

Ecuador's Presidential Election

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

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Last year, President Rafael Correa said he wouldn't seek a third term after 10 years in office.

In December 2015, Ecuador's constitution was amended to permit unlimited re-election runs, including for president – term limits eliminated after May 24, 2017, following this year's general elections, held on February 19, including for five regional MPs, 137 federal lawmakers, the nation's president and vice president.

With nearly 90% of votes counted as this is written, **Lenin Moreno**, Correa's former vice president, leads right-wing banker **Guillermo Lasso** by a 39.11 – 28.28 percent margin – close to the 40% threshold needed to avoid a second round runoff.

Ecuador's National Electoral Council said final results may take several more days as results trickle in from isolated areas, Ecuadoreans abroad, bureaucratic delays, and inconsistencies in some ballots.

Six other candidates competed. Moreno, a paraplegic, was nominated for the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize because of his advocacy for handicapped people.

In 1998, he was seriously wounded in a Quito robbery attempt, paralyzed, unable to walk. Years of therapy restored his ability to move around in a wheelchair, able to continue working in the public sector.

He promotes humor and joy as a way to overcome serious physical limitations. It worked for him, a remarkable story, especially if he becomes Ecuador's next president.

As vice president, he increased the federal budget for disabled people manyfold. Hundreds of thousands are helped.

Guillermo Lasso is a banker, businessman, running for president after losing to Correa decisively in 2013.

As Banco de Guayaquil president and largest shareholder, he coordinated right-wing attacks on Correa's agenda. During former Ecuadorian president Lucio Gutierrez's neoliberal tenure, he developed relations with US business elites.

Pre-election, Moreno was favored to win. His lead over Lasso makes him most likely to become Ecuador's next president.

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His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: How the US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."

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