

Ecuador

Consular Advice

The material below includes information from the US Department of State (DOS), the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCO), Global Affairs Canada (GAC), and Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), as well as from additional open-source material. Standard safety precautions that apply to all international travel can be found in the Library article Safety and Security.

Consular Travel Warning

Due to crime and civil unrest, Australia (DFAT) advises avoiding travel within 20 km (12.4 mi) of the border with Colombia (except the official border crossing at Tulcán) and also advises reconsidering travel (or avoiding nonessential travel) to the rest of the country. US (DOS), UK (FCO), and Canada (GAC) have more limited warnings.

A nationwide declaration of internal armed conflict is in place. Increased security measures are likely, especially in places where large crowds gather (e.g., public transportation and at airports and sea ports). Police and military forces may perform identification checks and searches; travelers should have identification readily available. Travelers should also maintain a high level of security awareness, carry a fully charged communication device, follow the advice of local authorities (including on how to handle health care emergencies), and monitor the situation through local media and embassy communications.

Terrorism Risk

No intrinsic risk of attack by terrorist groups exists, but unforeseen attacks are possible.

Crime

High risk of violent crime (armed robbery and sexual assault) and high risk of petty crime exist throughout the country, especially in Quito (particularly in El Panecillo, El Ejido, and La Carolina parks and the districts of La Mariscal, La Floresta, La Marin, Guápulo, South Quito, and Old Town Quito); in Guayaquil (in the districts of Urdesa, Kennedy, Alborada, and Malecón Simón Bolívar [including Cerro Santa Ana]; near the bus terminal, the downtown and market areas, and the Sagrado Corazón de Jesús [statue of Jesus Christ] on Cerro del Carmen); in other cities (Cuenca, Manta, and Riobamba); on volcano hiking trails (including Cerro Mandango near Vilcabamba, Loja Province, the Pichincha volcano, and the volcano outside the limits of the Quito TelefériQo or its pathway); in Montañita (Santa Elena Province); on beaches in the province of Esmeraldas; in jungle lodges in the Lower Rio Napo and Cuyabeno Wildlife Reserve.

Theft of valuables from unattended accommodations is common.

Kidnappings by criminal groups occur in northern and northeastern areas bordering Colombia and Peru, including the Cuyabeno Wildlife Reserve. Targets may include foreigners (especially Westerners), including foreigners working for oil companies.

Express kidnappings to force cash withdrawals at ATMs occur throughout the country, especially in Quito and Guayaquil.

Scams involving ATMs, credit cards, and the use of distraction techniques to commit robbery (including squirting substances on victims) have been reported.

Risk exists of robberies and/or assaults occurring after consuming intentionally drugged food or drink; tourists are frequently targeted.

Civil Unrest

Protests and demonstrations occur throughout the country and have the potential to turn violent without warning. Bystanders are at risk of harm from violence or from the response by authorities. Disruption to transportation, free movement, or the ability to carry out daily activities may occur.

Unsafe Areas

A dangerous security environment exists and armed groups are present in areas bordering Colombia, including Cuyabeno Wildlife Reserve.

Water Safety

Passenger boats may be unsafe on the Galápagos Islands. Decline water transportation in vessels that appear overloaded or lack personal flotation devices or life jackets.

Rent water sports equipment from reputable operators. Scuba dive only with personnel certified by PADI or NAUI, and use equipment only from PADI- or NAUI-certified dive operators.

Outdoor Safety

Basic safety standards for adventure activities (including bungee jumping, canopy tours, and recreational off-roading) may not be in place. Travelers should only use reputable adventure-sport operators for activities and equipment rentals.

Transportation Safety

High risk of traffic-related injury or death exists. The road traffic death rate is 12 to 24 per 100,000 population. The rate is less than 10 in most high-income countries.

Airline Safety

The US Federal Aviation Administration has determined that the civil aviation authority of this country oversees its air carriers in accordance with minimum international safety standards.

Natural Disasters

The rainy season is from May through November in areas east of the Andes mountains and December through May in coastal areas. Floods, mudslides, and landslides may occur.

Seismic and volcanic activity frequently occur.

Consular Information

Selected Embassies or Consulates in Ecuador

- United States: [+593] 2-398-5000; ec.usembassy.gov
- Canada: [+593] 2-2455-499; www.ecuador.gc.ca
- United Kingdom: [+593] 2-3972-200; www.gov.uk/world/organisations/british-embassy-in-ecuador
- Australia: [+593] 4-601-7529

Ecuador's Embassies or Consulates in Selected Countries

- In the U.S.: www.ecuador.org
- In Canada: www.embassyecuador.ca
- In the U.K.: reinounido.embajada.gob.ec
- In Australia: australia.embajada.gob.ec

Visa/HIV Testing

HIV testing is not required to obtain a tourist, work, or residence visa.

Consular Travel Warnings content is continuously updated as new information becomes available.

Page last updated April 10, 2024.
