

Reader's guide

Structure of the publication

Health at a Glance: Latin America and the Caribbean 2020 is divided into seven chapters:

Chapter 1 **Country dashboards** takes Universal Health Coverage as a basis and shows a set of key indicators to compare performance across countries in each of the following dimensions: population health (health status and determinants of health); coverage and services; financial protection; and quality of care. Furthermore, a fifth dimension on health inequalities covers selected indicators of the other dimensions. For each dimension, a set of 3 to 6 indicators are presented in the form of country dashboards. The indicators are selected based on their policy relevance, but also on data availability and interpretability. In order to assess comparative performance across countries, each country is classified for every indicator based on how they compare against the median of the LAC countries with available data.

Chapter 2 on **Wasteful spending in LAC health systems** focuses on the importance of waste identification and reduction, particularly in the areas of clinical care, operational and governance waste. It explores different sources of waste and provides data and policy analysis around them, stating that there is enough potential for both savings and improved outcomes.

Chapter 3 on **Health status** highlights the variations across countries in life expectancy, infant and childhood mortality and major causes of mortality and morbidity, including both communicable and non-communicable diseases.

Chapter 4 on **Determinants of health** focuses on non-medical determinants of health. It features the health of mothers and babies, through family planning issues, low birthweight and breastfeeding. It also includes lifestyle and behavioural indicators such as smoking and alcohol drinking, unhealthy diets, underweight and overweight, and drugs use, as well as water and sanitation. It also includes an indicator on road safety.

Chapter 5 on **Health care resources and activities** reviews some of the inputs, outputs and outcomes of health care systems. This includes the supply of doctors and nurses and hospital beds, as well as the provision of primary and secondary health care services, such as doctor consultations and hospital discharges, as well as a range of services surrounding pregnancy, childbirth and infancy.

Chapter 6 on **Health expenditure and financing** examines trends in health spending across LAC countries. It looks at how health services and goods are paid for, and the different mix between public funding, private health insurance, direct out-of-pocket payments by households and external resources. It also looks at financial protection measures such as impoverishment due to health care out-of-pocket payments.

Chapter 7 on **Quality of care** builds on the indicators used in the OECD's Health Care Quality Indicator programme to examine trends in health care quality improvement across LAC countries.

Latin America and the Caribbean countries

For this first edition of *Health at a Glance: Latin America and the Caribbean 2020*, 33 regional countries were included as seen in Table 1. Countries were selected based on their geographical location to either Latin America or the Caribbean, and if they are sovereign states.

Table 1. **Latin American and Caribbean countries included and their ISO codes**

Country	ISO Code	Country	ISO Code
Antigua and Barbuda	ATG	Guyana	GUY
Argentina	ARG	Haiti	HTI
Bahamas	BHS	Honduras	HND
Barbados	BRB	Jamaica	JAM
Belize	BLZ	Mexico	MEX
Bolivia	BOL	Nicaragua	NIC
Brazil	BRA	Panama	PAN
Chile	CHL	Paraguay	PRY
Colombia	COL	Peru	PER
Costa Rica	CRI	Saint Kitts and Nevis	KNA
Cuba	CUB	Saint Lucia	LCA
Dominica	DMA	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	VCT
Dominican Republic	DOM	Suriname	SUR
Ecuador	ECU	Trinidad and Tobago	TTO
El Salvador	SLV	Uruguay	URY
Grenada	GRD	Venezuela	VEN
Guatemala	GTM		

Selection and presentation of indicators

The indicators have been selected on the basis of being relevant to monitoring health systems performance, taking into account the availability and comparability of existing data in the LAC region. The publication takes advantage of the routine administrative and programme data collected by the World Health Organization, the World Bank Group and the OECD, as well as special country population surveys collecting demographic and health information.

The indicators are presented in the form of easy-to-read figures and explanatory text. Each of the topics covered in this publication is presented over two pages. The first page defines the indicator, provides brief commentary highlighting the key findings conveyed by the data, and provides a few key references. On the facing page is a set of figures. These typically show current levels of the indicator and, where possible, trends over time. In some cases, an additional figure relating the indicator to another variable is included. Where an OECD average is included in a figure, it is the unweighted average of the OECD countries presented, unless otherwise specified.

Limitations in data comparability are indicated both in the text (in the box related to “Definition and comparability”) as well as in footnotes to figures.

Health and health system’s situation can evolve rapidly, arguably even more so in low and middle-income countries than in high-income ones. Therefore, it is important to note that some indicators might not reflect the latest situation for some countries. The authors have collected the latest available data so the landscape depicted in each chapter and section of the publication shows the most updated scenario as possible.

Indicators from LAC countries that are OECD member or partner countries

Three LAC countries are OECD member states: Chile, Colombia and Mexico. The OECD average includes Chile and Mexico. Colombia was not an OECD Member at the time of preparation of this publication. Accordingly, Colombia does not appear in the list of OECD Members and is not included in the zone aggregates.

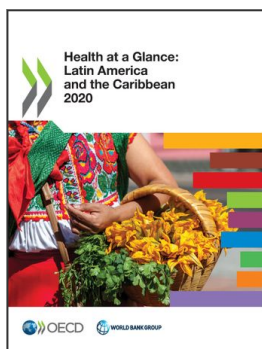
On 15 May 2020, the OECD Council invited Costa Rica to become a Member. However, Costa Rica is not included in the OECD zone aggregates in this publication because, at the time of its preparation, the deposit of Costa Rica's instrument of accession to the OECD Convention was pending.

Argentina, Brazil and Peru are partner countries to the OECD.

For these seven LAC countries, some figures in this publication considered the data that has been reported directly to the OECD, instead of using international sources. This is to maintain consistency among what it is informed in other OECD publications (e.g. *Health at a Glance 2019*) and what is available in the online database OECD Health Statistics on OECD.Stat at <https://oe.cd/ds/health-statistics>. These differences are noted in the footnotes of correspondent figures throughout the chapters.

Note on COVID-19 pandemic

All the data presented in this report was collected prior to the COVID-19 pandemic that began early 2020. The only exception corresponds to the data about intensive care unit beds in LAC and in OECD countries that was included in the Editorial.



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