

## ECUADOR

The Government of Ecuador estimates that 2 million Ecuadorian nationals live abroad.<sup>1</sup> The latest data available show a high concentration of Ecuadorian migrants in three countries:<sup>2</sup> Spain (being the destination chosen by around 45% of Ecuadorian migrants), United States (with around 30%) and Italy (7%).<sup>3</sup>

While emigration rates in Ecuador have constantly increased since the 1970s, 1999 saw an emigration boom: between 1.4 and 1.6 million Ecuadorians emigrated during the period 1999-2005. If, during the previous decades, Ecuadorians opted to move mainly to Canada, United States and Venezuela, from 1999 a shift towards destinations in Europe (mainly Spain and Italy) can be observed.<sup>4</sup> The causes of the emigration boom of the 1999 relate to different factors, such as the great political instability of the 1990s, the collapse of the Ecuadorian financial system (followed by the dollarization), and the rapidly increasing poverty and social exclusion rates.<sup>5</sup>

Since the end of the 2000s, there has been a deceleration of the number of Ecuadorians leaving their country due to two main reasons: First, in 2004, Ecuadorian nationals started needing a visa to travel to Europe due to a change in the Schengen regulations; and second, the lack of job opportunities as a result of the financial crisis that has affected Europe since 2008, especially in Southern European countries, including Italy and Spain.<sup>6</sup>

The evolution of Ecuadorian migration is reflected in changes in the country's emigrant policies. The lack of an emigration policy strategy from the 1970s began to be overcome in 2000, when the emigration flow intensified. For instance, in 2001, the government presented the first National Plan for Ecuadorian Migrants Abroad (*Plan Nacional de Migrantes Ecuatorianos en el Exterior*) that aimed at targeting the problems of Ecuadorian nationals living abroad.<sup>7</sup>

However, it was not until 2006 that Ecuador started building a more comprehensive migrant policy. During the electoral campaign of 2006, Ecuadorian migration featured highly on the political agenda and migrants were identified as victims of the complicated political, economic, and social situation of the previous years. With the Constitution of 2008, Ecuador granted

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1 The current Ecuadorian population is estimated at around 15.5 million.

2 The last official census conducted by Ecuador dates from 2010.

3 Herrera Mosquera, Moncayo, and Escobar, "Perfil Migratorio del Ecuador 2011."

4 Ibid.

5 Ramírez and Ramírez, *La estampida migratoria ecuatoriana. Crisis, redes transnacionales y repertorios de acción migratoria*.

6 Herrera Mosquera, Moncayo, and Escobar, "Perfil migratorio del Ecuador 2011"; FLACSO (Organization) Sede and UNFPA-Ecuador, *Ecuador*.

7 Herrera Mosquera, Moncayo, and Escobar, "Perfil migratorio del Ecuador 2011."

the emigrant population an important role in the political life of the country by, for instance, recognizing their right to participate in presidential and legislative elections, not only through voting, but also by electing their own representatives in the National Assembly.<sup>8</sup>

Ecuador has tried to incorporate its diaspora into the national political arena. However, other emigrant policy dimensions are still not fully developed. This is the case, for instance, of policies regarding the economic incorporation of emigrants into the home society or cultural policies that aim to promote Ecuadorian cultural traditions and values among the diaspora. In fact, Ecuador has not been able to pass the new migration bill needed to give coherence and cohesion to its migration policy. It is thus possible that major changes could be introduced in future years.<sup>9</sup>

The *Plan Nacional para el Buen Vivir 2013-2017* together with the *Agenda nacional para la movilidad humana 2013-2017* provide the current roadmap for Ecuadorian emigrant policies. Among their goals, is the protection and socioeconomic inclusion of Ecuadorian migrants by promoting a policy framework for human mobility, protecting Ecuadorian migrants or helping those migrants that want to return to the country.<sup>10</sup>

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## CITIZENSHIP/NATIONALITY

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### DUAL OR MULTIPLE NATIONALITY REGULATION

Dual citizenship was recognized in Ecuador in August 1994 after a referendum that included ten yes/no questions about key aspects of the Ecuadorian political system, the seventh being about allowing maintaining Ecuadorian nationality when acquiring another nationality. The dual citizenship proposition passed with 52.49% of votes in favor (2,087,262) and 19.58% against (778,786). Subsequently, dual citizenship was introduced in the 1998 Ecuadorian Constitution.<sup>11</sup>

Currently, there is no legal obstacle for holding or acquiring another citizenship alongside the Ecuadorian.<sup>12</sup>

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8 Ibid.

9 Sánchez Bautista, "Policy and Institutional Frameworks - Country Report Ecuador. INTERACT Research Report 2014/24."

10 At some points, information about past policies or changes in the status of emigrants is also included in order to contextualize important developments in regards emigrant policies in Ecuador.

11 Asamblea Nacional Constituyente, *Constitución de la República de Ecuador 1998*, Art. 10 and 11.

12 Asamblea Constituyente, *La Constitución de la República de Ecuador de 2008*, Art. 6 and 8.

There are also no specific conditions or restrictions for the exercise of dual citizenship. There is a specific regulation for the entrance and departure of Ecuadorians holding dual citizenship that aims at controlling potential illicit uses of dual citizenship status.<sup>13</sup> However, this is not considered a restriction on the exercise of dual citizenship.

Ecuador's 2008 Constitution establishes that all persons born in a foreign country to Ecuadorian parents, as well as their descendants to the third degree of consanguinity, are Ecuadorian by birth.<sup>14</sup> Thus, Ecuadorian citizenship can be passed down until the fourth generation of emigrants.

#### **LOSS OF CITIZENSHIP/NATIONALITY**

Ecuador does not regulate the loss of citizenship through permanent residence abroad or by acquisition of a foreign nationality.<sup>15</sup>

#### **DIFFERENT RIGHTS FOR EXTERNAL CITIZENS**

There are no significant differences between the legal status of citizenship of individuals located temporarily or permanently outside Ecuador and individuals residing in the country. The only difference is that Ecuadorians residing in the country are obligated to vote in national elections and Ecuadorians residing abroad are not, although they are enfranchised (see next section).

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### **SUFFRAGE**

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#### **VOTING RIGHTS OF NON-RESIDENT CITIZENS**

The Ecuadorian Constitution of 2008 grants voting rights to Ecuadorians abroad for national presidential and legislative elections.<sup>16</sup>

The electoral code, approved in 2009, establishes that the vote is facultative for non-residents and compulsory for Ecuadorians residing in the country.<sup>17</sup>

Although the right to vote of non-residents was introduced for the first time in the Constitution of 1998 and developed by National Law number 81 of 2002, which established that Ecuadorians abroad could vote in person in consulates and with prior registration, the first time that non-resident Ecuadorians were able to vote in an election was in the elections held on October 15, 2006.<sup>18</sup>

To date, no regional elections have been held in Ecuador. Although the

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13 Correa Delgado, *Decreto Número 132 - Ingreso Ecuatorianos de Doble Nacionalidad*.

14 Asamblea Constituyente, *La Constitución de la República de Ecuador de 2008*, Art. 7.2

15 Ibid. Art. 6.

16 Ibid. Art. 63.

17 Asamblea Nacional, *Ley orgánica electoral y de organizaciones políticas de la República del Ecuador*, Art. 11.2.

18 Ramírez and Boccagni, *Voto a la distancia*, 10.

2008 Constitution opens the possibility for regional political and administrative decentralization and prescribes an eight-year period to create the sub-state units, this process is still not finished. Therefore, no regional elections have been held. Moreover, neither the Constitution, nor the Electoral Law mentions the possibility of emigrant participation in potential regional elections for emigrants.<sup>19</sup>

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the Constitution of 2008 also grants residents abroad the possibility to call for a referendum, as long as they muster the support of 5 percent of their district.<sup>20</sup>

#### **CANDIDACY RIGHTS OF NON-RESIDENT CITIZENS**

The Constitution grants emigrants the right to be elected President, Vice-president, national representatives, and representatives of the external districts in the National Parliament. The only restriction mentioned is in regard to members of the civil service abroad: they may not represent Ecuadorians abroad, unless they renounce all their responsibilities at least six months before the election.<sup>21</sup>

Ecuadorians residing abroad do not have the right to be candidates in local mayoral or legislative elections.<sup>22</sup>

#### **VOTING METHODS AVAILABLE TO NON-RESIDENT CITIZENS**

For the elections held in 2013, the only external method available was voting in person in Ecuadorian embassies or consulates.<sup>23</sup> In-country voting was only possible if the person was not officially registered as an external voter and decided to travel to Ecuador to vote in the elections.

#### **REGISTRATION FOR FRANCHISE**

Registration for voting abroad is considered active and permanent. Therefore, Ecuadorians living abroad should fill out a registration form and send it to the nearest consulate or embassy in order to be able to vote. Once the registration is completed and providing the personal situation does not change, registration for subsequent elections is automatic.<sup>24</sup>

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19 Asamblea Constituyente, *La Constitución de la República de Ecuador de 2008*, Art. 63.

20 Ibid. Art. 104.

21 Ibid. Art. 113.5; Asamblea Nacional, *Ley orgánica electoral y de organizaciones políticas de la República del Ecuador*, Art. 96.5.

22 Asamblea Constituyente, *La Constitución de la República de Ecuador de 2008*, Art. 63.

23 Registro Oficial del Ecuador, "Segundo Suplemento Al Registro Oficial No. 827." PCE-CNE-2-24-10-2012.

24 Asamblea Nacional, *Ley orgánica electoral y de organizaciones políticas de la República del Ecuador*, Art. 78.

### MODE OF REPRESENTATION

The mode of representation for Ecuadorians living abroad is mixed. On the one hand, for election of special representatives, non-resident votes are counted separately from in-country votes and there are reserved seats divided into specific regions. Currently, there are six special representatives, elected in three regions: United States and Canada; Europe, Asia, and Oceania; and Latin America, the Caribbean, and Africa. For presidential elections, the votes are counted together with those cast in-country by residents. Regarding the rest of the elections (national executive, national parliamentary and for members of the Andean Parliament), non-resident votes are also counted separately, but then combined with the votes cast in the district with which the non-resident voter has a biographical connection.

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### REGULATION OF POLITICAL COMPETITION

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#### PARTY OFFICES IN HOST COUNTRIES

There is no legal limitation regarding the opening of party offices abroad. In fact, there are offices in countries with a high number of emigrants, such as Spain and the United States. Parties receive public funding to finance their activities and could potentially invest it in permanent offices abroad.

#### POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS

There are different regulations that apply to the political campaigns conducted by Ecuadorian parties abroad. The regulations are divided in two main categories: The current Electoral Law<sup>25</sup> and several administrative regulations enacted by the National Electoral Council (CNE by its Spanish initials).

The Electoral Law defines and regulates the public funding assigned for political campaigns abroad<sup>26</sup> and regulates political parties' bank accounts abroad, establishing that these are only permitted in the case of external districts.<sup>27</sup>

The CNE is responsible for managing the electoral process and, thus, it enacts vast regulation regarding all dimensions of the electoral campaigns. Campaigns abroad must be conducted under the same conditions as in-country campaigns and that the political organizations abroad may not directly advertise in media.<sup>28</sup>

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25 Ibid.

26 Ibid. Art. 209.

27 Ibid. Art. 225.

28 Consejo Nacional Electoral, *Compilación de la normativa interna del CNE sobre procesos electorales*. Reglamento de Promoción Electoral, Art. 31.

## MEMBERSHIP

The Electoral Law establishes that all citizens, including non-residents, with the right to vote can belong to a political party as long as they meet the requirements established by the party.<sup>29</sup> Emigrants can also occupy relevant official seats within the parties. For example, Ximena Peña, member of the *Alianza PAIS* movement and special representative for the United States and Canada district, is also a member of the Federal Executive of the party.

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## INSTITUTIONAL PARTICIPATION

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### CONSULTATIVE BODIES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

In 2014, the Ecuadorian National Assembly created the “National Councils for Equality (*Consejos Nacionales para la Igualdad*). The councils aim to promote equal treatment of certain groups of citizens, one of them being Ecuadorian emigrants. The councils, although not exclusively, have consultative functions. The regulation stipulates that they must be composed of 10 representatives from both civil society and the state. The members that represent civil society are elected in a public competition organized by the *Consejo de Participación Ciudadana y Control Social*. Members are elected for a period of 4 years and can be reelected once. The council is chaired by a person appointed directly by the President of the Republic. At the time of writing this chapter, the advisory board has not yet been called together by the Ecuadorian government.

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## ADMINISTRATION

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### CONSULATES

Currently, Ecuador has 81 consulates and 114 honorary consulates in 80 countries.<sup>30</sup> The Ecuadorian government has made it a priority to develop a new “human mobility” policy. Within this approach, the government also aims at developing a new consular policy, based on a new philosophy, “citizen diplomacy,” focused on the protection and defense of the rights of Ecuadorians living abroad (for example, by providing assistance to Ecuadorians living in Spain affected by the real estate crisis of 2008).<sup>31</sup>

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29 Asamblea Nacional, *Ley orgánica electoral y de organizaciones políticas de la República del Ecuador*, Art. 334.

30 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Movilidad Humana, “El Modelo de Gestión Estratégica de la Movilidad Humana.”

31 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Movilidad Humana, “La Diplomacia Ciudadana al servicio de las personas migrantes.”

Moreover, the government has developed an online platform, through which all Ecuadorians abroad can contact consular services directly, receive counseling, and perform different bureaucratic transactions.<sup>32</sup> Some consular missions, such as the consulate in Madrid, also operate mobile consulates<sup>33</sup> and have extended their office hours to Saturday, in order to meet the demands and needs of Ecuadorians abroad.<sup>34</sup>

Finally, the prospective “Human Mobility Law,” still in the first stage of its development, would include a chapter dedicated to the improvement of diplomatic and consular protection.<sup>35</sup>

The *Servicio 4x4* program allows Ecuadorian migrants to send packages to Ecuador without paying taxes. To benefit from this exception, it is necessary to be registered at a consulate.<sup>36</sup>

### HOME COUNTRY ADMINISTRATION

In 2013, the administrative structure dedicated to migrant issues changed: The National Migrant Office (*Secretaría Nacional del Migrante, SENAMI*) became the Vice-Ministry of Human Mobility under the Ministry of External Relations, Commerce, and Human Mobility.<sup>37</sup> In part, this change is explained by the perception of the *SENAMI* as a fragile institution that did not possess the necessary budget or leadership to meet the expectations of Ecuadorian migrants and their families.<sup>38</sup>

The Vice-Ministry of Human Mobility is an executive unit that has as its main mission the planning, management, and evaluation of human mobility policy in regards to issues such as emigration, immigration, transit, and return. Moreover, the Vice-Ministry aims to protect and promote the rights of all Ecuadorians abroad and immigrants in Ecuador.<sup>39</sup>

The organizational structure of the new Vice-Ministry is in development and at the moment of writing this report; currently, it has three units:

- Undersecretariat of Migratory and Consular Services: Responsible for documentation and consular services for Ecuadorians abroad and foreigners in the country.
- Undersecretariat for the Ecuadorian Migrant Community: Drafts and implements policies to promote and protect the rights of Ecu-

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32 <http://www.consuladovirtual.gob.ec/>

33 Consulado General del Ecuador en Madrid, “Consulados Móviles.”

34 Consulado General del Ecuador en New Jersey - Pennsylvania, “Horarios.”

35 Ibid. 16.

36 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Movilidad Humana, “Servicio 4x4.”

37 Correa Delgado, *Decreto Ejecutivo Número 20*.

38 Sánchez Bautista, “Policy and Institutional Frameworks - Country Report Ecuador. INTERACT Research Report 2014/24,” 24.

39 Ibid. 16.

dorians abroad and those returning to the country. Also manages the national and international migratory policy.

- Undersecretariat for Immigrant Services: Responsible for the integration and inclusion of the immigrant community in Ecuador.<sup>40</sup>

Since 2008, in cities with a high number of Ecuadorian migrants, the government has maintained *Casas Ecuatorianas* (Ecuadorian Houses),<sup>41</sup> which serve as an “antenna” of the Vice-Ministry of Human Mobility. The activities carried out in the *Casas Ecuatorianas* differ across countries and are the result of the work between the main actors of the Ecuadorian diaspora and the Ecuadorian government.<sup>42</sup> For example, the *Casa Ecuatoriana* in New York runs the *Aprendiendo de mi Ecuador* program, which aims to teach Ecuadorian children the Spanish language and Ecuadorian traditions.<sup>43</sup>

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the Constitution of 2008 mandates that the ombudsman’s office must staff delegates in every Ecuadorian province, as well as abroad.<sup>44</sup>

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## ECONOMIC POLICIES

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### REMITTANCES

The current Ecuadorian government does not consider remittances a source of funding for in-country development. For this reason, no economic programs designed to increase remittances or attract investment by emigrants have been found.

The Brasilia Declaration on South American Citizenship “*Declaración de Brasilia rumbo a la ciudadanía sudamericana*”, signed in 2011 by several South American countries, including Ecuador, recognizes the positive effects of emigrants and points out that remittances are the result of personal savings and may not be considered contributions to development.<sup>45</sup>

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40 Ibid. 16.

41 In 2011; in Caracas, London, Madrid, Milan, and New York City.

42 Herrera, “La construcción de la política de emigración del Estado ecuatoriano: el caso de las casas ecuatorianas en el exterior.”; Ramírez Gallegos, *La política migratoria en Ecuador*.

43 *Programa Aprendiendo de Mi Ecuador - Ceremonia de Clausura - Junio/28/2014*.

44 Asamblea Constituyente, *La Constitución de la República de Ecuador de 2008*, Art, 214.

45 Red Internacional de Migración y Desarrollo, “Declaración de Brasilia Rumbo a la Ciudadanía Sudamericana.”



## INVESTMENT

The Ecuadorian Constitution of 2008 established that the state will promote and protect savings as a source of productive investment in the country and will generate incentives for the return of savings and property of returning emigrants to encourage such investment.<sup>46</sup>

The former SENAMI developed the *Fondo Consursable El Cucayo* program, which aimed to support Ecuadorian migrants and returnees seeking to start a business in Ecuador by offering backing in terms of funding, training, or technical advice.<sup>47</sup> The program had been suspended by the time of writing this report.<sup>48</sup>

## BRAIN-CIRCULATION NETWORKS AND BRAIN-GAIN PROGRAMS

Ecuador has a web-based network of scholars and students living abroad. The aim of this network is to connect Ecuadorians working in similar fields around the world and to provide them information about the programs, plans, and projects developed by the government.<sup>49</sup>

Furthermore, the Ecuadorian government has created the *Prometeo* project to strengthen research and knowledge circulation in specialized topics by means of the creation of a network linking foreign researchers and Ecuadorians living abroad. The program is intended for universities, polytechnic schools, public research institutes, and other public institutions that may require assistance in the development of research projects. The program functions by inviting experts residing abroad to participate in in-country research projects for a period that can last between two and twelve months.<sup>50</sup>

In addition to the *Prometeo* project, the Ecuadorian government has a return plan for teachers and health professionals. The plan for teachers aims at recruiting Ecuadorian teachers living abroad that wish to move back to Ecuador and enter the Ecuadorian school system.<sup>51</sup> The government has developed the parallel *Ecuador saludable, voy por ti* plan for Ecuadorian health professionals living abroad that wish to enter in the Ecuadorian National Health System.<sup>52</sup>

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46 Asamblea Constituyente, *La Constitución de la República de Ecuador de 2008*, Art. 338.

47 Secretaría nacional del Migrante, “Portal del Migrante Ecuatoriano - SENAMI - Fondo Consursable ‘El Cucayo.’”

48 Sánchez Bautista, “Policy and Institutional Frameworks - Country Report Ecuador. INTERACT Research Report 2014/24,” 14.

49 Secretaría Nacional de Educación Superior, Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación, “Red de Becarios.”

50 Secretaría Nacional de Educación Superior, Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación, “Programa Prometeo.”

51 Ministerio de educación, “Plan Retorno”; Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Movilidad Humana, “Ecuador lanza en España un plan de retorno para docentes ecuatorianos radicados en España.”

52 Dirección Nacional de Talento Humano, “Plan Ecuador saludable, vuelvo por ti.”

### RETURN POLICIES

Ecuador has regulated the recognition of academic and professional qualifications acquired abroad. There is a specific regulation for the recognition of degrees related to health sciences<sup>53</sup> and a general procedure for other degrees. The general procedure establishes four different paths for recognition:

- Automatic recognition for degrees obtained in foreign institutions already certified by the Ministry of Education;
- Recognition of degrees obtained in countries with which Ecuador maintains an international agreement;
- Recognition of degree with a committee of experts and;
- Recognition through an academic institution.<sup>54</sup>

For all cases, there is no specific timeframe for recognition of academic and professional qualifications.

The above-mentioned *Ecuador saludable, vuelvo por ti* campaign is the best example of Ecuador conducting a communication campaign to persuade its citizens abroad to return. This campaign is composed of informative brochures, promotional videos and colloquia in embassies and consulates.<sup>55</sup>

The program *Volver a casa*, implemented by the National Customs Service, aims at facilitating the return of Ecuadorians either by easing the transport of their personal belongings or through housing benefits. This program is often combined with other campaigns, such as *Ecuador saludable, vuelvo por ti*.

The Ministry of Education manages a program to facilitate the incorporation of returned Ecuadorian children into the scholar system. The program consists primarily of an expedited recognition of studies undertaken abroad. For children that return from a member country of the *Convenio Andrés Bello* the only documents needed are the academic transcripts and identification.<sup>56</sup> For children returning from other countries, an official translation of the transcripts is also necessary.<sup>57</sup>

Furthermore, Ecuador offers free courses on professional skills to Ecuadorian returnees (although emigrants abroad can also take part in some courses). These courses aim at training returnees to enter the labor market and fostering entrepreneurship.<sup>58</sup>

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53 SENESCYT, *Acuerdo 2012-060*.

54 Asamblea Nacional, *Ley Orgánica de Educación Superior*; SENESCYT, *Reglamento para el reconocimiento, homologación y revalidación de títulos expedidos en el exterior*.

55 Dirección Nacional de Talento Humano, “Plan Ecuador saludable, vuelvo por ti.”

56 Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Spain, and Venezuela.

57 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Movilidad Humana, “Guía de Servicios Institucionales.”

58 Ibid.

In addition, the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing offers Ecuadorian emigrants or their families a voucher to assist with the construction, renovation, or purchase a house in Ecuador. There are some conditions to access to this voucher, such as having a certain amount of previous savings and not already owning a house in Ecuador.<sup>59</sup>

Finally, Ecuador also operates a program to support the return of migrants in precarious situations<sup>60</sup> and the *Plan Tierras* program, promoted by the Ministry of Agriculture, to offer land in Ecuador to emigrants in Spain with agricultural experience and knowledge.<sup>61</sup>

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## OBLIGATIONS

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### MILITARY SERVICE, SOCIAL SERVICE, TAXES

Military service is voluntary for all Ecuadorians, therefore, military service is also voluntary for Ecuadorians living abroad.<sup>62</sup>

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## CULTURAL POLICIES

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The *Casas Ecuatorianas*, present in countries with a high number of Ecuadorian nationals, were funded directly by the state and carry out, among other functions, cultural activities. Now, they are integrated into consular structures (See the “Administration” section).

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## EXIT AND TRANSIT POLICIES

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The Constitution of Ecuador recognizes the right to move freely within Ecuadorian territory, as well as the right to exit the country.<sup>63</sup>

The government of Ecuador, in collaboration with its embassy in Washington and consulate in New York City, has launched the *Dile no a la emigración riesgosa* campaign to discourage emigration that could endanger the life of

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59 Ibid.

60 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Movilidad Humana, “Protección a la Comunidad Migrante.”

61 Embajada del Ecuador en España, “Ecuador impulsa en España el Plan Tierras para facilitar el retorno productivo de sus ciudadanos”; Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Movilidad Humana, “Canciller Ricardo Patiño evalúa Plan Tierras en España.”

62 Asamblea Constituyente, *La Constitución de la República de Ecuador de 2008*, Art. 161.

63 Ibid. Art. 66.14.

the emigrant due to the lack of resources or documents. The campaign is composed of videos, press releases, social media coverage, and colloquia organized in Ecuador and abroad.<sup>64</sup>

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### SOCIAL POLICIES

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All Ecuadorian employees must pay unemployment insurance while working. In case of losing their job, they receive compensation in a lump sum payment. Therefore, there are no monthly transfers. Ecuadorians living abroad can receive their unemployment payment before emigrating if they meet all the formal criteria, for example, having worked at least 24 months in Ecuador.<sup>65</sup>

Moreover, Ecuadorians residing abroad can voluntarily register in the Ecuadorian Social Security Institute in order to maintain pension rights, as well as healthcare in Ecuador.<sup>66</sup> The Constitution of 2008 guarantees voluntary registration for Social Security<sup>67</sup> and obliges the state to safeguard the labor rights of Ecuadorians abroad and to pursue cooperation with other countries.<sup>68</sup>

In addition, the *Casas Ecuatorianas* provide a program for health information on topics such as HIV, cancer, and childcare.<sup>69</sup>

The Vice-Ministry of Human Mobility offers vocational training in the United States. The courses are free and are designed for Ecuadorian migrants that have lived at least one year outside Ecuador.<sup>70</sup> Moreover, the *SENESCYT* (Ecuadorian administration in charge of higher education) offers scholarships for studying graduate programs abroad to which non-residents can also apply.<sup>71</sup>

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### SYMBOLIC POLICIES

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There are some campaigns and awards that recognize the efforts and contributions of Ecuadorians abroad. For example, former congresswoman Linda Machuca, the representative of Ecuadorians in the United States and Canada,

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64 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Movilidad Humana, “Dile No a la migración riesgosa.”

65 IESS, “Prestación del Seguro de Cesantía.”

66 Ibid. 35.

67 Asamblea Constituyente, *La Constitución de la República de Ecuador de 2008*, Art. 374.

68 Ibid. Art. 329.

69 Casa Ecuatoriana New York, “Boletín de Prensa.”

70 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Movilidad Humana de Ecuador, “Formación y Capacitación.”

71 SENESCYT, “Becas en el exterior.”

organizes the *Reconocimiento a la Mujer Migrante ecuatoriana de la Asamblea Nacional* award.<sup>72</sup>

*Mi lindo Ecuador* is a campaign that encourages Ecuadorians residing abroad to promote Ecuador. The campaign is being developed by the Ministry of Tourism and includes promotional videos, social media accounts, and a photography competition, among other elements.<sup>73</sup>

From September 9 to 15, 2013, the National Assembly organized a conference on human mobility. The conference was attended by migrant associations, refugees and different social organizations related to migration issues.<sup>74</sup> The conference has not been held since 2013 and it seems to be a onetime event.

January 24 is the day of dual-citizenship<sup>75</sup> and July 21, 2013, was recognized as the day of the *Ecuatoriano Ausente*.<sup>76</sup>

The 2008 Constitution makes explicit reference to the Ecuadorian emigrant community.<sup>77</sup>

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72 Godoy, “Asamblea Nacional del Ecuador entregará ‘Reconocimiento Nacional a la Mujer Migrante.’”

73 Ministerio de Turismo de Ecuador, “Mi Lindo Ecuador.”

74 Asamblea Nacional, “Semana Por la Movilidad Humana.”

75 Ecuatorianos Residentes en el Exterior, “Anexo: Registro Oficial No. 113 Día de la Doble Nacionalidad.”

76 El Telégrafo, “Hoy se conmemora el Día del ecuatoriano ausente.”

77 Asamblea Constituyente, *La Constitución de la República de Ecuador de 2008*. Art. 40.

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