

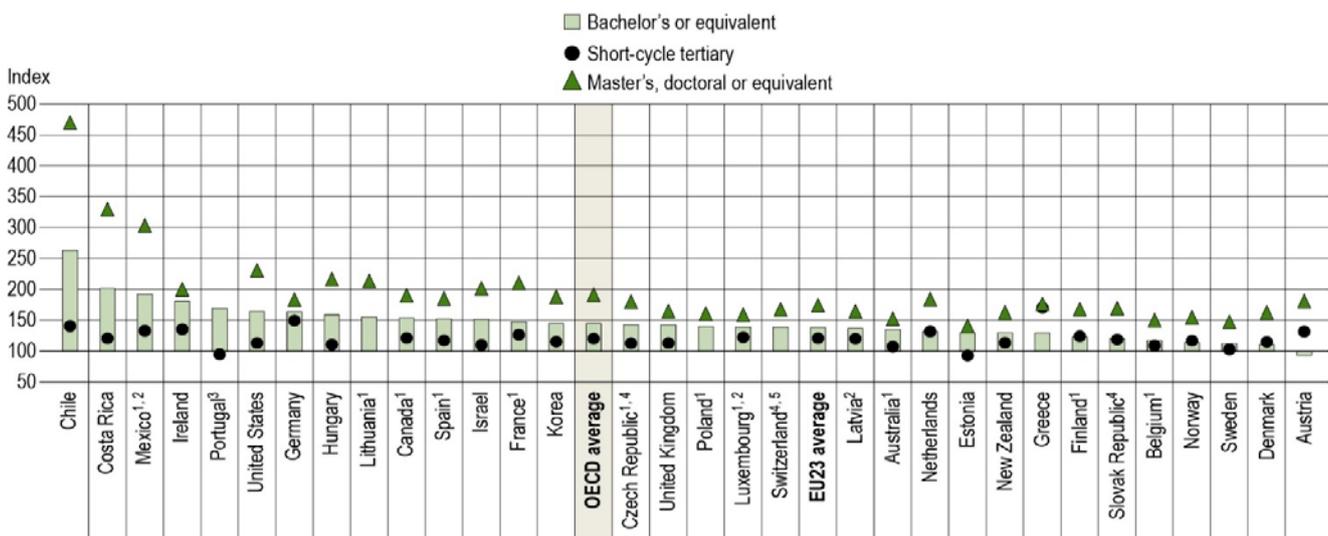
Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators (OECD, 2019^[1]) is the authoritative source for information on the state of education around the world. It provides data on the structure, finances and performance of education systems in OECD countries and partner countries.

Costa Rica

- **Less than one-third of young adults in Costa Rica have attained tertiary education**, mostly at bachelor's level. However, tertiary-educated adults earn at least twice as much as workers with an upper secondary education.
- Tertiary-educated women working full time in Costa Rica earn **almost as much as men**: their wages are 97% of those of similarly educated men, compared to only 75% among OECD countries.
- **More than half of 25-34 year-olds had not achieved upper secondary education in Costa Rica in 2018**. Despite recent increases in educational attainment, some challenges to providing a high-quality secondary education remain.
- **Policy initiatives to promote pre-primary education have increased enrolment**, but services for children under three are still underdeveloped.

Figure 1. Relative earnings of tertiary-educated adults, by educational attainment (2017)

25-64 year-old workers (full- and part-time workers), upper secondary education = 100



1. Year of reference differs from 2017. Refer to source table for more details.

2. Earnings net of income tax.

3. Bachelor's or equivalent includes master's, doctoral or equivalent.

4. Index 100 refers to the combined ISCED levels 3 and 4 of the educational attainment levels in the ISCED 2011 classification.

5. Bachelor's, master's, doctoral or equivalent include short-cycle tertiary.

Countries are ranked in descending order of the relative earnings of 25-64 year-olds with a bachelor's or equivalent qualification.

Source: OECD (2019), Table A4.1. See Source section for more information and Annex 3 for notes (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/https://doi.org/10.1787/f8d7880d-en>).

Tertiary attainment is low in Costa Rica and has a strong impact on earnings

- In Costa Rica, 28% of younger adults (25-34 year-olds) have attained tertiary education, representing a minor increase since 2008, when the figure was 26%. Although the country ranks above Brazil (21%) and Mexico (23%) among Latin American countries, it is still far below the OECD average of 44%. Most young adults with tertiary education in Costa Rica have a bachelor's degree, while only 1% hold a master's or equivalent degree compared with 14% among OECD countries.
- The large earnings advantage enjoyed by tertiary-educated workers may be partially explained by the low levels of tertiary attainment in the country (OECD, 2017^[2]). Adults with a bachelor's degree earn around 100% more than workers with upper secondary education, and those with a master's or doctoral degree earn 230% more (Figure 1). These strong earning premiums generate significant income inequality in the country: half of all tertiary-educated workers earn more than twice the median earnings compared to 23% on average across OECD countries.
- The largest share of tertiary-educated adults in Costa Rica studied business, administration and law (35%), or education (20%). The country also has one of the largest shares (7%) of adults with qualifications in information and communication technologies (ICT) among OECD and partner countries, which could be partly explained by the high employment rate (89%) for graduates in this field.
- Public spending on tertiary education in Costa Rica is high relative to other government priorities. In 2016, Costa Rica spent 4.9% of its total government expenditure on tertiary education, compared to an OECD average of 2.9%. This was higher than other Latin American countries such as Argentina (2.7%), Brazil (3.5%), Colombia (2.4%) and Mexico (4%). However, more than half of bachelor's students study in private institutions in Costa Rica, indicating that private financing is also an important source of funds at tertiary level in the country.

Costa Rica has a smaller earnings gender gap among tertiary-educated adults than the OECD average

- Among younger adults in Costa Rica, the proportion of tertiary-educated women (31%) is higher than the proportion of tertiary-educated men (25%). On average across OECD countries, the difference in tertiary attainment between women and men increased from 9 to 12 percentage points between 2008 and 2018, while in Costa Rica the gap remained constant at around 6 percentage points over this period.
- Despite higher educational attainment, women earn less than men in all OECD and partner countries. Although this is also still an issue in Costa Rica, tertiary-educated women working full time in the country earn almost as much as men: their wages are 97% of those of similarly educated men, compared to only 75% among OECD countries. This may be partly explained by the smaller share of adults with tertiary education and the high demand for such qualifications in the country.
- However women's employment rates are still considerably lower than those of men at all levels of education. In Costa Rica, 43% of young women with below upper secondary education were employed compared to 86% for men, a gap of 43 percentage points, compared to 28 percentage points on average across OECD countries in 2018. This gender gap narrows with higher educational attainment: 88% of tertiary-educated men are employed compared to 76% of women in Costa Rica. This gap is still larger than on average across OECD countries, mostly due to the lower employment rate for tertiary-educated women.

Attainment of upper secondary education is expanding but some quality challenges remain

- While the proportion of young adults with at least upper secondary education has increased by 7 percentage points since 2008 in Costa Rica, the share is still very low (49%) compared to the average for OECD countries (85%).
- Costa Rica devotes 14% of total government expenditure to primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education, a larger share than the average of 7.9% across OECD countries. However, in spite of education being a high government priority, teachers' salaries are among the lowest across OECD and partner countries at all education levels. Starting annual statutory salaries for lower secondary teachers

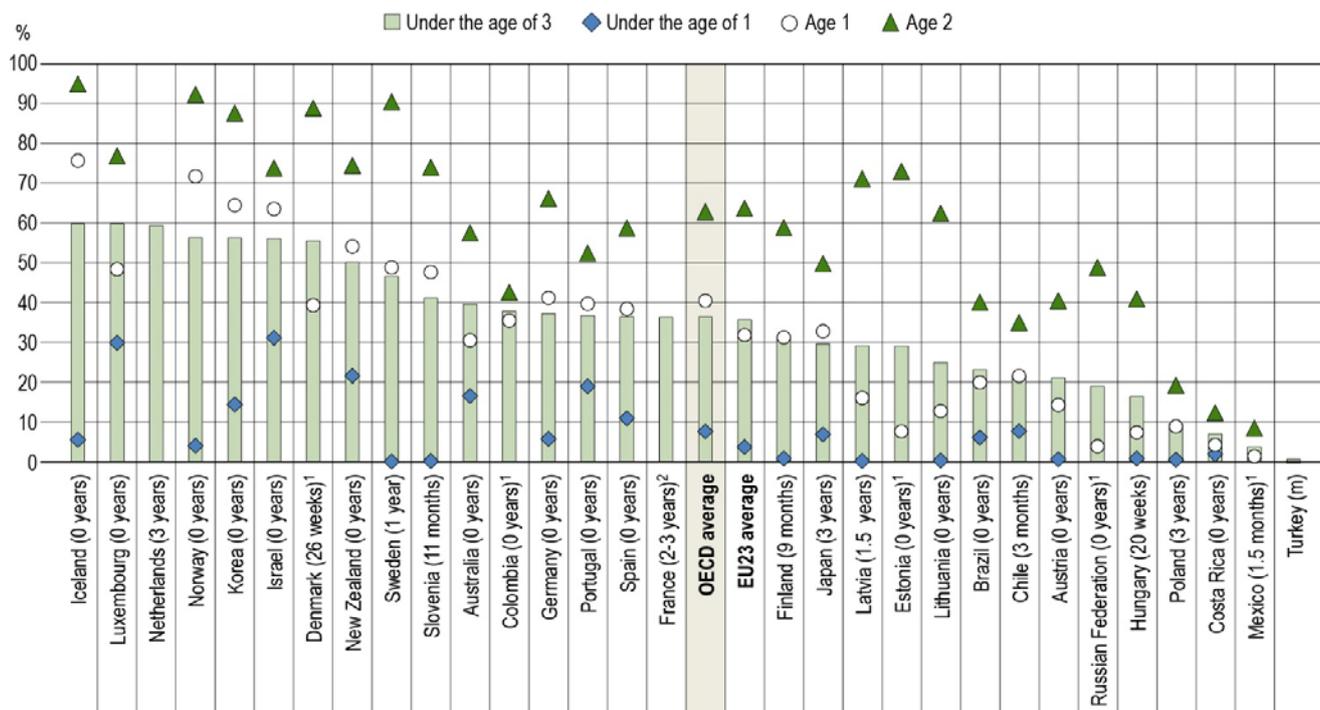
are USD 14 045¹ in Costa Rica, the lowest of all OECD countries. The difference with other countries narrows with professional experience, however. After 15 years of experience, lower secondary teachers' salaries increase to almost USD 32 000, compared to USD 47 675 on average across OECD countries.

- Secondary teachers also have longer teaching hours and teach larger classes. Teachers in public upper secondary general programmes in Costa Rica teach for 1 267 hours per year, compared to the OECD average of 667 hours. Such long teaching hours suggest that a smaller proportion of working time is available for non-teaching activities such as preparing lessons and in-service training. Class size at lower secondary level in public institutions is also the largest across OECD countries, averaging 35 students per class.

Policy initiatives to promote pre-primary education have increased enrolment, but services for younger children are still underdeveloped

- In 2017, only 7% of children under the age of 3 in Costa Rica were enrolled in early childhood education and care services, compared to an average of more than one-third across OECD countries (Figure 2). Enrolment rates are much higher for 4-year-olds (63%) and also for 5-year-olds (85%), although they are also still below the respective OECD averages.

Figure 2. Enrolment rates of children under the age of 3 in early childhood education and care, by age (2017)
All ECEC services (Early childhood education (ISCED 0) and other registered ECEC services outside the scope of ISCED 0)



Note: Figures in parentheses refer to the age when ECEC systems start offering intentional education objectives.

1. Age 1 also includes children under the age of 1.

2. Data for other registered ECEC services come from the survey "Modes de garde et d'accueil des jeunes enfants 2013" conducted by the statistical division of the French Ministry for Solidarities and Health (DREES). Figures refer to the primary custody arrangements.

Countries are ranked in descending order of the enrolment rates in ISCED 0 of children under the age of 3.

Source: OECD (2019), Table B2.1. See Source section for more information and Annex 3 for notes (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2019-36-en>).

- Lower ratios of children to staff members may support better quality staff-child interactions and improve learning outcomes. In Costa Rica, there are around 12 children for every teacher working in pre-primary education (ISCED 02), compared to a ratio of more than 20 in countries such as Mexico, Chile and

¹ Values reported in equivalent US dollars (USD) have been converted using purchasing power parities (PPPs) for GDP.

Colombia, and an OECD average of 16 children per teacher. In contrast, in early childhood educational development programmes (ISCED 01), there are 5 children for every teacher, significantly lower than the OECD average of 10.

- Most children enrolled in early childhood education and care attend public institutions in Costa Rica, and only 15% of them enrol in private institutions, compared to 28% in Brazil, 33% in Argentina and 50% in Chile. Although these figures suggest the development of policies promoting the public provision of early childhood education, this has mostly focused on children aged 3-5. Most early childhood education for children younger than 3 is provided by the private institutions, where 76% of them are enrolled in Costa Rica compared to 47% on average across OECD countries.
- Costa Rica spends 0.1% of its gross domestic product (GDP) on early childhood development programmes (ISCED 01) and 0.4% on pre-primary education (ISCED 02), compared to 0.3% and 0.6% on average among OECD countries.

References

OECD (2019), *Education at a Glance 2019: OECD indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [1]
<https://doi.org/10.1787/f8d7880d-en>.

OECD (2017), *Education at a Glance 2017: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [2]
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2017-en>.

For more information on **Education at a Glance 2019** and to access the full set of Indicators, visit www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm.

Updated data can be found on line at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-data-en> and by following the **StatLinks**  under the tables and charts in the publication.

Explore, compare and visualise more data and analysis using: 
<http://gpseducation.oecd.org/CountryProfile?primaryCountry=CRI&treshold=10&topic=EO>.

Questions can be directed to:	Country note author:
Marie-Helene Doumet Directorate for Education and Skills marie-helene.doumet@oecd.org	Anna Vitória Périco e Santos Directorate for Education and Skills annavitoria.pericoesantos@oecd.org

This work is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD member countries.

This document and any map included herein are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

On 25 May 2018, the OECD Council invited Colombia to become a Member. While Colombia is included in the OECD averages reported in this note, at the time of its preparation, Colombia was in the process of completing its domestic procedures for ratification and the deposit of Colombia's instrument of accession to the OECD Convention was pending.

Note regarding data from Israel

The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and are under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

Key Facts for Costa Rica in Education at a Glance 2019

Source	Main topics in <i>Education at a Glance</i>	Costa Rica		OECD average	
Tertiary education					
Educational attainment of 25-64 year-olds					
2018					
Table A1.1	Short-cycle tertiary	5%		7%	
	Bachelor's or equivalent	15%		17%	
	Master's or equivalent	2%		13%	
	Doctoral or equivalent	0%		1%	
Tertiary attainment of 25-34 year-olds, by gender					
2008					
Table A1.2	Men	23%	25%	31%	38%
	Women	29%	31%	40%	51%
	Total	26%	28%	35%	44%
Share of first-time tertiary entrants by education level					
2017					
Table B4.1	Short-cycle tertiary	**		17%	
	Bachelor's or equivalent	**		76%	
	Master's or equivalent	**		7%	
Share of international or foreign students, by education level¹					
2017					
Table B6.1	Bachelor's or equivalent	**		4%	
	Master's or equivalent	**		13%	
	Doctoral or equivalent	**		22%	
	All tertiary levels of education	1%		6%	
Employment rate of tertiary-educated 25-64 year-olds, by field of study					
2018					
Table A3.4	Education	77%		84%	
	Business and administration	81%		**	
	Engineering, manufacturing and construction	89%		88%	
	Health and welfare	80%		87%	
	All tertiary levels of education	81%		85%	
Relative earnings of full-time full-year 25-64 year-old workers, by educational attainment (upper secondary education = 100)					
2017					
Table A4.1	Short-cycle tertiary	121		120	
	Bachelor's or equivalent	201		144	
	Master's, doctoral or equivalent	330		191	
	All tertiary levels of education	201		157	
Upper secondary and vocational education and training (VET)					
Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment rate					
2018					
Table A1.2	Share of 25-34 year-olds with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary as their highest attainment	21%		41%	
Percentage of first-time upper secondary graduates with a vocational qualification					
2017					
Table B3.1	Vocational programmes	24%		40%	
Age at graduation from upper secondary education, by programme orientation					
2017					
Figure B3.1	General programmes	19		18	
	Vocational programmes	18		21	
Share of women among upper secondary graduates, by programme orientation					
2017					
Figure B3.2	General programmes	54%		55%	
	Vocational programmes	53%		48%	
Employment, unemployment and inactivity rates of 25-34 year-olds, with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education					
2018					
Table A3.3	Employment rate	72%		78%	
	Unemployment rate	13%		7%	
	Inactivity rate	18%		16%	
Total expenditure on upper secondary educational institutions, in USD² per full-time equivalent student, by programme orientation					
2016					
Table C1.1	General programmes	**		USD 9 397	
	Vocational programmes	**		USD 10 922	
Early childhood education and care (ECEC)					
Enrolment rate of 3-5 year-olds in education					
2017					
Table B2.2	ECEC and primary education	51%		87%	
Share of children enrolled in private institutions					
2017					
Table B2.3	Pre-primary level (ISCED 02)	11%		34%	
Ratio of children to teaching staff					
2017					
Table B2.3	Pre-primary level (ISCED 02)	12		16	
Expenditure on children aged 3-5 enrolled in education					
2016					
Table B2.4	Annual expenditure per child, in USD ² per child	**		USD 8 141	
Social outcomes and adult learning					
Participation in formal and/or non-formal education, by educational attainment					
2016					
Table A7.1	Below upper secondary	28%		n.a.	
	Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	55%		n.a.	
	Tertiary	59%		n.a.	
Participation in cultural or sporting activities in the last 12 months, by educational attainment					
2015					
Table A6.1	Below upper secondary	**		n.a.	
	Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	**		n.a.	
	Tertiary	**		n.a.	

Key Facts for Costa Rica in Education at a Glance 2019

Source	Main topics in <i>Education at a Glance</i>	Costa Rica		OECD average		G20 average	
Tertiary education							
Educational attainment of 25-64 year-olds							
2018							
Table A1.1	Short-cycle tertiary	5%		7%		9%	
	Bachelor's or equivalent	15%		17%		16%	
	Master's or equivalent	2%		13%		7%	
	Doctoral or equivalent	0%		1%		**	
Tertiary attainment of 25-34 year-olds, by gender							
2008							
Table A1.2	Men	**	25%	31%	38%	**	35%
	Women	29%	31%	40%	51%	**	41%
	Total	26%	28%	35%	44%	**	38%
Employment rate of 25-64 year-olds, by educational attainment							
2018							
Table A3.1	Short-cycle tertiary	73%		82%		**	
	Bachelor's or equivalent	83%		84%		**	
	Master's or equivalent	86%		88%		**	
	Doctoral or equivalent	**		92%		**	
	All tertiary levels of education	81%		85%		**	
Upper secondary and Vocational education and training (VET)							
Share of 25-34 year-olds with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education							
2018							
Table A1.2	Share of 25-34 year-olds with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education	21%		41%		37%	
Employment, unemployment and inactivity rates of 25-34 year-olds, with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education							
2018							
Table A3.3	Employment rate	72%		78%		**	
	Unemployment rate	13%		7%		**	
	Inactivity rate	18%		16%		**	
Early childhood education and care (ECEC)							
Enrolment rate of 3-5 year-olds in education							
2017							
Table B2.2	ECEC and primary education	51%		87%		**	
Share of children enrolled in private institutions							
2017							
Table B2.3	at pre-primary level (ISCED 02)	11%		34%		42%	
Financial resources invested in education							
Total expenditure on educational institutions, by level of education							
2016							
Table C1.1 and C2.1		USD/student ¹	% GDP	USD/student ¹	% GDP	USD/student ¹	% GDP
	Primary	**	**	USD 8 470	1.5%	**	**
	Lower secondary	**	**	USD 9 884	0.9%	**	**
	Upper secondary	**	**	USD 10 368	1.1%	**	**
	Tertiary (including R&D)	**	**	USD 15 556	1.5%	**	**
Teachers, the learning environment and the organisation of schools							
Share of female teachers, in public and private institutions							
2017							
Table D5.2	Primary	64%		83%		87%	
	Lower secondary	29%		69%		72%	
Average class size by level of education							
2017							
Table D2.1	Primary	15		21		20	
	Lower secondary	33		23		21	

The reference year is the year cited or the latest year for which data are available.

1. Values reported in equivalent US dollars (USD) have been converted using purchasing power parities (PPPs) for GDP

** Please refer to the source table for details on these data.

Cut-off date for the data: 19 July 2019. Any updates on data can be found on line at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-data-en>.