

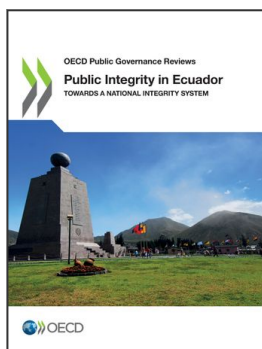
# Foreword

Public integrity is the glue that holds societies together. It is the consistent alignment of, and adherence to, shared ethical values, principles and norms for upholding, and prioritising the public interest over private interests in the public sector. Not respecting these values and rules undermines sustainable and inclusive development, and can endanger our democracies. As a key driver of trust in government, public integrity is crucial for ensuring the credibility and therefore the support for and success of policies.

Public integrity is also essential in the current context. Countries are suffering from the consequences of the COVID-19 crisis and have been mobilising significant public resources to make vaccines available, ensure health services, provide support to most vulnerable people and sustain businesses. Unfortunately, this situation has also exacerbated corruption risks, and in many countries corruption cases linked to the management of COVID-19-related resources are adding to citizens' already growing discontent, emphasising the relevance of building a responsive and resilient public integrity system.

To respond to this and other contemporary challenges, Ecuador has recognised the need for continuous improvement of its policies. Although public integrity is a novel issue in the country, Ecuador has showed willingness to develop a national integrity system in line with good international practices and the *OECD Recommendation on Public Integrity* (hereafter “the *OECD Recommendation*”). This will support Ecuador in developing a sustainable answer to corruption, as public integrity aspires to move beyond reacting to scandals only by building a culture of integrity in the whole of government, state and society. Furthermore, it will consolidate Ecuador's broader efforts to participate in international dialogue – which included joining the OECD Development Centre in 2019 - and to find innovative solutions to promote sustainable and inclusive growth, reduce poverty and inequalities, and improve people's lives.

This report, supported by the German Technical Cooperation in Ecuador, builds on the OECD work and experience on public integrity in Latin America and demonstrates the commitment of the country to raise its integrity standards and practices. It focuses on the institutional and strategic aspects addressed in the first pillar of the *OECD Recommendation*, which Ecuador has identified as priorities in developing an integrity system. As such, the report provides a road map with concrete recommendations which could be considered by the new government elected in 2021 to set the foundations for a comprehensive and strategic approach to integrity. Building on this first report, Ecuador could decide to expand the review to the two other pillars of the *OECD Recommendation* – culture of integrity and accountability – and carry out an OECD Integrity Review, which would enable the country to request adherence to the *OECD Recommendation* as other non-Member countries in the region, such as Argentina and Peru, have done.



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