



European Union  
Election Observation Mission  
**ECUADOR 2025**

Final Report



**Legislative and Presidential  
elections**

9 February 2025

**Presidential run-off**

13 April 2025



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## **FINAL REPORT**

## **EUROPEAN UNION ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION**

**Only the original English version is official.**

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## I. Executive summary

On 13 April, Daniel Noboa, the presidential candidate for the *Acción Democrática Nacional* (ADN) party, was re-elected with 55.6 per cent of the valid votes, in a transparent and well-organised election day that disproved fraud narratives spread by the two main political forces during the campaign. Luisa González, from the *Revolución Ciudadana* (RC) - RETO coalition, obtained 44.3 per cent of the vote and, unlike the main *prefectos* and mayors of her political movement, did not acknowledge the results. The EU Election Observation Mission analysed the objections presented by RC to the National Electoral Council (CNE) and found no evidence to cast doubt on the results. Daniel Noboa had also denounced irregularities after the first round but did not present evidence or lodge objections with the electoral authorities.

Noboa and González had made it to the run-off after a virtual tie, with 44 per cent of the vote each, in the first round of the presidential election on 9 February, which was contested by a record 16 candidacies. The markedly bipartisan political landscape portrayed by the presidential vote also applied to the legislative elections, in which the two main forces secured blocs of similar size, neither of them reaching a majority on its own. ADN and RC will also share the seats in the Andean Parliament.

The Ecuadorian **legal framework** is broadly in line with international standards for democratic elections. However, the election law contains several loopholes, while non-compliance with a number of legal obligations and prohibitions is not subject to sanctions. The EOM has noted certain signs of erosion of the rule of law during the process, including the government's failure to comply with some rulings of the Constitutional Court (CC); the reluctance of all relevant institutions to clearly state their position on president Noboa's failure to ask for a leave of absence; as well as the inability of the *Consejo de Participación Ciudadana y Control Social* (CPCCS) to renew the members of the electoral bodies.

The CNE organised the 2025 general elections in a transparent and efficient manner, accrediting high numbers of political party representatives and observers. **Election preparations** were conducted smoothly and within legal deadlines, including for out-of-country voting. Given the heavy rainfalls before the second round, CNE's continuous monitoring of polling centres led to very few centres having to be replaced, and these changes were adequately communicated to voters.

Despite having implemented several transparent processes in recent years, the image of the **election administration** continued to deteriorate. In addition to the delayed renewal of the CNE councillors, it was accused of partiality, especially when the CNE did not react to President Daniel Noboa's failure to request a leave of absence at the start of the campaign period. Also, before the second round, the CNE decided to ban the use of electronic devices during voting, which many interlocutors saw as evidence that the election administration had bent to government pressure. However, Noboa's request to exempt voters in the provinces most affected by heavy rainfall from fines for not voting was not considered by the CNE.

The Constitution provides for comprehensive voting rights. The **voter register** was largely perceived as inclusive and accurate, and very few administrative complaints were filed regarding its update by the CNE. To enable the participation of non-convicted prisoners, the CNE set up polling stations in 52 prisons across the country, where voting took place three days before the regular election days.

Ecuadorian legislation provides the basis for an inclusive system of **candidate registration** through political parties, movements or alliances, with no excessive or arbitrary restrictions. Out of 543 pre-candidacies that applied for registration, 495 were approved, covering all the



political spectrum. The disqualification by the TCE of presidential would-be candidate Jan Topic was controversial, not only for its political consequences, but also because the evidence relied on by the TCE to convict him was kept confidential and was not communicated to Topic, raising doubts about the respect for his right to defence.

Despite the climate of violence which prevails in parts of the country, candidates campaigned unhindered in both rounds. Observers assessed the two **election campaign** periods as calm and pluralistic, and freedoms of assembly and movement were guaranteed despite the successive states of emergency.

Ecuadorian regulation of **campaign financing** aims to foster a level playing-field by providing equal public funding for advertising in traditional media while establishing ceilings for private donations to cover other campaign expenses, notably on social media. The laws also set out mechanisms for the transparency of campaign accounts and oversight by the CNE. However, insufficient resources within the CNE, as well as regulatory loopholes limited effective supervision of campaign finances, particularly in relation to private campaign funds and their sources.

President Noboa, who failed to request a “leave of absence” to the Assembly as required by law for incumbents, repeatedly switched between his roles of president and candidate during both campaign periods, further blurring the boundaries between the two functions and tilting the playing-field.

Freedom of expression was largely respected during the campaign, with most **media** covering the electoral process without significant limitations. However, credible reports of “information blackout zones” pointed to threats against journalists reporting on the nexus between organised crime and politics, contributing to a climate of self-censorship, particularly at the local and regional levels. Continued criminalisation of libel remains a potential threat to independent reporting.

The media landscape was characterised by imbalances favouring Daniel Noboa, as state-owned media provided extensive positive **coverage** of both him and his government, whilst systematically marginalising opposition voices. The widespread use of government-sponsored advertising, often closely resembling campaign promotion, further reinforced the dominance of pro-incumbent narratives during the campaign.

Most candidates made extensive use of **social media** for campaigning, typically employing a cross-platform strategy. Online campaign spending lacked transparency, and accountability was significantly constrained by the limited availability of platform-specific data. Although political parties are required to report online spending to the CNE, the lack of verification mechanisms limits effective oversight of compliance with expenditure rules.

**Disinformation** campaigns were widespread across all monitored online platforms and were frequently amplified through proxy accounts, paid-for content, bot farms, and content impersonating credible media outlets to mislead voters. The use of AI-generated content increased over the course of the election, primarily to disseminate smear campaigns. The EU EOM observed that, with few exceptions, tech companies failed to implement effective measures to counter the dissemination of harmful content online.

Ecuador holds one of the highest legal standards for **women's political participation** in the region, with compulsory gender parity and alternation since 2008 and the introduction of closed lists in 2020, which makes this requirement more effective. The law also requires gender parity within the presidential ticket, but only two of the 16 presidential candidates were women, while 14 women ran for the vice-presidency.

Since 2020, **gender-based political violence** is a serious electoral offence, punishable with heavy fines and dismissal and/or suspension of political rights. The sharp increase in the number of complaints during the 2025 process raised concern insofar as some of these cases, despite being manifestly minor or unrelated to gender, have resulted in serious, disproportionate convictions. In this sense, TCE's sentence against vice-president Veronica Abad set a worrying precedent in the treatment of gender-based political violence, an offence initially conceived to protect women's participation in politics, not to curtail it. The ruling is widely considered as having unduly restricted the right to participate in politics, as well as freedom of expression.

Both **election days** were largely calm and orderly. Political party representatives were present in most polling stations visited by the EU EOM, with a higher presence during the second round. EU observers assessed the performance of polling staff as overall positive during opening and voting. While the counting process was assessed as transparent, it could have benefited from additional training. The reintroduction of polling centre coordinators in the second round was a positive step, but there were still eight per cent of the polling stations visited during the voting in which political party representatives were restricted in their work by either CNE coordinators or military forces, usually requiring them to observe from outside the polling station.

The **transmission of results** protocols from polling stations and the processing in provincial tabulation centres was fast and efficient in both rounds of the elections. The electronic results management system worked without interruptions, guaranteeing the transparency and traceability of the results transmission system. Minor issues with the accessibility of the CNE results website and the connectivity of Manabi provincial tabulation centre in the first round did not affect the integrity of the results and were addressed in good time for the second round.

Overall, the number of **complaints and appeals** filed against the preliminary results of the 9 February general election was low and led to few recounts with no significant impact. Following the presidential run-off, the CNE decided on six complaints lodged by RC-RETO requesting the annulment of the results of 14,825 polling stations. All complaints were denied as RC did not substantiate the grounds for the request, nor submitted enough supporting evidence.

The EU EOM made 15 recommendations with a view to further enhance the conduct of elections in Ecuador and to support efforts to bring them fully in line with international obligations and standards for democratic elections. They are made for the consideration of the newly elected Assembly, the new government, the election administration and Ecuadorian society. A table with all the mission's recommendations can be found at the end of this report.

**Priority recommendations** include:

1. Review the most severe penalties for electoral offences to avoid disproportionate restrictions on political rights.
2. Review, especially, the gender-based political violence electoral offence so that it does not unreasonably limit freedom of expression and the right to political participation.
3. Review the selection and nomination system in place to guarantee the effective renewal of CNE and TCE authorities.
4. To mitigate the benefits of incumbency, it would be advisable, during the election campaign, to confine the presidency and the government's activities to the handling of day-to-day business or emergency situations. For the same reasons, the National Assembly could go into recess during these periods.

5. Enhance oversight of government advertising by revising the legal framework to explicitly prohibit the use of institutional communication for electoral advantage and require all such content during campaign periods to be pre-approved by the CNE, clearly labelled, and subject to effective enforcement and sanctions.

## II. Introduction

The European Union Election Observation Mission began work in Ecuador on 28 December 2024, in response to an invitation from the *Consejo Nacional Electoral* (CNE) and the *Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores*. The Mission was led by Chief Observer Gabriel Mato, Member of the European Parliament (Spain). The EU EOM deployed 106 observers from 25 EU Member States, Norway and Canada in all 24 provinces of Ecuador to assess the entire electoral process against international obligations and commitments for democratic elections as well as the laws of Ecuador. A delegation from the European Parliament, headed by Nacho Sánchez-Amor, Member of the European Parliament (Spain), joined the mission for each of the two election days.

The mission published a preliminary statement after each election, on 11 February and 15 April. The EU EOM remained in Ecuador until 3 May, to observe the resolution of post-electoral disputes. The EU EOM is independent in its findings and conclusions and adheres to the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation endorsed at the United Nations in October 2005.

## III. Political background

In the 2025 general elections, Ecuadorians were called to elect their president from a record 16 presidential and vice-presidential candidacies.<sup>1</sup> Votes were also cast for the 151 members of the National Assembly and five representatives to the Andean Parliament. Despite the high number of presidential candidates and registered political parties and movements (256, many of them with only a local base), incumbent Daniel Noboa (*Alianza Democrática Nacional*, ADN) and *Revolución Ciudadana* (RC) candidate Luisa González made it to the second round, each of them securing 44 per cent of the vote in a nail-bitingly first round on 9 February. The remaining candidates trailed far behind, with only marginal voting intention. The bipartisan political landscape was also reflected in the new National Assembly, in which the two main forces secured blocs of similar size, neither of them reaching a majority on its own. Daniel Noboa won the 13 April run-off by a significant margin, with 55.6 per cent of the vote.

The 2025 elections took place after a transitional mandate of barely a year and a half that followed the triggering - for the first time in Ecuador - of the constitutional mechanism known

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<sup>1</sup> **Daniel Noboa** (presidential candidate) and María José Pinto (vice-presidential candidate) for *Movimiento Acción Democrática Nacional* – ADN; **Luisa González** and Diego Borja (*Movimiento Revolución Ciudadana* – RC in alliance with *Movimiento RETO*); **Leonidas Iza** and Katuska Molina (*Movimiento de la Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik*); **Carlos Rabascall** and Alejandra Rivas (*Partido Izquierda Democrática*); **Jimmy Jairala** and Lucía Vallecilla (*Movimiento Centro Democrático*); **Henry Cucalón** and Carla Larrea (*Movimiento Construye*); **Pedro Granja** and Verónica Silva (*Partido Socialista Ecuatoriano*); **Andrea González Náder** and Galo Moncayo (*Partido Sociedad Patriótica* - PSP); **Henry Kronfle** and Dallyana Passailaigue (*Partido Social Cristiano* - PSC); **Víctor Araus** and Cristina Carrera (*Movimiento Pueblo Igualdad Democracia*); **Enrique Gómez** and Inés Díaz (*Partido Sociedad Unida Más Acción* - SUMA); **Luis Tillería** and Karla Rosero (*Movimiento Avanza*); **Jorge Escala** and Pacha Terán (*Partido Unidad Popular*); **Juan Cueva** and Cristina Reyes (*Movimiento AMIGO*); **Francesco Tabacchi** and Blanca Sacancela (*Movimiento CREO*); **Iván Saquicela** and María Coello (*Movimiento Democracia Sí*).

as *muerte cruzada*: in 2023, faced with the threat of impeachment by the National Assembly, then President Guillermo Lasso dissolved parliament and called snap presidential and legislative elections. In accordance with the provisions for such elections, all those elected only served for the period remaining of the outgoing President and legislative body.<sup>2</sup>

#### IV. Legal framework

The Ecuadorian legal framework is broadly in line with international standards for democratic elections. The country has ratified the main universal and regional human rights instruments pertaining to political participation and inclusive electoral processes.<sup>3</sup> Necessary conditions for holding elections are established in the Constitution and legislation, including the right to participate in political affairs, universal suffrage, equal opportunities for men and women, the principle of equality, as well as freedoms of speech, information, assembly and association.

The Constitution bans electoral reform during the year prior to an election. In a context marked by the *muerte cruzada* and the 2023 early elections, there have been no electoral reforms since 2020, when the *Código de la Democracia* (election law) was extensively amended.<sup>4</sup> In 2021, the CNE adopted several regulations to allow for the implementation of the new law. Most of these regulations remained unchanged for the 2025 elections and no significant shortcomings were observed.<sup>5</sup>

However, the election law contains several loopholes, as non-compliance with certain legal obligations and prohibitions is not subject to sanctions. This is the case, among others, with the mandatory biweekly report on candidates' campaign spending; the obligation for candidates to open a dedicated bank account for all campaign income; the obligation for incumbents to request a leave of absence at the beginning of the campaign; and the prohibition for political organisations to hire international artists.<sup>6</sup>

***Recommendation:*** Introduce sanctions for non-compliance with a number of legal obligations and prohibitions for which no consequences are foreseen yet

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<sup>2</sup> In 2023 elections, Daniel Noboa rose sharply from the bottom rungs of opinion polls during the last two weeks of the first-round campaign, which was marked by the assassination of presidential candidate Fernando Villavicencio and secured a place in the second round. Noboa won the run-off by just over two points over Luisa Gonzalez, the candidate of *Revolución Ciudadana*, who was again his opponent again on 2025. The election led to a fragmented Assembly in which, after reaching some legislative accords in the early months of his mandate, the president steadily lost support, to the point where he became unable to command a majority

<sup>3</sup> These include, *inter alia*, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CPRD) and the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (ILO c. 169). Ecuador is also party to the American Convention on Human Rights (ACHR), Inter-American Convention on the granting of political Rights to Women, Inter-American Convention Against Corruption (IACAC), Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities and the Inter-American Convention against Racism, Racial Discrimination and Related Forms of Intolerance (A-68).

<sup>4</sup> Among others, the introduction of the Webster system for allocating National Assembly seats in provincial constituencies through closed lists; gender parity and alternation at the top of candidates lists and on the presidential ticket; the classification of gender-based political violence as an electoral crime; measures to promote and ensure youth participation; the mandatory requirement for election debates.

<sup>5</sup> The EU EOM only observed a contradiction between the regulation for the control of campaign expenses, which authorises international artists among the items approved for donation, and article 330 of the Election Law, which prohibits political organisations from holding events with international artists during the campaign period.

<sup>6</sup> Articles 93, 225, 211.1 and 330.4, Election Law.

The EOM has noted certain signs of erosion of the rule of law during the process. Concerning indicators include President Noboa's failure to ask for a leave of absence and the reluctance of all relevant institutions to clearly state their position on this issue; the inability of the *Consejo de Participación Ciudadana y Control Social* (CPCCS) to renew the members of the electoral bodies; as well as government's failure to comply with some rulings of the Constitutional Court (CC), especially in the case of the decrees declaring the state of emergency.<sup>7</sup>

### *Electoral System and Constituency Delimitation*

The President and Vice-President of Ecuador are elected in a single constituency. The presidential mandate is limited to two four-year terms, which may or may not be consecutive.<sup>8</sup> If no presidential candidate obtains 50 per cent of the valid votes or at least 40 per cent with a 10 per cent difference over the second, the winner is decided in a run-off between the two most voted candidates, to be held within 45 days.

The mandate of members of the National Assembly is also limited to two four-year terms, consecutive or not. The members of the 2025-2029 National Assembly increased from 137 to 151, based on the legal provision that requires a minimum of two seats per province, with an additional seat for each 200,000 inhabitants or fraction exceeding 150,000, according to the latest population census (2022).<sup>9</sup> Out of these 151 members, 15 were elected in a nationwide constituency, six were elected by Ecuadorians abroad divided in three constituencies, and the remaining 130 members were elected in 31 provincial or sub provincial constituencies with between two and six seats.<sup>10</sup> After the 2020 reform of the election law, the Webster method was reintroduced for the allocation of seats, slightly more favourable to minority parties than the previously used D'Hondt method.

On 9 February 2025, Ecuadorians also elected five representatives to the Andean Parliament in a nationwide constituency and with closed lists.

### *Implementation of recommendations from previous EU election expert missions (EU EEM)*

Since the last reform of the Election Law in 2020, no new electoral changes have taken place in a context marked by the *muerte cruzada* and the 2023 early elections and both Lasso's and Noboa's governments' failure to build up a majority in the National Assembly. Only few of the 2021 and 2023 EU EEM recommendations have seen progress, most at an operational level, such as the adoption by the CNE of new communication tools.

<sup>7</sup> The CC repeatedly pointed out the unconstitutionality of the declaration of an internal armed conflict to justify the decrees of emergency. However, the armed conflict was invoked by several decrees since April 2024, last time by decree n° 599, adopted on the eve of the presidential run-off.

<sup>8</sup> A Constitutional Court ruling from 2010 states that in the case of a *muerte cruzada* election (as in 2023), the mandates of the newly elected (President and Vice-president as well as members of the National Assembly) do not count towards the maximum two mandates allowed.

<sup>9</sup> The following provinces increased their representation in the 2025-2029 Assembly: Azuay (from 5 to 6), Esmeraldas (4 to 5), Guayas (20 to 24), Manabí (9 to 10), Morona Santiago (2 to 3), Orellana (2 to 3), Pichincha (16 to 19), Santa Elena (3 to 4) and Tungurahua (4 to 5) (cf. Resolution PLE-CNE-1-5-4-2024).

<sup>10</sup> According to the law, constituencies in which 8-12 assembly members are to be elected must be divided into two, those with 13-18 members into three, and those with more than 18 members into four. When defining the corresponding geographical delimitations, the CNE must ensure that the difference between the number of members to be elected in each new constituency does not exceed one. In accordance with these legal provisions, the CNE created two sub provincial constituencies for the province of Manabí and four constituencies each for the provinces of Guayas and Pichincha (cf. Resolution PLE-CNE-2-5-4-2024).

## V. Election Administration

### *Structure of the Election Administration*

Under the 2008 Constitution, the *Función Electoral* is one of five branches of the State and is carried out by two bodies, the *Consejo Nacional Electoral* (CNE) and the *Tribunal Contencioso Electoral* (TCE). Both institutions have administrative and financial autonomy, as well as their own legal personality. CNE councillors and TCE judges are appointed by the *Consejo de Participación Ciudadana y Control Social* (CPCCS), an institutional oversight and appointment body.

The broad mandate of the CNE includes organising electoral processes, regulating political parties and registering candidates, monitoring the campaign and campaign finance, as well as maintaining and updating the voter register. The CNE is headed by five councillors who serve a six-year term and are selected and appointed by the CPCCS.<sup>11</sup> Four out of five CNE councillors were in office since November 2018, as the CPCCS had been unable to replace them before November 2024, when their ordinary mandate expired.

The TCE is responsible for the electoral justice and is vested with a large sanctioning power. The tribunal adjudicates complaints against CNE resolutions and decides on electoral offences, as well as on appeals against electoral results. During the election periods, its rulings are not subject to review by any other tribunal, not even by the Constitutional Court. The term of the five electoral judges ended on 20 May 2025. As with CNE members, the mandate of the five TCE judges expired, and their mandate has been extended until their successors are selected by the CPCCS.<sup>12</sup>

According to most interlocutors, long delays, excessive formalities and lack of confidence in the tribunal discouraged the lodging of complaints (see *Campaign-related complaints and Complaints and Appeals*).

The CPCCS, the body in charge of nominating authorities of TCE and CNE proved to be dysfunctional, contributing to the loss of legitimacy and credibility of the electoral institutions. CPCCS's responsibility to renew the members of a number of institutions was hampered by the complexity of the selection procedures, which are subject to frequent delays, as well as by the not uncommon removal of its own councillors following political trials in the Assembly or court rulings.

**Recommendation:** review the selection and nomination system in place to guarantee the effective renewal of CNE and TCE authorities.

### *Public trust in the election administration*

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<sup>11</sup> The 2008 Constitution established a technical and impartial recruitment process for the CNE councillors, conducted through a public competition based on competence and merit. However, in 2018, the CPCCS decided that three CNE councillors would be proposed by the political parties that obtained the largest number of votes in the 2017 elections. The other two councillors were chosen from civil society. The current CNE president Diana Atamaint was proposed by CONAIE, vice-president Enrique Pita by CREO, councillor José Cabrera by the Social Christian Party (*Partido Social Cristiano*), and councillor Esthela Acero by *Alianza PAIS*. Councillor Elena Nájera (*Concertación*) replaced councillor Luis Verdesoto who resigned in 2021.

<sup>12</sup> The CPCCS was late with the renewal of at least 33 positions at TCE, CNE, Judiciary Council, Attorney General, and the Ombudsman's Office.

Despite having organised transparent electoral processes in recent years, the image of the CNE has continued to deteriorate. Public statements of CNE councillors were repeatedly distorted in social media to generate disinformation, and the CNE president was subject of attacks and hate speech (see *Social Media*). In addition to the delayed renewal of its councillors, the loss of credibility in recent years was also due to dissent within the CNE, which tarnished the institution's image.<sup>13</sup> It was further exacerbated in the 2025 electoral process by accusations of partiality and preferential treatment towards President Daniel Noboa and his party ADN. When Noboa did not request a leave of absence at the start of the campaign period, the CNE was accused of inaction as the councillors were unable to adopt a clear position on the matter, beyond a general statement issued on 6 January 2025 reminding public servants of the prohibition to campaign or to use public resources for campaigning.

Following allegations made by Noboa about irregularities and voter intimidation by organised crime during the first round of the elections, the CNE adopted on 13 March a resolution on the use of electronic devices in polling stations.<sup>14</sup> The resolution was criticised primarily because the CNE based its decision on confidential reports by the security forces that were not made public. Many interlocutors saw the adoption of this resolution as evidence that the election administration had bent to the government's pressure. The resolution was challenged three times at the TCE and the Constitutional Court (CC).<sup>15</sup> The CC affirmed the constitutionality of the resolution, while some operational measures for its application were established. However, the CC avoided analysing the consequences of non-compliance with the resolution. The CNE had *de facto* created a new offence through an administrative regulation, ignoring the constitutional obligation to do it by law. Moreover, the penalty foreseen in case of non-compliance appears disproportionate, as a voter who used a mobile device during voting could be punished with a fine up to USD 32,000 or even the suspension of their political rights for up to four years. It's worth noting that more serious electoral offences are punished with considerably lighter penalties.

After the first round of the elections, president Noboa also requested that voters in the provinces most affected by heavy rainfall be exempted from fines for not voting, but this measure was not considered by the CNE.

In contrast to the deteriorated public image of the electoral administration, the CNE acted transparently throughout the election preparations, publishing relevant information on its website and social network channels. The CNE councillors held regular sessions which were streamed online. The EU EOM experienced very good access to the CNE at the national and provincial level. Political party representatives were invited to all relevant electoral events but participated in low numbers. The CNE and its provincial offices held information sessions on the procedures to accredit party representatives and, at the request of the contestants, increased the numbers of representatives who could be accredited for the second round.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> CNE councillor Nájera, who claimed that she was being marginalised by the "majority councillors" (Atamaint, Pita and Cabrera), repeatedly criticised them in public.

<sup>14</sup> The resolution prohibited voters from using electronic devices such as phones or tablets while voting, to prevent taking pictures of their marked ballot. Polling staff was banned from using electronic devices during the counting, except for one staff member, to add up the votes.

<sup>15</sup> Two appeals were dismissed on procedural grounds. One appeal was still pending. The TCE judge filed a constitutionality referral on the resolution which was not accepted by the CC.

<sup>16</sup> For the second round, ADN and RC-RETO accredited 48,116 and 47,875 representatives respectively for all levels of the election administration.

For each electoral process, temporary Provincial Electoral Boards (*Juntas Provinciales Electorales* – JPE) and, in the case of general elections, one out-of-country Electoral Board (*Junta Especial del Exterior* – JEE) are created. For the 2025 general elections, members of these boards were appointed in July 2024, their composition reflecting the political power-sharing agreement among the CNE councillors. While the EU EOM saw no evidence of partisan behaviour in the work of the JPE, in some provinces, JPE members were less experienced and dependent on the support of provincial CNE offices.<sup>17</sup>

At the lower level of the election administration were the 41,483 polling boards (*Juntas Receptoras del Voto* – JRV), responsible for administering voting and counting in the polling stations. Their members were drawn by lot on 12 November 2024 from among citizens who had completed primary education, were in possession of their political rights, and were between 18 and 60 years old. However, the CNE gave priority to students enrolled in higher education, which ended up making 79 per cent of all JVR members.<sup>18</sup> In this electoral process, the CNE decided to exclude from the draw those citizens who already served as polling staff three times or more, giving preference to fresh, more motivated citizens. As a consequence, most polling staff lacked experience (see *Polling, Counting and Tabulation*).

### *Election Preparations*

On 9 February 2024, the CNE approved the electoral calendar for the 2025 general elections, and the call for elections was issued on 11 September 2024. Overall, preparations for the elections went smoothly and in line with the legal deadlines, and the CNE demonstrated high degrees of efficiency, professionalism, and transparency. For both rounds of the elections, electoral documents (ballots, protocols, voter lists) were printed by the Military Geographical Institute and dispatched according to schedule.

For the 9 February election day, in-person training for polling staff was compulsory. Training started on 2 December 2024 and 94.50 per cent of polling staff took part. In the relevant provinces, training was also organised in indigenous languages. EU EOM observers assessed the training sessions as generally well-conducted, but short on time. For the second round, polling staff training was limited as the budget to rehire trainers was reduced. Therefore, CNE provincial offices focused on members from those polling stations that had produced results protocols with mistakes during the first round and contacted them to offer further training. The training material was updated and adapted to the presidential run-off and online training was available on a voluntary basis, also for members of the security forces. The performance of polling staff on both election days showed that in many cases, they were insufficiently prepared to perform their tasks (see *Polling, Counting and Tabulation of Results*).

The CNE also offered training for members of the security forces (military and police) that were deployed to guarantee the security at polling centres. Ahead of the 9 February elections, the CNE trained some 21,700 members (about 20 per cent of those deployed), while 4,300

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<sup>17</sup> Prior to the deployment of the EU EOM, during the candidate registration phase, the members of the JPE Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas had to be replaced by the CNE after the TCE ruled on 20 November 2024 on a complaint filed by ADN regarding the denied registration of their list of provincial assembly members.

<sup>18</sup> As in previous processes, the CNE asked public and private universities across the country, as well as private companies in some areas, for lists of their students or employees in order to prioritise them in the draw. This procedure made it possible to select citizens who met the legal criteria (of age and literacy) for almost all polling stations, except in one remote rural area of the province of Bolívar, where CNE employees had to staff polling stations due to lack of suitable candidates.



received in-person training for the second round (about 4 per cent of those deployed).<sup>19</sup> Members of the security forces could also complete an online training on a voluntary basis. On both election days, the EU EOM observed some members of the military forces overstepping their mandate. They assumed tasks corresponding to polling staff or CNE coordinators, albeit without influencing the process in favour of a particular candidate but illustrating the need for a more thorough training for their election related tasks.

To support polling staff, the CNE hired polling station coordinators, one for every four polling stations. In some of the larger provinces, the CNE had difficulties to recruit these coordinators due to short contracts and low salaries, leading to delays and insufficient training in some cases. Following an internal evaluation of the 9 February election day, the CNE decided to strengthen its presence and authority at polling centres by reintroducing polling centre coordinators, a position abolished in 2024 due to budgetary cuts. These coordinators were trained to take on the important task of liaising with security forces in polling centres, and, together with polling station coordinators, to explain to polling staff how to implement the ban on electronic devices during voting.

Given the heavy rains in the weeks leading up to the second election day, which led to flooding in several provinces, the CNE and its provincial offices continuously monitored the condition and accessibility of polling centres and prepared contingency plans. All in all, only 24 polling centres (out of 4,349) in 10 provinces had to be replaced, most of them well ahead of election day and in due time to inform voters.<sup>20</sup> In several provinces, some of the election material had to be distributed by air or water instead of by land.

The CNE implemented out-of-country voting in 39 countries across five continents. Electoral material and technological kits were dispatched on time, and polling staff was trained online.<sup>21</sup> Ten days before the first round, the CNE cancel the elections in Venezuela due to difficulties to assure the vote due to the cut in diplomatic relations between Ecuador and Venezuela in April 2024.<sup>22</sup> Ahead of the second round, Ecuador managed to set up a consular office in the Embassy of Switzerland in Venezuela. The CNE dispatched the material to hold the presidential run-off, but had to cancel the voting in Caracas on the eve of election day because of logistical and administrative barriers.

The CNE developed three voter information campaigns ahead of the 2025 elections. Due to insufficient resources, the spots could only be disseminated via traditional media and CNE social media channels starting end of November 2024. In the weeks leading up to both election days, a series of CNE informational programmes on various aspects of the electoral process aired during primetime on the most important TV and radio channels (*cadena nacional*). CNE councillors and provincial directors participated in informative programmes in national and local media. Still, the EU EOM noted a complete lack of in-person voter education activities at the local level that would go beyond the mere sharing of facts on where, when and how to

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<sup>19</sup> According to the CNE, 49,821 members of the Military Forces were deployed in the first round and 59,806 in the second round; as for the Police, it was 51,651 and 56,588 members respectively.

<sup>20</sup> RC-RETO accused the CNE of changing polling centres in an untransparent and fraudulent manner. In fact, the CNE changed the 24 polling centres between 24 February and 12 April, and provincial CNE offices conducted communication campaigns in local media to inform affected voters. Also, analysis undertaken by the EU EOM showed that the distance between the original and the new polling centre was on average only 500 metres. In the concerned polling stations, turnout dropped only slightly by 1 per cent from the first to the second round.

<sup>21</sup> For out-of-country voting, polling staff was selected among volunteers and staff from previous processes.

<sup>22</sup> As the Venezuelan authorities did not grant Ecuadorian consular staff permission to enter the country, the CNE was unable to organise voting in Venezuela.

vote, and focus on key electoral concepts like the rights and responsibilities of voters, the secrecy of the vote, etc.

**Recommendation:** *to ensure the right of all voters to make an informed choice, strengthen the CNE's internal resources and capacity for civic and voter education and implement such programmes at the local level, including for vulnerable groups like indigenous people or remote population.*

### *Results Management System*

Over the past decade, the CNE developed and further optimised its electronic results management system (RMS) which relied on the tabulation of scanned polling station results protocols. These protocols were transferred from polling centres through dedicated encrypted lines and, at the central level, provided with digital signatures and blockchain traceability elements to protect the integrity of the results. The electronic results protocols were tabulated at provincial results processing centres in a standard double-entry procedure consisting in machine-read and manually entered data. Paper documents were consulted only in case of revisions or recounts. The RMS provided for an immediate publication of preliminary results and scanned protocols with a five-minute update frequency, easily accessible to the public on a dedicated website and a mobile application. In addition, a privileged access to full disaggregated data in easily exploitable formats was foreseen for political contenders, media and observers.

In the run-up to the elections, the CNE conducted a number of technical tests as well as public simulations of results processing, aimed at increasing stakeholders' trust and fine-tuning its operation. While the EU EOM noted some glitches in the early stages of testing, these were successfully overcome by election days. The critical infrastructure involved was well protected against most foreseeable risks from power outages to cyber-attacks. In general, the RMS employed most good practices, including those on transparency, integrity, accuracy and traceability of individual polling station results.

## VI. Voter registration

### *Right to vote*

The 2008 Constitution provides for very comprehensive voting rights. It grants the right to vote to citizens over the age of 16, Ecuadorians living abroad, as well as foreigners with more than five years of legal residency in the country. Voting is compulsory for citizens aged 18 to 65, including for non-convicted prisoners; it is optional for citizens aged 16 to 18 or over 65, Ecuadorians living abroad, military and police personnel on active duty, illiterate persons, and persons with disabilities.<sup>23</sup> Political rights can only be suspended by judicial interdiction, by a prison sentence, or by a TCE judgement for specific offences detailed in the election law.

### *Voter Register*

The voter register was largely perceived as inclusive and accurate, apart from a few reports of under-registration of indigenous people in remote Amazon regions. The final voter register

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<sup>23</sup> Those who are obliged to vote but fail to do so are fined 10 per cent of the minimum wage (USD 47 in 2025). In addition, proof of voting is required for many administrative procedures.

comprised 13,736,315 voters, an increase of 2.12 per cent since 2023.<sup>24</sup> Women made up 50.92 per cent of all voters. Almost a third of the electorate (31.64 per cent) were under 30 years old. The voter register included 456,485 Ecuadorians living abroad (3.32 per cent of registered voters) and 27,032 foreign citizens residing in Ecuador (0.19 per cent). In accordance with the law, the voter register remained unchanged for the second round of the presidential elections.

Voter registration in Ecuador is passive.<sup>25</sup> For each election, the CNE compiles the voter register based on the civil register. From 12 April to 11 May 2024, voters could request to change their registered address at CNE provincial offices or online.<sup>26</sup> As noted by the 2021 EU EEM, the deadline for changes of the electoral address seems unreasonably long from the date of the general elections, let alone from the presidential run-off.

Citizens who have not exercised their right to vote in the last four elections, nor carried out any other operation such as updating their address or paying fines for not voting, are excluded from the voter register and entered into the *Registro electoral pasivo*, which is essentially a mechanism to clear the voter register from citizens who are most likely deceased or living abroad. These citizens can request their readmission in the regular voter register before its closing (30 days prior to the call for elections). In line with the legal deadlines, the CNE adopted the passive voter register comprising 950,427 persons on 9 April 2024; citizens could check their status on the CNE website or app. At the closing of the voter register, 928,839 persons were included in the passive voter register.

During a two-week period in June 2024, political parties and citizens could submit complaints related to the voter register to the CNE. No observations were filed by political parties. As for administrative complaints by citizens, the CNE received 44 complaints, most of them related to address changes, and accepted 33 of them. According to the TCE, only two CNE decisions were appealed, and one of the appeals was successful.<sup>27</sup>

To identify themselves at the polling station on election day, voters must present an identity card or passport, which is accepted even if it is expired. In the weeks prior to both election days, the Civil Registry opened its offices around the country for extended hours and at weekends to issue identity cards to those who had lost theirs, to ensure they could vote.

To enable the participation of non-convicted prisoners, the CNE set up polling stations in 52 prisons across the country, where voting took place three days before the regular election days. The list of eligible prisoners, a parallel list to the voter register, was finalised in December 2024, and contained 6,218 persons. In the first round of the elections, 1,414 non-convicted prisoners (22.74 per cent) voted, while 1,146 (18.43 per cent) voted in the second round. For security reasons, voting for the second round was cancelled by the CNE at short notice in three

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<sup>24</sup> More precisely, the 2023 local elections. Due to the short notice given for the 2023 early general elections, the CNE did not update the voter register for that occasion.

<sup>25</sup> Except for foreign citizens who have to register (once) if they wish to be included in the voter register. For the 2025 general elections, foreign citizens could register until 11 May 2024.

<sup>26</sup> According to the CNE, 242,191 in-country and 21,192 overseas voters changed their address in that period.

<sup>27</sup> The corresponding case was given extensive press coverage as it was related to the vice-presidential pre-candidate of the Socialist Party. After the party primaries, the CNE denied her inscription as pre-candidate because she appeared as deceased in the civil register and the CNE had therefore deleted her from the voter register. Her request to be reincluded in the voter register was denied by the CNE on 17 August 2024 on the grounds that the complainant, legal representative of the Socialist Party, did not have legal standing. On 13 September 2024, the TCE ruled that the CNE must include her in the voter register.

polling stations located in one prison in El Oro and another one in Manabí; this affected 476 and 223 voters respectively.

A total of 662 persons registered for the vote-from-home programme implemented by the CNE which took place two days before both election days.<sup>28</sup> Several EU EOM interlocutors pointed out the strict criteria (only persons over the age of 50 with a physical disability of at least 75 per cent are eligible) that prevented many citizens with disabilities from applying for this programme.

## VII. Candidate registration

Ecuadorian legislation provides the basis for an inclusive system of candidate registration through political parties, movements or alliances, with no excessive or arbitrary restrictions.<sup>29</sup>

During the candidate registration period, which lasted from 13 September to 2 October 2024, the CNE verified pre-candidacies' compliance with legal requirements. These included, among others, the selection of candidates through internal democratic processes. Since its reform in 2020, the election law requires gender parity and the inclusion of 25 % of young citizens (from 18 up to 29 years) in the lists.

Out of 584 lists selected in the primaries, 543 applied for registration with the CNE and 495 were approved, covering all the political spectrum.<sup>30</sup> Only one presidential alliance was registered (RC and *Reto*). The number of candidates (excluding the reserve/replacement candidates) was 2,204, of which 48.5 per cent were women. There were only two women running for president, while 14 candidates were men.

### *Complaints and appeals on candidate registration*

Disqualified candidates, as well as all candidates running for elections, could challenge any registration or the disqualification before the CNE and the TCE. Nine per cent of the lists applying for registration were rejected by the CNE. The most common reason behind CNE disqualification of lists was the non-respect of internal democracy, as parties introduced changes to the lists voted in the primary elections. It also happened that resignations and replacements within the lists were not properly accredited. However, the CNE showed itself to be particularly restrictive when it came to facilitating corrections in the candidacy applications.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> In the first round, 553 (83.53 per cent) participants of the programme voted; in the second round, 537 (81.11 per cent).

<sup>29</sup> The Constitution and the Law establishes some age requirements (35 years for presidential and vice-presidential candidates, 18 for other positions) and a list of incompatibilities based on office (military and police, certain categories of civil servants, former members of de facto governments) or other criteria such as holding accounts in tax havens, outstanding child support payments or conviction for certain crimes.

<sup>30</sup> Among the 495 lists, there were 16 candidacies for the presidential election, 11 lists for the Andean Parliament members and 468 lists for the Assembly (12 lists for National Assembly members and the rest for provincial and out-of-country constituencies).

<sup>31</sup> TCE confirmed the disqualification of four national lists for the Assembly (*Democracia Si*, *Avanza*, *Pachakutik* and *Construye*) and some 30 provincial lists, including six from *Pachakutik*, three from *ADN*, four from *Izquierda Democrática* and three from *SUMA*. Five lists for the Andean Parliament were rejected (*Sociedad Patriótica*, *Avanza*, *Izquierda Democrática*, *Pachakutik*, and *Democracia Sí*).

Most disqualified candidates appealed to the TCE, who largely endorsed CNE's decisions. However, there were four exceptions: the TCE accepted three assembly lists that had been rejected by the CNE and, in a controversial ruling with relevant political implications, disqualified presidential pre-candidate Jan Topic despite his candidacy having been approved by the CNE.<sup>32</sup>

The disqualification of Jan Topic by the TCE, who came third in the first round of the 2023 presidential election, was at the centre of the political debate during the first stage of the electoral process. The CNE approved his candidacy and rejected two complaints against its decision filed by the *Partido Sociedad Patriótica* and *Pachakutik*. The complainants argued that Topic had contracts with the State, which is forbidden for candidates. The CNE decision to approve Topic's candidacy was based on, inter alia, the information provided by the *Servicio Nacional de Contratación Pública* (National Public Procurement Service), which confirmed that, at the moment of registration, the pre-candidate did not have any contracts with the State.

Both plaintiffs appealed to the TCE, which ruled in their favour, thus disqualifying Topic. While the general rule is that TCE rulings shall be based exclusively on the evidence presented by litigants, the judge may exceptionally request further information/evidence on his own initiative, as was the case in Topic's trial. The TCE, based on confidential information provided by the *Servicio de Rentas Internas*, concluded that Jan Topic fell under the prohibition to stand as candidate while having, as *final beneficiary*, a contract with the State for the provision of public services. The fact that the conclusive evidence used by the TCE was of a confidential nature and was not shared with Topic has raised doubts about the respect for his right to defence. In addition, the Constitution circumscribes the prohibition to stand as candidate to "contractors" (natural persons or representatives of legal entities). However, the TCE decided to subsume the category of *final beneficiary* under that of "contractor", thereby making an analogical application of the law to the detriment of the defendant's right to stand.

## VIII. The election campaign

The election campaign for the legislative elections and the first round of the presidential elections took place between 5 January and 6 February. The campaign for the second round of the presidential election, which was significantly shorter, ran from 23 March to 10 April. In both cases, campaigning in the social media, particularly relevant to the candidates' strategies, started well before January and never stopped between the two rounds, which, according to the *Corte Constitucional* (CC), does not constitute a violation of campaign rules.<sup>33</sup>

Throughout both campaign periods, EU EOM observers reported a pluralistic campaign, with proposals from across the political spectrum. The campaign took place in a generally calm environment, insofar as the challenging security conditions in parts of the country allowed.<sup>34</sup> In this context, candidates campaigned unhindered, and the freedoms of assembly and movement were guaranteed despite the successive declarations of the State of Emergency in

<sup>32</sup> The TCE ordered the registration of *Izquierda Democrática* list in Azuay, as well as those of *Unidad Popular* and ADN in Santo Domingo. The TCE found that the procedural flaws invoked by the CNE to reject the lists were, in fact, the responsibility of the election administration itself.

<sup>33</sup> The Constitutional Court ruled that social media cannot be subject to State control, as it might infringe on the right to freedom of expression. *Sentencia* No. 028-12-SIN-CC. October 17, 2012.

<sup>34</sup> The difficult security situation in areas of the coastal provinces and along the Colombian border sometimes limited campaign activities in these areas.

some provinces. All presidential and vice-presidential candidates were offered close protection by the police.

In each of the two presidential rounds, a mandatory televised debate was organised by the Consejo Nacional Electoral (CNE). The first debate was hampered by the large number of participants (16) and had to be divided into two lots, which undermined its dynamism and severely limited candidates' ability to confront arguments. Conducted in a neutral manner, the run-off debate, which opposed Noboa and González, was dynamic and comprehensive. Marked by the *anti-correísmo* vs. *anti-noboísmo* opposition rather than by concrete proposals, the debate was rich in mutual accusations.

The constitution and the election law provide for public servants running for election to take a leave of absence to minimise the benefits of incumbency. However, the president and ADN candidate did not request it from the National Assembly. During the first-round campaign, Noboa tried to circumvent his obligation by issuing four executive orders declaring himself "in temporary absence" from the presidency "due to force majeure" during brief periods, when he engaged in campaign activities.<sup>35</sup> The first two decrees were annulled by the *Corte Constitucional*, which did state that mere difficulties arising from the holding of an office do not constitute force majeure. In view of the unconstitutionality of the 'temporary absence' executive orders, during the run-off campaign Noboa simply notified the CNE of "campaign activities without using public funds" for three periods.<sup>36</sup>

Failure to request a leave of absence from the assembly resulted in Noboa frequently switching between his roles as candidate and president during both campaign periods. As a result, Noboa alternated campaign activities with government events, some of which are prohibited during campaign periods, such as participating in the inauguration of public works or handing out houses to citizens in the context of public programmes. On 26 March, three days into the run-off campaign period, two presidential decrees granted a USD 500 bonus payment to all active members of the police and the army. These benefits of incumbency were compounded by the blurring between the government's institutional propaganda and that of his party, as analysed in the media and social media sections of this report.

It's worth mentioning that the National Assembly continued its regular activities throughout both campaign periods. Parliamentary debates, as well as hearings before committees or statements by Assembly leadership, often weighed on the election campaign.<sup>37</sup>

The EU EOM considers that, regardless of whether or not the requirement to request a leave of absence is maintained in Ecuadorian law, the fact that the executive can take virtually any kind of decision during the election campaign provides incumbents with a powerful campaign tool.

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<sup>35</sup> In the case of President Noboa, the request for such leave would have implied his replacement at the head of the government by Vice-President Verónica Abad. However, a deep rift became evident between candidate Noboa and his running mate even before the two were elected in 2023 and never stopped widening since. President Noboa made several attempts to have Abad replaced by 'acting vice-presidents', but they were overturned by a judge and the CC, who ruled that the vice-president can only be removed from office by the Assembly through impeachment on constitutionally-mandated grounds.

<sup>36</sup> From 30 March, after a TCE sentence suspending vice-president Abad's political rights came into effect (see Women political participation), president Noboa acted exclusively as candidate after notifying the CNE of a new "temporary absence from the presidency".

<sup>37</sup> During this period, Daniel Noboa's ex-wife appeared at the request of the *antinoboísta* majority in the assembly.

**Recommendation:** *To mitigate the benefits of incumbency, it would be advisable, during the election campaign, to confine the presidency and the government's activities to the handling of day-to-day business or emergency situations. For the same reasons, the National Assembly could go into recess during these periods.*

National and municipal regulations on campaign materials in public spaces were generally respected, although municipal regulations were not homogeneous, and the application of sanctions was frequently inconsistent and sometimes dependent on the mayor's political leanings. In a number of cases, EU observers reported distribution of staple food and gifts to the most vulnerable communities by some governors, *prefectos* and mayors for the campaign of both candidates. These practices are forbidden by the election law.

A constant feature of the electoral process was the proliferation of fraud narratives, which cast doubt on the reliability of the results even before the vote took place. During the first-round campaign, RC's fraud narrative was particularly intense, mostly emphasising CNE's alleged lack of impartiality. Two days after the 9 February vote, Daniel Noboa, despite having won the first round by a narrow margin, denounced irregularities and alleged that, in some coastal provinces, voters were coerced by gangs linked to drug trafficking to vote for Luisa González. Despite these allegations, ADN did not register any complaint to support these allegations before the TCE or the *Fiscalía*.

Narratives of fraud from both sides escalated throughout the run-off campaign, culminating on the night of 13 April when Luisa González did not acknowledge the results, claiming "a grotesque fraud" had taken place. Leading figures in RC, such as the party's most important prefects and mayors, did not back up her stance and conceded Noboa's victory.

#### *Electoral offences and campaign related complaints*

Sanctions foreseen by the election law for electoral offences range from fines to dismissal and/or suspension of political rights from six months to four years.<sup>38</sup> The latter are not in line with the provisions of the American Convention on Human Rights (ACHR), which state that restrictions on political rights should be determined throughout criminal proceedings.<sup>39</sup> It is worth noting that, when provided for in the penal code, suspension of political rights never exceeds six months whereas in the election law it can be much longer. Furthermore, the EU EOM has observed, in line with most interlocutors, a lack of consistency both in the interpretation of electoral offences and in the application of the corresponding sanctions by the TCE.

**Recommendation:** *To avoid disproportionate restrictions on political rights, it would be advisable to review the most severe penalties for electoral offences.*

For the 2025 election campaign, more than 40 electoral complaints had been filed for alleged electoral offences at the time of writing.<sup>40</sup> Although the election law provides that TCE must

<sup>38</sup> The 2020 Electoral Law reform set the electoral offences into five categories (minor, serious, very serious, related to political financing and campaign expenditures and related to the media and election forecasting companies), with a general aggravation of sanctions. For a minor electoral offence, the sanction is a fine from 470\$ up to 4,700 USD, and for very serious offences the fine is from 9870 up to 32,900 USD, dismissal and/or suspension of political rights from two up to four years.

<sup>39</sup> Art. 23.2 of the ACHR.

<sup>40</sup> The election law establishes a two-year deadline for lodging complaints about electoral offences.



rule on electoral offences within 30 days of their admission, in practice, this often takes several months, thus jeopardising legal remedy in due time. In addition, the EU EOM observed that the handling of some complaints progressed at a notably slower pace than other complaints of similar complexity.<sup>41</sup>

At the time of the writing, 25 complaints have been dismissed on procedural grounds, which reflects a limited understanding of procedures by complainants. In fact, there have only been two rulings to date.<sup>42</sup>

## IX. Campaign finance

Ecuador's election campaign funding system combines contributions from the state budget with private funds. The CNE, through the *Fondo de Promoción Electoral* (FPE), provides for the costs of all electoral propaganda in traditional and digital media, as well as billboards, allocating equal amounts to each type of candidacy. Other expenses, including advertising in social media and campaign events, must be covered by the political organizations through their own funds, private contributions, or bank loans, subject to certain limits and restrictions.<sup>43</sup> The election law provides for the CNE to set campaign spending ceilings for each type of candidacy, which do not include the FPE, but do account for expenses incurred during the pre-campaign period.<sup>44</sup>

The election law establishes a number of mechanisms to ensure the transparency of campaign accounts and its supervision by the CNE, such as the submission by candidates of a campaign budget estimate and biweekly expenditure reports, published by the CNE on its website. However, the law does not provide for any sanctions in the rather common cases where biweekly reports are not submitted or contain manifestly inaccurate data. Campaign managers must also submit to the CNE a final, comprehensive report within 90 days after the election, with an additional 30-day grace period in case the CNE identifies inconsistencies.

The review of these final reports by the CNE is the main campaign finance verification mechanism. However, this exercise is hampered by a number of limitations. On the campaign expenditure side, the CNE is not able to verify the actual spending on social media ads, one of

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<sup>41</sup> The two complaints against Noboa for campaigning without leave of absence and for abuse of public resources were on standby for more of 40 days, with no evident reason.

<sup>42</sup> A RC candidate to the Assembly was condemned to a fine of 5,170 USD for distributing unauthorised gifts (flowers and plans). The judge relied on a 2021 list of promotional items authorized by the CNE, in which flowers did not appear but numerous items of equal or greater value did. In the other case, a PSP Assembly candidate was fined 11,750 USD for gender-based political violence after he addressed a *Partido Socialista Ecuatoriano* female candidate during a TV debate.

<sup>43</sup> The election law prohibits donations made by legal entities, as well as by foreign citizens not residing in Ecuador, and citizens with government contracts or who have lawsuits with the government arising from contracts. Contributions from illicit activities are also prohibited, primarily to prevent the penetration of drug trafficking, but also corruption, in the financing of campaigns. Private contributions from citizens and candidates, as well as the amount of bank loans, may not exceed certain percentages of the expenditure ceiling established for each list or candidate. Election law; title III, chapter 3.

<sup>44</sup> For the 9 February elections, the spending limit amounted to 5.5 million USD for each presidential ticket. The FPE allocated 320,000 USD per presidential candidacy, as well as nine million USD for the National Assembly and Andean Parliament elections. For the presidential run-off, one million USD was split between Daniel Noboa, who received 400,000, and Luisa González, who was allocated 600,000, reflecting the legal incentive for party alliances.



the largest spending items, as most technology platforms, all of which are located outside the country, do not provide information (see Social media section).<sup>45</sup>

Regarding revenue, the law grants the CNE access to income tax returns, social security contributions, and other relevant information held by public agencies, but the *Consejo* still lacks functioning channels of information exchange to be able to make use of this access in its oversight of campaign finances. In this sense, the 2020 reform of the election law provided for the creation of a data interconnection system to facilitate data cross-checking and the detection of irregularities in campaign financing, which was scheduled to be ready by beginning of 2025 and would enable the CNE to “collect information from any public or private entity on political financing without prejudice to existing legal limitations”. However, there is no evidence to date that the system is operating.

**Recommendation:** *Set up the data interconnection system for the control of political financing provided for in the election law, to enable the exchange of information between the CNE and other public and private bodies.*

Within the CNE, responsibility for the audit of expenditure and income is divided between the *Dirección Nacional de Supervisión y Control del gasto electoral* and the *Delegaciones Electorales Provinciales* (DEP), depending on the type of election. Both have limited human and material resources, and operate under the pressure of a two-year statute of limitations, after which campaign financing offences can no longer be referred to the TCE. In fact, most of the files that end up as complaints on alleged violations usually reach the TCE shortly before the legal deadline.

**Recommendation:** *Provide the Dirección Nacional de Supervisión y Control del Gasto Electoral with sufficient human and material resources to appropriately examine in a timely manner the final reports on electoral campaign finances.*

Civil society organizations have denounced for years CNE’s passivity when it comes to investigating and sanctioning flagrant violations of campaign financing rules, such as widespread underreporting of campaign income and expenses and candidates’ failure to declare pre-campaign expenses.<sup>46</sup>

## X. Media

### *Media Environment and Freedom of Expression*

The media environment during the 2025 presidential elections was marked by pronounced imbalances in visibility, tone, and advertising favouring Daniel Noboa and his government. State-owned media contributed heavily to an uneven playing field by systematically praising the incumbent. Elements of pluralism were present, as some private and regional media offered more critical or alternative perspectives. However, these voices remained limited in reach and

<sup>45</sup> CNE's provincial delegations conduct street-level monitoring of electoral propaganda to estimate spending on authorized billboards and promotional items.

<sup>46</sup> See *Fundación Ciudadanía y Desarrollo* reports on campaign funding (2021 and 2023 General elections): [https://www.ciudadaniaydesarrollo.org/wp-content/plugins/pdfjs-viewer-shortcode/pdfjs/web/viewer.php?file=https://www.ciudadaniaydesarrollo.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/OFP.pdf&attachment\\_id=2633&dButton=true&pButton=true&oButton=false&sButton=true&pagemode=none&wpononce=3f2c03bc29](https://www.ciudadaniaydesarrollo.org/wp-content/plugins/pdfjs-viewer-shortcode/pdfjs/web/viewer.php?file=https://www.ciudadaniaydesarrollo.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/OFP.pdf&attachment_id=2633&dButton=true&pButton=true&oButton=false&sButton=true&pagemode=none&wpononce=3f2c03bc29) ; <https://www.ciudadaniaydesarrollo.org/publicaciones/como-financiaron-andres-arauz-y-guillermo-lasso-sus-campanas-en-segunda-vuelta/> ; <https://www.ciudadaniaydesarrollo.org/publicaciones/elecciones2023ecuador/>

impact compared to the dominant narrative shaped by state-owned and most private media. The extensive use of government-sponsored institutional advertising, often indistinguishable from campaign promotion, further amplified these disparities. Although some outlets contributed to media pluralism, the overall landscape tilted heavily towards the incumbent.

Freedom of expression and of the press was largely respected during the campaign period, with media granted access to most presidential and assembly candidates.<sup>47</sup> However, the mission received credible reports of “information blackout zones” in various regions, where journalists faced threats or violence when reporting on the nexus between organised crime and politics. Although defamation has been decriminalised in Ecuador, libel remains punishable by prison sentences under the Penal Code, contributing to a climate of self-censorship, particularly at the local and regional levels.

**Recommendation:** *Replace prison sentences for libel with fines commensurate with the offence, in order to avoid self-censorship.*

The State Mechanism for the Prevention and Protection of Journalistic Work has operated without a dedicated budget since its establishment in 2022 and relied heavily on civil society support to perform its functions throughout the electoral period. Although the legal framework provides for journalist protection, the limited institutional capacity to implement these measures effectively left media professionals vulnerable, particularly in high-risk areas. Strengthening the Mechanism through adequate funding and institutional support remains essential to safeguarding the ability of journalists to operate freely and safely during elections and beyond.

#### *Broadcast Licence Tender*

In December 2024, the government initiated a public tender for the issuance and renewal of radio and television broadcast licences. The timing of the licensing procedure raised concerns among media stakeholders regarding its transparency and potential implications for editorial independence. Mission interlocutors voiced apprehension that undertaking the allocation of frequencies in close proximity to the elections could be perceived as politically motivated, with possible adverse effects on media pluralism. Broadcasters’ associations similarly conveyed unease, suggesting that the tender process could be used to exert influence over media outlets at a sensitive moment. The ongoing nature of the process was widely viewed as creating conditions conducive to self-censorship among media actors during the electoral period.

#### *State Financing of Media Access*

The *Fondo de Promoción Electoral* (FPE) offered candidates equal opportunities to access traditional media during both rounds, through transparent funding allocations. However, the size of the fund in both rounds was widely regarded as insufficient to afford adequate prime-time advertising on the most viewed television channels, limiting candidates’ ability to reach broader audiences. In addition, the FPE did not cover social media advertising, allowing candidates with greater private resources to dominate online campaigning. The allocation of public financing to numerous marginal candidacies with minimal electoral support raised concerns about the effective use of these resources. Although the legal framework foresees reimbursement of public funds by candidates who repeatedly underperform, no reimbursement was triggered in 2025, as none of the underperforming candidates had also run in the previous election.

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<sup>47</sup> *Fundamedios* documented 43 adverse election-related situations involving the press during the 2025 electoral period, as detailed in its *Electoral Coverage Under Restrictions: 2025 Presidential Elections Report* (April 2025).

### *Media Monitoring Findings*

Analysis of media monitored by the mission<sup>48</sup> found notable disparities in visibility, tone, and editorial treatment between the main candidates. These imbalances were consistently reinforced through both editorial coverage and political advertising, resulting in an uneven playing field that persisted, and in some cases intensified, between the first and second rounds.

State-owned media outlets played a central role in shaping the information landscape in favour of the incumbent. TC Televisión, Radio Pública FM, and El Telégrafo systematically provided extensive and overwhelmingly positive coverage of Daniel Noboa and the Government, while Luisa González was often marginalised or portrayed negatively. The absence of critical reporting on the incumbent and the consistently negative treatment of the main opposition candidate significantly limited the diversity of viewpoints available to the public through state media.

***Recommendation:*** *Ensure state-owned media uphold editorial independence and provide a balanced and impartial electoral coverage.*

Private media offered a more diverse but still uneven landscape. While some outlets sought to provide a more balanced distribution of airtime and tone between the candidates, the overall trend still favoured Noboa, both in volume and in the thematic framing of coverage. Positive reporting on his campaign activities and government initiatives was generally more prominent, whereas González's media presence often included critical narratives, particularly related to corruption and public trust.<sup>49</sup>

Political advertising dynamics reinforced the observed editorial asymmetries. Government-sponsored institutional advertising played a particularly significant role, notably expanding in the second round to account for approximately two-thirds of all political ads on monitored broadcast media. Although permitted under specific legal exceptions, the thematic content and presentation of many government adverts often exceeded the scope of public information, promoting achievements closely aligned with the incumbent's campaign narrative. The notable increase in government ads lacking CNE authorisation during the second round, including during the period of electoral silence, raises concerns about regulatory compliance and the effectiveness of oversight mechanisms. Candidate advertising mirrored these disparities, with Noboa maintaining a substantially greater presence than González across both rounds.

***Recommendation:*** *Enhance oversight of government advertising by revising the legal framework to explicitly prohibit the use of institutional communication for electoral advantage and require all such content during campaign periods to be pre-approved by the CNE, clearly labelled, and subject to effective enforcement and sanctions.*

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<sup>48</sup> During the first round (5 January–16 February 2025), EU EOM Ecuador 2025 monitored: state-owned media – TC Televisión, Radio Pública FM, and El Telégrafo (digital news media); and private or publicly owned media – Teleamazonas and Ecuavisa (TV), Radio Democracia, Radio Pública FM, and Radio Sucre (radio), El Universo and Expreso (newspapers), and Primicias and El Comercio (digital news media). In the second round (23 March–20 April 2025), Radio Pichincha replaced Radio Sucre. Time slots: TV (07:00–08:00, 18:00–23:00); radio (06:00–09:00, 17:00–20:00).

<sup>49</sup> The change in the monitored radio sample between rounds, with the substitution of Radio Sucre by Radio Pichincha, further highlighted the existence of alternative editorial perspectives. Radio Pichincha's more critical stance towards Noboa and favourable treatment of González contributed to the pluralism of the media landscape. However, such counterbalancing voices remained limited in reach compared to dominant national platforms, and were insufficient to offset broader structural trends.

Annex I of this report details the mission's media monitoring methodology and findings, presenting quantitative and qualitative analysis of coverage of the electoral process, candidates, and state institutions across a sample of television, radio, print, and digital news media during both rounds of the election.

## XI. Social media

### *Digital landscape*

Around 84 percent of Ecuadorians have access to Internet. Despite recent efforts to improve connectivity, rural areas still suffer from poor infrastructure. Power outages significantly disrupted connectivity across the country in 2024.

Overall, there were 13.5 million social media users at the beginning of 2025, with TikTok and Facebook leading in popularity, followed by YouTube and Instagram.<sup>50</sup> TikTok emerged as the fastest-growing social media platform and played a central role in engaging younger audiences in the election process. Despite the smaller size of its community compared to other platforms, X remains a primary space for opinion and political leaders, with an influential role in generating trending topics further spread through other platforms and setting the media agenda. WhatsApp is by large the most popular instant messaging app.

### *Legal Framework for Campaigning Online*

The Constitution guarantees universal access to information and communication technologies. Amendments to the *Ley Orgánica de Comunicación* adopted in 2022 explicitly safeguard freedom of expression on the Internet, including the right to express personal opinions on social media. The law commits the State to promoting Internet access and enhancing digital literacy.<sup>51</sup> Other laws relevant to the digital sphere are the *Ley Orgánica de Telecomunicaciones* and the *Código Penal*. The *Ley Orgánica de Protección de Datos Personales* provides the legal framework for protecting citizens' personal information, and a Data Protection Authority was established in September 2024. Ecuador is a signatory to the Salta Declaration on Principles of Freedom of Expression in the Digital Age.<sup>52</sup>

While the election law imposes strict regulations on political advertising across traditional and digital media to ensure equitable treatment of all candidates, the legislation explicitly excludes social networks from the definition of "digital media", thus exempting them from these provisions.

### *Digital campaigning*

Most candidates primarily relied on online platforms for their campaigns, usually adopting a cross-platform strategy to engage with the electorate. TikTok emerged as a particularly influential tool in digital campaigning, as its video format facilitates easy dissemination through messaging applications like WhatsApp. This widespread strategy enhanced the reach and engagement of campaign messages across diverse voter segments.

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<sup>50</sup> We are Social, Ecuador [Country Report](#).

<sup>51</sup> Freedom House, [Freedom of the Net 2024 Report](#).

<sup>52</sup> [Declaration of Salta of Principles on Freedom of Expression in the Digital Age](#), Inter American Press Association, 2018.

Political advertising in traditional media is financed through public funding mechanisms, while paid-for content on social media is permitted solely through private funding, subject to the condition that campaign expenditure remains within the legal spending limits. Although political parties are required to report campaign expenditure on social media to the CNE, the lack of verification mechanisms significantly limits the ability to oversee spending throughout the campaign period. The campaign strategy of relying on paid influencers without labeling the content as sponsored, observed in most platforms, further limited transparency on expenditures. Additionally, the frequent use of digital institutional advertising to convey campaign messages in favour of the incumbent compromised fundamental conditions for a level playing field (see annex I).

Candidates made extensive use of multiple online platforms to disseminate paid political advertising. However, digital campaign spending lacked transparency, and accountability in this area was severely constrained by limited availability of platform-specific data.

Although tech platforms are not obliged to disclose political advertising revenue, Meta (Facebook and Instagram) provided a public repository enabling to track political advertising expenditures. The EU EOM observed a widespread use of Google Ads for campaigning, including to attack political opponents and disseminate political disinformation. However, Google's failure to implement its Ads Transparency tool made it impossible to verify advertisers' identities or spending amounts, significantly hindering oversight efforts. Costs related to the boosting of posts on X are not known. Although TikTok prohibits political advertising, local candidates informed the EU EOM that they had placed campaign ads on the platform, raising concerns about TikTok's ability to effectively enforce its paid political policy.

***Recommendation:*** *Strengthen collaboration between the election administration and major tech companies to develop effective mechanisms to increase the transparency of online campaigning expenditure, while reinforcing CNE's capacity to conduct systematic social media monitoring.*

### *Harmful content*

Alongside promotion of party platforms, social media was widely used to spread disinformation and personal attacks among candidates. The EU EOM observed a widespread dissemination of manipulated content on all platforms, frequently amplified through proxy accounts, paid-for content and bot farms.

All monitored online platforms were used to spread disinformation through various tactics. Shady accounts created during the electoral period boosted deceptive election-related messages through ads. Troll accounts operated across online platforms. Social media accounts presenting themselves as genuine media propagated false opinion polls and narratives, as well as disinformation presented as content from reputable media such as France24, RTVE and Deutsche Welle.<sup>53</sup>

Several proxy Facebook pages sponsored posts designed to discredit candidates through smear campaigns. The EU EOM welcomes Meta's effort to deescalate disinformation by cooperating

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<sup>53</sup> [Cómo la inteligencia artificial y los "deepfakes" han ensuciado las elecciones en Ecuador](#), Deutsche Welle, 11 April 2025.

with fact-checkers and TikTok's content moderation initiatives.<sup>54</sup> Other companies failed to enforce effective measures to counter disinformation.<sup>55</sup>

The EU EOM identified websites and social media accounts presenting themselves as fact-checking entities while disseminating deceptive content, thus undermining the credibility of genuine fact-checking organizations. During the first presidential debate, President Noboa endorsed some of these websites as reliable sources, potentially amplifying their reach and impact.

***Recommendation:*** Encourage the adoption of a code of conduct by political parties to refrain from producing and disseminating disinformation, harmful content and unlabelled political advertising.

Several public institutions used their official social media accounts to counter alleged disinformation, using a graphic design reminiscent of fact-checkers' posts. However, these efforts often lacked transparency regarding their methodology and, at times, showed a lack of impartiality. In some instances, information disseminated by these institutional accounts was later proven to be inaccurate. Such practices risk eroding public trust in independent, non-partisan verification efforts, which are essential to preserving the integrity of the electoral information environment.

The EU EOM observed that female candidates and women leaders were victims of online hate speech and sexist attacks throughout the campaign. The mission identified 347 instances of such attacks targeting 22 women in their political or institutional capacities on X. In all cases analysed, the source of the insult was a common or influential user on the platform. These attacks included content that discredited or minimised women's roles in society (202), objectified women (101), insulted them for their physical appearance (20), referenced social class or economic status (7) and employed slurs with racist or ethnic connotations (17). Diana Atamaint, President of the CNE and a member of the Shuar people, and Paola Cabezas, an Afro-descendant assembly candidate, were among the most targeted election-related figures.<sup>56</sup>

Gender-based online abuse posed challenges to women's participation in political and public life. While X maintains policies prohibiting hateful conduct based on gender, gender identity, race, and ethnicity, their enforcement has proven inconsistent. The platform fell short of protecting users from gender-based online harm.<sup>57</sup>

### *Artificial Intelligence*

The use of AI-generated content increased throughout the election campaign, often employed to fuel disinformation and personal attacks against candidates. The EU EOM identified 131 instances of AI-generated content disseminated across Facebook, Instagram, X and TikTok.

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<sup>54</sup> Meta's third-party fact-checking programme is key to support the work of independent fact-checkers providing tools to help identify, review, and debunk false or misleading content shared on its platforms.

<sup>55</sup> In the following example, Facebook marks the post as false information, indicating that the content has been reviewed by independent fact-checkers and providing a link to the verified information in order to offer more context and facilitate the user's access to correct data: <https://shorturl.at/dgqk9>; TikTok announced the removal of multiple networks of inauthentic accounts acting in a coordinated manner to manipulate political discourse during the campaign: [TikTok Covert Influence Operations report, January 2025](#).

<sup>56</sup> See: ANNEX "Social Media Monitoring Findings".

<sup>57</sup> The EU EOM repeated requests to X for a meeting remained unanswered. X policy on "Hateful Conduct": <https://shorturl.at/gjoyV>



Their analysis revealed that AI was used to manipulate video in 63 cases and images in 55, to generate text in seven, and to clone voices or alter audio in six occasions.

Fifty-six of these items were shared by accounts suspected to be trolls or bots, 48 by influencers or content creators, 27 by ordinary users. While some of the identified AI-generated content was employed for satire or genuine campaign promotion, the majority aimed to delegitimise political opponents (91 cases) and spread disinformation (7).

AI-generated content observed during the campaign included 27 instances of fabricated political reports attributed to reputable media outlets. The sophistication of these contents posed challenges for voters, largely unfamiliar with such practice. The EU EOM commends the role of national fact-checking initiatives to debunk this disinformation technique in collaboration with local analysts. The mission also highlights the importance of media literacy and robust verification initiatives to safeguard the integrity of electoral processes in the digital age.

**Recommendation:** *To enhance cooperation among the CNE, the media, civil society, academia and tech companies to develop awareness-raising campaigns on online election-related disinformation, including AI-generated.*

Annex II of this report details the mission's social media monitoring methodology and main findings.

## XII. Women's participation

Ecuador holds one of the highest legal standards for women's political participation in the region, with compulsory gender parity and alternation since 2008 and the introduction of closed lists in 2020, which makes this requirement more effective.<sup>58</sup>

The law requires gender parity also in presidential elections, but only two of the 16 presidential candidates were women, while 14 women ran for the vice-presidency. Of the 151 Assembly seats, 68 were won by women, which represent 45 per cent, a minimal increase from the 44 per cent of 2023. Three of the five elected Andean parliamentarians are women. Three of the five members of the CNE are women, including its president, Diana Atamaint. TCE president Ivonne Coloma is the only woman in the five-member body.

### *Gender-based political violence*

Gender based political violence has been recognised as an important issue that has to be tackled. Since 2020, gender-based political violence has been a serious electoral offence, punishable with heavy fines and dismissal and/or suspension of political rights from two to four years. Sixty-four cases have been filed with the TCE since the creation of this electoral offence, of which more than half were filed in 2024 and 2025.<sup>59</sup> EU EOM interlocutors expressed concern by the sharp increase in the number of complaints during the 2025 process, insofar as many of these cases are manifestly unrelated to gender-political violence.

In fact, the election law makes a broad definition of this offence, with no less than 14 instances that could be considered gender-based political violence. The most frequently invoked ground

<sup>58</sup> According to the last population census, 51.3 per cent of the population are women.

<sup>59</sup> Only 2 complaints were introduced in 2020, 3 complaints in 2021, 12 complaints in 2022, 10 complaints in 2023, 26 in 2024 and already 11 so far in 2025.

refers to the use of expressions that denigrate women in politics, often in conflict with freedom of expression or the right to political participation.<sup>60</sup>

**Recommendation:** *Review the gender-based political violence electoral offence so that it does not unreasonably limit freedom of expression and the right to political participation.*

In this respect, the two-year suspension of political rights handed by the TCE to vice-president Veronica Abad set a worrying precedent in the treatment of gender-based political violence. The sentence is widely considered as opening the door to the political instrumentalisation of an offence initially conceived to protect the participation of women in politics.

At the end of February, Abad was convicted of gender-based political violence for having referred to foreign minister Gabriela Sommerfeld as ‘deaf’ and ‘submissive’ as well as accusing her of ‘maintaining a hidden agenda’. According to the judge, these expressions constitute insults that fall within gender stereotypes and that, moreover, would have prevented the minister from exercising her functions normally. The ruling also stated that, since the vice-president occupies a higher hierarchical position than the minister, the sanction should be exemplary, even though the mandate given by the president to Abad never conferred to her any authority over the minister.<sup>61</sup> The sentence was confirmed by three TCE judges while the other two issued dissenting votes, considering Abad not guilty. They also found the penalty disproportionate.

TCE dissenting votes as well as most legal experts considered the ruling to be a blatant attack on freedom of expression. Although the court was not clear on its effects, the decision amounted to a de facto dismissal of the vice-president, on grounds and through procedures other than those provided for in the Constitution.

Several interlocutors found Abad’s convictions particularly striking when compared with the parallel acquittals of Noboa himself and three other government and ADN officials who had been accused of gender-based violence by the vice-president.<sup>62</sup>

United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Reem Alsalem, expressed her concern about ‘*a sentence that imposed a sanction of suspension of political rights on an authority with a constitutional mandate, without demonstrating real violence, effective harm, or any affectation of the exercise of public functions by the complainant*’.<sup>63</sup>

### XIII. Political participation of national minorities

Ecuador has ratified the most important international and regional instruments on non-discrimination and the protection and promotion of the rights of indigenous peoples and national minorities. The Constitution and the election law dedicate numerous provisions to the

<sup>60</sup> Art. 280.3: “*making any expression that denigrates women during the electoral process and in the exercise of their political functions, based on gender stereotypes, with the objective or the result of undermining their public image, limiting or annulling their political rights*”

<sup>61</sup> Abad was sentenced to a two-year suspension of her political rights and a fine exceeding 14,000 USD.

<sup>62</sup> In the following cases, the same judge in charge of the Abad trial considered that the expressions under scrutiny were sheltered by freedom of expression and did not constitute verbal political violence. ADN Assembly member Diana Jácome on Abad: “I see that they are trying to victimise the lady a lot. Do you know how much she earns in Israel? [...] Here we’re not dealing with nuns,” “[...] if your son is in prison, do you go back or do you prefer to stay because you want power?”; Foreign Minister Sommerfeld on Abad: “[...] instead of being grateful and performing the duties for which she was appointed, she is constantly acting against Ecuador”; Vice-Minister Esteban Torres on Abad: “It would be disastrous for the country if someone who does not share the President’s vision and actions were to take power”; Noboa on Abad: “She’s going to leave on her own, I think [...] She has a son who is on trial and a boyfriend who is on trial.”

<sup>63</sup> <https://x.com/UNSRVAW/status/1904885664362954905>



recognition and protection of the rights of the different indigenous peoples of Ecuador, as well as the Afro-Ecuadorian communities and the Montubio people.<sup>64</sup>

The election law enables the CNE to introduce, through regulations, affirmative action measures to favour their political inclusion. However, no such regulations have been adopted to the date. Election regulations stipulate that the CNE will not authorize electoral advertising with content and images that denigrate or belittle Indigenous peoples, Afro-Ecuadorians and Montubios.<sup>65</sup>

According to the CNE, 63 of the slightly more than 2,000 legislative candidates identified themselves as afro-descendant, 84 as indigenous and 91 as Montubios. Among the presidential candidates, Luisa González identified herself as Montubia and Leonidas Iza as indigenous. No presidential or vice-presidential candidates self-identified as Afro-Ecuadorian. Regarding the elected National Assembly, 3 members self-identified Afro-descendants (1.9 per cent), 11 indigenous (7 per cent) and 4 Montubias (2.5 per cent).

Training for polling staff in native languages was observed in provinces with a substantial indigenous population (Cotopaxi, Napo, Pastaza), and the CNE published some video tutorials in Shuar Chicham and Kichwa. However, the EU EOM noted that the CNE did not promote specific initiatives or had an institutional policy in this area.

#### XIV. Participation of People with Disabilities

The Constitution recognises the right of persons with disabilities to fully participate in the political life of the country.<sup>66</sup> The latest figures from the *Consejo Nacional de Igualdad de las Discapacidades* (CONADIS) indicate that 487,542 Ecuadorians are registered as people with special needs in the country.<sup>67</sup>

While voting is compulsory in Ecuador, this does not apply to this group. The Election Law establishes general principles of non-discrimination and accessibility, guaranteeing that all persons, including those with disabilities, can exercise their political rights under equal conditions. The CNE has taken positive steps to ensure that voters with special needs can exercise their electoral rights on equal terms with others. As in the last elections, the CNE organised a *Voto en casa* programme (See *Voter registration section*) and the *Mesas de atención preferente* (See *Polling, Counting and Tabulation section*).

#### XV. Participation of LGBTI persons

The legal framework provides for the political participation of the LGBTI people.<sup>68</sup> The Constitution states that no one shall be discriminated against for their sexual orientation or gender identity, and that the state shall take affirmative actions to promote real equality of

<sup>64</sup> According to the latest census by the Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos (INEC, 2022), 7 per cent of the Ecuadorian population self-identifies as indigenous according to 14 peoples (Tsáchila, Chachi, Epera, Awa, Kichwas, Shuar, Achuar, Shiwiar, Cofán, Siona, Secoya, Zápara, Andoa y Waoran; 7.7 per cent as Montubio; and 4.8 per cent as Afro-Ecuadorian. 77.5 per cent of the population considers themselves *mestizo*.

<sup>65</sup> Art. 32, CNE regulation on public electoral advertisement.

<sup>66</sup> Ecuador is a State Party to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

<sup>67</sup> <https://www.consejodiscapacidades.gob.ec/estadisticas-de-discapacidad/>

<sup>68</sup> During the last population and housing census (2022), questions on gender diversity were included for the first time. In this regard, 270,970 people of legal age recognised and identified themselves as part of the LGBTIQ+ community, representing 2.4% of the current population.

rights.<sup>69</sup> The most recent initiative in this field was the recognition of gender identity in the *Ley orgánica de gestión de la identidad y datos civiles*, which allowed transgender people to have their gender identity reflected in the civil registry, and thereafter their identity card and the voter register. According to the voter register for the 2025 elections, 1,584 changes of gender have been requested since the law was enacted.<sup>70</sup>

At the beginning of the campaign the TCE urged the CNE to ensure that the electoral campaign was conducted in a non-discriminatory manner after a LGTBI rights organisation denounced a statement by a presidential candidate as homophobic.<sup>71</sup>

## XVI. Election observation

The legal framework contains comprehensive and inclusive provisions for national and international election observation. It guarantees access to information and all electoral activities, prohibits interference in the process, requires impartiality, and mandates the CNE to regulate the accreditation process. The law provides for the accreditation of both organisations and individuals and the criteria for accreditation are straightforward. Ecuadorian citizens as well as foreigners with at least five years of residence in Ecuador can request accreditation as national observers.

The CNE accredited high numbers of observers for both rounds of the elections.<sup>72</sup> Among the national observer groups were several *Consejos Nacionales de Igualdad* (National Equality Councils, for Disabilities, Gender, Intergenerational Equality, etc.) and universities, all of whom focussed their activities on election day. The most experienced observer organisation *Participación Ciudadana* had to cancel its observation plans due to lack of funding, which led to a complete absence of national observation activities during the campaign period.

International observer groups included the Organisation of American States (OAS), the Inter-American Union of Electoral Organizations (UNIORE), the MERCOSUR Parliament (PARLASUR), and the Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB), all of which deployed their observers in the week before election day. The EU EOM was the only election observation mission with a long-term presence.

## XVII. Polling, counting and tabulation of results

### *Polling and Counting*

#### *1. General Elections on 9 February*

Election day was overall calm and peaceful. Most of the polling stations observed in the morning opened on time or with slight delays, due to unpreparedness or late arrival of polling staff or the delayed distribution of electoral material by the military forces.<sup>73</sup> Opening procedures were mostly followed, although in almost a third of cases, polling staff did not show

<sup>69</sup> Art. 11 and 66 Constitution.

<sup>70</sup> 1,270 from male to female and 314 from female to male.

<sup>71</sup> Case 016-2025-TCE; Diane Rodríguez, from Asociación Silueta X against Luis Tillería, presidential candidate - Partido AVANZA 8.

<sup>72</sup> 1,174 National observers were accredited for the first round and 1,213 for the second. As for international observers, 508 were accredited for the first round and 476 for the second.

<sup>73</sup> On 9 February, the EU EOM observed opening in 43, voting in 396 and counting in 41 polling stations.

the ballot boxes to be empty before sealing them. However, EU observers did not detect any intention to limit transparency, but rather attributed this mistake to insufficient training. Observers assessed the opening positively in 39 out of 43 polling stations visited.

Throughout the day, party representatives were present at 69 per cent of polling stations; in 40 per cent, the two main presidential candidacies were represented. The EU EOM observed a very low presence of domestic observers. Voting procedures were generally followed, and the EU could observe the voting without undue restrictions in 97 per cent of polling stations it visited. In the remaining cases, military forces or CNE staff impeded EU observers as well as party representatives to observe inside the polling station. In 7 per cent of observed polling stations, the layout did not sufficiently protect the secrecy of the vote.

All polling stations observed at the end of the day closed on time. The number of party representatives increased during counting; they were present in 39 out of 41 polling stations observed; in 30 polling stations, the two main presidential candidacies were represented. The inadequate training of polling staff became more evident during counting, which EU observers assessed as transparent, but confusing. In many cases, the procedures were not completely followed. For example, in five polling stations, polling staff did not follow the procedures to reconcile the number of voters and the number of ballot papers, and in 17 polling stations, they did not always read out aloud and show the vote of each ballot. In 18 polling stations, the EU noted that polling staff had difficulties to fill out the results sheets, and in seven polling stations, the results protocols showed numeric inconsistencies. While counting was badly organised in 12 cases and the EU noted minor procedural errors or omissions in 21 cases, the EU did not observe any instances of intimidation of polling staff or signs of falsification of results. The EU EOM as well as party representatives could observe the counting without undue restrictions in all polling stations visited.

***Recommendation:*** Reinforce training of polling staff, with a focus on voting and counting procedures, as well as the filling of results protocols.

## *2. Presidential Run-off*

The second round election day was largely calm and orderly, with isolated incidents reported by the CNE and the National Police.<sup>74</sup> The presence of political party representatives was higher than in the first round; ADN was represented in 74 per cent of polling stations visited throughout the day, and RC-RETO in 73 per cent.<sup>75</sup> As in the first round, most polling stations opened on time or with slight delays due to late or unprepared polling staff; opening procedures were largely adhered to.

In ten per cent of polling stations visited throughout the day, the layout did not sufficiently protect the secrecy of the vote. This increase compared to the first round (from 7 to 10 per cent) is most likely linked to the ban of electronic devices. The EU EOM observed that, in some polling stations, military forces or CNE coordinators insisted on turning the voting booth towards the room instead of the wall in order to check that voters did not take a picture of their ballot.

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<sup>74</sup> According to the Police, 64 persons were arrested, including because of impersonation, use of false documents and forgery of signatures.

<sup>75</sup> On 13 April, the EU observed opening in 42, voting in 411, and closing and counting in 40 polling stations.

As in the first round, the EU EOM noted positively that *Mesas de Atención Preferente* (MAP) were functioning in almost all polling centres visited, providing support to persons with disabilities and elderly voters. However, the EU observed that the secrecy of the vote was not always guaranteed when voters cast their vote at the MAP.

Voting procedures were largely respected, except the one that required polling staff to inform voters about the ban of electronic devices. While the EU EOM did not directly observe any case of voters trying to take a picture of their ballot, the CNE later informed that 1,063 voters had been issued a notification because of a presumed electoral offence. In 8 out of 411 polling stations observed, military forces did not allow political representatives or EU observers to use their phones (in Cotopaxi, El Oro and Pichincha).<sup>76</sup>

While the EU found that the reintroduction of polling centre coordinators in the second round was a positive step and that their work was essential in many of the observed centres, there were still 8 per cent of observed polling stations (the same percentage as in the first round) in which political party representatives were restricted in their work by either CNE coordinators or military forces, usually requiring them to observe from outside the polling station.

As in the first round, all polling stations observed at the end of the day closed on time. Closing and counting procedures were mostly followed, although in almost half of the observed polling stations the vote of each ballot was not read out aloud. Overall, EU observers as well as political party representatives could follow the process without undue restrictions, and the EU evaluated closing and counting as positive in 36 out of the 40 observed polling stations.

### *Results Transmission and Processing*

Upon conclusion of counting at polling stations, results protocols were delivered to scanning centres (*Centro de digitalización de actas* – CDA) situated in 39 per cent of all polling centres, where they were scanned and transferred to the CNE HQ, generally in presence of party agents.<sup>77</sup> While this process was overall smooth, in the first round there were occasional malfunctions of scanners in Tungurahua and Imbabura, which were repaired or replaced for the second round.

After the close of polls, tabulation of results started immediately in the results processing centres (*Centros de procesamiento electoral* – CPE) in all 24 provinces and in one special CPE for out-of-country voting (OCV) located in Quito. They worked fast and efficiently: by midnight of the election night, 82 per cent of the presidential election results were processed and validated; likewise, 46, 75 and 61 per cent of protocols for the election of National Assembly members at national and provincial level and OCV constituencies.<sup>78</sup> By the end of the next day, the presidential election was processed to 96 per cent. The last presidential results

<sup>76</sup> The CNE resolution did not explicitly address the use of electronic devices by political party representatives and observers. However, the CNE subsequently stated clearly that there would be no restrictions for these actors. The CNE also actively communicated this point, including the broadcast of an informative spot, events in all provinces for party representatives and the media, and a series of informational programmes aired during primetime on the most widely viewed channels (*cadena nacional*). Nevertheless, this campaign started late, and its reach was limited. EU observers noted that understanding of the new regulation varied at the local level.

<sup>77</sup> From polling centres without CDA (2,671), results protocols were taken to the nearest polling centre with CDA (1,679). Overall, 67 per cent of all polling stations were located in polling centres with CDA. Polling stations abroad were served by 83 official CDA; in other cases, protocols were scanned in consulates using regular scanners and then sent by encrypted channels to the CPE for further processing.

<sup>78</sup> At the same time, the processing of the results for the Andean parliament reached 40 per cent.

protocols were validated six days after the elections. EU observers evaluated the results processing at CPE as good or very good in 97 per cent of observations and also evaluated positively the transparency of the process and the performance of CPE staff.

The lower number of results protocols and therefore simpler procedures in the second round led to an even smoother and faster tabulation process. Within seven hours after closing of the polls, 96 per cent of all results were processed. The bulk of protocols was tabulated in the first three hours, with some CPE (Pichincha, Santo Domingo and Tungurahua) processing over 70 per cent of their results in just one hour. By midnight of the following day, tabulation reached 99 per cent. The last in-country results were accounted for six days after election day, and the last OCV protocol, which arrived by diplomatic mail from Paris, eight days after election day.

Parallel to the processing of valid results protocols, CPE staff began to review protocols flagged by the results management system as containing arithmetical inconsistencies or missing signatures. CPE staff compared the scanned results protocol with the second copy of the protocol, and, where necessary, proceeded to recount the ballots. Overall, 6.63 per cent of all results protocols were recounted in the first round, and 2.24 per cent in the second round. EU observers assessed this part of the process as well organised and transparent. Political party representatives were present in about two thirds of the tabulation centres and could file complaints about results protocols.<sup>79</sup>

During tabulation, the CNE continuously published updated results as well as individual polling station protocols through a dedicated website and a mobile application. This ensured a high level of transparency and full traceability of results. Due to an unexpectedly high number of visits in the first election night (exceeding 100 million requests in the first hours of tabulation), the CNE's results website was not accessible for about an hour. Also, the CPE in Manabí lost connection with the CNE's central server for almost an hour on election night, caused by simultaneous but unrelated failures of the principal and backup connections provided by the National Telecommunication Company. These incidents had no impact on the integrity of the results processing and were addressed in good time for the second round.

Political parties, media and observer groups, including the EU EOM, were offered privileged access to a repository of tabulated results, results protocols, and progress and inconsistencies reports, which were updated every five minutes, ensuring full transparency of the process.

## XVIII. Complaints and appeals on results

Complaints and appeals filed against the preliminary results in both rounds led to few recounts with no significant impact.

Following 9 February elections, the CNE decided on 17 complaints, filed mainly by RC. Most of them were rejected, as the CNE, in a rather restrictive interpretation of the election law, considered that provincial party delegates, who filed the complaints, lacked standing to challenge the results.<sup>80</sup> Overall, only two complaints were admitted, leading to the recount of

<sup>79</sup> Overall, in both rounds, some 55 complaints were filed at 11 Provincial Electoral Boards and the Out-of-country Board, mainly by RC-RETO and ADN. Most of them were rejected based on a lack of legal standing of the complainant or because the complaint was unfounded.

<sup>80</sup> RC internal regulations confer the legal representation of the movement to its president, except in case of delegation. However, the Election Law explicitly grants to provincial party directors the right to challenge the

15 polling stations upon ADN request and a further 21 following RC claims. While Luisa González gained more than 3,000 votes in the presidential recounts requested by RC, the ADN Assembly candidate for Pichincha lost 17 votes in the recounts requested by her party.

Only 16 appeals on results were lodged with the TCE. The vast majority were related to the legislative elections and were filed by RC. The TCE dismissed half of them on procedural grounds and upheld CNE's decisions in the remaining cases. Despite Daniel Noboa's allegations of widespread irregularities, ADN filed only two appeals.

Following the presidential run-off of 13 April, the CNE decided on 6 complaints lodged by RC-RETO requesting the annulment of 14,825 polling stations. All complaints were denied as RC did not substantiate the grounds for the request, nor submitted enough supporting evidence. Particularly, RC failed to submit a significant number of results forms that differed from those published by the CNE.<sup>81</sup> Later, RC-RETO filed an objection to the 24 April CNE declaration of preliminary results, which was rejected by the *Consejo* for the same reasons. No appeals against the results were lodged with the TCE within the legal deadline.

Throughout the process, but particularly during the legislative elections, EOM observers reported that party delegates and representatives often lacked the necessary training to adequately file complaints or appeals.

## XIX. Results and post-election environment

### 9 February elections

On 11 February, the *Juntas electorales provinciales* started to publish preliminary results of the provincial constituencies for the National Assembly, while the CNE begun publishing those of the presidential election, the national constituency for the assembly, and *Parlamento Andino* (PA) on 24 February. After all appeals had been dealt with by the TCE, the CNE declared final results for the presidential election on 12 March and on 7 April for the assembly and the PA.

Contrary to ADN expectations of a single-round victory, the result was a tie, with Noboa scoring 44.17 per cent of the valid votes (4,527,606 votes), just 16,746 more than Luisa González with 44.00 per cent (4,527,606 votes). In third place was indigenous leader Leonidas Iza (*Pachakutik*) with 5.25 per cent (538,456 votes), followed by Andrea González (*Partido Sociedad Patriótica*) with 2.68 per cent (275,376 votes). The remaining twelve candidacies together obtained less than four percent of the vote. Invalid votes accounted for 6.8 and blank votes for 2.2 per cent. The turnout, in a country where voting is compulsory for the majority of the population, was 82 per cent. (See annex III)

On 11 February, Daniel Noboa denounced in a TV interview wide-spread irregularities during voting and intimidation of voters by organized crime, especially in the coastal provinces, where González had won. However, the President did not provide evidence of it, nor did he file any complaint with the TCE or the *Fiscalía*. The EU EOM and the OAS EOM both stated that no indications of fraud had been observed.

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results. The law also establishes that the CNE must ensure that party regulations are in accordance with the law and do not restrict constitutional or legal rights.

<sup>81</sup> In fact, only three of the 14,825 results forms provided by RC were different in some way from those published by the CNE.

The National Assembly election results roughly reflected the presidential ones, with two benches of similar size: RC obtained 67 of the 151 seats in dispute, thus 15 more than in the smaller 2023 Assembly, while ADN won 66, almost doubling its 2023 result. However, both fell short of the 77 members needed for a majority. Much in contrast to the fragmented 2023 Assembly, the rest of the parties either failed to gain representation or obtained only a few members, unable to constitute parliamentary groups on their own. *Pachakutik* secured nine parliamentarians and the *Partido Social Cristiano* five, eleven less than in 2023. *Construye* won only one seat, a major setback for a party that had obtained 21 seats in 2023. Each of the three regional coalitions or movements that made it to the assembly obtained one seat. In line with a long-standing practice, the first changes of affiliation of elected Assembly members were already underway in the weeks following the election.

Twenty newly elected *asambleístas* were between 18 and 29 years old, eighteen representing ADN and only two from the ranks of RC.

### *13 April election (presidential run-off)*

The presidential run-off preliminary results were announced by the CNE on 24 April. Definitive results were proclaimed by the CNE on 10 May. Although all polls had indicated a narrow competition, Daniel Noboa won the election with 5,870,618 votes (55.63 per cent of the valid vote), eleven points and almost 1.2 million votes ahead of Luisa González, who obtained 4,683,260 votes (44.37 per cent). Noboa managed to increase by 1.34 million votes his first round results, while González added only 170,000 extra votes. Invalid votes accounted for 6.7 per cent, almost identical to the first round, while blank votes, 0.7 per cent, dropped to one third of the first round's figure. Turnout was 82.95 per cent, barely one point more than in the first round.

On election night, as preliminary results indicated an irreversible victory for Noboa, Luisa González denounced a “grotesque fraud” and requested a vote recount without providing evidence. However, many senior RC figures including the main *prefectos* and mayors, as well as a number of assembly members conceded Noboa's victory. None of the other parties that had backed González in the second round joined her in her claim. As it had been the case after the 9 February election, both the EU EOM and the OAS EOM stated that no indication of fraud had been observed.



## XX. Recommendations

No.	CONTEXT	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED CHANGE IN THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTION	KEY INTERNATIONAL & REGIONAL OBLIGATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
LEGAL FRAMEWORK					
1	<p>Election Law contains several loopholes. Non-compliance with certain legal obligations and prohibitions is not subject to sanctions. This is the case, among others, with the mandatory biweekly report on candidates' campaign spending; the obligation for candidates to open a dedicated bank account for all campaign income; the obligation for incumbents to request a leave of absence at the beginning of the campaign; and the prohibition for political organisations to hire international artists.</p> <p><i>Final report, page 7</i></p>	<p><i>Introduce sanctions for non-compliance with a number of legal obligations and prohibitions for which no consequences are foreseen yet.</i></p>	Election Law	National Assembly	<p><b>Rule of Law</b></p> <p><i>ICCPR GC 34, para. 25</i>            “A norm, to be characterised as a “law”, must be formulated with sufficient precision to enable an individual to regulate his or her conduct accordingly and it must be made accessible to the public”.</p> <p><i>UN Human Rights Council, Resolution 19/36 of 2012 (A/HRC/RES/19/36), para. 16</i>            “Calls upon States to make continuous effort to strengthen the rule of law and promote democracy by c) ensuring that a sufficient degree of legal certainty and predictability is provided in the application of the law, in order to avoid any arbitrariness”.</p>
2	<p>Sanctions foreseen by the Election Law for electoral offences range from fines to dismissal and/or suspension of political rights from six months to four years. The latter are not in line with the provisions of the American Convention on Human Rights (ACHR) which state that restrictions on political rights should be determined throughout criminal proceedings. (...) Furthermore, the EU EOM, as well as most interlocutors, has</p>	<p><i>To avoid disproportionate restrictions on political rights, it would be advisable to review the most severe penalties for electoral offences in the election law.</i></p>	Election Law	CNE	<p><b>Right and opportunity to participate in public affairs and hold office</b></p> <p><i>American Convention on Human Rights (ACHR), art. 23</i>            (...) 2. The law may regulate the exercise of the rights and opportunities referred to in the preceding paragraph only on the basis of age, nationality, residence, language, education, civil and mental capacity, or sentencing by a competent court in criminal</p>



No.	CONTEXT	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED CHANGE IN THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTION	KEY INTERNATIONAL & REGIONAL OBLIGATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
	<p>observed a lack of consistency both in the interpretation of electoral offences and in the application of the corresponding sanctions by the TCE.</p> <p><i>Final report, page 18</i></p>				<p>proceedings.</p> <p><i>State must take the necessary steps to give effect to the rights</i></p> <p><b>ICCPR, General comment 25</b>            “Any conditions applied to the exercise of the rights recognized in Article 25 must be based on objective and reasonable criteria.”            “The suspension or exclusion of the right to vote or to be elected may only be justified on objective and reasonable grounds and must be proportionate.”            “If conviction for an offence is a basis for suspending the right to vote, the period of such suspension should be proportionate to the offence and the sentence.”</p>
ELECTION ADMINISTRATION					
3	<p>The CPCCS as the body in charge of nominating authorities of TCE and CNE has repeatedly failed to replace the judges and <i>consejeros</i> whose mandate had expired, in some cases several years ago, contributing to the loss of credibility of the electoral institutions.</p> <p><i>Final report, page 10</i></p>	<p><i>Review the selection and nomination system in place to guarantee the effective renewal of CNE and TCE authorities.</i></p>	<p>Constitution Election Law</p>	<p>National Assembly</p>	<p><b>Genuine elections that reflect the free expression of the will of the people</b></p> <p><b>ICCPR GC 25, para. 20</b>            “An independent electoral authority should be established to supervise the electoral process and to ensure that it is conducted fairly, impartially and in accordance with established laws (...).”</p> <p><b>OAS Electoral Good Practices Guide for Strengthening Electoral Processes, section C.1, para. 5</b>            “It is important for electoral bodies to be</p>

No.	CONTEXT	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED CHANGE IN THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTION	KEY INTERNATIONAL & REGIONAL OBLIGATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
					independent as regards their ability to decide and act, without their performance being subject to any governmental, political, or other influence” <i>Ibid., section C.1, para. 7</i> : “If membership of those bodies is renewed on rotating or staggered basis, they tend to be more stable, professional, and accountable.”
4	<p>(...) the EU EOM noted a complete lack of in-person voter education activities at the local level that would go beyond the mere sharing of facts on where, when and how to vote, and focus on key electoral concepts like the rights and responsibilities of voters, the secrecy of the vote, etc.</p> <p><i>Final report, page 13</i></p>	<p><i>To ensure the right of all voters to make an informed choice, strengthening the CNE’s internal resources and capacity for civic and voter education and implementing such programmes at the local level, including for vulnerable groups like indigenous people or remote population.</i></p>	No legal reform required	CNE	<p><b>Genuine elections that reflect the free expression of the will of the people</b></p> <p><i>ICCPR, art. 19.2</i> “Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.”</p> <p><b>Transparency and access to information</b></p> <p><i>ICCPR GC 25, para. 11</i> “Voter education and registration campaigns are necessary to ensure the effective exercise of article 25 rights by an informed community.”</p>
ELECTION CAMPAIGN					

No.	CONTEXT	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED CHANGE IN THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTION	KEY INTERNATIONAL & REGIONAL OBLIGATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
5	<p>The incumbent's campaign benefited from government initiatives such as granting subsidies, approval of high social impact programmes or the inauguration of public works. At the same time, the National Assembly continued its ordinary activities, often with an impact on the electoral campaign.</p> <p><i>Final report, page 18</i></p>	<p><i>To mitigate the benefits of incumbency, it would be advisable, during the election campaign, to confine the presidency and the government's activities to the handling of day-to-day business or emergency situations. For the same reasons, the National Assembly could go into recess during these periods.</i></p>	Constitution	National Assembly	<p><b>Genuine elections that reflect the free expression of the will of voters</b></p> <p><i>ICCPR, art.25</i>            "Every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity [...] b) to vote and to be elected at genuine [...] elections [...] guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors;</p> <p><b>Prevention of corruption</b></p> <p><i>UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), art. 7.3</i>            "Each State Party shall also consider taking appropriate legislative and administrative measures, consistent with the objectives of this Convention and in accordance with the fundamental principles of its domestic law, to enhance transparency in the funding of candidatures for elected public office and, where applicable, the funding of political parties."</p>
<b>CAMPAIGN FINANCE</b>					
6	<p>The 2020 reform of the Election Law provided for the creation of a data interconnection system to facilitate data cross-checking and the detection of irregularities in electoral financing, which was scheduled to be ready by the beginning of 2025 and would enable the</p>	<p><i>Set up the data interconnection system for the control of political financing provided for in the Election Law, to enable the exchange of information between the CNE and other public and private bodies.</i></p>	No legal reform required	CNE	<p><b>Prevention of corruption</b></p> <p><i>UN Convention Against Corruption, art 7.3</i>            "Each State Party shall also consider taking appropriate legislative and administrative measures, consistent with the objectives of this Convention and in accordance with the</p>

No.	CONTEXT	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED CHANGE IN THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTION	KEY INTERNATIONAL & REGIONAL OBLIGATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
	<p>CNE to “collect information from any public or private entity on political financing without prejudice to existing legal limitations”. The implementation of this mechanism would allow for more effective oversight of private campaign financing, especially in relation to the origin of funds. However, this system is not yet functional.</p> <p><i>Final report, page 20</i></p>				<p>fundamental principles of its domestic law, to enhance transparency in the funding of candidatures for elected public office and, where applicable, the funding of political parties.”</p>
7	<p>Responsibility for the audit of expenditure and income is divided between the CNE’s <i>Dirección Nacional de Supervisión y Control del gasto electoral</i> and the <i>Delegaciones Electorales Provinciales</i> (DEP). Both have limited human and material resources, and operate under the pressure of a two-year statute of limitations, after which campaign financing offences can no longer be referred to the TCE.</p> <p><i>Final report, page 20</i></p>	<p><i>Provide the Dirección Nacional de Supervisión y Control del Gasto Electoral and the DPES with sufficient human and material resources to appropriately examine in a timely manner the final reports on electoral campaign finances.</i></p>	<p>No legal reform required</p>	<p>CNE</p>	<p><b>Fairness in the election campaign</b></p> <p><i>UN Convention Against Corruption, art. 7.3</i></p>
8	<p>Major Tech platforms were the main battleground for paid political advertisement. However, in the absence of a legal obligation for these companies to disclose political advertising revenue, only Meta maintained a public</p>	<p><i>Strengthen collaboration between the election administration and major tech companies to develop effective mechanisms to increase the transparency of online</i></p>	<p>CNE Regulations</p>	<p>CNE</p>	<p><b>Right to effective remedy</b></p> <p><i>ICCPR, art- 2, 3), a</i></p> <p>“To ensure that any person whose rights or freedoms as herein recognized are violated shall have an effective remedy,</p>

No.	CONTEXT	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED CHANGE IN THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTION	KEY INTERNATIONAL & REGIONAL OBLIGATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
	<p>repository that allowed for the tracking of candidates' campaign expenditure.</p> <p>[...] Although political parties are required to report campaign expenditure on social media to the CNE, the lack of verification mechanisms significantly limits the ability to oversee spending throughout the campaign period. [...]</p> <p><i>Final report, page 24</i></p>	<p><i>campaigning expenditure, while reinforcing CNE's capacity to conduct systematic social media monitoring.</i></p>			<p>notwithstanding that the violation has been committed by persons acting in an official capacity.”</p> <p><b>Fairness in the election campaign</b></p> <p><b>ICCPR. GC 25. P.19:</b> “Reasonable limitations on campaign expenditure may be justified where this is necessary to ensure that the free choice of voters is not undermined or the democratic process distorted by the disproportionate expenditure on behalf of any candidate or party.”</p>
<b>MEDIA</b>					
9	<p>Press associations have denounced the misuse of criminal law to silence journalists. Defamation is no longer included in the Penal Code, but the offence of libel remains. This offence is punishable by six months to two years' imprisonment.</p> <p><i>Final report, page 21</i></p>	<p><i>Replace prison sentences for libel with fines commensurate with the offence, in order to avoid self-censorship.</i></p>	Penal Code	National Assembly	<p><b>Freedom of opinion and expression</b></p> <p><b>ICCPR. GC 34, para. 47</b></p> <p>“States parties should consider the decriminalization of defamation and, in any case, the application of the criminal law should only be countenanced in the most serious of cases and imprisonment is never an appropriate penalty.”</p>
10	<p>State-owned media provided overwhelmingly favourable coverage to the incumbent, limiting the diversity of viewpoints and undermining balanced electoral reporting.</p> <p><i>Final report, page 22</i></p>	<p><i>Ensure state-owned media uphold editorial independence and provide a balanced and impartial electoral coverage.</i></p>	<i>Ley orgánica de comunicaciones</i>	National Assembly	<p><b>Freedom of opinion and expression</b></p> <p><b>ICCPR. art. 19.2</b></p> <p>“Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers,</p>

No.	CONTEXT	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED CHANGE IN THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTION	KEY INTERNATIONAL & REGIONAL OBLIGATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
					<p>either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.”</p> <p><b><i>IACHR Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression. Principle 12</i></b>  “Control of the media by the State must be limited in order to prevent any manipulation thereof.”</p>
11	<p>The Government aired extensive institutional advertising highlighting its achievements, much of which aligned closely with the messaging of the incumbent's campaign.</p> <p><i>Final report, page 23</i></p>	<p><b><i>Enhance oversight of government advertising by revising the legal framework to explicitly prohibit the use of institutional communication for electoral advantage and require all such content during campaign periods to be pre-approved by the CNE, clearly labelled, and subject to effective enforcement and sanctions.</i></b></p>	<p><i>Ley orgánica de comunicación,</i> Election Law, CNE regulations</p>	<p>National Assembly CNE</p>	<p><b>Freedom from discrimination</b></p> <p><b><i>IACHR Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression. Principle 13</i></b>  “The exercise of power and the use of public funds by the State must be governed by the principles of equality and non-discrimination with regard to all individuals.</p> <p><b>State must take the necessary steps to give effect to the rights</b></p> <p><b><i>ICCPR GC 25 para. 19</i></b>  “An equitable allocation of public funds to political parties and candidates may be desirable to ensure the effective exercise of the right to vote by all citizens. States should take measures to ensure that parties and candidates enjoy fair and equal access to the media, particularly during election periods.”</p>

No.	CONTEXT	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED CHANGE IN THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTION	KEY INTERNATIONAL & REGIONAL OBLIGATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
DIGITAL COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA					
12	<p>The EU EOM identified websites and social media accounts presenting themselves as fact-checking entities while disseminating deceptive content, thus undermining the credibility of genuine fact-checking organizations. During the first presidential debate President Noboa endorsed some of these websites as reliable information sources, potentially amplifying their reach and impact.</p> <p><i>Final Report, page 25</i></p>	<p><i>Encourage the adoption of a code of conduct by political parties to refrain from producing and disseminating disinformation, harmful content and unlabelled political advertising.</i></p>	<p>No legal reform required.</p>	<p>Political Parties Media, CSOs, Tech Companies</p>	<p><b>Freedom of expression and opinion /</b> <i>ICCPR Art. 19(2)</i> <i>ICCPR GC 25, para.19</i></p> <p><i>UN, OSCE, OAS, ACHPR Joint declaration on freedom of expression and 'fake news', disinformation and propaganda, 2017, 6(a)</i> “All stakeholders – including intermediaries, media outlets, civil society and academia – should be supported in developing participatory and transparent initiatives for creating a better understanding of the impact of disinformation and propaganda on democracy, freedom of expression, journalism and civic space, as well as appropriate responses to these phenomena.”</p> <p><b>Transparency and access to information</b></p> <p><i>UN, OAS, OSCE Joint Declaration on Freedom of Expression and Elections In the Digital Age, 2020, para.1 (d)</i> “Access to Information Relating to Elections: ii) Parties and candidates should be required to be transparent in a timely fashion, including to the media, regarding their spending on elections and, in particular, spending on legacy and digital</p>

No.	CONTEXT	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED CHANGE IN THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTION	KEY INTERNATIONAL & REGIONAL OBLIGATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
					media, and other digital communications efforts.”  <i>UN, OSCE, OAS, ACHPR Joint Declaration on Politicians and Public Officials and Freedom of Expression, 2021: Recommendations for Political Parties, Politicians and Senior Public Officials, 3, i)</i> “Political parties should adopt and enforce measures, such as codes of conduct, which set minimum standards of behavior for their officials and candidates for elected office, including to address speech that promotes intolerance, discrimination or hatred, or constitutes disinformation which is designed to limit freedom of expression or other human rights.”
13	AI-generated content observed during the campaign included 27 instances of fabricated political reports attributed to reputable media outlets. The sophistication of these contents posed challenges for voters, largely unfamiliar with such practice. [...]  <i>Final Report, page 26</i>	<i>Enhance cooperation among the CNE, the media, civil society, academia and tech companies to develop awareness-raising campaigns on online election-related disinformation, including AI-generated.</i>	No legal reform required.	CNE, Media, CSOs, Academia, Tech Companies	<b>Freedom of expression and opinion</b>  <i>ICCPR GC 25, para. 19</i>  <i>UN, OSCE, OAS, ACHPR Joint declaration on freedom of expression and ‘fake news’, disinformation and propaganda, 2017, p. 6(a) and p. 3(e)</i>  <b>Transparency and access to information</b>  <i>UN, OSCE, OAS, ACHPR, Joint declaration on Freedom of Expression and Elections in the Digital Age, 2020, para. 1(b.5)</i>



No.	CONTEXT	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED CHANGE IN THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTION	KEY INTERNATIONAL & REGIONAL OBLIGATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
					“States should make a concerted effort to promote digital media and information literacy, including in relation to elections.”
WOMEN’S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION					
14	<p>Since 2020, gender-based political violence is a serious electoral offence, punishable with heavy fines and dismissal and/or suspension of political rights from two to four years. (...) EOM interlocutors expressed concern by the sharp increase in the number of complaints during the 2025 process, insofar as many of these cases are manifestly unrelated to gender-political violence.</p> <p>In fact, the election law makes a broad definition of this offence (...); The most frequently invoked ground refers to the use of expressions that denigrate women in politics, often in conflict with freedom of expression or the right to political participation.</p> <p><i>Final report, page 27</i></p>	<p><i>Review the gender-based political violence electoral offence so that it does not unreasonably limit freedom of expression and the right to political participation.</i></p>	Election Law	CNE	<p><b>Freedom of expression</b></p> <p><i>ICCPR, art. 19.2</i> “Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression”.</p> <p><b>Women’s participation in public affairs</b></p> <p><i>CEDAW, art. 7 (a)</i> “State parties shall take appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country</p>
POLLING, COUNTING AND TABULATION					
15	<p>The inadequate training of polling staff became more evident during counting, which EU observers assessed as well-intentioned and transparent, but confusing. In many cases, the procedures were not completely followed. (...) While</p>	<p><i>Reinforce training of polling staff, with a focus on voting and counting procedures, as well as the filling of results protocols.</i></p>	No legal reform required	CNE	<p><b>Genuine elections that reflect the free expression of the will of the people</b></p> <p><i>ICCPR, Article 25(b)</i> “Every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity, without any of the distinctions</p>

No.	CONTEXT	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED CHANGE IN THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTION	KEY INTERNATIONAL & REGIONAL OBLIGATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
	<p>counting was badly organised in 12 cases and the EU noted minor procedural errors or omissions in 21 cases, the EU did not observe any instances of intimidation of polling staff or signs of falsification of results.</p> <p><i>Final report, page 30</i></p>				<p>mentioned in article 2 and without unreasonable restrictions: (...) b) To vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors.”</p>

## XXI. Annexes

**Annex I – MEDIA MONITORING FINDINGS****1. Methodological Parameters**

EU EOM Ecuador 2025 monitored a sample of traditional and digital news outlets throughout the election period, covering both rounds of the presidential elections. The monitoring was conducted from 05 January to 16 February for the first round, and resumed from 23 March to 20 April for the second round, coinciding with the official campaign periods.

The media sample included three television channels (Teleamazonas, Ecuavisa, and TC Televisión); three radio stations (Radio Democracia, Radio Pública FM, and Radio Sucre in the first round / Radio Pichincha in the second); two newspapers (El Universo and Expreso); and three digital news outlets (Primicias, El Telégrafo, and El Comercio). Television content was monitored daily from 07:00 to 08:00 and from 18:00 to 23:00, while radio monitoring took place from 06:00 to 09:00 and from 17:00 to 20:00.

An adjustment was made to the media sample between rounds in the radio category. Radio Sucre, based in Guayaquil, was recorded via internet during the first round. However, technical challenges in maintaining reliable recordings began to emerge in the interim period between the two campaigns. To ensure continuous and stable access to broadcast content, the mission transitioned to monitoring Radio Pichincha, a Quito-based station, for the second round.

The monitoring encompassed a broad range of election-related topics, including—but not limited to political parties and candidates, campaign activities, election administration, legal challenges, and security issues. A team of media monitors analysed all relevant content, assessing both quantitative indicators, such as airtime (in seconds on TV and radio), space (in square centimetres in print media), and word count (in digital media), as well as qualitative elements, including the tone of coverage and the prominence of key issues.

**2. Glossary of Terms**

Term	Definition
<b>Airtime Distribution</b>	The amount of broadcast time, measured in seconds, allocated to different political entities, parties, or topics across media outlets.
<b>Size</b>	The measurement of coverage length: in broadcast media, by seconds of airtime; in digital media, by word count; and in print media, by square centimetres of print space.
<b>Tone</b>	The sentiment of media coverage, classified as positive, negative, or neutral toward a political candidate, entity or topic.
<b>Political Advertising</b>	Paid promotional content aimed at supporting political parties, candidates, or policies during the campaign period.
<b>Privately or Publicly Owned Media</b>	Media outlets owned by private entities, local governments (e.g. municipalities), or community organisations. This includes television channels, radio broadcasters, newspapers, and digital platforms not operated by the central government.
<b>State-Owned Media</b>	Media outlets owned and operated by the central government.

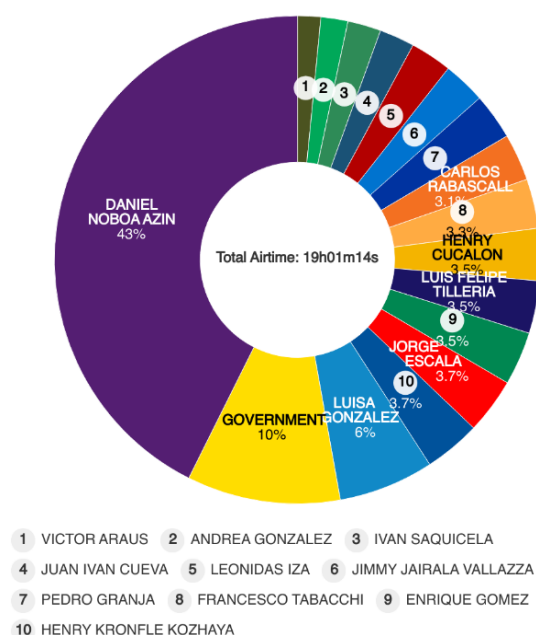
### 3. State Owned Media

TC Televisión's coverage during both rounds of the campaign was markedly favourable towards Daniel Noboa and the Government, while Luisa González was frequently portrayed in a negative light. In the first round, Noboa received the most airtime, with largely positive coverage centred on campaign events, justice, and environmental issues. The Government was consistently framed in a positive light, particularly in the context of crime and public security.

In contrast, González was marginalised and mostly covered critically, especially on issues related to crime and justice. In the second round, her presence increased but the tone of coverage became even more negative, reinforcing the overall imbalance in narrative framing. Noboa remained the dominant figure in both visibility and positive tone, while the Government continued to receive favourable treatment by the state-owned TV channel, which did not make any negative mentions of either during the campaign period of the second round.

Fig.1.1: Airtime Distribution of Presidential Candidates and the Government on TC Televisión (1<sup>st</sup> Round)

6 January - 6 February 2025 (07:00 - 08:00 & 18:00 - 23:00)

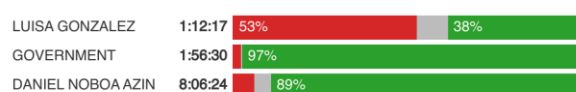


Airtime measured in seconds of coverage given to every presidential candidate, excluding paid advertising or the live broadcast of the debate  
Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring - Created with Datawrapper

Fig.1.3: Tone of Coverage on TC Televisión (1<sup>st</sup> Round)

Based on size in number of seconds

■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive

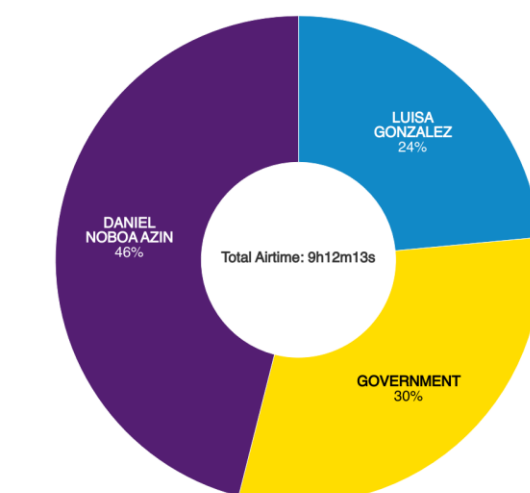


6 January - 6 February 2025 (07:00 - 08:00 & 18:00 - 23:00)

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring - Created with Datawrapper

Fig.1.2: Airtime Distribution of Presidential Candidates and the Government on TC Televisión (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)

23 March - 10 April 2025 (07:00 - 08:00 & 18:00 - 23:00)

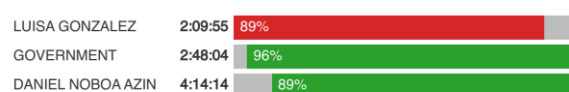


Airtime measured in seconds of coverage given to every presidential candidate, excluding paid advertising or the live broadcast of the debate  
Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring - Created with Datawrapper

Fig.1.4: Tone of Coverage on TC Televisión (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)

Based on size in number of seconds

■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive



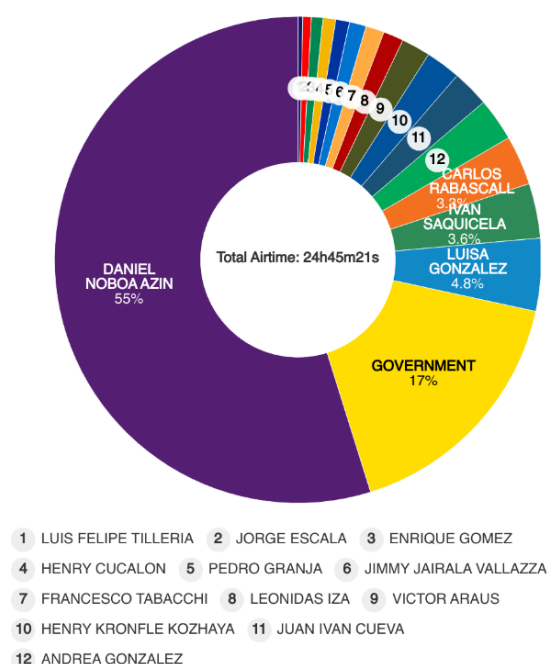
23 March - 10 April 2025 (07:00 - 08:00 & 18:00 - 23:00)

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring - Created with Datawrapper

On Radio Pública FM, coverage during both rounds of the presidential election clearly favoured Daniel Noboa and his government, while Luisa González was predominantly portrayed in a negative light. In the first round, Noboa received over half of all editorial airtime, with 92 per cent of his coverage being positive and mostly focused on his campaign activities. The Government also enjoyed a broadly positive editorial stance, particularly on issues such as education, health, and security. In the second round, this imbalance deepened. Noboa's tone remained 99 per cent positive, while González faced 78 per cent negative coverage. Nearly half of all relevant monitored airtime on Radio Pública FM was allocated to the Government, which was covered in a very positive light by the station.

Fig.1.5: Airtime Distribution of Presidential Candidates and the Government on Radio Pública FM (1<sup>st</sup> Round)

6 January - 6 February 2025 (06:00 - 09:00 & 17:00 - 20:00)

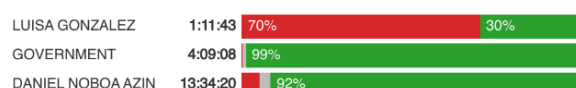


Airtime measured in seconds of coverage given to every presidential candidate, excluding paid advertising or the live broadcast of the debate  
Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring • Created with Datawrapper

Fig.1.7: Tone of Coverage on Radio Pública FM (1<sup>st</sup> Round)

Based on size in number of seconds

■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive

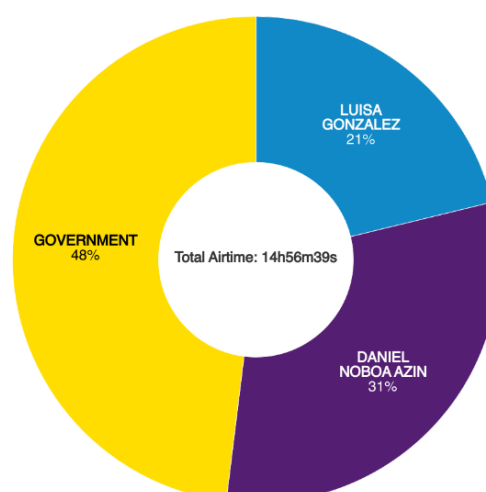


6 January - 6 February 2025 (06:00 - 09:00 & 17:00 - 20:00)

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring • Created with Datawrapper

Fig.1.6: Airtime Distribution of Presidential Candidates and the Government on Radio Pública FM (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)

23 March - 10 April 2025 (06:00 - 09:00 & 17:00 - 20:00)

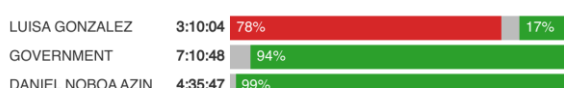


Airtime measured in seconds of coverage given to every presidential candidate, excluding paid advertising or the live broadcast of the debate  
Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring • Created with Datawrapper

Fig.1.8: Tone of Coverage on Radio Pública FM (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)

Based on size in number of seconds

■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive



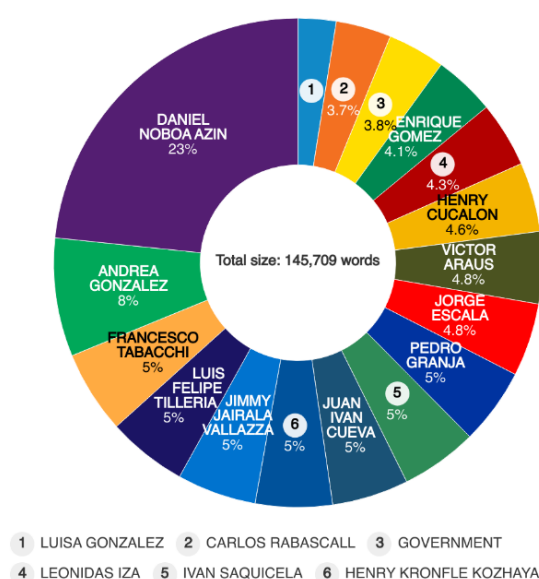
23 March - 10 April 2025 (06:00 - 09:00 & 17:00 - 20:00)

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring • Created with Datawrapper

El Telégrafo gave consistently favourable coverage to Daniel Noboa and the Government during both rounds of the presidential election, while Luisa González was largely portrayed in a negative light. In the first round, Noboa was the most prominently covered candidate and received overwhelmingly positive reporting, often highlighting his campaign promises, foreign relations, and economic proposals. The Government was covered exclusively in a positive tone, with a focus on public policy achievements in areas such as security, health, and education. In contrast, González's coverage included numerous critical pieces, with recurring mentions of corruption and legal issues. In the second round, this imbalance became more pronounced. The Government dominated the coverage, followed by Noboa, whose tone remained highly favourable. González's limited coverage included numerous critical pieces, with recurring references to her association with former officials involved in corruption investigations and to broader concerns about legal and institutional risks. The overall editorial line reinforced official narratives and campaign messaging favourable to the incumbent.

Fig.1.9: Total size of Published Pieces about Presidential Candidates and the Government in El Telégrafo (1<sup>st</sup> Round)

6 January - 6 February 2025



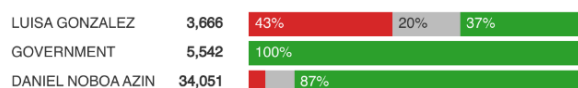
Size measured in the number of words

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring • Created with Datawrapper

Fig.1.11: Tone of Coverage in El Telégrafo (1<sup>st</sup> Round)

Based on size in number of words

■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive

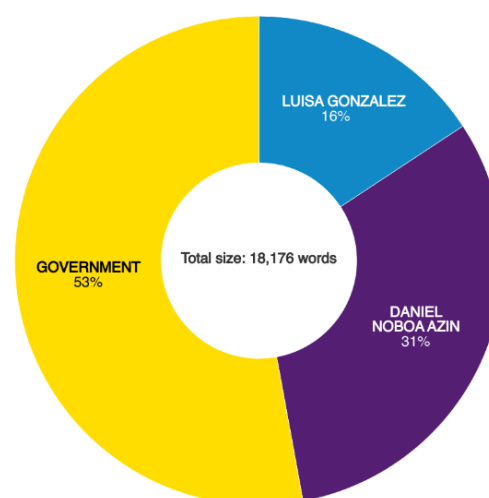


6 January - 6 February 2025

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring • Created with Datawrapper

Fig.1.10: Total size of Published Pieces about Presidential Candidates and the Government in El Telégrafo (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)

23 March - 10 April 2025



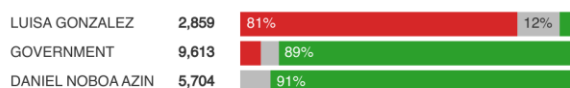
Size measured in the number of words

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring • Created with Datawrapper

Fig.1.12: Tone of Coverage in El Telégrafo (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)

Based on size in number of words

■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive



23 March - 10 April 2025

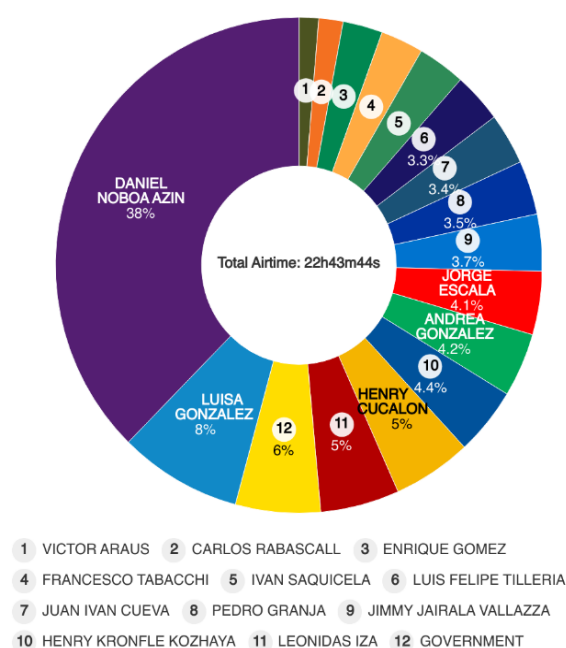
Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring • Created with Datawrapper

## 4. Private Television

Ecuavisa's coverage was more balanced than that of state-owned media but still tended to favour Daniel Noboa. In the first round, Noboa received the most airtime, with predominantly positive reporting focused on campaign events, international engagements, and economic initiatives. The Government was also portrayed positively, particularly in coverage of security and public services. Luisa González received less coverage and a more mixed tone, with negative reporting linked to crime and legal matters. In the second round, she received more airtime, but much of it focused on criticisms. Noboa's coverage remained positive, highlighting his campaign appearances, while Government stories continued to focus on institutional achievements. Although Ecuavisa gave space to both candidates, its tone and thematic focus subtly favoured the incumbent.

Fig.2.1: Airtime Distribution of Presidential Candidates and the Government on Ecuavisa (1<sup>st</sup> Round)

6 January - 6 February 2025 (07:00 - 08:00 & 18:00 - 23:00)



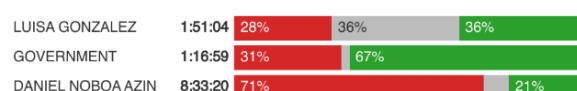
1 VICTOR ARAUS 2 CARLOS RABASCALL 3 ENRIQUE GOMEZ  
4 FRANCESCO TABACCHI 5 IVAN SAQUICELA 6 LUIS FELIPE TILLERIA  
7 JUAN IVAN CUEVA 8 PEDRO GRANJA 9 JIMMY JAIRALA VALLAZZA  
10 HENRY KRONFLE KOZHAYA 11 LEONIDAS IZA 12 GOVERNMENT

Airtime measured in seconds of coverage given to every presidential candidate, excluding paid advertising or the live broadcast of the debate  
Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring • Created with Datawrapper

Fig.2.3: Tone of Coverage on Ecuavisa (1<sup>st</sup> Round)

Based on size in number of seconds

■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive

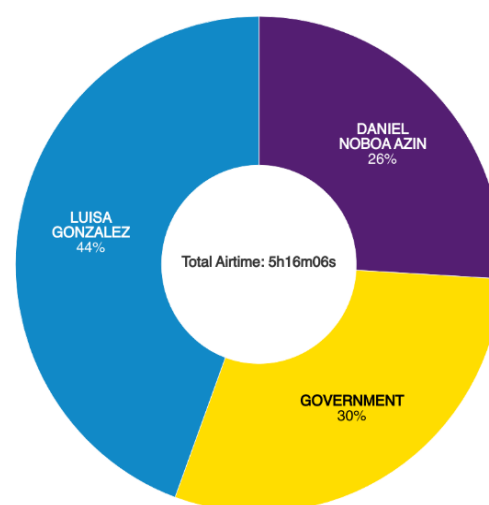


6 January - 6 February 2025 (07:00 - 08:00 & 18:00 - 23:00)

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring • Created with Datawrapper

Fig.2.2: Airtime Distribution of Presidential Candidates and the Government on Ecuavisa (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)

23 March - 10 April 2025 (07:00 - 08:00 & 18:00 - 23:00)

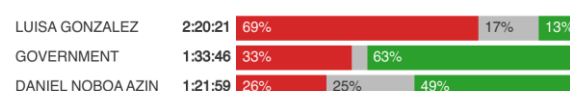


Airtime measured in seconds of coverage given to every presidential candidate, excluding paid advertising or the live broadcast of the debate  
Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring • Created with Datawrapper

Fig.2.4: Tone of Coverage on Ecuavisa (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)

Based on size in number of seconds

■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive



23 March - 10 April 2025 (07:00 - 08:00 & 18:00 - 23:00)

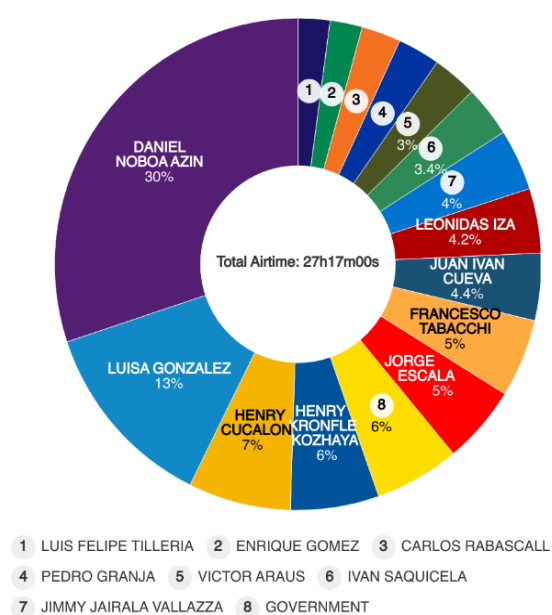
Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring • Created with Datawrapper



Telem Amazonas provided comparatively balanced coverage across both rounds of the election, though Daniel Noboa generally received more favourable treatment. In the first round, he was the most covered candidate, with positive reporting focused on campaign events, his public appearances, and in opinion segments. Luisa González also received significant airtime, with mostly positive or neutral tone and coverage centred on campaign activities. The Government was portrayed positively, particularly in stories about public services, security, and the economy. In the second round, Noboa again received the most airtime, followed by the Government and then González. While her coverage included neutral and positive reporting, it also featured negative opinion segments. Noboa's tone remained mostly positive, and Government coverage continued to emphasise institutional achievements, with negative mentions appearing primarily in opinion segments of talk shows. Overall, while Telem Amazonas gave visibility to both candidates, the framing and tone continued to benefit the incumbent.

Fig.2.5: Airtime Distribution of Presidential Candidates and the Government on Telem Amazonas (1<sup>st</sup> Round)

6 January - 6 February 2025 (07:00 - 08:00 & 18:00 - 23:00)

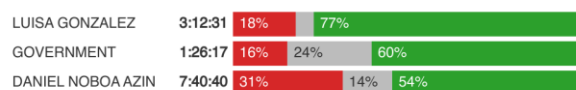


Airtime measured in seconds of coverage given to every presidential candidate, excluding paid advertising or the live broadcast of the debate  
Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring - Created with Datawrapper

Fig.2.7: Tone of Coverage on Telem Amazonas (1<sup>st</sup> Round)

Based on size in number of seconds

■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive

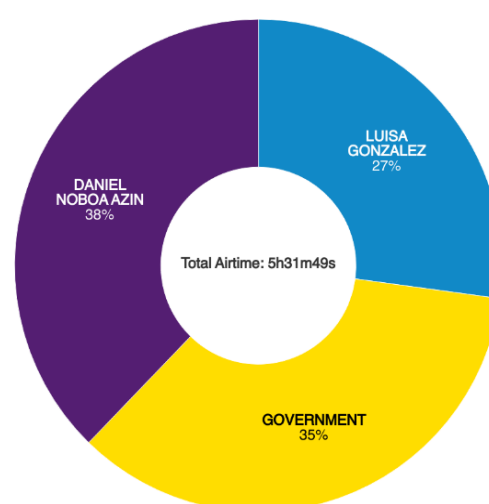


6 January - 6 February 2025 (07:00 - 08:00 & 18:00 - 23:00)

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring - Created with Datawrapper

Fig.2.6: Airtime Distribution of Presidential Candidates and the Government on Telem Amazonas (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)

23 March - 10 April 2025 (07:00 - 08:00 & 18:00 - 23:00)

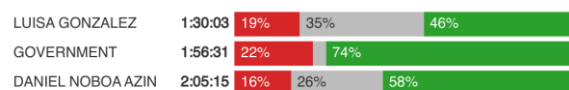


Airtime measured in seconds of coverage given to every presidential candidate, excluding paid advertising or the live broadcast of the debate  
Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring - Created with Datawrapper

Fig.2.8: Tone of Coverage on Telem Amazonas (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)

Based on size in number of seconds

■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive



23 March - 10 April 2025 (07:00 - 08:00 & 18:00 - 23:00)

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring - Created with Datawrapper

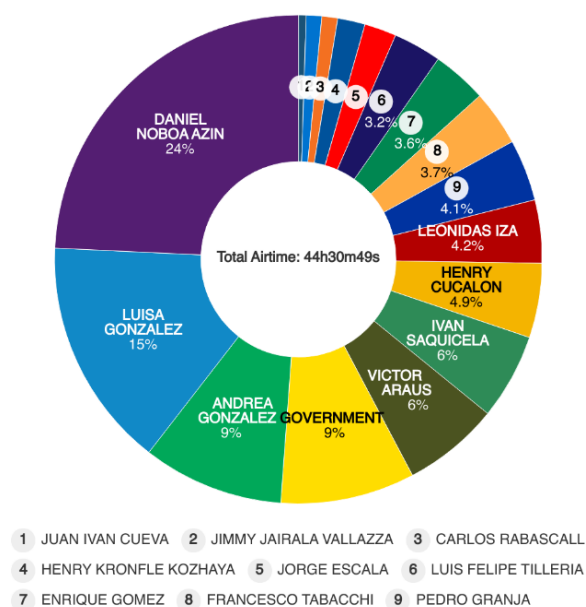


## 5. Private or Publicly Owned Radios

Privately owned Radio Democracia provided extensive coverage of the presidential campaign, with Daniel Noboa consistently receiving the most favourable treatment. In the first round, he was the most covered candidate, with predominantly positive reporting focused on campaign events, security, foreign affairs and in opinion pieces. Luisa González also received substantial airtime, but her coverage was predominantly negative. The main criticism centred in opinion segments and on her campaign activities, along with repeated references to her political associations with former officials implicated in corruption cases, broader concerns about judicial independence, and criticisms of her economic proposals. Government coverage was mostly positive, highlighting public services and health-related topics. In the second round, Noboa continued to benefit from nearly all-positive coverage, while González's portrayal became even more critical. Negative reporting focused on crime and security, corruption, her perceived legal vulnerability due to associations with past scandals, and her conduct during campaign events. Although Radio Democracia included both candidates in its coverage, the tone and focus of its reporting strongly tilted in favour of Noboa.

Fig.3.1: Airtime Distribution of Presidential Candidates and the Government on Radio Democracia (1<sup>st</sup> Round)

6 January - 6 February 2025 (06:00 - 09:00 & 17:00 - 20:00)



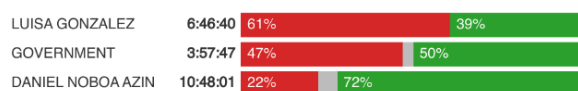
Airtime measured in seconds of coverage given to every presidential candidate, excluding paid advertising or the live broadcast of the debate

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring - Created with Datawrapper

Fig.3.3: Tone of Coverage on Radio Democracia (1<sup>st</sup> Round)

Based on size in number of seconds

■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive

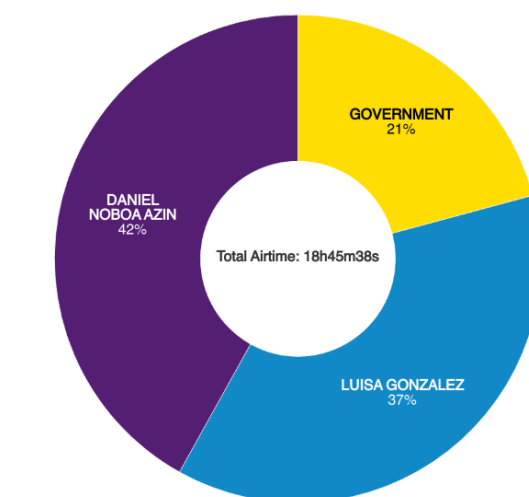


6 January - 6 February 2025 (06:00 - 09:00 & 17:00 - 20:00)

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring - Created with Datawrapper

Fig.3.2: Airtime Distribution of Presidential Candidates and the Government on Radio Democracia (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)

23 March - 10 April 2025 (06:00 - 09:00 & 17:00 - 20:00)



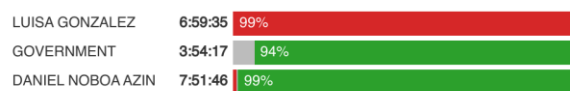
Airtime measured in seconds of coverage given to every presidential candidate, excluding paid advertising or the live broadcast of the debate

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring - Created with Datawrapper

Fig.3.4: Tone of Coverage on Radio Democracia (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)

Based on size in number of seconds

■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive



23 March - 10 April 2025 (06:00 - 09:00 & 17:00 - 20:00)

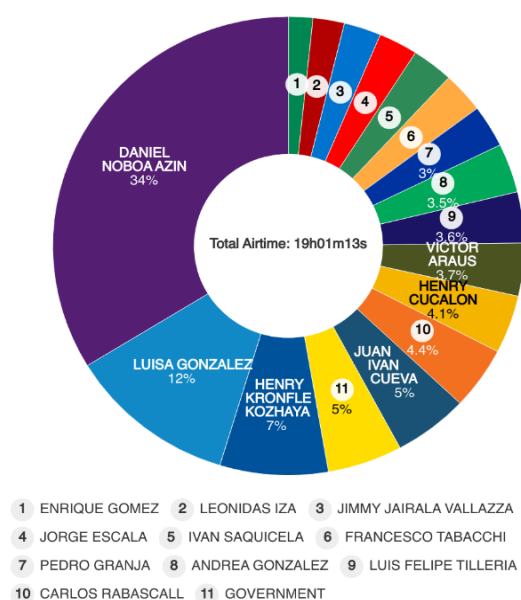
Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring - Created with Datawrapper

Radio Sucre and Radio Pichincha were selected for their relevance as leading regional broadcasters with significant influence on public debate. Radio Sucre, a major private station based in Guayaquil, has a broader commercial reach across the coastal region, while Radio Pichincha, a public broadcaster owned by the Provincial Government of Pichincha, serves a more concentrated audience in the capital area. Due to technical challenges affecting the remote recording of Radio Sucre during the second round, Radio Pichincha was incorporated into the monitoring, bringing a contrasting editorial perspective that contributed to a more pluralistic media sample.

In the first round, Radio Sucre provided overwhelmingly favourable coverage of the Government and Daniel Noboa, with over three-quarters of Noboa's airtime being positive. Luisa González received less airtime and more mixed treatment, with both critical and supportive segments. The dominant themes included campaign events, public policy achievements, and economic performance. By contrast, Radio Pichincha offered a strikingly different editorial stance observed during the second round. Coverage of both Noboa and the Government was overwhelmingly negative, often framed through opinion segments and criticism of governance in news reports. Luisa González, on the other hand, was treated far more favourably, receiving substantial positive airtime focused on social issues, public services, and campaign activity. The contrast between the two stations, both in tone and thematic focus, underscored the diversity of political perspectives present in Ecuador's radio landscape.

Fig.3.5: Airtime Distribution of Presidential Candidates and the Government on Radio Sucre (1<sup>st</sup> Round)

6 January - 6 February 2025 (06:00 - 09:00 & 17:00 - 20:00)

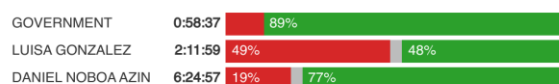


Airtime measured in seconds of coverage given to every presidential candidate, excluding paid advertising or the live broadcast of the debate  
Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring • Created with Datawrapper

Fig.3.7: Tone of Coverage on Radio Sucre (1<sup>st</sup> Round)

Based on size in number of seconds

■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive

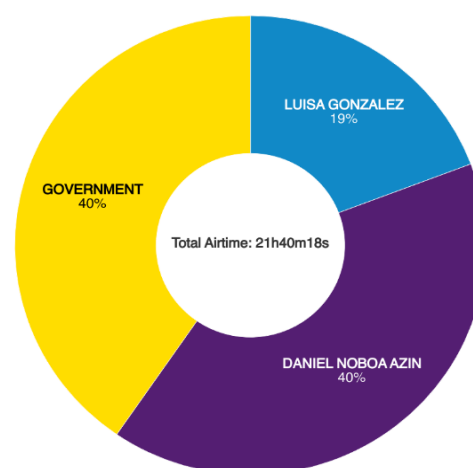


6 January - 6 February 2025 (06:00 - 09:00 & 17:00 - 20:00)

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring • Created with Datawrapper

Fig.3.6: Airtime Distribution of Presidential Candidates and the Government on Radio Pichincha (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)

23 March - 10 April 2025 (06:00 - 09:00 & 17:00 - 20:00)

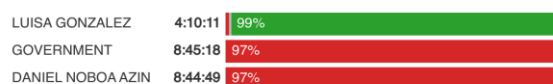


Airtime measured in seconds of coverage given to every presidential candidate, excluding paid advertising or the live broadcast of the debate  
Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring • Created with Datawrapper

Fig.3.8: Tone of Coverage on Radio Pichincha (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)

Based on size in number of seconds

■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive



23 March - 10 April 2025 (06:00 - 09:00 & 17:00 - 20:00)

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring • Created with Datawrapper

## 6. Political Advertising on Broadcast Media

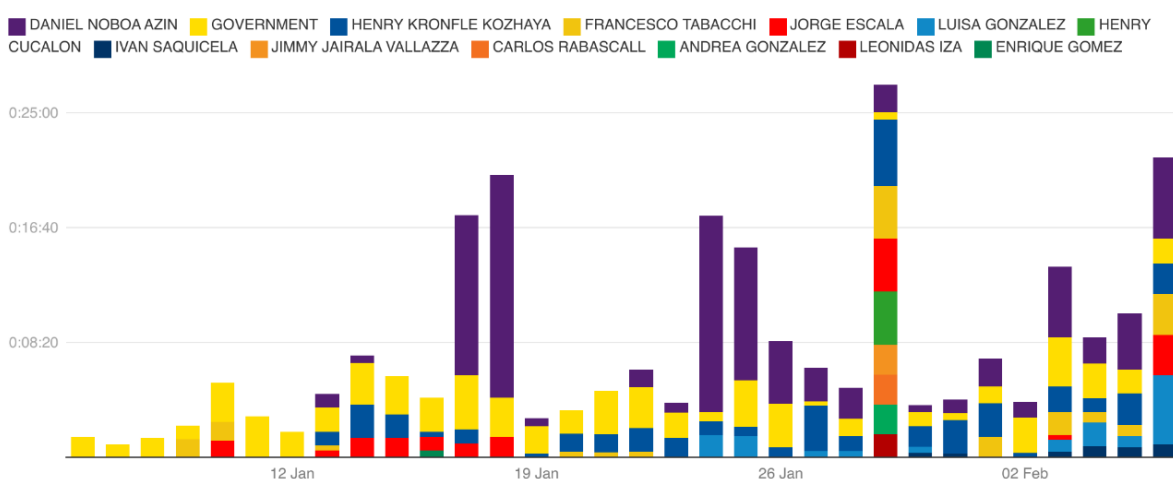
Political advertising during the 2025 presidential election featured a substantial volume of government-sponsored content across both television and radio. In the first round, nearly all government ads were formally authorised by the CNE and broadcast under exceptions permitted by the *Código de la Democracia* and detailed in the *Reglamento para la Promoción Electoral*, which allow urgent communications on health, education, and public safety during campaigns. In practice, many government ads exceeded the informational purpose intended in the law, promoting broader public achievements and reinforcing campaign narratives. Most spots were attributed to the *Secretaría General de Comunicación de la Presidencia* and focused on public services, security, health, education, and the economy. Government advertising accounted for around 38 per cent of all political ads in the first round, and on some platforms, it represented an even higher share. Notably, government ads in the first round carried the full slogan of Daniel Noboa's campaign, closely aligning institutional messaging with his electoral platform.

In the second round, government-sponsored advertising expanded further, accounting for approximately 66 per cent of all political ads on monitored television and radio combined. The government shortened the advert slogan, while maintaining its association with Noboa's messaging. There was also a notable increase in unauthorised government ads, particularly on radio, many of which focused on crime, healthcare, and social support. These spots often aired without any indication of CNE approval and became especially frequent in the final days before the vote, including during the period of electoral silence. The growing volume of unauthorised and thematically aligned government advertising further blurred the line between institutional communication and electoral campaigning.

Candidate advertising reflected these imbalances in visibility. In the first round, Daniel Noboa was the most visible candidate, maintaining a significantly greater presence than Luisa González. Henry Kronfle and Francesco Tabacchi, also had notable advertising activity. Candidate ads focused on distinct themes – Noboa emphasised security and economic modernisation, while González highlighted social protection and anti-corruption initiatives. In the second round, Noboa's campaign further expanded its advertising presence in broadcast media, while González remained underrepresented in overall advertising volume.

Fig.4.1: Political Advertising on Television (1<sup>st</sup> Round )

Duration of advertisements in seconds



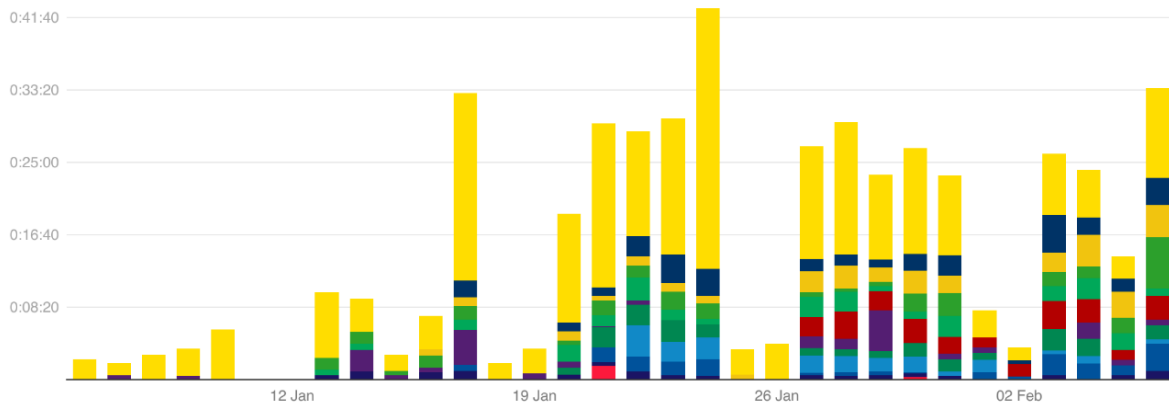
6 January to 6 February 2025 on Teleamazonas, Ecuavisa, TC Televisión (07:00–08:00 and 18:00–23:00)

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring • Created with Datawrapper

Fig.4.2: Political Advertising on Radio (1<sup>st</sup> Round )

Duration of advertisements in seconds

GOVERNMENT IVAN SAQUICELA FRANCESCO TABACCHI HENRY CUCALON ANDREA GONZALEZ LEONIDAS IZA DANIEL NOBOA AZIN  
 ENRIQUE GOMEZ LUISA GONZALEZ HENRY KRONFLE KOZHAYA LUIS FELIPE TILLERIA JUAN IVAN CUEVA JORGE ESCALA



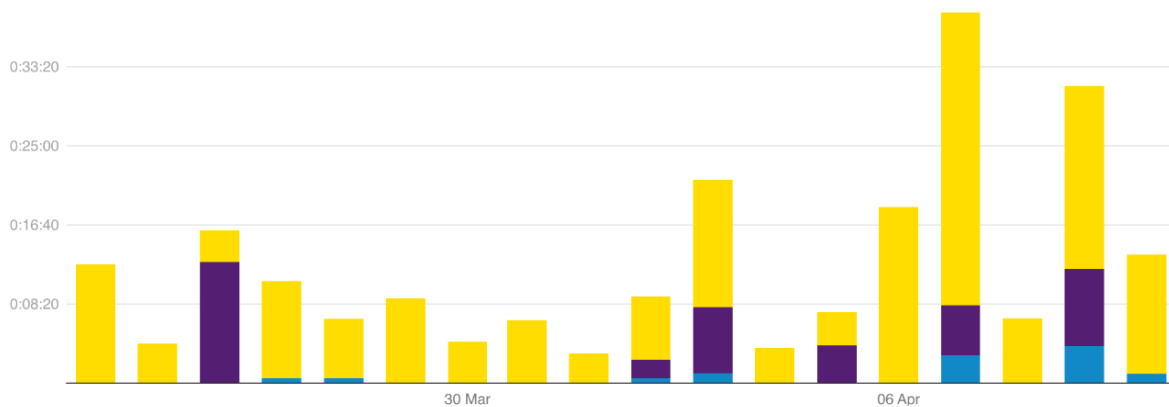
6 January to 6 February 2025 on Radio Democracia, Radio Pública FM, Radio Sucre (06:00–09:00 and 17:00–20:00)

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring • Created with Datawrapper

Fig.4.3: Political Advertising on Television (2<sup>nd</sup> Round )

Duration of advertisements in seconds

GOVERNMENT DANIEL NOBOA AZIN LUISA GONZALEZ



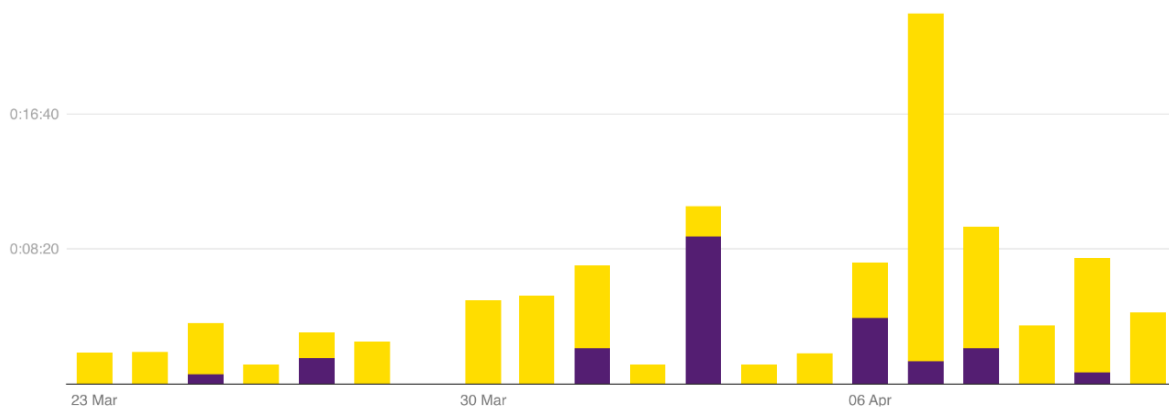
23 March - 10 April 2025 on Teleamazonas, Ecuavisa, TC Televisión (07:00–08:00 and 18:00–23:00)

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring • Created with Datawrapper

Fig.4.4: Political Advertising in Radio (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)

Duration of advertisements in seconds

GOVERNMENT DANIEL NOBOA AZIN



23 March - 10 April 2025 in Radio Democracia, Radio Pública FM, Radio Pichincha (06:00–09:00 and 17:00–20:00)

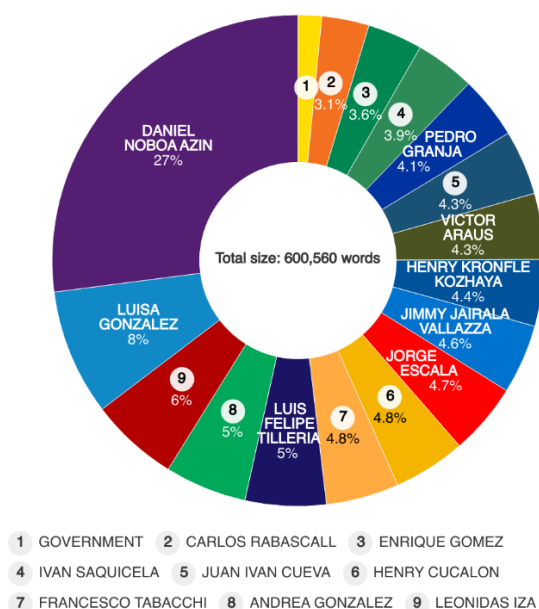
Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring • Created with Datawrapper

## 7. Private Digital Media

Primicias maintained a relatively balanced distribution of coverage between the main presidential candidates across both rounds, though Daniel Noboa consistently received more space and a slightly more favourable tone. In the first round, Noboa accounted for the largest volume of published content, with a mix of tone. His coverage focused on campaign events, the economy, and foreign affairs, with some critical reporting linked to legal issues and in opinion pieces. Luisa González received less coverage and a more critical tone, with negative reporting related to campaign activity, corruption and legal concerns. Government coverage was limited but mostly positive, highlighting crime and economic topics. In the second round, the volume of reporting decreased overall, but the tone became more polarised. Noboa's coverage remained extensive and split between critical and favourable perspectives, while González faced more negative reporting, particularly in opinion pieces. The Government continued to receive favourable treatment. Primicias offered a degree of pluralism in its political reporting, though the tone and volume of content subtly reinforced Noboa's prominence.

Fig.5.1: Total size of Published Pieces about Presidential Candidates and the Government in Primicias (1<sup>st</sup> Round)

6 January - 6 February 2025



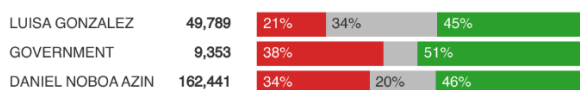
Size measured in the number of words

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring

Fig.5.3: Tone of Coverage in Primicias (1<sup>st</sup> Round)

Based on size in number of words

■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive

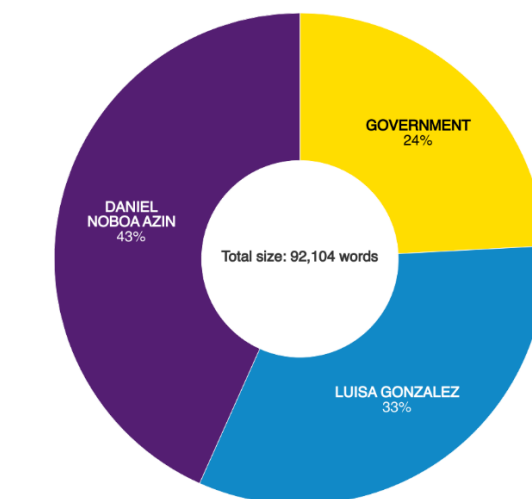


6 January - 6 February 2025

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring

Fig.5.2: Total size of Published Pieces about Presidential Candidates and the Government in Primicias (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)

23 March - 10 April 2025



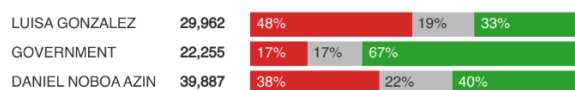
Size measured in the number of words

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring

Fig.5.4: Tone of Coverage in Primicias (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)

Based on size in number of words

■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive



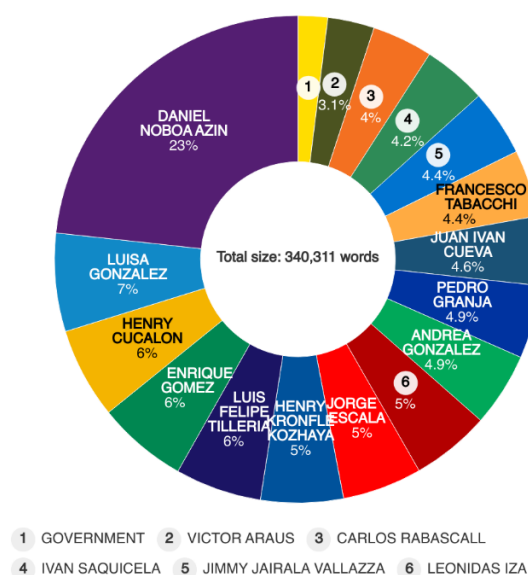
23 March - 10 April 2025

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring

El Comercio offered relatively balanced coverage across both rounds, with a generally favourable tone toward all main political actors. In the first round, Daniel Noboa received the most attention, with coverage focused on campaign events, foreign affairs, and economic proposals. While a portion of his reporting was critical, nearly half was positive. Luisa González's coverage was also extensive and mostly favourable, highlighting her campaign activities and social policy agenda. Government coverage was limited but mostly positive, with emphasis on public services and crime. In the second round, the tone softened further, with Noboa, González, and the Government receiving largely neutral or positive treatment. Noboa's coverage remained the most prominent, while González continued to be portrayed favourably, especially through reporting on her campaign efforts. El Comercio's approach contributed to a more moderate and less polarised media environment, offering space for both candidates with a constructive tone.

Fig.5.5: Total size of Published Pieces about Presidential Candidates and the Government in El Comercio (1<sup>st</sup> Round)

6 January - 6 February 2025



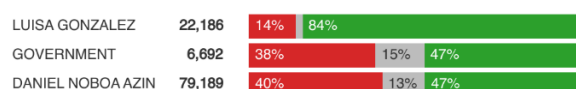
Size measured in the number of words

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring

Fig.5.7: Tone of Coverage in El Comercio (1<sup>st</sup> Round)

Based on size in number of words

■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive

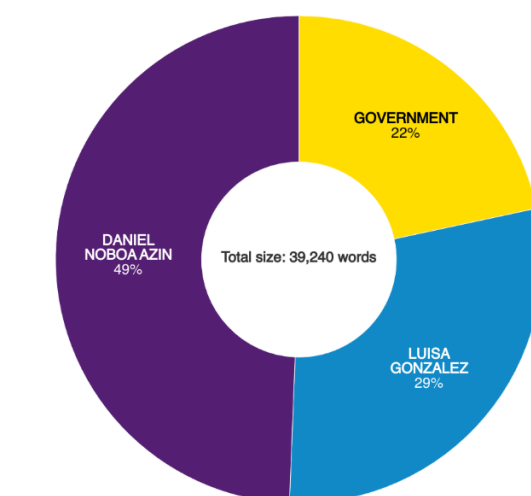


6 January - 6 February 2025

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring

Fig.5.6: Total size of Published Pieces about Presidential Candidates and the Government in El Comercio (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)

23 March - 10 April 2025



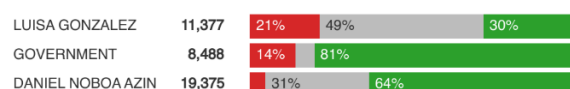
Size measured in the number of words

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring

Fig.5.8: Tone of Coverage in El Comercio (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)

Based on size in number of words

■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive



23 March - 10 April 2025

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring

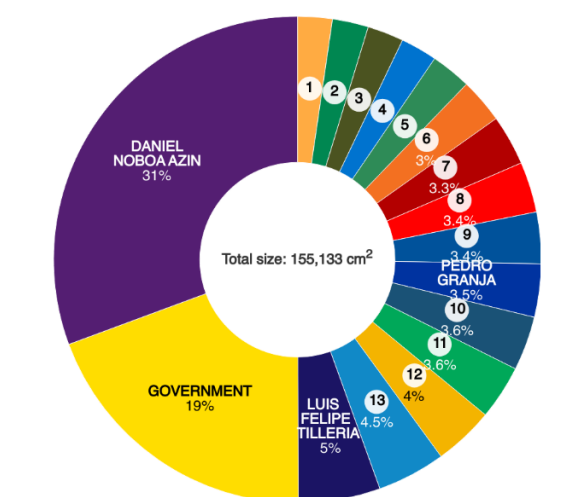


## 8. Private Print Newspapers

El Universo provided broad and relatively critical coverage in the first round, with Daniel Noboa and the Government receiving the most print space. Noboa's reporting, while extensive, was predominantly negative or neutral, with stories centred on campaign activities, legal and justice-related issues, and public reactions to these. Luisa González also received critical coverage, particularly in opinion pieces about corruption-related content, though her tone was slightly more balanced than Noboa's. Government reporting combined critical commentary with institutional achievements, notably in security and health. In the second round, the tone became more even-handed across all actors. Noboa remained the most prominently covered, with increased positive reporting, especially around campaign events. González saw a near-equal split between critical, neutral, and favourable stories, while Government coverage remained largely positive. The outlet's editorial approach placed emphasis on political accountability, while continuing to reflect the prominence of Noboa's candidacy.

Fig.6.1: Total size of articles about Presidential Candidates and the Government in El Universo (1<sup>st</sup> Round)

6 January - 6 February 2025



- 1 FRANCESCO TABACCHI 2 ENRIQUE GOMEZ 3 VICTOR ARAUS  
4 JIMMY JAIRALA VALLAZZA 5 IVAN SAQUICELA 6 CARLOS RABASCALL  
7 LEONIDAS IZA 8 JORGE ESCALA 9 HENRY KRONFLE KOZHAYA  
10 JUAN IVAN CUEVA 11 ANDREA GONZALEZ 12 HENRY CUCALON  
13 LUISA GONZALEZ

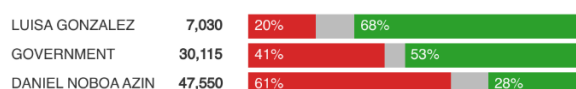
Size measured in cm² of printed space

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring

Fig.6.3: Tone of Coverage in El Universo (1<sup>st</sup> Round)

Based on size in cm² of printed space

■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive

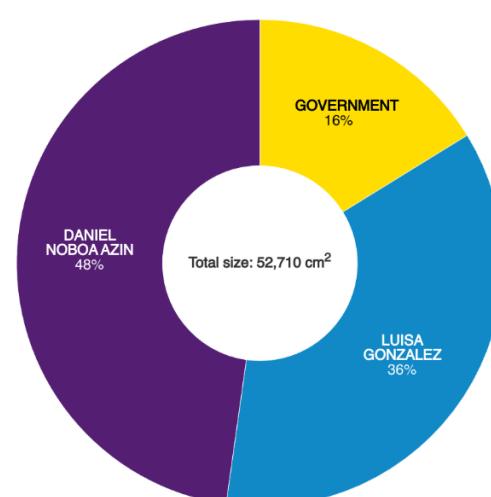


6 January - 6 February 2025

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring

Fig.6.2: Total size of articles about Presidential Candidates and the Government in El Universo (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)

23 March - 10 April 2025



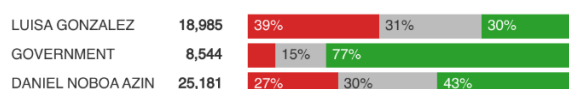
Size measured in cm² of printed space

Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring

Fig.6.4: Tone of Coverage in El Universo (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)

Based on size in cm² of printed space

■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive



23 March - 10 April 2025

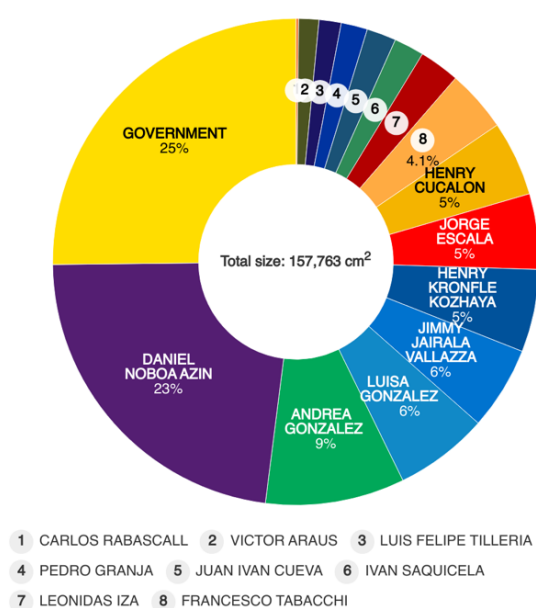
Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring



Expreso maintained a distinctly critical editorial stance throughout the campaign, particularly in its treatment of the main presidential candidates. In the first round, both Daniel Noboa and Luisa González received predominantly negative coverage, with critical content dominating reporting on their campaign activities, legal issues, and in opinion columns. González faced the most hostile tone, with over three-quarters of her coverage framed negatively and frequent mentions of corruption. Noboa was similarly criticised, particularly in connection with legal affairs, public perceptions, and security. Government coverage was also negative overall, primarily focusing on corruption and governance shortcomings. In the second round, this trend continued. Noboa and González remained the most visible figures, and while their coverage included some positive segments, negative reporting continued to dominate. The Government received relatively limited attention, though still largely critical. Expreso's coverage stood out for its confrontational tone and consistent scrutiny of all major actors.

Fig.6.5: Total size of articles about Presidential Candidates and the Government in Expreso (1<sup>st</sup> Round)

6 January - 6 February 2025

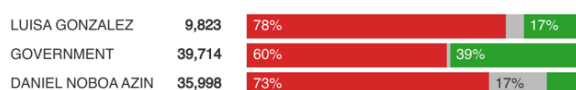


Size measured in cm<sup>2</sup> of printed space  
Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring

Fig.6.7: Tone of Coverage in Expreso (1<sup>st</sup> Round)

Based on size in cm<sup>2</sup> of printed space

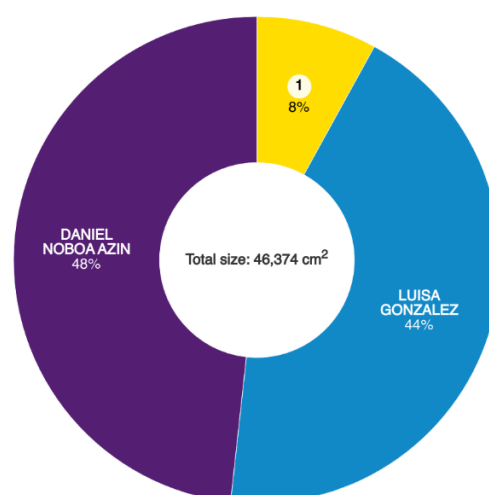
■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive



6 January - 6 February 2025  
Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring

Fig.6.6: Total size of articles about Presidential Candidates and the Government in Expreso (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)

23 March - 10 April 2025

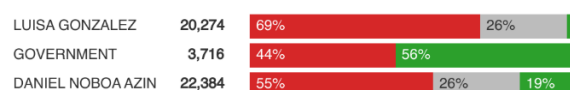


1 GOVERNMENT  
Size measured in cm<sup>2</sup> of printed space  
Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring

Fig.6.8: Tone of Coverage in Expreso (2<sup>nd</sup> Round)

Based on size in cm<sup>2</sup> of printed space

■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive



23 March - 10 April 2025  
Source: EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Media Monitoring

## Annex II – SOCIAL MEDIA MONITORING FINDINGS

### 1. EU EOM Methodology

The EU EOM applied a variety of complementary methods and techniques to analyse digital platforms and collect information on online election content.<sup>82</sup> Methodologies applied included quantitative and qualitative data analysis, legal analysis, as well as meetings with key interlocutors, in collaboration with different members of the core team and long-term observers.

The EU EOM analysed a representative set of accounts, profiles, pages and topics of national interest, to capture key campaign trends on the monitored digital platforms. The sample was selected considering the following criteria:

- **Relevance:** number of followers, interaction metrics (reach, interaction rate per publication, among others) and qualitative assessment of the potential impact of the accounts on the public agenda and political discourse.
- **Content of the publications:** social, political and electoral issues.
- **Political affiliation:** link of the accounts, pages or channels with political parties or movements.

The methodology used is based on data sources including:

- **Fanpage Karma** for Facebook, Instagram, X, TikTok and YouTube data scraping;
- **SentiOne** for X data scraping and punctual analysis of trending topics or keywords;
- **Golden Social Suite** for bot-driven amplification analysis on X;
- Meta public transparency tool **Facebook Ad Library** for paid-for content;
- **InVid Verification Plugin** extension to verify visual content suspected of being manipulated;
- **Datawrapper** and **Canva** for data visualization;

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<sup>82</sup> Monitoring messaging apps such as WhatsApp is not included in the scope of the EU EOM methodology due to data protection and privacy matters. However, EOMs may include relevant information coming from national and international credible organizations specialized in social media monitoring.

## 2. Social Media Environment

Internet penetration and social media use continue to increase in the country. At the beginning of 2025, 15,2 million people were using the Internet and there were 13,5 million users, with a penetration of around 84 per cent. TikTok, Facebook and YouTube lead in popularity, followed by Instagram, LinkedIn, and X. WhatsApp is the most popular instant messaging application.

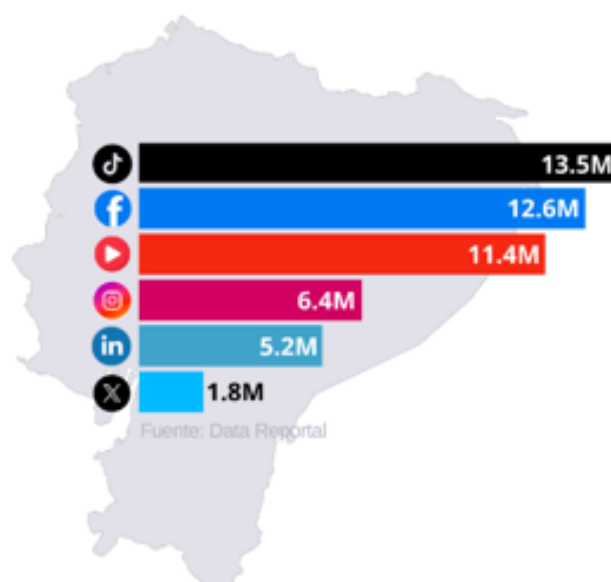


Figure 1. Social media users by population.

### Internet Access

■ Total population ■ Internet users ■ Social media users

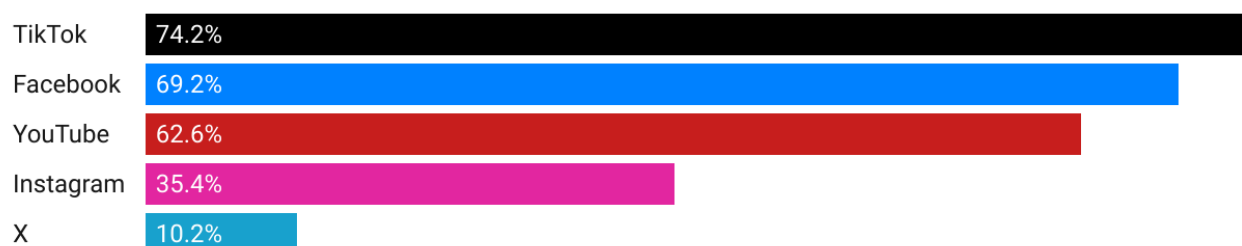


Source: Data Reportal • Created with Datawrapper

Figure 2. Internet and social network penetration rates in relation to the population.

### Most Used Online Platforms

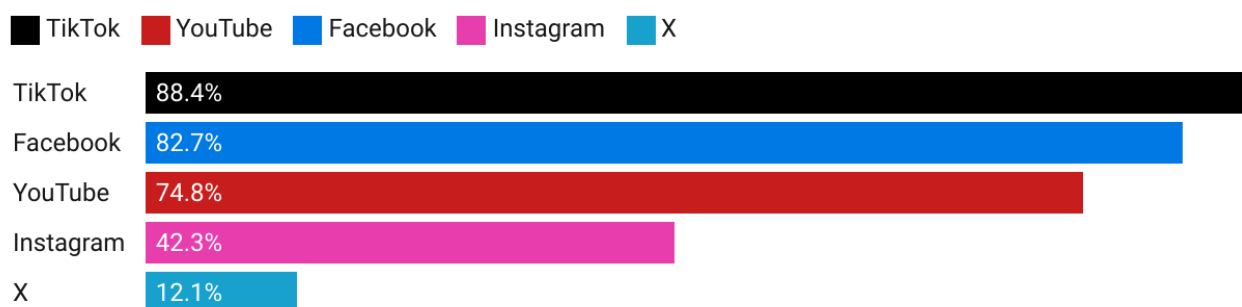
■ TikTok ■ YouTube ■ Facebook ■ Instagram ■ X



Source: Data Reportal • Created with Datawrapper

Figure 3. Most used online platforms of the total internet user base.

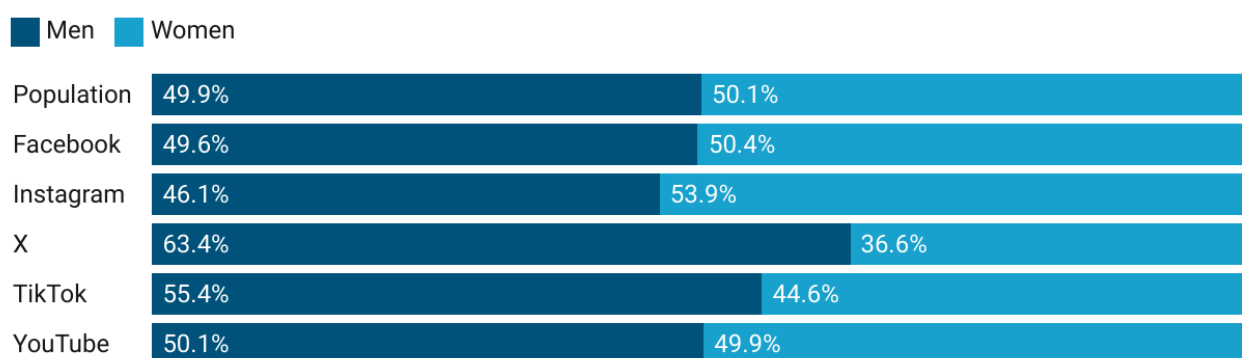
## Potential Advertising Reach by Platform



Source: Data Reportal • Created with Datawrapper

Figure 4. Online platforms, potential advertising reach of the total internet user base.

## Breakdown of Social Media Users by Gender



Source: Data Reportal • Created with Datawrapper

Figure 5. Breakdown of social media users by gender.

### 3. Scope of the EU EOM Ecuador 2025 Social Media Monitoring

The EU EOM started its activities by mapping the digital ecosystem, to assess the social media presence of presidential candidates, political parties and other prominent electoral actors, as well as to determine the importance of each platform as a campaign tool during the general elections. Different monitoring projects were designed based on priority issues, identified from preliminary consultations with local election stakeholders.

The EU EOM analysed online election-related content, focusing on the main campaign issues, paid political advertising, disinformation, content manipulation techniques, dissemination of violent speech, the tone of political discourse in the digital space and the public perception of the EU EOM's presence in the country, in coordination with the Press Officer. The monitoring activity covered the election campaign, the election silence period, voting day and post-election events. The sample was selected on the basis of various analytical objectives, which were subsequently reflected in different internal reports.

































Topic	Analytical approach	Monitoring period	Platforms	Tools
Actor mapping / multiple analysis	Qualitative	From January to April	    	Fanpage Karma
Campaign narratives Analysis (multiple)	Brainstorming Case-study	From January to April		SentiOne
Manipulation techniques (bot-driven amplification, trolls, deepfakes)	Case-study Qualitative	From January to April		Excel Golden Social Suite InVid Verification plugin
AI Generated content	Quantitative	From 23 March to 13 April	    	Manual
Gender-based violent Speech	Quantitative	From January to 9 February		SentiOne
Institutional Communication	Qualitative Quantitative	From 5 January to 13 April	 	Facebook Ad Library
Paid Political Advertisement	Qualitative Quantitative	From 5 January to 13 April	  	Facebook Ad Library Manual
Political Campaign by candidates	Qualitative Quantitative	From 5 January to 13 April	    	Fanpage Karma
Smear Campaign	Qualitative	From 5 January to 13 April	    	Facebook Ad Library Excel
Influencers Analysis	Qualitative	23 March / 13 April	   	Manual
Disinformation	Qualitative	From 5 January to 13 April	    	Excel
Election Day Developments	Qualitative	9 February 13 April	   	Excel
Hate Speech	Quantitative	From 5 January to 9 February		SentiOne

Figure 6. EU EOM's social media monitoring, methodological approach. Source: own elaboration.

## Social Media Monitoring Sample

Number of Actors per Platform					
Actor	Facebook	Instagram	X	TikTok	YouTube
National Assembly Candidates (top of the list candidates)	18	18	17	16	6
Presidential candidates	15	16	15	16	2
Institutional accounts	42	52	54	37	n/a
Influencers	39	55	84	67	n/a
Suspicious accounts (disinformation sources)	39	n/a	57	n/a	21
Total	153	141	227	136	29

Source: FanpageKarma • Created with Datawrapper

Figure 7. Social media monitoring sample.

## 4. Candidates' Digital Campaign

The EU EOM's social media monitoring unit analysed the campaign activities of the presidential candidates participating in both the first and second rounds of the election, focusing on their official accounts across the main platforms used for political outreach: Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X, and YouTube. A review of all content published by Luisa González and Daniel Noboa during the first-round campaign period (5 January – 9 February) and the second-round period (23 March – 13 April) shows that Luisa González was significantly more active, publishing nearly three times as much content as her opponent.

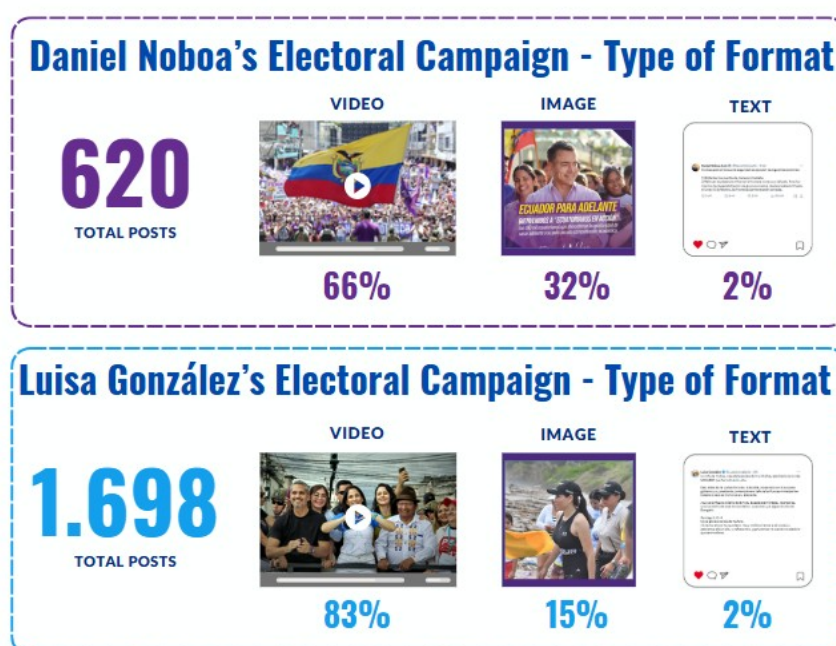


Figure 8. Noboa and González's digital campaign by type of format. Source: own elaboration.

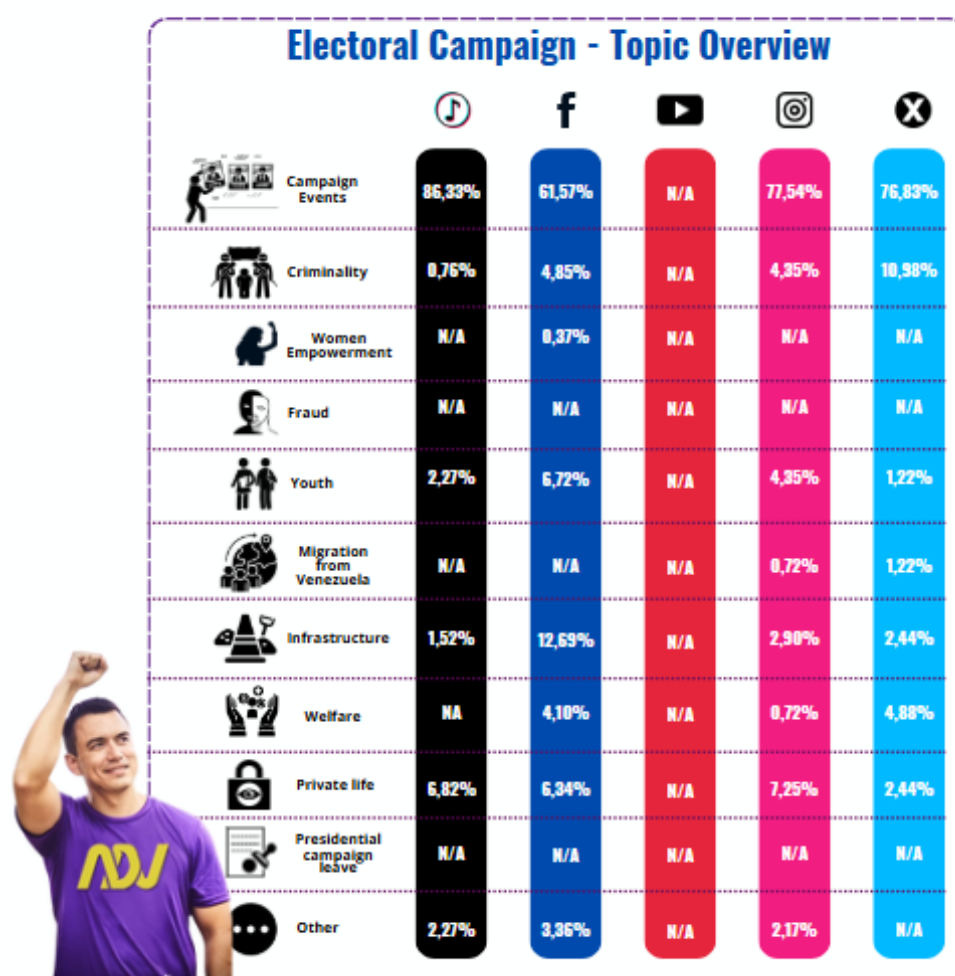


Figure 9. Daniel Noboa's digital campaign by topic. Source: own elaboration.

The tables below present the ten most viral hashtags associated with the online conversations generated by Daniel Noboa's official publications. These hashtags reflect the most frequently used and terms among users engaging with his content across social media platforms during the campaign period.

#### Top 10 Hashtags - Daniel Noboa

First round (January 5th to February 9th)	Times Shared
#danielnoboapresidente	80
#ecuador	76
#noboa	76
#danielnoboazin	75
#noboapresidente	66
#danielnoboa	64
#elnuevoecuador	63
#unasolavuelta	54
#votatodo7	54
#presidente	41

Source: FanpageKarma • Created with Datawrapper

#### Top 10 Hashtags - Daniel Noboa

Second round (March 23rd to April 13th)	Times Shared
#DanielNoboa	293
#ADN7	281
#Ecuador	271
#NoboaPresidente	268
#Noboa7	258
#ecuadorparaadelante	226
#7	68
#DebatePresidencial2025	37
#danielnoboapresidente	31
#adn	19

Source: FanpageKarma • Created with Datawrapper

Figure 10. Top 10 hashtags associated with the conversations generated by Noboa's digital campaign.



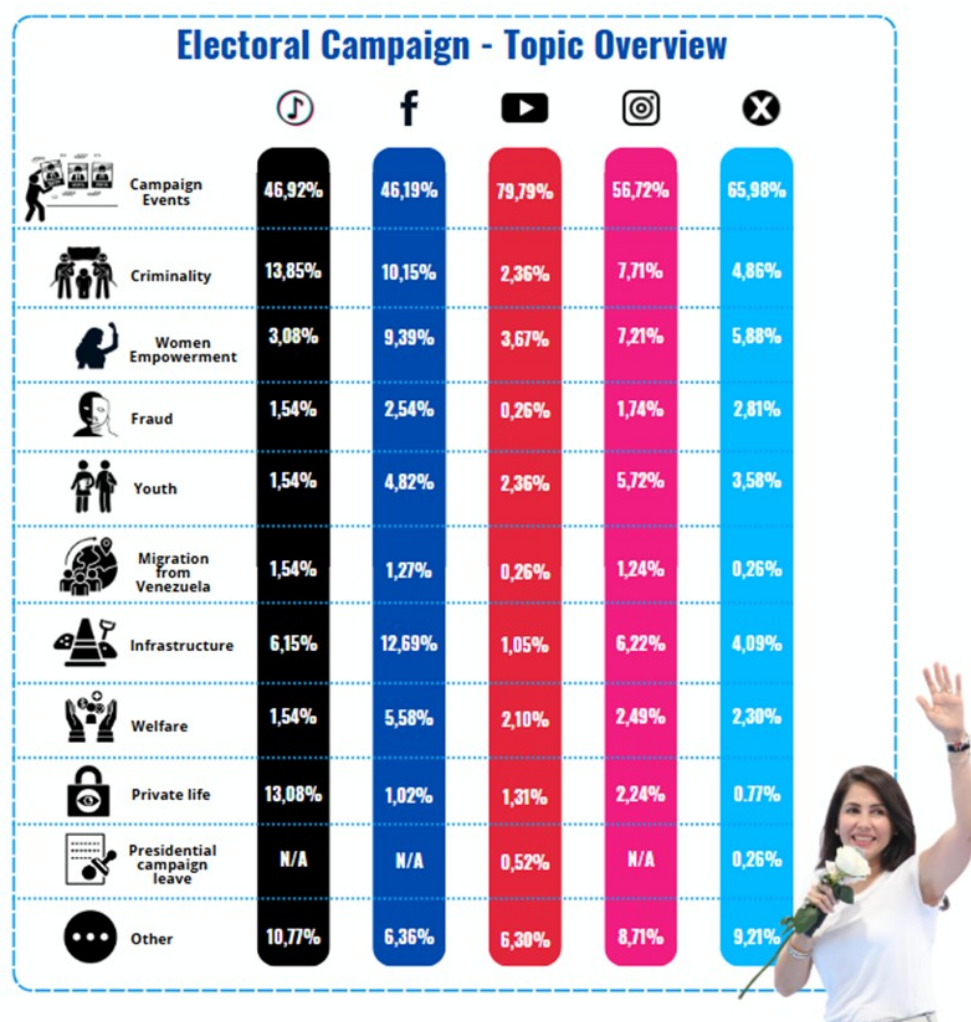


Figure 11. Luisa González's digital campaign by topic. Source: own elaboration.

The following tables display the ten most prominent hashtags linked to online interactions driven by Luisa González's official social media posts. These hashtags represent the most used and widely shared terms among users who engaged with her content throughout the campaign.

### Top 10 Hashtags - Luisa González

First round (January 5th to February 9th)	Times Shared
#LuisaPresidenta	887
#RevivirEcuador	505
#CambioSeguro	396
#RevivirEcuador	374
#LuisaEs	67
#Ecuador	55
#luisagonzález	41
#ecuatorianosporel mundo	38
#ecuatorianosensusa	36
#rc5	35

Source: FanpageKarma • Created with Datawrapper

### Top 10 Hashtags - Luisa González

Second round (march 23rd to april 13th)	Times Shared
#LuisaPorLaVida	604
#LuisaPresidenta	452
#LuisaPresidenta	259
#RevivirEcuador	109
#PorLaVida	77
#LuisaGonzalez	26
#DebatePresidencial	62
#DebatePresidencial2025	43
#NoboaNO	37
#Ecuador	17

Source: FanpageKarma • Created with Datawrapper

Figure 12. Top 10 hashtags associated with the conversations generated by González's digital campaign.

While Noboa focused his campaign efforts on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and X, González maintained a strong presence across all five platforms, particularly through the publication of approximately 380 video posts on her official YouTube channel. The EU EOM observed that 33 of the videos shared on YouTube by González surpassed 500,000 views, suggesting that they were boosted through paid advertising.

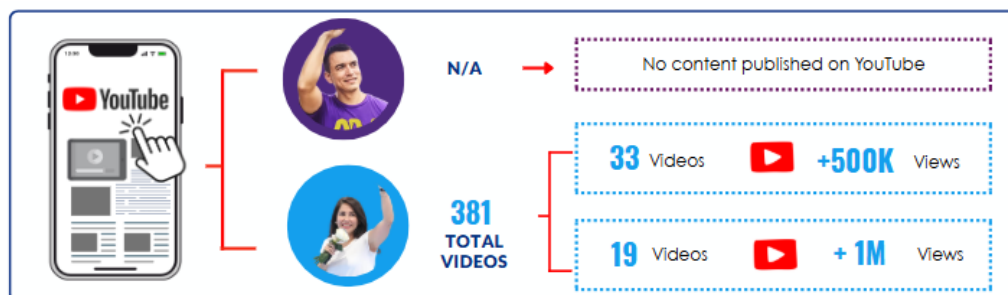


Figure 13. Content published on the candidates' official YouTube channels. Source: own elaboration.

## 5. Candidates Followers Growth

The EU EOM monitored the growth of the presidential candidates' communities on the four online platforms mainly used as campaigning tools in these elections, TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, and X. The tables below show the number of followers of the presidential candidates, since the start of the election campaign on 5 January, divided by election rounds.

FIRST ROUND						
	Candidate	Political party	Social Network	05/01	09/02	Total Growth
1			TikTok	18800	97400	78600
			Facebook	5869	8052	2183
			Instagram	48992	77529	28537
			X	41048	56538	15490
2			TikTok	6605	6915	310
			Facebook	77902	77886	-16
			Instagram	28353	29133	780
			X	104015	104241	226
3			TikTok	2400000	2600000	200000
			Facebook	370978	398388	27410
			Instagram	1106538	1264071	157533
			X	595856	614233	18377
4			TikTok	557	5531	4974
			Facebook	NA	NA	NA
			Instagram	774	1216	442
			X	369	507	138
5			TikTok	88700	95600	6900
			Facebook	16468	16871	403
			Instagram	41888	42977	1089
			X	8804	9149	345
6			TikTok	2282	3999	1717
			Facebook	22915	23165	250
			Instagram	12866	13429	563
			X	61342	61546	204
7			TikTok	5613	6461	848
			Facebook	16656	17009	353
			Instagram	9054	10678	1624
			X	17128	17391	263
8			TikTok	10600	11000	400
			Facebook	4694	4827	133
			Instagram	5247	5433	186
			X	14723	14774	51

















FIRST ROUND							
	Candidate	Political party	Social Network	05/01	09/02	Total Growth	Growth rate
9	 Jimmy Jairala		TikTok	111600	120600	9000	8.06%
			Facebook	1214155	1212926	-1229	-0.10%
			Instagram	190269	192145	1876	0.99%
			X	232790	232807	17	0.01%
10	 Jorge Escala		TikTok	2998	4275	1277	42.60%
			Facebook	3815	5214	1399	36.67%
			Instagram	312	644	NA	NA
			X	7600	8022	422	5.55%
11	 Juan Cueva		TikTok	26200	9682	-16518	-63.05%
			Facebook	17386	15869	-1517	-8.73%
			Instagram	68020	69319	1299	1.91%
			X	8256	8478	222	2.69%
12	 Leonidas Iza		TikTok	80900	94400	13500	16.69%
			Facebook	103384	105395	2011	1.95%
			Instagram	4478	7156	2678	59.80%
			X	106857	107737	880	0.82%
13	 Luis Felipe Tillería		TikTok	31500	50600	19100	60.63%
			Facebook	NA	NA	NA	NA
			Instagram	5853	7104	1251	21.37%
			X	7859	9101	1242	15.80%
14	 Luisa González		TikTok	547000	809400	262400	47.97%
			Facebook	183849	235894	52045	28.31%
			Instagram	146528	183423	36895	25.18%
			X	136121	146587	10466	7.69%
15	 Pedro Granja		TikTok	80100	80500	400	0.50%
			Facebook	4497	5078	581	12.92%
			Instagram	NA	18078	18078	NA
			X	170792	170958	166	0.10%
16	 Victor Aráuz		TikTok	40600	48900	8300	20.44%
			Facebook	1820	1860	40	2.20%
			Instagram	8958	8656	-302	-3.37%
			X	13541	13598	57	0.42%

Figure 14. Candidates' follower growth, first round. Source: Fanpage Karma.





SECOND ROUND						
	Candidate	Political Party	Social Network	23/03	13/04	Total Growth
			TikTok	960800	1100000	139200
			Facebook	293726	328244	34518
			Instagram	207298	220311	13013
			X	165346	171721	6375
			TikTok	2700000	2800000	100000
			Facebook	437331	489379	52048
			Instagram	1310944	1373691	62747
			X	632220	641078	8858

Figure 15. Candidates' follower growth, second round. Source: Fanpage Karma.

## 6. Paid-for Content

The EU EOM monitored the online political advertising spending of the two candidates competing in the presidential run-off. The EU EOM observed that both candidates advertised on Facebook, Instagram and Google.

The following is a summary of Daniel Noboa's and Luisa González's expenditure on advertising across Meta platforms during the first and second rounds of the presidential campaign. As Google does not provide a political advertising transparency report for Ecuador, the EU EOM was unable to verify the identity of advertisers, or the amounts spent on political advertising through Google's platforms and services.

### Paid for Content / First Round

(January 5th, 2025 to February 9th, 2025)

	Daniel Noboa	Luisa González
Total ad spend by candidate (approx.)	138K	108K
Total number of ads by candidate	233	166

Source: Facebook Ad Library • Created with Datawrapper

Figure 16. Presidential candidates paid-for content on Meta, first round. Source: Facebook Ad Library.

### Paid for Content /Second Round

(March 23rd, 2025 to April 13th, 2025)

	Daniel Noboa	Luisa González
Total ad spend by candidate (approx.)	626K	25K
Total number of ads by candidate	1853	61
Total ad spend by support fanpages (approx.)	766K	286K
Total number of ads by support fanpages	3271	1001

Source: Facebook Ad Library • Created with Datawrapper

Figure 17. Presidential candidates paid-for content on Meta, second round. Source: Facebook Ad Library.



## 7. Election-related Information Shared by Non-contestants

### *Gender-based harmful content analysis*

As part of its broader observation efforts, the EU EOM conducted a social media monitoring exercise to identify potential instances of online hate speech, with a specific focus on gender-based violence. The exercise concentrated on the platform X and employed SentiOne for data extraction, followed by a content analysis methodology.

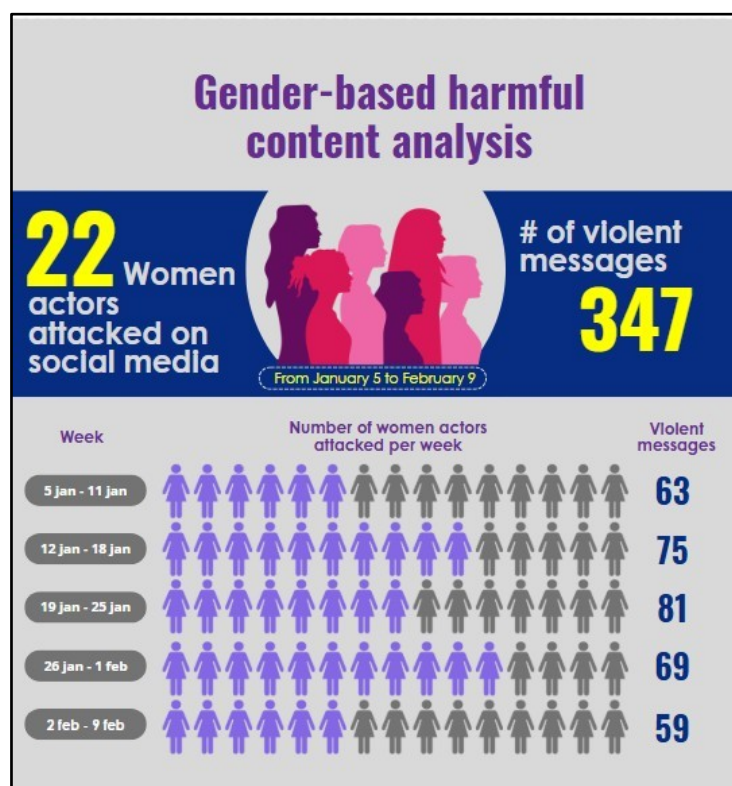


Figure 18. Key findings. Source: own elaboration.

The attacks originated from both ordinary users and influential accounts. The content analysis identified key patterns of gender-based violent discourse, with the majority of cases (202) discrediting or minimizing women's roles in society. Objectification of women was observed in 101 instances, while 20 cases involved insults related to physical appearance. Additionally, 7 instances referenced social class or economic status, and 17 cases employed slurs of a racist or ethnic nature.

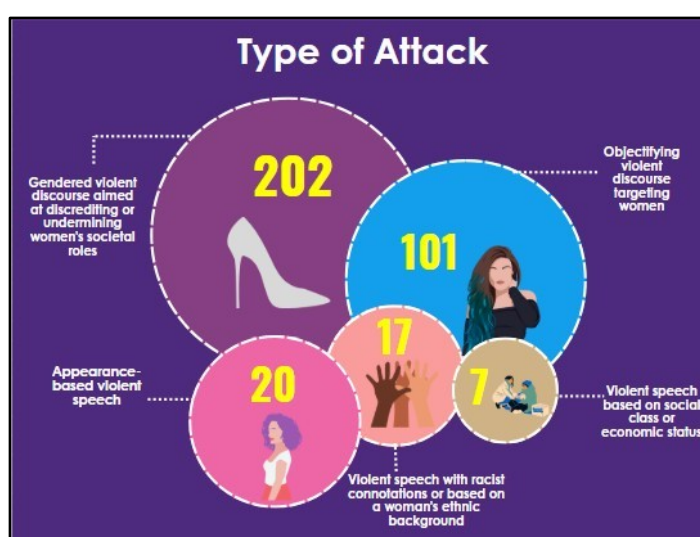


Figure 19. Key findings. Source: own elaboration.

## 8. Information Manipulation

### AI-generated content

The MOE UE identified 131 instances of AI-generated content disseminated across Facebook, Instagram, X and TikTok. Fifty-six of these items were shared by accounts suspected to be trolls or bots, 48 by influencers or content creators, 27 by ordinary users.

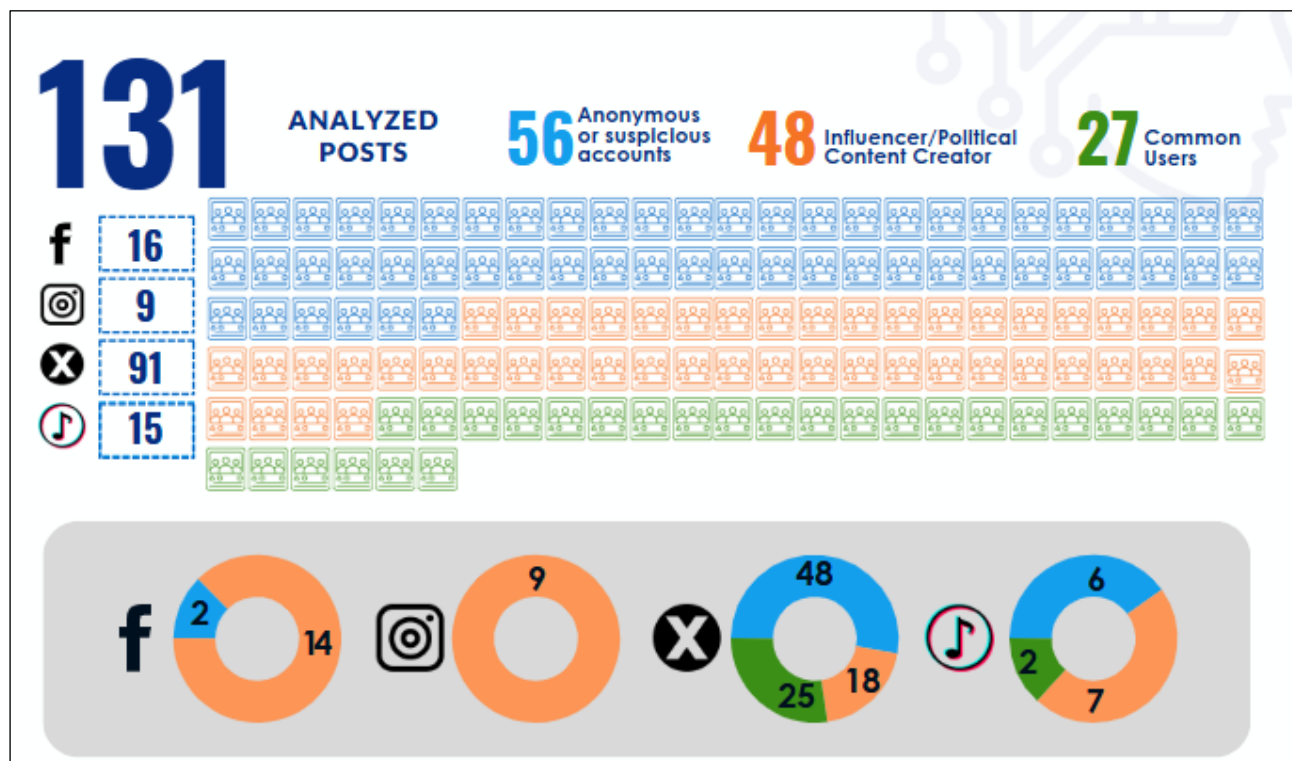


Figure 20. AI-generated items analysed. Source: own elaboration.

The analysis revealed that AI was used to manipulate video in 63 cases, images in 55, generate text in seven, and clone voices or alter audio in six.

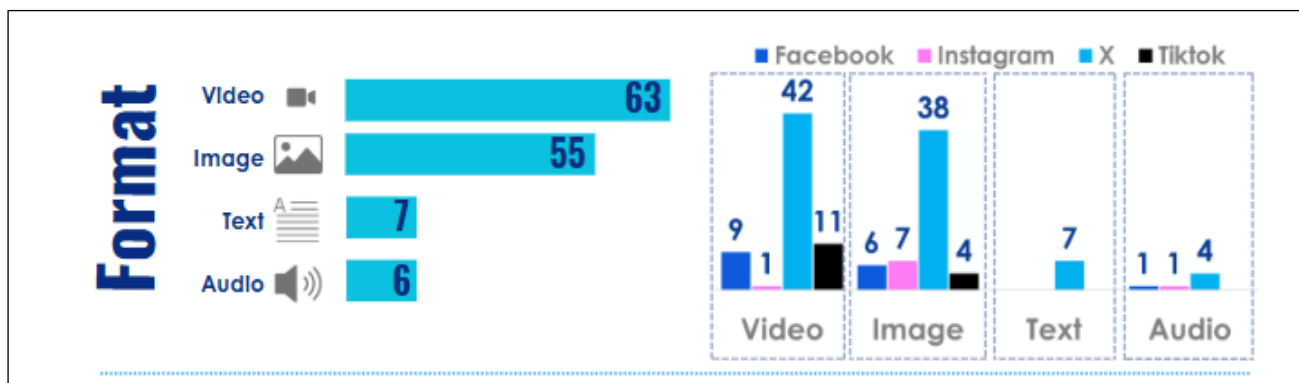


Figure 21. Format of the AI-generated items analysed. Source: own elaboration.

While some AI-generated content was employed for satire or genuine campaign promotion, the majority aimed to delegitimize political opponents (91 cases) and spread disinformation (7).

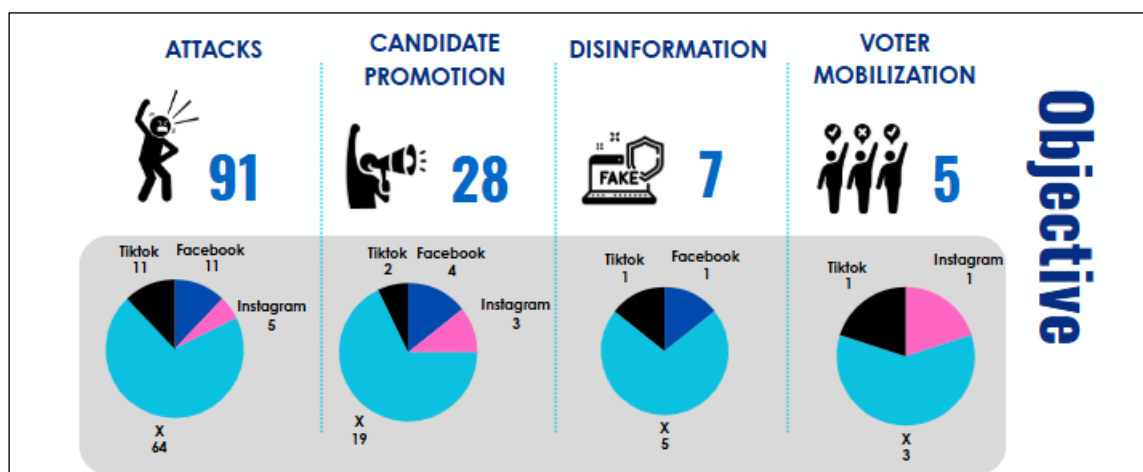


Figure 22. Objective of the AI-generated items analysed. Source: own elaboration.

The EU EOM observed that although the reach of the AI-generated content analysed during the campaign period was relatively limited, there was a notable increase in the volume of such content during the campaign.

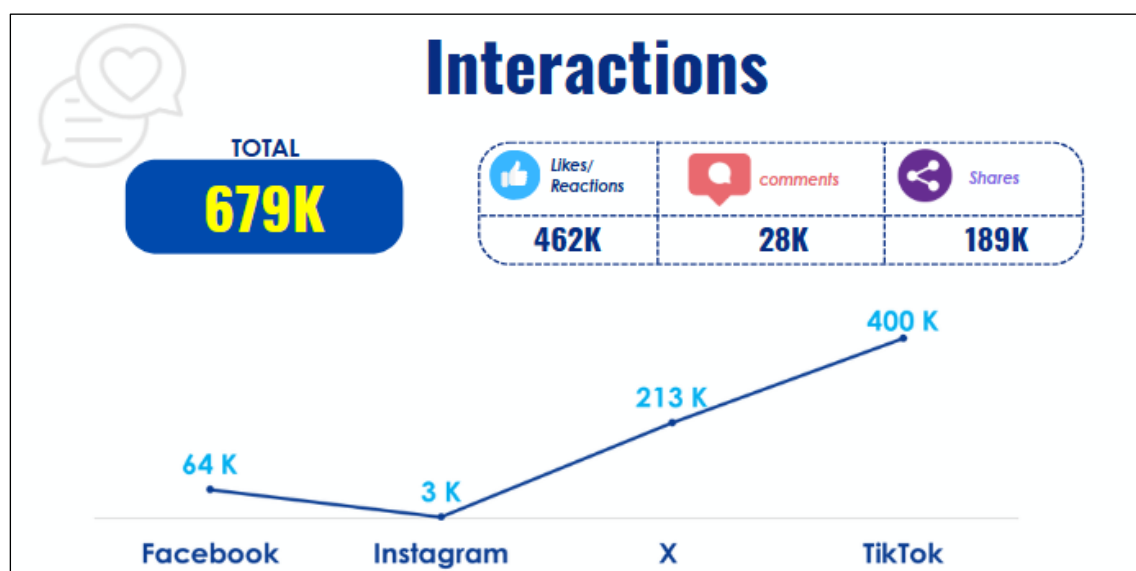


Figure 23. Total interactions of the AI-generated items analysed. Source: own elaboration.<sup>83</sup>

Local interlocutors confirmed that this was the first election in Ecuador where AI-generated materials featured prominently and expressed concern regarding the growing sophistication of these contents, noting that they can be difficult to distinguish from authentic information. This evolution poses significant challenges for voters, the majority of whom are unfamiliar with AI-generated practices.

<sup>83</sup> As to 25 April 2025.



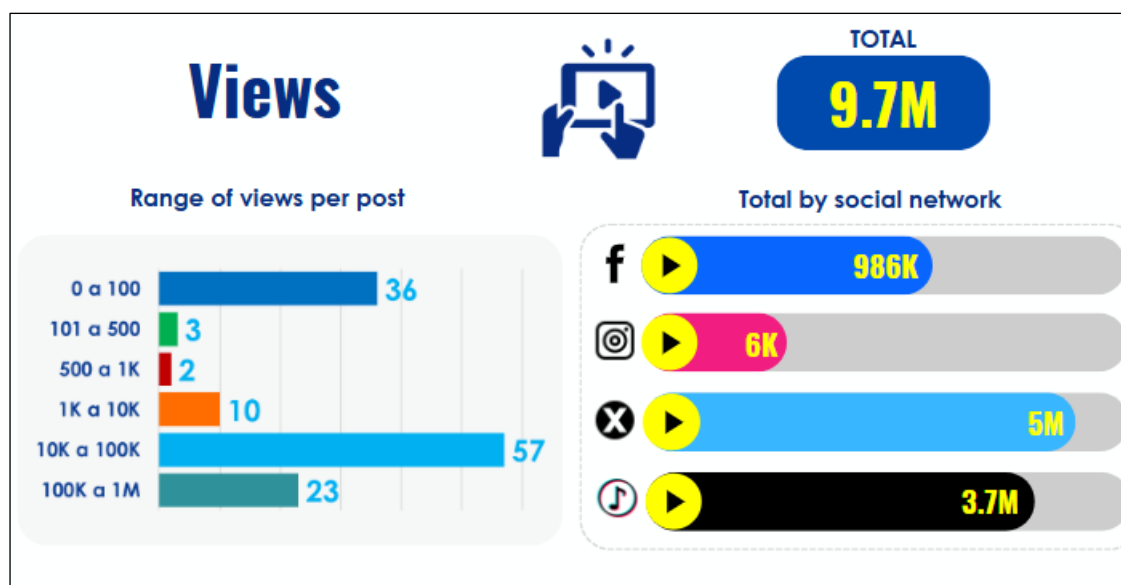


Figure 24. Views of the AI-generated items analysed. Source: own elaboration.

AI-generated content observed during the campaign included 27 instances of fabricated political reports attributed to reputable media outlets.



Figure 25. Examples of content impersonating well-known media outlets.

### Disinformation

Three fact-checking initiatives took significant steps to counter disinformation during the electoral period. An analysis conducted by the EU EOM of 403 disinformation items debunked by Lupa Media, Ecuador Chequea, and AFP Factual between 5 January and 13 April revealed that 171 items concerned the verification of public statements, 90 addressed attacks against candidates or public officials, 66 focused on attacks against the CNE, six involved allegations of fraud, five related to false opinion polls, and two involved false exit polls.

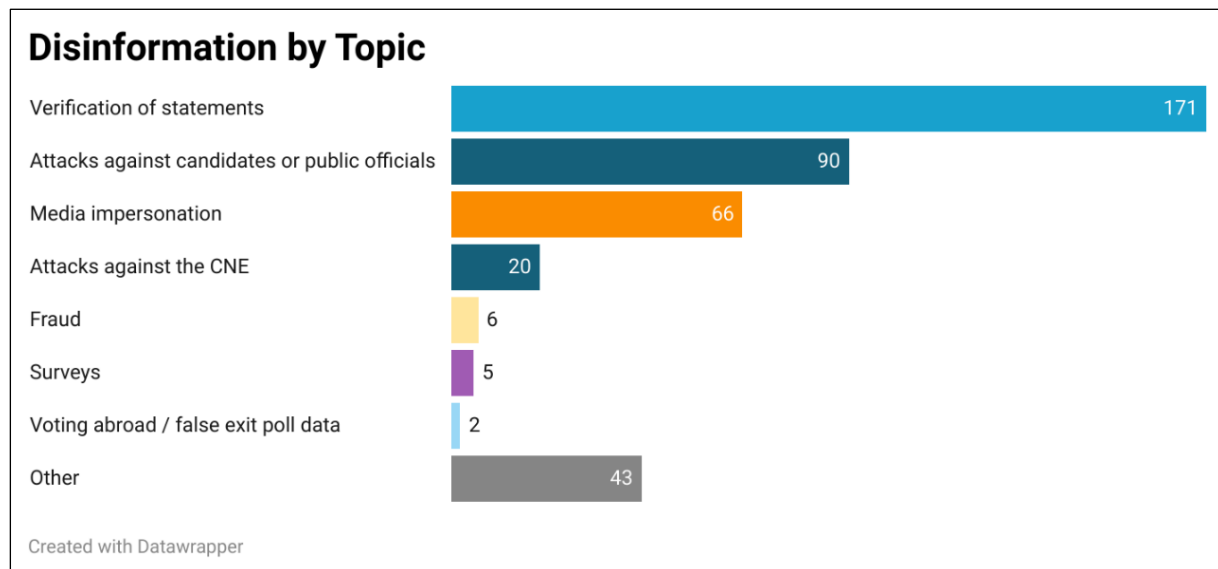


Figure 26. Disinformation cases categorized by topic. Source: EU EOM, own elaboration.

Of the 403 disinformation items verified, 64 involved the use of AI-generated content (16 per cent).

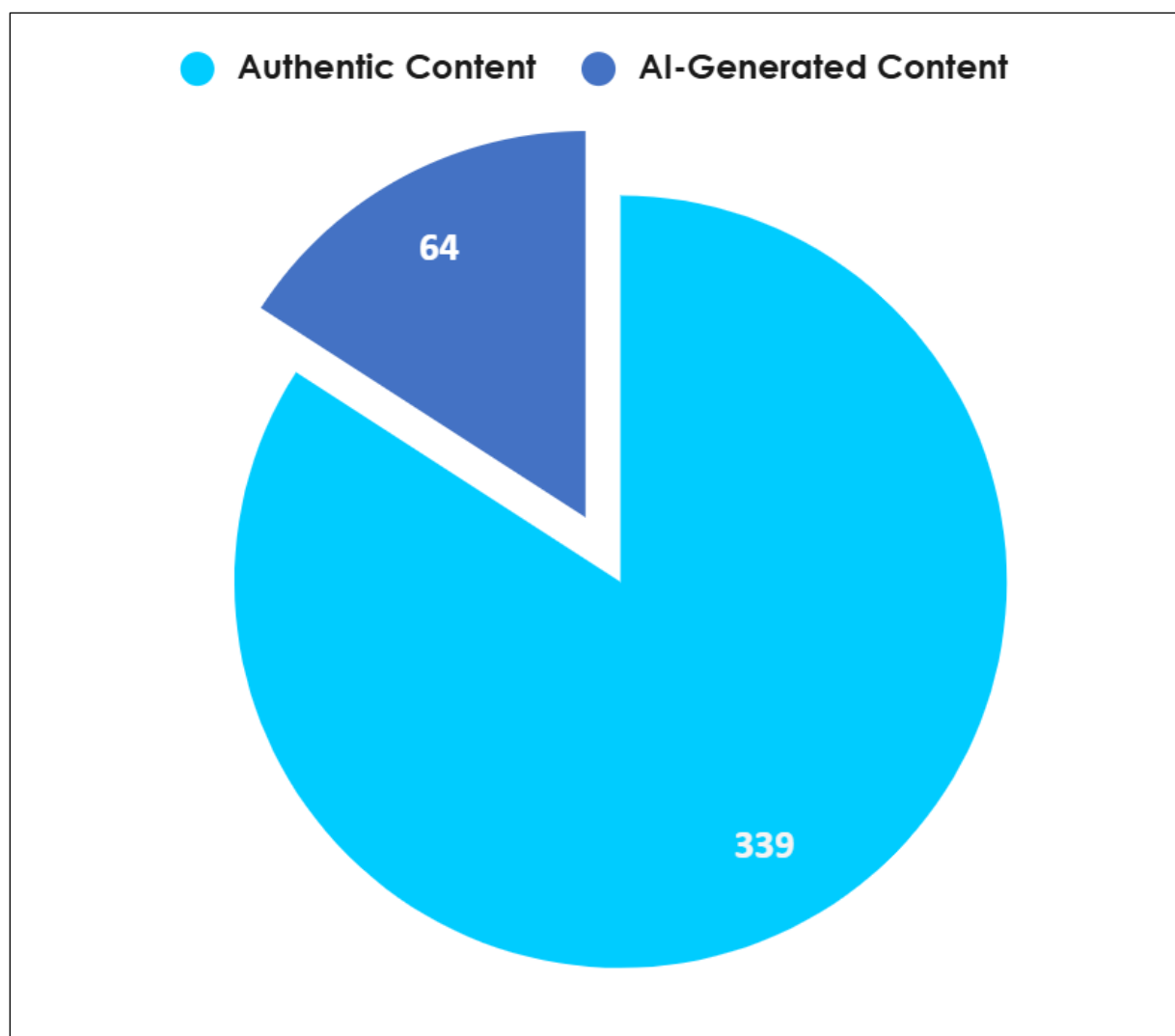


Figure 27. Breakdown of AI-generated misinformation cases verified by fact-checkers.

## Annex III – ELECTION RESULTS

## 1. Seats and voters per constituency

Constituency	Seats	Voters	% of electorate
Azuay	6	635,167	4.62%
Bolívar	3	179,381	1.31%
Cañar	3	194,783	1.42%
Carchi	3	150,459	1.10%
Chimborazo	4	421,768	3.07%
Cotopaxi	4	394,410	2.87%
El Oro	5	552,652	4.02%
Esmeraldas	5	433,155	3.15%
Galápagos	2	22,603	0.16%
Guayas - Constituency N° 1	6	3,238,444	23.58%
Guayas - Constituency N° 2	6		
Guayas - Constituency N° 3	6		
Guayas - Constituency N° 4	6		
Imbabura	4	395,165	2.88%
Loja	4	405,742	2.95%
Los Ríos	6	703,901	5.12%
Manabí - Constituency N° 1 (north)	5	1,302,367	9.48%
Manabí - Constituency N° 2 (south)	5		
Morona Santiago	3	143,275	1.04%
Napo	2	100,009	0.73%
OCV - Canada and United States	2	151,603	1.10%
OCV - Europe, Oceania and Asia	2	270,467	1.97%
OCV - Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa	2	34,415	0.25%
Orellana	3	139,417	1.01%
Pastaza	2	82,694	0.60%
Pichincha - Constituency N° 1 (urban)	5	2,387,550	17.38%
Pichincha - Constituency N° 2 (urban)	5		
Pichincha - Constituency N° 3 (rural)	5		
Pichincha - Constituency N° 4 (rest of Pichincha)	4		
Santa Elena	4	280,163	2.04%
Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas	4	396,558	2.89%
Sucumbíos	3	162,213	1.18%
Tungurahua	5	465,885	3.39%
Zamora Chinchipe	2	92,069	0.67%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>13,736,315</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

## 2. Turnout first and second round

		First round		Second round	
Province	Registered voters	Actual voters (pres. elect.)	Turnout %	Actual voters	Turnout %
Azuay	635.167	494.882	77,91%	502.989	79,19%
Bolívar	179.381	149.906	83,57%	151.639	84,53%
Cañar	194.783	142.895	73,36%	144.316	74,09%
Carchi	150.459	128.893	85,67%	130.881	86,99%
Chimborazo	421.768	334.806	79,38%	339.893	80,59%
Cotopaxi	394.410	333.688	84,60%	337.536	85,58%
El Oro	552.652	456.901	82,67%	459.139	83,08%
Esmeraldas	433.155	351.988	81,26%	355.265	82,02%
OCV - Canada and United States	151.603	38.564	25,44%	46.800	30,87%
OCV - Europe, Oceania and Asia	270.467	104.222	38,53%	118.366	43,76%
OCV - Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa	34.415	8.850	25,72%	10.304	29,94%
Galápagos	22.603	17.151	75,88%	16.313	72,17%
Guayas	3.238.444	2.732.519	84,38%	2.751.216	84,95%
Imbabura	395.165	332.704	84,19%	336.268	85,10%
Loja	405.742	322.968	79,60%	325.791	80,30%
Los Ríos	703.901	618.009	87,80%	618.870	87,92%
Manabí	1.302.367	1.126.824	86,52%	1.132.840	86,98%
Morona Santiago	143.275	107.419	74,97%	110.526	77,14%
Napo	100.009	86.433	86,43%	87.799	87,79%
Orellana	139.417	119.590	85,78%	121.052	86,83%
Pastaza	82.694	66.636	80,58%	67.815	82,01%
Pichincha	2.387.550	2.008.373	84,12%	2.035.639	85,26%
Santa Elena	280.163	253.068	90,33%	254.850	90,96%
Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas	396.558	331.157	83,51%	334.030	84,23%
Sucumbíos	162.213	136.842	84,36%	138.411	85,33%
Tungurahua	465.885	385.221	82,69%	390.652	83,85%
Zamora Chinchipe	92.069	73.980	80,35%	75.047	81,51%
<b>Total</b>	<b>13.736.315</b>	<b>11.264.489</b>	<b>82,01%</b>	<b>11.394.247</b>	<b>82,95%</b>

## 3. Blank and invalid votes

Election	Registered voters	Actual voters	Blank votes	Blank votes %	Invalid votes	Invalid votes %
Presidential (first round)	13.736.315	11.264.489	243.573	2,16%	765.649	6,80%
National Assembly (provincial)	13.736.315	11.263.861	909.315	8,07%	989.832	8,79%
National Assembly (national)	13.736.315	11.264.019	1.109.547	9,85%	1.040.695	9,24%
Andean Parliament	13.736.315	11.264.338	894.739	7,94%	1.188.097	10,55%
Presidential (second round)	13.736.315	11.394.247	75.956	0,67%	763.180	6,70%

**4. Presidential Election Results, First Round**

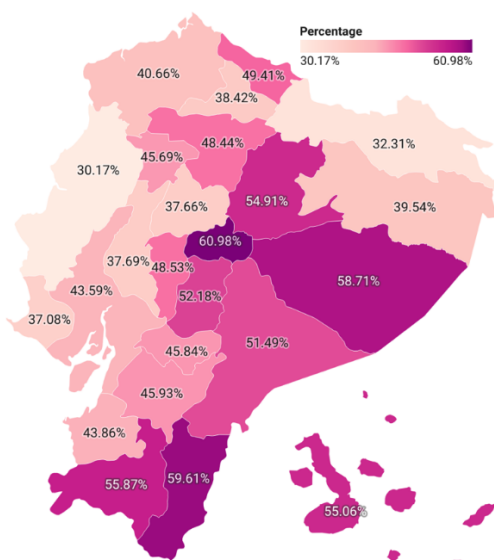
	<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Votes</b>	<b>% valid votes</b>
1	Daniel Noboa Azín	4,527,606	44.17%
2	Luisa González	4,510,860	44.00%
3	Leonidas Iza	538,456	5.25%
4	Andrea González	275,376	2.69%
5	Henry Kronfle Kozhaya	73,293	0.71%
6	Pedro Granja	53,940	0.53%
7	Jimmy Jairala Vallazza	40,559	0.40%
8	Jorge Escala	40,483	0.39%
9	Henry Cucalón	37,316	0.36%
10	Luis Felipe Tillería	33,239	0.32%
11	Francesco Tabacchi	26,768	0.26%
12	Víctor Araus	22,678	0.22%
13	Carlos Rabascall	22,270	0.22%
14	Enrique Gómez	18,815	0.18%
15	Juan Iván Cueva	17,545	0.17%
16	Iván Saquicela	11,985	0.12%

**5. Presidential Election Results, Second Round**

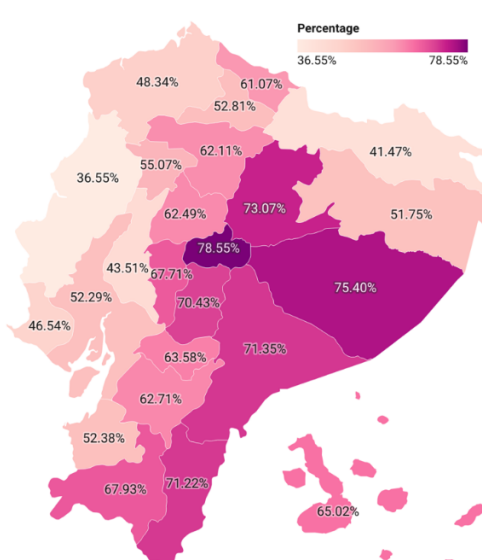
	<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Votes</b>	<b>% valid votes</b>
1	Daniel Noboa Azín	5,870,618	55.63%
2	Luisa González	4,683,260	44.37%

## 6. Presidential Election Results - Daniel Noboa and Luisa González

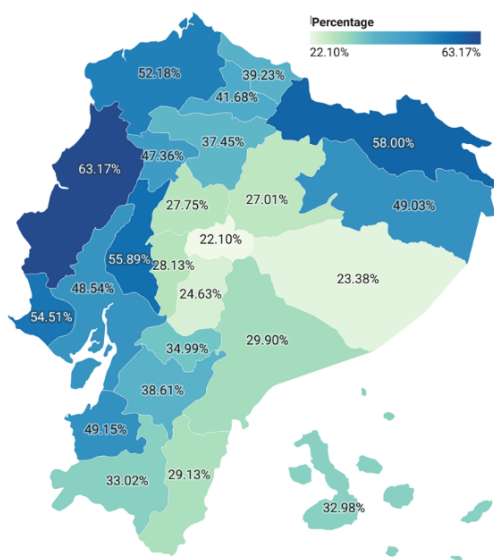
**Daniel Noboa - First Round**



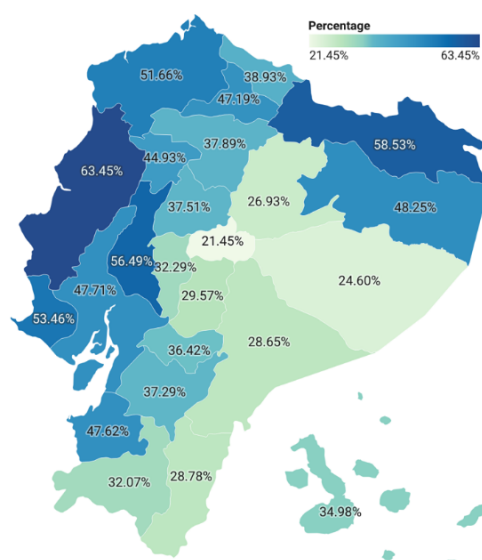
**Daniel Noboa - Second Round**



**Luisa González - First Round**



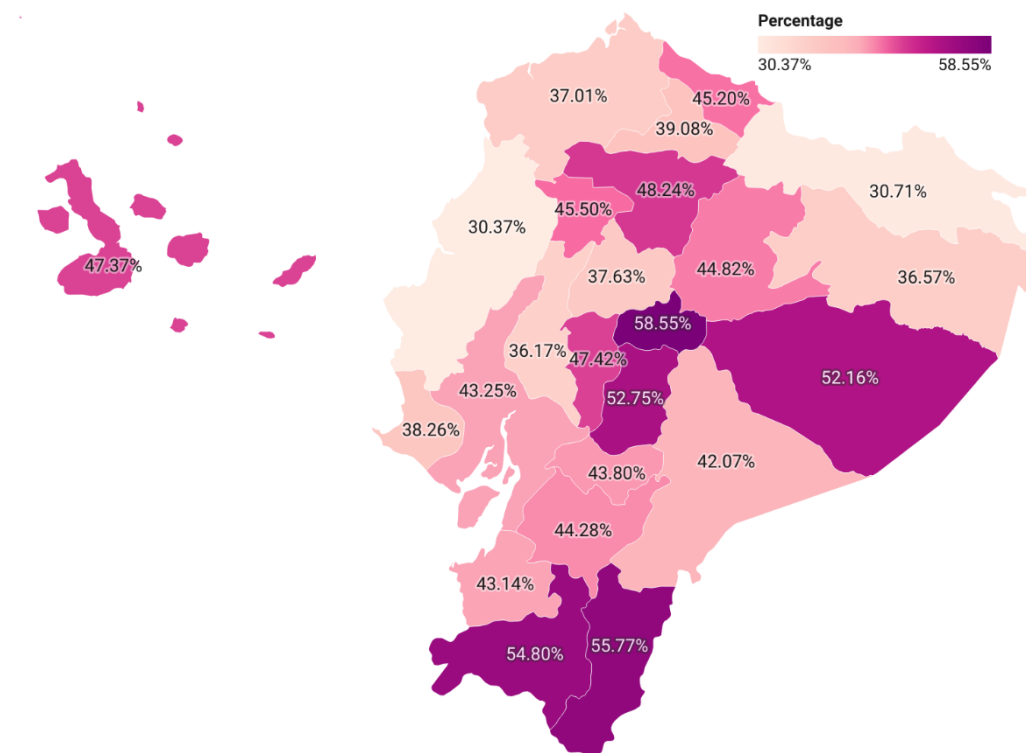
**Luisa González - Second Round**



## 7. Election Results for the National Assembly

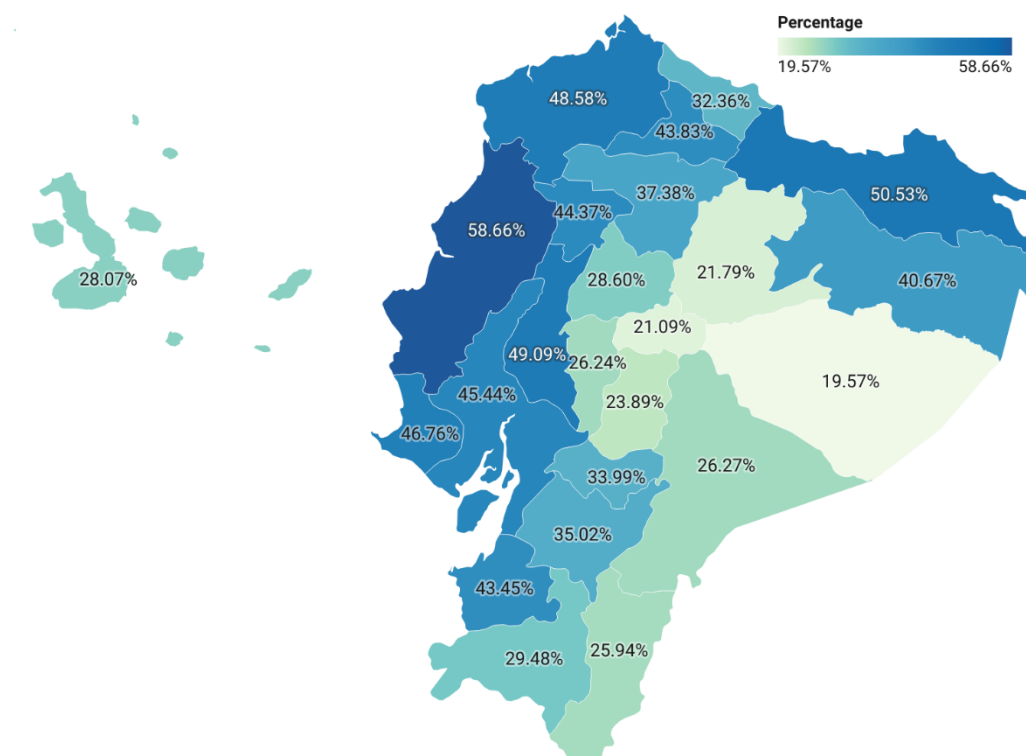
### ADN - National Assembly

Share of votes in the national constituency election



### RC-RETO - National Assembly

Share of votes in the national constituency election





## 8. Composition of the National Assembly

Political party	Assembly: National	Assembly: Provincial	Assembly: Out-of-country	Total
Movimiento Acción Democrática Nacional, ADN	7	57	3	67
Revolución Ciudadana - RETO	7	56	3	66
Movimiento de Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik	1	9	-	9
Partido Social Cristiano	-	4	-	4
PSC/PSP/DSI	-	1	-	1
PID/UP/PSE	-	1	-	1
Movimiento Construye	-	1	-	1
Provincial Movements	-	2	-	2

Composition of the National Assembly of Ecuador  
Term 2025 - 2029

