



Diaspora engagement mapping

ECUADOR

Facts & figures

Political rights



Dual citizenship



Right to vote in national elections
for citizens residing abroad



Remittances



Remittances as a share of GDP: 5.25%

Remittances inflow (USD million): 6,544

Voting from abroad:

At embassies/consulates



Data disclaimer

As diaspora definitions vary widely, we have chosen to use comparable data on emigration as a proxy. This does not include all who consider themselves diaspora and is not necessarily aligned with national definitions of diaspora. Emigration data comes from UNDESA (2024) and remittances from the World Bank (2024).

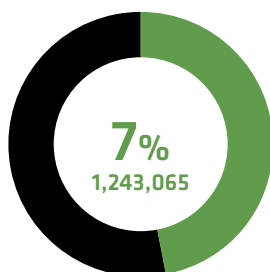
Emigration



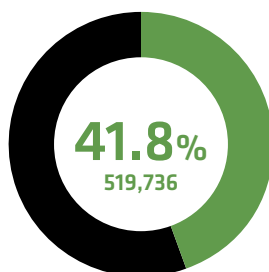
% of emigrants in
total population



% of which
in the EU



♂ 48.3%
♀ 51.7%



♂ 45.1%
♀ 54.9%

Top countries of destination¹

United States of America	561,895
Spain	432,111
Italy	76,883
Chile	46,245
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	33,255

¹ Source: Remittances, World Bank Development Indicators (2018); Migration: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019)

Overview of the policy and legislative framework



- 2008** ● **Executive Decree No. 1397** created the Housing Subsidy for Migrants (Bono de Vivienda para la Persona Migrante) for migrants and their families which is still available today. This Decree increases migrants' and their families' access to habitable conditions and basic services by subsidizing housing costs in Ecuador whilst living abroad.²
- 2013** ● **Executive Decree Transformation of the Migrants National Secretariat SENAMI No. 20 (Decreto No. 20 Transformación Secretaría Nacional del Migrante (SENAMI))** transforms the Migrants' National Secretariat into the Vice Ministry of Human Mobility, which is housed within the Ministry of Foreign Relations and Human Mobility. The purpose of this change is to integrate policy relating to people's mobility with foreign policy. Ecuador's policies relating to human mobility encompass migrants within Ecuador as well as Ecuadorian emigrants.³
- 2017** ● **Human Mobility Law No. 938 (Ley Orgánica de Movilidad Humana No. 938)** establishes the rights of Ecuadorians living abroad, including the right to send and receive remittances, the right to access and participate in programmes and projects offered by the Ecuadorian government, the right to participate in elections for president, vice-president and legislators while abroad, and the right to Ecuadorian cultural identity. To guarantee the right to send and receive remittances, the Legislation states that the Ecuadorian government will create the necessary mechanisms to facilitate remittance transfers as well as incentives to develop relevant projects. This legislation also created the Registration of Overseas Ecuadorian Organisations service (Registro de Organizaciones Ecuatorianas en el Exterior) in order to guarantee Ecuadorians' rights to association. This law also details the services that consulates provide such as informing those living abroad of events in their interest.⁴
- 2018** ● **The Human Mobility Viceministry's Ministerial Agreement Number 000275 (Acuerdo Ministerial Numero 000275 del Viceministerio De Movilidad Humana)** seeks to guarantee the rights of Ecuadorians abroad and those foreigners in transit through public policy. The plan aims to be progressive and go beyond the control of inward and outward migration flows. One of the objectives is to "strengthen the protection of the rights of the population in mobility." To do so, for Ecuadorians living abroad, it seeks to implement an accessible remittances system, increase their financial inclusion in the country's financial system, facilitate access to professional opportunities in Ecuador while living abroad, and promote their inclusion in strategies relating to Ecuador's commercial, touristic, and cultural promotion. With regard to the objective "to defend diversity, integration, and coexistence of people in transit," the plan proposes to create international spaces for the country's cultural promotion, create ways for Ecuadorians living abroad to present artistic and cultural products, and host sporting events with the purpose of integrating Ecuadorian migrants and the local populations in countries of destinations.⁵
- 2018** ● **The Human Mobility Viceministry's Ministerial Agreement Number 000275 (Acuerdo 000275 Ministerial Numero 000275 del Viceministerio De Movilidad Humana)** created the National Human Mobility Working Group and the Permanent Intersectional Human Mobility Working Groups to coordinate public policy relating to human mobility for citizens and non-citizens entering and exiting the country. While this Agreement does mention Ecuadorians living abroad, it does not specifically mention the diaspora nor plans to engage with them for development purposes. Rather, the Agreement mentions Ecuadorian migrants and their need to be properly informed about their access to programmes and services, as well as the government's duty to protect their rights.⁶

2 <https://www.habitatyvivienda.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/09/Reglamento-Bono-Personas-Migrantes-y-su-Familia-Acuerdo-Ministerial-011.pdf>

3 <https://www.cancilleria.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/DECRETO-EJECUTIVO-NO.-20-DE-10-DE-JUNIO-DE-2013.pdf>

4 <https://www.acnur.org/fileadmin/Documentos/BDL/2017/10973.pdf>

5 https://www.cancilleria.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/plan_nacional_de_movilidad_humana.pdf

6 https://www.cancilleria.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/acuerdo_ministerial_275.pdf

Practices

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Registration of Overseas Ecuadorian Organisations (Registro de Organizaciones Ecuatorianas en el Exterior) - February 6, 2017 - Ongoing

Created through the Human Mobility Law No. 938, this initiative was created with the purpose of registering emigrants' associations, civic committees, non-profit organizations, and all those relating to the organised social participation of Ecuadorians living abroad. Registration takes place in diplomatic offices and is publicly available to all Ecuadorians abroad. This registration facilitates engagement with the diaspora by mapping and identifying diaspora groups.

Housing Subsidy for Migrants (Bono de Vivienda para la Persona Migrante) - 2008 - Ongoing

The Housing Subsidy for Migrants is provided by the Ecuadorian government to a migrant or the migrant's immediate family members as a reward for saving. The programme aims to facilitate access to housing for migrants and their families, strengthen migrants' links to Ecuador, increase private sector participation through the construction industry, and incentivise individuals' desire to save their remittances to acquire housing.

Social Employment Network for Immigrants living Abroad and Returnees (Red Socio Empleo para Migrantes en el Exterior y Migrantes Retornados) - September 2017 - Ongoing

This programme allows Ecuadorians living abroad to register to the national information support system (Soprote informatico) which facilitates the recruitment and selection of the Employment Partner Group (Bolsa de Socio Empleo). This system provides access to the network of offices nationwide that provide employment intermediation and specialised training to find employment in both public and private entities in Ecuador.

Balcón del Migrante

In 2024, consulates began implementing Balcón del Migrante ("Migrant's Window") service desks as one-stop help centres for the diaspora. These are dedicated counters (physical or virtual) where Ecuadorians abroad can get guidance on a range of issues – from renewing documents and transferring remittances, to accessing Ecuadorian government programmes. The Balcón concept, highlighted by the Foreign Ministry in 2024, is part of a broader diaspora customer service approach.

Circular Migration Programme

It is a government initiative that facilitates access to temporary employment opportunities abroad through safe, orderly and regulated channels. Managed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility, in coordination with the Ministry of Labour, the programme enables Ecuadorian citizens to apply for overseas vacancies free of charge through the Encuentra Empleo platform. A central feature of the initiative is its commitment to return, allowing participants to work abroad temporarily while maintaining the possibility of returning to Ecuador and, in many cases, reapplying in subsequent years. The programme currently includes opportunities in countries such as Spain, Italy, Germany, Canada, the United States and the United Arab Emirates, as well as "Work and Holiday" schemes in France, Hungary and Australia.

Observations

The “Observations” and “Obstacles” sections contain additional information on the context of diaspora engagement that does not fit directly into the other sections. They are based on a combination of literature review and comments from the authors. New information is incorporated during the annual updates. Readers are invited to verify the relevance of the information at the time of reading, as the context may have evolved.

Ecuador has progressively increased over the past ten years activities and services with a focus on voting rights, access to programmes and services, remittances and cultural identity.

The government has recently increased its attention to remittances. Both the National Human Mobility Plan (2018) as well as the Human Mobility Law. 938 (2017) explicitly mention remittances. The National Human Mobility Plan mentions the need to establish a system that facilitates remittances to meet its policy goal of strengthening the protection of the rights of the population in mobility.

The Ecuadorian government is also committed to assisting Ecuadorians to maintain their cultural identity.

Moreover, Ecuador has several international social security agreements that allow Ecuadorians abroad to receive retirement and disability pensions when the requirements are met.⁷

In November 2022, the National Electoral Council assured that Ecuadorians abroad will be able to vote telematically for the first time in the next elections in 2023. This will include the election of members of the Council for Citizen Participation and Social Control and a popular consultation.⁸

Obstacles



- **Engagement focus on return:** While Ecuador has programmes for Ecuadorians living abroad, a large portion of Ecuador’s policy relates to returnees. Similarly, many government related groups are mandated to serve the returnee population resulting in government services geared towards returnees. One of the two groups managed by the Sub-secretariat of the Ecuadorian Migrant Community focuses on the integration of returnees and the other on the protection of Ecuadorians living abroad.⁹ This combination of priorities on returnees both abroad and at home may limit the resources dedicated to other types of diaspora engagement.
- **Lack of knowledge of diaspora profile:** Many of the government’s policies attempt to give the migrant population access to services available to Ecuadorians at home in order to protect Ecuadorian’s rights both at home and abroad. While these programmes are still helpful, the government may be missing opportunities to differentiate the groups living abroad and use their diverse skillset and resources to benefit their community in their country of origin.
- **Low priority for government:** Ecuador, along with other countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, has directed its attention towards addressing the challenges resulting from the mass Venezuelan exodus. As a result, attention and resources have been focused on internal migration policy. Although this attention is warranted, it means that attempts to create links with the diaspora will likely be on hold.

7 <https://www.iess.gob.ec/es/convenios-internacionales1>

8 <https://www.prensa-latina.cu/2022/11/22/ecuatorianos-en-el-exterior-podran-votar-de-forma-telematica-en-2023>

9 <https://www.cancilleria.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Estructura-Cancilleria-1.pdf>

Annex:

List of actors

Diaspora related institutions

- **Regional organisations**

Comunidad Andina (CAN) 1969

CAN is an international organisation that has several institutions that make up the Andean Integration System (SAI). Its objective is to achieve comprehensive development through Andean integration with a focus on South American and Latin American integration.

- **National institutions**

- At ministerial level

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility (El Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Movilidad Humana (MREMH) 2013

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility coordinates and manages international policy and the integration of Latin America and human mobility. The Ministry seeks to not only protect Ecuadorians abroad but also to increase the quality, efficiency, and accessibility of services that the Ministry provides nationally and internationally to its citizens.

- At sub-ministerial level

Vice Ministry of Human Mobility (Viceministerio de Movilidad Humana) 2013

The mission of the Vice Ministry of Human Mobility is to plan, direct and evaluate the management of human mobility policy relating to emigration, immigration, transit, and returnees, in order to contribute to the protection and promotion of the rights of Ecuadorians abroad and migrants in Ecuador.

Sub-secretariat of the Ecuadorian Migrant Community (Subsecretaria de la Comunidad Migrante Ecuatoriana) 2013

This Sub-secretariat directs and executes policy relating to human mobility for the promotion and protection of the rights of Ecuadorian migrants, and integration of the returnee population into the country. At the same time, the Sub-secretariat manages migratory policy both nationally and internationally.

National Human Mobility Working Group (Mesa Nacional de Movilidad Humana) 2018

The Working Group establishes, supervises, coordinates, and evaluates the implementation of public policy relating to people's mobility.

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Permanent Intersectional Human Mobility Working Groups (Mesas Intersectoriales Permanentes de Movilidad Humana) 2018

These Working Groups operationalise the decisions made by the National Human Mobility Working Group by creating a space for a wide array of government actors to implement the policies. There are eight working groups in total. The Intersectional Integration and Ecuadorian Migrant Community Working Group focuses on Ecuadorians living abroad. Although its mandate does not mention working with the diaspora for development, its mission is to ensure that Ecuadorians living abroad are properly informed about access to programmes and services provided by the government to support them as well as to protect their rights when needed.

Diaspora organisations in Europe

Asociación Croata Ecuatoriana 2013 Croatia

This group was created for all Ecuadorians, Croatians and anyone else who is interested in learning about Croatia, its culture and people. The group serves as portal for meetings, information, and business.

Asociación de Ecuatorianos de Cataluña 1993 Spain

This group encourages the integration of Ecuadorian migrants in Catalonia by strengthening their cognitive skills, providing legal advice, and offering Catalan courses. The group also strives to maintain Ecuadorian culture.

Asociación Pueblos del Ecuador en Madrid (APEM) Spain

APEM is a soccer league which is used as a tool for unity and coexistence between Ecuadorians living in Madrid.

Asociacion Red Ecuador September 2016 Spain

Development activities

This non-profit organisation based in Spain promotes, trains and advises agricultural communities in Ecuador. It also plans, develops, and executes agro-industrial projects benefiting agricultural and fishing communities with the objective of improving and optimising their production processes through donations, non-refundable credits, technical assistance, and technology transfers.

Asociación Rumiñahui 1997 Spain

Development activities

This non-profit organisation defends and advocates for the rights of migrants, trying to facilitate their integration and improve their quality of life and that of their families in Spain.

Read more about diaspora organisations in [“Starting guide: What is a diaspora organisation”](#)



Ecuadorian Community Association (ECA) - Asociación de la Comunidad Ecuatoriana en el Reino Unido 2007 UK

Development activities

ECA's mission is to integrate and unify the Ecuadorian community based in the United Kingdom. It identifies community needs and opportunities and then develops services to improve the quality of life of Ecuadorians and assist with integration into British society. This group also works to maintain Ecuadorian identity through cultural, social, and sports exchange activities. Additionally, the group seeks to create development projects and channel humanitarian aid to Ecuador.

Movimiento Ecuador en el Reino Unido 2007 UK

This organisation defends the rights of immigrants in the United Kingdom through proposals and initiatives for research as well as the awareness raising and promotion of human rights. The group's projects relate to maintaining their culture and creating spaces for integration through sports. The group also supports Ecuadorian talent initiatives in the United Kingdom.

Unione di Solidarietà degli Ecuatoriani in Italia (USEI-APS)

Integration activities

Unione di Solidarietà degli Ecuatoriani in Italia (USEI-APS) is a non-profit organisation established in 2008 by a group of Ecuadorian diasporans in Italy. Initially, a reference for the Ecuadorian community in Italy, USEI-APS provides an inclusive and integrative space for Italians, Ecuadorians, Latin Americans and other foreigners.

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