



Global Expertise. Local Solutions.  
Sustainable Democracy.

# **Elections in Ecuador**

## *February 17 Presidential & Legislative Elections*

Frequently Asked Questions

**The Americas**

**International Foundation for Electoral Systems**

1850 K Street, NW | Fifth Floor | Washington, D.C. 20006 | [www.IFES.org](http://www.IFES.org)

February 13, 2013

# Frequently Asked Questions

- Who will Ecuadorians elect in the 2013 elections? ..... 1
- When are elections in Ecuador? ..... 1
- When did the electoral process begin? ..... 1
- How is Ecuador organized politically? ..... 1
- What are the main political parties? ..... 2
- Who is running for president and vice president? ..... 2
- How is election administration structured in Ecuador? ..... 3
- Who can vote in this election? ..... 3
- During what hours will polling stations be open? ..... 3
- What accommodations will there be for voters with disabilities? ..... 3
- Can Ecuadorians who reside abroad vote in the elections? ..... 4
- Is electoral observation allowed? How is it regulated? ..... 4
- When will preliminary election results be released? When will the election results be final? ..... 4
- What rules govern media coverage of the elections? ..... 5
- Resources ..... 6

*Disclosure:*  
*These FAQs reflect decisions made by the Ecuadorian elections authorities as of February 12, 2013, to the best of our knowledge.*  
*This document does not represent any IFES policy or technical recommendations.*

## **Who will Ecuadorians elect in the 2013 elections?**

On February 17, Ecuadorians who are eligible to vote will go to the polls to elect the country's next president and vice president and 137 members of the National Assembly (*Asamblea Nacional*).

They will also choose five representatives for the Andean Parliament (*Parlamento Andino*), the legislative branch of the Andean Community, a trading bloc composed of four member states: Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia and Colombia.

## **When are elections in Ecuador?**

Elections will take place on February 17, 2013, for the presidency, vice presidency, National Assembly seats, and Andean Parliament seats.

In order to win in the first round of the presidential election, a candidate must get at least 40 percent of the vote and have a 10-percentage-point advantage over the closest rival. If a run-off is necessary, this will take place on April 7, 2013.

## **When did the electoral process begin?**

The National Electoral Council (*Consejo Nacional Electoral*, CNE) sets the date for the election with a public announcement called a *convocatoria*, or summons. On October 18, 2012, the CNE called for presidential and legislative elections to take place on February 17, 2013.

## **How is Ecuador organized politically?**

Ecuador is a presidential representative democratic republic with a multiparty system. The president and vice president form the executive branch of the government; the legislative branch consists of the National Assembly, which is made up of 137 members.

The presidential elections take place under a two-round majority run-off system. The president and vice president are elected on the same ticket by popular vote for a four-year term and can be re-elected for another consecutive term.

In the National Assembly, all members are elected to serve four-year terms. Fifteen members are elected through an open-list proportional representation system; 116 members are elected by plurality vote in single-member constituencies; and six members are elected by majority vote in multimember constituencies. These six seats are reserved for representatives of Ecuadorians living abroad; these members are elected in three multimember constituencies (two representatives for Asia, Australia, and Europe; two for Canada and the United States; and two for Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa).

The single-member districts were redrawn in 2012 to allow more proportional representation across the country.

## What are the main political parties?

Ecuador has 10 main parliamentary political parties:

1. PAIS (Proud and Sovereign Fatherland) Alliance Movement (*Movimiento Alianza PAIS [Patria Altiva i Soberana]*), Christian socialist party, 59 deputies, currently holds the presidency
2. January 21 Patriotic Society Party (*Partido Sociedad Patriótica 21 de Enero*), conservative, 19 deputies
3. Civic Movement Madera de Guerrero (*Movimiento Cívico Madera de Guerrero*), conservative, seven deputies
4. Institutional Renewal Party of National Action (*Partido Renovador Institucional de Acción Nacional*), right-wing populist, seven deputies
5. Democratic People's Movement (*Movimiento Popular Democrático*), Marxist-Leninist, five deputies
6. Municipalist Movement for National Integrity (*Movimiento Municipalista por la Integridad Nacional*), five deputies
7. Social Christian Party (*Partido Social Cristiano*), conservative, 4 deputies
8. Pachakutik Plurinational Unity Movement – New Country (*Movimiento Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik – Nuevo Pais*), Democratic socialist/indigenous rights, four deputies
9. Ecuadorian Roldosist Party (*Partido Roldosista Ecuatoriano*), left-wing populist, three deputies
10. Democratic Left Party (*Partido Izquierda Democrática*), center left, two deputies

Currently, nine additional parties each have a single deputy in the National Assembly.

## Who is running for president and vice president?

The main candidates in the race for the presidency and vice presidency of Ecuador are:

**Alberto ACOSTA Espinosa (presidential candidate)**

**Marcia Caicedo (vice presidential candidate)**

Multinational Union of the Left (*Unidad Plurinacional de las Izquierdas*)

**Rafeal Vicente CORREA Delgado (incumbent president)**

**Jorge Glass (vice presidential candidate)**

PAIS (Proud and Sovereign Fatherland) Alliance Movement (*Movimiento Alianza PAIS [Patria Altiva i Soberana]*)

**Lucio Edwin GUTIÉRREZ Borbúa (presidential candidate)**

**Pearl Ann Boyes (vice presidential candidate)**

January 21 Patriotic Society Party (*Partido Sociedad Patriótica 21 de Enero*)

**Guillermo Alberto Santiago LASSO Mendoza (presidential candidate)**

**Juan Carlos Solines (vice presidential candidate)**

Creating Opportunities Movement (*Movimiento CREO*)

The polls have incumbent President Correa ahead in the race, with about 60.6 percent of the vote, followed by Guillermo Lasso with 11.2 percent. Alberto Acosta is predicted to receive 4.5 percent of the total votes, and Lucio Gutiérrez, 3.5 percent. The remaining candidates are each expected to receive less than 2 percent of the ballots.

## **How is election administration structured in Ecuador?**

Two main bodies are in charge of the electoral processes in Ecuador: the National Electoral Council (*Consejo Nacional Electoral*, CNE) and the Electoral Tribunal (*Tribunal Contencioso Electoral*, TCE). Together, they form the electoral branch (*Función Electoral*) of the Ecuadorian government.

The CNE organizes and oversees elections; registers political parties for the electoral process; and enforces sanctions and penalties for breaches of the electoral law. The organization is made up of five members elected by another governmental branch, the National Council for Citizen Participation and Social Control (*Consejo de Participación Ciudadana y Control Social*). Members are elected for six-year terms. The president and vice president of the CNE are elected by and from among its five members.

The TCE is responsible for resolving all electoral disputes and appeals pertaining to mandates and rules established and enforced by the CNE. This includes any litigious actions emanating from political organizations or any other type of institution. In addition, the TCE is responsible for penalizing breaches of the norms and statutes related to campaign finance, propaganda and electoral expenses as well as all other transgressions against electoral law. Like the CNE, it is made up of five members elected for six-year terms; a mandatory turnover of two positions occurs every two years, and every three years for the posts of president and vice president of the TCE.

## **Who can vote in this election?**

According to electoral law, suffrage is mandatory for citizens 18 years or older and optional for those between the ages of 16 and 18, active military service members, Ecuadorians residing abroad, citizens with disabilities, and those who are illiterate.

According to the CNE, 11,656,145 people are registered to vote in the upcoming elections; 40,283 voting stations will be set up to accommodate voters all over the country.

## **During what hours will polling stations be open?**

Polling stations will open at 7:00 a.m. and close at 4:00 p.m. In accordance with Article 118 of the electoral law, polling stations will close at 4:00 p.m., and voters still waiting in line at that time will *not* be allowed to vote. Instead, those voters will each receive a certificate of attendance.

## **What accommodations will there be for voters with disabilities?**

The Ecuadorian constitution contains safeguards for the rights for persons with disabilities. The constitution states that persons with disabilities must be afforded the opportunity to participate on

equal footing in all aspects of Ecuadorian life, including political participation. The CNE is responsible for putting appropriate measures in place to facilitate voting by persons with disabilities.

During this election, each polling center will have at least one accessible voting table devoted to serving persons with disabilities. This voting table will be located on the first floor of the precinct.

Voters with disabilities will be able to receive the necessary support to exercise their right to vote according to their specific disabilities. Precinct workers who have been trained in how to administer the vote to persons with disabilities will be in charge of assisting them to and from the voting tables. Braille ballot papers will also be readily available for persons with visual disabilities, and will be attached to the voting ballot so that these voters can vote independently.

### **Can Ecuadorians who reside abroad vote in the elections?**

Yes. According to Article 13 of the electoral law, Ecuadorians living abroad have the right to vote for the president and vice president as well as National Assembly representatives. They can also be elected to any governmental position.

### **Is electoral observation allowed? How is it regulated?**

According to the Ecuadorian electoral law (Articles 174 through 181), electoral observation can be carried out by Ecuadorian citizens and organizations, as well as by foreign individuals or delegations.

Electoral observation can be exercised in connection to any process that involves a political decision undertaken by the citizenry (whether at the local or national level), including referendums and the election of representatives. In addition, as long as the observer is properly registered with the CNE, its accreditation enables it to perform a variety of actions in connection with this work. This includes, but is not limited to, observing the setup of voting stations, reviewing electoral documents available at voting stations and witnessing vote counting.

Under electoral law, the CNE guarantees freedom of mobility, freedom of communication with any and all political actors, and access to public documents before, during and after Election Day in order to facilitate electoral observation tasks. Each observer group is required to draft a final report for the CNE to serve as a reference point for corrective measures for future electoral processes.

Lastly, electoral observers must agree to remain impartial and objective, and not influence any voter or the decisions made by any polling station coordinator or director. Observers will not be allowed to engage in political campaigning or make invocations of support for any political actor or group.

### **When will preliminary election results be released? When will the election results be final?**

A process is in place for the preliminary transmission of electoral results, which will allow preliminary results to be released within five hours of the official close of voting stations.

According to the CNE electoral calendar, official results for the presidential race will be announced a month after Election Day, on March 17, while results for legislative elections will be released on March 26. If a second round of voting for president is required, voting will take place on April 7, with final results released on May 13.

### **What rules govern media coverage of the elections?**

Media outlets are permitted to report on general electoral issues. However, according to the recently amended Article 203 of the electoral law, media outlets are prohibited from reporting on or publishing any material that could be perceived as partisan or favorable to one candidate to the detriment of another.

This measure has sparked great controversy in the country among those who perceive it as a way of weakening and censoring media outlets. The government has stated that this change was designed to balance reports coming out of the media; however, members of the press have argued that the measure hinders their ability to inform the public. Some in the media have pointed out that reporting or publishing investigative reports on a candidate's track record could be perceived as partisan reports favoring another candidate, and thus might be considered illegal.

## Resources

- The Constitution of Ecuador ([English](#))
- The Constitution of Ecuador ([Spanish](#))
- The National Electoral Council [website](#)
- Electoral Tribunal [website](#)