July 2019

The Political Culture of Democracy in Ecuador

AmericasBarometer
Barómetro de las Américas
2004 – 2019

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AmericasBarometer
Barómetro de las Américas

- Representative samples (national & subnational)
- Standardized methods
- Common core content from 2004 to present day
- Face-to-face interviews
- 100% interviews audited for quality
- 100% e-devices
- Open access to data & reports
- Over 250,000 interviews

The 2018/19 round is scheduled to include 21 countries and over 30,000 interviews
2019 AmericasBarometer National Survey in Ecuador

- 1,533 face-to-face interviews (margin of error: ±3%)
- Pretest: December 19-20, 2018
- Training: January 14-15, 2019
- Fieldwork: January 22 – March 19, 2019
- 100% of the data collected with electronic devices

Our team pretesting and training in Quito
Ecuador’s Sample Design

✓ Nationally Representative

✓ Stratified by region (Coastal, Sierra, and Amazon); county size (large, medium, small); and urbanization level (urban and rural)

✓ Multistage, probability selection of primary sampling units and clusters

✓ Clustered at the block level
Regions and Provinces in the Sample Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regions</th>
<th>Provinces</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coastal</td>
<td>Azuay, Bolívar, Cañar, Chimborazo, Cotopaxi, El Oro, Esmeraldas, Guayas, Imbabura, Loja, Los Ríos, Manabí, Morona Santiago, Napo, Pichincha, S.D. De los Tsáchilas, Santa Elena, Sucumbíos, Tungurahua, Zamora Chinchipe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amazon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LAPOP Gathers Data from 51 Counties (Cantones) in Ecuador

LAPOP’s mission is to:

- Produce high quality public opinion data
- Develop and implement cutting-edge survey methods
- Build capacity in survey research and analysis
- Generate and disseminate policy-relevant research
Section 1
National Problems
The economy continues to be the most important problem for 60.4% of Ecuadorians in 2019 (down from 80.3% in 2016). However, the percentage of people reporting security and politics as the most important problem has increased substantially since the last round.

Source: © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2016-2019; v.TS_20190627
1.1 Economic Insecurity
63.8% of Ecuadorians think the economy has worsened in 2019, up from only 20.0% in 2014 (red line below). Just a small fraction (5.9%) thinks the economy has improved in the last 12 months (blue line).

**Perceptions of the National Economic Situation**

**SOCT2.** Do you think that the country's current economic situation is better than, the same as or worse than it was 12 months ago?
48.9% think their personal economic situation has gotten worse in 2019. Only 8.8% of Ecuadorians think their economic situation has improved, down from 25.2% in 2014.

Perceptions of the **Personal** Economic Situation

**IDIQ2.** Do you think that your economic situation is better than, the same as, or worse than it was 12 months ago?
In 2019, fewer Ecuadorians (40.3%) reported that their household income has deteriorated in the past 2 years than in 2016 (48.2%).

Source: © AmericasBarometer LAPOP, 2010-2019; v.TS_20190627
More Ecuadorians (29.9%) reported running out of food over the last three months in 2019 than in 2012 (21.1%).

**FS2. In the last 3 months, due to lack of money or resources, did you ever run out of food?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Has Run Out of Food in the Last 3 Months</th>
<th>Ecuador 2012</th>
<th>Ecuador, 2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>78.9%</td>
<td>70.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2010-2019; v.TS_20190627
24.8% reported that an adult in their household has eaten only once or not eaten an entire day in the 3 months prior to the survey (up from 18.7% in 2012).
In 2016 and 2019, the percentage of Ecuadorians actively looking for a job is nearly three times that of 2012.

Source: © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2008-2019; v.TS_20190627
The percentage of Ecuadorians who reported receiving government cash transfers was cut almost by half in 2019 compared to 2014.

Recipients of Bono de Desarrollo Humano (Cash Transfer)

CCT1B. Now, talking specifically about Bono de Desarrollo Humano, are you or someone in your house a beneficiary of this program?
1.2 Crime and Insecurity
Crime victimization rates in Ecuador have remained relatively stable. Since 2010, nearly 1 out 3 citizens report having been victimized in the 12 months prior to the survey.

**VIC1EXT.** Have you been a victim of any type of crime in the past 12 months? That is, have you been a victim of robbery, burglary, assault, fraud, blackmail, extortion, violent threats or any other type of crime in the past 12 months?
For the first time, more than half of Ecuadorians feel somewhat or very unsafe in their neighborhoods.

**Perceptions of Insecurity**

*AOJ11. Speaking of the neighborhood where you live and thinking of the possibility of being assaulted or robbed, do you feel very safe, somewhat safe, somewhat unsafe or very unsafe? The figure above shows the percentage of those who feel somewhat and very unsafe.*

Source: © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2004-2019; v.TS_20190627
In 2019, there is a sharp decrease (13.6 percentage points) in the number of Ecuadorians who have faith that the judicial system will punish criminals, compared to 2016.

Belief that Courts Will Punish the Guilty

Source: © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2004-2019; v.TS_20190627
A little less than half the adult population state that they would own a gun for protection. More than half are in favor of the death penalty for people guilty of murder.

**Would Own Gun for Protection**
- Yes: 46.5%
- No: 53.5%

**Opinion on Death Penalty**
- For: 58.6%
- Against: 41.4%

*Source: © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2019; v.TS_20190627*
1.3 Corruption
The percentage of Ecuadorians who think that corruption among public officials is somewhat or very widespread has been declining since 2006.

Source: © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2004-2019; v.TS_20190627
In 2019, the belief that more than half or all politicians are corrupt increased 8.2 percentage points compared to 2016.

Source: © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2019; v.TS_20190627
The percentage of corruption victims has remained stable since 2014 in Ecuador, at a rate of nearly 1 out of 4.

Source: © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2004-2019; v.TS_20190627
Nearly 1 out of 4 Ecuadorians justify paying a bribe (up from 13.6% in 2014).

**Corruption Tolerance**

**EXC18.** Do you think given the way things are, sometimes paying a bribe is justified?

Source: © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2004-2019; v.TS_20190627
Section 2
Democracy
2.1. Support and Satisfaction with Democracy
In 2016-2019, support for democracy dropped by about 10 percentage points compared to earlier rounds. There is an even sharper decreasing trend in the percentage of Ecuadorians satisfied with the functioning of democracy in the country.

**Support for Democracy in the Abstract**

**Satisfaction with the Way Democracy Works in Ecuador**

**ING4.** Changing the subject again, democracy may have problems, but it is better than any other form of government. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? Figure on left shows the percentage who responded 5-7 in the original 1-7 scale.

**PN4.** In general, would you say that you are very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the way democracy works in (country)? Figure on right shows the percentage of those who are satisfied and very satisfied.
2.2 Institutional Legitimacy
More than half of Ecuadorians respect and support political institutions. However, the majority feel their rights are not well protected, and more than 2/3 think courts do not guarantee fair trials.

System Support Components

**Figure** shows the percentage of people who responded 5-7 on the 1-7 original scale.

- **Respect for Political Institutions**: 57.5%
- **People Should Support the Political System**: 51.3%
- **Pride in Political System**: 46.0%
- **Basic Rights are Protected**: 36.7%
- **Courts Guarantee Fair Trial**: 29.0%

Source: © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2019; vTS_20190627
Trust in Institutions of Representative Democracy

- More citizens trust elections and their local governments than the National Assembly and political parties.

- No institution of representative democracy is trusted by more than 43% of the population.

**B Series. To what extent do you...**

*Figure shows the percentage of people who responded 5-7 on the 1-7 original scale.*

*Source: © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2019; v.T5_20190627*
Trust in the Military, the Police, and the National Court of Justice

- Nearly 3 in 4 people trust the Military, but only half trust the Police

- Less than a third of Ecuadorians trust the National Court of Justice

*B Series. To what extent do you...*

*Figure shows the percentage of people who responded 5-7 on the 1-7 original scale*
Trust in Other Institutions

- More than half of Ecuadorians trust in the Catholic Church and the Media
- Nearly a third trust the Evangelical/Protestant churches

*B Series. To what extent do you...*

*Figure shows the percentage of people who responded 5-7 on the 1-7 original scale*

Source: © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2019; v.TS_20190627
Trust in government institutions has followed different patterns: while both the President and the National Assembly have experienced losses since 2014, trust in the National Court of Justice is increasing. Trust in political parties has remained stable since 2014.

Figures show the percentage of people who responded 5-7 on the 1-7 original scale.
Trust in the Armed Forces and the Police has increased since 2004, but declined somewhat since 2016. Elections and local government have experienced slight decreases in trust since 2004.

Figure shows the percentage of people who responded 5-7 on the 1-7 original scale.
2.3 Tolerance
Tolerance

Except for peaceful demonstrations, the majority of Ecuadorians disapprove of government critics’ political rights including the right to vote, make speeches, and run for office in 2019.

**D Series.** There are people who only say bad things about the Ecuador’s form of government, not just the incumbent government but the system of government. How strongly do you approve or disapprove of such people’s right to... Figure shows the percentage of people who responded 7-10 on the 1-10 original scale.
In general, tolerance has increased from 2014 to 2016-2019. However, it remains low, especially for speech and running for office.

Approval of Government Critics’ Right to...

Figure shows the percentage of people who responded 7-10 on the 1-10 original scale.
2.3 The Ecuadorian Voter
In 2019, most Ecuadorians said they have little or no interest in politics.
Many more people dislike a political party than identify with one.

**identifies with a political party**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>77.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**dislikes a political party**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33.5%</td>
<td>66.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2019; v.TS_20190627
If the next presidential election were being held in the week of the survey, most people would either vote for the opposition or spoil their vote.

**Vote Intention in Next Presidential Election Ecuador 2019**

- Wouldn't vote: 41.8%
- Would vote for government party: 45.5%
- Would vote for the opposition: 10.4%
- Would spoil vote: 2.3%

Source: © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2019; v.TS_20190627
Section 4

Other Issues
4.1 Migration
A little less than a third of Ecuadorians are considering emigrating, up from less than 20% in 2010.

Q14. Do you have any intention of going to live or work in another country in the next three years?
In 2019, few Ecuadorians receive remittances from abroad.
4.2 Progressive Policies
Most Ecuadorians strongly disapprove of gays’ rights to get married and to run for public office

Gays’ Right to Run for Public Office (2019)

Gays’ Right to Marry (2019)

D5. EnAnd now, changing the topic and thinking of homosexuals, how strongly do you approve or disapprove of such people being permitted to run for public office?

D6. How strongly do you approve or disapprove of same-sex couples having the right to marry?
There is a sizable majority of people who would approve of abortion when the mother’s health is at risk.

Abortion Justified When Mother's Health is at Risk
Ecuador 2019

Source: © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2019; v.TS_20190627
3.2. Trust in China and US Governments
In 2019, more Ecuadorians trust the Chinese Government (46.5%) than the US Government (38.6%). However, trust in both governments is decreasing.

Source: © AmericasBarometer LAPOP, 2012-2019; v.TS_20190627

Percentage who Think the Governments are Somewhat or Very Trustworthy

**MIL10A.** The government of China. In your opinion, is it very trustworthy, somewhat trustworthy, not very trustworthy, or not at all trustworthy, or do you not have an opinion? **MIL10E.** The government of the United States. In your opinion, is it very trustworthy, somewhat trustworthy, not very trustworthy, or not at all trustworthy, or do you not have an opinion?
Main Findings

National Problems: The Economy

- Public opinion of the economy is pessimistic: almost 2 out of 3 Ecuadorians think the national economic situation is worse today than it was 12 months ago.

- At the individual level, nearly half of Ecuadorians report that their personal economic situation has deteriorated during the last year.

- 40.3% saw their household income decrease in the last two years.

- Nearly 1/3 ran out of food in the last 3 months, and 1 out of 4 ate only once or did not eat an entire day in the same period.

- The percentage of Ecuadorians who received the Bono de Desarrollo Humano dropped from 29.7% in 2014 to 16.7% in 2019.
Main Findings

**National Problems: Crime**

- The rate of crime victimization has remained stable at around 1/3 of the population since our first measurement in 2010.

- **Perceptions of insecurity**, however, have skyrocketed: 55.7% of Ecuadorians feel somewhat or very unsafe in their neighborhoods (up from 34.9% in 2014).

- There has been a sharp decrease in the percentage of Ecuadorians (38.5%) who have faith in the judicial system to punish criminals (down from 52.1% in 2016).
Main Findings

National Problems: Corruption

- In 2019, almost 2 out of 3 Ecuadorians think that **more than half or all politicians are corrupt** (up from 56.1% in 2016)

- The rate of **corruption victimization**, however, has remained stable since 2014 (at around 26-27%)

- In 2016 and 2019 more people than ever before in our measurements think that **paying a bribe is justifiable** (27.2 and 25.4%, respectively)
Main Findings

Democracy:

- A little over half of Ecuadorians (54.4%) think in 2019 that in spite of its problems, **democracy is the best form of government**

- Only 38.7% are satisfied with **the way democracy works in Ecuador**

- **Trust in Government institutions** is rather low. The most trusted institutions are the Military (73.1% of Ecuadorians trust in this institution), the National Police (50.0%), and local governments (39.6%). The least trusted are Congress (33.0%), the National Court of Justice (32.3%), and political parties (19.9%)

- **Tolerance** towards system critics is improving, but it also remains low. 53.1% approve of government critics to carry out peaceful demonstrations, whereas only 24.5% approve of them running for office.
Main Findings

The Ecuadorian Voter

➢ Most people (68.3%) have little (35.4%) or no interest in politics (32.9%) in 2019

➢ Only 22.9% identify with a political party, while 33.5% dislike at least one political party

➢ If the next presidential elections had been held the week of the survey, only 10.4% would have voted for the incumbent party
Report Credits

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All LAPOP reports and datasets are available at www.lapopsurveys.org

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