



COSTA RICA GENDER LANDSCAPE

This briefing showcases the gender landscape in Costa Rica on key indicators helpful for monitoring gender equality and designing effective policy interventions. Gender equality fosters productivity gains, minimizes losses in wealth, reduces poverty, boosts shared prosperity, and supports green, resilient, and inclusive development.

Click the measures below to explore the [World Bank Gender Data Portal](#).

Compared to:	Base Year	Region
>10% Higher Value	↗	
Equal/No Change	→	
>10% Lower Value	↘	
No Data	---	

		Country Performance					Peer Comparison		
		Baseline			Latest		Latest		
		Value	Year		Value	Year	LAC	UMC	World
HUMAN ENDOWMENTS									
Learning-Adjusted Years of Schooling	Female	8.49	2010	→	9.04	2020	NA	NA	NA
	Male	8.42	2010	→	8.95	2020	NA	NA	NA
Lower secondary completion rate (% of relevant group)	Female	57.9	2010	↗	71.0	2020	82.3	90.0	77.3
	Male	50.5	2010	↗	67.5	2020	77.6	88.8	76.7
Female share of graduates from STEM programs, tertiary (%)		28.7	2010	↗	32.2	2018	NA	NA	NA
Fertility rate, total (births per woman)		1.88	2010	→	1.72	2020	1.99	1.83	2.39
Adolescent fertility rate (births per 1,000 women 15-19)		61.3	2010	↘	50.6	2020	60.3	29.1	41.0
Maternal mortality ratio (modeled estimate per 100,000 live births)		32.0	2010	↘	27.0	2017	74.0	41.0	211
Pregnant women receiving prenatal care of at least four visits (% of pregnant women)		85.8	2008	→	94.1	2018	90.9	NA	NA
Unmet need for contraception (% of married women 15-49)		11.7	2010	↗	13.7	2018	NA	NA	NA
Mortality from chronic vascular disease, cancer, diabetes or cardiorespiratory disease between 30 and 70 (%)	Female	9.20	2010	↘	8.10	2019	12.7	12.2	14.8
	Male	13.0	2010	↘	11.0	2019	17.1	21.1	21.7
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY									
Labor force participation rate (% 15+, modeled ILO estimate)	Female	43.9	2010	→	47.5	2021	48.5	55.5	46.3
	Male	74.6	2010	→	71.1	2021	72.5	72.9	71.7
Wage and salaried workers (% of employment, modeled ILO estimate)	Female	79.1	2010	→	76.4	2019	63.5	60.2	54.6
	Male	72.9	2010	→	71.6	2019	61.2	60.8	53.0
Employment in agriculture (% of employment, modeled ILO estimate)	Female	3.37	2010	↗	4.05	2019	7.08	17.8	25.3
	Male	16.0	2010	→	16.7	2019	18.0	23.5	27.6
Share of youth not in education, employment or training (% of youth population)	Female	24.4	2010	→	24.2	2020	29.5	NA	NA
	Male	13.7	2010	↗	16.6	2020	18.3	NA	NA
Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work (% of 24 hour day)	Female	NA	NA	---	22.1	2017	NA	NA	NA
	Male	NA	NA	---	8.38	2017	NA	NA	NA
Age dependency ratio (% of working-age population)		46.2	2010	→	45.1	2020	49.1	45.5	54.6
Financial institution account (% 15+)	Female	NA	NA	---	60.9	2017	NA	69.0	63.7
	Male	NA	NA	---	75.5	2017	NA	76.6	70.6
Borrowed to start, operate, or expand a farm or business (% 15+)	Female	NA	NA	---	5.15	2017	NA	4.29	5.26
	Male	NA	NA	---	6.84	2017	NA	6.78	7.57
Female share of employment in senior and middle management (%)		NA	NA	---	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Firms with female participation in ownership (% of firms)		43.5	2010	---	NA	NA	49.9	34.2	33.1
VOICE AND AGENCY									
Firms with female top manager (% of firms)		15.4	2010	---	NA	NA	20.1	19.1	17.8
Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments (%)		38.6	2010	↗	45.6	2021	34.4	27.1	26.1
Women who were first married by 18 (% of women 20-24)		NA	NA	---	17.1	2018	NA	NA	NA
Proportion of women in ministerial level positions (%)		35.0	2010	↗	52.0	2020	27.9	21.4	22.0
Proportion of women subjected to physical and/or sexual violence in the last 12 months (% of ever-partnered women 15-49)		NA	NA	---	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

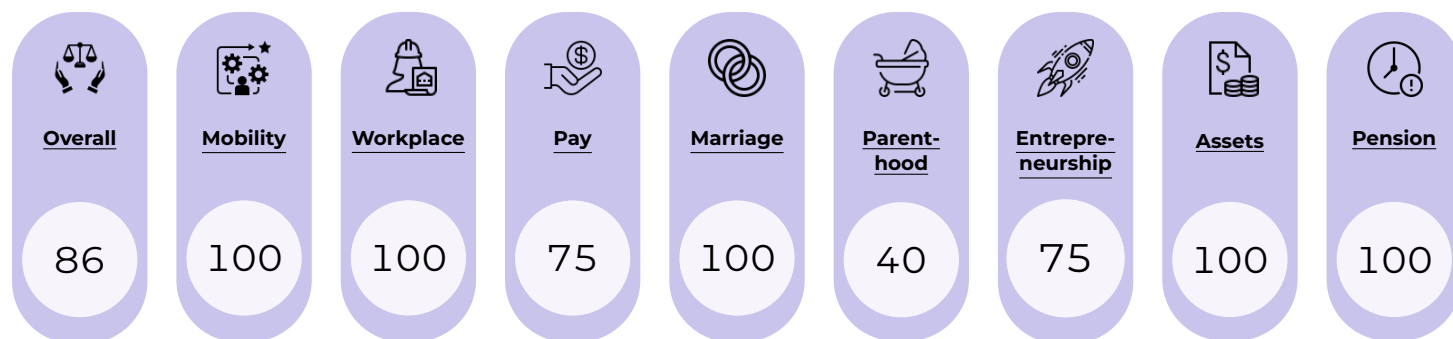
Note: The Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region includes 42 countries (all income levels), as classified by The World Bank Group. Costa Rica is an upper middle income (UMC) country, which includes 55 countries with a Gross National Income (GNI) per capita from \$4,096 to \$12,695 (calculated using the World Bank Atlas method). Data and definitions can be found on the [Gender Data Portal](#). Data is as of June 24, 2022. Country Baseline provides a reference from 1990 to 2010. Latest Value shows the latest available value from 2011 onwards. The arrow icon represents country increases or decreases over 10 percent relative to the base year. Peer Comparison shows how Costa Rica performs relative to its peers in the region, income group, and the world. Color coding represents values 10 percent above or below its peers in the region.



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Women, Business and the Law in Costa Rica

Women, Business and the Law (WBL) 2022 presents an index covering 190 economies, structured around the life cycle of a working woman. In total, 35 questions are scored across eight indicators. **Costa Rica scores 86 out of 100**, while the regional average across Latin America and Caribbean is 80.

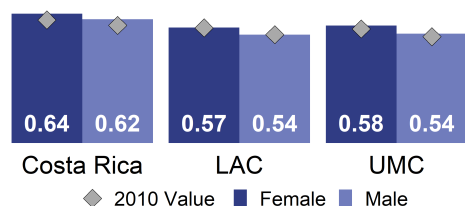


A Closer Look at Gender Equality in Costa Rica

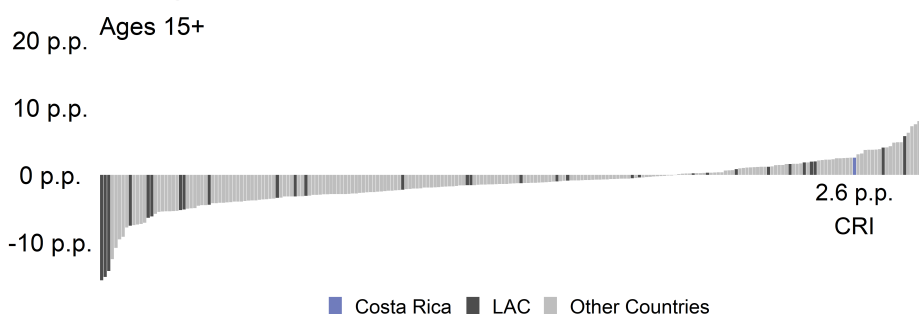
Despite some progress, gender gaps, gender-based violence, and disadvantageous social norms facing women and girls persist, and gains in human capital of women and girls remain untapped. Turning human capital investments into economic gains means addressing multiple barriers to women's economic empowerment, including improving their voice and agency.

Human Capital Index Score (0-1)

Baseline compared to 2020



Change in Female Labor Force Participation 2010-2020 (p.p.)



Unpacking the Numbers in Costa Rica

64 percent

A girl born today will be 64 percent as productive as if she enjoyed full education, health, and employment **(2020)**

17 in 100

17 percent of women ages 20 to 24 were first married by age 18 **(2018)**

14 percent

14 percent of married women ages 15 to 49 report not having access to contraceptives **(2018)**

1.2 times

Men hold 1.2 times as many seats in the national parliament as women **(2021)**

1.5 times

A man is 1.5 times as likely to have used the internet to pay bills or to buy something online in the past year **(2017)**

LEARN MORE

The World Bank in Gender: This portal features the latest research, news, and events around gender equality in international development.

Women, Business and the Law: This portal includes reports, data, and news on the laws and regulations that affect women's economic opportunity.

World Bank Group Gender Strategy (FY16-FY23): This 2015 report outlines the World Bank Group's strategy to promote gender equality.

World Bank Gender Data Portal: This open data tool shares the latest statistics and research to improve understanding and inform policy choices.

LAC Gender Innovation Lab: This page features policy research by the GIL, evaluating innovative solutions to close priority gender gaps in the region.

Costa Rica Gender Scorecard: This report offers additional context about the gender dynamic in Costa Rica from the Poverty and Equity Team.



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Accelerate Equality
Gender Equality and Development