

## Ecuador

Ecuador is a diverse country with a variety of challenges in the implementation of measures to protect, promote and diffuse cultural rights, which includes the diversity of cultural expressions. The difficulties include a colonial past that promoted the dominance of a European culture and the isolation of the cultural expressions of other populations, including indigenous people, those of African descent and the flourishing cultures of the coastal regions. Other challenges include lack of public policies in culture, limitations of the cultural budget, and lack of institutionalization of culture in society.

However, the Constitution that was ratified in 2008 clearly establishes the population's right to construct their own cultural identity, to decide the cultural community they belong to, to express those decisions and their own aesthetic choices, to know the historical memory of their cultures and have access to their cultural patrimony, to disseminate their own cultural expressions, and to have access to diverse cultural expressions. Within this framework, the National Plan of Good Living (Sumak Kawsay), a long-term and sustainable development plan, establishes a number of strategies when it comes to culture. They include naming the Ministry of Culture, an institution that was previously part of the Ministry of Education, the governing authority in all cultural matters, with the proper competence and faculty to accomplish its goals. Additionally, the creation of the Ministry Coordinator of Patrimony has contributed to the institutionalization of patrimonial matters, and the execution of emblematic projects at the national and international level.

Since the creation of the Ministry of Culture in 2007, the country has started a long process of cultural transformation that starts with the creation of public policies. The publication of the Ministry's Cultural Policies in 2010 established the guidelines for the work of the institution. This framework includes four programmatic axis: De-colonization, Cultural Rights, Cultural Entrepreneurship, and shaping the New Contemporary Ecuadorian Identity, all of which protect, promote and diffuse the diversity of cultural expressions. There are also four transversal axis that complement the goals of the programmatic axis: Interculturalism, Integral Equality, Strengthening of Institutionalism, and the Cultural Positioning of Ecuador Abroad.

The Ministry of Culture is also in the process of creating public policies in all areas of the institution. The creation of policies in many of these areas promotes the participation of civil society in public workshops, debates, conferences and online communication.

- The area of Patrimony, in addition to an intense work to create public policies, has executed a number of projects and programs for the protection of cultural patrimony. This includes ethnographic exhibitions, measures to protect the all native human groups, events surrounding the Pumapungo patrimonial site, among others.
- The Social Memory area has worked on the creation of public policies and Public Memorials for the protection, promotion and diffusion of historical memorials. Also, the Division is working on the National Systems of Museums, Libraries and Archives, all of which are creating webs of participants and policies in the topic of their competence.
- The Arts and Creativity area is carrying out a number of processes in order to measure and increase artistic production, including public contests for funding and activities that promote exchanges between cultural expressions.
- The Cultural Entrepreneurship and Industry area is working on the creation of public policies, the strengthening of the Editorial fund and an information system of culture with the capacity to reflect the national reality and point to areas of priority.
- The National Council of Cinematography works to promote cinematic production and the protection of filmic patrimony.