoining provinces in order to decentralize the administrative functions of the capital Quito. In Ecuador there are seven regions or zones, each shaped by the following provinces:

* Region 1 (42,126 km², or 16,265 mi2): [Esmeraldas](/wiki/Esmeraldas_(province)), [Carchi](/wiki/Carchi), [Imbabura](/wiki/Imbabura_Province), and [Sucumbios](/wiki/Sucumbios). Administrative city: [Ibarra](/wiki/Ibarra,_Ecuador)
* Region 2 (43,498 km², or 16,795 mi2): [Pichincha](/wiki/Pichincha_(province)), [Napo](/wiki/Napo_(province)), and [Orellana](/wiki/Orellana_Province). Administrative city: [Tena](/wiki/Tena,_Ecuador)
* Region 3 (44,710 km², or 17,263 mi2): [Chimborazo](/wiki/Chimborazo_(province)), [Tungurahua](/wiki/Tungurahua_(province)), [Pastaza](/wiki/Pastaza_(province)), and [Cotopaxi](/wiki/Cotopaxi_(province)). Administrative city: [Riobamba](/wiki/Riobamba,_Ecuador)
* Region 4 (22,257 km², or 8,594 mi2): [Manabí](/wiki/Manabí_Province) and [Santo Domingo de los Tsachilas](/wiki/Santo_Domingo_de_los_Tsachilas). Administrative city: [Ciudad Alfaro](/wiki/Ciudad_Alfaro,_Ecuador)
* Region 5 (38,420 km², or 14,834 mi2): [Santa Elena](/wiki/Santa_Elena_Province), [Guayas](/wiki/Guayas_(province)), [Los Ríos](/wiki/Los_Ríos_Province), [Galápagos](/wiki/Galápagos), and [Bolívar](/wiki/Bolívar_Province_(Ecuador)). Administrative city: [Milagro](/wiki/Milagro,_Ecuador)
* Region 6 (38,237 km², or 14,763 mi2): [Cañar](/wiki/Cañar_Province,_Ecuador), [Azuay](/wiki/Azuay), and [Morona Santiago](/wiki/Morona_Santiago). Administrative city: [Cuenca](/wiki/Cuenca_(Ecuador))
* Region 7 (27,571 km², or 10,645 mi2): [El Oro](/wiki/El_Oro_Province), [Loja](/wiki/Loja_Province), and [Zamora Chinchipe](/wiki/Zamora_Chinchipe). Administrative city: [Loja](/wiki/Loja,_Ecuador)

[Quito](/wiki/Quito) and [Guayaquil](/wiki/Guayaquil) are Metropolitan Districts. [Galápagos](/wiki/Galápagos), despite being included within Region 5,[[21]](#cite_note-21) is also under a special unit.[[22]](#cite_note-22)

## Military[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=25)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|A Puma helicopter from the Army's Aviation Branch](/wiki/File:Superpuma-ecu.JPG) [left|thumb|Ecuadorian Air Force (FAE)](/wiki/File:Kfir_CE_front.JPG) [right|thumb|](/wiki/File:Submarino_Shyri.jpg)[BAE Shyri (SS-101)](/wiki/BAE_Shyri_(SS-101)) from the Ecuadorian Navy. The [Ecuadorian Armed Forces](/wiki/Military_of_Ecuador) (Fuerzas Armadas del Ecuador), consists of the [Army](/wiki/Ecuadorian_Army), [Air Force](/wiki/Ecuadorian_Air_Force), and [Navy](/wiki/Ecuadorian_Navy) and have the stated responsibility for the preservation of the integrity and national sovereignty of the national territory.

The military tradition starts in [Gran Colombia](/wiki/Gran_Colombia), where a sizable army was stationed in Ecuador due to border disputes with Peru, which claimed territories under its political control when it was a Spanish vice-royalty. Once Gran Colombia was dissolved after the death of [Simón Bolívar](/wiki/Simón_Bolívar) in 1830, Ecuador inherited the same border disputes and had the need of creating its own professional military force. So influential was the military in Ecuador in the early republican period that its first decade was under the control of General [Juan Jose Flores](/wiki/Juan_Jose_Flores), first president of Ecuador of Venezuelan origin. General Jose Ma. Urbina and General Robles are examples of military figures who became presidents of the country in the early republican period.

Due to the continuous border disputes with Peru, finally settled in the early 2000s, and due to the ongoing problem with the Colombian guerrilla insurgency infiltrating Amazonian provinces, the Ecuadorian Armed Forces has gone through a series of changes. In 2009, the new administration at the Defense Ministry launched a deep restructuring within the forces, increasing spending budget to $1,691,776,803, an increase of 25%.[[23]](#cite_note-23) The icons of the Ecuadorian military forces are the Marshall Antonio José de Sucre and General [Eloy Alfaro](/wiki/Eloy_Alfaro). The Military Academy General Eloy Alfaro (c. 1838) graduates the army officers and is located in Quito.[[24]](#cite_note-24) The Ecuadorian Navy Academy (c. 1837), located in Salinas graduates the navy officers,[[25]](#cite_note-25) and the Air Academy "Cosme Rennella (c. 1920), also located in Salinas, graduates the air force officers.[[26]](#cite_note-26) Other training academies for different military specialties are found across the country.

## Geography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=26)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Ecuador has a total area of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), including the [Galápagos Islands](/wiki/Galápagos_Islands). Of this, [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) is land and [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) water. Ecuador is bigger than Uruguay, Suriname, Guyana and French Guyana in [South America](/wiki/South_America). [250px|right](/wiki/File:Ecuador_Topography.png) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Vicuña_-_Chimborazo,_Ecuador.jpg)[Chimborazo](/wiki/Chimborazo_(volcano)) volcano, the farthest point from the centre of the Earth[[27]](#cite_note-27)[[28]](#cite_note-28) Ecuador lies between latitudes [2°N](/wiki/2nd_parallel_north) and [5°S](/wiki/5th_parallel_south), bounded on the west by the [Pacific Ocean](/wiki/Pacific_Ocean), and has [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of [coastline](/wiki/Coastline). It has [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of land boundaries, with [Colombia](/wiki/Colombia) in the north [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) border and Peru in the east and south [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) border. It is the westernmost country that lies on the equator.[[29]](#cite_note-29) The country has four main geographic regions:

* **La Costa**, or "the coast": The coastal region consists of the provinces to the West of the Andean range -, [Esmeraldas](/wiki/Esmeraldas_Province), [Guayas](/wiki/Guayas_Province), [Los Ríos](/wiki/Los_Ríos_Province), [Manabí](/wiki/Manabí_Province), [El Oro](/wiki/El_Oro_Province), [Santa Elena](/wiki/Santa_Elena_Province). It is the country's most fertile and productive land, and is the seat of the large [banana](/wiki/Banana) exportation plantations of the companies [Dole](/wiki/Dole_Food_Company) and [Chiquita](/wiki/Chiquita). This region is also where most of Ecuador's [rice](/wiki/Rice) crop is grown. The truly coastal provinces have active fisheries. The largest coastal city is [Guayaquil](/wiki/Guayaquil).
* **La Sierra**, or "the highlands": The sierra consists of the Andean and Interandean highland provinces - [Azuay](/wiki/Azuay_Province), [Cañar](/wiki/Cañar_Province), [Carchi](/wiki/Carchi_Province), [Chimborazo](/wiki/Chimborazo_Province), [Imbabura](/wiki/Imbabura_Province), [Loja](/wiki/Loja_Province), [Pichincha](/wiki/Pichincha_Province), and [Tungurahua](/wiki/Tungurahua_Province). This land contains most of Ecuador's volcanoes and all of its snow-capped peaks. Agriculture is focused on the traditional crops of [potato](/wiki/Potato), [maize](/wiki/Maize), and [quinua](/wiki/Quinoa) and the population is predominantly Amerindian [Kichua](/wiki/Quechua_people). The largest Sierran city is [Quito](/wiki/Quito).
* **La Amazonía**, also known as *El Oriente*, or "the east": The oriente consists of the [Amazon jungle](/wiki/Amazon_rainforest) provinces - [Morona Santiago](/wiki/Morona_Santiago_Province), [Napo](/wiki/Napo_Province), [Orellana](/wiki/Orellana_Province), [Pastaza](/wiki/Pastaza_Province), [Sucumbíos](/wiki/Sucumbíos_Province), and [Zamora-Chinchipe](/wiki/Zamora-Chinchipe_Province). This region is primarily made up of the huge Amazon national parks and Amerindian untouchable zones, which are vast stretches of land set aside for the Amazon Amerindian tribes to continue living traditionally. It is also the area with the largest reserves of [petroleum](/wiki/Petroleum) in Ecuador, and parts of the upper Amazon here have been extensively exploited by petroleum companies. The population is primarily mixed Amerindian [Shuar](/wiki/Shuar), [Huaorani](/wiki/Huaorani) and [Kichua](/wiki/Quechua_people), although there are numerous tribes in the deep jungle which are little-contacted. The largest city in the Oriente is probably [Lago Agrio](/wiki/Nueva_Loja) in Sucumbíos, although [Macas](/wiki/Macas_(city)) in Morona Santiago runs a close second.
* **La Región Insular** is the region comprising the [Galápagos Islands](/wiki/Galápagos_Islands), some [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) west of the mainland in the Pacific Ocean.

Ecuador's capital is Quito, which is in the province of [Pichincha](/wiki/Pichincha_Province,_Ecuador) in the Sierra region. Its largest city is Guayaquil, in the [Guayas Province](/wiki/Guayas_Province). [Cotopaxi](/wiki/Cotopaxi), which is just south of Quito, features one of the world's highest active volcanoes. The top of [Mount Chimborazo](/wiki/Chimborazo_(volcano)) (6,268 m, or 20,560 ft, above sea level) is considered to be the most distant point of the Earth's surface from the center of the Earth, given the approximately [ellipsoid](/wiki/Ellipsoid) shape of the planet.<ref name=CIA>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

### Climate[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=27)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|300px|Ecuador map of Köppen climate classification.](/wiki/File:Ecuador_map_of_Köppen_climate_classification.svg) There is great variety in the climate, largely determined by altitude. It is mild year-round in the mountain valleys, with a [humid subtropical climate](/wiki/Humid_subtropical_climate) in coastal areas and [rainforest](/wiki/Rainforest) in lowlands. The Pacific coastal area has a [tropical climate](/wiki/Tropical_climate) with a severe rainy season. The climate in the Andean highlands is [temperate](/wiki/Temperateness) and relatively dry, and the Amazon basin on the eastern side of the mountains shares the climate of other rainforest zones.

Because of its location at the equator, Ecuador experiences little variation in daylight hours during the course of a year. Both sunrise and sunset occur each day at the two six o'clock hours.<ref name=CIA/>

### Hydrology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=28)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|upright|Pastaza River](/wiki/File:Ecuador_Pastazas_near_Banos.JPG) The Andes is the *watershed divisor* between the [Amazon](/wiki/Amazon_Basin) watershed, which runs to the east, and the Pacific, including the north–south rivers Mataje, Santiago, [Esmeraldas](/wiki/Esmeraldas_River), [Chone](/wiki/Chone_River), [Guayas](/wiki/Guayas_River), Jubones, and Puyango-Tumbes.

Almost all of the rivers in Ecuador form in the La Sierra region and flow east toward the [Amazon River](/wiki/Amazon_River) or west toward the Pacific Ocean. The rivers rise from snowmelt at the edges of the snowcapped peaks or from the abundant precipitation that falls at higher elevations. In the La Sierra region, the streams and rivers are narrow and flow rapidly over precipitous slopes. Rivers may slow and widen as they cross the hoyas yet become rapid again as they flow from the heights of the [Andes](/wiki/Andes) to the lower elevations of the other regions. The highland rivers broaden as they enter the more level areas of the Costa and the Oriente.

In the Costa, the external coast has mostly intermittent rivers that are fed by constant rains from December through May and become empty riverbeds during the dry season. The few exceptions are the longer, perennial rivers that flow throughout the external coast from the internal coast and La Sierra on their way to the [Pacific Ocean](/wiki/Pacific_Ocean). The internal coast, by contrast, is crossed by perennial rivers that may flood during the rainy season, sometimes forming swamps.

Major rivers in the Oriente include the [Pastaza](/wiki/Pastaza_River), [Napo](/wiki/Napo_River), and [Putumayo](/wiki/Putumayo_River). The Pastaza is formed by the confluence of the Chambo and the Patate rivers, both of which rise in the Sierra. The Pastaza includes the Agoyan waterfall, which at sixty-one meters (200 feet) is the highest waterfall in Ecuador. The Napo rises near Mount Cotopaxi and is the major river used for transport in the eastern lowlands. The Napo ranges in width from [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert). In its upper reaches, the Napo flows rapidly until the confluence with one of its major tributaries, the Coca River, where it slows and levels off. The Putumayo forms part of the border with Colombia. All of these rivers flow into the [Amazon River](/wiki/Amazon_River). The Galápagos Islands have no significant rivers. Several of the larger islands, however, have freshwater springs although they are surrounded by the Pacific Ocean.

### Biodiversity[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=29)]

[thumb|right|](/wiki/File:Galapagos_dominance_display.jpg)[Galápagos tortoise](/wiki/Galápagos_tortoise) [thumb|left|upright|](/wiki/File:SulaNebouxi.jpg)[Blue-footed booby](/wiki/Blue-footed_booby) [thumb|left|](/wiki/File:Sphyrna_lewini_galapagos.jpg) [Hammerhead sharks](/wiki/Hammerhead_shark) Ecuador is one of seventeen [megadiverse countries](/wiki/Megadiverse_countries) in the world according to Conservation International,[[5]](#cite_note-5) and it has the most biodiversity per square kilometer of any nation.[[30]](#cite_note-30)[[31]](#cite_note-31) Ecuador has 1,600 bird species (15% of the world's known bird species) in the continental area and 38 more [endemic](/wiki/Endemism) in the Galápagos. In addition to over 16,000 species of plants, the country has 106 endemic reptiles, 138 endemic amphibians, and 6,000 species of butterfly. The Galápagos Islands are well known as a region of distinct fauna, famous as the place of birth of Darwin's [Theory of Evolution](/wiki/Theory_of_Evolution) and a [UNESCO](/wiki/UNESCO) World Heritage Site.[[32]](#cite_note-32) Ecuador has the first constitution to recognize the rights of nature.[[33]](#cite_note-33) The protection of the nation's biodiversity is an explicit national priority as stated in the National Plan of "Buen Vivir", or good living, Objective 4, "Guarantee the rights of nature", Policy 1: "Sustainably conserve and manage the natural heritage, including its land and marine biodiversity, which is considered a strategic sector".[[34]](#cite_note-34) As of the writing of the Plan in 2008, 19% of Ecuador's land area was in a protected area; however, the Plan also states that 32% of the land must be protected in order to truly preserve the nation's biodiversity.[[30]](#cite_note-30) Current [protected areas](/wiki/List_of_national_parks_in_Ecuador) include 11 national parks, 10 wildlife refuges, 9 ecological reserves, and other areas.[[35]](#cite_note-35) A program begun in 2008, Sociobosque, is preserving another 2.3% of total land area (6,295 km², or 629,500 ha) by paying private landowners or community landowners (such as Amerindian tribes) incentives to maintain their land as native ecosystems such as native forests or grasslands. Eligibility and subsidy rates for this program are determined based on the poverty in the region, the number of hectares that will be protected, and the type of ecosystem of the land to be protected, among other factors.[[36]](#cite_note-36) Despite being on the UNESCO list, the Galápagos are endangered by a range of negative environmental effects, threatening the existence of this exotic [ecosystem](/wiki/Ecosystem).[[37]](#cite_note-37) Additionally, oil exploitation of the Amazon rainforest has led to the release of billions of gallons of untreated wastes, gas, and crude oil into the environment, contaminating ecosystems and causing detrimental health effects to Amerindian peoples.[[38]](#cite_note-38)[Template:Clear](/wiki/Template:Clear)

## Economy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=30)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|Tree map of products exported by Ecuador in the HS4 product classification.](/wiki/File:Products_exported_by_Ecuador.png) Ecuador has a [developing economy](/wiki/Developing_economy) that is highly dependent on commodities, namely petroleum and agricultural products. The country is classified as a medium-income country. Ecuador's economy is the eighth largest in Latin America and experienced an average growth of 4.6% between 2000 and 2006.[[39]](#cite_note-39) From 2007 to 2012 Ecuador's GDP grew at an annual average of 4.3 percent, above the average for Latin America and the Caribbean, which was 3.5%, according to the United Nations' Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean (ECLAC).[[40]](#cite_note-40) Ecuador was able to maintain relatively superior growth during the crisis. In January 2009 the Central Bank of Ecuador (BCE) put the 2010 growth forecast at 6.88%.[[41]](#cite_note-41) In 2011 its GDP grew at 8% and ranked 3rd highest in Latin America, behind Argentina (2nd) and Panama (1st).[[42]](#cite_note-42) Between 1999 and 2007, GDP doubled, reaching $65,490 million according to BCE.[[43]](#cite_note-43)Inflation rate up to January 2008 was located about 1.14%, the highest recorded in the last year, according to the government.[[44]](#cite_note-44)[[45]](#cite_note-45) The monthly unemployment rate remained at about 6 and 8 percent from December 2007 until September 2008; however, it went up to about 9 percent in October and dropped again in November 2008 to 8 percent.[[46]](#cite_note-46) Unemployment mean annual rate for 2009 in Ecuador was 8.5% because the global economic crisis continued to affect the Latin American economies. From this point unemployment rates started a downward trend: 7.6% in 2010, 6.0% in 2011, and 4.8% in 2012.[[47]](#cite_note-47) The extreme poverty rate has declined significantly between 1999 and 2010.[[48]](#cite_note-48) In 2001 it was estimated at 40% of the population, while by 2011 the figure dropped to 17.4% of the total population.<ref name=economy>Rebeca, Ray and Sara, Kozameh. (May 2012) [Ecuador's Economy Since 2007](http://www.scribd.com/doc/92086279/Ecuador%E2%80%99s-Economy-Since-2007). p. 15.</ref> This is explained to an extent by emigration and the economic stability achieved after adopting the U.S. dollar as official means of transaction. However, starting in 2008 with the bad economic performance of the nations where most Ecuadorian emigrants work, the reduction of poverty has been realized through social spending mainly in education and health.[[49]](#cite_note-49) [thumb|left|Refineries in Esmeraldas](/wiki/File:Industria_petrolera_ecuatoriana.jpg) Oil accounts for 40% of exports and contributes to maintaining a positive trade balance.[[50]](#cite_note-50) Since the late 1960s, the exploitation of oil increased production, and proven reserves are estimated at 6.51 billion barrels [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of).[[51]](#cite_note-51) The overall trade balance for August 2012 was a surplus of almost $390 million for the first six months of 2012, a huge figure compared with that of 2007, which reached only $5.7 million; the surplus had risen by about $425 million compared to 2006.<ref name=economy/> The oil trade balance positive had revenues of $3.295 million in 2008, while non-oil was negative, amounting to $2.842 million. The trade balance with the United States, Chile, the European Union, Bolivia, Peru, Brazil, and Mexico is positive. The trade balance with Argentina, Colombia, and Asia is negative.[[52]](#cite_note-52) In the agricultural sector, Ecuador is a major exporter of bananas (first place worldwide in production and export), flowers, and the seventh largest producer of cocoa.[[53]](#cite_note-53) The shrimp, sugar cane, rice, cotton, corn, palm, and coffee productions are also significant.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) The country's vast resources include large amounts of timber across the country, like eucalyptus and mangroves.[[54]](#cite_note-54) Pines and cedars are planted in the region of La Sierra and walnuts, rosemary, and balsa wood in the Guayas River Basin.[[55]](#cite_note-55)The industry is concentrated mainly in Guayaquil, the largest industrial center, and in Quito, where in recent years the industry has grown considerably. This city is also the largest business center of the country.[[56]](#cite_note-56) Industrial production is directed primarily to the domestic market.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) Despite this, there is limited export of products produced or processed industrially.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) These include canned foods, liquor, jewelry, furniture, and more.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) A minor industrial activity is also concentrated in Cuenca.[[57]](#cite_note-57) The incomes due to the tourism have been increasing during the last years because of the efforts of the Government of showing the variety of climates and the biodiversity in Ecuador.

[thumb|right|upright|World Trade Center headquarters in](/wiki/File:Wtcgye.jpg) [Guayaquil](/wiki/Guayaquil) Ecuador has negotiated bilateral treaties with other countries, besides belonging to the [Andean Community of Nations](/wiki/Andean_Community_of_Nations),[[58]](#cite_note-58) and an associate member of [Mercosur](/wiki/Mercosur).[[59]](#cite_note-59) It also serves on the [World Trade Organization](/wiki/World_Trade_Organization) (WTO), in addition to the [Inter-American Development Bank](/wiki/Inter-American_Development_Bank) (IDB), [World Bank](/wiki/World_Bank), [International Monetary Fund](/wiki/International_Monetary_Fund) (IMF), [Corporación Andina de Fomento](/wiki/Corporación_Andina_de_Fomento) (CAF) and other multilateral agencies.[[60]](#cite_note-60)[[61]](#cite_note-61)[[62]](#cite_note-62) In April 2007, Ecuador paid off its debt to the IMF, thus ending an era of interventionism of the Agency in the country.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) The public finance of Ecuador consists of the Central Bank of Ecuador (BCE), the National Development Bank (BNF), the State Bank, the National Finance Corporation, the Ecuadorian Housing Bank (BEV) and the Ecuadorian Educational Loans and Grants.[[63]](#cite_note-63) Between 2006 and 2009, the government increased social spending on social welfare and education from 2.6% to 5.2% of its GDP.[[64]](#cite_note-64) Starting in 2007, with an economy surpassed by the economic crisis, Ecuador was subject to a number of economic policy reforms by the government that have helped steer the Ecuadorian economy to a sustained, substantial, and focused financial stability and social policy.[[64]](#cite_note-64) [Template:Vague](/wiki/Template:Vague) Such policies were expansionary fiscal policies, of access to housing finance, stimulus packs, and limiting the amount of money reserves banks could keep abroad.[[64]](#cite_note-64) The Ecuadorian Government has made huge investments in education and infrastructure throughout the nation, which have improved the lives of the poor.[[65]](#cite_note-65) In 2000, Ecuador [changed](/wiki/Currency_substitution) its currency from the [sucre](/wiki/Ecuadorian_sucre) to the [U.S. dollar](/wiki/United_States_Dollar) following a [banking crisis](/wiki/Banking_crisis).<ref name=FT081213/>

On December 12, 2008, president Correa announced that Ecuador would not pay $30.6 million in interest to lenders of a $510-million [loan](/wiki/Loan), claiming that they were illegitimate.<ref name=FT081213>Mapstone, (December 13, 2008). [Ecuador defaults on sovereign bonds](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/7170e224-c897-11dd-b86f-000077b07658.html). [*Financial Times*](/wiki/Financial_Times)</ref> In addition, it claimed that $3.8 billion in foreign debt negotiated by previous administrations was illegitimate because it was authorized without executive decree.<ref name=FT081213/> At the time of the announcement, the country had $5.65 billion in cash reserves.<ref name=FT081213/> <http://www.worlddiplomacy.org> States that "Since Ecuador's President Rafael Correa won a third term in 2013, this should provide further stability and a good rate of growth for Ecuador's economy."[[66]](#cite_note-66) Ecuador, as part of the Mercosur, have signed a free trade agreement with [Lebanon](/wiki/Lebanon) on December 18, 2014.[[67]](#cite_note-67) [Amerindians](/wiki/Indigenous_Peoples_of_the_Americas) account for 7% of the current population. The mostly rural Montubio population of the coastal provinces of Ecuador, who might be classified as [Pardo](/wiki/Pardo) account for 7.4% of the population. The [Afro-Ecuadorians](/wiki/Afro-Ecuadorian_people) is a minority population (7%) in Ecuador, that includes the [Mulattos](/wiki/Mulatto) and [*zambos*](/wiki/Zambo), and are largely based in the Esmeraldas province and to a lesser degree in the predominantly Mestizo provinces of Coastal Ecuador - Guayas and Manabi. In the Highland Andes where a predominantly Mestizo, white and Amerindian population exist, the African presence is almost non-existent except for a small community in the province of Imbabura called Chota Valley.

### Religion[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=38)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:Basilica_del_Voto_Nacional.jpg)[Basílica del Voto Nacional](/wiki/Basílica_del_Voto_Nacional) in old downtown Quito According to the Ecuadorian National Institute of Statistics and Census, 91.95% of the country's population have a religion, 7.94% are [atheists](/wiki/Atheism) and 0.11% are [agnostics](/wiki/Agnosticism). Among the people that have a religion, 80.44% are Roman Catholic [Latin Rite](/wiki/Latin_Rite) (see [List of Roman Catholic dioceses in Ecuador](/wiki/List_of_Roman_Catholic_dioceses_in_Ecuador)), 11.30% are [Evangelical](/wiki/Evangelical) [Protestants](/wiki/Protestantism), 1.29% are [Jehovah's Witnesses](/wiki/Jehovah's_Witnesses) and 6.97% other (mainly Jewish, Buddhists and Latter-day Saints).[[72]](#cite_note-72)[[73]](#cite_note-73) [thumb|left|Church of San Francisco](/wiki/File:Iglesia_de_San_Francisco,_Quito_01.jpg) In the rural parts of Ecuador, Amerindian beliefs and Catholicism are sometimes [syncretized](/wiki/Syncretism). Most festivals and annual parades are based on religious celebrations, many incorporating a mixture of rites and icons.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

There is a small number of [Eastern Orthodox Christians](/wiki/Eastern_Orthodox_Church), Amerindian religions, Muslims (see [Islam in Ecuador](/wiki/Islam_in_Ecuador)), [Buddhists](/wiki/Buddhist) and [Bahá'í](/wiki/Bahá'í). According to their own estimates, the [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](/wiki/The_Church_of_Jesus_Christ_of_Latter-day_Saints) accounts for about 1.4% of the population, or 211,165 members at the end of 2012.[[74]](#cite_note-74) According to their own sources, in 2012 there were 77,323 [Jehovah's Witnesses](/wiki/Jehovah's_Witnesses) in the country.[[75]](#cite_note-75) The first Jews arrived in Ecuador in the 16th and 17th centuries. Most of them are [Sephardic](/wiki/Sephardic) [Anusim](/wiki/Anusim) ([Crypto-Jews](/wiki/Crypto-Jews)) and many still speak [Judaeo-Spanish](/wiki/Judaeo-Spanish) (Ladino) language.[[76]](#cite_note-76)[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) Today the Jewish Community of Ecuador (Comunidad Judía del Ecuador) has its seat in [Quito](/wiki/Quito) and has approximately 200 members. Nevertheless, this number is declining because young people leave the country for the United States or [Israel](/wiki/Israel). The Community has a Jewish Center with a [synagogue](/wiki/Synagogue), a country club, and a cemetery. It supports the "Albert Einstein School", where Jewish history, religion, and [Hebrew](/wiki/Hebrew) classes are offered. There are very small communities in [Cuenca](/wiki/Cuenca_(Ecuador)). The "Comunidad de Culto Israelita" reunites the Jews of [Guayaquil](/wiki/Guayaquil). This community works independently from the "Jewish Community of Ecuador" and is composed of only 30 people.[[77]](#cite_note-77)

### Nations[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=39)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) The Ecuadorian constitution recognizes the "pluri-nationality" of those who want to exercise their affiliation with their native ethnic groups. Thus, in addition to *criollos*, *mestizos*, and Afro-Ecuadorians, some people belong to the Amerindian nations scattered in a few places in the coast, Quechua Andean villages, and the Amazonian jungle.

### Population genetics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=40)]

According to a 2015 [genealogical DNA testing](/wiki/Genealogical_DNA_test), the average Ecuadorian is estimated to be 52.96% [Native American](/wiki/Native_American), 41.77% [European](/wiki/Ethnic_groups_in_Europe), and 5.26% [Sub-Saharan African](/wiki/Sub-Saharan_African) overall.[[78]](#cite_note-78)

### Population density[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=41)]

The majority of Ecuadorians live in the central provinces, the Andes mountains, or along the Pacific coast. The tropical forest region to the east of the mountains (El Oriente) remains sparsely populated and contains only about 3% of the population. Birth rate is 2-1 for each death. Marriages are usually from 14 and above using parental consent. About 12.4% of the population is married in the ages 15–19. Divorce rates are moderate.  
Population cities (2010)[[20]](#cite_note-20) {|class="infobox" style="text-align:center; width:97%; margin-right:10px; font-size:90%" ! colspan="9" style="text-align:center; font-weight:bold;"| Largest cities of Ecuador |- ! rowspan=13 width:100|  
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[Quito](/wiki/Quito)  
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[Cuenca](/wiki/Cuenca_(Ecuador))  
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[Santo Domingo](/wiki/Santo_Domingo_(Ecuador))  
  
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### Immigration and emigration[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=42)]

[Template:Expand section](/wiki/Template:Expand_section) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) A small east [Asian Latino](/wiki/Asian_Latino) community, estimated at 2,500, mainly consists of those of Japanese and Chinese descent, whose ancestors arrived as miners, farmhands and fishermen in the late 19th century.<ref name=CIA/>

In the early years of World War II, Ecuador still admitted a certain number of immigrants, and in 1939, when several South American countries refused to accept 165 Jewish refugees from Germany aboard the ship *Koenigstein*, Ecuador granted them entry permits.[[80]](#cite_note-80) In recent years, Ecuador has grown in popularity among North American expatriates.[[81]](#cite_note-81) They're drawn there by the authentic cultural experience and beautiful natural surroundings. Also, Ecuador's favorable residency options make for an easy transition for those who decide to settle there indefinitely.

Another perk that draws many expats to Ecuador is its low cost of living. Since everything from gas to groceries costs far less than in North America, it's a popular choice for those who are looking to make the most of their retirement budget.

Even real estate in Ecuador is much less than its tropical counterparts. However, as more and more North Americans are discovering Ecuador's potential, property prices are beginning to rise from where they were a decade ago, particularly in the areas that are popular among expats and tourists.

## Culture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=43)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|A mestizo woman in Ecuadorian garment participating in the 2010](/wiki/File:Ecuadorian_dress,_Carnival_del_Pueblo_2010,_London.jpg) [Carnaval del Pueblo](/wiki/Carnaval_del_Pueblo) Ecuador's mainstream culture is defined by its Hispanic [*mestizo*](/wiki/Mestizo) majority, and, like their ancestry, it is traditionally of Spanish heritage, influenced in different degrees by Amerindian traditions and in some cases by African elements. The first and most substantial wave of modern immigration to Ecuador consisted of Spanish colonists, following the arrival of Europeans in 1499. A lower number of other Europeans and North Americans migrated to the country in the late 19th and early twentieth centuries and, in smaller numbers, Poles, Lithuanians, English, Irish, and Croats during and after the Second World War.

[thumb|right|](/wiki/File:Otavalo_Artisan_Market_-_Andes_Mountains_-_South_America_-_photograph_001.JPG)[Alpaca](/wiki/Alpaca) textile at the [Otavalo](/wiki/Otavalo) Artisan Market in the [Andes](/wiki/Andes) Mountains, Ecuador

[thumb|right|Hand Painted Handcrafts at the Otavalo Artisan Market](/wiki/File:Otavalo_Artisan_Market_-_Andes_Mountains_-_South_America_-_photograph_007.JPG)

Since African slavery was not the workforce of the Spanish colonies in the Andes Mountains, given the subjugation of the Amerindian people through proselytization and [*encomiendas*](/wiki/Encomiendas), the minority population of African descent is mostly found in the coastal northern province of Esmeraldas. This is largely owing to the 17th-century shipwreck of a slave-trading galleon off the northern coast of Ecuador. The few black African survivors swam to the shore and penetrated the then-thick jungle under the leadership of Anton, the chief of the group, where they remained as free men maintaining their original culture, not influenced by the typical elements found in other provinces of the coast or in the Andean region. A little later, runaway slaves from Colombia known as *cimarrones* joined them. In the small Chota Valley of the province of Imbabura exists a small community of Africans among the province's predominantly mestizo population. These blacks are descendants of Africans, who were brought over from Colombia by Jesuits to work their colonial sugar plantations as slaves. As a general rule, small elements of zambos and mulattoes coexisted among the overwhelming mestizo population of coastal Ecuador throughout its history as gold miners in Loja, Zaruma, and Zamora and as shipbuilders and plantation workers around the city of Guayaquil. Today you can find a small community of Africans in the Catamayo valley of the predominantly mestizo population of Loja.

Ecuador's Amerindian communities are integrated into the mainstream culture to varying degrees,[[82]](#cite_note-82) but some may also practice their own native cultures, particularly the more remote Amerindian communities of the [Amazon basin](/wiki/Amazon_basin). Spanish is spoken as the first language by more than 90% of the population and as a first or second language by more than 98%. Part of Ecuador's population can speak [Amerindian](/wiki/Amerindian) languages, in some cases as a second language. Two percent of the population speak only Amerindian languages.

### Language[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=44)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Most Ecuadorians speak Spanish, though many speak Amerindian language, such as [Kichwa](/wiki/Kichwa) (also spelt Quichua), which is one of the Quechuan languages and is spoken by approximately 2.5 million people in Ecuador, Bolivia, Colombia, and Peru.[[83]](#cite_note-83) Other Amerindian languages spoken in Ecuador include Awapit (spoken by the Awá), A'ingae (spoken by the Cofan), Shuar Chicham (spoken by the Shuar), Achuar-Shiwiar (spoken by the Achuar and the Shiwiar), Cha'palaachi (spoken by the Chachi), Tsa'fiki (spoken by the Tsáchila), Paicoca (spoken by the Siona and Secoya), and Wao Tededeo (spoken by the Waorani). Though most features of Ecuadorian Spanish are those universal to the Spanish-speaking world, there are several idiosyncrasies.

### Music[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=45)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|right|](/wiki/File:Julio_jaramillo_laurido2.jpg)[Julio Jaramillo](/wiki/Julio_Jaramillo) is an icon of music. The music of Ecuador has a long history. [Pasillo](/wiki/Pasillo) is a genre of indigenous Latin music. In Ecuador it is the "national genre of music". Through the years, many cultures have brought their influences together to create new types of music. There are also different kinds of traditional music like albazo, pasacalle, fox incaico, tonada, capishca, [Bomba](/wiki/Bomba_(Ecuador)) (highly established in Afro-Ecuadorian societies), and so on. [Tecnocumbia](/wiki/Tecnocumbia) and Rockola are clear examples of the influence of foreign cultures. One of the most traditional forms of dancing in Ecuador is [Sanjuanito](/wiki/Sanjuanito). It's originally from northern Ecuador ([Otavalo](/wiki/Otavalo_(city))-Imbabura). Sanjuanito is a type of dance music played during festivities by the mestizo and Amerindian communities. According to the Ecuadorian musicologist Segundo Luis Moreno, Sanjuanito was danced by Amerindian people during San Juan Bautista's birthday. This important date was established by the Spaniards on June 24, coincidentally the same date when Amerindian people celebrated their rituals of [Inti Raymi](/wiki/Inti_Raymi).

### Cuisine[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=46)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|Ecuadorian](/wiki/File:Ceviche_ecuador.JPG) [*ceviche*](/wiki/Ceviche), made of shrimp, lemon, onions, and some herbs. Tomato sauce and orange are used at some places but do not form a part of the basic recipe [Ecuadorian cuisine](/wiki/Ecuadorian_cuisine) is diverse, varying with the altitude and associated agricultural conditions. Most regions in Ecuador follow the traditional three course meal of soup, a course that includes rice and a protein, and then dessert and coffee to finish. Supper is usually lighter and sometimes consists only of coffee or herbal tea with bread.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

In the highland region, pork, chicken, beef, and *cuy* (guinea pig) are popular and are served with a variety of grains (especially rice and corn) or potatoes.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

In the coastal region, seafood is very popular, with fish, shrimp, and [*ceviche*](/wiki/Ceviche) being key parts of the diet. Generally, ceviches are served with fried plantain ([chifles](/wiki/Chifle) y patacones), popcorn, or [tostado](/wiki/Tostada_(tortilla)). [Plantain](/wiki/Plantain_(cooking))- and peanut-based dishes are the basis of most coastal meals. Encocados (dishes that contain a coconut sauce) are also very popular. [*Churrasco*](/wiki/Churrasco) is a staple food of the coastal region, especially [Guayaquil](/wiki/Guayaquil). *Arroz con menestra y carne asada* (rice with beans and grilled beef) is one of the traditional dishes of Guayaquil, as is [fried plantain](/wiki/Tostones), which is often served with it. This region is a leading producer of [bananas](/wiki/Banana), [Cocoa beans](/wiki/Cocoa_bean) (to make chocolate), shrimp, [tilapia](/wiki/Tilapia), [mango](/wiki/Mango), and [passion fruit](/wiki/Passiflora_edulis), among other products.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

In the Amazon region, a dietary staple is the *yuca*, elsewhere called [cassava](/wiki/Cassava). Many fruits are available in this region, including [bananas](/wiki/Banana), [tree grapes](/wiki/Cyphostemma_juttae), and [peach palms](/wiki/Bactris_gasipaes).[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

[thumnb|right|222px|Centro de Arte Contemporáneo, Quito](/wiki/File:Centro_de_Arte_Contemporáneo,_Quito_pic_b4.JPG) [thumnb|right|222px| Antiguo Hospital Militar (Centro Histórico, Quito)](/wiki/File:Antiguo_Hospital_Militar_(Centro_Histórico,_Quito)_pic_a05.JPG)

### Literature[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=47)]

Early literature in colonial Ecuador, as in the rest of Spanish America, was influenced by the [Spanish Golden Age](/wiki/Spanish_Golden_Age). One of the earliest examples is [Jacinto Collahuazo](/wiki/Jacinto_Collahuazo),<ref name =Boceto>Borja, Piedad. [Boceto de Poesía Ecuatoriana,'Journal de la Academia de Literatura Hispanoamericana', 1972](http://revistas.ucm.es/fll/02104547/articulos/ALHI7272110053A.PDF)</ref> an Amerindian chief of a northern village in today's Ibarra, born in the late 1600s. Despite the early repression and discrimination of the native people by the Spanish, Collahuazo learned to read and write in [Castilian](/wiki/Spanish_language), but his work was written in [Quechua](/wiki/Quechua_languages). The use of [Quipu](/wiki/Quipu) was banned by the Spanish,[[84]](#cite_note-84) and in order to preserve their work, many Inca poets had to resort to the use of the Latin alphabet to write in their native Quechua language. The history behind the Inca drama "Ollantay", the oldest literary piece in existence for any Amerindian language in America,[[85]](#cite_note-85) shares some similarities with the work of Collahuazo. Collahuazo was imprisoned and all of his work burned. The existence of his literary work came to light many centuries later, when a crew of masons was restoring the walls of a colonial church in Quito and found a hidden manuscript. The salvaged fragment is a Spanish translation from Quechua of the "Elegy to the Dead of Atahualpa",<ref name =Boceto/> a poem written by Collahuazo, which describes the sadness and impotence of the Inca people of having lost their king Atahualpa.

Other early Ecuadorian writers include the Jesuits [Juan Bautista Aguirre](/wiki/Juan_Bautista_Aguirre), born in [Daule](/wiki/Daule_Canton) in 1725, and Father [Juan de Velasco](/wiki/Juan_de_Velasco), born in Riobamba in 1727. De Velasco wrote about the nations and chiefdoms that had existed in the *Kingdom of Quito* (today Ecuador) before the arrival of the Spanish. His historical accounts are nationalistic, featuring a romantic perspective of precolonial history. [thumb|upright|left|](/wiki/File:Jmontalvo.jpg)[Juan Montalvo](/wiki/Juan_Montalvo)

Famous authors from the late colonial and early republic period include [Eugenio Espejo](/wiki/Eugenio_Espejo), a printer and main author of the first newspaper in Ecuadorian colonial times; [Jose Joaquin de Olmedo](/wiki/Jose_Joaquin_de_Olmedo) (born in Guayaquil), famous for his ode to [Simón Bolívar](/wiki/Simón_Bolívar) titled *Victoria de Junin*; [Juan Montalvo](/wiki/Juan_Montalvo), a prominent essayist and novelist; [Juan Leon Mera](/wiki/Juan_Leon_Mera), famous for his work "Cumanda" or "Tragedy among Savages" and the Ecuadorian National Anthem; Juan A. Martinez with *A la Costa';, Dolores Veintimilla;*[*[86]*](#cite_note-86) *and others.*

Contemporary Ecuadorian writers include the novelist [Jorge Enrique Adoum](/wiki/Jorge_Enrique_Adoum); the poet [Jorge Carrera Andrade](/wiki/Jorge_Carrera_Andrade); the essayist [Benjamín Carrión](/wiki/Benjamín_Carrión); the poets Medardo Angel Silva, Jorge Carrera Andrade, and [Luis Alberto Costales](/wiki/Luis_Costales); the novelist Enrique Gil Gilbert; the novelist [Jorge Icaza](/wiki/Jorge_Icaza) (author of the novel *Huasipungo*, translated to many languages); the short story author Pablo Palacio; and the novelist Alicia Yanez Cossio.

In spite of Ecuador's considerable mystique, it is rarely featured as a setting in contemporary western literature. One exception is "The Ecuadorian Deception," a murder mystery/thriller authored by American Bear Mills. In it, George d'Hout, a website designer from the United States is lured under false pretenses to Guayaquil. A corrupt American archaeologist is behind the plot, believing d'Hout holds the keys to locating a treasure hidden by a buccaneer ancestor. The story is based on a real pirate by the name of George d'Hout who terrorized Guayaquil in the 16th Century.

### Art[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=48)]

The best known art styles from Ecuador belonged to the [*Escuela Quiteña*](/wiki/Escuela_Quiteña), which developed from the 16th to 18th centuries, examples of which are on display in various old churches in Quito. [Ecuadorian painters](/wiki/Ecuadorian_painters) include [Eduardo Kingman](/wiki/Eduardo_Kingman), [Oswaldo Guayasamín](/wiki/Oswaldo_Guayasamín), and [Camilo Egas](/wiki/Camilo_Egas) from the Indiginist Movement; [Manuel Rendon](/wiki/Manuel_Rendon), Jaime Zapata, [Enrique Tábara](/wiki/Enrique_Tábara), [Aníbal Villacís](/wiki/Aníbal_Villacís), [Theo Constanté](/wiki/Theo_Constanté), [Luis Molinari](/wiki/Luis_Molinari), [Araceli Gilbert](/wiki/Araceli_Gilbert), [Judith Gutierrez](/wiki/Judith_Gutierrez), [Felix Arauz](/wiki/Felix_Arauz), and [Estuardo Maldonado](/wiki/Estuardo_Maldonado) from the Informalist Movement; and [Luis Burgos Flor](/wiki/Luis_Burgos_Flor) with his abstract, futuristic style. The Amerindian people of Tigua, Ecuador, are also world-renowned[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) for their [traditional paintings](/wiki/Culture_of_Ecuador#Indigenous_art_of_Tigua).

### Sports[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=49)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|left|](/wiki/File:Perez-flag.jpg)[Jefferson Pérez](/wiki/Jefferson_Pérez), Olympic gold medalist [thumb|Estadio Monumental of Guayaquil.](/wiki/File:Estadio_Monumental_6.JPG) The most popular [sport in Ecuador](/wiki/Sport_in_Ecuador), as in most South American countries, is football (soccer). Its best known professional teams include [Liga De Quito](/wiki/LDU_Quito) from [Quito](/wiki/Quito); is the most important in the Ecuadorian football. Also [Emelec](/wiki/Club_Sport_Emelec) from [Guayaquil](/wiki/Guayaquil); [Deportivo Quito](/wiki/Sociedad_Deportivo_Quito), and [El Nacional](/wiki/Club_Deportivo_El_Nacional) from Quito; [Olmedo](/wiki/Centro_Deportivo_Olmedo) from [Riobamba](/wiki/Riobamba); and [Deportivo Cuenca](/wiki/Club_Deportivo_Cuenca) from Cuenca. Currently the most successful soccer team in Ecuador is LDU Quito, and it is the only Ecuadorian team that has won the [*Copa Libertadores*](/wiki/Copa_Libertadores), the [*Copa Sudamericana*](/wiki/Copa_Sudamericana), and the [*Recopa Sudamericana*](/wiki/Recopa_Sudamericana); they were also runners-up in the [2008 FIFA Club World Cup](/wiki/2008_FIFA_Club_World_Cup). The matches of the [Ecuadorian national team](/wiki/Ecuador_national_football_team) are the most-watched sporting events in the country.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) Ecuador has qualified for the final rounds of the [2002](/wiki/2002_FIFA_World_Cup), the [2006](/wiki/2006_FIFA_World_Cup), & the [2014](/wiki/2014_FIFA_World_Cup) [FIFA World Cups](/wiki/FIFA_World_Cup). The 2002 FIFA World Cup qualifying campaign was considered a huge success for the country and its inhabitants.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) The unusually high elevation of the home stadium in Quito often affects the performance of visiting teams. Ecuador finished in 2nd place in the [CONMEBOL](/wiki/CONMEBOL) qualifiers behind [Argentina](/wiki/Argentina_national_football_team) and above the team that would become World Champions, [Brazil](/wiki/Brazil_national_football_team). In the 2006 FIFA World Cup, Ecuador finished ahead of [Poland](/wiki/Poland_national_football_team) and [Costa Rica](/wiki/Costa_Rica_national_football_team) finishing second behind [Germany](/wiki/Germany_national_football_team) in Group A in the 2006 World Cup. They were defeated by [England](/wiki/England_national_football_team) in the second round.

Ecuador has won only two medals in the Olympic Games, both gained by 20-km (12 mi) racewalker [Jefferson Pérez](/wiki/Jefferson_Pérez), who took gold in the [1996](/wiki/1996_Summer_Olympics) games and silver [12 years later](/wiki/2008_Summer_Olympics). Pérez also set a world best in the 2003 World Championships of 1:17:21 for the 20-km (12 mi) distance.[[87]](#cite_note-87)

## Health[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=50)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|IESS Hospital in](/wiki/File:EC_Latacunga_Hospital_2012.jpg) [Latacunga](/wiki/Latacunga) The current structure of the Ecuadorian public health care system dates back to 1967.[[88]](#cite_note-88)[[89]](#cite_note-89) The Ministry of the Public Health (Ministerio de Salud Pública del Ecuador) is the responsible entity of the regulation and creation of the public health policies and health care plans. The Minister of Public Health is appointed directly by the President of the Republic. The current minister, or Ecuadorian general surgeon, is [Margarita Guevara](/wiki/Margarita_Guevara).

The philosophy of the Ministry of Public Health is the social support and service to the most vulnerable population,<ref name=health>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> and its main plan of action lies around communitarian health and preventive medicine.<ref name=health/>

The public healthcare system allows patients to be treated without an appointment in public general hospitals by general practitioners and specialists in the outpatient clinic (*Consulta Externa*) at no cost. This is done in the four basic specialties of pediatric, gynecology, clinic medicine, and surgery.<ref name=healths>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> There are also public hospitals specialized to treat chronic diseases, target a particular group of the population, or provide better treatment in some medical specialties. Some examples in this group are the Gynecologic Hospitals, or Maternities, Children Hospitals, Geriatric Hospitals, and Oncology Institutes.

Although well-equipped general hospitals are found in the major cities or capitals of provinces, there are basic hospitals in the smaller towns and [canton](/wiki/Canton_(country_subdivision)) cities for family care consultation and treatments in pediatrics, gynecology, clinical medicine, and surgery.<ref name=healths/>

Community health care centers (Centros de Salud) are found inside metropolitan areas of cities and in rural areas. These are day hospitals that provide treatment to patients whose hospitalization is under 24 hours.<ref name=healths/> The doctors assigned to rural communities, where the Amerindian population can be substantial, have small clinics under their responsibility for the treatment of patients in the same fashion as the day hospitals in the major cities. The treatment in this case respects the culture of the community.<ref name=healths/>

The public healthcare system should not be confused with the Ecuadorian Social Security healthcare service, which is dedicated to individuals with formal employment and who are affiliated obligatorily through their employers. Citizens with no formal employment may still contribute to the social security system voluntarily and have access to the medical services rendered by the social security system. The Ecuadorian Institute of Social Security (IESS) has several major hospitals and medical sub-centers under its administration across the nation.[[90]](#cite_note-90) Ecuador currently ranks 20, in most [efficient health care countries](/wiki/World_Health_Organization_ranking_of_health_systems), compared to 111 back in the year 2000.[[91]](#cite_note-91)Ecuadorians have a life expectancy of 75.6 years.[[92]](#cite_note-92) The infant mortality rate is 13 per 1,000 live births,<ref name=free/> a major improvement from approximately 76 in the early 1980s and 140 in 1950.<ref name=cs>[Template:Csref](/wiki/Template:Csref)</ref> 23% of children under five are chronically malnourished.<ref name=free/> Population in some rural areas have no access to potable water, and its supply is provided by mean of water tankers. There are 686 malaria cases per 100,000 people.[[93]](#cite_note-93) Basic health care, including doctor's visits, basic surgeries, and basic medications, has been provided free since 2008.<ref name=free>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> However, some public hospitals are in poor condition and often lack necessary supplies to attend the high demand of patients. Private hospitals and clinics are well equipped but still expensive for the majority of the population.

## Education[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=51)]

[thumb|ESPOL – Guayaquil](/wiki/File:Rectorado_noche.jpg) [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

[thumb|The Oldest Observatory in](/wiki/File:Quito_Observatory.JPG) [South America](/wiki/South_America) is the [Quito Astronomical Observatory](/wiki/Quito_Astronomical_Observatory), founded in 1873 and located in [Quito](/wiki/Quito), Ecuador. The Quito Astronomical Observatory is managed by [EPN](/wiki/National_Polytechnic_School).[[94]](#cite_note-94)

The Ecuadorian Constitution requires that all children attend school until they achieve a "basic level of education", which is estimated at nine school years.<ref name=ilab>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> In 1996, the net primary enrollment rate was 96.9%, and 71.8% of children stayed in school until the fifth grade.<ref name=ilab/> The cost of primary and secondary education is borne by the government, but families often face significant additional expenses such as fees and transportation costs.<ref name=ilab/>

Provision of public schools falls far below the levels needed, and class sizes are often very large, and families of limited means often find it necessary to pay for education.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) In rural areas, only 10% of the children go on to high school.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) The Ministry of Education states that the mean number of years completed is 6.7.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

[thumb|Maldonado's High School](/wiki/File:Colegio_Maldonado_Riobamba.jpg) [Riobamba](/wiki/Riobamba) Ecuador has 61 universities, many of which still confer [terminal degrees](/wiki/Terminal_degree) according to the traditional Spanish education system,[[95]](#cite_note-95) honoring a long tradition of having some of the oldest universities in the Americas: University of San Fulgencio, founded in 1586 by the Augustines; San Gregorio Magno University, founded in 1651 by the Jesuits; and University of Santo Tomás of Aquino, founded in 1681 by the Dominican order.

Among the traditional conferred terminal degrees can be noted the doctorate for medicine and law schools or engineering, physics, chemistry, or mathematics for polytechnic or technology institutes. These terminal degrees, as in the case of the PhD in other countries, were the main requirement for an individual to be accepted in academia as a professor or researcher. In the professional realm, a terminal degree granted by an accredited institution automatically provides a professional license to the individual.

However, in 2004, the National Council of Higher Education (CONESUP), started the reorganization of all the degree-granting schemes of the accredited universities in order to pair them with foreign counterparts. The new structure of some careers caused the dropping of subjects, credits, or even the name of the previously conferred diplomas. The terminal degree in law, previously known as JD [Juris Doctor](/wiki/Juris_Doctor) (Doctor en Jurisprudencia) was replaced by the one of *abogado* (attorney) with the exception of the modification of the number of credits to equate it to an undergraduate degree. In the same fashion for medical school, the required time of education was considerably reduced from nine years (the minimum needed to obtain the title of MD in Medicine and Surgery) to almost five, with the provision that the diploma is not terminal anymore, and it is given with the title of *médico* (medic). Therefore, an MD or PhD in medicine is only to be obtained overseas until the universities adjust themselves to granting schemes and curriculum as in foreign counterparts. Nonetheless, a "médico" can start a career as family practitioner or general medicine physician. [thumb|](/wiki/File:SageoEG_-_Biblioteca_Municipal_de_Guayaquil_001.jpg)[Biblioteca Municipal de Guayaquil](/wiki/Biblioteca_Municipal_de_Guayaquil) This new reorganization, although very ambitious, lacked the proper path to the homologation of diplomas for highly educated professionals graduated in the country or even for the ones graduated in foreign institutions. One of the points of conflict was the imposition of obtaining foreign degrees to current academicians. As today, a master's degree is a requirement to keep an academic position and at least a foreign PhD to attain or retain the status of *rector* (president of a university) or *décano* (dean). For Ecuadorian researchers and many academicians trained in the country, these regulations sounded illogical, disappointing, and unlawful since it appeared a question of a title name conflict rather than specialization or science advancement.

A debate to modify this and other reforms, especially the one which granted control of the Higher Education System by the government, was practically passed with consensus by the multi-partisan National Assembly on August 4, 2010, but vetoed by President [Rafael Correa](/wiki/Rafael_Correa), who wanted to keep the law strictly as it was originally redacted by his political party and SENPLADES (National Secretary of Planning and Development). Due to this change, there are many highly educated professionals and academicians under the old structure but estimated that only 87% of the faculty in public universities have already obtained a master's degree, and fewer than 5% have a PhD (although many of them already have Ecuadorian-granted doctorate degrees).

About 300 institutes of higher education offer two to three years of post-secondary vocational or technical training.

## Sciences and research[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=52)]

[left|thumb|](/wiki/File:NEE-01-PEGASO.jpg)[EXA's](/wiki/Ecuadorian_Civilian_Space_Agency) first satellite, [NEE-01 Pegasus](/wiki/NEE-01_Pegasus) Ecuador is currently placed in 96th position, of innovation in technology.[[96]](#cite_note-96)The most notable icons in Ecuadorian sciences are the mathematician and cartographer [Pedro Vicente Maldonado](/wiki/Pedro_Vicente_Maldonado), born in Riobamba in 1707, and the printer, independence precursor, and medical pioneer [Eugenio Espejo](/wiki/Eugenio_Espejo), born in 1747 in Quito. Among other notable Ecuadorian scientists and engineers are Lieutenant [Jose Rodriguez Lavandera](/wiki/Submarine#First_military_models),[[97]](#cite_note-97) a pioneer who built the first [submarine](/wiki/Submarine) in Latin America in 1837; [Reinaldo Espinosa Aguilar](/wiki/Es:Reinaldo_Espinosa_Aguilar) (1898–1950), a botanist and biologist of Andean flora; and [José Aurelio Dueñas](/wiki/Es:José_Aurelio_Dueñas) (1880–1961), a chemist and inventor of a method of textile serigraphy.

The major areas of scientific research in Ecuador have been in the medical fields, tropical and infectious diseases treatments, agricultural engineering, pharmaceutical research, and bioengineering. Being a small country and a consumer of foreign technology, Ecuador has favored research supported by entrepreneurship in information technology. The antivirus program *Checkprogram*, banking protection system *MdLock*, and Core Banking Software *Cobis* are products of Ecuadorian development.[[98]](#cite_note-98) The scientific production in hard sciences has been limited due to lack of funding but focused around physics, statistics, and partial differential equations in mathematics.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) In the case of engineering fields, the majority of scientific production comes from the top three polytechnic institutions: Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral - [*ESPOL*](/wiki/Escuela_Superior_Politecnica_del_Litoral), Universidad de Las Fuerzas Armadas - [*ESPE*](/wiki/ESPE), and Escuela Politécnica Nacional [*EPN*](/wiki/National_Polytechnic_School).

EPN is known for research and education in the [applied science](/wiki/Applied_science), [astronomy](/wiki/Astronomy), [atmospheric physics](/wiki/Atmospheric_physics), [engineering](/wiki/Engineering) and [physical sciences](/wiki/Physical_sciences). The [Geophysics](/wiki/Geophysics) Institute [[99]](#cite_note-99) monitors over the country's [volcanoes](/wiki/Volcanoes) in the [Andes Mountains](/wiki/Andes_Mountains) of Ecuador and in the [Galápagos Islands](/wiki/Galápagos_Islands), all of which is part of the [Ring of Fire](/wiki/Ring_of_Fire). EPN adopted the [polytechnic university model](/wiki/History_of_European_research_universities) that stresses laboratory instruction in applied science and engineering.

The Oldest Observatory in South America is the [Quito Astronomical Observatory](/wiki/Quito_Astronomical_Observatory) and is located in Quito, Ecuador. The Quito Astronomical Observatory, which gives the global community of a Virtual Telescope System that is connected via the Internet and allows the world to watch by streaming, is managed by EPN.

Contemporary Ecuadorian scientists who have been recognized by international institutions are Eugenia del Pino (born 1945), the first Ecuadorian to be elected to the United States [National Academy of Science](/wiki/National_Academy_of_Science), and [Arturo Villavicencio](/wiki/Arturo_Villavicencio), who was part of the working group of the IPCC, which shared the [2007 Nobel Peace Prize](/wiki/2007_Nobel_Peace_Prize) with [Al Gore](/wiki/Al_Gore) for their dissemination of the effects of climate change.

Currently, the politics of research and investigation are managed by the National Secretary of Higher Education, Science, and Technology (*Senescyt*).[[100]](#cite_note-100)

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=53)]

[Template:Portal](/wiki/Template:Portal) [Template:Div col](/wiki/Template:Div_col)

* [Index of Ecuador-related articles](/wiki/Index_of_Ecuador-related_articles)
* [French Geodesic Mission](/wiki/French_Geodesic_Mission)
* [International rankings of Ecuador](/wiki/International_rankings_of_Ecuador)
* [List of Ecuadorians](/wiki/List_of_Ecuadorians)
* [List of mountains in Ecuador](/wiki/List_of_mountains_in_Ecuador)
* [List of national parks in Ecuador](/wiki/List_of_national_parks_in_Ecuador)
* Lost Pyramid of [Puñay](/wiki/Puñay)
* [National symbols of Ecuador](/wiki/National_symbols_of_Ecuador)
* [Outline of Ecuador](/wiki/Outline_of_Ecuador)

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[Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

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