



**International Human Rights
Instruments**

Distr.: General
16 April 2025
English
Original: Spanish

**Common core document forming part of the
reports of States Parties**

Ecuador*

[Date received: 25 October 2024]

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. General information about Ecuador	3
A. Demographic, economic, social and cultural characteristics of the State	3
1. Demographic indicators	3
2. Social, economic and cultural indicators	7
3. Right to education	9
4. Right to health	15
5. Right to work.....	21
6. Right to social security and a pension	31
7. Right to housing	35
B. Constitutional, political and legal structure of the State	36
II. General framework for the protection and promotion of human rights.....	44
A. Legal framework for the protection of human rights at the national level	44
B. Acceptance of international human rights norms.....	46
C. Follow-up to the concluding observations of the human rights treaty bodies and preparation of reports on human rights	48

1. The present document contains general information about the Republic of Ecuador, in particular the framework for the protection of human rights and the different national planning tools issued in conformity with the 2008 Political Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador, including the Development Plan for a New Ecuador 2024–2025.
2. It was prepared by the Ministry of Women and Human Rights, in keeping with the harmonized guidelines set out in document [HRI/GEN/2/Rev.6](#) of 3 June 2009, in order to update the common core document submitted by Ecuador in 2018 ([HRI/CORE/ECU/2018](#), issued on 19 November 2018), with input from the competent public institutions.

I. General information about Ecuador

3. To the north, Ecuador has a land border with Colombia and a maritime border with Costa Rica; to the south and east, it borders Peru, and to the west is the Pacific Ocean. It is divided into four geographical regions, nine planning areas and 24 provinces,¹ 7 of which are in the mainland coastal (Costa) region, 10 in the Andean (Sierra) region and 6 in the Amazon (Oriente) region, the remaining province being the Galápagos Islands situated 1,050 km off the mainland.
4. Since becoming an independent republic in 1830, Ecuador has had 19 constitutions, the one currently in force being the Constitution of 2008. In 2000, the United States dollar replaced the sucre as the country's official currency.
5. Ecuador is a member of the main international and regional organizations, including the United Nations, the Organization of American States, the Andean Community, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, the World Trade Organization, the Inter-American Development Bank and the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries.

A. Demographic, economic, social and cultural characteristics of the State

1. Demographic indicators

6. According to the 2022 population census, the population of Ecuador is estimated at 16,938,986 people, with 8,252,523 men (48.71 per cent) and 8,686,463 women (51.28 per cent). Ecuadorian society is heterogeneous. Alongside a majority mestizo population with an overwhelmingly westernized way of life, there are large population groups with a wide variety of sociocultural practices.

Size of the population

<i>Age (years)</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
0–4	659 849 (8%)	633 476 (7%)
5–14	1 544 739 (19%)	1 474 925 (17%)
15–29	2 153 030 (26%)	2 223 874 (27%)
30–44	1 668 739 (20%)	1 860 675 (21%)
45–64	1 520 712 (18%)	1 678 377 (19%)
65 and over	705 454 (9%)	815 136 (9%)

Source: National Statistics and Census Institute, general characteristics of the population – total population, eighth population census and seventh housing census, 2022.

¹ The coastal (Costa) region is comprised of the following provinces: Esmeraldas, Manabí, Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas, Santa Elena, Guayas, Los Ríos and El Oro. The provinces of the Andean (Sierra) region are Carchi, Imbabura, Pichincha, Cotopaxi, Tungurahua, Bolívar, Chimborazo, Cañar, Azuay and Loja. The eastern (Oriente) region has six provinces: Sucumbíos, Napo, Orellana, Pastaza, Morona-Santiago and Zamora-Chinchipe. The island region consists of the Province of Galápagos.

7. Ecuador is home to Afro-Ecuadorian, Montubio and mestizo peoples and nations, various Indigenous nations and migrants. In the 2022 population census, 13,122,337 people identified as mestizo (77.46 per cent), 1,302,057 as Indigenous (7.68 per cent), 814,495 as Afro-Ecuadorian, of African descent, black or of mixed European and African descent (4.80 per cent), 1,305,000 as Montubio (7.70 per cent), 374,930 as white (2.21 per cent) and 20,167 as other (0.11 per cent).

Population distribution by ethnic origin

<i>Ethnic group</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
Indigenous	633 328 (7.67%)	668 729 (7.69%)
Afro-Ecuadorian/black/mixed European and African descent	404 008 (4.89%)	410 487 (4.72%)
Montubio	668 713 (8.10%)	636 287 (7.32%)
Mestizo	6 354 515 (77%)	6 767 822 (77.92%)
White	180 449 (2.18%)	194 481 (2.23%)
Other	11 510 (0.13%)	8 657 (0.09%)

Source: National Statistics and Census Institute, general characteristics of the population – total population, eighth population census and seventh housing census, 2022.

8. The population density of Ecuador is 66 inhabitants per km².

Population density, by province of usual residence

<i>Province of residence</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Area (km²)</i>	<i>Population density (persons per km²)</i>
Azuay	801 609	8 173	98
Bolívar	199 078	3 957	50
Cañar	227 578	3 647	62
Carchi	172 828	3 783	46
Cotopaxi	470 210	6 188	76
Chimborazo	471 933	6 116	77
El Oro	714 592	5 870	122
Esmeraldas	553 900	15 836	35
Guayas	4 391 923	15 900	276
Imbabura	469 879	4 791	98
Loja	485 421	11 064	44
Los Ríos	898 652	7 238	124
Manabí	1 592 840	19 517	82
Morona Santiago	192 508	24 004	8
Napo	131 675	12 542	10
Pastaza	111 915	29 647	4
Pichincha	3 089 473	9 453	327
Tungurahua	563 532	3 386	166
Zamora Chinchipe	110 973	10 565	11
Galápagos	28 583	8 233	3
Sucumbíos	199 014	18 098	11
Orellana	182 166	21 729	8

<i>Province of residence</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Area (km²)</i>	<i>Population density (persons per km²)</i>
Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas	492 969	3 780	130
Santa Elena	385 735	3 688	105
Total	16 938 986	257 204	66

Source: National Statistics and Census Institute, population density, by province of usual residence, level of disaggregation: provincial, eighth population census and seventh housing census, 2022.

9. The population is distributed according to language or languages used as follows: 0.63 per cent speak only an Indigenous language, 92.63 per cent speak only Spanish, 0.15 per cent speak only a foreign language, 0.05 per cent use only Ecuadorian Sign Language and 0.51 per cent do not communicate or speak. Additionally, 3.27 per cent speak both an Indigenous language and Spanish, 2.62 per cent speak Spanish and a foreign language, 0.03 per cent speak an Indigenous language, Spanish and a foreign language and 0.06 per cent use other language combinations.

Distribution of the population by language used

Language(s) of communication (persons aged 1 year and above)

<i>Sex at birth</i>	<i>Indigenous language only</i>	<i>Spanish only</i>	<i>Foreign language only</i>	<i>Ecuadorian Sign Language only</i>	<i>Does not speak or communicate</i>	<i>Indigenous language and Spanish</i>	<i>Spanish and foreign language</i>	<i>Indigenous language, Spanish and a foreign language</i>	<i>Other language combinations</i>	<i>Total</i>
Male	45 008	7 520 837	12 999	4 672	47 114	263 484	226 749	3 798	4 747	8 129 408
Female	60 243	7 946 637	12 950	4 991	39 046	283 843	211 955	2 317	5 846	8 567 828
Total	105 251	15 467 474	25 949	9 663	86 160	547 327	438 704	6 115	10 593	16 697 236

Source: National Statistics and Census Institute, general characteristics of the population – total population, eighth population census and seventh housing census, 2022.

10. The population distribution by location (rural/urban) is as follows: 10,687,151 people (63.09 per cent) live in urban areas, while 6,251,085 people (36.90 per cent) reside in rural areas.

Population distribution by rural/urban area

<i>Urban or rural area</i>	<i>Urban areas</i>	<i>Rural areas</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Sex at birth</i>			
Male	5 161 870	3 090 653	8 252 523
Female	5 525 281	3 161 182	8 686 463
Total	10 687 151	6 251 835	16 938 986

Source: National Statistics and Census Institute, general characteristics of the population – total population, eighth population census and seventh housing census, 2022.

11. In 2022, life expectancy was 80.5 years for women and 72.9 years for men.

Life expectancy at birth

Life expectancy at birth (years)

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Both sexes	76.1	76.3	71.8	73.3	76.7
Male	72.6	72.7	67.8	69.6	72.9
Female	79.6	79.8	75.8	77.0	80.5

Source: National Statistics and Census Institute, life expectancy at birth, eighth population census and seventh housing census, 2022.

12. Life expectancy at birth is projected to be 80.9 years for women and 74.0 years for men in 2024, and 82.1 years for women and 75.4 years for men in 2023.

Projected life expectancy at birth

Projected life expectancy (years)

Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Both sexes	77.2	77.4	77.7	77.9	78.1	78.3	78.5	78.7
Male	73.7	74.0	74.2	74.4	74.7	74.9	75.1	75.4
Female	80.7	80.9	81.1	81.3	81.5	81.7	81.9	82.1

Source: National Statistics and Census Institute, projected life expectancy at birth, eighth population census and seventh housing census, 2022.

Mortality statistics²

Year of death	No. of deaths
2010	61 681
2011	62 304
2012	63 511
2013	64 206
2014	63 788
2015	65 391
2016	68 304
2017	70 144
2018	71 982
2019	74 439
2020	117 200
2021	106 211
2022 (p**) ³	89 946

Source: National Statistics and Census Institute, number of deaths by year of death, statistical register of deaths, 2010–2022, and eighth population census and seventh housing census, 2022.

² Registered deaths (t): Deaths that occurred in the year of study and registered by 31 December 2022.

³ (p**) Provisional figures: Data or indicators generated using information on the deaths that occurred in 2022 and subject to adjustment based on subsequent registrations.

13. In 2022, the overall fertility rate was 1.86. It is projected to decline to 1.76 by 2024.

Fertility rate

Fertility indicator	Estimates				Projections	
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Births per year	295 297	287 289	278 949	271 823	266 696	263 020
Crude birth rate (per 1 000 persons)	17.0	16.4	15.8	15.3	15.0	14.6
Overall fertility rate	2.03	1.97	1.91	1.86	1.82	1.79

Source: National Statistics and Census Institute, fertility rate, eighth population census and seventh housing census, 2022.

14. In 2022, there were 5,188,827 families in Ecuador. The average number of persons per household was 3.26.

2. Social, economic and cultural indicators

15. The ranking of Ecuador in the United Nations Development Programme human development index fell by six places between 2018 and 2021 for reasons related to the crisis arising from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. It subsequently improved its position, moving up 12 places to 83 out of 193 countries in 2024.

16. In 2023, 23.9 per cent of the population was living in income poverty, while 8.7 per cent of the population was living in extreme income poverty. That year, the Gini coefficient, an indicator of inequality, was 0.461. The multidimensional poverty rate was 36.9 per cent, and the rate of poverty as measured by unsatisfied basic needs was 28.4 per cent.

Poverty indicators, 2018–2023

Period	Indicator	National	By area	
		Total	Urban	Rural
2018	Income poverty	22.3%	14.1%	39.7 %
2018	Extreme income poverty	7.9%	3.5%	17.2%
2018	Gini coefficient	0.472	0.452	0.452
2018	Rate of multidimensional poverty	37.7%	23.0%	69.2%
2018	Poverty as measured by unsatisfied basic needs	32.2%	20.9%	56.2%
2019	Income poverty	23.4%	15.3%	40.5%
2019	Extreme income poverty	8.5%	4.2%	17.7%
2019	Gini coefficient	0.469	0.450	0.443
2019	Rate of multidimensional poverty	37.9%	23.4%	68.6%
2019	Poverty as measured by unsatisfied basic needs	31.8%	20.2%	56.3%
2021	Income poverty	28.8%	22.8%	41.7%
2021	Extreme income poverty	10.3%	6.8%	17.7%
2021	Gini coefficient	0.487	0.481	0.444
2021	Rate of multidimensional poverty	39.6%	26.1%	68.4%
2021	Poverty as measured by unsatisfied basic needs	31.1%	21.8%	51.2%
2022	Income poverty	25.5%	18.6%	40.0%
2022	Extreme income poverty	9.1%	5.1%	17.5%
2022	Gini coefficient	0.468	0.455	0.440
2022	Rate of multidimensional poverty	38.4%	24.7%	67.7%
2022	Poverty as measured by unsatisfied basic needs	29.3%	21.1%	46.8%
2023	Income poverty	23.9%	17.0%	38.5%

Period	Indicator	National	By area	
		Total	Urban	Rural
2023	Extreme income poverty	8.7%	4.2%	18.5%
2023	Gini coefficient	0.461	0.444	0.450
2023	Rate of multidimensional poverty	36.9%	23.4%	66.0%
2023	Poverty as measured by unsatisfied basic needs	28.4%	19.0%	48.7%

Source: National employment, unemployment and underemployment survey, 2018–2019 and 2021–2023. Prepared by: National Statistics and Census Institute.

17. The Social Registry Unit of the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing analyses the relationship between poverty and housing conditions and has determined that, by the end of 2023, there were 3,113,056 registered households in Ecuador, of which 47.5 per cent (1,477,529 households) were in poverty or extreme poverty.

Structure of current monetary expenditure⁴

Category of current household expenditure	Monthly average household spending	Monthly total household spending	Households that spend	Total No. of households	% of households that spend
Food and non-alcoholic beverages	151.45	584 496 340.68	3 859 422	3 923 123	98.4
Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels	46.19	177 342 239.42	3 839 376	3 923 123	97.9
Health	50.18	179 090 619.56	3 568 938	3 923 123	91.0
Education	98.59	104 381 478.16	1 058 751	3 923 123	27.0

Source: National urban/rural income and spending survey 2012. Prepared by: National Statistics and Census Institute.

18. Articles 275 and 276 of the Constitution provide that the State must carry out development planning to uphold rights and ensure the achievement of development goals and compliance with the principles enshrined in the Constitution. Such planning seeks to promote social and territorial equity and encourage consensus and participation, ensuring that individuals and Indigenous and other communities, Peoples and nations are able to enjoy their rights and assume their responsibilities within a framework of interculturalism, respect for diversity and harmonious coexistence with nature. These planning activities are reflected in the National Development Plan. Economic and fiscal decisions and actions are aligned with the Constitution and the National Development Plan and are subject to rigorous processes of analysis, evaluation and approval by the highest State authorities in order to safeguard public resources and ensure their fair distribution. Accrued social spending increased from \$10.542 billion in 2019 to \$13.805 billion in 2023, broken down as follows: 34.64 per cent on education, 22.79 per cent on health, 22.79 per cent on social security,

⁴ * Spending information is provided for each household.

** The number of households is considered separately for each category; in other words, each product was surveyed in all the households in the sample, so the total number of households is the same for every product.

(i) Total monthly spending corresponds to the monetary value that households spent on the acquisition of a good or service.

(ii) The 12 spending categories are included in order to show what households spent on the acquisition of goods and services.

(iii) The food, housing, health and education spending categories include the following spending groups.

14.15 per cent on social welfare, 0.71 per cent on urban development and housing, 0.69 per cent on labour and 0.27 per cent on culture.

19. In the second quarter of 2024, the gross domestic product (GDP) of Ecuador fell by 2.2 per cent compared to the same period in 2023. This decrease was related to year-on-year declines, with gross fixed capital formation falling by 8.2 per cent, household consumption by 2.2 per cent and government spending by 0.6 per cent. However, there were positive annual variations in exports, which rose by 1.9 per cent, and in imports, which rose by 0.2 per cent.

20. In December 2022, the public debt stood at \$63.693 billion, equivalent to 55.4 per cent of GDP. In September 2023, it was equivalent to 50.1 per cent; external debt represented 39.1 per cent of GDP and domestic debt 11.0 per cent. Also in September 2023, 52.2 per cent of external public debt was owed to multilateral institutions, followed by 34.2 per cent in international bonds and 9.5 per cent in bilateral loans. In terms of the domestic debt, 37 per cent corresponded to domestic bonds and 16 per cent to Treasury certificates.

21. In 2023, net tax revenue was \$14.825 billion, down by 2.4 per cent on 2022. Gross tax revenue stood at \$17421 million, up by 1.5 per cent on the \$17.161 billion collected in 2022. Value added tax has grown the most in recent years, and it continues to be, together with income tax, the main contributor to tax revenue. Of the total gross tax revenue in 2023 (14.5 per cent of GDP), 7 per cent corresponded to value added tax, 4.9 per cent to income tax and 0.7 per cent to tax on special consumption items. Indirect taxes accounted for more than half of the total gross revenue.

22. The value of remittances in 2022 was \$4.744 billion – an increase of 8.7 per cent compared to 2021. In 2022, the United States of America was the main country from which remittances were received (69.7 per cent of the total), followed by Spain (16.5 per cent) and Italy (3.6 per cent). The most recent data from the Central Bank of Ecuador indicate that, in the third quarter of 2023, remittances reached a value of \$1.398 billion, an increase of 14.5 per cent on the third quarter of 2022. Cumulative remittances in the first three quarters of 2023 totalled \$3.943 billion and confirmed a growing trend observed over the last five years, which continued even in the year of the pandemic.

3. Right to education

23. Article 26 of the Constitution states that all persons have a right to lifelong education and that the provision of education is a mandatory duty of the State. Article 28 states that education must serve the public interest and cannot be subservient to individual or corporate interests, guarantees universal access to the education system without any form of discrimination, with the right to continuity, mobility and completion, and provides that education is compulsory at the initial, basic and secondary levels. It also provides that public education is free of charge up to and including undergraduate university education. Article 347 provides that the State is responsible for ensuring that all persons have access to public education, according to the principles of social, territorial and regional equity. Thus, the right to education must be upheld for the entire population without discrimination. Education must be accessible – that is, free, compulsory and inclusive. It should be delivered efficiently and with sensitivity, through policies that support teacher training and the development of safe, violence-free learning environments tailored to students' needs and sociocultural backgrounds, alongside appropriate educational resources and methods.

24. The general regulations on the Organic Act on Intercultural Education establish the provisions applicable to access to the National Education System for school-age children and adolescents. These provisions include suggested ages by grade or course and access mechanisms with specific time frames, such as ordinary enrolment, extraordinary enrolment, automatic enrolment, readiness programmes, recognition of prior studies and placement exams (for students without academic records). The ordinary and extraordinary enrolment processes for public schools are open to all through the online platform of the Ministry of Education; parents, guardians or representatives can select their preferred school within the dates specified in the official schedules, based on the availability of educational offerings and the location of the school. Thanks to this automated mechanism, opportunities to secure a place in public schools are totally transparent and guarantee equal conditions.

25. Between 2018 and 2024, Ecuador adopted two national development plans: the Opportunity Creation Plan 2021–2025, and its successor, the Development Plan for a New Ecuador 2024–2025, which was introduced following the change of government in 2023. In the 2021–2025 Plan, goal No. 7, under the social component, focuses on education. It aims to enhance citizens' capabilities and promote innovative, inclusive and high-quality education at all levels. This includes: ensuring universal and inclusive access to high-quality early childhood, basic and secondary education; promoting student retention and completion of studies; modernizing and improving the efficiency of the education system through innovation and technology; eliminating all forms of discrimination, neglect and violence in education, with an emphasis on preventing sexual violence against children and adolescents; strengthening the higher education system in accordance with the principles of freedom, responsible autonomy, equal opportunity, quality and relevance; and promoting high-impact research. Goal No. 8 aims to create new opportunities and improve well-being in rural areas, especially for Indigenous and other Peoples and nations. It emphasizes ensuring access to education in rural areas in ways that are adapted to local contexts. In the 2024–2025 plan, goal No. 2 continues the theme of strengthening citizens' capacities through equitable, inclusive, high-quality education and promotes spaces for cultural exchange through policies that: ensure universal access to inclusive, equitable, relevant and intercultural education for children, adolescents, young people and adults; support student retention and completion of studies; ensure student mobility within the national education system; promote high-quality education with an innovative, competency-based, inclusive, resilient and participatory approach that strengthens cognitive, socioemotional, communication, digital and life skills; eliminate discrimination and all forms of violence; implement comprehensive evaluation processes for continuous improvement; improve access to, retention in and completion of higher education, guided by the principles of democracy, quality and meritocracy; and expand the higher education system through new study modalities and degree courses and the development of technical and technological education as a means of professionalizing the population.

26. Between 2019 and 2021, the accrued education budget declined due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, falling by 10.2 per cent in 2020 and by a further 4.9 per cent in 2021. However, in 2022 and 2023, it began to recover, increasing by 11.1 per cent in 2023. In 2024, the codified budget is projected to rise significantly – by 37.6 per cent compared to 2023. This suggests a strong planned expansion in spending, potentially driven by new policies or increased investment in key areas.

Investment in education since 2019

<i>Year</i>	<i>Accrued budget</i>
2019	3 293 936 283.24
2020	2 958 779 733.45
2021	2 812 880 699.94
2022	3 004 865 946.82
2023	3 339 463 312.96
<i>Year</i>	<i>Codified budget</i>
2024	4 594 523 633.37

Source: Ministry of Education.

27. In 2023, the average number of years of schooling⁵ nationwide was 10.3, the same as in 2022. In 2021, it was 10.4, and in 2018 and 2019, it stood at 10.1. No data are available for 2020 for reasons relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.

⁵ Average number of years spent in formal education by persons aged 24 and above.

28. The illiteracy rate⁶ in Ecuador was 6.3 per cent in 2023, 6.1 per cent in 2022, 6 per cent in 2021 and 6.5 per cent in both 2019 and 2018. No data are available for 2020 for reasons relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. Of the country's total population, 12,153,769 people (5,857,541 men and 6,296,228 women) are literate and 472,228 people (190,394 men and 281,834 women) are illiterate.

29. In 2023, the net enrolment rate was 96.6 per cent for primary⁷ education,⁸ 95.1 per cent for general basic education,⁹ 86.2 per cent for secondary education¹⁰ and 75.7 per cent for upper secondary education.¹¹ That year, the gross enrolment rate was 115.7 per cent for primary¹² education,¹³ 98 per cent for general basic education,¹⁴ 96.8 per cent for secondary education¹⁵ and 99.6 per cent for upper secondary education.¹⁶

Education indicators

Period	Indicator	National	Area	
		Total	Urban	Rural
2018	Average years of schooling	10.1	11.3	7.2
2018	Illiteracy rate	6.5%	3.7%	12.9%
2018	Net primary school enrolment rate	94.8%	94.8%	94.8%
2018	Net general basic education enrolment rate	94.9%	95.4%	94.0%
2018	Net secondary school enrolment rate	85.9%	88.1%	82.0%
2018	Net upper secondary school enrolment rate	71.0%	74.4%	65.2%
2018	Gross primary school enrolment rate	111.9%	111.8%	112.2%
2018	Gross general basic education enrolment rate	99.9%	99.8%	100.2%
2018	Gross secondary school enrolment rate	101.4%	103.5%	97.8%
2018	Gross upper secondary school enrolment rate	98.7%	101.8%	93.4%
2019	Average years of schooling	10.1	11.3	7.3
2019	Illiteracy rate	6.5%	3.6%	12.9%
2019	Net primary school enrolment rate	95.0%	94.8%	95.5%
2019	Gross general basic education enrolment rate	94.9%	95.1%	94.3%

⁶ Persons aged 15 and above who cannot read or write are considered illiterate. Persons who can only read or only write are also considered illiterate.

⁷ The net enrolment rate is the ratio of the number of people in the official age group for a given level of education who are actually enrolled in that level to the total population of that age group, in period (t).

⁸ Net primary school enrolment: Persons aged 6 to 11 who are enrolled in classes at the primary level and are within the official age group for that level.

⁹ Net enrolment in general basic education: Persons aged 5 to 14 who attend classes at the basic level and are within the official age group for that level.

¹⁰ Net secondary school enrolment: Persons aged 12 to 17 who are enrolled in classes at the secondary level and are within the official age group for that level.

¹¹ Net upper secondary school enrolment: Persons aged 15 to 17 who are enrolled in classes at the upper secondary level and are within the official age group for that level.

¹² Gross enrolment rate is the ratio of the number of people attending a certain level of formal education regardless of their age to the total population of the official age group for that level of formal education, in period (t).

¹³ Gross primary school enrolment: Persons attending classes at the primary level, regardless of age. Primary school is considered to span from kindergarten through sixth grade of the previous curriculum system.

¹⁴ Gross enrolment in general basic education: Persons enrolled at the level of general basic education, regardless of age.

¹⁵ Gross secondary school enrolment: Persons enrolled in a regular formal secondary school, regardless of age. Secondary education spans from first grade to sixth grade of the previous curriculum system.

¹⁶ Gross upper secondary school enrolment: Persons attending classes at the upper secondary level, regardless of age.

Period	Indicator	National	Area	
		Total	Urban	Rural
2019	Net secondary school enrolment rate	86.6%	89.0%	82.7%
2019	Net upper secondary school enrolment rate	72.2%	75.4%	66.7%
2019	Gross primary school enrolment rate	110.7%	110.3%	111.5%
2019	Gross general basic education enrolment rate	99.2%	98.8%	99.9%
2019	Gross secondary school enrolment rate	101.7%	104.0%	97.7%
2019	Gross upper secondary school enrolment rate	100.4%	104.0%	94.5%
2021	Average years of schooling	10.4	11.5	7.8
2021	Illiteracy rate	6.0%	3.6%	11.1%
2021	Net primary school enrolment rate	94.6%	94.5%	94.7%
2021	Gross general basic education enrolment rate	93.6%	93.7%	93.4%
2021	Net secondary school enrolment rate	87.0%	89.5%	82.6%
2021	Net upper secondary school enrolment rate	75.5%	78.8%	69.9%
2021	Gross primary school enrolment rate	109.9%	110.0%	109.9%
2021	Gross general basic education enrolment rate	97.5%	97.2%	97.9%
2021	Gross secondary school enrolment rate	101.1%	103.3%	97.1%
2021	Gross upper secondary school enrolment rate	104.0%	107.9%	97.3%
2022	Average years of schooling	10.3	11.4	7.7
2022	Illiteracy rate	6.1%	3.5%	11.6%
2022	Net primary school enrolment rate	96.5%	96.4%	96.6%
2022	Gross general basic education enrolment rate	94.7%	94.9%	94.4%
2022	Net secondary school enrolment rate	87.0%	88.7%	83.7%
2022	Net upper secondary school enrolment rate	76.6%	79.7%	71.2%
2022	Gross primary school enrolment rate	113.7%	113.2%	114.8%
2022	Gross general basic education enrolment rate	98.0%	97.9%	98.1%
2022	Gross secondary school enrolment rate	98.9%	100.7%	95.5%
2022	Gross upper secondary school enrolment rate	104.1%	108.5%	96.2%
2023	Average years of schooling	10.3	11.4	7.8
2023	Illiteracy rate	6.3%	3.7%	12.1%
2023	Net primary school enrolment rate	96.6%	96.4%	97.2%
2023	Gross general basic education enrolment rate	95.1%	95.2%	94.9%
2023	Net secondary school enrolment rate	86.2%	88.2%	82.4%
2023	Net upper secondary school enrolment rate	75.7%	79.3%	68.8%
2023	Gross primary school enrolment rate	115.7%	115.8%	115.4%
2023	Gross general basic education enrolment rate	98.0%	98.0%	98.2%
2023	Gross secondary school enrolment rate	96.8%	98.3%	94.0%
2023	Gross upper secondary school enrolment rate	99.6%	102.3%	94.5%

Source: National employment, unemployment and underemployment survey, 2018–2019 and 2021–2023.

30. The national dropout rate was 2.1 per cent in 2018/19, decreasing to 1.8 per cent in 2020/21. It then rose to 2.11 per cent in 2021/22, before falling to 1.88 per cent in the following year.

Dropout, repetition and promotion rates by nationality (per cent)

<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Year of enrolment</i>	<i>2018/19</i>	<i>2019/20</i>	<i>2020/21</i>	<i>2021/22</i>	<i>2022/23</i>
National						
	Dropout rate	2.1	1.73	1.8	2.11	1.88
	Repetition rate	1.90	0.36	0.70	1.26	1.39
	Promotion rate	96.03	97.91	97.52	96.63	96.74
Ecuadorian						
	Dropout rate	2.05	1.69	1.73	2.02	1.81
	Repetition rate	1.90	0.36	0.70	1.25	1.39
	Promotion rate	96.05	97.96	97.57	96.73	96.80
Venezuelan						
	Dropout rate	4.42	5.44	3.79	7.19	6.01
	Repetition rate	1.74	0.40	1.01	1.88	1.51
	Promotion rate	93.84	94.16	95.21	90.94	92.48
Colombian						
	Dropout rate	7.04	5.75	6.58	8.37	6.68
	Repetition rate	2.95	0.54	1.37	2.32	1.79
	Promotion rate	90.01	93.71	92.05	89.30	91.53
Peruvian						
	Dropout rate	2.69	3.82	3.15	3.75	3.11
	Repetition rate	2.04	0.57	0.69	1.46	0.99
	Promotion rate	95.27	95.61	96.16	94.80	95.91
Other countries in the Americas						
	Dropout rate	2.07	3.16	2.55	4.03	3.56
	Repetition rate	1.16	0.22	0.57	0.97	0.72
	Promotion rate	96.77	96.62	96.89	94.99	95.72
Other continents						
	Dropout rate	2.03	2.64	2.11	3.24	2.59
	Repetition rate	1.82	0.28	0.53	1.06	1.09
	Promotion rate	96.15	97.07	97.36	95.71	96.32

Source: Ministry of Education.

31. In Ecuador, there are 203,595 teachers, 71 per cent (144,625) of whom are employed in public schools. Notably, 7 out of 10 teachers are women. Of the total, 69.5 per cent work in urban areas, while 30.6 per cent are based in rural areas. Regarding the type of institution, 94.3 per cent teach in intercultural schools and 5.7 per cent in intercultural bilingual schools.

32. Of the 12,386 public schools surveyed in 2023, 12,151 (98.1 per cent) provided data on the condition of their physical infrastructure. Among these, 72.1 per cent were reported to be in fair condition, 11.4 per cent in good condition, 15.3 per cent in poor condition and 1.2 per cent were reported to be dilapidated. The infrastructure in 1.5 of every 10 schools is considered to be in adequate condition.

33. In the 2018/19 school year, 42.4 per cent of public schools had Internet access for pedagogical purposes. This figure dropped by around 6 per cent in 2019/20 but began to recover in 2020/21, reaching 51.8 per cent by the 2022/23 school year.

34. The Ministry of Education has issued 14 national intercultural bilingual curricula for use in the following programmes: community-based family child education; introduction to semiotic processes; cognitive, emotional, and psychomotor development; development of

study skills and techniques; and research learning processes. In addition, the intercultural bilingual upper secondary education curriculum for both the sciences and technical subjects has been expanded. The percentage of bilingual intercultural schools in which the bilingual intercultural education model is being used doubled from 2.3 per cent nationwide in 2017/18 to 4.6 per cent in 2022/23.

35. In the framework of its inclusive educational model, the Ministry of Education supports 108 schools that provide publicly funded specialized educational services to 7,848 students with disabilities. Local inclusion support units offer psychopedagogical assessment services and assist students with disability-related special educational needs through assessment, counselling, placement and psychopedagogical assistance. These services are available across all educational programmes, modalities of care and levels of the education system. However, there remains a need to strengthen specialized educational services to enhance the assessment process and, ultimately, improve the quality of education for persons with disabilities.

Enrolled students by school year and type of support

<i>School year</i>	<i>Public</i>	<i>State-funded religious</i>	<i>Municipal</i>	<i>Private</i>	<i>Total</i>
2019/20	3 219 939	286 382	35 191	865 518	4 407 030
2020/21	3 297 505	269 742	34 173	713 357	4 314 777
2021/22	3 324 405	259 054	33 652	692 028	4 309 139
2022/23	3 259 496	258 503	32 507	771 632	4 322 138
2023/24	3 133 706	251 217	32 825	785 050	4 202 798

Source: Ministry of Education.

Enrolled students by school year and ethnicity

<i>School year</i>	<i>2020/21</i>	<i>2021/22</i>	<i>2022/23</i>	<i>2023/24</i>
Mixed ethnicity	3 928 274	3 926 994	3 946 105	3 831 047
Indigenous	226 013	222 845	217 468	211 217
Montubio	55 602	59 951	65 726	73 218
Afro-Ecuadorian	66 959	64 957	64 052	61 879
White	37 929	34 392	28 787	25 437
Total	4 314 777	4 309 139	4 322 138	4 202 798

Source: Ministry of Education.

36. The Ministry of Education develops public policies, regulations and guidelines to govern formal education for young people, adults and older adults who have not completed their schooling. These policies are implemented in a decentralized manner. Within this framework, educational services are offered in literacy, post-literacy, upper basic general education and upper secondary education (both academic and technical), enabling this segment of the population to complete their education.

37. To achieve the goals outlined in the National Development Plan and to effectively prevent, combat and punish abuse and violence, in particular sexual violence, against children and adolescents within the National Education System, the Ministry of Education has launched several key initiatives, including: the National Plan for the Prevention of Psychosocial Risks; the “Preventing and Addressing Psychosocial Risks in the Educational Environment” project; the “Educating at Home” programme; comprehensive classroom support; the National Strategy for Comprehensive Sex Education; teaching guides for comprehensive sex education; the Pathway for the Prevention of Sexual and Gender-based Violence; the “*Para Hacerlo – Rurankapak*” (Let’s Do It) methodology; and protocols and guidelines for handling situations of violence identified or committed in the education system.

In relation to sexual violence in education, Ecuador issued the Public Policy for the Eradication of Sexual Violence in Education 2024–2030 in August 2024. The Policy was developed in compliance with operative paragraph 11 of the judgment issued on 24 June 2020 by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in the case of *Guzmán Albarracín et al. v. Ecuador*.

38. The Ministry of Education has several initiatives aimed at ensuring access to inclusive high-quality education for specific population groups, including the Pedagogical Levelling and Acceleration Service, the “Learning on Time” national plan, the “Everyone in the Classroom” strategy, the “Strengthening Learning through Remote Tutoring” strategy and the “Learning Networks” strategy.

39. Data on access to higher education show an increase in the gross enrolment rate in tertiary education, from 32.2 per cent in 2017 to 40.9 per cent in 2022. Despite increased enrolment, first-year attrition rates in tertiary education have remained almost unchanged, hovering around 21 per cent between 2017 and 2021, except in 2020, when the rate dropped to 16.9 per cent.

40. From 2015 to mid-2017, the number of places available for students in the higher education system stayed about the same. However, in the second half of 2018, there was a sharp increase, with 127,498 spots offered to students.

41. In 2022, Ecuadorian students most often chose to accept spots in higher education in the following areas: education (19.1 per cent), engineering, industry and construction (18.4 per cent), social sciences and journalism (15.1 per cent) and business administration (13.7 per cent).

42. At present, there are 62 public, private and co-financed universities offering a total of 5,068 degree programmes in 10 broad fields of knowledge. In the case of technical and technological education, there are a total of 197 public and private institutes, which offer 1,944 degree programmes in 10 broad fields of knowledge.

43. From 2015 to 2022, the number of students enrolling in universities and polytechnic institutes steadily grew. Since 2017, this growth has been consistently positive, and it is directly connected to the resources allocated to these institutions. In 2022, 792,530 students enrolled in universities and polytechnic institutes; of those students, 43.9 per cent were men and 56.1 per cent were women.

44. Around 14 per cent of students in the higher education system are enrolled in technical and technological institutes. Enrolment in technical and technological education is concentrated mainly in Pichincha, Guayas, Tungurahua, Chimborazo, Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas, Imbabura, Azuay and Loja Provinces. Of these students, 50.5 per cent are men and 49.5 per cent are women.

45. With respect to scholarships and financial aid, the State has implemented programmes that benefit people of limited economic means, regular students with high averages or who have received academic or artistic distinction, high-performance athletes, persons with disabilities, persons belonging to the Indigenous and other Peoples and nations of Ecuador, Ecuadorian citizens abroad and returned or deported migrants, as long as they can provide their academic records.

46. As of 2017, scholarship policies have benefitted a total of 27,178 students. Of the scholarships awarded, 95 per cent were national scholarships and 5 per cent were international. Of the total number of scholarships awarded, 59.7 per cent went to women and 40.3 per cent to men.

4. Right to health

47. The Constitution recognizes health as a fundamental right that must be guaranteed by the Government. The comprehensive care model for family, community and intercultural health is geared towards improving and restoring health in all its dimensions: biological, mental, spiritual, psychological and social.

48. There are three levels of care within the National Health System. These levels range from the first level, which consists of the prevention, promotion and ambulatory care services

that cover 80 per cent of the population's health needs, to the third level, which is provided by highly specialized establishments that treat 5 per cent of health problems.

49. The right to health has been given effect in the Opportunity Creation Plan 2021–2025, in particular through goal No. 6 of its social component. The goal is to guarantee the right to comprehensive, free and high-quality healthcare through policies to improve conditions for the exercise of all aspects of the right to health. These policies cover prevention and promotion, special care for women, children and adolescents, older persons, persons with disabilities, members of the LGBTI+ community and all those in vulnerable situations, universal access to vaccines, the adoption of health measures to prevent the outbreak of infectious diseases, the provision of comprehensive, inclusive and high-quality sexual and reproductive health services, the fight against all forms of malnutrition, chronic child malnutrition in particular, the modernization of the public health system to guarantee the delivery of high-quality, efficient and transparent services, the prevention of drug use, the provision of care and rehabilitation services to persons struggling with addiction and the protection of their rights. The right to health is incorporated in goal No. 1 – to comprehensively improve the living conditions of the population by promoting equitable access to health, housing and social welfare – of the Development Plan for a New Ecuador 2024–2025. The purpose of the policies set out under the goal is to improve the provision of all health services, including promotion and prevention services, primary care, rehabilitation and palliative care. The policies seek to ensure the availability of sufficient numbers of trained health personnel and focus on care for priority groups and all those in vulnerable situations, strengthening the surveillance, prevention and control of communicable and noncommunicable diseases, guaranteeing access to information, comprehensive sex education and high-quality sexual and reproductive health services to ensure the full enjoyment of sexual and reproductive rights and implementing prevention and promotion programmes to address the determinants of health that contribute to the problems of malnutrition, chronic child malnutrition in particular, affecting the population as a whole.

Public expenditure on health

<i>Year</i>	<i>Amount approved</i>	<i>Amount disbursed</i>
2018	3 456.25	3 224.61
2019	3 161.19	2 976.66
2020	3 078.62	2 738.79
2021	3 271.17	3 171.25
2022	3 238.23	3 083.23
2023	3 401.69	3 145.99

Infant deaths¹⁷

Number of infant deaths by sex and year of death

<i>Year of death</i>	<i>Sex</i>		
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
2010	3 204	1 735	1 469
2011	3 046	1 659	1 387
2012	3 002	1 656	1 346
2013	2 979	1 639	1 340
2014	2 862	1 592	1 270
2015	3 011	1 681	1 330
2016	3 078	1 695	1 383

¹⁷ Registered deaths (t): deaths that occurred in the year of study and had been registered by 31 December 2022. The information provided concerns deaths of children under the age of 1.

Number of infant deaths by sex and year of death

<i>Year of death</i>	<i>Sex</i>		
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
2017	3 298	1 821	1 477
2018	3 391	1 874	1 517
2019	3 397	1 906	1 491
2020	2 601	1 453	1 148
2021	2 690	1 475	1 215
2022 (p**) ¹⁸	2 855	1 562	1 293

Source: Statistical Register of Deaths 2010–2022 (p**). Prepared by: National Statistics and Census Institute.

Maternal deaths¹⁹

Number of maternal deaths by year of death

<i>Year of death</i>	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 (P**) ²⁰
Nationwide	203	241	203	157	166	150	132	143	138	123	191	144	112
10–12 years	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13–15 years	2	3	5	4	3	3	2	2	4	2	2	3	2
16–18 years	20	23	19	15	10	6	10	11	11	10	14	7	9
19–21 years	23	24	23	19	29	23	14	23	21	15	23	15	14
22–24 years	29	26	30	21	21	17	16	11	9	16	22	14	19
25–27 years	15	25	30	18	17	13	15	21	22	16	24	21	15
28–30 years	23	25	18	22	15	20	15	17	15	10	21	14	8
31–33 years	30	40	22	17	17	15	22	14	19	12	23	20	17
34–36 years	25	28	16	11	18	25	15	21	17	19	29	26	9
37–39 years	19	24	21	11	19	18	11	17	12	14	18	17	14
40–42 years	9	18	14	16	11	8	8	5	6	7	9	5	5
43–45 years	7	4	2	1	3	1	4	1	2	1	6	2	-
46–49 years	1	1	3	2	2	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-

Source: Statistical Register of Deaths 2010–2022 (p**). Prepared by: National Statistics and Census Institute.

Number of hospital discharges following a medical abortion²¹

<i>Age group</i>	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total	3 067	2 412	3 713	2 965	1 715	982	742	944	804	911	704	750	541	547
10–14 years	45	25	52	54	21	10	10	4	4	7	8	18	25	45
15–19 years	517	331	625	527	271	16	103	120	98	105	81	69	61	75

¹⁸ Provisional figures (p**): data or indicators that have been generated using information on deaths that occurred in 2022 and are subject to adjustment based on subsequent registrations.

¹⁹ Registered deaths (t): deaths that occurred in the year of study and had been registered by 31 December 2022.

²⁰ Provisional figures (p**): data or indicators that have been generated using information on deaths that occurred in 2022 and are subject to adjustment based on subsequent registrations.

²¹ The term “hospital discharge” refers to the release of a hospitalized patient from a hospital inpatient service. It always involves the conclusion of the hospitalization and the vacating of a hospital bed, whether by release or death.

Age group	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
20–24 years	801	590	872	680	363	233	168	179	168	175	142	140	120	101
25–29 years	649	520	775	624	395	190	156	209	187	202	147	172	116	102
30–34 years	465	402	625	495	304	177	129	181	150	178	166	154	96	115
35–39 years	330	258	419	347	195	146	108	144	111	134	101	105	79	70
40–44 years	180	161	223	157	108	41	51	78	62	66	37	69	39	30
45–49 years	79	125	121	79	58	22	12	22	22	36	22	15	5	8
50–54 years	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	7	2	8	-	8	-	1
No information	1	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Statistical Register of Hospital Discharges 2010–2023. Prepared by: National Statistics and Census Institute.

Main causes of death by year of death²²

Year	Main causes of death	Number of deaths
2018	I21 Acute myocardial infarction	7 642
	J18 Pneumonia, unspecified	3 290
	R99 Other ill-defined and unspecified causes of mortality	2 452
	E11 Non-insulin dependent diabetes mellitus	2 246
	E14 Unspecified diabetes mellitus	2 145
	V89 Motor vehicle or non-motor vehicle accident, type of vehicle unspecified	1 839
	K74 Hepatic fibrosis and cirrhosis	1 790
	C16 Malignant neoplasm of the stomach	1 704
	I11 Hypertensive heart disease	1 514
	J44 Other chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	1 503
	Other causes of death	45 857
Total		71 982

Source: National Statistics and Census Institute.

Year	Main causes of death	Number of deaths
2019	I21 Acute myocardial infarction	8 276
	J18 Pneumonia, unspecified	3 313
	R98 Unattended death	3 144
	E11 Non-insulin dependent diabetes mellitus	2 303
	E14 Unspecified diabetes mellitus	2 232
	V89 Motor vehicle or non-motor vehicle accident, type of vehicle unspecified	1 984
	K74 Hepatic fibrosis and cirrhosis	1 756
	C16 Malignant neoplasm of the stomach	1 721
	J44 Other chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	1 596
	I11 Hypertensive heart disease	1 337
	Other causes of death	46 777
Total		74 439

Source: National Statistics and Census Institute.

²² Registered deaths (t): deaths that occurred in the year of study and had been registered by 31 December 2022.

Year	Main causes of death		Number of deaths
2020	U07	COVID-19, confirmed or probable	23 921
	I21	Acute myocardial infarction	15 220
	R99	Other ill-defined and unspecified causes of mortality	3 965
	J18	Pneumonia, unspecified	3 854
	E11	Non-insulin dependent diabetes mellitus	3 768
	E14	Unspecified diabetes mellitus	3 618
	I10	Essential (primary) hypertension	2 491
	J12	Viral pneumonia, not elsewhere classified	2 467
	I11	Hypertensive heart disease	1 869
	C16	Malignant neoplasm of the stomach	1 777
	Other causes of death		54 250
Total		117 200	

Source: National Statistics and Census Institute.

Year	Main causes of death		Number of deaths
2021	U07	COVID-19, confirmed or probable	20 900
	I21	Acute myocardial infarction	12 422
	E11	Non-insulin dependent diabetes mellitus	2 687
	J18	Pneumonia, unspecified	2 660
	E14	Unspecified diabetes mellitus	2 354
	V89	Motor vehicle or non-motor vehicle accident, type of vehicle unspecified	2 239
	I10	Essential (primary) hypertension	1 910
	K74	Hepatic fibrosis and cirrhosis	1 791
	C16	Malignant neoplasm of the stomach	1 755
	R98	Unattended death	1 699
	Other causes of death		55 794
Total		106 211	

Source: National Statistics and Census Institute.

Year	Main causes of death		Number of deaths
2022 (p**) ²³	I21	Acute myocardial infarction	12 878
	X95	Assault by other and unspecified firearm discharge	3 728
	U07	COVID-19, confirmed or probable	3 166
	J18	Pneumonia, unspecified	2 867
	V89	Motor vehicle or non-motor vehicle accident, type of vehicle unspecified	2 632
	E11	Non-insulin dependent diabetes mellitus	2 322
	E14	Unspecified diabetes mellitus	2 243
	K74	Hepatic fibrosis and cirrhosis	1 962
	C16	Malignant neoplasm of the stomach	1 791
	I10	Essential (primary) hypertension	1 787

²³ Provisional figures (p**): data or indicators that have been generated using information on the deaths that occurred in 2022 and are subject to adjustment based on subsequent registrations.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Main causes of death</i>	<i>Number of deaths</i>
	Other causes of death	54 570
	Total	89 946

Source: National Statistics and Census Institute.

50. According to the 2018 national health and nutrition survey, 43.7 per cent of women of childbearing age and 53.8 per cent of men used contraception during first sexual intercourse. Modern contraception methods are used by 92.8 per cent of women of childbearing age who are married or in a relationship. That figure stands at 94.7 per cent among men.

51. Ecuador has established regulations on access to contraception and a standard and protocol on family planning. These instruments contain guidance on the procurement of contraceptives, in accordance with which, in 2023, a budget of \$5.8 million was earmarked for efforts to maintain an adequate supply of contraceptive drugs and medical devices. The budget for 2024 is estimated at \$4.1 million.

52. Educational and informational toolkits for the promotion of sexual and reproductive health and prevention of gender-based violence among adolescents have been developed and are being used. Twenty-five large-scale events were held across the country to mark the Andean and Central American Week for the Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy, with the participation of a total of 8,054 individuals, including adolescents, parents and/or caregivers, representatives of organizations and other local actors.

53. In terms of access to health services, 365 primary healthcare facilities run by the Ministry of Health currently offer comprehensive adolescent-friendly care services.

54. The relevant guidance issued includes the instructions on screening for physical, psychological and sexual violence in girls and adolescents between 10 and 18 years of age, the manual on comprehensive care for pregnant girls and adolescents under 15 and the 2023 manual on comprehensive healthcare for adolescents.

55. With regard to adolescent pregnancy, in 2022, there were 1,921 recorded live births to mothers between 10 and 14 years of age, representing a rate of 2.3 live births per 1,000 women in that age range. The same year, 38,087 live births to mothers between 15 and 19 years, or 47.3 live births per 1,000 women that age, were registered. A total of 6,487 adolescents dropped out of school owing to pregnancy, which is equivalent to 36,871 years of lost schooling and \$728.5 million in lost income that they would have earned had they not dropped out of school before reaching higher education. The Ministry of Health allocated \$8,991,906.37 to the implementation of the 2019–2022 investment project for the prevention of pregnancy in girls and adolescents.

56. The 2023–2025 investment project aimed at promoting a comprehensive approach to adolescent sexual and reproductive health was developed in 2023 and is being implemented with a budget of \$14,845,389.90 to cover its period of validity.

Expansion of the service coverage of the health centres of the Ministry of Health

<i>Beneficiaries</i>	<i>December 2023</i>	<i>March 2024</i>
Number of pregnant women treated	72 004	74 335
Number of prenatal check-ups per month	95 179	101 608
Number of well-child check-ups (for children under 2)	136 047	154 568

Source: Ministry of Health.

57. The main results of the specialized survey on child malnutrition were presented in 2023 as part of the Intersectoral Strategic Plan for the Prevention and Reduction of Chronic Child Malnutrition. The results showed that the prevalence of chronic child malnutrition in children under the ages of 2 and 5 was 20.1 per cent and 17.5 per cent, respectively. The provinces with the highest levels of chronic child malnutrition are Chimborazo (35.1 per cent), Bolívar (30.3 per cent) and Santa Elena (29.8 per cent). The results also revealed that 33.4 per cent of Indigenous children under 2 suffer from chronic malnutrition, compared to 2 per cent of mestizo children, 16 per cent of Afro-Ecuadorian children and 15 per cent of Montubio children.

58. The purpose of the social investment made through the “Ecuador Grows without Child Malnutrition” strategy is to improve the living conditions of children under the age of 2 and pregnant women by preventing and reducing chronic child malnutrition. The budget was earmarked primarily for the recruitment of doctors, nurses, nutritionists and educators to work at the child development and “Growing with Our Children” centres and for the purchase of vaccines, micronutrients, equipment and other priority supplies. The management of the budget earmarked for the strategy and the results of its execution are improving by the year.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Investment (\$)</i>
2021	188 651 431.48
2022	254 355 614.19
2023	302 700 348.09
2024	352 929 282.81 (approved)

Source: Technical secretariat for the “Ecuador Grows without Chronic Child Malnutrition” strategy.

59. There has been a steady increase in common mental health disorders at the national level. Between 2018 and 2022, the most common disorders were anxiety disorders (29 per cent) and depression (16.5 per cent).

60. In 2016, the estimated number of drug users was approximately 791,000 persons. By 2023, demand for treatment had increased by 60 per cent, and there were approximately 2 million users. A multidisciplinary approach to addressing this alarming situation needs to be taken.

5. Right to work

61. Article 284 of the Constitution establishes that the fundamental objective of Ecuadorian economic policy is to promote full employment and all forms of work, always with respect for labour rights. The same objective underpins articles 325 and 326, which establish that the Government must guarantee the right to employment and recognize all types of work, regardless of whether the person is employed or self-employed, including work to provide for oneself and care for others. The right to work is based on several principles, one of which is that the Government should promote full employment and focus on eliminating underemployment and unemployment. Article 328 of the Constitution establishes that remuneration must be fair and consist of a living wage that covers at least the basic needs of the worker and his or her family. This remuneration can be garnished only for the payment of alimony. The Government has a duty to promote education and training in order to improve the quality of employment and access to jobs and self-employment initiatives, all of which young people are viewed as being entitled to by right, in line with article 329 of the Constitution. Pursuant to article 177 of the Labour Code, the Government, through the National Labour and Wages Council, must determine the unified basic salary for private sector workers on an annual basis. Similarly, article 8 of the Organic Code of Production, Commerce and Investment establishes that the monthly living wage, which must cover at least the basic needs of a worker and his or her family, is calculated by dividing the cost of a basic basket of goods and services by the number of wage earners in the household. The value of the basic basket and the number of wage earners in a household are determined yearly by

the National Statistics and Census Institute and serve as the basis for the calculation of the living wage established by the Ministry of Labour Relations.

62. Policies relating to the right to work are set out in goal No. 1 of the economic component of the Opportunity Creation Plan 2021–2025, which is to increase and promote employment opportunities and improve working conditions in an inclusive manner. The policy set out under this goal is focused on creating new opportunities for decent work and promoting labour inclusion and the improvement of contracts, with an emphasis on reducing inequalities and providing support for priority groups, young people, women and members of the LGBTI+ community. Goal No. 3 is to promote productivity and competitiveness in the agricultural, industrial, aquaculture and fishing sectors by taking a circular approach to the economy. In addition to pursuing that objective, the associated policies aim to facilitate access to adequate infrastructure, inputs and modern and clean technologies and foster the creation of production associations that boost citizen participation in production and marketing activities. The eradication of poverty is addressed through goal No. 5 of the social component, which is to protect families, guarantee their rights and access to services, eradicate poverty and foster social inclusion. The relevant policy covers the promotion of rights and the eradication of poverty, with a focus on individuals belonging to priority groups. Goal No. 8 is to create new opportunities and well-being in rural areas, with an emphasis on Indigenous Peoples and nations. The aim of the policy set out under the goal, which is suited to specific areas, is to eradicate poverty and guarantee universal access to basic services and connectivity in rural areas. The Development Plan for a New Ecuador 2024–2025 contributes to poverty reduction and the creation of jobs through a number of goals and policies set forth in the social component. Goal No. 1 is to comprehensively improve the living conditions of the population by promoting equitable access to health, housing and social welfare through policies designed to help reduce poverty and extreme poverty (development of employment and self-employment skills, access to financing, marketing support and development of entrepreneurial activities, with a focus on people living in poverty and extreme poverty) and strengthen the bioeconomy of Indigenous and other Peoples and nations (financing of social, economic and productive projects and the strengthening of value chains to improve the living conditions of these groups). The economic development component includes a number of goals and policies. Goal No. 5 is to sustainably promote production by improving productivity; the relevant policies seek to increase the supply of agricultural products to satisfy national and international demand for high-quality traditional and non-traditional products and encourage productivity, competitiveness, marketing, industrialization and the generation of value added in the agro-industrial, industrial and manufacturing sector at the national level. Goal No. 6 is to incentivize the creation of decent jobs through policies to promote decent employment opportunities in an inclusive manner, guarantee compliance with labour rights, encourage the sustainable development of productive units (micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises), promote job creation through mechanisms for the growth and expansion of companies of local relevance, develop the capacities of young people between 18 and 29 years of age to facilitate their integration into the labour market and ensure that men and women receive equal pay or other form of economic compensation for work of equal value.

63. The Organic Act on Economic Efficiency and Job Creation entered into force in December 2023. It contains clear guidelines designed to promote infrastructure development through public-private partnerships, without prejudice to the interests of the State and in a manner that is complementary to public investment.

64. Article 188 of the Labour Code provides for compensation for dismissal without notice, meaning that employers who fail to give workers notice before dismissing them are required to compensate them based on their length of service. Workers with up to three years of service are entitled to an amount equivalent to three months' pay. Those with more than three years of service are entitled to a month's pay per year of service, up to a maximum of 25 months' pay.

65. The Organic Act on the Promotion of the Purple Economy, which seeks to promote gender equality and empower women in the economic sphere, entered into force on 20 January 2023 with a view to eliminating inequalities between men and women. Decree No. 928 establishing the regulations implementing the Act was issued on 24 November 2023.

The Organic Act on Equal Pay for Women and Men entered into force on 19 January 2024. Its purpose is to guarantee that men and women who do the same work or work of equal value receive the same pay and any other form of economic reward by establishing a number of key criteria, including skills and qualifications, working conditions, effort and level of responsibility.

66. Articles 14, 20 and 29 of the Organic Act on the Right to Human Care of 27 April 2023 establish that women and persons with childbearing capacity who are pregnant, are in the postnatal period or are breastfeeding have the right to enhanced job security during the special protection period, which is linked to the right to care. For up to 15 months, such persons are entitled to take unpaid or paid maternity leave²⁴ and benefit from special labour protections in both the public and private sectors.²⁵

67. The Ministry of Labour is responsible for labour affairs and policies, including processes to strengthen employment skills and competitiveness in the labour market. The Ministry has developed a number of initiatives, including a strategy to strengthen employment by proposing alternatives for reincorporation into the labour market for jobseekers and a strategy to support entrepreneurship by proposing alternatives for reincorporation into the labour market for citizens who have a business idea or have started a business venture. Between 2021 and June 2024, a total of 30,344 citizens (18,219, or 60 per cent, of whom were women) received support through these initiatives, helping them to obtain access to the labour market or generate income through a business venture.

68. Between 2021 and June 2024, the Ministry of Labour conducted 41,911 labour inspections across the country with a view to verifying employers' compliance with their labour obligations to their workers.

Labour market indicators²⁶

Period	Indicators	National	Area	
		Total	Urban	Rural
2018	Unemployment rate	3.9%	5.2%	1.5%
2018	Total participation rate	66.9%	63.8%	73.8%
2018	Gross participation rate	47.6%	46.1%	50.6%
2019	Unemployment rate	4.2%	5.3%	1.9%
2019	Total participation rate	67.3%	63.9%	74.9%
2019	Gross participation rate	47.8%	46.1%	51.4%
2021	Unemployment rate	5.2%	6.8%	2.3%
2021	Total participation rate	66.0%	62.7%	73.3%
2021	Gross participation rate	46.9%	45.0%	51.1%

²⁴ Paid maternity leave should be understood as the period that starts from the birth and continues for the maximum time established by the applicable laws regulating human resource relations.

²⁵ Workers who are pregnant or in the postnatal period benefit from special protection until the end of the paid or unpaid maternity, paternity, adoption or breastfeeding leave, regardless of their contract type and whether they work in the public or private sector. During the special protection period, women or persons with childbearing capacity are guaranteed enhanced job security, the same pay they received before the pregnancy or a larger amount, respect for maternity and breastfeeding leave, a suitable work environment that is adapted to their specific needs and enables them to work without violence or discrimination of any kind and the payment of compensation as established in the relevant laws.

²⁶ Unemployment rate: the total number of unemployed persons as a percentage of the economically active population.

Total participation rate: the economically active population as a percentage of the working-age population.

Gross participation rate: the total number of employed persons as a percentage of the working-age population.

Period	Indicators	National	Area	
		Total	Urban	Rural
2022	Unemployment rate	4.4%	5.5%	2.2%
2022	Total participation rate	65.9%	63.0%	72.4%
2022	Gross participation rate	46.9%	45.2%	50.6%
2023	Unemployment rate	3.8%	5.0%	1.6%
2023	Total participation rate	64.7%	61.6%	71.8%
2023	Gross participation rate	46.1%	44.5%	49.5%

Source: National employment, unemployment and underemployment survey for the years 2018–2019 and 2021–2023.

69. The informal sector accounted for 55.7 per cent, reflecting the growing trend observed in recent years. The underemployment rate at the end of 2023 was 21.2 per cent. In December 2023, the rate of decent employment was 35.9 per cent, which remains lower than pre-pandemic levels.

70. In December 2023, the total labour market participation rate among women was 54 per cent, 23.7 percentage points lower than that of men, which reached 77.7 per cent. The percentage of women and men employed in decent jobs was 28.8 per cent and 41.1 per cent, respectively. In December 2023, the female unemployment rate was 4.2 per cent. The male unemployment rate was lower, at 2.8 per cent (a difference of 1.4 percentage points). These figures show that women face more difficult working conditions than men. In 2022, the average monthly income for men and women was \$503 and \$406.30, respectively, demonstrating that men outearn women by \$96.70 a month. In other words, men's monthly income is 1.24 times greater than that of women. While this gap has always existed, it has narrowed. In December 2023, men earned 1.20 times more than women.

71. In December 2023, 30.1 per cent of individuals between the ages of 18 and 29 who were employed in decent jobs. The unemployment rate of that age group was 8 per cent, and the underemployment rate was 26.7 per cent. All these figures are higher than the national-level figures for the working-age population as a whole and suggest that the country's young people do not enjoy decent and adequate working conditions, which affects their future development and well-being.

72. In December 2023, the underemployment rate by ethnic self-identification was highest among the mestizo group (78.1 per cent), followed by the Indigenous (11.9 per cent), Montubio (6.6 per cent), Afro-Ecuadorian (3 per cent) and white (0.4 per cent) groups. The rate of employment in the informal sector was highest among the mestizo group (68.8 per cent), followed by the Indigenous (23 per cent) and Montubio (5.1 per cent) groups.

73. The child labour rate for the year of the outbreak of the pandemic was 6.1 per cent. In 2021, it increased to 10.1 per cent before dropping to 6.5 per cent the following year. It rose again in December 2023, reaching 10 per cent.

Percentage of persons in employment by branch of activity²⁷

Branch of activity	National				
	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023
Agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing	29.5%	30.1%	31.5%	30.5%	30.0%
Oil and mining	0.4%	0.4%	0.5%	0.5%	0.4%
Manufacturing (including oil refining)	10.9%	10.5%	10.2%	10.6%	10.1%
Electricity and water supply	0.6%	0.5%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%
Construction	6.2%	5.9%	5.9%	6.1%	6.4%
Trade	18.2%	18.1%	18.6%	18.0%	17.7%
Accommodation and food service activities	6.2%	6.4%	6.2%	6.6%	6.9%
Transport	5.7%	5.7%	5.5%	5.6%	5.8%
Mail and communications	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	0.8%	0.9%
Financial activities	0.7%	0.7%	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%
Professional, technical and administrative activities	4.4%	4.5%	4.4%	4.9%	5.0%
Education and health and social services	6.5%	6.4%	6.0%	6.1%	6.4%
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	3.4%	3.3%	3.2%	3.0%	2.8%
Domestic services	2.7%	2.8%	2.2%	2.3%	2.5%

Source: National employment, unemployment and underemployment survey for the years 2018–2019 and 2021–2023.

Number of people in employment by job category, 2023

Job category	Men	Women	Total
Government employee	272 514	259 723	532 237
Private sector employee	1 450 310	868 862	2 319 172

Source: Ministry of Labour.

Number of people in employment by job category and sex, July 2024

Job category	Men	Women	Total
Government employee	275 277	248 819	524 096
Private sector employee	1 408 588	827 553	2 236 141

²⁷ Employment: persons in employment are those of working age who, during the reference week, were engaged in any activity to produce goods or provide services for pay or profit.

The following persons fall under this category: (a) persons employed, at work, i.e., who worked for at least one hour for pay; and (b) persons who are employed but not at work due to temporary absence from the job or to the nature of their working time arrangement, such as shift work, compensatory leave for overtime or flexitime (International Labour Organization, 2013).

Branch of activity: the economic activity that enables the establishment where the person works or worked to be classified within a sector of the economy, based on the type of goods or services it produces. This is a characteristic of establishments that is defined according to the activities of the company or business.

Number of women in employment by job category and ethnicity, 2023

<i>Job category</i>	<i>Indigenous</i>	<i>Afro-Ecuadorian</i>	<i>Montubio</i>	<i>Mestizo</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
Government employee	7 727	9 839	5 706	234 745	1 677	28	259 723
Private sector employee	32 969	25 226	13 713	787 124	9 812	17	868 862

Source: Ministry of Labour.

Number of women in employment by job category and ethnicity, July 2024

<i>Job category</i>	<i>Indigenous</i>	<i>Afro-Ecuadorian</i>	<i>Montubio</i>	<i>Mestizo</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
Government employee	9 260	11 142	33	228 008	376	-	248 819
Private sector employee	34 547	23 762	9 146	757 323	2 775	-	827 553

Source: Ministry of Labour.

Gender wage gap and difference in the proportion of men and women in decent jobs

<i>Period</i>	<i>Wage gap</i>	<i>Difference in the proportion of men and women in decent jobs</i>
2023	15.39%	30.41%
July 2024	18.66%	34.61%

Source: Ministry of Labour.

Nominal and real per capita income²⁸

<i>Period</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>National</i>	<i>Area</i>	
		<i>Total</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Rural</i>
2018	Average nominal per capita income	234.1	275.4	146.2
2019	Average nominal per capita income	227.5	267.8	141.7
2021	Average nominal per capita income	207.2	239.6	138.1
2022	Average nominal per capita income	222.7	257.9	147.5
2023	Average nominal per capita income	228.4	263.2	153.8
2018	Average real per capita income	245.3	288.7	153.2
2019	Average real per capita income	237.7	279.9	148.1
2021	Average real per capita income	217.2	251.3	144.8
2022	Average real per capita income	226.2	261.9	149.9
2023	Average real per capita income	226.5	261.0	152.4

Source: National employment, unemployment and underemployment survey for the years 2018–2019 and 2021–2023.

74. In August 2024, the consumer price index reached 113.79, driven by rising prices in several divisions, including food and non-alcoholic beverages, housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels and miscellaneous goods and services. In December 2020, the index was 104.23, reflecting an economic slowdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The August 2024

²⁸ Per capita income: the average income received by each member of a household, in other words, the total household income divided by the total number of household members.

Average annual per capita income (nominal): in United States dollars at current values.

Average annual per capita income (real): in United States dollars at the real values of December 2022.

index is the highest in recent years, attributed to the post-pandemic recovery and subsequent price increases.

75. The Ministry of Labour helps people find jobs by matching job openings with jobseekers and enhancing their skills and qualifications. It also oversees employment and placement services. The results of the efforts of the Public Employment Service are laid out below:

<i>Number of persons placed</i>	
<i>Year</i>	<i>Total</i>
2020	55 437
2021	60 935
2022	74 468
2023	66 718
2024	15 044
Total	217 165

Source: Ministry of Labour.

76. Targeted training programmes have been implemented to help jobseekers enhance their qualifications and improve their technical skills. By converting these skills into practical abilities, individuals can perform better in their jobs. The results of these efforts are as follows:

<i>Number of persons trained</i>	
<i>Year</i>	<i>Total</i>
2021	128 209
2022	65 630
2023	60 518
2024	23 614
Total	277 971

Source: Ministry of Labour.

Consumer price index

<i>Level</i>	<i>COICOP code</i>	<i>COICOP description</i>	<i>Dec. 2019</i>	<i>Dec. 2020</i>	<i>Dec. 2021</i>	<i>Dec. 2022</i>	<i>Dec. 2023</i>	<i>Aug. 2024</i>
General	0	General	105.21	104.23	106.26	110.23	111.72	113.79
Division	01	Food and non-alcoholic beverages	104.66	104.60	105.73	113.77	118.58	120.02
Group	011	Food	102.76	102.90	103.72	112.43	117.44	118.53
Class	0111	Bread and cereals (non-durables (ND))	99.95	100.62	103.71	111.16	126.34	123.53
Class	0112	Meat (ND)	102.89	103.39	104.63	105.57	108.63	112.13
Class	0113	Fish (ND)	109.45	107.80	109.48	114.79	113.76	112.34
Class	0114	Milk, cheese and eggs (ND)	101.66	102.99	102.73	114.03	120.96	120.51
Class	0115	Oils and fats (ND)	96.41	95.22	123.86	141.37	124.24	123.55
Class	0116	Fruit (ND)	103.74	102.60	98.85	117.05	115.58	117.19
Class	0117	Vegetables (ND)	105.72	104.36	100.79	112.92	115.50	120.68
Class	0118	Sugar, jam, honey, chocolate and confectionery (ND)	99.03	98.93	96.70	105.67	115.81	116.52
Class	0119	Other food products not elsewhere classified (ND)	110.59	115.85	112.42	120.03	124.09	131.11

<i>Level</i>	<i>COICOP code</i>	<i>COICOP description</i>	<i>Dec. 2019</i>	<i>Dec. 2020</i>	<i>Dec. 2021</i>	<i>Dec. 2022</i>	<i>Dec. 2023</i>	<i>Aug. 2024</i>
Group	012	Non-alcoholic beverages	119.86	118.22	121.82	124.43	127.74	131.91
Class	0121	Coffee, tea and cocoa (ND)	105.50	100.60	102.51	116.13	116.27	118.53
Class	0122	Mineral waters, soft drinks and juices (ND)	121.31	120.00	123.77	125.27	128.90	133.26
Division	02	Alcoholic beverages, tobacco and drugs	130.69	132.79	135.00	142.79	146.92	153.53
Group	021	Alcoholic beverages	116.83	119.51	122.49	132.84	135.03	140.63
Class	0211	Spirits (ND)	80.32	79.34	82.45	87.77	88.49	93.42
Class	0213	Beer (ND)	125.01	128.52	131.46	142.94	145.46	151.21
Group	022	Tobacco	163.64	164.37	164.75	166.45	175.21	184.19
Class	0221	Tobacco (ND)	163.64	164.37	164.75	166.45	175.21	184.19
Division	03	Garments and footwear	83.75	80.28	77.71	76.30	74.11	74.08
Group	031	Garments	87.25	84.31	81.84	80.69	78.70	78.98
Class	0311	Clothing materials (semi-durables (SD))	101.91	101.80	100.89	104.03	105.05	105.49
Class	0312	Garments (SD)	86.32	83.23	80.68	79.24	77.07	77.23
Class	0313	Other articles of clothing and clothing accessories (SD)	85.79	85.17	81.73	81.59	79.05	79.89
Class	0314	Cleaning, repair and hire of clothing (services (S))	106.20	105.02	104.44	108.46	110.49	113.43
Group	032	Footwear	75.82	71.16	68.35	66.35	63.69	62.98
Class	0321	Shoes and other footwear (SD)	75.13	70.47	67.56	65.40	62.63	61.79
Class	0322	Repair and hire of footwear (S)	107.14	102.50	104.11	109.40	111.53	117.20
Division	04	Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels	115.97	116.05	116.71	118.76	119.65	120.68
Group	041	Actual rentals for housing	118.74	118.76	119.20	120.16	121.60	122.21
Class	0411	Actual rentals paid by tenants (S)	118.74	118.76	119.20	120.16	121.60	122.21
Group	043	Maintenance and repair of the dwelling	104.67	104.13	106.70	112.11	111.71	111.05
Class	0431	Materials for the maintenance and repair of the dwelling (ND)	95.71	97.02	101.58	109.37	108.42	106.04
Group	044	Water supply and miscellaneous services relating to the dwelling	119.68	120.36	122.17	127.85	129.73	133.74
Class	0441	Water supply (ND)	121.08	121.11	123.43	128.83	130.64	134.67
Group	045	Electricity, gas and other fuels	111.28	111.20	111.11	111.90	111.54	111.61
Class	0451	Electricity (ND)	113.84	113.84	113.93	114.68	115.52	115.53
Class	0452	Gas (ND)	96.08	95.51	94.34	95.38	87.93	88.29
Division	05	Furnishings, household equipment and routine household maintenance	100.24	99.95	102.19	107.29	108.89	110.21
Group	051	Furniture, furnishings, carpets and other floor coverings	102.18	99.94	103.07	105.05	105.31	104.52
Class	0511	Furniture and furnishings (durables (D))	101.69	99.24	101.84	103.81	104.47	103.43
Group	052	Household textiles	92.03	92.33	92.10	94.72	92.19	91.42
Class	0520	Household textiles (SD)	92.03	92.33	92.10	94.72	92.19	91.42
Group	053	Household appliances	77.03	75.36	76.34	77.70	74.96	76.23
Class	0531	Major household appliances, whether electric or not (D)	73.34	71.69	72.52	73.79	70.23	71.14
Class	0532	Small electrical household appliances (SD)	82.90	82.06	85.54	86.38	88.75	89.54
Group	054	Glassware, tableware and household utensils	94.25	94.11	102.06	106.52	106.36	106.74

<i>Level</i>	<i>COICOP code</i>	<i>COICOP description</i>	<i>Dec. 2019</i>	<i>Dec. 2020</i>	<i>Dec. 2021</i>	<i>Dec. 2022</i>	<i>Dec. 2023</i>	<i>Aug. 2024</i>
Class	0540	Glassware, tableware and household utensils (SD)	94.25	94.11	102.06	106.52	106.36	106.74
Group	055	Tools and equipment for house and garden	82.39	80.07	80.79	83.39	81.23	78.79
Class	0552	Non-motorized tools and miscellaneous accessories (SD)	82.22	79.30	79.18	82.54	80.66	78.32
Group	056	Goods and services for routine household maintenance	107.91	108.49	110.92	118.18	121.94	124.18
Class	0561	Non-durable household goods (ND)	97.80	97.51	101.86	108.82	109.49	111.08
Division	06	Health	111.86	115.88	117.75	120.13	121.30	124.17
Group	061	Medical products, devices and equipment	107.97	112.27	113.42	116.33	117.83	121.11
Class	0611	Medicines (ND)	107.67	112.52	113.63	116.59	118.28	121.44
Class	0612	Other medical products (ND)	122.92	114.02	124.33	134.51	131.57	131.89
Class	0613	Assistive devices and equipment (D)	107.74	108.84	108.13	108.60	108.96	114.41
Group	062	Outpatient care services	116.64	120.90	124.04	125.28	124.96	127.75
Class	0621	Medical services (S)	119.08	122.05	125.49	127.29	128.43	131.69
Class	0622	Dental services (S)	123.35	130.47	135.88	136.30	132.97	137.38
Class	0623	Paramedical services (S)	107.31	110.81	111.55	112.73	113.07	113.79
Group	063	Inpatient care services (S)	118.03	120.31	122.49	125.10	128.08	129.35
Class	0630	Inpatient care services (S)	118.03	120.31	122.49	125.10	128.08	129.35
Division	07	Transportation	108.36	105.87	116.21	119.55	119.42	123.16
Group	071	Purchase of vehicles	101.92	99.77	100.93	102.56	101.74	104.33
Class	0711	Motor cars (D)	101.26	99.14	100.05	101.80	101.17	104.00
Class	0713	Bicycles (D)	91.22	89.16	87.79	80.41	78.46	75.86
Group	072	Operation of personal transport equipment	110.78	103.99	132.28	139.46	137.50	146.75
Class	0721	Parts and accessories for personal transport equipment (SD)	82.99	78.22	83.13	86.34	86.50	88.27
Class	0722	Fuels and lubricants for personal transport equipment (ND)	121.14	111.26	155.92	166.02	162.23	175.78
Class	0723	Maintenance and repair of personal transport equipment (S)	101.43	100.74	104.10	106.82	107.99	111.83
Class	0724	Services for parking and toll facilities (S)	101.02	100.61	99.08	100.32	101.39	101.03
Group	073	Transport services	113.92	114.16	121.90	124.41	126.41	127.45
Class	0732	Passenger transport by road (S)	115.03	115.41	123.27	126.27	129.01	129.93
Class	0733	Passenger transport by air (S)	102.46	101.25	107.84	105.19	99.59	101.86
Division	08	Communication	93.92	96.81	93.52	94.72	94.60	97.23
Group	081	Postal services	105.64	110.09	109.96	111.91	115.17	121.43
Class	0810	Postal services (S)	105.64	110.09	109.96	111.91	115.17	121.43
Group	082	Telephone and telefax equipment	40.11	38.30	35.20	32.20	28.16	26.77
Class	0820	Telephone and telefax equipment (D)	40.11	38.30	35.20	32.20	28.16	26.77
Group	083	Telephone and telefax services	98.71	102.02	98.69	100.26	100.48	103.45
Class	0830	Telephone and telefax services (S)	98.71	102.02	98.69	100.26	100.48	103.45
Division	09	Recreation and culture	99.48	94.97	94.53	93.92	93.31	94.77
Group	091	Audiovisual, photographic and data-processing equipment	76.00	75.74	76.23	71.96	66.02	67.44

<i>Level</i>	<i>COICOP code</i>	<i>COICOP description</i>	<i>Dec. 2019</i>	<i>Dec. 2020</i>	<i>Dec. 2021</i>	<i>Dec. 2022</i>	<i>Dec. 2023</i>	<i>Aug. 2024</i>
Class	0911	Equipment for the reception, recording and reproduction of sounds and images (D)	68.53	66.86	67.32	63.02	57.08	56.97
Class	0912	Photographic, cinematographic and optical equipment (D)	58.89	60.81	60.32	59.90	62.42	69.56
Class	0913	Data-processing equipment (D)	80.18	81.51	81.29	72.96	63.74	63.31
Class	0914	Recording media (SD)	88.48	88.29	90.81	93.43	91.21	99.37
Group	093	Other recreational items, gardens and pets	93.67	91.18	94.62	97.58	97.74	99.06
Class	0931	Maintenance and repair of other major durables for recreation and culture (S)	79.12	76.84	75.48	73.29	71.95	72.70
Class	0932	Equipment for sport, camping and open-air recreation (SD)	92.57	93.17	96.87	96.00	94.96	96.35
Group	094	Recreational and cultural services	128.01	115.03	112.38	109.90	114.11	117.15
Class	0941	Recreational and sporting services (S)	212.73	148.92	144.68	135.67	149.14	149.24
Class	0942	Cultural services (S)	106.22	107.27	104.62	103.79	105.81	110.38
Group	095	Books, newspapers and stationery	97.85	97.64	95.39	99.76	99.56	99.96
Class	0951	Books (SD)	94.59	94.19	90.07	91.56	91.50	91.66
Class	0952	Newspapers (ND)	102.15	102.11	102.31	113.29	113.16	115.46
Class	0954	Stationery and drawing materials (ND)	102.42	102.62	102.98	107.74	107.01	105.67
Division	10	Education	115.62	109.97	113.01	118.70	120.41	122.49
Group	101	Preschool, primary and secondary education	121.89	113.33	118.46	126.63	130.50	132.78
Class	1010	Preschool, primary and secondary education (S)	121.89	113.33	118.46	126.63	130.50	132.78
Group	102	Secondary education	124.88	117.24	122.21	130.76	135.18	137.99
Class	1020	Secondary education (S)	124.88	117.24	122.21	130.76	135.18	137.99
Group	104	Tertiary education	104.19	101.19	104.13	105.32	104.12	106.15
Class	1040	Tertiary education (S)	104.19	101.19	104.13	105.32	104.12	106.15
Division	11	Restaurants and accommodation services	108.37	107.45	108.15	112.15	114.63	116.82
Group	111	Catering services	109.18	108.46	109.09	113.12	115.64	117.89
Class	1111	Restaurants, cafés and the like (S)	109.18	108.46	109.09	113.12	115.64	117.89
Group	112	Accommodation services	77.43	68.30	71.95	74.43	75.53	75.38
Class	1121	Accommodation services (S)	77.43	68.30	71.95	74.43	75.53	75.38
Division	12	Miscellaneous goods and services	106.38	104.66	105.41	110.04	110.70	113.76
Group	121	Personal care	105.84	104.24	104.28	110.07	111.00	115.37
Class	1211	Hairdressing salons and personal grooming establishments (S)	112.82	113.42	114.26	116.95	119.58	120.85
Class	1213	Other appliances and products for personal care (ND)	104.59	102.58	102.48	108.88	109.50	114.45

Source: National Statistics and Census Institute.

77. In September 2023, the national working-age population was 13.1 million people, with 8.8 million economically active and 4.3 million economically inactive. By the first quarter of 2024, the working-age population had increased to 13.2 million, with 8.5 million economically active and 4.7 million economically inactive. From 2023 to 2024, the working-age population grew by approximately 100,000 people, a 0.76 per cent increase. The

economically active population decreased by 300,000 people, a 3.41 per cent reduction, while the economically inactive population increased by 400,000 people, or 9.3 per cent.

78. Some of the main measures aimed at the eradication of child labour include: the issuance of a technical standard for the Child Labour Eradication Service by the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion; the development of a child labour risk identification model in June 2024; the national roll-out of the “Rights with Dignity” campaign by the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion; the issuance of a protocol for action in the National Education System by the Ministry of Education; and the implementation of the Child Labour Eradication Programme by the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion. In February 2024, 12,206 persons were helped by 160 care units through the Child Labour Eradication Programme. These individuals make up 38 per cent of all those who received help from the Special Protection Service. Ecuador is the first member country of the Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labour Regional Initiative to develop this statistical tool, which uses information from surveys, censuses and administrative records to identify areas where child labour is most likely to occur and to estimate the impact of factors related to this issue.

6. Right to social security and a pension

79. The right to social security is guaranteed in the Constitution. Articles 3, 32, 34 and 66 provide that one of the primary duties of the State is to provide social security and that the right to social security is inalienable. Under article 367, the social security system is public and universal, may not be privatized, must meet the immediate needs of the population and must operate based on the principles of sustainability, efficiency, dispatch and transparency. Article 370 specifies that the Ecuadorian Social Security Institute is responsible for providing mandatory universal insurance benefits to its members. The National Police and the armed forces have their own special social security systems. The National Police Social Security Act and the Armed Forces Social Security Act, as amended by the Act for Strengthening the Special Social Security Systems of the Armed Forces and the National Police, establish the National Police Social Security Institute and the Armed Forces Social Security Institute, respectively. The implementing regulations to the social security laws for the armed forces and the National Police, issued in May 2017, establish that the State must provide funds for the payment of pensions to the Armed Forces Social Security Institute and the National Police Social Security Institute. The Constitution also establishes the Rural Social Insurance Scheme, a special mandatory universal insurance system for the rural population and persons working in small-scale fisheries.

80. The Social Security Act is composed of 308 articles, a single special provision, a general provision and 32 transitional provisions, which regulate the right to social security and define the Ecuadorian Social Security Institute as an entity with administrative, financial and regulatory autonomy responsible for providing benefits. It regulates the different social security benefits, how the social security system is funded, whom it protects, the requirements to qualify for benefits and the risks it covers – namely, maternity, sickness, occupational risks, old age, disability, death, severance and unemployment, including for rural workers.

81. The Labour Code contains several articles that recognize specific social security benefits, such as article 196, which establishes the right to the reserve fund. Any worker who has been employed for more than one year has the right to receive a sum of money from his or her employer equal to one month’s salary for each full year of service after the first year. These amounts will make up the worker’s reserve or capitalized work fund. The worker may not lose this right for any reason.

82. The Organic Act on Disabilities establishes a special old-age regime for persons with functional disabilities. Article 84 provides for a permanent total or absolute permanent disability pension. Members with such disabilities are entitled to this pension without needing to meet a minimum contribution requirement. The Ecuadorian Social Security Institute calculates the disability pension on the basis of set minimum and maximum limits, with periodic adjustments.

83. Goal No. 5 of the National Development Plan 2021–2024 is to protect families, guarantee their rights and services, eradicate poverty and promote social inclusion. To achieve the Goal, there is a policy to establish a universal, efficient, transparent and

sustainable social security system involving cooperation between the Government, the private sector and citizens.

84. As of 6 March 2024, the Ecuadorian Social Security Institute has introduced a new contribution system involving one component for young entrepreneurs who are formally or informally active in the economy and another, voluntary affiliation, for those who, such as students who opt into the special voluntary insurance system, are not economically active.

85. This group of members receives the same benefits as those without an employment relationship and those under the special voluntary insurance system, according to the Social Security Act. These benefits include: old-age pension, disability pension, dependants' pension, funeral assistance, occupational risk insurance and comprehensive healthcare.

86. As of November 2023, there were 3,275,278 million jobs registered in the social security system. Salaried employees accounted for 80.8 per cent and rural workers for 10.9 per cent. This was followed by the self-employed, at 6 per cent, and employers, at 2.3 per cent.

87. In 2020, there were 447,823 pensioners, including those receiving old-age, disability or functional disability pensions. This number increased to 472,112 in 2021, then to 498,770 in 2022; it rose to 540,195 in 2023, a significant rise.

Retirees by sex and type of benefit, December 2020–2023

Year	Benefit	Sex		Total
		Men	Women	
2020	Disability	15 661	13 458	29 119
	Old age	233 387	175 629	409 016
	Functional disability	5 993	3 695	9 688
	Total	255 041	192 782	447 823
2021	Disability	15 156	13 221	28 377
	Old age	244 659	188 428	433 087
	Functional disability	6 527	4 121	10 648
	Total	266 342	205 770	472 112
2022	Disability	14 908	13 068	27 976
	Old age	257 865	201 539	459 404
	Functional disability	6 920	4 470	11 390
	Total	279 693	219 077	498 770
2023	Disability	14 787	12 980	27 767
	Old age	278 822	221 146	499 968
	Functional disability	7 569	4 891	12 460
	Total	301 178	239 017	540 195

Source: Pension system master record of beneficiaries, December 2020–2023.

88. Notes:

- Benefits arising from international agreements and military and police upgrades are included
- Pensioners identified through passport information, not the Civil Registry

Retirees by age range and type of benefit, December 2020–2023

Year	Age range	Benefit			Total
		Disability	Old age	Functional disability	
2020	Under 40 years	585	-	4	589
	40–50 years	2 435	54	1 275	3 764
	51–60 years	7 915	8 348	6 663	22 926
	61–70 years	12 085	188 064	1 746	201 895
	71–80 years	4 133	149 315	-	153 448
	81–90 years	1 615	53 679	-	55 294
	Over 90 years	351	9 556	-	9 907
Total		29 119	409 016	9 688	447 823
2021	Under 40 years	554	-	2	556
	40–50 years	2 252	58	1 113	3 423
	51–60 years	7 071	8 385	7 103	22 559
	61–70 years	12 192	196 142	2 430	210 764
	71–80 years	4 359	162 221	-	166 580
	81–90 years	1 584	56 085	-	57 669
	Over 90 years	365	10 196	-	10 561
Total		28 377	433 087	10 648	472 112
2022	Under 40 years	500	-	4	504
	40–50 years	2 124	53	961	3 138
	51–60 years	6 438	7 910	7 237	21 585
	61–70 years	12 245	203 932	3 179	219 356
	71–80 years	4 737	177 143	9	181 889
	81–90 years	1 561	59 700	-	61 261
	Over 90 years	371	10 666	-	11 037
Total		27 976	459 404	11 390	498 770
2023	Under 40 years	455	-	4	459
	40–50 years	2 047	42	834	2 923
	51–60 years	5 830	8 174	7 234	21 238
	61–70 years	12 283	218 294	4 358	234 935
	71–80 years	5 144	196 967	30	202 141
	81–90 years	1 625	64 836	-	66 461
	Over 90 years	383	11 655	-	12 038
Total		27 767	499 968	12 460	540 195

Source: Pension system master record of beneficiaries, December 2020–2023.

89. Notes:

- Benefits arising from international agreements and military and police upgrades are included

Retirees by amount of pension and type of benefit, December 2020–2023

Year	Pension amount	Benefit			Total
		Disability	Old age	Functional disability	
2020	Under \$200	353	3 047	-	3 400
	\$200–\$400	13 992	142 153	2 837	158 982
	\$400–\$600	6 783	88 154	2 215	97 152
	\$600–\$800	4 699	72 640	1 543	78 882
	\$800–\$1 000	1 378	36 363	975	38 716
	\$1 000–\$1 200	746	19 623	582	20 951
	\$1 200–\$1 400	436	13 942	464	14 842
	\$1 400–\$1 600	303	9 007	776	10 086
	\$1 600–\$1 800	429	10 615	239	11 283
	\$1 800–\$2 000	-	7 594	57	7 651
	\$2 000–\$2 200	-	5 876	-	5 876
	\$2 200 or more	-	2	-	2
	Total	29 119	409 016	9 688	447 823
2021	Under \$200	358	3 056	-	3 414
	\$200–\$400	13 757	158 128	3 093	174 978
	\$400–\$600	6 540	89 120	2 435	98 095
	\$600–\$800	4 427	72 518	1 683	78 628
	\$800–\$1 000	1 358	37 835	1 084	40 277
	\$1 000–\$1 200	752	21 240	643	22 635
	\$1 200–\$1 400	443	14 995	516	15 954
	\$1 400–\$1 600	305	9 837	863	11 005
	\$1 600–\$1 800	437	11 796	269	12 502
	\$1 800–\$2 000	-	8 247	62	8 309
	\$2 000–\$2 200	-	6 313	-	6 313
	\$2 200 or more	-	2	-	2
	Total	28 377	433 087	10 648	472 112
2022	Under \$212.5	366	3 069	-	3 435
	\$212.5–\$425	14 370	186 524	3 626	204 520
	\$425–\$637.5	6 987	97 156	2 734	106 877
	\$637.5–\$850	3 417	68 296	1 747	73 460
	\$850–\$1 062.5	1 189	33 763	986	35 938
	\$1 062.5–\$1 275	623	21 541	668	22 832
	\$1 275–\$1 487.5	420	14 331	500	15 251
	\$1 487.5–\$1 700	485	9 888	823	11 196
	\$1 700–\$1 912.5	118	11 465	251	11 834
	\$1 912.5–\$2 125	1	7 861	55	7 917
	\$2 125–\$2 337.5	-	5 508	-	5 508
	\$2 337.5 or more	-	2	-	2
	Total	27 976	459 404	11 390	498 770

Year	Pension amount	Benefit			Total
		Disability	Old age	Functional disability	
2023	Under \$225	384	3 345	-	3 729
	\$225–\$450	14 716	216 099	4 030	234 845
	\$450–\$675	7 123	104 258	2 935	114 316
	\$675–\$900	2 826	65 472	1 918	70 216
	\$900–\$1 125	1 144	35 171	1 045	37 360
	\$1 125–\$1 350	594	23 118	715	24 427
	\$1 350–\$1 575	413	14 938	582	15 933
	\$1 575–\$1 800	486	10 658	914	12 058
	\$1 800–\$2 025	80	12 600	263	12 943
	\$2 025–\$2 250	1	8 463	58	8 522
	\$2 250–\$2 475	-	5 845	-	5 845
	\$2 475 or more	-	1	-	1
Total		27 767	499 968	12 460	540 195

Source: Pension system master record of beneficiaries, December 2020–2023.

7. Right to housing

90. Article 340 of the Constitution defines the national system of inclusion and social equity as a coordinated set of systems, institutions, policies, standards, programmes and services designed to ensure that certain rights, including the right to housing, are exercised, protected and enforced. It is the duty of the State to allocate resources on a priority basis to ensure the provision of high-quality public services based on the principles of universality, equality, equity, progressiveness, interculturality, solidarity and non-discrimination.

91. Goal No. 5 of the National Development Plan 2021–2025 – namely, to protect families, guarantee their rights and services, eradicate poverty and promote social inclusion – includes the right to housing by promoting access to a safe, healthy environment and adequate, decent housing. Goal No. 1 of the Plan focuses on improving living conditions comprehensively, promoting equitable access to health, housing and social welfare, guaranteeing the right to adequate housing and fostering liveable, safe and healthy environments through comprehensive, coordinated and participatory action that contributes to the promotion and development of inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and communities.

92. In 2017, the housing deficit was 47.1 per cent of the existing housing stock. By 2022, the deficit had reached 53.7 per cent, a significant increase of 6.6 percentage points.

93. The qualitative housing deficit, referring to dwellings regarded as recoverable based on their material condition, was 33.5 per cent in 2017. By 2022, this deficit had risen to 40.6 per cent. Between 2017 and 2022, the quantitative housing deficit, which includes homes classified as unrecoverable, increased from 13.4 to 14.2 per cent.

94. The Organic Act on Social Housing of 25 March 2022 establishes rules for managing, planning, regulating, controlling and producing safe and healthy living environments. It also aims to ensure the right to decent and adequate social housing for everyone.

95. Since 2022, the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing has been implementing the “Creating Housing” programme to reduce the housing deficit and improve the quality of lives of the Ecuadorian people by building adequate and sustainable housing. This programme is targeted at vulnerable persons and comprises six subprogrammes: Creating Social and Affordable Housing, Creating Heritage, Creating Quality of Life, Creating Habitat, Creating Investment and Creating Communities.

96. The National Habitat and Housing Plan 2021–2025 seeks to reduce the housing deficit and promote a safe and healthy habitat in Ecuador. This Plan gives effect to the Organic Act

on Social Housing, Executive Decree No. 405 regulating social and affordable housing and the guide for the development of sector-specific plans of the National Secretariat of Planning.

97. The “5/25/5” mortgage programme was launched in 2024, offering loans with an interest rate of 5 per cent for a 25-year term and a down payment of 5 per cent. This initiative aims to help thousands of Ecuadorian families, particularly those that do not qualify for traditional loans due to their socioeconomic status, achieve home ownership.

98. In 2022 and 2023, a total of \$152.41 million was invested in housing development projects.

99. Access to water through the national public network to 84.2 per cent in 2022, significantly more than the 72 per cent of 2010. Similarly, the availability of electric power service improved from 93.2 per cent in 2010 to 97.5 per cent in 2022.

100. The coverage of the sewerage system increased significantly, reaching 65.8 per cent in 2022, up from 53.6 per cent in the previous census. Additionally, the coverage of the garbage collection system improved considerably, reaching 88.7 per cent in 2022, compared to 77 per cent in 2010.

101. In the most populated provinces of Ecuador, access to basic services varies significantly. In Guayas, access to electricity is very high at 98 per cent, with access to potable water at 84.4 per cent, the sewerage system at 66 per cent and garbage collection at 92.3 per cent. Pichincha has high coverage, with 99.6 per cent access to electricity, 98.2 per cent to potable water, 92.9 per cent to the sewerage system and 97.7 per cent to garbage collection. Manabí has shown improvements but still lags behind Guayas and Pichincha, with 96.2 per cent access to electricity, 61.1 per cent to potable water, 43.6 per cent to the sewerage system and 80.7 per cent to garbage collection.

Prevalence of housing types by poverty level

<i>Deficit/poverty</i>	<i>Extreme poverty</i>	<i>Poverty</i>
Acceptable	32 918	237 682
Recoverable	125 013	485 308
Irrecoverable	202 342	394 253
Total	360 273	1 117 243

Source: Ministry of Urban Development and Housing.

102. Disaggregating by sex and ethnic self-identification shows that, in 2022, the qualitative housing deficit was higher among women (39.3 per cent) than among men (38.5 per cent), with a difference of 0.8 percentage points. By ethnic self-identification, the qualitative housing deficit was higher among Montubios (49.4 per cent), Afro-Ecuadorians (45.4 per cent) and Indigenous groups (41.9 per cent). The quantitative housing deficit was higher among Indigenous groups (28.9 per cent), Montubios (28.7 per cent) and Afro-Ecuadorians (17.3 per cent).

103. According to the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing, 80 per cent of the Ecuadorian population cannot afford a standard two-bedroom single-family home because of high interest rates, a lack of initial savings, high housing prices, the lack of options for acquiring used housing, the absence of tools to mitigate the credit risk of financial institutions and the strict evaluation criteria applied by banks for approving loans.

B. Constitutional, political and legal structure of the State

104. Article 1 of the Constitution establishes that Ecuador is a constitutional, social, democratic, sovereign, independent, unitary, intercultural, plurinational and secular State that guarantees rights and justice, is organized as a republic and is governed in a decentralized manner. Article 424 provides that the Constitution is the supreme law of the land and takes precedence over the entire national legal system and that, accordingly, government

regulations and actions must be consistent with the Constitution. The article also states that the Constitution and international human rights treaties ratified by Ecuador that recognize rights more favourable than those set out in the Constitution take precedence over any other government regulation or action.

105. Interculturality and plurinationality, elements of a single, unitary State, are reflected in the application of the principle of *buen vivir* – the notion of peaceable, harmonious, ethical and environmentally sustainable living that underpins the Indigenous cosmovision – as a framework for interpreting certain rights and guiding public policy on inclusion, equity and resource management, as well as in the recognition of the self-determination of Indigenous and other Peoples, communities and nations and of forms of social organization for purposes of self-determination.

106. The republican form of government is provided for under title IV of the Constitution, on participation and government structure, as well as under title V, on the territorial organization of the State. These titles define: (a) the forms of social participation; (b) the institutions of the central Government; (c) the decentralized autonomous governments and special regimes; and (d) the distribution of powers.

107. Title IV contains provisions relating to article 1 of the Constitution, on the establishment of a democratic State and on the coordination of participation in the republican form of government. Article 100 of the Constitution states that every level of government is ruled by democratic principles and, to that end, provides for the establishment of participatory bodies that include elected officials and represent decentralized public authorities and society in the territory under the jurisdiction of the corresponding level of government. The article also provides for participation in government bodies for the purpose of: (a) formulating national, local and sectoral plans and policies involving governments and the public; (b) improving the quality of public investment and setting development agendas; (c) preparing governments' participatory budgets; (d) strengthening democracy by means of permanent transparency, accountability and social oversight mechanisms; and (e) promoting citizen participation and fostering communication processes.

108. Article 103, in section 4, on direct democracy, of title IV, states that it is possible, by popular initiative, to submit to the legislature proposals to introduce, amend or repeal legislation, including proposals for constitutional amendments. If the legislature fails to act, the National Electoral Council may submit the proposals to a referendum. Under article 104, a referendum may also be called by the relevant electoral body, upon instruction of the President of the Republic, as deemed appropriate; by the decentralized autonomous governments on matters of interest in the area under their jurisdiction; and by the public on any matter. Under article 105, persons in possession of their political rights may recall elected authorities.

109. Section 5 of title IV addresses political organizations. Article 108 recognizes political parties and movements as non-State public organizations that express the people's political plurality and support inclusive, non-discriminatory philosophical, political and ideological beliefs. In addition, it provides that their organization, structure and functioning must be democratic and ensure the rotation of power, accountability and parity between men and women on their boards. Under article 109, parties are national in scope, while movements may correspond to any level of government, including that representing Ecuadorian nationals abroad. Both must state their ideological principles and propose a government platform, while parties must keep a record of members and movements must keep a record of supporters. Lastly, articles 110 and 111 establish that parties and movements will be funded by dues from members or supporters and, provided that they meet the legal requirements, by State allocations that are subject to oversight. The right of political parties and movements to exercise political opposition at all levels of government is recognized.

110. With respect to political representation, which is addressed in section 6 of title IV, article 112 allows political parties and movements to put forward candidates for elected office. Article 113 makes the following persons, among others, ineligible to stand as candidates: persons with State contracts, persons convicted of, inter alia, unlawful enrichment or embezzlement, persons owing maintenance payments, persons who have exercised executive

authority in de facto governments and serving members of the armed forces and the National Police.

111. Article 114 provides that elected authorities may be re-elected only once, whether consecutively or not, to the same office. Article 115 guarantees that elections will be promoted through the media, for the purpose of encouraging debate and disseminating proposals, with fair and equal support from the State. Article 116 provides for the establishment of a multi-candidate electoral system that upholds the principles of proportionality, voter equality, fairness, parity and rotation of men and women. Article 117 prohibits changes to the electoral laws in the year preceding elections.

112. With regard to State institutions, chapters 2 to 6 of title IV of the Constitution deal with the five main branches of government, while chapter 2 of title V sets out the territorial organization of the State and chapter 3 provides for the decentralized autonomous governments. The five branches of the central Government are (1) the legislative branch, (2) the executive branch, (3) the judicial and Indigenous justice branch, (4) the transparency and social oversight branch and (5) the electoral branch.

113. Chapter 2 covers the National Assembly (the legislative branch). Under article 119, members of the Assembly must be Ecuadorian nationals who have reached the age of majority and are in possession of their political rights. Article 118 provides for a unicameral assembly based in Quito, with members serving four-year terms, and consisting of 15 members elected at the national level and two in each province, along with one additional member for every 200,000 inhabitants or fraction thereof over 150,000 inhabitants, calculated on the basis of the most recent census. Under article 123, the Assembly will convene, without needing to be called, on 14 May of the year of its election and sit in ordinary session throughout the year, with two recesses of 15 days each, during which periods it may sit in extraordinary session. The sessions of the Assembly are public, except as otherwise provided by law.

114. Article 120 sets out the Assembly's functions, the most important of which are: (a) to swear in the President and Vice-President of the Republic following their election by the people; (b) to declare a President mentally or physically incapable of performing his or her duties and to decide on his or her removal from office; (c) to review the President's annual reports and to comment on them; (d) to participate in the constitutional review process; (e) to enact, codify, amend and repeal laws and to give generally binding interpretations of them; (f) to introduce, modify or abolish taxes by law; (g) to approve or reject international treaties, as relevant; (h) to monitor the activities of the executive, electoral and transparency and social oversight branches and other public sector bodies; (i) to approve the general State budget, which will set the public debt limit, and oversee its implementation; and (j) to grant amnesties for political offences and pardons on humanitarian grounds.

115. According to article 122, the highest body of the legislative branch comprises the President and two Vice-Presidents of the National Assembly and four members elected by the Assembly in plenary session. Under Article 124, a party or movement representing 10 per cent of Assembly members may form a legislative caucus, as may parties and movements that join together for that purpose. Article 126 provides for the establishment of specialized standing committees to perform the Assembly's work, with their number, composition and powers to be determined by law.

116. Article 127 sets out the disqualifications to which members of the Assembly are subject, and article 128 provides that members may be tried only by the National Court of Justice and may not be held civilly or criminally responsible for opinions expressed, decisions made or acts carried out in the performance of their duties within the National Assembly or outside it. However, the article also states that the Assembly's authorization is required before any criminal proceedings may be initiated against a member, except in cases unrelated to the performance of the member's duties.

117. Article 129 allows for the impeachment of the President or Vice-President of the Republic by the Assembly only in the case of offences against the security of the State, extortion, bribery, embezzlement, illicit enrichment, genocide, torture, enforced disappearance, abduction or homicide for political reasons or reasons of belief. Article 130 provides for the possibility of removing the President from office for assuming powers not

assigned by the Constitution, following a ruling by the Constitutional Court, or in the event of a serious political crisis and domestic unrest.

118. Article 132 is also relevant to the legislative process. Under article 134, bills may be proposed by: (a) members of the Assembly who have the support of 5 per cent of Assembly members or a legislative caucus; (b) the President of the Republic; (c) the other branches of government, within their areas of competence; (d) the Constitutional Court, the Counsel General's Office, the Attorney General's Office, the Ombudsman's Office and the Public Defence Service in matters within their mandates; and (e) citizens in possession of their political rights and social organizations with the support of 0.25 per cent of registered voters. According to articles 137 to 139, such bills will be debated twice and will be disseminated publicly so that persons affected by them may put their concerns and arguments before the Assembly. Once a bill has been passed, it is sent to the President for signature or veto. If the President expresses an outright objection to the bill, it may be reconsidered only after one year; if the objection is partial, the President will submit an alternative text. The Assembly may then accept the alternative text or endorse the original bill, although a ruling by the Constitutional Court is necessary if the President's objection is made on grounds of unconstitutionality.

119. With regard to the executive branch, which is addressed in chapter 3, article 141 states that the President of the Republic is the Head of State and Government and is therefore responsible for public administration. The executive branch comprises the Offices of the President and Vice-President of the Republic, State ministries and other bodies and institutions necessary for performing the functions of directing, planning, executing and evaluating national public policies. Under article 144, the President's term of office begins no later than 10 days after the convening of the National Assembly, before which he or she takes the oath of office. The President serves a four-year term and may be re-elected once. Article 145 sets out the reasons for which a presidency may end, including (a) the ending of the term of office, (b) resignation, (c) removal from office in accordance with the Constitution, (d) physical or mental incapacity, (e) desertion of office, as confirmed by the Constitutional Court, and (f) recall.

120. Article 147 establishes the powers of the President of the Republic, which are, *inter alia*: (a) to comply with and enforce the Constitution, international treaties, laws and other legal provisions within his or her sphere of competence; (b) to present, on taking office, an outline of policies to be pursued; (c) to formulate and direct the public policies of the executive branch; (d) to submit a proposal for a national development plan to the National Planning Council for adoption; (e) to lead the Government in a decentralized manner and issue the necessary decrees for its composition, organization, regulation and oversight; (f) to establish, modify and abolish ministries, agencies and coordination bodies; (g) to report annually to the National Assembly on the implementation of the national development plan and the proposed targets for the following year; (h) to transmit the draft general State budget to the National Assembly for approval; (i) to appoint and remove State ministers and other public officials whom he or she is empowered to appoint; (j) to define foreign policy, sign and ratify international treaties, and appoint and remove ambassadors and heads of mission; (k) to participate in the legislative process by proposing legislation and to issue the necessary regulations for the enforcement of laws; (l) to call referendums in the cases and according to the requirements laid down in the Constitution; (m) to convene special sessions of the National Assembly; and (n) to exercise supreme authority over the armed forces and the National Police and to appoint their senior officers.

121. Article 151 provides that ministers are politically, civilly and criminally responsible for actions taken and contracts entered into during the performance of their duties, independently of the State's subsidiary civil liability. Article 152 lists persons prohibited from becoming ministers, including relatives of the President or Vice-President, State contractors and members of the armed forces or police on active duty. Article 154 sets out two functions of State ministers in addition to those defined by law – namely, (a) to guide public policy in their area of responsibility and (b) to report to the National Assembly as required on the areas for which they are responsible.

122. Under article 156, national equality councils are responsible for ensuring the full enjoyment and exercise of the rights enshrined in the Constitution and in international human

rights instruments and, to that end, are empowered to formulate, mainstream, implement, monitor and evaluate public policies on issues relating to gender, ethnicity, disability and human mobility and on generational and intercultural issues, in line with the law and in coordination with lead and implementing agencies and human rights protection bodies at all levels of government. Article 157 provides that the councils will consist of equal numbers of representatives of civil society and the State and will be chaired by the President of the Republic. The national equality councils were established under an organic law on 17 July 2014 and now fall under the 2015 Organic Act on National Equality Councils and its implementing regulations. There are national equality councils for gender, intergenerational matters, Indigenous and other Peoples and nations, disability and human mobility.

123. Chapter 4 of title IV covers the judicial and Indigenous justice branch. Articles 167 to 170 set out the principles governing the administration of justice, which include: (a) internal and external independence; (b) administrative, economic and financial autonomy of the judiciary; (c) jurisdictional unity; (d) access to justice free of charge; (e) public trials; (f) orality, consolidation, adversarial procedure and the principle whereby the parties delimit the scope of a case; (g) procedural simplicity, uniformity, efficiency, immediacy, promptness and economy; (h) due process; and (i) the appointment of judges on the basis of equality, equity, integrity, open, competitive and merit-based selection processes, right of challenge and citizen participation.

124. Article 171 addresses Indigenous justice and provides that the authorities of Indigenous Peoples, communities and nations will perform judicial duties on the basis of their ancestral traditions and Indigenous law, within their territory and with guarantees concerning the participation of women and their involvement in decision-making. It also states that Indigenous authorities will apply their own rules and procedures to settle internal disputes, provided that they do not conflict with the Constitution or the human rights recognized in international instruments. Lastly, it provides that the State will ensure that the rulings of Indigenous courts are respected by public institutions and authorities, although such rulings are subject to constitutional review.

125. Articles 172 to 176 set out the principles governing the judicial branch, which include: (a) the administration of justice in accordance with the Constitution, international human rights instruments and the law; (b) due diligence; (c) the responsibility of judges for delays, negligence, denial of justice or breaches of procedure; (d) the possibility of challenging administrative acts through judicial means; (e) the prohibition against engagement in the practice of law by members of the judiciary; (f) the specialized administration of justice for children and adolescents; and (g) the competitive and merit-based selection of judicial staff.

126. Article 177 states that the judicial branch comprises judicial, administrative, auxiliary and autonomous bodies, and article 178 provides for the following courts: (a) the National Court of Justice; (b) provincial courts of justice; (c) tribunals and courts established by law; and (d) magistrates' courts. The Council of the Judiciary is the body responsible for administration, governance, oversight and discipline; the notarial service, judicial auctioneers and persons responsible for executing sequestration orders constitute auxiliary bodies; and the Public Defence Service and Attorney General's Office are autonomous bodies.

127. Article 181 empowers the Council of the Judiciary to: (a) formulate and implement policies for the improvement and modernization of the judicial system; (b) review and approve the draft budget of the judicial branch; (c) direct the selection process for judges and other judicial officials and handle assessments, promotions and disciplinary matters through public procedures and reasoned decisions; (d) administer and professionalize the judicial service through the establishment and operation of training colleges; and (e) ensure transparency and efficiency in the judicial branch.

128. Article 182 provides that the National Court of Justice, based in Quito, has national jurisdiction and comprises 21 judges organized in specialized divisions and serving non-renewable, nine-year terms of office, with one third of its members changing every three years. The President of the Court, who represents the judicial branch, is elected from among the judges of the National Court for a three-year term. The article also provides for alternate judges subject to the same rules as full members.

129. According to article 183, in order to serve as a judge on the National Court, a person must be an Ecuadorian national, be in possession of his or her political rights, hold a university law degree that is legally recognized in Ecuador and have worked as a lawyer, judge or law teacher for at least 10 years with a good reputation and record of conduct. Judges are selected by the Council of the Judiciary on the basis of a competitive, merit-based selection process that is subject to challenge and social oversight and that promotes parity between men and women.

130. Article 184 vests the National Court with the following powers, independently of those assigned to it by law: (a) to hear appeals in cassation, appeals for review and other appeals established by law; (b) to develop a system of precedent based on the repetition of rulings in three cases; (c) to hear cases brought against public servants entitled to be tried only by the National Court; and (d) to submit bills on the administration of justice. With regard to the second of these powers, article 185 provides that rulings issued by the Court's specialized divisions that restate on three occasions the same opinion on the same point will be referred to the full Court so that it may deliberate and make a decision as to its agreement within 60 days. If the opinion is upheld, it becomes binding precedent.

131. Article 186 provides for the establishment of provincial courts, with the number of judges needed to handle the cases before them, in each province. The judges, who will be drawn from among the judicial service, practising lawyers or university teachers, will be divided into specialized divisions that correspond to those of the National Court. The article also provides that the Council of the Judiciary will determine the number of courts necessary to meet the needs of the population, keeping in mind that in each canton there should be at least one judge specializing in matters affecting families, children and adolescents or youth offenders, in accordance with the needs of the population, and that where there is a social rehabilitation centre, there must be at least one court specializing in enforcing prison safeguards.

132. To ensure jurisdictional unity, article 188 provides that members of the armed forces and the National Police will be tried by ordinary courts, while their own procedural rules will apply in cases of disciplinary offences. Cases subject to special jurisdiction for reasons of administrative responsibility and rank will be regulated by law. Articles 191 to 193 set out the legal framework for the Public Defence Service and state that the Service's aim is to ensure full and equal access to justice for persons who, because of their vulnerability or economic, social or cultural situation, are unable to retain defence counsel to help them protect their rights. According to these articles, the Service will provide professional, appropriate, efficient and effective legal services at no charge, offering legal assistance and advice on individuals' rights in all matters and before all bodies. The Service is an administratively and financially independent body with human and material resources and working conditions equivalent to those in the Attorney General's Office. The articles also require university law schools to establish and maintain clinics providing free representation and advice to persons of limited financial means and priority groups.

133. Article 178 of the Constitution provides that "the Council of the Judiciary is the governing, administrative, supervisory and disciplinary body of the judicial branch", and it is to carry out its disciplinary duties in accordance with the Organic Code of the Judiciary. Under article 194, the Attorney General's Office operates as a decentralized, administratively and financially independent body, with the Attorney General as its head and legal representative.

134. Article 195 states that the Attorney General's Office will, on its own initiative or at the request of a party, direct preliminary inquiries and criminal investigations and bring criminal proceedings in accordance with the principles of prosecutorial discretion and minimal prosecution, paying special attention to the public interest and the rights of victims. Where there are grounds for so doing, the Office will bring charges against the alleged offenders before the competent judge and handle the prosecution during the criminal trial.

135. To enable it to perform these functions, article 195 provides that the Office will set up and head a specialized system combining investigation, forensic medicine and forensic science and staffed by civilian and police investigators, and a scheme to protect and assist victims and witnesses participating in criminal proceedings. It will also fulfil other

obligations established by law. Under article 198, the Office must work with public bodies involved in areas related to the concerns and objectives of the scheme and coordinate the participation of civil society organizations.

136. Article 204 states that the transparency and social oversight branch described in chapter 5 of title IV will promote and encourage the monitoring of public sector entities and bodies and natural and legal persons in the private sector performing services or activities in the public interest in order to ensure that they conduct their business responsibly, transparently and fairly. To that end, the transparency and social oversight branch will foster public participation, protect the exercise of and ensure respect for rights, and prevent and combat corruption. In this regard, the article provides that the branch will comprise the Council for Citizen Participation and Social Control, the Ombudsman's Office, the Office of the Comptroller General and the offices of superintendents, which will have legal personality and administrative, financial, budgetary and organizational independence.

137. Article 205 provides generally that representatives of the institutions that make up the transparency and social oversight branch will be appointed for five-year terms, may be tried only by the National Court and will be liable to impeachment by the National Assembly. In addition, it states that senior officials must be Ecuadorian nationals in possession of their political rights and selected through merit-based, public competitive examinations and an application process that is subject to public oversight and may be challenged by the public.

138. According to article 206, officials from the institutions of the transparency and social oversight branch must establish a coordinating body and elect a Chair annually. The duties of the coordinating body are: (a) to formulate public policies on transparency, monitoring, accountability, the promotion of citizen participation and the prevention of and fight against corruption; (b) to coordinate the institutions' action plans, without undermining their independence; (c) to coordinate the preparation of a national anti-corruption plan; (d) to submit to the National Assembly proposals for legislative amendments in its areas of competence; and (e) to report annually to the National Assembly on activities relating to the performance of its functions.

139. According to article 207, the purpose of the Council for Citizen Participation and Social Control is to promote and encourage the exercise of participation rights by promoting and establishing mechanisms for social oversight in matters of public interest and appointing the relevant authorities in accordance with the Constitution and the law. The article provides that the Council will comprise seven full members and seven alternates, who will elect a Chair from among them to serve as their legal representative for a term of two and a half years. Under the article, Council members will be elected from among candidates put forward by social organizations and the public, following a procedure to be organized by the National Electoral Council that involves a merit-based, public competitive examination and an application process subject to public oversight and that may be challenged by the public.

140. Under article 208, the powers and duties of the Council are, inter alia: (a) to promote citizen participation, encourage public consultation processes and foster training in citizenship, values, transparency and the fight against corruption; (b) to establish accountability mechanisms for public sector institutions and bodies; (c) to investigate reports of acts or omissions undermining citizen participation or resulting in corruption; (d) to publish reports on whether there is evidence of liability, make the necessary recommendations and initiate the corresponding legal proceedings; (e) to act as a party to proceedings in cases that are brought as a result of its investigations; (f) to request from any State body or official the information necessary for investigations or trials; (g) to appoint the heads of the Counsel General's Office and the offices of superintendents from a shortlist put forward by the President of the Republic; (h) to appoint the heads of the Ombudsman's Office, the Public Defence Service, the Attorney General's Office and the Office of the Comptroller General, on completion of the corresponding challenge and oversight process; and (i) to appoint the members of the National Electoral Council, Electoral Court and Council of the Judiciary, on completion of the corresponding selection process.

141. Article 211 defines the Office of the Comptroller General as the technical body responsible for monitoring the use of State resources and private corporations receiving public funding. Under article 213, the offices of superintendents are technical bodies that

have powers of oversight, audit, intervention and scrutiny in respect of economic, social and environmental activities and services performed by public and private entities in order to ensure that they comply with the law and are in the general interest. In doing so, they may act on their own initiative or at the request of members of the public. Articles 214 to 216 deal with matters relating to the Ombudsman's Office. Specifically, the Office is a statutory body with national jurisdiction, legal personality and administrative and financial independence. It has a decentralized structure, with representatives in each province and abroad. It is responsible for protecting and safeguarding persons living in Ecuador and protecting the rights of Ecuadorian nationals abroad. The Ombudsman's Office became the national mechanism for the prevention of torture in 2012 and is recognized as such by the United Nations.

142. The electoral branch is addressed in chapter 6. According to article 217, the branch guarantees the exercise of political rights expressed through voting or relating to political organization by the public. It comprises the National Electoral Council and the Electoral Court, which are based in Quito and have their own legal personality, national jurisdiction and administrative, financial and organizational independence. The article also provides that the Council and the Court are governed by the principles of autonomy, independence, openness, transparency, equity, interculturality, gender parity and integrity.

143. Articles 218 and 219 contain provisions relating to the National Electoral Council. According to these articles, the Council comprises five full members and five alternates serving six-year terms, with some members' terms expiring every three years. The Chair is elected from among the members, is the legal representative of the electoral branch and serves a three-year term. Council members must be Ecuadorian nationals in possession of their political rights. Under article 220 of the Constitution, the Electoral Court has five full and five alternate members who serve six-year terms, with some members' terms expiring every three years. Eligibility requirements for members are the same as those for judges on the National Court. The President of the Electoral Court is elected from among its members and serves for three years.

144. Articles 222 to 224 provide for common standards of political and social oversight, including the possibility of impeaching members of the Council and the Court for failure to fulfil their duties and responsibilities; the social oversight of electoral bodies, with political organizations and candidates having the power to monitor and oversee electoral activities and ensure that they are public; and the appointment of members of the Council and the Court by the Council for Citizen Participation and Social Control, as indicated above.

145. With regard to the decentralized autonomous governments, special regimes and distribution of powers provided for in title V of the Constitution, articles 238 to 240 state that decentralized autonomous governments have political, administrative and financial independence and are governed by the principles of solidarity, subsidiarity, territorial equity, integration and citizen participation.

146. The articles provide for the establishment, under the relevant law, of a national system defining areas of competence, which will be mandatory and progressive in nature, and mechanisms for offsetting territorial disparities in the development process. The articles refer to the following decentralized autonomous governments: (a) rural parish councils; (b) municipal councils; (c) metropolitan councils; (d) provincial councils; and (e) regional councils. They also state that the decentralized autonomous governments of regions, metropolitan districts, provinces and cantons will have legislative powers within their spheres of competence and for the areas under their territorial jurisdiction.

II. General framework for the protection and promotion of human rights

A. Legal framework for the protection of human rights at the national level

147. Title II of the Constitution, on rights, includes a chapter on rights related to the idea of *buen vivir*, of which economic, social and cultural rights are prime examples. Title VII, on *buen vivir*, establishes various guarantees and guidelines intended to promote inclusion and equity and a sustainable use of natural resources that is respectful of other living beings.

148. Article 3 of the 2008 Constitution stipulates that the State has a primordial duty to protect human rights, while articles 10 and 11 establish the principles governing the exercise of rights, including the obligation to make reparation for rights violations and the determination of the State's responsibility in this area. Regulations on the procedure for the coordination and fulfilment of international obligations under the inter-American and universal human rights systems were issued pursuant to a decision of 29 August 2023. The Ministry of Women and Human Rights is responsible for their implementation.

149. In article 35 of the Constitution, specific and special rights are recognized for groups requiring priority attention, such as older persons, young people, migrants or migrant groups, pregnant women, children and adolescents, persons with disabilities, persons with catastrophic illnesses, persons deprived of their liberty, substance abusers and Indigenous and other communities, Peoples and nations.

150. Recognition of the rights of Indigenous and other communities, Peoples and nations can be found in chapter 4 of title II on rights. Article 56 establishes that Indigenous and other communities, Peoples and nations, Afro-Ecuadorians and the Montubio people and ancestral communes are part of the State. Article 57 recognizes that those groups or entities have the following rights, among others: (a) to uphold, develop and strengthen their identity, feeling of belonging, ancestral traditions and forms of social organization; (b) to keep permanent, inalienable, and indivisible ownership of their community lands, which cannot be seized; (c) to free, prior and informed consultation on plans and programmes for prospecting for, producing and selling non-renewable resources located on their lands; (d) to keep and develop their own forms of coexistence and social organization and to create and exercise authority in their legally recognized territories; and (e) to develop, strengthen and promote the intercultural bilingual education system.

151. The rights of persons with disabilities are recognized in chapter 2 of title II. Article 47 stipulates that the State shall guarantee disability prevention policies and, along with society and the family, ensure equal opportunities for persons with disabilities and their social inclusion.

152. All forms in which society can be organized to express the people's sovereignty to develop self-determination processes and influence the decisions, public policies and public oversight of all levels of government, public bodies and private entities that provide public services are recognized in article 96 of the Constitution, in section 2 of chapter 1 of title IV, on participation and the organization of power. Article 97 states that the organizations that are formed must be able to, inter alia, develop alternative forms of mediation and conflict resolution, seek reparations, put forward economic, political, environmental, social, cultural or other proposals and claims that promote *buen vivir*, exercise their right to resist and seek recognition of new rights.

153. All public authorities and public officials have a duty to guarantee these and other rights. However, the Constitution sets out specific provisions that public authorities must adopt with respect to rights. Articles 120 (6) and 133 (2) state that the National Assembly must progressively develop the content of rights by issuing, codifying and amending organic and ordinary laws or repealing laws that are incompatible with the effective enjoyment of rights. Article 147 (1) and (3) establishes that the President of the Republic is to observe and enforce the Constitution, international treaties, laws and other relevant legal norms and must therefore define and direct public policies that promote recognized rights. Article 172

stipulates that judges are to administer justice in accordance with the Constitution, international human rights instruments and the law. Throughout the section on principles governing the administration of justice and the judiciary, reference is made to the rights of access to justice, effective judicial protection and guarantees of due process.

154. With regard to guaranteeing the recognition, exercise and protection of human rights and reparation for the violation of such rights, title III of the Constitution is devoted to establishing appropriate legislative, public policy and judicial protection safeguards. Article 84 stipulates, in connection with such safeguards, that the National Assembly and all other organs with legislative powers have an obligation to make laws and other legal norms, formally and materially, compatible with the rights set forth in the Constitution and international treaties and such other rights as are necessary to guarantee the dignity of individuals or Indigenous and other communities, Peoples and nations. It also establishes that in no case may any changes to the Constitution, laws, legal norms or acts by the public authorities infringe recognized rights.

155. With respect to safeguards in the area of public policy, public services and public participation, article 85 stipulates that the formulation, execution, evaluation and monitoring of public policy and public services guaranteeing the rights recognized in the Constitution are to be governed by the following provisions: (i) public policy and the provision of public goods and services are to be directed towards the realization of *buen vivir* and all rights and their formulation are to be guided by the principle of solidarity; (ii) without prejudice to the primacy of the general interest over private interests, when the implementation of public policy or the provision of public goods and services has the effect of harming or threatening constitutional rights, such policy or provision is to be reformulated or alternative measures are to be taken to reconcile the conflicting rights; (iii) the State is to ensure that the budget for the execution of public policy and the provision of public goods and services is distributed fairly and on a basis of solidarity; and (iv) the participation of individuals and of Indigenous and other nations, Peoples and communities in the formulation, execution, evaluation and monitoring of public policy and public services must be guaranteed.

156. Concerning judicial safeguards, articles 86 and 87 establish ordinary provisions, while articles 88 to 94 provide for the following remedies: (a) remedy of protection; (b) remedy of habeas corpus; (c) remedy of access to public information; (d) remedy of *habeas data*; (e) action for non-compliance; and (f) special remedy of protection. The remedy of protection, established in article 88, is intended to ensure direct, effective protection of the rights recognized in the Constitution and may be lodged when these rights have been violated by acts or omissions of any non-judicial public authority, by public policies that prevent the enjoyment or exercise of constitutional rights, by acts of private individuals that cause serious harm, by the provision of unsuitable public services either on behalf of or under concession from a public authority or if the affected person is in a subordinate position, is defenceless or is a victim of discrimination.

157. The national equality councils, created by the Constitution and governed by the 2014 Organic Act on National Equality Councils and the 2015 implementing regulations, replace the former thematic councils and are responsible for ensuring the full enjoyment and exercise of the rights enshrined in the Constitution and the law and in international human rights instruments. There are equality councils for gender, intergenerational matters, Indigenous and other Peoples and nations, disability and human mobility. The councils' main activities include the preparation of the national equality agendas, the first of which covered the period 2014–2017 and the second the period 2018–2021. The agendas are planning instruments and contain a series of policies and guidelines for State action in the area of human rights.

158. Pursuant to Executive Decree No. 609 of 29 November 2022, the Secretariat for Human Rights became the Ministry of Women and Human Rights, an entity under public law with legal personality and administrative and financial independence. As well as exercising all the competencies, powers and functions of what was previously the Secretariat for Human Rights, the Ministry of Women and Human Rights is responsible for developing public policy on women's empowerment and the prevention and eradication of violence against women.

B. Acceptance of international human rights norms

Ratification status: Universal human rights system

<i>Treaty</i>	<i>Date of signature</i>	<i>Date of ratification, accession (a) or succession (d)</i>
Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	4 February 1985	30 March 1988
Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	24 May 2007	20 July 2010
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	4 April 1968	6 March 1969
Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty		23 February 1993 (a)
International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance	24 May 2007	20 October 2009
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	17 July 1980	9 November 1981
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination		22 September 1966 (a)
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	29 September 1967	6 March 1969
International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families		5 February 2002 (a)
Convention on the Rights of the Child	26 January 1990	23 March 1990
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict	6 September 2000	7 June 2004
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography	6 September 2000	30 January 2004
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	30 March 2007	3 April 2008

Acceptance of individual complaints procedures

<i>Treaty</i>	<i>Acceptance of individual complaints procedures</i>	<i>Date of acceptance/non-acceptance</i>
Individual complaints procedure under the Convention against Torture	Yes	6 September 1988
Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	Yes	6 March 1969
Individual complaints procedure under the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance	Yes	20 October 2009
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	Yes	5 February 2002
Individual complaints procedure under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	Yes	18 March 1977
Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	Yes	11 June 2010
Individual complaints procedure under the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families	Yes	12 January 2018
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure	Yes	19 September 2018
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	Yes	3 April 2008

Special procedures

159. The universal periodic review is a process intended to facilitate a peer review of the human rights situation in each of the States Members of the United Nations. It is a State-driven process, under the auspices of a working group of the Human Rights Council, which provides the opportunity for all States to declare what actions they have taken to improve the human rights situation in their countries and to fulfil their human rights obligations. Ecuador has submitted reports since the first cycle of the universal periodic review in 2008 and has been reviewed during all four cycles. The most recent review of the country's human rights record took place on 7 November 2022 in Geneva at the forty-first session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review. Ecuador received 174 recommendations, of which it accepted 164, 1.23 per cent more than during the third cycle of the review in 2017.

Ratification status: Inter-American human rights system

160. American Convention on Human Rights (Pact of San José): Ecuador is an original signatory and ratified this instrument on 28 December 1977; Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Protocol of San Salvador): ratified on 25 June 1992; Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belém do Pará): ratified on 30 June 1995; Inter-American Convention on Forced Disappearance of Persons: ratified on 27 July 2006; Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities: ratified on 15 September 1999.

C. Follow-up to the concluding observations of the human rights treaty bodies and preparation of reports on human rights

161. Ecuador has put in place a human rights information system called SIDERECHOS to facilitate reporting on and monitoring and evaluation of compliance with international human rights obligations. Jointly managed by the Ministry of Women and Human Rights and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility, SIDERECHOS comprises a search engine for constitutional and international standards; an archive of the reports submitted by Ecuador under international human rights protection systems, alternative reports and recommendations received; a specific section for human rights reports in the process of being drafted; and a section for follow-up to recommendations that Ecuador has received from international bodies under the universal and inter-American human rights systems. This final section is being updated for the years 2023 onward.

162. With respect to measures taken to monitor the implementation of recommendations made by the treaty bodies of the universal human rights system and as part of the universal periodic review, the State, in fulfilment of one of its voluntary commitments from the universal periodic review in 2022, is in the process of creating, pursuant to an agreement between the Ministry of Women and Human Rights and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility, a national coordination mechanism for the implementation and monitoring of human rights recommendations. This mechanism is expected to be formally established by the end of 2024.

163. The human rights duties of the Ministry of Women and Human Rights include coordinating the enforcement of judgments, precautionary measures, provisional measures, amicable settlements, implementing recommendations and decisions originating in the inter-American and universal human rights systems and monitoring and evaluating international human rights commitments and obligations. With respect to national and international human rights obligations, the Ministry of Women and Human Rights participates jointly with the competent unit of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility in the process of drafting and approving the State's reports to human rights committees and other human rights treaty bodies and monitoring the implementation of recommendations made by those bodies. Its activities include participating in international meetings and presenting reports to international human rights organizations. It is also responsible for follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of compliance with international human rights recommendations, treaties and commitments.
