



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	
Foundational Well-being: End Gender-Based Violence and Elevate Human Capital									
Proportion of women subjected to physical and/or sexual violence in the last 12 months (% of ever partnered women ages 15-49)		NA	NA	---	7.00	2018	8.31	8.75	NA
Women who were first married by 18 (% of women 20-24)		NA	NA	---	17.1	2018	NA	NA	NA
Learning poverty: Share of children at the end-of-primary age below minimum reading proficiency (%)	Female	29.5	2006	→	31.0	2013	26.0	14.2	50.0
	Male	29.6	2006	↗	33.6	2013	27.4	17.2	53.7
Lower secondary completion rate (% of relevant group)	Female	57.5	2011	↗	72.0	2021	76.1	91.7	77.0
	Male	49.1	2011	↗	69.6	2021	72.2	89.6	76.3
Female share of graduates from STEM programs, tertiary (%)		32.9	2011	→	32.2	2018	NA	NA	NA
Adolescent fertility rate (births per 1,000 women 15-19)		64.9	2011	↘	37.1	2021	53.2	28.2	42.5
Maternal mortality ratio (modeled estimate per 100,000 live births)		24.0	2011	→	22.0	2020	88.0	61.0	223
Contraceptive prevalence, any modern method (% of married women 15-49)		74.7	2011	→	70.0	2018	NA	71.6	55.7
Fraction of children under 5 not stunted	Female	NA	NA	---	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Male	NA	NA	---	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mortality from chronic vascular disease, cancer, diabetes or cardiorespiratory disease between 30 and 70 (%)	Female	8.50	2011	→	8.10	2019	12.7	12.9	14.8
	Male	12.1	2011	→	11.0	2019	17.1	21.7	21.7
Economic Participation: Expand and Enable Economic Opportunities									
Labor force participation rate (% 15+)	Female	46.3	2011	→	50.1	2022	50.9	56.1	47.8
	Male	75.0	2011	→	73.0	2022	74.8	73.6	72.9
Wage and salaried workers (% of employment)	Female	76.3	2011	→	76.5	2022	64.6	58.5	53.1
	Male	71.3	2011	→	70.2	2022	62.0	58.6	51.3
Employment in agriculture (% of employment)	Female	4.41	2011	↗	7.97	2022	7.62	16.6	25.6
	Male	17.8	2011	→	16.9	2022	17.8	23.1	26.9
Share of youth not in education, employment or training (% of youth population)	Female	27.3	2011	↘	21.5	2022	26.2	NA	NA
	Male	15.6	2011	↘	13.6	2022	14.1	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)	Female	46.9	2011	→	45.0	2022	48.2	46.8	55.2
	Male	40.7	2011	↗	61.1	2021	68.1	81.7	71.9
Financial institution account (% 15+)	Female	60.2	2011	↗	76.3	2021	75.3	85.7	76.0
	Male	NA	NA	---	29.7	2021	27.6	49.0	31.8
Used a mobile phone or the internet to pay bills (% 15+)	Female	NA	NA	---	35.9	2021	39.4	54.0	37.0
	Male	NA	NA	---	35.9	2021	39.4	54.0	37.0
Female share of employment in senior and middle management (%)		26.6	2007	↗	45.9	2022	NA	NA	NA
Leadership: Engage Women as Leaders									
Firms with female participation in ownership (% of firms)		43.5	2010	---	NA	NA	49.9	34.7	33.3
Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments (%)		38.6	2011	↗	47.4	2022	35.7	27.7	26.5
Proportion of women in ministerial level positions (%)		35.0	2010	↗	45.5	2022	30.1	21.2	22.8
Women participating in decisions related to health care, purchases, and visiting family (% of women age 15-49)		NA	NA	---	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

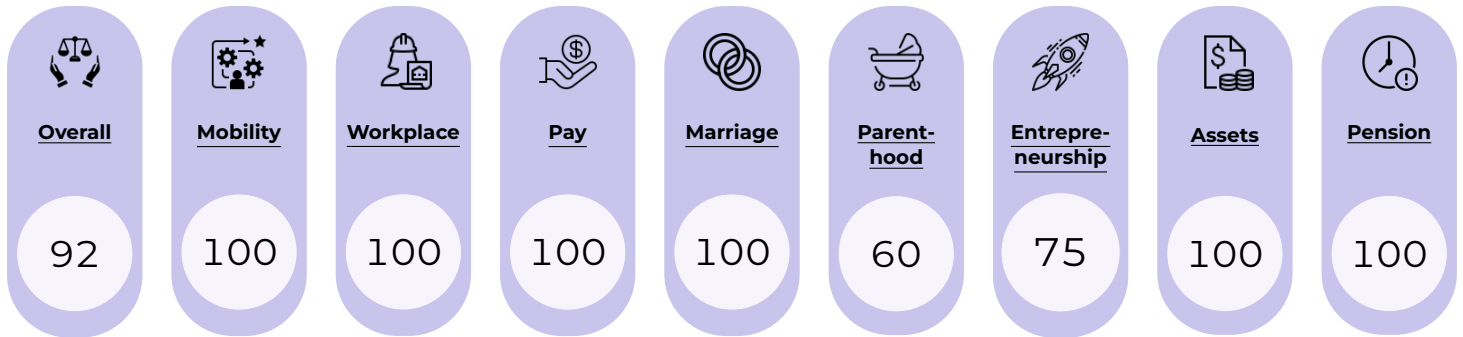
Note: The Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region includes 42 countries (all income levels), as classified by The World Bank Group. Costa Rica is an upper middle income (UMC) country, which includes 54 countries with a Gross National Income (GNI) per capita from \$4,466 to \$13,845 (calculated using the World Bank Atlas method). Data and definitions can be found on the [Gender Data Portal](#). Data is as of March 17, 2024. Country Baseline provides a reference from 1990 to 2011. Latest Value shows the latest available value from 2012 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

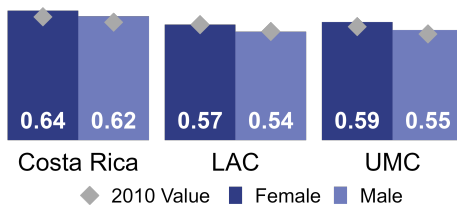
Women, Business and the Law (WBL) 2023 presents an index covering 190 economies, structured around the life cycle of a working woman. In total, 35 questions are scored across eight indicators. **Costa Rica scores 92 out of 100**, while the regional average across Latin America and Caribbean is 81.



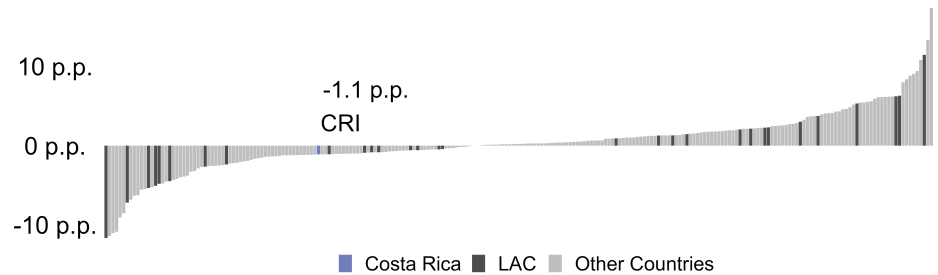
A Closer Look at Gender Equality in Costa Rica

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 2012-2022 (p.p.)
Ages 15+



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)**

23 points

Men and women have a 23 percentage point gap in labor force participation **(2022)**

7 percent

7 percent of women were subjected to physical or sexual violence in the last 12 months **(2018)**

1.1 times

Men hold 1.1 times as many seats in the national parliament as women **(2022)**

1.2 times

A man is 1.2 times as likely to have used a mobile phone or the internet to pay bills **(2021)**

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 Gender Strategy (2024-2030): The new Strategy puts forward the bold ambition to accelerate gender equality for a sustainable, resilient, and inclusive future.

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.