

A decorative graphic consisting of two overlapping circles in a light green color. The larger circle is on the right, and a smaller one overlaps its left side. The text is centered within the larger circle.

Country Sheet Ecuador

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Foreword

The Country Sheet Ecuador is a compilation of information from related documents with factual country information, economic, social and development priorities, as also information on higher education and university cooperation in Ecuador. The information included is extracted from policy documents, websites and strategy papers from EU, UNDP, World Bank and other organisations. Contextual information from 2011 midterm evaluation of the IUC Cuenca University, performed by Ruddi Vaes and Bart Delvaux (international consultants) was also included.

This compiled document was realised by Peter De Lannoy, VLIR-UOS South Coordinator, and is by no means to be considered as a policy document. Its sole purpose is to propose a working document with background and context for Country Strategy Identification of VLIR-UOS cooperation in and with Ecuador.

As this concerns a working document, frequent updates will occur. The date of compilation of the current version is mentioned in the footer of the document.

List of abbreviations

AAR	Annual Activity Report
ACORDES	(Programa de) Acompañamiento Organizacional para el Desarrollo
ALFA	Latin American Academic Training Programme
ALINVEST	Latin American investment programme for the promotion of relations between SMEs
AP	Activity Programme
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BSc.	Bachelor of Science
BTC	Belgian Technical Cooperation
CAF	Andean Development Corporation
CAN	Andean Community of Nations: Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru + AISCEA Centro de Estudios Amb
CEAACES	Consejo Nacional De Evaluación Y Acreditación De La Educación Superior Del Ecuador
CES	National Council of Higher Education
CESPLA	Centro de Estudios Sociales y Politicos Latinoamericanos
CITYPRES	World Heritage City Preservation Management Project (V.5 vertical project)
CONACYT	Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología.
CONEA	National Council on Evaluation and Accreditation
CONESUP	Consejo Nacional de Educación Superior
CPI	Corruption Perception Index (Transparency International)
CTG	Close the Gap (VLIR programme)
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (of the OECD)
DE	Distant Education
DGD	Directorate General for Development Cooperation (the former DGDC)
DGIC	Directorate General for International Cooperation
DIUC	Dirección de Investigaciones de la Universidad de Cuenca
EI	Own Initiative Project (Eigen Initiatief Project)
EPN	Escuela Politécnica Nacional
ESPOL	Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral

ETAPA	Empresa Municipal de Telecomunicaciones, Agua Potable, Alcantarillado y Saneamiento
EU	European Union
EUR	Euro
FWO	Research Foundation Flanders (Fonds voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek)
GIS	Geographic Information System
HDI	Human Development Index (UNDP)
HEI	Higher Education Institute
HUMSEX	Human Sexuality Project (V.2 Vertical Project)
ICOS	Instellingscoördinator Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (entity within the Flemish universities in charge of the coordination of university development cooperation)
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IFS	International Foundation for Science (IFS)
ICCA	Interamerican Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
INCO	European Union academic cooperation programme
INPC	Instituto Nacional del Patrimonio Cultural
INSTCHAN	Institutional Change to Strengthen Research and Education (T.1 Transversal Project)
IR	Intermediate Result
IUC	Institutional University Cooperation
JSCM	Joint Steering Committee Meeting
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
KRA	Key Result Area
KUL	University of Louvain (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven)
LAN	Local Area Network
LFA	Logical Framework Analysis / Approach
LogFrame	Logical Framework
LUC	Limburg University Centre (Limburgs Universitair Centrum)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MBA	Master of Business Administration
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MEDPLAN	Pharmacological Characterization of Medicinal Plants Project (V.4 vertical project)

MIGDEV	International Migration and Local Development Project (V.6 vertical project)
MHO	Dutch programme on international university cooperation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MOV	Means of Verification (LogFrame)
MSc.	Master of Sciences
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
MU-K	Moi University, Kenya
N&S	North and South
N.A.	Not Applicable
N.I.	No Information available
NSSCP	North South South Cooperation Programme
NUFFIC	Dutch counterpart of the VLIR
NUTHEALTH	Food, Nutrition and Health Project (V.1 vertical project)
OD	Organisational Development
OECD	Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development
OVI	Objectively Verifiable Indicator
PC	Personal Computer
PCM	Programme/Project Cycle Management
Ph.D.	Doctor of Philosophy
PME	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation
PMES	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation System
PP	Partner Programme
PRECOM ³ OS	Preventive Conservation, Maintenance and Monitoring of Monuments and Sites
PROMAS	Programa para el Manejo del Agua y del Suelo
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSU	Programme Support Unit
PYDLOS	Población y Desarrollo Local Sustentable
RET	Research, Extension and Training
RIP	Research Initiative Programme
RUG	University of Ghent (Rijksuniversiteit Gent)
SENACYT	Secretaría Nacional de Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación

SENESCYT	Secretaría Nacional de Educación Superior, Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación
SENPLADES	Secretaría Nacional de Planificación y Desarrollo
TOR / ToR	Terms of Reference
UA	University of Antwerp
UCOS	University Centre for Development Cooperation (Universitair Centrum voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking)
UCuenca	Universidad de Cuenca
UDC	University Development Cooperation
UNDP	United Nations Development Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UOS	Universitaire Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (= UDC)
URBAL	Latin American Urban Programme (for the establishment of networks of local authorities in various areas of activity)
VLIR	Flemish Interuniversity Council (Vlaamse Interuniversitaire Raad)
VND	Vietnamese Dong
VUB	University of Brussels (Vrije Universiteit Brussel)
VVOB	Vereniging voor Opleidingsprogramma's in het Buitenland (Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance)
WAN	Wide Area Network
WATQUAL	Integrated Water Quality Management Project (V.3 vertical project)
WB	World Bank
WTO	World Trade Organization
WWW	World Wide Web

Statistics

ECUADOR: SOME BASIC FIGURES				
INDICATOR		VALUE	YEAR	RANKED POSITION VLIR-UOS PARTNER COUNTRIES
BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT (VLIR-UOS country selection methodology)				
1	BoD-score (based on basket of 2, 3 and 4)	0,30	2010	16
2	Human Development Index	0,70	2010	3
3	Public Spending on Education (as % percentage of GDP)	1,30	2000	17
VLIR-UOS INVESTMENTS				
4	Total VLIR-UOS-investments	1.031.750	2010	6
5	# Institutional University Cooperation	1	2011	3
6	# Own Initiatives	2	2011	4
7	# South initiatives	-	2011	3
8	# Scholars (ICP/ITP/KOI/ICP-PhD)	10	2010	7
9	# Travel Grants + VLADOC	32	2009	5
EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT AID				
10	# Universities	71	2011	6
11	School enrollment, tertiary (% gross)	42,41	2008	2
12	Aid per Capita (Current US\$ per person)	14,30	2006	16
13	DGD expenditure: bilateral	3.234.931	2009	11
14	DGD expenditure: non-governmental	5.412.056	2009	3
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT				
14	Life expectancy at birth	75,28	2009	2
15	Under-five mortality (per 1,000 live births)	25,00	2008	15
16	Combined gross enrolment ratio in education (both sexes) (%)	70,20	1990	7
17	Adult literacy rate (both sexes) (% aged 15 and above)	91,00	2010	4
18	Gender Inequality Index (updated)	0,62	2008	9
19	Prevalence of undernourishment (% of population)	15,00	2007	10
DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC INDICATORS				
20	Population	13.625.069	2009	15
21	Labor participation rate, total (% of total population ages 15+)	62,30	2009	13

22	GDP per capita (2008 PPP US\$)	817	2010	17
23	Improved water source (% of population with access)	94,00	2008	2
24	Internet users (per100 people)	28,80	2008	2
25	Income Gini coefficient	54,40	2007	2
POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL INDICATORS				
26	Voice and Accountability Percentile Rank (0-100)	40,30	2009	10
27	Political Stability Percentile Rank (0-100)	20,80	2009	11
28	Government Effectiveness Percentile Rank (0-100)	21,90	2009	17
29	Regalutory Quality Percentile Rank (0-100)	6,20	2009	18
30	Rule of Law Percentile Rank (0-100)	7,50	2009	19
31	Control of Corruption Percentile Rank (0-100)	17,60	2009	17

1. Country Profile

1.1 Geographical Presentation¹

Ecuador is a small country (256,370 km²) in the Andean region with a great diversity of geographical and ecological systems, a population made up of a variety of cultures and ethnic groups and highly differentiated local economies. The country is a presidential democracy, and held presidential and congressional elections in late 2006.

The total population was estimated at 13.2 million in 2005. Population numbers are subject to the contradictory effects of a high birth rate and a high rate of emigration, with a high proportion of young people.

Geographically, culturally and economically, the country can be divided into four markedly different regions:

1. the Andean region in the centre, which includes the capital, Quito, and the cities of Ambato, Cuenca and Loja, which are important centres for trade and the rural economy;
2. the Pacific coastal region in the western part of the country, which historically has absorbed major population flows (Arabs and Africans from the days of slavery, Asians and East Europeans more recently). Trade and industry have developed in economic centres such as Guayaquil (the largest port and biggest city in the country), Manta and Santo Domingo de los Colorados;
3. the Amazonian region, which covers more than 50% of the national territory, and features extensive reserves of wood and oil, the country's major economic asset. The area is thinly and sparsely populated; and,
4. the island region of the Galápagos Archipelago, a nature reserve dedicated to tourism and fishing.

1.2 Socio-economic Analysis²

1.2.1 UNDP HDI and Transparency CPI

According to the UNDP Human Development Report 2010, Ecuador ranked 77 among 169 countries with a Human Development Index value of 0.695. Ecuador's HDI is more or less at the same level as the neighbouring countries Peru (0.723 – 63) and Colombia (0.689 – 79) and halfway between Chile (0.783 – 45), the highest HDI in South America, and Bolivia (0.643-95), the lowest. According to Transparency's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) 2010, on a scale of 1 to 10, Ecuador is perceived by its own population to have a corruption index of 2.5 (ranking 127/177). (Peru: 3.5, Colombia: 3.5). This is almost a status quo since 2001 (2.3; ranking 79/91).

¹ Taken from EU strategy Paper for Ecuador

² Taken from UNDP documentation

1.2.2 Brief History

Ecuador's official language is Spanish. Kichwa (Quechua) and Shuar are official languages of intercultural relations. The territory of what today is called Ecuador, was originally inhabited by natives. In 1532 this territory was conquered by Spain. Independence from this colonial power was obtained in 1830, starting the Republican period up to the present. Since independence in 1830, Ecuador's history generally has been characterized by political instability, with over 20 Legislative Assemblies, 40 Constitutional Presidents and more than 80 factual or provisional Governments.

1.2.3 Demography

From 1950 to 2010, Ecuador's population increased from 3.2 million to 14.3 million (14,306,876 according to the preliminary results from the 2010 census), while the share of its urban population augmented from 28.5% to 61.0%. Annual population growth rate decreased from 2.92% in the 1980s and 1990s to 2.11% for decade 1990-2000, while the annual urban population growth rate was 3.6%, compared to -0.07 for the rural areas, basically as a consequence of migration. Major cities are: Guayaquil (2,039,789 inhabitants), Quito (1,839,853), Cuenca (417,632), Ambato (287,282), Santo Domingo (287,018), Portoviejo (823,8430) and Machala (217,696) based on 2001 census figures. The historical centres of the cities of Quito and Cuenca have been declared by UNESCO as world heritage patrimony. The Coastal region holds 50.4% of the national population, the Andean region represents 45.6%, while the Amazon and Galapagos have a small population with only 3.9 and 0.1% respectively. Of the total population, 13.9% are Indian Americans and 3.1% are Afro Americans. The previous 2001 census showed women representing 50.40% of the total population and men 49.60%.

1.2.4 Migration Issues

The first migration waves towards the United States in the seventies used their contacts with Cuenca traders that already lived there since the forties for the toquilla hat business, especially in New York. The economic crisis of the eighties in the entire South American region, and the "Josefina" disaster in the Azuay province in 1992 aggravated the migration trend. Migration basically is a masculine activity, leaving women and children at home. Later, also women started to migrate, leaving the children with grandparents or other relatives. Migrating people also tend to become younger, which has a strong incidence on the population pyramid of the region and a negative effect on its productive population. Schooling on average is higher among migrants, resulting in a real brain drain for the region. In the nineties, Spain became a very important destination country. In the 2001 census the provinces of Cañar, Azuay and Morona Santiago represent respectively the first, third and fifth highest migration expulsion rates. Second and fourth place are for Loja and Zamora Chinchipe, in the South.

1.2.5 Employment

The unemployment rate dropped from 14.1% in year 2000, as a consequence of the economic crisis, to 11.2% in 2005, as a result of relative economic stability related to the change of the national currency to the US Dollar. Nevertheless, formally employed persons accounted for only 51.1% of the

working age population, which implies a high percentage of underemployment. According to a recent survey, 49% of the population is in the informal sector.

1.2.6 International Treaties and Agreements

Ecuador is member of the Comunidad Andina de Naciones and the Comunidad Suramericana de Naciones. It is also a member of the political economical block ALBA (Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas). It subscribed to several international treaties. The recent administration is not so keen on opening (economic and commercial) frontiers in comparison to the neighbouring countries Peru and Colombia, who are going to a more intense economic integration (e.g. stock exchanges are unified, together with Chile). Peru and Colombia concluded a Free Trade Treatment with the UE, after negotiations to conclude a Free Tariffs and Trade agreement between Andean Community (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru) failed.

1.2.7 Relations with Neighbouring Countries

With Peru relations settled well after the 1997 peace agreements. Although official politics are quite different (Peru is more open and liberal economically), relations are good. With Colombia, there are moments of tension, as for example after the raid on a FARC training camp in Ecuadorian territory. At CAN-level, there is an agreement for recognition of academic and education titles (Andrés Bello).

1.3 Political Structure

1.3.1 The Nineties

In the first years of the nineties a new political actor entered into political life: the indigenous movement. As a representative of the rural poor they fought for more political inclusion. Since that time, they are an integral, important part of political life in Ecuador, including government responsibilities. The deteriorating economic performance in the late nineties culminated in a severe financial crisis in 1999. The crisis was precipitated by a number of external shocks, including the El Niño weather phenomenon in 1997, a sharp drop in global oil prices in 1997-98, and emerging international market instability in 1997-98. These factors highlighted the then Government of Ecuador's unsustainable economic policy mix of large fiscal deficits and expansionary money policy. It resulted in a 7.3% contraction of GDP, annual year-on-year inflation of 52.2%, and a 65% devaluation of the national currency in 1999.

1.3.2 The New Millennium

On January 9, 2000, the administration of President Jamil Mahuad announced its intention to adopt the US dollar as the official currency of Ecuador to address the ongoing economic crisis. Subsequent protests led to the 2000 Ecuadorean coup d'état which saw Mahuad's removal from office and the elevation of Vice President Gustavo Noboa to the Presidency. The following few years' inflation was still high, but without a currency that could not be devaluated (US dollar) this resulted in strong income reduction and more widespread poverty. The period from 1996 till the election of present president

Correa in 2006 was very instable, with several coups and none of the elected presidents that completed his term.

1.3.2 Recent Years

Recent years brought some more stability. Current President Correa is now one of the more lasting presidents, with four years in office (and good prospects to get re-elected). Some fundamental changes are being implemented in line with the new Constitution. Education, together with infrastructure (roads) are priority key result areas of the present administration. Last October 2010, there was an attempted coup although that it remains unclear what exactly happened. According to the opposition, no coup took place, as it only was a police strike that had ran out of hand. Anyway, the president was sequestrated and a muscular army intervention was needed to set the President free. Regardless if it was a coup or not, political stability is not yet solidly attained. Minister positions trend to be rather stable. Some issues with the new Constitution (the basis of the “Citizens Revolution” as indicated by the Government) start to show up and a referendum to modify the Constitution is planned for the next months (Parliament does not have attributes to change the Constitution).

1.3.3 Latest Institutional Reforms

The latest institutional reforms are an implementation of the new Constitution and show a tendency to a more centralised state model. This implies the creation of some new national institutions and the liquidation of older ones. It seems that liquidation of obsolete institutions, normally a complex and often not completed task, is actually taken place. One of the more important of these new institutions is SENPLADES.

1.4 Economic Performance - synthesis³

1.4.1 Key macro indicators

Key macro indicators confirm that Ecuador can be considered a “middle” country in comparison to this neighbouring countries. It grows at Latin American averages. Human development is improving, generally the economy is more open (with ups and downs however), development is more integrated and local (regional) trade is increasing.

1.4.2 Macro-Economy

In 2009, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Ecuador reached \$ 24,120 billion in 2000 dollars, the GDP per capita income was 8,160 USD and the GNI per capita stood at 7931.2 USD. Ecuador’s economy is strongly based on the export of primary goods, mainly petroleum and agricultural products as banana, cocoa and flowers. Very important also are remittances from migrant workers, almost at the same level as petroleum income (especially from workers in the United States, and also in Spain). Between 2006 and 2009, GDP increased from 21,962 billion to 24,120 billion (USD 2000) and the

³ Taken from VLIR-UOS Midterm report of the IUC Programme with Universidad de Cuenca, Annex. 13. Authors: R. Vaes and B. Delvaux.

share of petroleum dropped from 3,700 billion to 3,345 billion in the same period. Exports are more or less stable while at the same time importation kept growing, resulting in a growing negative commercial balance from about 500 to 900 million USD last year.

1.4.3 Economic Crises

The analysis of GDP for the last three decades shows two drastic drops in 1983 and 1987, the former due to the occurrence of the so called “El Niño” phenomenon, which affected agriculture, the latter due to an earthquake which destroyed oil pipes, thus interrupting crude oil exportation, which is the main source of income for the country. The third drop was observed in the year 1999 following a massive bank collapse caused by frauds of bank owners, in turn influenced by a new El Niño phenomenon that occurred in 1997-1998. The State of Ecuador guaranteed and effectively paid more than 6.000 million USD to people affected by the bankruptcy. According to a CEPAL Report, direct losses due to “El Niño” 97-98 reached 2,650.8 million dollars. Inflation declined from an annual rate of 96.1% in 2000 to 2.7% in 2004, basically as a consequence of the Ecuadorian Government’s decision in January 2000 to replace its own currency, the Sucre, by the US Dollar. In 2005, a new increase to 4.36% of annual inflation occurred as a consequence of fiscal deficits mainly. This implied a substantive increase in costs of living, due to the still high inflation during the first years of US Dollar currency implementation. Household basket cost is calculated at 548.63 USD for January 2011, coming from 440.81 in January 2006. Since January 2006, the maximum monthly inflation is 1.52 and the highest accumulated inflation during this periods was 8.83 % in December 2008. In the same period, average salaries increased from 107.95 USD to 142.53 USD.

1.4.4 Industrial Production

In spite of its abundant natural resources, Ecuador has a low level of industrial production. Medium and high technology production generates only 13% of the total aggregated value. Most export comes from natural primary production. Last year in 2010 an economic activity census was held. Preliminary results show 284,629 establishments (companies) for the Sierra, 232,132 for the coastal region and 23,153 for the Amazon. The small insular region Galapagos counts 1.438 establishments. The small difference with the population data is explained by the fact that big industry is almost exclusively located in Guayaquil, in the coastal region.

2. Education⁴

2.1 Structure

2.1.1 General

The Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) is responsible for the quality of education in Ecuador, for all levels with exception of the tertiary level. After the deactivation of the CONESUP, the University system is directed by the National Council of Higher Education (CES) and SENESCYT. In accordance with the Constitution and the Ecuadorian Law for the Higher Education, universities have autonomy to govern themselves. The structure of the educational system (primary and secondary is reflected in this same chart under Annex 13.6. For higher education CONESUP disappeared and is now replaced by SENESCYT and related institutions.

2.1.2 Primary Education

In the late nineties, a fundamental educational reform took place, where schooling was changed from 6 years primary (age 6 to 12) and 6 years secondary education (age 12 to 18), more or less the same as in Belgium, to a system of ten years basic education (age 5 to 14) and three years of secondary education. Implementation is still ongoing, is as much as almost none of the schools yet offers the complete basic educational offer, except for those schools that offered secondary as well as primary education in the former system. So in many cases, schools offer from year 2 to 7, but for the subsequent studying years 8 to 10, children have to change schools where they then can complete secondary from grade 1 to 3. The first year of basic education corresponds to the last year of kindergarten, which is not without problems in rural areas where there has never been a kindergarten section. In practice, children in the countryside often start to study in year 2. Recent reforms are aiming at grouping old primary schools with a secondary school in one school-group. In some cases financial unification is already the case, with managerial, pedagogic and organisational grouping to follow. For children under five, nursery education (educación inicial) is organised. It basically existed already in urban areas, but the intention is to guarantee overall access in the entire country.

2.1.3 Secondary Education

After the educational reform, three types of secondary education (“bachillerato”) are organised: (i) arts, (ii) sciences, and (iii) international. Nevertheless, most institutions still function under the previous scheme of 6 years of secondary education, and also are using still older curricula.

⁴ Taken from VLIR-UOS Midterm report of the IUC Programme with Universidad de Cuenca, Annex. 13. Authors: R. Vaes and B. Delvaux.

2.2 Data and Policy focus in terms of higher education

2.2.1 Structure

Higher education is provided by universities, polytechnics and, at non-university level, “Institutos Pedagógicos” and “Institutos Técnicos Superiores”. All universities whether public or private, are autonomous. Higher education institutions are now supervised by CES/ SENESCYT.

The CONEA Report and Implications

On 22 July 2008, the National Assembly (Parliament) issued Constitutional Mandate 14. This mandate establishes the obligation for the National Council on Evaluation and Accreditation (CONEA) to elaborate a technical report with respect to the level of performance of the superior education establishments to guarantee quality. It corresponds to CONESUP’s authority and responsibility to determine the academic and legal situation of all establishments. CONEA had a year to complete its report. Indicators used by CONEA for the assessment of Universities and other higher education establishments were: (i) Teacher training, (ii) Budget for scholarships, (iii) Mobility of students and credit acknowledgment, (iv) Investment in libraries, (v) Financial resources and budget performance, (vi) Coherence between academic processes and mission and objectives of the University, (vii) Use and creation of extensions to guarantee academic quality and infrastructure (classroom spaces)

Final Report:

Subsequently, on November 10, 2009, CONEA’s final report was published. In this report, five categories were distinguished for the classification of 68 universities and poly-technical high schools.

Extensions: Apart from the central university headquarters assessed in the report, the system counts about 145 more or less independent extensions in 107 cities. Most of these do not meet any quality criteria.

Main Conclusions and Recommendations of the report include:

- a deputation of Universities, in other words closing down the E category of 26 Universities;
- the gradual dismantling of university extensions;
- promotion of alliances between universities;
- a moratorium on the creation of new universities;
- a regulation of academic performance and institutional framework for higher education;
- a strengthening of postgraduate offers, including suspension of postgraduates in Universities in classes D and E;
- more strict criteria for the organisation of postgraduates;
- classification of masters according to orientation;
- presentation and approval of strategic plans;
- paying attention to harmonization of concepts and higher education practice;
- recuperation of historic identity and university memory;
- amplifying university democracy;
- development of an integral system for teaching and researcher careers;
- guarantying equality of opportunities;
- promotion of scientific research and;
- guaranties for social relevance and focussing on enhanced integrality of the entire educational system.

International Ranking:

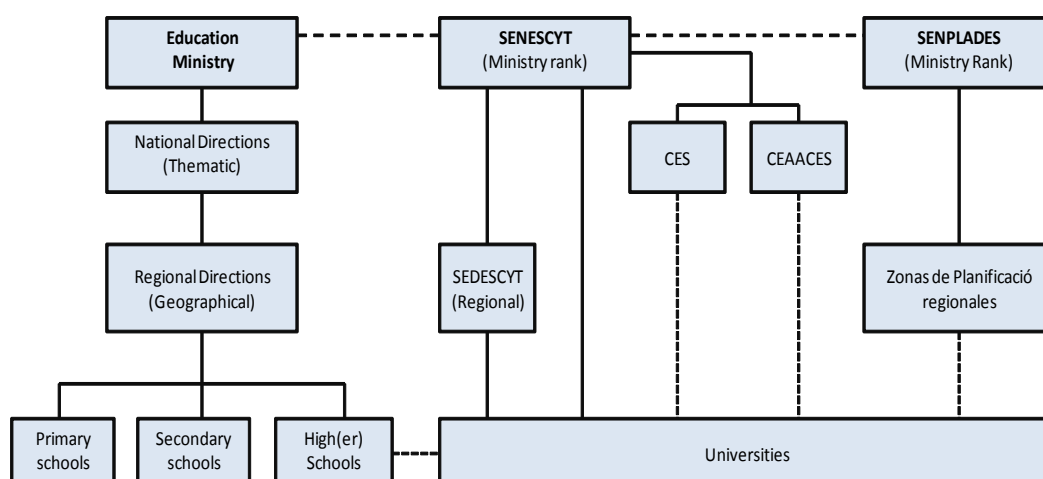
Another tool for assessing university quality is the International Ranking system. South American Universities and especially Ecuadorian ones are performing relatively modestly using this kind of indices. The relative differences between Ecuadorian Universities as reflected in the CONEA Report matches rather well with several International Rankings such as Times Higher Education Ranking (THE), WEB ranking World Universities (WEBOMETRICS), SIR Institutions Ranking (including a regional Ibero-american Index). This applies for all but the Polytechnic Universities. International ranking is probably not a very useful tool for the assessment of short term project indicators, but eventually can be useful for permanent quality monitoring.

The Former and the New Institutions for Higher Education

The Institutional Structure

The former CONESUP (Consejo Nacional de Educación Superior) was dismantled in October 2010. Functions were partially overtaken by the CES (National Council of Higher Education), a more central and official body, directly dependent of the Presidency. Reason for this change was the rather inefficient action of this body, which needed to coordinate (and integrate) 72 Universities, more than 160 more or less independent extensions and about 300 Higher Institutions. This thus does not come as a surprise. A more centralised and delegated management should improve this. Some reactions from Universities and Higher Institutions about loss of autonomy are to be expected. It now is to be seen if management by CES will be more efficient, and if it can win legitimacy in the sector. The members of CES and CEAACES are appointed / elected in the first months of 2011. This CES will be an advisory body or a part of SENESCYT. This is not yet entirely clear. The below Figure 1 gives a schematic overview of the actual organisation of higher education in Ecuador.

Figure 1 : Institutional Chart of the Organisation of Higher Education in Ecuador at Present



Related Institutional Transformations

Other related institutional transformations are being worked / under implementation. The former SENACYT, which was responsible for research and basically managed funds for research and scholarships, saw its competences broadened with recognition of students' titles, a former CONESUP

competence and became the SENESCYT. The (temporarily active) CONEA Commission was converted into the CEAACES (Consejo Nacional De Evaluación y Acreditación de la Educación Superior del Ecuador), which probably will be another advisory body to the SENESCYT. This body has the mandate of evaluating and accrediting Universities in Ecuador. It was created to assure higher education quality, due to the fact that the former responsible body (CONESUP) in practice was not so well in a position to do so, amongst others due to its composition (universities and institutes) with peer evaluations proving not so productive. Ecuador has a high proliferation of Universities and Higher Educational Institutes (72 Universities, more than 160 extensions and about 300 higher institutes), and no systematic quality control. An important achievement is the ranking of Universities, based on both an auto-assessment and an external evaluation. This exercise is almost completed. Next step is passing the information to the CES for action to be taken accordingly.

Science and Technology (S&T)

For the period 1990-2000 Ecuador reported 140 scientists and engineers working in research and development. This is below the average of the region, and represents less than one third of investment by Chile and one fifth of Argentina. In 2003, Ecuador had only 0.16 researchers for 1,000 workers, while Chile had 1.4, Spain 6.4 and the United States had 13.8. Or maybe it is other types of scientists/researchers working in science and technology, since only 10% worked full time, and just 10.4% had a PhD degree. Investment in research and development has also been low. Between 2002 and 2003, Ecuador invested 0.07% of GDP for science and technology, which is far below the Latin America average of 0.62%.

SENACYT and SENESCYT

The former National Secretariat for Science and Technology (SENACYT), now an integral part of SENESCYT, is the public institution with the mandate on science and technology matters, which includes the following responsibilities:

- prepare and issue national policies on science & technology and innovation;
- elaborate the national programmes of science, technology and innovation;
- coordinate strategic activities of the National System of Science, Technology and Innovation;
- promote technical and financial aspects of international cooperation for science and technology.

FUNDACYT

The Foundation for Science and Technology (FUNDACYT) which is the technical and operational institution in charge of promoting the strengthening of scientific and technological activities, has been absorbed by SENACYT and is for this reason now also integrated in SENESCYT.

The New Law on Higher Education of 2010

Institutional Changes

Important changes brought about by the New Law on Higher Education officially issued on 12 October 2010 are the new administrative regulations: CONESUP, as a body exclusively consisting of

universities before disappears and is replaced by a National Secretariat (SENESCYT). So stronger government coordination and control is expected. Another important issue is the importance given to assessment and accreditation, organised by the CEAACES, also a part of SENESCYT. This institution is an outcome of the CONEA report, and is responsible for follow up of accreditation of Universities. At administrative level, SENESCYT becomes the most important institution for higher education and investigation.

Delineation of Responsibilities

Responsibilities regarding education have slightly shifted between actors. The former (non performing) regional direction has been abolished and the trend towards more centralization has been initiated. Municipal education, an experiment in Quito, was never tried in the Austro region. Apart from the Provincial Authorities, there are now new Zone Directions, responding to the SENPLADES development zones, but it is not very clear yet who has which responsibilities. A classical, still persisting problem is the double decision and responsibility chain: Local personal (provincial and zone) depends on the national directions for thematic / technical issues, but on the provincial or zone directors for administrative issues. Differences and delineations are not always clear.

Underlying Principles and Main Functions

Underlying base principles of the higher education system as enshrined in the new law (Title I) and further worked out under Titles II to VIII are the following: (i) Responsible autonomy; (ii) Co-governance; (iii) Equal opportunities; (iv) Quality; (v) Relevance, (vi) Integrality, (vii) Auto-determination; (viii) Universal thinking, and (ix) Technical scientific production.

As functions of the Higher Education system are detailed in the law of 12 October 2010: (i) Guarantee access, create and diffuse technical knowledge; (ii) Form academics; (iii) Evaluate institutions; (iv) Guarantee autonomy, and (v) Offer educational quality.

The Ministry of Education

The efforts of the Ministry are directed with priority towards (i) further implementation of the ten year basic education programme, (ii) the connection of the (new) three year secondary cycle to basic education and (iii) the more detailed definition of the relationship with SENPLADES, basically at sub-national (zone and provincial) level.

The new law also wishes to boost the number of lecturers who are PHD Holders. Currently only 428 from 33.000 lecturers have a PHD. 600 Ecuadorians are studying abroad in the context of postdoctoral studies. The Ecuadorian government wishes to double this number in 2011.⁵

⁵ Information from SciDevnet, "Ecuador exigirá PhD a docentes y rectores universitarios", 17 November 2010.

2.2.2 Ecuador University Cooperation and higher education initiatives

Ecuador opens its doors to senior scientists⁶

Ecuador to become 'the retirement destination of brilliant minds'

Ecuador's president Rafael Correa has announced a US\$1.7 million plan to attract senior Ecuadorian scientists living abroad and senior scientists from the developed world — whether active or retired — to come and work in Ecuador.

Under the 'Prometheus Old Wiseman' plan, announced last week (7 August), 48 scientists will be invited to come to Ecuador for up to a year to teach at universities, or collaborate in research centres or state-owned companies.

Initially the aim is for 30 Ecuadorian scientists living abroad to return home to teach, at an estimated cost of US\$735,000 to the government, who will pay the airfares for the scientists and their families, and living costs.

Under the second part of the programme, backed by a further US\$981,000 sum of government funding, around 18 foreign scientists will be invited to Ecuador.

"According to a 2009 survey, only 29 per cent of the universities in Ecuador have a research programme," Manuel Baldeón, head of the National Secretariat for Science and Technology (Senacyt) told **SciDev.Net**.

"This is the trend that Prometheus wants to reverse by bringing foreign retired scientists to Ecuadorian research centres and universities for at least one semester. We thought of retired experts because they have time and experience," he added.

Baldeón said that Prometheus aimed to turn Ecuador into a haven for top scientists from around the world and that the government is ready to provide "all that is necessary" to lead the country into becoming "the retirement destination of brilliant minds".

"It will be great if Ecuadorian universities could have a couple of worldwide recognised scientists — even Nobel Prize winners — that would help them to structure their research programmes and could also teach some classes," Juan-Carlos Idrobo, an Ecuadorian physicist from the US-based Vanderbilt University, told **SciDev.Net**.

"It's very important for students to have role models, and a couple of internationally-recognised scientists, as well as highly motivated young scientists, would really help to engage students in getting into research," Idrobo said.

Scientists can apply to Prometheus online, or Ecuadorian scientific and academic institutions can also nominate a scientist. An evaluation committee will select the best candidates and match them to a research centre or university.

Many European countries and Japan have a mandatory retirement age that forces scientists to retire even if they are at the top of their field. Their main options have been to become an emeritus

⁶ Information from SENASCYT on the PROMETHEUS 'Viejo Sabio' Programme

professor, or move to a country that does not have an upper age limit, such as United States or Australia.

SENASCYT-Ecuador launches scholarship programme for master, PHD and postdoc level for overseas studies⁷

SENASCYT-Ecuador launches its largest ever scholarship programme for master, PHD and postdoc level for overseas studies in research centres and universities of excellence abroad. This programme is supposed to finance up to 1000 scholars a year. SENASCYT-Ecuador showed interest to promote this programme in Europe and is interested in visiting Flemish universities in the context of these activities.

On 31 May the results of the 1st Call were communicated: “Con 7.621 aplicaciones al PROGRAMA DE BECAS “CONVOCATORIA ABIERTA 2011”, 1.922 candidatos cerraron sus postulaciones, de las cuales 1.376 han sido APROBADAS. Participaron cuatro áreas estratégicas para el desarrollo del país: Ciencias de la Vida, Ciencias de los Recursos Naturales, Ciencias de la Producción e Innovación y Ciencias Sociales.

Durante el próximo mes, se seleccionará a los 1.000 mejores postulantes del país mediante un proceso que asegure la transparencia de la adjudicación, para financiar sus estudios y estancia en el exterior con montos de hasta USD 70.736 para Maestrías, USD 158.300 para doctorados y de USD 87.300 para posdoctorados.”

SENASCYT-Ecuador incentivates discussion on multidisciplinary research parks⁸

SENASCYT-Ecuador incentivates discussion on multidisciplinary research parks as being a top priority for the development of research and strengthening of innovation and competitiveness in Ecuador.

SENASCYT-Ecuador defines 9 priority areas for research⁹

Áreas de Investigación Científica en el Ecuador 2011

- Salud
 - Desarrollo Agropecuario y Seguridad Alimentaria
 - Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales
 - Biodiversidad
 - Energía
 - TIC`s
 - Ciencias Básicas
 - Ciencias Sociales y del Buen Vivir
- Transporte y Construcción

⁷ Information from SENASCYT on the new Ecuadorian Scholarship Programme for master, PHD and postdoc level for studies in research institutes and universities abroad, boletín de prensa 8 Senascyt, 20 Jan 2011.

⁸ Information from SENASCYT on the Forum on Research and Technology Parks (Parques tecnológicos), boletín de prensa 22, Senascyt, 23 March 2011.

⁹ Information from SENASCYT on the priority areas for research 2011, boletín de prensa Senascyt, 25 May 2011.

3. Development Aid Analysis

3.1 Development strategy with focus on poverty reduction

3.1.1 Poverty Situation and Access to Basic Services¹⁰

The latest UNDP Poverty indicators on Ecuador show that 45.2% of the population lives below the poverty line and that respectively 4.7% and 12.8% of the population lives below the 1.25 USD and 2 USD threshold (PPP). There is a marked improvement since people living below the poverty line of less than one dollar per day accounted for about 20% of the country's population in 1983-2000.

Nevertheless it should be noted that the cost of living has increased considerably between the eighties and the present day. Data from the mountain (sierra) area were compared to national data, because UCuenca is located in the mountain area. Poverty in the country is mainly located in rural zones, especially in the Andean rural areas where the Indian population lives. This is confirmed for the unsatisfied basic needs and for consumption indigence, but not for consumption poverty. It however should be noted that probably poverty is very widespread in the marginal urban zones as well, but that social mobility chances there are higher.

3.1.2 Development Planning and Strategies in Ecuador

There is no formal PRSP document available. However it is important to underline the role of the planning office SENPLADES. *SENPLADES'* mission is to coordinate participative development planning. It is (intended to be) a strong central office entrusted with development strategies and the planning of development actions. From SENPLADES' website it is learned that planning has become virtually obsolete over the last 20 years, and that it intends to give it a new (central) place. Former central planning offices were: JUNAPLA (Junta Nacional de Planificación y Coordinación Económica , 1954), replaced by CONADE (Consejo Nacional de Desarrollo, 1979) including INEC (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas), FPI (Fondo Nacional de Pre inversión), and CONACYT (Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología). In 1998, COADE was replaced by ODEPLAN (Oficina de Planificación). In 2004, SENPLADES was created. Since 2007, CONAM (Consejo Nacional de Modernización del Estado, 1994) and SODEM (Secretaría Nacional de los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio, 2005) are integrated in SENPLADES.

3.1.3 Decentralization, Regionalization and Impact on Development Actions

Regionalisation

The overall tendency is towards centralisation, in spite of earlier (not implemented) decentralization strategies, and on-going processes at regional level. Decentralization is officially seen as political autonomous regionalism, and considered a refuge for conservative politicians to preserve their power. At operational level this implies that no real advances are made in administrative decentralization and local participation. There were some attempts to reorganise local regions, but more based on political strategies than taking into account management requirements characteristic for the different regions.

¹⁰ Information taken from UNDP Ecuador documentation

Local dependencies of national entities (ministries) are intensifying, not exceptionally at the expense of local political entities (provinces, and to a lesser degree municipalities). The regional reorganisation of SENPLADES is an example in case (7 Regions instead of the 24 Provinces) and is the model of administrative division / organisation of the country, and not yet the Provinces.

The regions are:

- Zone 1 – Norte: Esmeraldas, Carchi, Imbabura, Sucumbios
- Zone 2 – Centro Norte: Pichincha, Napo Orellana
- Zone 3 - Centro: Chimborazo, Cotopaxi, Tungurahua, Pastaza
- Zone 4 - Pacífico: Manabí, Santo Domingo
- Zone 5 – Litoral: Guayas, Santa Elena, Los Ríos, Bolivar
- Zone 6 - Austro: Cañar, Azuay, Morona Santiago
- Zone 7 – Sur: Loja, El Oro, Zamora Chinchipe

The seven regions (zones) are intended to become development regions, where all state actions are developed within a more or less homogenous territory, and not - as was often the case in the past – different actual territories for each Ministry. Hence now every Ministry is supposed to have the same seven development regions. Exception is SENAGUA, the water management body for which there are 9 regions, not completely coinciding with the seven SENPLADES regions, but this is due to the logical decision to make water management coinciding with actual water basins. Some former local development offices (e.g. CREA in the Austro Region, and PREDESUR in the South Border Region) were integrated in SENPLADES' regional offices. At Austro level, SENPLADES focused on forming participative organisms and an information system (with UCuenca participation).

Municipalities

Over the last two decades, municipalities did grow in importance (and resources) and increased their importance in development actions as key development actors. They are organised in the Asociación de Municipalidades del Ecuador. If national politics were not always stable in the last years, (bigger) municipalities generally continued to show positive political and management performance.

Ecuador's Policy Agenda and MDGs¹¹

During recent years, Ecuador has experienced a serious political and governance crisis, making it very difficult to predict the course of national policies over the next few years. In addition to the serious difficulties experienced in reaching agreement on long-term national strategies for Ecuador, the level of practical impact in terms of implementation of agreed policies has been poor in recent years. General elections took place in 2006 in a context of polarised political and social forces and widespread disillusionment with the major democratic institutions such as the traditional political parties, the Congress and, indeed, the Presidency. Although Rafael Correa was elected President in the second round with a convincing 57% of the vote, his party *Alianza País* has no members elected to Congress and he will depend on the support of several other political parties. This means that the Correa Government, which takes office in January 2007, may struggle to implement effectively its

¹¹ Taken from EU Strategy Paper 2007-2013

policies on vital matters such as health, education and poverty reduction. If major political reforms are not achieved, the day-to-day activities of governance may continue to unfold in the atmosphere of constant social tension that has reigned during the past decade.

Recent political debate has focused on two aspects of the country's institutional functioning: the consolidation of the rule of law through the modernisation of the justice system, and administrative and budgetary decentralisation. The prerequisites for the consolidation of the justice system are: making the Supreme Court function; and reforming the Constitutional Tribunal, the Ombudsman's Office (*Defensoría del Pueblo*) and the Electoral Commissions. If a government meets these challenges, this could provide the basis for the modernisation of the sector over the coming years. For decentralisation, bodies like Association of Ecuadorean Municipalities (AME) and the Consortium of Provincial Councils (CONCOPE) have become advocates of the indispensable reforms, forcing the national government to take note of their demands. The strategic plans of both bodies feature the essential objectives of strengthening local governance and territorial development, and there is no doubt that these are a fundamental requirement for any democratic and political consolidation of the country.

Notwithstanding the absence of the clear policy framework which would be provided by a national development plan or a PRSP, the Ecuadorean authorities are committed to certain strategic lines that are likely to remain in place in the short term. Ecuador is firmly committed to building, consolidating and extending a democratic society even if there are still huge areas of disagreement as to the forms this should take. On the social and human front, Ecuador has made significant progress in developing a legal framework for gender equality, respect for human rights, environmental conservation and recognition of the cultural values and specific rights of indigenous peoples. However, there is still a worrying gap between the existence of the legal framework and its implementation.

Ecuador is also committed to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and has made considerable progress in extending the coverage of basic services, education and health; however, greater efforts are needed in these areas to reduce poverty levels and offer economic opportunities to the majority of the population who remain excluded from national life. Recent years have seen important achievements in education, such as falling illiteracy rates, but access to education remains linked to income levels, gender, race and geographical location. There are also concerns about the quality of education, in particular the out-dated and over centralised curriculum with little connection to local realities and to the needs of labour markets. Similarly, while various health indicators are showing a marked improvement, the rural and poorest sectors of the population have limited access to good quality health care. The significant majorities (ranging from 64% to 67%) in favour of three propositions submitted to referendum in late 2006, all of which focused on increasing social investment particularly in health, education and economic regeneration, provide the Correa government with a clear mandate to step up Ecuador's efforts in these fields. Work has been under way for several years on the reform of the public sector, with the aim of achieving more efficient public management. The results of this reform are still patchy and there is a lack of continuity in the efforts deployed.

3.2 Actors

See Annex Belgian NGOs and their activities in Ecuador (Annex x in English).

3.3 Donor Aid

3.3.1 Overview

See overview of donor intervention per thematic area in annex 2_. In order of importance of multilateral and multistate organisations UN organisations, World Bank, BID, Andean Cooperation, EU contribute largely to development cooperation with Ecuador. In terms of State to State cooperation Belgium is together with Germany and Spain an important player, but also many other countries cooperation with Ecuador in a diverse range of thematic areas.

International Aid and Investment

According to the Human Development Report 2004, net aid per capita was USD 16.9, while the average amount for Latin America stood at USD 8.6. The 22 most important donors contributed 49.014 million dollars on average for the period 1999-2003, equivalent to USD 53.9 per capita. For the same period, ten important donors contributed 15.886 million dollars, of which 9.3% was devoted to education. The average annual aid to education in Ecuador is USD 11.7 million over the period 1999-2003, while the aid per capita was only USD 0.9 for the same period. According to UNCTAD's World Investment Report 2004, foreign direct investment in Ecuador increased from 648 million dollars in 1999 to 1,555 million dollars in 2003.

3.3.2 Cooperation Belgium – Ecuador and ICP 2007-2010¹²

Belgian development cooperation has been working in Ecuador since 1977. The governments of the two countries signed a general agreement on cooperation in 1980. The current cooperation programme runs from 2007 to 2010 and is worth €32 million. It was decided that Belgium would focus on two sectors, namely rural development and healthcare.

Unequal distribution of wealth

There are major social inequalities in Ecuador. Rural areas are the most affected by poverty (77%). The gross domestic product per inhabitant is increasing: in 2009, it amounted to \$3,669, which places Ecuador among middle-income countries. But the benefits of this development are still unevenly distributed – around 10% of the population holds 46% of the country's income.

Targeted support for certain population groups

These social inequalities primarily affect women, indigenous peoples and Afro-Ecuadorians, which is why the rural development programme supports local initiatives that provide employment and income-generating opportunities to these social groups. In five priority provinces, production zones have been

¹² Website extract from http://diplomatie.belgium.be/en/policy/development_cooperation/countries/partner_countries/ecuador/; PIC Belgique – Equateur 2007-2010. Document en annexe.

identified for coffee and cocoa cultivation, fisheries and tourism. The aim is to improve the quality and sale of the products.

Healthcare

Ecuador's healthcare system has deteriorated over the past 10 years because its institutions fragmented and improving health services was not considered a priority. The current government has increased the budget for the health sector by 200% compared to previous years. A large share of the budget has been earmarked for developing a new management and care model, which is supposed to improve quality and access to free healthcare. Belgian development cooperation supports this plan, which was formulated by the Ministry of Public Health.

Despite the efforts agreed upon by various cooperation actors, 62% of the rural population and 38% of the urban population still have no access to drinking water. One of the critical issues is the management of water resources and drainage basins. Access to high-quality water is an essential condition for good health. Consequently, the health programme will help the Ministry for Urban Development and Housing to improve the management of Juntas de agua parroquiales (intermunicipal water providers) in collaboration with other cooperation agencies, which are concentrating on the construction and improvement of drinking water systems.

3.3.3 EU Strategy 2007-2013

The context for the new strategy for the period 2007–2013 is the EU Development Policy Statement “The European Consensus on Development” adopted by the European Parliament, the Council of Ministers, the Member States and the European Commission in December 2005. This Statement underlines that the primary and overarching objective of EU development cooperation is the eradication of poverty in the context of sustainable development, including the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It also highlights the importance of partnership with the developing countries as well as the promotion of good governance, human rights and democracy, in order to achieve a fair and equitable globalisation. The Statement sets out a differentiated approach, according to the relevant context and needs, and proposes a common thematic framework which includes social cohesion and employment, as well as trade and regional integration, among the priorities for Community cooperation.

The Development Policy Statement also contains a specific chapter on mainstreaming crosscutting issues. Special reference is made to the promotion of human rights, gender equality, democracy, good governance, children's rights and the rights of indigenous peoples, conflict prevention, environmental sustainability and combating HIV/AIDS. These cross-cutting issues are both objectives in themselves and vital factors in strengthening the impact and sustainability of cooperation.

Domestically, the country is facing two major challenges: poor central governance, resulting from an outdated system of political representation and a justice system which has suffered from political interference and needs modernising; and a serious deterioration in the country's human capital as a result of extremely unequal wealth distribution and very low social spending by successive governments. These factors combine to produce a high percentage of poverty (57% of the total population at the last count, including 19% in extreme poverty) and alarming levels of inequality and exclusion.

Externally, the main challenges include difficulties in the process of Andean integration; and the spill-over of the armed conflict in Colombia and impact of Colombian drug-traffickers' activity. Some areas in Ecuador's northern provinces are a rear-base for Colombian belligerent groups (FARC guerrilla and paramilitaries), while the number of asylum-seekers registered in Ecuador in 2005 was nearly 45,000.

Faced with these challenges, the **EC's response strategy** should concentrate on two objectives:

- encouraging higher and better quality social spending by the government; and
- bolstering the competitiveness and entry into the market of small and medium-sized enterprises, which offer the best hope for job creation. These two sectors coincide with two of the three major policy priorities of the government of Rafael Correa who was elected President of Ecuador in November 2006.

Under the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), an indicative allocation of € 137 million has been earmarked for Ecuador for the period 2007-13. These resources may be supplemented by projects and programmes financed under the regional programmes for the Andean Community and for Latin America and under various thematic programmes.

The ultimate aim of the EC interventions which are detailed below is to reduce poverty and help to attain the Millennium Development Goals. Activities will be directed at promoting social cohesion - hence reducing poverty, inequality and social exclusion - and regional integration. In view of the weakness of the national institutions, particularly close attention will be paid to incorporating institutional capacity-building measures and the promotion of improved governance in all EC-funded interventions in these two sectors.

The strategic intervention areas have been prioritised on the basis of all the above and on a detailed analysis of the support provided by the other donors and/or financial backers in Ecuador, to ensure that this strategy can respond appropriately to future needs that are not covered by others. As mentioned in Chapter 4.1.3, one of the main lessons learned from the CSP for 2002-2006 is that, where counterpart institutions are weak and unstable, interventions which take a project approach are subject to serious risks as regards efficiency, continuity and long-term impact. Ecuador's chronic political and institutional instability makes the formulation and application of coherent sectoral policies challenging and difficult. However it is hoped that, by taking a sector-wide approach for the interventions envisaged, the EC can contribute to securing improvements in the country's capacity to do so, as an integral part of such an approach is the prior definition of agreed policy and medium-term investment frameworks, systems for sectoral follow-up and enhanced mechanisms of coordination between donors and Government.

Operations will be coordinated and harmonised with the rest of international cooperation and the Government, especially at the operational identification and formulation phases, with special emphasis on seeking complementarity with the EU Member States. In prioritising these strategic sectors, account has been taken of the experience and comparative advantages that the EC has acquired in its relations with Ecuador. Sectors have also been chosen where interventions may prove more effective because they are better tailored to EC procedures and the Financial Regulation. Maximum internal coherence between the different EC programmes will also be sought.

Conflict prevention is a growing concern in Ecuador and one that is likely to require special emphasis in all EC interventions. Of the various sources of conflict in Ecuador the most important are:

inequitable access to, and lack of, social services; the poor quality and management of those services due to weak governance; and poverty and social exclusion. The interventions to increase expenditure on and improve the quality of education, and to generate sustainable livelihoods, proposed below as the two priority sectors for intervention, will thus have direct and indirect impacts on conflict. In addition, it is envisaged that actions to prevent and manage conflict will be mainstreamed within all EC interventions and that, where relevant, conflict prevention will be specified as a direct or indirect objective. Finally, there may be a need for the EC to address this concern through other EC financing instruments such as the Stability Instrument and thematic budget lines dedicated to funding the promotion of human rights and actions by non-state actors.

The proposed intervention areas identified in this strategy are fully consistent with the Commission's strategies at a regional level, in particular with regard to the emphasis on social cohesion through increasing social investment on education and by means of improved governance, and on regional integration by supporting competitive micro-enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises which can maximise the opportunities for trade within the Andean Community and beyond.

In this context, the EC has prioritised the following strategic areas of intervention:

- Contributing to increased government social investment to increase the access of marginalised and disadvantaged communities to social services.
- Generating sustainable economic opportunities and promoting regional integration by supporting competitive micro-enterprises and small- and medium-sized enterprises.

4. University Development Cooperation

4.1 VLIR-UOS Activity in/with the Country

See **annex 1** for an overview of past and present VLIR-UOS investments and active programmes (REI, BTP & Zuid) and scholarships. Also other scientific cooperation of Flemish universities has been integrated in the same overview.

See **annex 2** for an overview of thematic areas in which VLIR-UOS university development cooperation actors are active. The donor overview annex ...also shows how these relate with other donor action...

4.2 Focus of other university development cooperation donors

Other donors active in the field of university (development) cooperation with Ecuador are amongst other Spain (through AECID), Italy and Sweden (through Upsalla University).

List of Resources and interesting Links

- ICP Belgium Ecuador 2007-2010:
http://diplomatie.belgium.be/en/policy/development_cooperation/countries/partner_countries/ecuador/
- EU Strategy document: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ecuador/csp/07_13_en.pdf
- UNDP in Ecuador: <http://www.undp.org.ec/trabajoUndp.html>
- CONEA: <http://www.conea.net/>
- *Overview of Belgian NGO activity in Ecuador (in Dutch)*
- World Bank projects in Ecuador:
<http://web.worldbank.org/external/default/main?menuPK=325149&pagePK=141143&piPK=141103&theSitePK=325116>
- BID projects in Ecuador: <http://www.iadb.org/en/countries/ecuador/ecuador-and-the-idb,1065.html>
- BID Country Strategy Ecuador: <http://www.iadb.org/document.cfm?id=1726069SENASCYT>:
<http://www.senacyt.gob.ec/>
- Priority list universities for cooperation with SENASCYT:
http://www.senescyt.gob.ec/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=7c5940c1-606c-4142-8006-e20d5f33e022&groupId=10156
- Ecuador 'Viejo Sabio' or 'Old Wiseman' project from SENASCYT:
<http://prometeo.senescyt.gob.ec/portal/es/web/prometeo/inicio>
- Scholarships SENASCYT: <http://becas.senescyt.gob.ec/>
- Oficina de cooperación universitária (OCU – Spain): <http://www.ocu.es/portal/page/portal/inicio> and www.aecid.es/export/sites/.../cooperacion/.../03-Coop.Universidades.pdf
- Portal internacional en gestion universitária (rankings of universities):
http://www.piguonline.com/portal/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=47&Itemid=53

ANNEXES

1. **Overview activities/projects of Flemish university/institutes of higher education in the country (VLIR-UOS and other) – working document**
2. **Overview VLIR-UOS projects per thematic activity and as compared to interventions of other donors (2 worksheets) – working document**
3. **New Law on Higher Education**
4. **ICP Belgium Ecuador 2007-2010**
5. **Annexes from SENASCYT (areas of scientific priority senascyt, Boletín de prensa del 26 de Mayo del 2011)**

Other relevant annexes will be added when available.