



**DIRECTORIO
LEGISLATIVO**

FORTALECEMOS
LAS DEMOCRACIAS
DE AMÉRICA LATINA

STRENGTHENING
DEMOCRACIES
IN LATIN AMERICA

FEBRUARY 2021

Ecuador

Presidential and legislative elections Post-election report



Executive summary

On Sunday, February 7, presidential and legislative elections were held in Ecuador to choose the **next head of state and 137 National Assembly** members until 2025.

With 97% of the votes counted, the National Electoral Council (CNE) is signalling there will be **run-off election on April 11**. Although Aráuz obtained a wide advantage (32.20%) over the other candidates, having failed to obtain over 40% as well as a 10%+ victory margin over the runner-up, the candidate of 'Correism' must now face off against either indigenous leader Yaku Pérez or against the businessman Guillermo Lasso. The latter two candidates are so far tied, though as counting continues the next days are expected to produce a clear second placed candidate.

The new National Assembly looks set to be fragmented, as predicted, comprising eight political parties, none of which able to pursue a legislative agenda without reaching wider consensus. As a result, negotiations and alliance building among parties will be key to advancing or rejecting the bills presented by the new administration.

A distinctive feature of the elections was the **high number of annulled or blank ballots**. So far, 850,105 invalid votes have been registered, which in any scenario is a huge number and, in part, is due to the lack of public faith in the electoral process and the presidential and legislative candidates.

Content

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PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

- Presidential candidates
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LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS

- How is the National Assembly currently made up?
- What will the Assembly look like as of May 14?
- Conclusions

Key considerations

What was at stake?

Last Sunday, February 7, Ecuadorians went to the polls to elect the President, Vice-president, 137 legislators and 5 Andean Parliament members for the 2021-2025 term.

Electoral schedule

According to the Constitution, the president, vice-president and assembly members are elected for a 4-year term.

Will there be a run-off election?

Yes. As none of the candidates for president obtained an absolute majority of the votes or 40 percent of the votes and a difference of 10 points more than the second, there will be a **run-off election on April 11, 2021**. Andres Arauz of Partido Unión por la Esperanza (UNES - allied to former President Rafael Correa) will compete against Guillermo Lasso of the Creando Oportunidades (CREO) - Partido Social Cristiano (PSC) alliance or Yaku Perez of Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik. The latter two are in a technical tie, so they must wait for the final counting.

How were contestants elected?

The Constitution establishes that "the popular vote is universal, equal, direct, secret, and publicly scrutinized". Additionally, the vote was mandatory for people who can read and write, and voluntary for illiterate people, for young people between sixteen and eighteen years old, and for people over sixty-five years old.

What were the results of the legislative elections?

With 75% of the ballots counted by the National Electoral Council, the party of candidate Aráuz (UNES) **would obtain the largest number of seats in the National Assembly**. It would be followed by parties such as Movimiento de la Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik, Izquierda Democrática and CREO. None of the parties would have a majority of its own.

When will the elected officials take office?

According to the article 120 of the Constitution, the president and vice-president will take office on **May 24**. Meanwhile, the elected legislators will take office on **May 14**.

Main takeaways from the elections

- Within the framework of the pandemic, the general elections in Ecuador registered a **large turnout of voters**. With 97.56% of the votes counted, the winner is **Andres Arauz** of UNES, with 32.2% of the vote, followed by Yaku Perez (Pachakutik), with 19.8%, and Guillermo Lasso (CREO-PSC) at 19.6%.
- At the end of the election day, the National Electoral Council (CNE) confirmed there will be a **run-off election** on April 11 after none of the candidates obtained more than 40% of the votes.
- The question now is which candidate **will compete against Arauz in the run-off**. The second place is being fought out between banker Guillermo Lasso and indigenous environmentalist leader Yaku Perez. Opinion polls seem to have underestimated Perez, whose successful wooing of environmentalist organizations and different social groups appears to have paid off.
- One of the **surprises of the day** was the candidate of the democratic left, Xavier Hervas, who obtained 16.1%. Until a few months ago, Hervas was an unknown businessman in the world of Ecuadorian politics. Through his social networks, the businessman managed to gain the interest and acknowledgement of citizens, effectively sharing his campaign proposals through digital platforms.
- In line with opinion polls, **UNES looks set to have the largest number of legislators in the National Assembly**. However, preliminary results indicate that none of the parties will have a majority. On the other hand, the Executive will face the need to generate coalitions with the different political blocs in order to advance on its government agenda.

Presidential elections

MAIN CANDIDATES

Although there were 16 political parties registered to compete for the presidency, Andrés Aráuz Galarza (UNES) was the most voted candidate. It remains to be defined who will be Aráuz's opponent in the ballotage on April 11: Guillermo Lasso Mendoza (CREO) or Yaku Pérez (UPP). Please find below their profiles and government proposals.



ANDRÉS ARÁUZ GALARZA
**Coalición Unión por la
Esperanza**



YAKU PÉREZ GUARTAMBEL
**Unidad Plurinacional
Pachakutik**



GUILLERMO LASSO MENDOZA
**Alianza Creando
Oportunidades**

Coalición Unión por la Esperanza (UNES) | 32.2% of the votes*

ANDRÉS ARÁUZ GALARZA

He holds a master's degree in Development Economics from the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO, in Spanish) and is currently studying for a doctorate in Financial Economics at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM, in Spanish). Aráuz launched his candidacy with the political support of former President Rafael Correa and the Centro Democrático party.

During the Correa administration, Aráuz served as coordinating minister of Knowledge and Human Talent, director of the National Public Procurement Service (Sercop, in Spanish), undersecretary of Investment and undersecretary of Planning for Good Living at Senplades. He was also general banking director at the Central Bank of Ecuador (2009-2011) and financial policy advisor (2007).



Vice-presidential running mate

Carlos Rabascall



Engineer and economist. For 13 years he worked as a journalist. In the public sector, he served as Director of Institutional Development of the former National Secretariat of Administrative Development (SENDA, in Spanish) and was a member of the National Council of Modernization (CONAM, in Spanish).

It is worth mentioning that Rabascall became a candidate after former President Rafael Correa was banned from running for office due to his conviction in a bribery case.

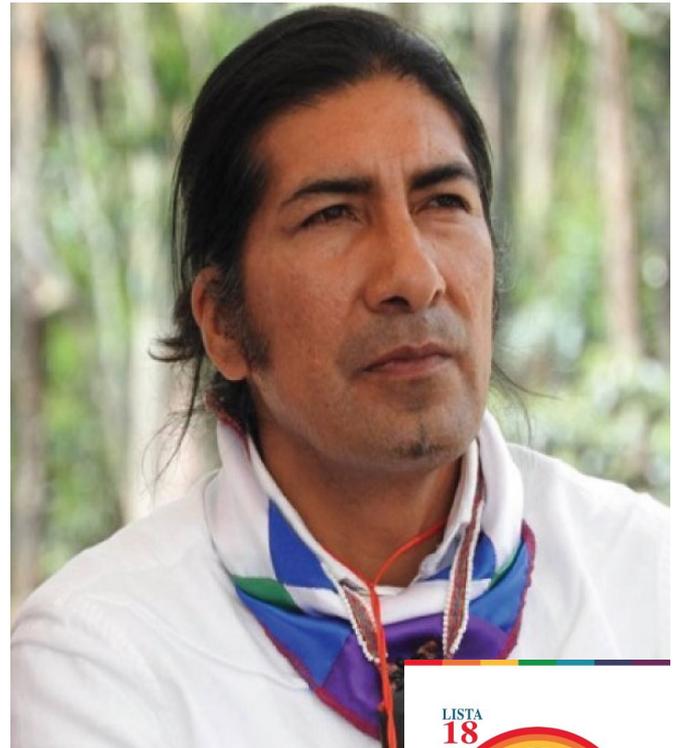
*Source: preliminary results provided by the National Electoral Council (CNE).

Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik (UPP) | 19.8% of the votes*

YAKU PÉREZ GUARTAMBEL

He is the leader of the country's indigenous peoples and has a left-wing political stance. Perez holds a Master's degree in Criminal Law and Criminology from the Universidad de los Andes. He was president of the Confederation of Peoples of the Kichwa Nationality (ECUARUNARI in Spanish) between 2013 and 2019.

The indigenous leader is recognized for rejecting mining activities and being a strong defender of the environment. Yaku Perez was one of the main visible opponents of the government of former President Rafael Correa.



Vice-presidential running mate

Virna Cedeño

She is a biologist from the University of Guayaquil and holds a PhD in Molecular Biotechnology from the University of Montpellier. Cedeño is president and owner of the company specialized in aquaculture biotechnology Concepto Azul.

She was honored as one of the women of the year in 2017 for the creation of the first Master's degree in Biotechnology in the country. If she becomes vice president, Cedeño wants to handle issues such as science, technology, innovation and education.

*Source: preliminary results provided by the National Electoral Council (CNE).

Alianza Creando Oportunidades (CREO) | 19.6% of the votes*

GUILLERMO LASSO MENDOZA

Lasso is a banker and politician. He owns financial holding companies, including Banco Guayaquil. This is Lasso's third run for the presidency. He was a candidate in 2013 and 2017 elections. For these elections, Lasso allied with the Partido Social Cristiano (PSC).

He served as Minister of Economy in 1999 and was governor of the province of Guayas in 1998. Lasso is noted for the "Banco del Barrio" program, through which he brought financial services to the stores. The Inter-American Development Bank recognized it as the largest bankarisation initiative in Latin America in 2010.



Vice-presidential running mate



Alfredo Borrero Vega

Medical Doctor, born in Cuenca. He is currently Dean of Health Sciences at Universidad de las Américas (UDLA, in Spanish). Prior to this appointment, he was Medical Director of the Hospital Metropolitano de Quito.

He holds a degree in Neurosurgery from the Mexican Board of Neurological Surgery, a subspecialty in Spine Surgery from Ochsner Institutions/Tulane University, and a Diploma in Health Administration from Harvard University.

*Source: preliminary results provided by the National Electoral Council (CNE).

Main proposals



ANDRÉS ARÁUZ GALARZA

Coalición Unión por la Esperanza (UNES)
32.2% of the votes

- Lower active interest rates in the country.
- Create institutions to guarantee food sovereignty and implement a progressive tax reform of wealth.
- Put dollars in "quarantine" to prevent currency flight.
- Implement the "universal decent work" program, with a monthly work salary, to help the youth and women's work.
- Foster the integration process with UNASUR and CELAC.

To see the complete government plan, [click here](#).



YAKU PÉREZ GUARTAMBEL

Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik (UPP)
19.8% of the votes

- Financing for new lines of credit to reactivate 100,000 small agricultural production units.
- Preferential credit lines with single-digit interest rates for entrepreneurs.
- Establish a fully-equipped community preventive health network.
- Financing for the construction of communities and neighborhoods of knowledge.
- Reforms to the Integral Penal Code, to establish the grounds for seizure of assets in cases of corruption.

To see the complete government plan, [click here](#).



GUILLERMO LASSO MENDOZA

Alianza Creando Oportunidades (CREO)
19.6% of the votes

- Create new hiring mechanisms.
- Incentives and mechanisms to simplify the hiring of vulnerable groups.
- Apply a technical rule for the annual calculation of the basic salary.
- Promote a system of international financial integration.
- Adopt regulations to attract local and foreign investment and promote free competition in the financial services market.

To see the complete government plan, [click here](#).

PRELIMINARY RESULTS



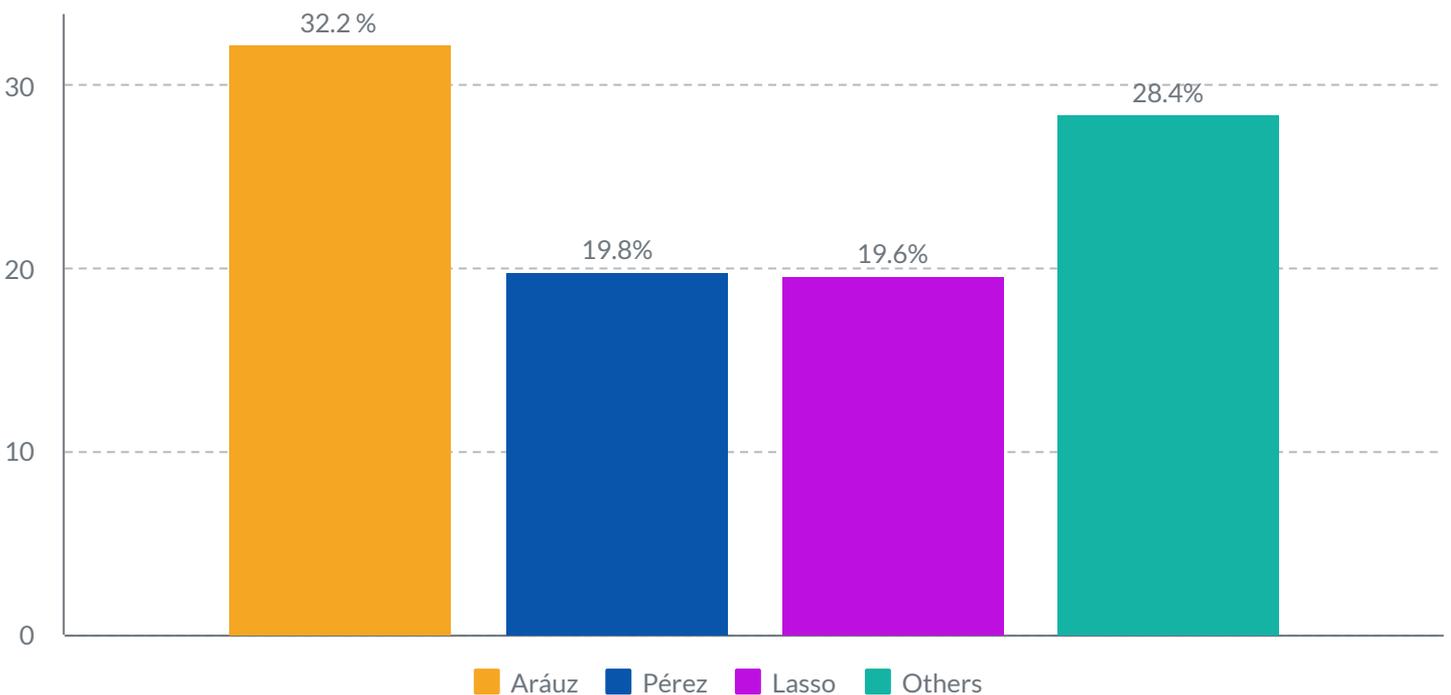
ANDRÉS ARÁUZ GALARZA
Coalición Unión por la Esperanza
32.2% of the votes*



YAKU PÉREZ GUARTAMBEL
Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik
19.8% of the votes*



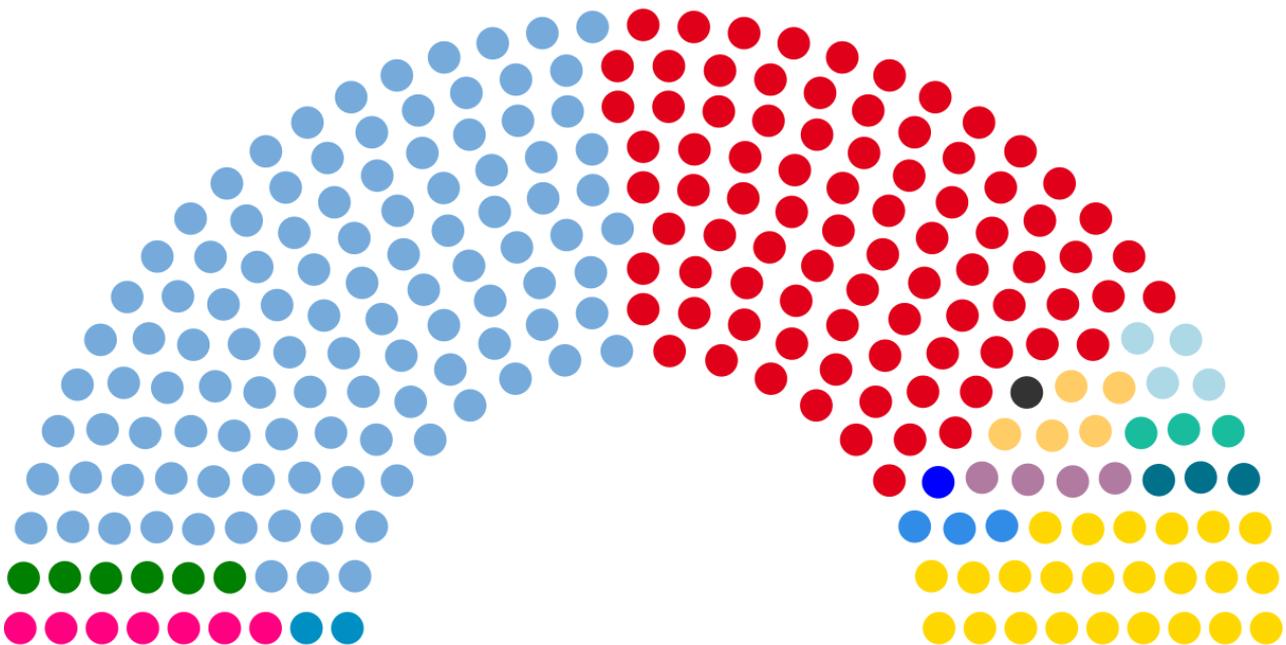
GUILLERMO LASSO MENDOZA
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*Source: Own elaboration based on preliminary results provided by the National Electoral Council (CNE).

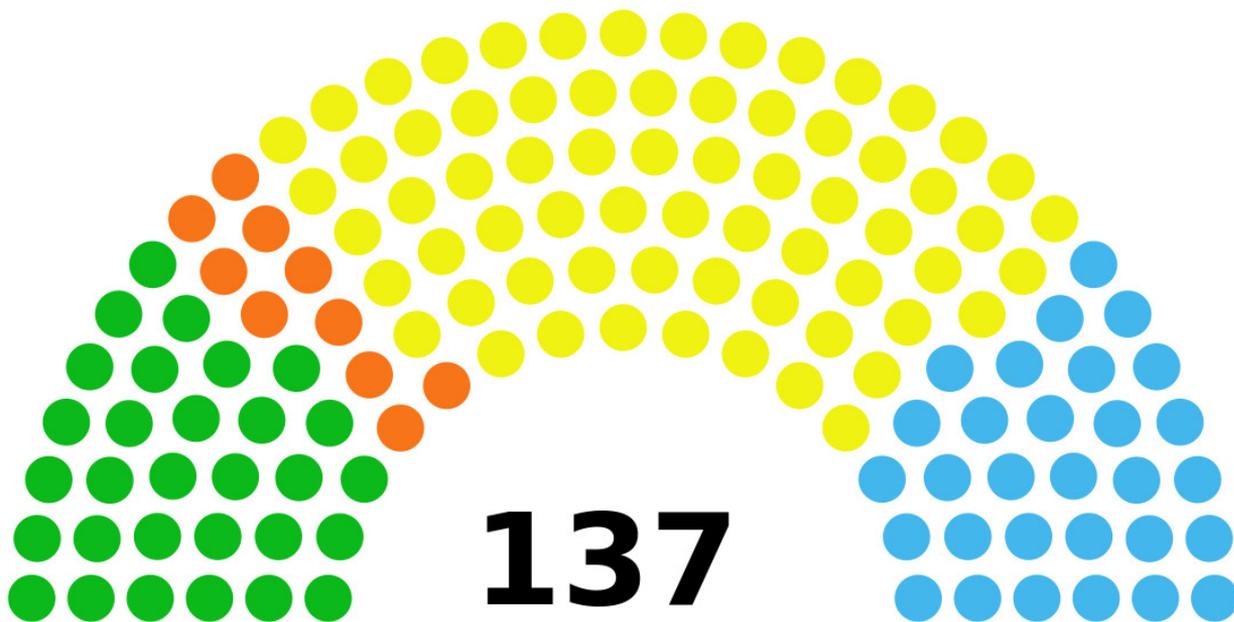
Legislative Elections

HOW IS IT PRESENTLY COMPOSED
AND WHAT WILL THE ASSEMBLY LOOK LIKE AS OF MAY 14?



What is the current composition of the Assembly?

The Assembly is composed of 137 seats. At present, the government does not have an absolute majority in the chamber, so in **order to advance its legislative agenda it must negotiate with the opposition.**



● Ruling party (30)

ALIANZA PAÍS (24)
ALLIES AP (6)

● Allies (10)

SUMA (5)
ID (2)
MNJP (2)
PSP (1)

● Opposition (67)

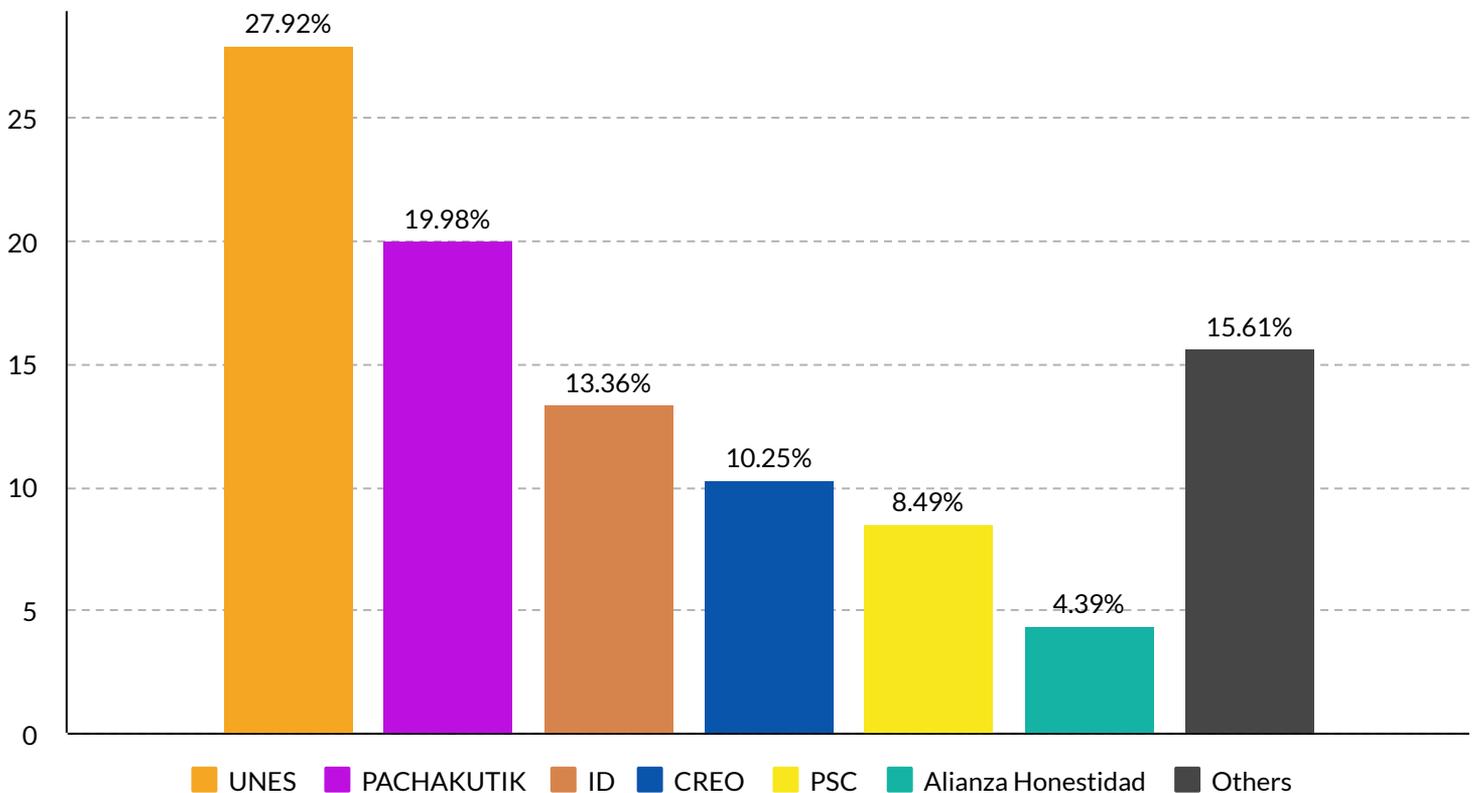
RC (29)
PSC (16)
CREO (16)
MUPP (5)

● Independents (30)

INDEPENDENTS (25)
PROVINCIAL (5)

What will the Assembly look like as of May 14?

- As of the amendment to the Democracy Code, and the consequent application of the Webster method, there **will be a greater number of parties in the new National Assembly**. This is due to the fact that, at the time of assigning seats, a larger weight of representation will be given to parties with fewer votes.
- Preliminary results indicate that **UNES is likely to be the party with the most National Assembly seats**, followed by Movimiento de la Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik, Izquierda Democrática and CREO. None of the parties look set to have a majority of its own.



***Source:** Own elaboration based on preliminary results provided by the National Electoral Council (CNE).

Conclusions

- The quick count of the National Electoral Council (CNE) indicates that **the president will be elected in a second electoral round on April 11**. However, it still remains to be defined who will be the candidate to challenge the hope of Correism, Andrés Arauz. That is currently being disputed vote by vote between the banker Guillermo Lasso and the surprise of the elections, the indigenous leader Yaku Pérez. The final tally will take a few days to be made official and the total votes of those living abroad have not yet been obtained.
- In terms of the second round on April 11, **several scenarios are possible** -
 - In the event that the second round is contested by Arauz and Lasso, the former is the one likely to draw most of the indigenous support.
 - On the other hand, if there is a run-off between Pérez and Arauz, the indigenous leader would not only obtain the support of these communities but also of the right wing of the country, which is expected to support Pérez to stop Correism at all cost.
- In the meantime, the **Legislative branch would be fragmented**. Although Arauz's UNES is the party expected to have the largest number of seats in the Assembly, it is the first time Correism would lack its own majority in the Legislature. Meanwhile, the 'Plurinational Unity Pachakutik Movement' would hold the second most seats, followed by the Democratic Left, the CREO movement, the Social Christian Party and the Honesty Alliance. With this result, none of the parties would have a majority of its own, so will have to generate alliances to impose their own agendas.
- The next government will have to face a continued **economic and health crisis**. Likewise, the future president must deal with the different fiscal and tax reforms that are part of the obligations taken on by the country to secure international financing - which will require the support of, or agreements to be struck, with the Assembly.

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Directorio Legislativo is an independent, non-profit organization working to strengthen democracy and make law- and policy-making in Latin America more transparent, representative and participatory. We achieve this by improving access to public information, and through the creation of spaces for legislators and politicians to engage and be influenced by outside specialists, civil society and the public at large.

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