

Ecuador's 2025 Elections: Implications for U.S. Policy

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On April 13, 2025, Ecuador held a presidential runoff election. Incumbent President Daniel Noboa (2023-present) of the center-right [National Democratic Action](#) (ADN) defeated Luisa González of the left-leaning [Citizen Revolution-Total Renovation](#) (RC-RETO) political alliance, [55.6% to 44.4%](#). President Noboa is set to be inaugurated for a four-year term on May 24, 2025.

Congress has taken an active role in shaping U.S.-Ecuador relations at times. The United States-Ecuador Partnership Act of 2022 (Title LV, Subtitle B, of P.L. 117-263), for example, aims to deepen bilateral economic and security ties. The 119th Congress may assess the implications of Ecuador's 2025 election on Trump Administration policies toward Ecuador and for U.S.-Ecuador relations.

Electoral Context and Results

[Noboa](#) is scheduled to begin his first full presidential term 18 months after assuming the presidency to complete the term of his predecessor, President Guillermo Lasso (2021-2023), who had dissolved the national legislature (National Assembly) and called snap elections in 2023. Under the Noboa administration, Ecuador has continued to grapple with an [organized crime-fueled security crisis](#), energy [shortages](#), and other challenges that have contributed to slowing [economic growth](#) and increased [unauthorized migration](#).

Noboa's runoff [victory](#) by about 11-percentage points was greater than some [polls](#) projected, after the two leading candidates nearly tied in the [first round vote](#) held on February 9, 2025. Opposition candidate Luisa González alleged irregularities and has [disputed](#) the results. Electoral observation missions from the [Organization of American States](#) (OAS) and the [European Union](#) (EU) expressed confidence in the election's results while noting some concerns during the campaign. In its [preliminary report](#), for example, the OAS noted "indications that public resources and the state apparatus were improperly used for proselytizing purposes" in favor of President Noboa.

Elections for all 151 members of the [newly expanded](#) National Assembly also were held on February 9. Support was divided largely between Noboa's ADN and RC. In the [incoming National Assembly](#), scheduled to be seated on May 14, 2025, both RC and ADN are set to control 66 seats each following the defection of one RC assemblywoman-elect. [Pachakutik](#), the party of the [Confederation of Indigenous](#)

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[Nationalities of Ecuador](#), secured nine seats, while the remaining seats were divided among other political parties or coalitions. President Noboa will require the support of some of these smaller parties to advance his legislative agenda, including a [proposal](#) to convene a constitutional assembly to replace the country's 2008 constitution drafted under [RC leader](#) and former president Rafael Correa (2007-2017).

Implications for U.S. Policy and the 119th Congress

President Noboa may seek to continue deepening U.S.-Ecuador security cooperation. Under the first Trump Administration and the Biden Administration, U.S. and Ecuadorian officials sought to increase law enforcement and security cooperation to counter transnational crime following a period of strained relations under former President Correa, who [halted most cooperation](#) in these areas. Since 2023, the two countries have established a [Defense Bilateral Working Group](#) and implemented several agreements to deepen military cooperation, including to establish a framework for U.S. military personnel to [operate](#) in Ecuador and [allowing](#) for joint naval operations to combat drug trafficking and other illicit activities.

Noboa has proposed expanding international cooperation to counter transnational crime, including [reversing](#) a Correa-era constitutional ban on foreign military bases in Ecuador and [temporarily allowing](#) foreign special forces from “allied nations” to support Ecuadorian forces. Noboa administration officials [reportedly](#) have expressed interest in Ecuador hosting a U.S. military base; from 1999 to 2009, the United States conducted counternarcotics operations from a [Forward Operating Location](#) in Manta, Ecuador, before it was closed under then-President Correa. President Noboa also [reportedly](#) asked President Trump to designate several Ecuador-based gangs as Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTOs) following the State Department's February 2025 [designation](#) of eight transnational criminal organizations as FTOs (pursuant to [Executive Order \(E.O.\) 14157](#)) and Specially Designated Global Terrorists (pursuant to [E.O. 13224](#), as amended).

[Some Members of Congress](#) have lauded the Noboa administration as a “valued partner” on security and other issues and have advocated for a continued expansion of defense and security cooperation with Ecuador to “address critical challenges in the region while upholding our shared democratic values.”

[Some Members](#) have expressed concerns about [alleged human rights abuses](#) under the Noboa administration and urged the State Department to ensure U.S. security assistance to the country complies with [Leahy Laws](#) (codified in [22 U.S.C. §2378d](#)), which prohibit U.S. assistance to foreign security forces when there is credible information that such forces have committed a “gross violation of human rights.”

The State Department has allocated security assistance to Ecuador, primarily under the International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement account, for programs intended to build Ecuador's capacity to counter transnational organized crime and corruption, among other activities. The Trump Administration's 90-day “[pause](#)” on foreign assistance and subsequent [cancellation](#) of awards [reportedly interrupted](#) some U.S.-backed counternarcotics efforts in Ecuador. In February 2025, the Trump Administration [reportedly exempted](#) some security and counternarcotics programs from the pause. Congress may seek to conduct oversight on how, if at all, these changes have affected (and/or may continue to affect) counternarcotics and anti-corruption efforts in Ecuador.

The Noboa administration also is [reportedly](#) seeking to enhance commercial ties with the United States, including through a possible bilateral free trade agreement. In 2020, under the first Trump Administration, the United States and Ecuador [signed](#) a protocol to strengthen the 1990 U.S.-Ecuador Trade and Investment Council—the primary mechanism for discussing bilateral trade issues. On April 2, 2025, President Trump issued [E.O. 14257](#) imposing a minimum 10% tariff on U.S. imports from all countries, including Ecuador, as of April 5, 2025. A new bilateral trade agreement could address these tariffs and other trade issues. Congress also could seek to influence U.S.-Ecuador trade relations. For example, in the 118th Congress, several Members introduced the Innovation and Development in Ecuador Act of 2023 (S. 913/H.R. 6414), which would have made Ecuador eligible for designation as a beneficiary country under

the [Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act](#), potentially giving the country access to certain unilateral U.S. trade preferences.

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