Public employment fell sharply in Costa Rica

In 2018, public employment in Costa Rica reached 12.7% of total employment, slightly above the LAC average of 11.9%. However, between 2011 and 2018 public employment decreased by 4 percentage points, the steepest decrease in the region. This reduction is the result of an absolute decrease of public sector employment coupled with an annual increase of total employment over the seven-year period.

Costa Rica has made progress to engage stakeholders in the development of subordinate regulations

In 2019, Costa Rica scored 2.07 (0 being the lowest and 4 the highest) in the composite indicator stakeholder engagement in developing subordinate regulations. This is the second highest score for the LAC region and the biggest increase (1 point) since 2015. Such increase reflects, among others, the reform of the law on Protection from the Excess of Requirements and Administrative Procedures in 2016. As part of the reform, the Preliminary Control System (SICOPRE) was implemented. The SICOPRE is a centralized webpage for consultations during the development of new regulations or the modification of regulations that establish administrative procedures and requirements.

Trust in government and satisfaction with services are comparatively high in Costa Rica

In 2018, 48% of the population reported trusting the government, this is above LAC (34%) and OECD (45%) averages. Furthermore, between 2007 and 2018 trust increased by 3 percentage points in Costa Rica, while it decreased by 4.4 percentage points overall in the LAC region. One key driver of Trust in government is citizens’ satisfaction with services. In 2018, people in Costa Rica reported the highest satisfaction with both health (67%) and education (79%) services, significantly above the LAC averages: 49% and 63% respectively.
Public Finance and Economics

**Fiscal balance (2018)**

- **Costa Rica**: -6.0%
- **Average of OECD country values in blue**: 0%
- **Range of LAC country values in grey**: -10% to -2%
- **Average of LAC country values in purple**: -8%

Source: IMF World Economic Outlook database

**Government gross debt (2018)**

- **Costa Rica**: 53.5%
- **Average of OECD country values in blue**: 64.7%
- **Range of LAC country values in grey**: 100% to 140%
- **Average of LAC country values in purple**: 108.6%

Source: IMF World Economic Outlook database

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**Public Employment**

**Government investment (2017)**

- **Costa Rica**: 1.6%
- **Average of OECD country values in blue**: 3.1%
- **Range of LAC country values in grey**: 0% to 4%

Source: IMF Government Finance Statistics database

**Public sector employment as % of total employment (2018)**

- **Costa Rica**: 12.7%
- **Average of OECD country values in blue**: 21.1%
- **Range of LAC country values in grey**: 0% to 50%

Source: International Labour Organization ILOSTAT database

**Gender equality in public sector employment (2018)**

- **Costa Rica**: 48.5%
- **Average of OECD country values in blue**: 60.2%
- **Range of LAC country values in grey**: 40% to 90%

Source: International Labour Organization ILOSTAT database

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**Public Procurement**

**Government procurement expenditures (2017)**

- **Costa Rica**: 6.0%

Source: IMF Government Finance Statistics database

**Strategic public procurement by objective (2018)**

- **Support to green public procurement**: Costa Rica
- **Support to SMEs**: Costa Rica
- **Support to innovative goods and services**: Costa Rica
- **Support to women-owned businesses**: Costa Rica
- **Support to responsible business conduct**: Costa Rica

- **A strategy/policy has been developed at a central level**: Costa Rica
- **Some procuring entities have developed an internal strategy/policy**: Costa Rica
- **There has never been a strategy/policy in place**: Costa Rica
- **A strategy/policy has been rescinded**: Costa Rica

Source: OECD-IDB Survey on Public Procurement

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*See Notes*
**Institutions**

**Level of influence of the Centre of Government over line ministries (2018)**

- **Costa Rica**
  - High

Source: OECD-IDB Survey on Organization and Functions of the Centre of Government

**IREG: Composite indicator on stakeholder engagement in developing subordinate regulations (2019)**

- **Costa Rica**
  - 2.07
  - 1.63
  - 2.11

Source: OECD Indicators of Regulatory Policy and Governance for Latin America

**Open Government Data**

**OURdata Index: Open, Useful, Reusable Government Data (2019)**

- **Costa Rica**
  - 0.37
  - 0.43
  - 0.60

Source: IDB-OECD Open Government Data Survey

**Public Sector Integrity**

**Index of quality of regulations against undue influence (2018)**

- **Costa Rica**
  - 3.40
  - 4.08

Source: OECD Questionnaire on Public Integrity in Latin America

**Budgeting Practices**

**Existence of participatory budgeting at the central/federal level (2018)**

- **Costa Rica**
  - No

Source: OECD/IDB Survey of Budget Practices and Procedures

**Human Resources Management**

**Proportion of vacancies that are published and open to external recruitment (2018)**

- **Costa Rica**
  - None

Source: OECD/IDB Survey on Strategic Human Resources Management in Central/Federal Governments
Core Government Results

Rule of Law Index: Constraint to government powers (2019)

Source: World Justice Project Rule of Law Index

Satisfaction and confidence across public services (2018)

Source: Gallup World Poll

Gini coefficient: Differences in income inequality pre and post-tax and government transfers (2017)

Source: OECD Income Distribution database

Notes

LAC and OECD averages for Public finance and economics and Government procurement expenditures are weighted.

* Costs of goods and services financed by general government are not included in government procurement because they are not accounted separately in the IMF Government Finance Statistics (database).

For more information on the data (including full methodology and figure notes) and to consult all other Country Fact Sheets: http://www.oecd.org/gov/government-at-a-glance-lac.htm

The Excel spreadsheets used to create the tables and figures in Government at a Glance: Latin America and the Caribbean 2020 are available via the StatLinks provided throughout the publication: https://doi.org/10.1787/13130fbb-en

Government at a Glance: Latin America and the Caribbean 2020

This third edition of Government at a Glance Latin America and the Caribbean provides the latest available evidence on public administrations and their performance in the LAC region and compares it to OECD countries. This publication includes indicators on public finances and economics, public employment, centres of government, regulatory governance, open government data, public sector integrity, public procurement and for the first time core government results (e.g. trust, inequality reduction). Governance indicators are especially useful for monitoring and benchmarking governments’ progress in their public sector reforms. Each indicator in the publication is presented in a user-friendly format, consisting of graphs and/or charts illustrating variations across countries and over time, brief descriptive analyses highlighting the major findings of the data, and a methodological section on the definition of the indicator and any limitations in data comparability.