

Ecuador



A patchwork of indigenous communities, people of colonial Spanish origins and descendants of African slaves, Ecuador is a microcosm of Latin American cultures. Its capital, Quito, once a center of the Inca empire, also has some of the best-preserved early colonial architecture on the continent.

ECUADOR FACTS

Population: 13 million (UN, 2003)

Capital: Quito

Major languages: Spanish, indigenous languages

Major religion: Christianity

Life expectancy: 68 years (men), 73 years (women) (UN)

Monetary unit: 1 US dollar = 100 cents

Main exports: Petroleum, bananas, shrimp, coffee, cocoa, cut flowers, fish

Average annual income: US\$1,080 (World Bank, 2001)

Internet domain: .ec

International dialing code: +593

Traditionally an agrarian country, Ecuador's economic profile changed radically after the 1960s, when the discovery of oil and the promulgation of an industrial development law set off rapid growth and brought about great progress in the spheres of health, education and housing.



Flag Description: three horizontal bands of yellow (top, double width), blue, and red with the coat of arms superimposed at the center of the flag; similar to the flag of Colombia, which is shorter and does not bear a coat of arms. For a timeline of key events go to

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/country_profiles/1212826.stm