

ECUADOR

Date of Elections: 31 January 1988

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the seats in Parliament on the normal expiry of the members' term of office.

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of Ecuador, the National Congress, comprises 71 members: 12 members elected by national vote and 59 members elected by provincial vote. The latter include 2 Deputies for each of the country's 20 provinces (except those with less than 100,000 inhabitants, which have only one Deputy) and one additional Deputy for every 300,000 inhabitants or fraction exceeding 200,000. National Deputies are elected for 4 years and provincial Deputies for 2 years; they are eligible for re-election after the lapse of one legislative term.

Electoral System

All Ecuadorian citizens who are at least 18 years of age and in full possession of their civil rights are entitled to vote. Disqualified from voting are the insane; persons convicted for fraud in the public sector or connected with elections; those who are imprisoned or detained; drunkards, vagabonds and defrauders; tax evaders; and members of the armed and police forces.

Officials of the State Civil Registry are responsible for keeping the electoral registers up to date; they are revised every two years. Voting is compulsory, but optional for illiterates and persons over 65 years of age; abstention is punishable by a fine ranging from 500 to 2,000 *suces*.

Ecuadorian citizens by birth who are 30 years of age or more, in full possession of their civil rights and belonging to a legally recognized political party are eligible to be candidates for Parliament. Provincial candidates must be at least 25 years old and be natives of, or have resided for three consecutive years prior to polling day in, the province where running. The parliamentary mandate is incompatible with membership of the Government, certain posts and offices connected with the public sector, membership of the armed forces on active duty, government contractor, banker, membership of the clergy and the function of legal representative of a foreign company.

Candidates are nominated by political parties. They are elected according to a list system of proportional representation, without preferential voting or vote splitting.

The distribution of seats is carried out as follows:

1. Where only two Deputies are to be elected in a constituency, one seat is allotted to the first candidate on the list which has received the most votes and the other one to the following list, provided that the latter has obtained at least 50% of the votes received by the winning list. If this is not the case, both seats go to the list which is leading.

2. Where more than two Deputies are to be elected in a constituency, the procedure is as follows:

- (a) The total valid votes cast are divided by the number of seats to be filled, and those lists which have not received a number of votes equal to at least 50% of the quotient thus obtained are eliminated;
- (b) The total votes won by the eligible lists are divided by the number of seats to be filled so as to obtain a second quotient. Each list obtains as many seats as this quotient is contained in its own total. Seats left unfilled after this first distribution are allocated on the basis of the system of greatest remainder.

Substitutes elected at the same time as titular members of Parliament fill seats which become vacant between general elections.

Background and Outcome of the Elections

The date of the congressional elections - held simultaneously with that for President of the Republic - was set on 4 October 1987.

Ten candidates were in contention to succeed Mr. Leon Febres Cordero (Social-Christian Party - PSC) in the presidential race. Prominent among these were Mr. Rodrigo Borja Cevallos of the social-democratic *Izquierda Democrática* (ID), Mr. Sixto Duran Balien of PSC and Mr. Abdala Bucaram Ortiz of the *Partido Roldosista Ecuaioriano*. During the generally peaceful campaign, Mr. Borja opposed the outgoing Government's conservative policies and called for a moratorium on Ecuador's foreign debt payments, a more restrictive foreign investment policy, restoration of diplomatic relations with Nicaragua and closer ties to the Non-Aligned Movement. The populist Mr. Bucaram described himself as the champion of the poor.

On polling day, the left and centre-left parties, led by ID, won control of the Congress. Mr. Borja and Mr. Bucaram, with the highest percentage of votes, qualified for the runoff presidential contest on 8 May as observers interpreted Mr. Duran's loss as a sign of the Government's waning popularity in the face of serious economic problems brought on by the sharp drop in world prices of oil (Ecuador's main export product) as well as the damage caused by the devastating earthquakes of 1987. Mr. Borja, who had narrowly lost the previous runoff of 1984, ultimately won; his four-year term was to start on 10 August.

Statistics

*1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats
in the National Congress*

Number of registered electors.	4,673,980	
Voters.	3,632,615	(77.7%)
Valid votes.	3,325,772	

Political Group	Number of Seats		
	Provincial	National	Total
Democratic Left (ID)	27	3	30
Popular Democracy (DP)	6	1	7
<i>Partido Roldosista Ecuatoriano</i> (PRE)	6	2	8
Social Christian Party (PSC)	7	1	8
<i>Concentracion de Fuerzas Populares</i> (CFP)	5	1	6
Socialist Party (PSE)	3	1	4
<i>Frente Radical Alfarista</i> (FRA)	1	1	2
<i>Movimiento Popular Democrático</i> (MPD)	2	—	2
<i>Frente Amplio de Izquierda</i> (FADI)	1	1	2
Conservative Party (PC)		1	1
Liberal Party (PL)	1		1
	59	12	71

2. Distribution of Deputies according to Profession

Lawyers.	25
Engineers.	8
Professors.	5
Doctors.	5
Economists.	5
Journalists.	2
Others.	21
	71

3. *Distribution of Deputies according to Sex*

Men67
Women34
	71

4. *Distribution of Deputies according to Age*

25-35 years.15%
35-45 »40%
45-55 »30%
56 and over.	<u>.15%</u>
	100%