

Ecuador

Archetype **Stalled middle**

GDP / person **\$7k**

Population **18.29M**

10-yr trend **1.3%**

Gradual **10%** · **#54**

Fast **11.8%** · **#64**

WHERE ECUADOR STARTS

Ecuador enters the AGI era as a stalled middle economy: middling income, middling scores, slow growth. Its ten-year trend growth is just 1.3% a year, and at about \$7,125 per person it sits in the middle-income band. The scores show where it stands. Demographics and migration score 4.6, well above the archetype median, a young workforce that is Ecuador's clearest asset. Physical build speed is 3.4 and climate resilience 3.9. What holds it back is energy and compute access, at 1.2. Ecuador leans heavily on hydropower, and the droughts of 2023–24 forced blackouts of up to fourteen hours a day. Its dollarized economy, in place since 2000, limits the fiscal tools a government can reach for. Geopolitical positioning scores 2: Ecuador sits outside the blocs that decide chip access.

THE THREE PATHS

These are simulations, not forecasts. The Modest path is the baseline, and the two AGI scenarios fork from it. Under the Modest scenario, AI stays a normal technology. Ecuador would gain almost nothing on trend: 1.6% growth a year, 127th of 157. Gains would arrive imported and late, the archetype's fate. Under **Gradual** takeoff, growth would climb over two decades and reach 10% a year once AGI matures around 2045. That would place Ecuador 54th in the world. An economy growing at 10% doubles in about seven years. The long ramp gives Ecuador time to turn its young workforce and construction capacity into something more. Under **Fast** takeoff, growth would reach 11.8% a year from the early 2030s, a doubling in a little over six years. Yet Ecuador's rank would slip to 64th, ten places below its gradual standing, because a fast world rewards the compute and frontier access Ecuador lacks. Regulation and politics could slow or redirect any of these paths. How Ecuadorians and their leaders respond to transformative AI is a variable the model holds constant.

HOW YOU WOULD KNOW WHICH WORLD YOU ARE IN

The three scenarios look almost the same until about 2030. So watch leading indicators, not GDP, and check them live. Three global signals matter most. First, whether the METR task-horizon curve keeps doubling every four to five months through 2027–28; METR publishes it at metr.org. Second, whether frontier-lab revenue and capital spending keep compounding; Epoch AI tracks both at epoch.ai. Third, whether growth in the ten to twenty most-ready economies — the United States and China above all — breaks above trend in the early 2030s. Double-digit growth there within a couple of years of 2030 would point to a fast world. A point or two above trend by the mid-2030s would point to a gradual one. A fade

back to trend would point to a modest one. Ecuador's own signals would arrive earlier than the growth data: new generation and grid projects reaching financial close, any hyperscaler hosting commitment on Ecuadorian soil, and AI adoption in banking, oil services and the shrimp and banana export sectors.

IF GROWTH GOES EXPLOSIVE

Explosive is relative. At 11.8% growth a year under fast takeoff, Ecuador would run ahead of the Latin American median of 9.2%, but far behind a frontier compounding at 39.2%. The gap to the leaders would widen even as Ecuador grew faster than ever. At 10% growth an economy doubles in about seven years, so a child starting school today would finish it in a country twice as rich. The mix would shift from oil, nearly 29% of exports, toward services and higher-value work. Rising wages at home would ease the pressure to emigrate that has long drawn Ecuadorians to the United States and Spain. There is a way this leaves Ecuadorians worse off. Its compute would be rented, not owned, and financed from abroad; the same grid that failed in the 2024 blackouts cannot yet power it. Decisions made in another capital could throttle or reprice that capacity. The hedge is to secure reliable power and negotiate firm terms of access. Even then, the pace-setter would move to the state, testing whether Ecuador's ministries, permitting agencies and courts can approve and adjudicate at speed.

WHAT ECUADOR CAN DO NOW

Three levers follow from the scores, and two pay off whether or not AGI arrives. The first is AI diffusion, at 3.1. Digital skills, deployment-permissive rules and digital government carry real weight even in the skeptic's world, so building them is a no-regret move. The second is geopolitical positioning, at 2. Keeping access to capital markets and avoiding sanctions exposure protects Ecuador under every scenario, and it opens the door to trusted-partner chip access later; that too is no-regret. The third lever is the bet. Compute and energy access, at 1.2, barely moves growth if AI stays ordinary, but under fast takeoff it becomes Ecuador's single largest lever. Fixing the grid matters now, given the blackouts, and it is the input any data-center build would need. Closing the gap means packaging reliable power, land and fast permits to draw investment. Thailand shows the model: it won Google, Microsoft and AWS data-center commitments by offering power and incentives. A cautious government can act on the two no-regret levers today and lose nothing if the skeptics are right. Open the atlas's [policy editor](#) to see how moving these scores changes Ecuador's path under each scenario.

The three levers — and which pay off regardless

AI diffusion capacity

score 3.1 / 5 · weight 24 under skeptic → 13 under fast takeoff

Counts under the Modest scenario too (24→13). Closing this gap pays off whether or not AGI arrives.

No-regret

Compute & energy access

score 1.2 / 5 · weight 8 under skeptic → 24 under fast takeoff

Weight climbs from 8 to 24 as takeoff nears. It barely moves growth if AI stays ordinary — the lever that needs a view on the takeoff.

AGI bet

Trusted chip & tech access

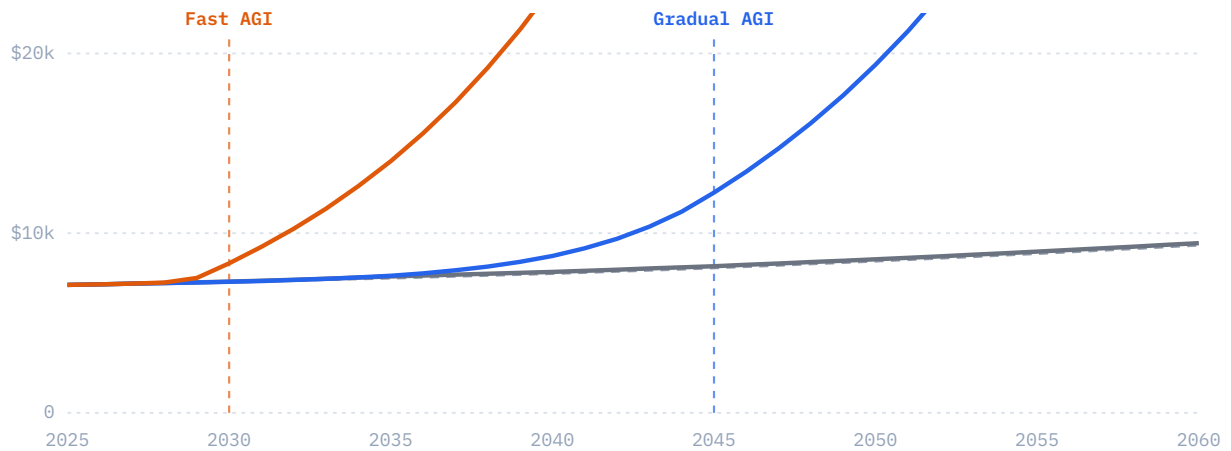
score 2 / 5 · weight 8 under skeptic → 12 under fast takeoff

Weight climbs from 8 to 12 as takeoff nears. It barely moves growth if AI stays ordinary — the lever that needs a view on the takeoff.

AGI bet

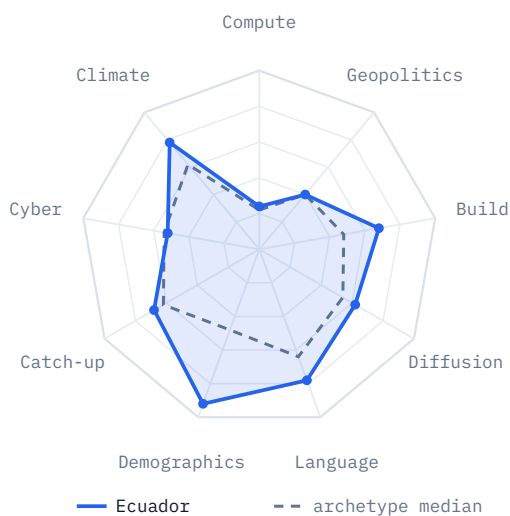
The no-regret levers pay off in every scenario, so a cautious government can act on them today. The AGI bets become decisive only if takeoff is real.

GDP per person to 2060, by scenario



Linear scale; solid lines are the three scenarios, dashed grey the no-AI baseline. Growth ramps from 2027 to each scenario's rate at its AGI year (Fast ~2030, Gradual ~2045), then holds. Timing and divergence are the point, not end levels; steep paths exit the top of the capped axis.

The nine factors



Solid: Ecuador. Dashed: the median of its archetype. Scores are relative to the other 156 countries (3 ≈ global median, 5 = leading today).

Outcomes under each scenario

SCENARIO	GROWTH / YR	WORLD RANK	INDEX	DOUBLING
Modest	1.6%	127 / 157	63.7	—
Gradual	10%	54 / 157	60.7	7.3 yrs
Fast	11.8%	64 / 157	55.1	6.2 yrs

Post-AGI growth rate, rank among 157 countries, AGI Growth Index (0–100, scenario-weighted), and the implied economy doubling time. The Modest path is the baseline the AGI scenarios fork from.

THE THREE SCENARIOS

Modest the Acemoglu view

AI as a normal productivity tool

Intelligence was never the binding constraint on growth, so AI delivers real but ordinary gains. Each country gets a one-time boost of a couple of percent of GDP, phased in through 2035; growth then returns to trend. The mainstream-economics view.

≤0.66% TFP over a decade — a one-time gain

Ecuador: 1.6% growth a year · #127 of 157

Gradual Erdil & Besiroglu, base case

Broad automation, on a long timeline

Broad automation of remote work arrives around 2045, with gains building slowly from the late 2020s. Growth then reaches up to ~20% a year for the best-positioned countries — ten times today's frontier trend. A slow arrival gives countries time to adapt, so the gains are wide but uneven.

up to ~20%/yr after 2045 — 10× the frontier trend

Ecuador: 10% growth a year · #54 of 157

Fast Erdil & Besiroglu, fast takeoff

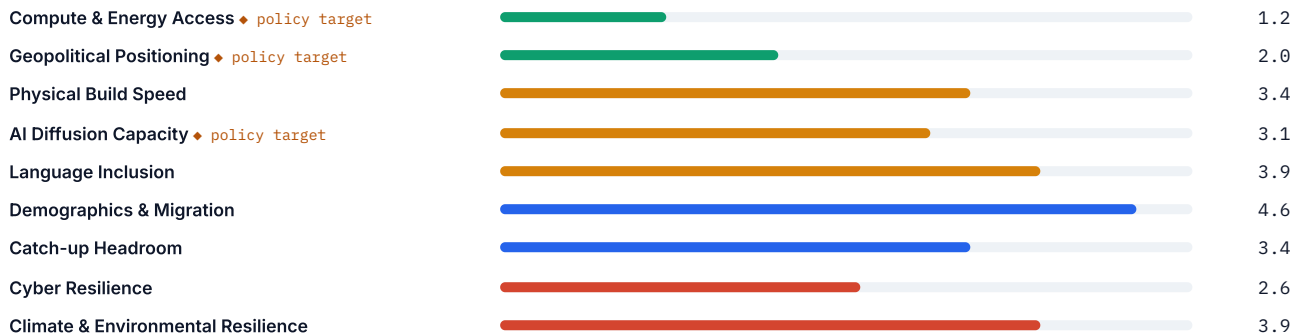
Fast takeoff — today's infrastructure decides

Transformation lands around 2030, before countries can adjust. Whoever already owns compute, capital and the ability to build wins; the gap between countries widens dramatically — and some are left growing slower than they would have without AGI.

up to ~40%/yr from 2030

Ecuador: 11.8% growth a year · #64 of 157

Factor scores — and where policy bites



♦ marks this country's highest-leverage policy targets: the weakest factors carrying the most weight under the AGI scenarios. The atlas's interactive policy editor (agigrowth.org/#editor) simulates how raising any score changes growth under each scenario.

Archetype: Stalled middle

Neither frontier nor fragile: middling income, middling scores, slow growth — at every size, from micro-states to Brazil.

Wins: No clean window — gains arrive imported, and late.

Watch: Drift: the gap to every faster group compounds year by year.

Jordan 11.8% · #37

Brazil 11% · #43

Mexico 10.4% · #48

Thailand 10% · #55

Slovakia 9.6% · #59

Argentina 9.5% · #61

Lithuania 9.3% · #63

Cabo Verde 9.3% · #64

Croatia 9.1% · #67

Nepal 9.1% · #68

The regional picture — Mid-table, and outside the blocs.

Latin America enters the era mid-table on almost every factor — and mostly outside the blocs that decide access. Chile leads on institutions and hosts real compute; Brazil and Mexico have hyperscaler regions and huge domestic markets but thin R&D; Uruguay and Costa Rica absorb well at small scale; Guyana is converting an oil windfall into the hemisphere's fastest construction boom. The region's twenty-year question is what happens to nearshoring: the manufacturing and services work that moved toward Mexico and Central America on labor costs is the work automation reprices first, and no country here has a plan B at scale. Distance from the US-China rivalry cuts both ways — few export controls apply, and few strategic investments arrive. Under the modest lens the region loses little; under fast takeoff it drifts: gains arrive, mostly imported, mostly late, and the gap to the frontier compounds year by year.

Method, in brief

Each country is scored 1–5 on nine factors from public data (World Bank, Epoch AI, ITU, IMF and national sources). A scenario-weighted average forms the AGI Growth Index (0–100), which maps to a post-AGI growth rate inside ceilings derived from Erdil & Besiroglu (2023): ~20% growth a year for the best-positioned country under Gradual takeoff (AGI ~2045), ~40% under Fast (AGI ~2030); growth ramps convexly from 2027. The scenario sets the growth rates on offer; the index only decides where each country sits within them. The Modest scenario is the skeptics' baseline — a small uplift on each country's own ten-year trend. These are simulations for structured thinking, not forecasts; no probabilities are attached to any scenario.

Watch the global signals live: the METR task-horizon curve at metr.org/time-horizons · frontier-lab revenue at epoch.ai/ai-companies · AI-chip spending at epoch.ai/ai-chip-sales.

Explore further: full methodology agigrowth.org/#methodology · map & rankings agigrowth.org/#explore · country profiles agigrowth.org/#countries · policy editor agigrowth.org/#editor