



# Ecuador



## Country Overview:

*Location: Western South America, bordering the Pacific Ocean at the Equator, between Colombia and Peru*

*Size: 283,561 sq km*

*Population: 15,439,429 (July 2013 est.)*

*Capital: Quito*

*Exports-commodities: petroleum, bananas, cut flowers, shrimp, cacao, coffee, wood, fish*

*Imports-commodities: industrial materials, fuels and lubricants, nondurable consumer goods*

*Currency: the US dollar (as of 2007)*

*Ethnic groups: mestizo (mixed Amerindian and white) 71.9%, Montubio 7.4%, Afroecuadorian 7.2%, Amerindian 7%, white 6.1%, other 0.4% (2010 census)*

*Religion: Roman Catholic 95%, other 5%*

*Government type: Republic*

*Chief of State: President Rafael CORREA Delgado (since January 2007)*

*Head of Government: President Rafael CORREA Delgado (since January 2007)*

*Language: Spanish (official), indigenous (Quechua, Shuar)*

*Ecuador is the 64th largest economy in the world.*



## Republic of Ecuador / Republica del Ecuador

### Meetings and Negotiations

-Ecuadorians are generally less punctual than some South Americans and particularly North American counterparts. Do **not** be offended if kept waiting as this can be anticipated.

-The expected and most common greeting is a slightly loose handshake, direct eye contact, and a smile.

-Business cards are exchanged during initial introductions.

-Ecuadorians often have a low tolerance for uncertainty. **Maintain** guarantees and safety measures.

-Use professional titles followed by the father's surname (often listed first of two surnames). If without a title, use Señor or Señora.

-In Ecuador, a person's word is his/her **bond**. Remain aware when giving verbal assurances.

-Negotiations can be drawn out and lengthy. Remain **patient** throughout process.

-Do **not** change members of your

team.

-Business decisions are often made within a hierarchical corporate structure.

### Business Attire

-Styles are European, modest, and Conservative.

-Men: Dark suits and ties are expected for formal meetings. For casual situations light shirts may be worn.

-Women: For the first meeting, women should wear a suit. Comfortable dresses are fine afterwards.

### Behavior

-Using a nod to signify 'yes' and a head shake for 'no' may not be fully interpreted. Respond **verbal-ly** as well.

-It is considered impolite to point at others or yawn in public.

-Expect **less** personal space with your Ecuador counterparts in respect to both proximity and physical

contact.

-Ecuadorians find nervous and repetitive movements to be annoying (ie. toe tapping or knee bouncing).

-During conversations **sustained** eye contact is commonplace.

### Gift Giving

-Gifts are typically exchanged upon the completion of business negotiations although a small gift may be acceptable after a dinner meeting.

-Gifts are generally open when received. Also, remain **effusive** in your gratitude during this process.

### Appropriate Gifts:

-pastries, chocolates, wine, liquors, items for the home, desk accessories, pictures & books (especially related to your country)

### Gifts to Avoid:

-lilies and marigolds which are associated with funerals

-scissors, knives, or sharp objects as they indicate the severing of ties

## Business Tips continued

### Conversation

-Emphasis is placed on doing business with persons as opposed to the companies they represent. **Concentrate** on establishing trust and respect as these are the cornerstones of business.

-**"Saving face"** is commonly employed. Ecuadorians are diplomatic and non-confrontational in conversation.

Blunt dialogue is not well received.

-Beginning with small talk helps establish a base for the relationship.

-Ecuadorians can become quite **animated** during negotiation. Do not interpret the associated language or actions as forms of aggression.

-Probing questions may be asked to assess how open, reliable, and trustworthy you may be. Answer

**honestly and directly**; remaining protective over personal information may be regarded as impolite.

### Topics to Discuss:

-family, culture, history of one's place of origin

### Topics to Avoid:

-politics, US political influence, sex, human rights, class issues, Peru as relations are often strained

