



# Unease Spreads in Ecuador Amid Assassination of Presidential Candidate

Tracking Global Events | August 16, 2023

The August 9 assassination of Ecuadorian presidential candidate Fernando Villavicencio shocked the country and raises concerns about the rise of violence and impunity. Villavicencio was a vocal critic of corruption and drug trafficking in Ecuador and had received death threats in the past. The criminal syndicate Los Lobos has claimed responsibility for his assassination. As violence [continues to spiral out of control](#), and the highly-contested presidential elections creep up, **Premise launched a survey in Ecuador to measure sentiment on the impact of Villavicencio’s assassination and broader rise in crime and violence.**

## Insights

- **84% of respondents report feeling fearful or very fearful** for their family’s safety. Those in the provinces of Santa Elena and Guayas were most fearful for their safety (see Figure 1).
- When asked if they think Villavicencio’s assassination will change the way they think about free speech and political participation, **81% said they feel either more (40%) or much more (41%) afraid to speak freely and participate politically.**
- The vast majority of respondents (**77%**) feel that the organized crime group **Los Lobos poses a strong or very strong threat to democracy**, while 57% feel the group threatens personal safety.
- **77% are supportive of the US special investigatory agents** sent to help investigate the assassination of Fernando Villavicencio.

Figure 1: Regional Fear For Safety

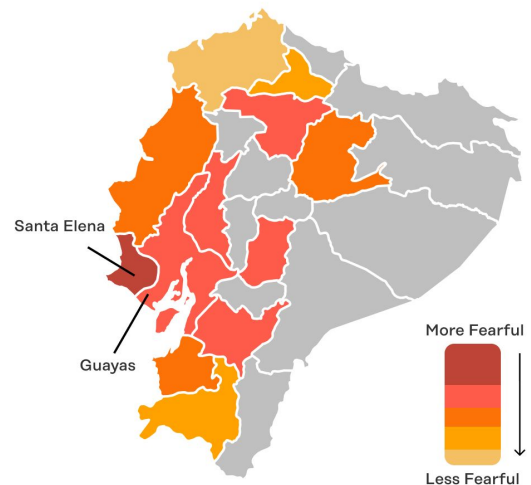
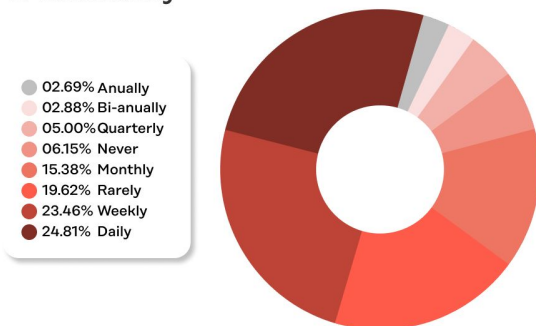


Figure 2: Crime Prevalence in Community



- **Nearly half of respondents** reported witnessing crime in their community either daily or weekly.
- “Fear of violent retribution” and “lack of trust in police” were cited as the **main reasons** why people don’t report crime.
- **Only 27% of respondents believe** that local security forces are properly trained to respond to an emergency.
- Unsurprisingly, only 4% said they felt that security did enough to protect the late Fernando Villavicencio from external threats.

## Methodology

Between August 10th and 15th Premise launched a convenience sample, a type of nonprobability sampling that is hyper-efficient in dynamic events, involving the sample being drawn from a population ready to assist. Premise received 508 responses across Ecuador.

## Premise in Action

Premise offers a unique ability to quickly source information from real people on the ground in hard-to-reach places. Over five million people in over 140 countries are using the Premise app on their smartphones, enabling our customers to monitor a situation over time and employ a data-driven approach to timely decision-making. To learn more about Premise, watch our tech demo or get in touch with us.