

## Reader's guide

*In order to accurately interpret the data included in Government at a Glance Latin America and the Caribbean 2020, readers need to be familiar with the following methodological considerations that cut across a number of indicators. The standard format for the presentation of indicators is a double page spread. The first page contains text that explains the relevance of the topic and highlights some of the major differences observed across Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) countries. Furthermore, when data are comparable, the OECD averages are considered as an additional benchmark. This is followed by a “Methodology and definitions” section, which describes the data sources and provides important information necessary for interpreting the data. Additional information regarding country data can be found in the specific figure notes. Closing the first page is the “Further reading” section, which lists useful background literature providing context for the data displayed. The second page showcases the data. The figures show current levels and, where possible, trends over time. A glossary of the main terms used in the publication can be found in the final chapter.*

### Data sources and features

Most of the data used in *Government at a Glance: Latin America and the Caribbean 2020* are collected from government officials by the OECD/IDB via specifically designed surveys. As such, they represent either official government statistics or the country's own assessment of current practices and procedures. To the extent possible, OECD data collection instruments use standardised definitions and common units of measure. However, bias can occur in that countries may interpret and answer questions differently and/or may not be entirely objective in their responses. In general, the direction of the bias is known, but not necessarily its extent. To try and minimise these biases, the OECD/IDB have cleaned and verified the collected data by following up with countries when there were potential inconsistencies or outliers. This has been done by benefiting from the OECD's knowledge acquired through previous work in the region, but is mainly based on the IDB's expertise and local presence in the countries under study. In addition, respondents were asked to provide additional evidence to validate their answers which, in turn, have been verified with other external and additional sources, whenever available (e.g. public expenditure and financial accountability).

Data are also drawn from other international organisations such as the *International Labour Organization* (ILO) and the *International Monetary Fund* (IMF). The public finance and economics data for LAC countries are based on the IMF's *World Economic Outlook* (IMF WEO) and the IMF's *Government Financial Statistics* (IMF GFS) databases. Data from the IMF WEO were extracted in late November 2019 corresponding to the October update. Data from the GFS database were extracted on November 30<sup>th</sup> 2019. Moreover, data for tax revenues and fiscal revenues from non-renewable natural resources, which are

also part of the public finance data, were extracted from the OECD *Revenue Statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean* database on November 30<sup>th</sup> 2019. Finally, for the OECD averages data were based on the *System of National Accounts (SNA)*, and were extracted from the *Government at a Glance* online database representing the last available update: 14 January 2020 (financial government accounts: 21 January 2020). In many cases, data on public finances are presented for 2007 and 2018, showcasing the year before the economic crisis as well as the latest actual year available.

The public employment data for LAC countries was extracted from the ILO dataset LABORSTA on 9 December 2019.

Despite the significant accomplishments of international organisations in harmonising data among the different statistical systems, several differences exist in different instances, which impact some of the indicators analysed. As a consequence, the methodological sections contain specific notes whenever specific methodological considerations need to be taken into account. Although they are not official sources, data from the World Justice Project (WJP) were used for justice-related measures, since it presents one of the most systematic approaches to conceptualising and measuring the rule of law worldwide. Data from Gallup World Poll were used for citizen-perception measures, because it provides a long time series covering most countries in the world.

## Country coverage

*Government at a Glance Latin America and the Caribbean 2020* was intended to include data for 26 LAC countries: Argentina, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela. Based on data availability these are the countries for which data from external sources (e.g. ILO, IMF) were extracted. Other LAC countries were invited to respond to OECD/IDB surveys and hence, some chapters display information for an additional set of countries. In addition, for this edition, seven OECD survey instruments were used to collect data on relevant public management practices. To the extent possible, data were collected through existing policy networks. Based on the coverage and country participation in the different networks, data were collected for an uneven number of countries. The table below displays the country coverage for each of the surveys sent specifically for this publication. Due to the contemporariness and comparability between the OECD and the OECD/IDB data collections, data for some countries and for some surveys were sourced from the OECD round. The section on figure notes clarifies when the data refer to the OECD survey and the year in which the collection took place.

Figure 0.1. **Coverage of the different surveys sent to LAC countries**

Survey	Number of respondents	Countries
Centres of government	14	ARG, BHS, BRB, BRA*, CHL, COL, CRI*, DOM, GTM, HND, MEX*, PRY, PER, URY
Budget practices and procedures	13	ARG, BHS, BRA, CHL*, CRI, DOM, GTM, MEX*, PAN, PER, PRY, SLV, URY
Strategic Human Resources Management	12	ARG, BRA, CHL*, COL, CRI, DOM, GTM, JAM, MEX*, PER, SLV, URY
Regulatory governance	10	ARG, BRA, CHL, COL, CRI, DOM, ECU, MEX, PER, SLV
Open government data	16	ARG*, BHS, BRA, CHL*, COL*, CRI, DMA**, DOM, ECU, GTM, HND, MEX*, PAN, PRY, SLV, URY
Public Integrity	12	ARG, BRA, CHL, COL, CRI, ECU, GTM, HND, MEX, PER, PRY, URY
Public procurement	20	AIA***, BLZ, BRB, CHL, GRD***, GUY, HND, LCA***, SLV, TCA***, BRA, COL, CRI, DOM, ECU, GTM, MEX, NIC, PRY, URY

Note: (\*) data for these countries were collected during the OECD round of surveys; (\*\*) data for the country of Dominica (DMA) were collected only for the open government data survey; (\*\*\*) data for the countries of Anguilla (AIA), Grenada (GRD), Saint Lucia (LCA) and Turks and Caicos Islands (TCA) were collected only for the public procurement survey.

Building on the successful experience that led to the 2017 edition, the joint OECD/IDB LAC Senior Budget Officials network was used as a vehicle to collect data for the survey on budget practices and procedures. The preliminary results of the survey were presented at the 2019 annual meeting of the network in Madrid, Spain (17-18 June).

In the course of the special meeting of the OECD-IDB LAC Public Integrity Network that took place in Lima on 18-19 October 2018, a workshop on the public sector integrity survey was conducted during the course special meeting of the Inter-American Network on Public Sector Integrity that took place in Lima on 18-19 October, 2018. The data were collected from and cleaned in close cooperation with delegates from the network.

The meeting of the Ibero-American and Caribbean Regulatory Improvement Network, which took place in Lima on 10-11 October 2019, was used to present and discuss the results of the regulatory governance survey. Shortly after, data cleaning was finalised in close co-operation with the respondents to the survey.

For the surveys on centres of government, open government data, strategic human resources management and public procurement the data were cleaned in close cooperation with the survey respondents, who were senior public officials responsible for each of those topics.

## Country codes (ISO codes)

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) defines three letter codes for the names of countries, dependent territories and special areas of geographical interest. The following ISO codes are used for the geographical display of some figures:

Latin America and the Caribbean Countries			
Argentina	ARG	Guyana	GUY
Bahamas	BHS	Haiti	HTI
Barbados	BRB	Honduras	HND
Belize	BLZ	Jamaica	JAM
Bolivia	BOL	Mexico	MEX
Brazil	BRA	Nicaragua	NIC
Chile	CHL	Panama	PAN
Colombia	COL	Paraguay	PRY
Costa Rica	CRI	Peru	PER
Dominican Republic	DOM	Suriname	SUR
Ecuador	ECU	Trinidad and Tobago	TTO
El Salvador	SLV	Uruguay	URY
Guatemala	GTM	Venezuela	VEN

## LAC and OECD averages and totals

### Averages

In figures and text, the LAC and OECD averages are presented either as unweighted, arithmetic mean or weighted average of the OECD or LAC countries for which data are available. When a figure depicts information for one or more years, the LAC average includes all countries with available data (unless specified otherwise). For instance, a LAC average for 2018 includes all current LAC countries with available information for that year. In the case of the OECD average, averages have been updated considering the latest available data (unless specified otherwise).

In the case of *National Accounts data*, LAC and OECD averages refer to the weighted average, unless otherwise indicated.

## Totals

LAC and OECD totals are most commonly found in tables and represent the sum of data in the corresponding column for LAC and OECD countries for which data are available. In the case of LAC countries, those not included in the tables are countries without available data. For OECD member countries, the totals are those published in *Government at a Glance, 2019* and/or in the *Government at a Glance* online data set.

## Online supplements

*Government at a Glance Latin America and the Caribbean 2020* also offers access to StatLinks, a service that allows readers to download the corresponding Excel files of the data. StatLinks are found at the bottom right-hand corner of the tables or figures and can be typed into a web browser or, in an electronic version of the publication, clicked on directly.

In addition, supplementary materials are available online at [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/governance/government-at-a-glance-latin-america-and-the-caribbean-2020\\_13130fbb-en](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/governance/government-at-a-glance-latin-america-and-the-caribbean-2020_13130fbb-en).

Country factsheets that present key data by country compared with the LAC and OECD averages were prepared for the following 14 countries which have completed at least 4 surveys (equivalent to 4 chapters): Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay.

## Per capita indicators

Some indicators (e.g. expenditures, revenues and government debt) are shown on a per capita (e.g. per person) basis. The underlying population estimates are based on the notion of residency. They include persons who are resident in a country for one year or more, regardless of their citizenship, and also include foreign diplomatic personnel and defence personnel together with their families, students that are studying and patients seeking treatment abroad, even if they stay abroad for more than one year. The one-year rule means that usual residents who live abroad for less than one year are included in the population, while foreign visitors (for example, vacationers) who are in the country for less than one year are excluded. An important point to note in this context is that individuals may feature as employees of one country (contributing to the gross domestic product of that country via production), but residents of another (with their wages and salaries reflected in the gross national income of their resident country).

## Purchasing power parities

Purchasing power parity (PPP) between two countries is the rate at which the currency of one country needs to be converted into that of a second country. This conversion is done to ensure that a given amount of the first country's currency will purchase the same volume of goods and services in the second country as it does in the first. In consequence, when converted by means of PPPs, expenditures across countries are in effect expressed at the same set of prices enabling comparisons across countries that reflect only the differences in the volume of goods and services purchased.

The PPP index used for LAC countries is the same that used by the IMF World Economic Outlook. The International Comparisons Program is a global statistical initiative that produces internationally comparable PPP estimates. The PPP exchange rate estimates, maintained and published by the World Bank, the OECD and other international organisations, are used by the WEO to calculate its own PPP weight time series.

## Composite indicators

This publication includes descriptive composite indices in narrowly defined areas: one on budgeting practices and procedures, four on open government data, one on stakeholder engagement for regulatory policies and two on public sector integrity. These composite indices are a practical way

of summarising discrete, qualitative information. The stakeholder engagement and open government data composites were created in accordance with the steps identified in the *Handbook on Constructing Composite Indicators* (OECD/European Union/JRC, 2008). The composite on Rule of Law by the World Justice Project is also featured in this publication.

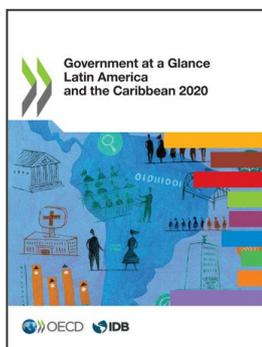
The description of the methodology behind the indicator on budgeting practices and procedures (use of a medium-term perspective) can be found in Annex A. Details about the variables and weights used to construct the stakeholder engagement composite (iREG) are available in Annex C. Details about the composite indicator on open government data are available in Annex D. Annex E presents the components of the composites on public sector integrity. The composite indicators are based on theory and/or best practices, the variables composing the indices and their relative weights are based on expert judgements and, as a result, may change over time.

## Acronyms

Sign/acronym	Meaning
.	Missing values
x	Not applicable (unless otherwise stated)
CBA	Central budget authority
CPA	Central public administration
EUR	Euro (currency)
GDP	Gross domestic product
GFS	Government Financial Statistics
GFSM	Government Finance Statistics Manual
HR	Human resources
HRM	Human resources management
ICT	Information and communication technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation
IT	Information technology
LAC	Latin American and Caribbean
OGD	Open government data
p.p.	Percentage points
PPPs	Purchasing power parities / private-public partnerships
R&D	Research and development
SHRM	Strategic human resources management
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SNA	System of National Accounts
USD	US dollars
VAT	Value-added tax
WEO	World Economic Outlook
WJP	World Justice Project

## References

OECD/European Union/JRC (2008), *Handbook on Constructing Composite Indicators: Methodology and User Guide*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264043466-en>.



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