

Businessman Daniel Noboa elected new president of Ecuador

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By María Josefina Arce

Against a backdrop of high insecurity, Ecuadorians went to the polls this Sunday and elected as their new president the center-right Daniel Noboa, of National Democratic Action, who will have a very complex task ahead of him.

Noboa receives a country surrounded by violence, with a difficult economic situation and in the hands of the IMF, International Monetary Fund, and its draconian adjustment policies that create discontent among the population.

The millionaire businessman, who surprisingly slipped into the ballot, obtained 52.29% of the votes and thus prevailed over his opponent Luisa González, of Revolución Ciudadana, who obtained 47.71%.

More than 82% of the citizens went to the polls, in a day in which almost 100 thousand police and military officers were deployed and which counted with the presence of foreign and national observers.

The early elections in Ecuador have been unprecedented in many aspects, such as the use for the first time of the constitutional mechanism called cross death and a security crisis never seen before.

Thus, the current process has been marked by all kinds of violent actions, including against presidential candidates such as the case of Fernando Villavicencio, murdered on August 9, days before the first round of elections.

This is a problem that has been worsening in the last months and will be faced by the president elect.

So far this year, more than 5,300 crimes have been reported in Ecuadorian territory, a figure that already exceeds by far the 4,600 recorded last year, which was considered the bloodiest in the history of that nation.

Ecuadorian experts point out that this situation is a sign of the failure of the security measures of the government of President Guillermo Lasso, since it is not a matter of giving more bullets to the police, but of establishing comprehensive public policies for the whole society.

And precisely, Noboa finds a country where poverty and inequality have once again reached high levels, after from 2007 to 2017, under the government of Rafael Correa, they were reduced significantly, thanks to an increase in social spending and economic and institutional reforms.

But the arrival of Lenín Moreno to the presidency meant the return to the neoliberal model and the return of the IMF, which has led to adjustment measures that have had a negative impact on the population, a situation that worsened with the COVID 19 pandemic and the policy along the same lines followed by his successor Guillermo Lasso.

According to the National Institute of Statistics and Census, as of June of this year, poverty stood at 27%, and extreme poverty at almost 11%. Only three out of 10 Ecuadorians had a formal job.

The economy is not going through a good period either. Experts estimate that by the end of the year the fiscal deficit will reach five billion dollars, almost 4% of the Gross Domestic Product.

Noboa, who will become the youngest president of Ecuador, will complete the mandate of Guillermo Lasso until May 2025, although he has already expressed his intention to run again in that year.

For the time being, he will have very little time to provide solutions to the serious problems facing the country, without forgetting that he defends the interests of the right wing, neoliberalism and the business community.



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