Country Profile on Disability
Republic of Costa Rica

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Abbreviations

ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder	
CBR	Community-based Rehabilitation	
CCSS	Caja Costarricense de Seguro Social	Costa Rican Social Security Fund
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	
CENARE	Centro Nacional de Rehabilitación	National Rehabilitation Center
CNREE	Consejo Nacional de Rehabilitación y Educación Especial	National Council of Rehabilitation and Special Education
CONAPDIS	Consejo Nacional de Personas con Discapacidad	National Council of Persons with Disabilities
CRC	Convention of the Rights of the Child	
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	
ENADIS	La Encuesta Nacional sobre Discapacidad	National Survey on Disability
ICF	International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health	
ICT	Information and Communication Technology	
INEC	Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos	National Institute of Statistics and Census
INS	Instituto Nacional de Seguros	National Insurance Institute
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency	
LESCO	Costa Rican Sign Language	
OPD	Disabled People's Organization	
SECDIS	Servicio de Certificación de la Discapacidad	Disability Certification Service
SICID	Sistema Costarricense de Información sobre Discapacidad	Costa Rican Information System on Disability
UDL	Universal Design for Learning	
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund	
USAID	United States Agency for International Development	

1. Basic Profile

1-1. Basic Indicators[1]

Gross Domestic Product[2] per capita	USD 18,587.2	2024

Government Expenditures by Sector

Healthcare (% of GDP)	7.2 %	2022
Education (% of GDP)	6.2 %	2021
Social protection (% of GDP)[3]	7.1 %	2023

Population

Total population	5,129,910	2024
Male (% of total population)	49.4 %	
Female (% of total population)	50.6 %	
Urban population (% of total population)	79.3 %	
Rural population (% of total population)	20.7 %	
Life expectancy at birth (total)	80.8 years	2023
Male	78.1 years	
Female	83.4 years	

Health

Prevalence of undernourishment (% of population)	2.5 %	2023
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	9.2	2023

Education

Education System [4]		
Primary Education	6 years	
Compulsory education	10 years	
Literacy rate (total)	97.4 %	2011
Adult male	97.3 %	
Adult female	97.5 %	

[1] Based on the World Bank Database(https://data.worldbank.org/indicator (Accessed: 20 January 2026))

[2] Hereinafter referred to as "GDP."

[3] Excluding healthcare. Based on ILO (2024) World Social Protection Report, https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/2024-09/WSPR_2024_EN_WEB_1.pdf (Accessed: 20 January 2026).

[4] The Costa Rican education system consists of primary school (6 years), junior secondary school (3 years), senior secondary school (2-3 years), and university (4 years). Based on the document from the Costa Rican Council for Higher Education website (https://repositorio.conare.ac.cr/server/api/core/bitstreams/e8d302ac-cbc9-4eb1-8d7f-2bd296837763/content) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO） website (https://download.uis.unesco.org/SDG4/SDG4-Profile-Costa%20Rica.pdf) (Accessed: 9 June 2026)

School enrollment		
Primary (% gross) (total)	106.2 %	2023
Male	105.6 %	
Female	106.7 %	
Secondary (% gross) (total)	125.5 %	2023
Male	120.6 %	
Female	130.6 %	
Tertiary (% gross) (total)	55.0 %	2019
Male	49.8 %	
Female	60.5 %	

Employment

Unemployment (total)	7.8 %	2024
Male (% of male labor force)	7.0 %	
Female (% of female labor force)	9.2 %	

1-2. Definition of Disability and Indicators on Disability

1-2-1. Definition of Disability

According to the State Party's Report submitted by the Government of the Republic of Costa Rica (hereinafter referred to as "Costa Rica") to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (hereinafter referred to as "CRPD") in 2011, disability was not explicitly defined. Subsequently, Article 2 of the Act on the Promotion of Personal Autonomy of Persons with Disabilities (No.9379) (*Ley para Promoción de la Autonomía Personal de las Personas con Discapacidad*), enacted in 2016, defines disability as "an evolving concept that results from the interaction between persons with disabilities and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others."

1-2-2. Indicators on Disability

In Costa Rica, statistics on disabilities are derived from the Population and Housing Census (hereinafter referred to as "Census") and the National Survey on Disability[5] (*Encuesta Nacional sobre Discapacidad*; hereinafter referred to as "ENADIS"), both conducted by the National Institute of Statistics and Census (*Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos*; hereinafter referred to as "INEC").

[5] In response to the CRPD's Concluding Observations (2014), ENADIS was established as the first nationwide survey specifically focused on disability. The first survey was conducted in 2018.

The latest Census was originally scheduled for 2020 but postponed to 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, because the response rate was low, detailed statistical figures based solely on the Census have not yet been finalized[6]. Meanwhile, the latest ENADIS was conducted in 2023 and provides a more detailed picture of the living conditions of persons with disabilities, complementing the 2022 Census.

In light of the above, this section uses statistics based on the 2023 ENADIS[7]. However, it is important to note that ENADIS is limited to citizens aged 18 and older.

ENADIS uses its own questionnaire[8], which covers a wide range of topics in detail, rather than simplified formats such as the Washington Group Short Set on Functioning. Specifically, the questionnaire is designed to comprehensively assess not only an individual's physical and cognitive limitations but also their educational background, work environment, use of assistive devices, and the presence of environmental barriers that hinder daily living and social participation.

Number of Persons with Disabilities (adult)	676,310	17.2% of adult population	2023
Male (adult)	284,727		
Female (adult)	391,583		

Source: Prepared by the study team based on INEC(2023)

[6] https://ghdx.healthdata.org/record/costa-rica-national-population-and-housing-census-2022#:~:text=The%202022%20census%20data%20collection,demographic%20information%20that%20is%20required.%22 (Accessed: 20 March 2026)

[7] https://sistemas.inec.cr/pad5/index.php/catalog/351/related-materials (Accessed: 20 March 2026)

[8] https://sistemas.inec.cr/pad5/index.php/catalog/351/download/5978 (Accessed: 20 March 2026)

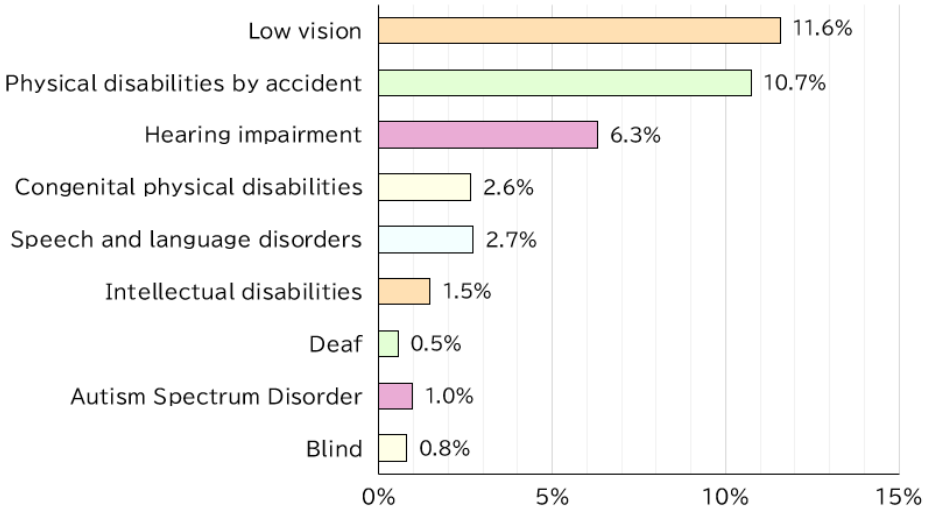


Figure 1 Percentage of Diagnosed Impairments among Persons with Disabilities (aged 18 and older) (2023)

Low vision (11.6%) was the most common, followed by physical disabilities by accident (10.7%) and hearing impairment (6.3%). These are followed by speech and language disorders (2.7%), congenital physical disabilities (2.6%), intellectual disabilities (1.5%), Autism Spectrum Disorder (hereinafter referred to as "ASD") (1.0%), blind (0.8%), and deaf (0.5%).

Source: Prepared by the study team based on INEC(2023)

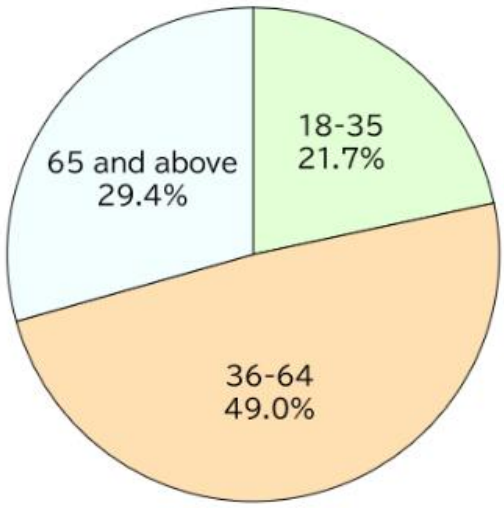


Figure 2 Percentage of Persons with Disabilities by Age Group (aged 18 and older) (2023)

By age group, persons with disabilities aged 36 to 64 account for the largest share at 49.0%. This is followed by those aged 65 and older at 29.4%, and those aged 18 to 35 at 21.7%.

Source: Prepared by the study team based on INEC(2023)

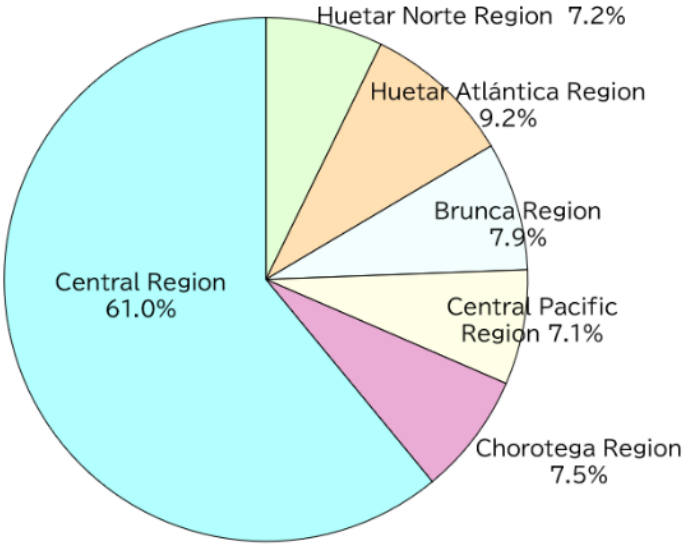


Figure 3 Percentage of Persons with Disabilities by Residential Areas[9] (aged 18 and older) (2023)

By residential area of persons with disabilities, Central Region (*Región Central*) accounts for the majority (61.0%). This is followed by Huetar Atlántica Region (*Región Huetar Atlántica*) (9.2%), Brunca Region (*Región Brunca*) (7.9%), Chorotega Region (*Región Chorotega*) (7.5%), Huetar Norte Region (*Región Huetar Norte*) (7.2%), and Central Pacific Region (*Región Pacífico Central*) (7.1%).

Source: Prepared by the study team based on INEC(2023)

[9] Classified by Planning Region (*Región de Planificación*) designated by the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Policy (*Ministerio de Planificación y Política Económica*) pursuant to Executive Decree No. 7944 of 1978 (amended by Article 57 of Executive Decree No. 37735-Plan of 2013). The overview of each Planning Region is as follows:

- Central Region (*Región Central*): The central part of the country, including the capital city of San José.
- Chorotega Region (*Región Chorotega*): The northwestern Pacific region, centered around Guanacaste Province.
- Central Pacific Region (*Región Pacífico Central*): The coastal area, including Puntarenas Province.
- Brunca Region (*Región Brunca*): The southern Pacific region.
- Huetar Atlántica Region (*Región Huetar Atlántica*): The Caribbean coastal area, centered around Limón Province.
- Huetar Norte Region (*Región Huetar Norte*): The northern region close to the Nicaraguan border.

2. Administration and Policy on Disability

2-1. Administration on Disability

In Costa Rica, the National Council of Rehabilitation and Special Education (*Consejo Nacional de Rehabilitación y Educación Especial*; hereinafter referred to as "CNREE") was established in 1973, and efforts to support persons with disabilities have been ongoing. To address the challenges facing persons with disabilities more comprehensively, the CNREE was reorganized in 2015 into the National Council of Persons with Disabilities (*Consejo Nacional de Personas con Discapacidad*; hereinafter referred to as "CONAPDIS"), which now serves as the coordination mechanism for disability policy.

<Central government>[10]

Entities responsible for disability issues

Table 1 Entities Responsible for Disability Issues in Costa Rica

No.	Name	Overview
1	Ministry of Public Education (*Ministerio de Educación Pública*)	The Ministry promotes inclusive education and safeguards the right to education for children with disabilities by adapting curriculum content to meet individual needs, providing assistive devices, and offering on-site guidance by specialized teachers.
2	National Apprenticeship Institute (*Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje*)	The Institute provides vocational training programs in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Education to support the employment of persons with disabilities.
3	Ministry of Labor and Social Security (*Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social*)	The Ministry oversees initiatives related to the labor inclusion and employment promotion of persons with disabilities, encourages businesses to hire them and provides job placement services for them.
4	Joint Social Assistance Institute (*Instituto Mixto de Ayuda Social*)	The Institute provides direct financial assistance and welfare services, such as housing and educational support, to families with persons with disabilities living in poverty.
5	Ministry of Health (*Ministerio de Salud*)	The Ministry formulates and oversees national policies in the field of disability, requires medical facilities to comply with accessibility standards, and promotes the early detection and prevention of disabilities.
6	Costa Rican Social Security Fund (*Caja Costarricense de Seguro Social*) (hereinafter referred to as "CCSS")	As an agency responsible for implementing health and medical policies, the Fund provides specific medical services, rehabilitation, and assistive devices (such as wheelchairs) to persons with disabilities through hospitals and clinics nationwide.

[10] Based on State Party's Report (2011) and the CONAPDIS website (https://conapdis.go.cr/conapdis/estructura-organizacional/junta-directiva/ (Accessed: 23 March 2026)).

7	Ministry of Public Works and Transport (*Ministerio de Obras Públicas y Transportes*)	The Ministry regulates and oversees the accessibility of public transportation and road infrastructure (including promoting the introduction of vehicles accessible to wheelchair users).
8	Ministry of Science, Innovation, Technology and Telecommunications (*Ministerio de Ciencia, Innovación, Tecnología y Telecomunicaciones*)	The Ministry promotes the adoption of assistive technologies, providing support for the acquisition of digital skills, and improving website accessibility to ensure that persons with disabilities can access information and communication technologies.

Source: Prepared by the study team based on State Party's Report (2011) and the CONADIS website.

Status of Coordination Mechanism

Name of the mechanism	National Council of Persons with Disabilities (CONAPDIS)
Members (Four-year term)	Ministry of Public Education, Ministry of Labor and Social Security, Ministry of Public Works and Transport, Ministry of Science, Innovation, Technology and Telecommunications, Ministry of Health, CCSS, and Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (hereinafter referred to as "OPDs") (5 representatives)[11]
Roles and status of operation	Created in 2015 under Act No. 9303, CONAPDIS serves as the lead agency on disability issues. Its responsibilities include monitoring compliance with laws and regulations regarding the rights of persons with disabilities, managing national disability policies, and promoting inclusive policies through collaboration with relevant agencies. CONAPDIS employs approximately 120individuals, including contract employees, who are divided between the headquarters and regional offices[12].

Name of the mechanism	National Commission on the Employability and Work of Persons with Disabilities (*Comisión Nacional para la Empleabilidad y el Trabajo de las Personas con Discapacidad*)
Members	Ministry of Labor and Social Security, CONAPDIS, National Apprenticeship Institute, Directorate General of Civil Service, OPDs, and the private sector
Roles and status of operation	Established in 2019 under Executive Decree No. 41761-MTSS[13]. Through collaboration among the government, the private sector, and OPDs, the Commission works to ensure strict compliance with the 5% employment quota in the public sector, while also striving to foster an inclusive working environment nationwide by providing

[11] Representatives are elected at the National Assembly (*Asamblea Nacional*) by OPDs representing the five categories of disabilities: physical, hearing, visual, intellectual, and mental. Representatives must be persons with disabilities or their guardians.

[12] https://conapdis.go.cr/transparencia/recursos-humanos/ (Accessed: 23 March 2026)

[13] https://pgrweb.go.cr/scij/Busqueda/Normativa/Normas/nrm_texto_completo.aspx?param1=NRTC&nValor1=1&nValor2=89192&nValor3=116983&strTipM=TC (Accessed: 23 March 2026)

	guidance and advice to private companies, and coordinating vocational training.

<Local government>

In addition to its headquarters in the capital, San José, CONAPDIS has established nine regional offices. Municipal Commissions on Accessibility and Disability were established in each municipality.

Entities responsible for disability issues

Name of the mechanism	Municipal Commissions on Accessibility and Disability (*Comisiones Municipales de Accesibilidad y Discapacidad*)
Members	Appointment by the municipal council
Roles and status of operation	These commissions were created in each municipality under the 2010 amendment to the Municipal Code (Law No. 8822)[14] to monitor compliance with the Act on Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (Act No. 7600). They work to improve accessibility by incorporating the perspectives of persons with disabilities into municipal policies and urban planning.

2-2. Laws and Policies on Disability[15]

In Costa Rica, the Act on the Establishment of the National Council for Rehabilitation and Special Education (Act No. 5347) was enacted in 1973, followed by the Act on Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (Act No. 7600) in 1996. Since the ratification of the CRPD in 2008, various laws and regulations have been enacted, including amendments to the Act on the Establishment of the National Council, as well as measures for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in specific sectors such as labor, and those related to their independent living.

The main laws and regulations related to the rights of persons with disabilities are listed below in chronological order, starting with the most recent.

Title	Act on the Recognition and Promotion of Costa Rican Sign Language[16] (Act No.9822) (*Ley de Reconocimiento y Promoción de la Lengua de Señas Costarricense: LESCO*)
Year of enactment	2020

[14]https://pgrweb.go.cr/scij/Busqueda/Normativa/Normas/nrm_texto_completo.aspx?param1=NRTC&nValor1=1&nValor2=68058&nValor3=80972&strTipM=TC (Accessed: 23 March 2026)

[15] Although a comprehensive overview is provided in Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social (2022) *Compilado de leyes y decretos ejecutivos vigentes sobre discapacidad en Costa Rica 2022*, this section focuses primarily on information contained in State Party's Report (2011) and Periodic Report (2020). https://www.mtss.go.cr/seguridad-social/discapacidad/compilacion_leyes_decretos_cr.pdf (Accessed: 22 March 2026)

[16]https://www.asamblea.go.cr/sd/Lists/Archivo_Leyes/DispForm.aspx?ID=1113&ContentTypeId=0x010027F4CF5CCAE4F047BABD7F5711AD329C (Accessed: 22 March 2026)

Overview	Pursuant to the 2012 Act on the Recognition of Costa Rican Sign Language as a Mother Tongue (Act No.9049), the placement of sign language interpreters and the provision of information in sign language became guaranteed as a right in educational settings and public services. This legislation defines Costa Rican Sign Language (hereinafter referred to as "LESCO") as a "cultural and linguistic heritage" and integrates it into the nation's multilingual framework. It also explicitly classifies the denial of access to information in sign language as an act of discrimination, and thereby establishes this as a legal right. With the enactment of this Act, Act No.9049 was repealed.

Title	Executive Decree on Standards for the Inclusion, Protection, and Care of Persons with Disabilities in Cases of Emergency and Disaster[17] (Decree No.41095-MP-MTSS) (*Normas para la Inclusión, Protección y Atención de Personas con Discapacidad en las Emergencias y Desastres*)
Year of enactment	2018
Overview	This Executive Devree established mandatory standards to ensure the rights and safety of persons with disabilities in cases of disaster or emergency. Based on this, the National Emergency Commission and CONAPDIS collaborate to promote inclusive responses in risk management, shelter setup, and access to information.

Title	Executive Decree on Establishment of Inclusion and Accessibility in the Costa Rican Educational System[18](Decree No.40955-MEP) (*Establecimiento de la inclusión y la accesibilidad en el Sistema Educativo Costarricense*)
Year of enactment	2018
Overview	A legal framework that guarantees equal access and inclusion for all students, regardless of disability, across the entire curriculum. It explicitly mandates a shift from traditional segregated education to inclusive education, where students learn together in mainstream classrooms, and legally requires the provision of appropriate support and reasonable accommodations in educational settings.

Title	Executive Decree on the Establishment of the Disability Certification Service[19] (Decree No.40727-MP-MTSS) (*Decreto de Creación del Servicio de Certificación de la Discapacidad*)
Year of enactment	2017
Overview	This Executive Devree established the Disability Certification Service (*Servicio de Certificación de la Discapacidad*: SECDIS). Administered by CONAPDIS, the service officially assesses and certifies disability

[17] https://www.preventionweb.net/files/64835_dne3.pdf?startDownload=true (Accessed: 25 March 2026)
[18]https://pgrweb.go.cr/scij/Busqueda/Normativa/Normas/nrm_articulo.aspx?param1=NRA&nValor1=1&nValor2=86181&nValor3=111664&nValor5=2 (Accessed: 26 March 2026)
[19] https://pgrweb.go.cr/scij/Busqueda/Normativa/Normas/nrm_texto_completo.aspx?param1=NRTC&nValor1=1&nValor2=85440&nValor3=110486&strTipM=TC (Accessed: 22 March 2026)

	status based on the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (hereinafter referred to as "ICF"). It stipulates that a certificate is required to access public benefits in areas such as employment (the 5% quota under Law No.8862), social welfare, health, transportation, and education.

Title	Act on the Promotion of Personal Autonomy of Persons with Disabilities[20] (Act No.9379) (*Ley para Promoción de la Autonomía Personal de las Personas con Discapacidad*)
Year of enactment	2016
Overview	A groundbreaking legislation that defines persons with disabilities as "subjects of self-determination" rather than mere objects of protection. It was the first in Latin America to abolish the guardianship system, thereby recognizing their full legal capacity, and explicitly stipulated public funding for personal assistant services to enable them to live in the community without relying solely on their families.

Title	Executive Decree on the Establishment of the Costa Rican Information System on Disability[21] (Decree No.39419-MP-MTSS-MDIS-MREC-MIDEPLAN-MS) (*Establece el Sistema Costarricense de Información sobre Discapacidad*: SICID)
Year of enactment	2016
Overview	SICID was established as an official platform aimed at protecting the rights of persons with disabilities and supporting their independent living. By centrally managing disability-related data, it serves as evidence for evaluating the implementation status of the CRPD, identifying barriers, and formulating national policies. Through its official website[22], the platform provides services and information to support the daily lives of persons with disabilities and their families.

Title	Act on the Establishment of the National Council of Persons with Disabilities (Act No.9303)[23] (*Ley de Creación del Consejo Nacional de Personas con Discapacidad*)
Year of enactment	2015
Overview	The enabling legislation that reorganized CNREE (established in 1973), to create CONAPDIS. As the central coordination mechanism responsible for promoting the protection of the rights and equal opportunities for persons with disabilities, it is granted the authority

[20] https://accesoalajusticia.poder-judicial.go.cr/index.php/leyes?download=1759:ley-n-9379-ley-para-la-promocion-de-la-autonomia-personal-de-las-personas-con-discapacidad-y-su-reglamento (Accessed: 22 March 2026)
[21] https://pgrweb.go.cr/scij/Busqueda/Normativa/Normas/nrm_texto_completo.aspx?param1=NRTC&nValor1=1&nValor2=81900&nValor3=104644&strTipM=TC (Accessed: 23 March 2026)
[22] https://conapdis.go.cr/sicid/#:~:text=El%20Sistema%20Costarricense%20de%20Informaci%C3%B3n%20sobre%20Discapacidad%2C,de%20los%20sectores:%20p%C3%BAblico%2C%20privado%20y%20organizaciones (Accessed: 23 March 2026)
[23]https://pgrweb.go.cr/scij/Busqueda/Normativa/Normas/nrm_texto_completo.aspx?param1=NRTC&nValor1=1&nValor2=79686&nValor3=100848&strTipM=TC (Accessed: 22 March 2026)

	to cross-cuttingly coordinate and oversee policies across various ministries and agencies, including health, education, and labor.

Title	Act on the Establishment of Institutional Commissions on Accessibility and Disability (Act No.9171)[24] (*Ley de Creación de las Comisiones Institucionales sobre Accesibilidad y Discapacidad*)
Year of enactment	2013
Overview	All public agencies are required to establish commissions aimed at protecting the rights of persons with disabilities and improving accessibility. CONAPDIS provides guidance and oversight.

Title	Act on the Inclusion and Labor Protection of Persons with Disabilities in the Public Sector[25](Act No.8862) (*Ley de Inclusión y Protección laboral de las Personas con Discapacidad en el Sector Público*)
Year of enactment	2010
Overview	This Act protects the employment of persons with disabilities in the public sector. It stipulates that at least 5% of vacant positions in each public agency must be reserved as an employment quota for persons with disabilities. It also provides for the establishment of an inter-institutional technical commission.

Title	Act on Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (Act No. 7600)[26](*Ley de Igualdad de Oportunidades para las Personas con Discapacidad y su Reglamento*)
Year of enactment	1996 (Amended in 2017)
Overview	This Act prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in key sectors such as education, employment, healthcare, and transportation, guaranteeing them the same rights as others. It mandates the accessible design of public facilities and the provision of information, aiming to improve accessibility across society. The 2017 amendment enhanced accessibility for users with disabilities by specifying detailed requirements regarding the location and size of parking spaces, bus lifts, and wheelchair areas.

Title	Act on the Establishment of the National Council for Rehabilitation and Special Education (Act No.5347)[27](*Ley de Creación del Consejo Nacional de Rehabilitación y Educación Especial*)
Year of enactment	1973 (Repealed in 2015)

[24]https://pgrweb.go.cr/scij/Busqueda/Normativa/Normas/nrm_texto_completo.aspx?param1=NRTC&nValor1=1&nValor2=76228&nValor3=95069&param2=12&strTipM=TC&lResultado=114&strSim=simp (Accessed: 22 March 2026)

[25]https://pgrweb.go.cr/scij/Busqueda/Normativa/Normas/nrm_texto_completo.aspx?param1=NRTC&nValor1=1&nValor2=69031&nValor3=82737&strTipM=TC (Accessed: 22 March 2026)

[26] https://www.asamblea.go.cr/sd/SiteAssets/Lists/Consultas%20Biblioteca/EditForm/Ley%207600.pdf (Accessed: 22 March 2026)

[27] https://pgrweb.go.cr/scij/Busqueda/Normativa/Normas/nrm_texto_completo.aspx?nValor1=1&nValor2=10613 (Accessed: 22 March 2026)

Overview	This Act created CNREE, the body that oversaw national policies on rehabilitation and special education for persons with disabilities. In coordination with the ministries of health, education, and labor, it established a framework to promote the rights and equal opportunities of persons with disabilities. With the reorganization of CNREE into CONAPDIS in 2015, this Act was repealed.

Other major laws and regulations related to the rights of persons with disabilities include the following.

Title	Act on Copyright and Related Rights (Act No.6683) (*Ley de Derechos de Autor y Derechos Conexos*)
Year of enactment	1982 (Amended in 2020)
References to disabilities	The Amendment (Act No.9858) [28] implementing the Marrakesh Treaty [29] introduced an exception permitting the reproduction, distribution, and public display of copyrighted works in accessible formats (such as Braille, large print, and audio) for non-profit purposes without the authorization of the copyright holders.

Title	Labor Law Reform Act (Act No.9343)[30](*Reforma Procesal Laboral*)
Year of enactment	2016
References to disabilities	This Act strictly prohibits all forms of discrimination based on disability, strengthens protections against unfair dismissal, and guarantees access to justice.

Title	Income Tax Act (Act No.7092)[31] (*Ley del Impuesto sobre la Renta*)
Year of enactment	1988 (Amended in 1996)
References to disabilities	This Act supports companies in promoting employment by providing incentives such as allowing double income tax deductions for expenses including salaries for employing persons with disabilities, as well as permitting the inclusion of costs for workplace modifications as business expenses.

Disability Policies[32]

Title	National Development and Public Investment Plan[33] (*Plan Nacional de Desarrollo y de Inversión Pública*)
Years implemented	2023-2026

[28] https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/21983 (Accessed: 20 March 2026)
[29] Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled
[30] https://www.mtss.go.cr/elministerio/despacho/rpl/Ley%209343%20Reforma%20Procesal%20Laboral.pdf (Accessed: 22 March 2026)
[31] https://pgrweb.go.cr/scij/Busqueda/Normativa/Normas/nrm_texto_completo.aspx?nValor1=1&nValor2=10969 (Accessed March 22, 2026)
[32] Based on State Party's Report (2011), Periodic Report (2020)
[33] https://www.infocoop.go.cr/sites/default/files/PNDIP%202023-2026%20Main.pdf (Accessed: 22 March 2026)

Overview	Regarding persons with disabilities, primarily within the sectoral strategy for the "Welfare, Labor, and Social Inclusion Sector," policy objectives have been set forth, such as providing financial assistance to meet the basic needs of persons with disabilities living in poverty, promoting rights education for persons with disabilities, and increasing the number of disability certifications.

Title	National Mental Health Policy[34] (*Política Nacional de Salud Mental*)
Years implemented	2024-2034
References to disabilities	This Policy aims to shift from the traditional model of treatment centered on psychiatric hospitals to comprehensive care within the community. With a focus on respect for human rights and the elimination of prejudice, it seeks to improve the mental well-being and quality of life of the public by 2034 through multi-agency collaboration and digitalization.

Title	National Care Policy[35] (*Política Nacional de Cuidados*)
Years implemented	2021-2031
References to disabilities	This Policy aims to shift toward supporting independent living for persons with disabilities. By institutionalizing personal assistant services and establishing a framework in which care responsibilities are shared among the state, the private sector, and local communities, it seeks to guarantee a life of dignity at the national level.

Title	National Plan for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in the Labor Market[36] (*Plan Nacional de Inclusión Laboral para la Población con Discapacidad*)
Year of enactment	2012
Overview	A national plan designed to promote the integration of persons with disabilities into the labor market. It aims to achieve their social and economic inclusion by providing education and training to enhance their employability, raising employer awareness, strengthening supported employment services (including job coaching), supporting entrepreneurship, and fostering inter-institutional coordination.

Title	National Disability Policy[37] (*Política Nacional en Discapacidad*)
Years implemented	2011-2030

[34] http://www.pgrweb.go.cr/docsdescargar/Normas/No%20DE-44839/Version1/politica_nacional_salud_mental.pdf (Accessed: 26 March 2026)

[35] https://www.imas.go.cr/sites/default/files/custom/Politica%20Nacional%20de%20Cuidados%202021-2031_0.pdf (Accessed: 22 March 2026)

[36] https://www.mtss.go.cr/seguridad-social/discapacidad/Plan%20nacional%20de%20insercion%20laboral%20para%20la%20poblacion%20con%20discapacidad%20en%20Costa%20Rica%20.pdf (Accessed: 22 March 2026)

[37] https://www.imas.go.cr/sites/default/files/custom/Ponadis-2011-2030.pdf (Accessed: 22 March 2026)

Overview	As a national strategy[38] that views persons with disabilities as subjects of rights and aims for their social inclusion by 2030, this Policy centers on human rights, gender, and independent living. It serves as guidelines for various ministries to collaborate and execute specific measures in priority areas such as education, employment, and accessibility. In its formulation, persons with disabilities identified and prioritized their own needs, and proposed affirmative action measures to the public institutions responsible for implementing each strategy. The Action Plan 2024–2030[39] clearly defines the responsibilities and budgets of each ministry, while also emphasizing digitalization and addressing the intersectionality of groups such as women and Indigenous peoples.

2-3. Measures on Disability[40]

1) Healthcare

In Costa Rica, the Ministry of Health oversees health-related policies, including rehabilitation. The CCSS executes these policies and is the sole independent public institution providing public health insurance to all citizens. Under the CCSS, the National Rehabilitation Center (*Centro Nacional de Rehabilitación*; hereinafter referred to as "CENARE") is responsible for providing rehabilitation services. Additionally, the National Insurance Institute (*Instituto Nacional de Seguros*; hereinafter referred to as "INS") promotes insurance coverage among citizens and provides rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities resulting from work-related accidents.

Regarding policies and plans in the health sector, there are the National Health Policy (*Política Nacional de Salud*) 2023-2033 and the National Strategic Plan on HIV and AIDS (*Plan Estratégico Nacional de VIH y Sida*) 2024-2027, both of which adopt a policy of considering vulnerable people, including persons with disabilities. The National Care Policy and the National Mental Health Policy advocate for the independence of persons with disabilities.

Since 2008, the Ministry of Health has conducted disability awareness training for medical personnel to ensure that persons with disabilities receive appropriate services. This training covers LESCO, assistance methods, and the Act on Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (Act No.7600). Additionally, the INS provides orthopedic equipment and financial assistance to adapt living environments.

In addition to the above, the following initiatives are being implemented regarding healthcare for persons with disabilities:

[38] When it was first formulated, it was a 10-year plan running through 2021, but it was later extended to 2030 to align with the SDGs.

[39] https://conapdis.go.cr/el-sector-informa/documentacion/4-5-5-ponadis/ (Accessed: 22 March 2026)

[40] Based on State Party's Report (2011) and Periodic Report (2020). For information gathered from other sources, its source is indicated.

- INS has developed guidelines for pharmacy staff on how to provide clear information and communicate effectively with people who use the medical service network within its pharmacy services; and
- By April 2018, all patients admitted to the National Psychiatric Hospital (*Hospital Nacional Psiquiátrico*) had been transferred to facilities outside the hospital, and the long-term care wards were completely closed. The residents were relocated to privately operated shelters across the country equipped with the necessary infrastructure, personnel, and training programs.

The recommendations for healthcare based on the Concluding Observations (2024) are as follows:

- Ensure that all persons with disabilities, including those in rural and remote areas, have access to high-quality, gender-sensitive, and culturally sensitive health services through the improvement of physical and informational accessibility, as well as training for healthcare personnel;
- Strengthen efforts to ensure that all health policies, programs, and services, including those related to sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS, are fully accessible and incorporate a gender perspective (particularly in rural areas and at the community level);
- Develop an action plan backed by adequate human and financial resources to implement the National Policy on Community-Based Mental Health Services;
- Provide continuous training on the human rights model of disability for healthcare personnel, with the active involvement of OPDs in its design and implementation;
- Guarantee the provision of functional training and rehabilitation services throughout the national territory to all persons with disabilities, including indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants, regardless of their age, gender, origin, or socioeconomic status; and
- Expeditiously adopt strategies to promote Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) services, focusing on the capacity development of persons with disabilities from early childhood.

2) Education

According to ENADIS (2023), the educational attainment levels of adults with disabilities are as follows: 6.0% with no schooling; 47.4% at the primary level (of whom 17.7% are incomplete); 28.3% at the secondary level (of whom 14.8% are incomplete); and 18.3% at the tertiary level.

Table 2 Educational Attainment Levels of Adults (2018 and 2023) (%)

	No schooling		Primary		Secondary		Tertiary	
Year	2018	2023	2018	2023	2018	2023	2018	2023
Persons with disabilities	6.5	6.0	45.6	47.4	29.0	28.3	18.0	18.3
Persons without disabilities	2.4	1.4	34.0	28.7	39.1	40.7	25.1	29.1

Source: Prepared by the study team based on INEC (2023)

The Government of Costa Rica has implemented reforms to make the education system inclusive. In 2018, Executive Decree No.40955-MEP was issued to promote the transition toward inclusive, equitable, and quality education across all curricula. This decree regulates the gradual transformation of special education schools into Learning Support Resource Centers[41] (*Centros de Recursos y Apoyo Educativo*), the conversion of integrated classrooms[42] (*Aulas Integradas*) into educational support services, the transition of students from special education to mainstream education, and the incorporation of Universal Design for Learning (hereinafter referred to as "UDL") into training plans and educational curricula.

State universities are taking steps to promote the admission, enrollment, and graduation of students with disabilities by providing support services, improving physical accessibility, training teachers, and raising awareness. Private universities are also mandated to ensure that all their institutions are fully accessible to students with disabilities.

In addition to the above, the following initiatives are being implemented regarding education for persons with disabilities:

- According to a report by the Ministry of Public Education, 66% of schools have made improvements in physical accessibility;
- The in-hospital classrooms at the National Children's Hospital were transformed into the Hospital Learning Center and the Center for Supporting Children and Adolescents; and
- The 2018 Executive Decree sets a 10-year timeframe to transition 22 special education centers into Learning Support Resource Centers.

The recommendations for education based on the Concluding Observations (2024) are as follows:

- Adopt a strategic framework for implementing the inclusive education system, in consultation with OPDs, incorporating goals, implementation schedules, and financial

[41] A base to support the learning of students with disabilities in mainstream classrooms. It provides ICT equipment, tailored educational materials, implements UDL, and offers professional advice to teachers, thereby ensuring an environment where all students can learn equally.

[42] Special education classrooms within public schools designed for students with disabilities to receive their education.

plans, while considering regional disparities and indigenous territories;

- Align Article 62 of the Code on Children and Adolescents with Article 24 of the CRPD to guarantee the right of students with disabilities to receive high-quality inclusive education;
- Redouble efforts to ensure accessibility in mainstream schools, provide the necessary support for educational activities, and adapt transportation services for students with disabilities;
- Provide high-quality inclusive education to students with disabilities in general education through systematic in-service training and support for special education teachers, and ensure accessible and adapted digital educational technologies for students with disabilities;
- Systematically collect disaggregated data to produce reliable statistics on students with disabilities and their educational environments, and to monitor progress in inclusive education; and
- Abolish discriminatory qualification systems and ensure that students with disabilities can obtain qualifications and graduation certificates on an equal basis with others.

3) Gender

Since 2016, CONAPDIS has been a member of the Inter-Institutional Technical Committee on Gender Equality Policies and, through this committee, has contributed to the formulation of the National Policy for Effective Equality between Women and Men (*Política Nacional para la Igualdad Efectiva entre Mujeres y Hombres*) 2018-2030. When this policy was presented to stakeholders in the disability sector, the Minister for Women's Affairs committed to incorporating initiatives aligned with the National Disability Policy and to including specific measures for women with disabilities in the action plan.

Since the establishment of the National System for the Prevention and Addressing of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (*Sistema Nacional para la Atención y Prevención de la Violencia contra las Mujeres y la Violencia Intrafamiliar*), CONAPDIS has participated in its follow-up committee and regional networks, raising awareness about the right of women with disabilities to live free from violence.

In addition to the above, the following initiatives are being implemented regarding gender for persons with disabilities:

- The Judiciary has established procedures for the Prosecutor's Office to support victims of sexual offenses and domestic violence in all cases where allegations of violence based on gender or disability are made;
- The appointment of OPD representatives to the highest decision-making body of

CONAPDIS is stipulated, and gender balance must be ensured in these appointments.

- CONAPDIS, in collaboration with the State Distance University (*Universidad Estatal a Distancia*), provided training to promote the election of women with disabilities to public office in the 2020 local elections;
- CENARE, in coordination with the National Women's Hospital (*Hospital Nacional de las Mujeres*), has developed a sexual and reproductive health program to ensure that women with disabilities have access to these services.

The recommendations for gender based on the Concluding Observations (2024) are as follows:

- Redouble efforts to explicitly mainstream a disability perspective into laws and policies on gender equality, and a gender perspective into laws and policies on disability, in coordination with relevant OPDs, and incorporate a gender and disability perspective into the national financial inclusion strategy;
- Strengthen support measures to promote the participation of women with disabilities in political and public life and ensure their inclusion in the training and educational programs of the National Women's Institute;
- Accelerate the development and implementation of protocols to protect women and girls with disabilities from exploitation, violence, and abuse;
- Ensure that services for women and girls with disabilities who are victims of gender-based violence, including support centers and emergency shelters, are accessible nationwide and that the necessary assistance is provided;
- Take measures to empower women and girls with disabilities and ensure their participation in decision-making processes in political activities; and
- Strengthen efforts to collect comprehensive and disaggregated data on violence against women and girls with disabilities.

4) Vocational Training and Employment

According to ENADIS (2023), there is a significant gap in the labor force participation rate[43] among individuals aged 18 and older, standing at 44.2% for persons with disabilities compared to 70.0% for persons without disabilities.

To promote the labor inclusion of persons with disabilities, the Government of Costa Rica established the Inter-Institutional Technical Committee for the Employability of Persons with

[43] The total percentage of individuals who responded that they are "employed in some form of work" or are "actively seeking employment."

Disabilities in 2006, and enacted the Act on the Inclusion and Labor Protection of Persons with Disabilities in the Public Sector (Act No.8862) in 2010.

The Department of Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities within the Ministry of Labor and Social Security provides comprehensive support toward achieving decent work for persons with disabilities. Specifically, it offers advice and training on non-discrimination and reasonable accommodation to employers in both public and private sectors, while providing psychosocial care, entrepreneurship support, and employment tools to persons with disabilities and their families. In addition, the department provides counseling to those facing workplace discrimination and guidance on improving the work environment, thereby supporting the social and occupational inclusion of persons with disabilities through practical measures.

Local municipalities, in coordination with the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, implement *Empléate Inclusivo*,[44] an employment support program with a framework specialized for persons with disabilities, targeting persons with disabilities aged 17 to 35 who are certified as being in vulnerable socioeconomic situations.

In addition to the above, the following initiatives are being implemented regarding vocational training and employment for persons with disabilities:

- In November 2014, the General Directorate of Civil Service issued an official circular (DG-019-2014), stating its commitment to ensuring that all persons with disabilities who have proven their qualifications and competencies can enter the civil service system and develop their careers. In May 2016, an electronic registration process was launched to create a registry that can be disaggregated by variables such as region, disability type, and job category. As of December 2018, a total of 229 persons with disabilities were employed, consisting of 109 women (48%) and 120 men (52%); and
- The Ombudsman's Office secured the provision of reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities and older persons working within the office under a policy adopted in 2017.

The recommendations for vocational training and employment based on the Concluding Observations (2024) are as follows:

- Effectively guarantee the right to work for all persons with disabilities, take measures to combat discrimination in work and employment, and establish incentives and concrete measures to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the private

[44]https://www.mtss.go.cr/prensa/comunicados/2017/agosto/EMPLEATE_convoco_a_Personas_Jovenes_con_Discapacidad.html (Accessed: 23 March 2026) Although the program continues to operate in 2026, the employment support and vocational training services that were previously scattered across various ministries have been consolidated into the digital platform (www.ane.cr) of the National Employment Agency (*Agencia Nacional de Empleo*), which was established in 2019.

labor market;

- Ensure strict compliance with the Act on the Inclusion and Labor Protection of Persons with Disabilities in the Public Sector (Act No.8862), and establish a monitoring mechanism and sanctions for the employment quota (5%); and
- Promote self-employment opportunities for persons with disabilities by establishing special funds to provide grants and waiving business license fees.

5) Social Security, Social Service for Persons with Disabilities

Article 51 of the Constitution states: "The family, as the natural element and basis of society, is entitled to the special protection of the State. Mothers, children, older persons, and persons with disabilities are also entitled to this protection." The Income Tax Act (Act No.7092) stipulates that 5% of the corporate income tax revenue collected under Article 15 shall be used as financial resources to support persons with disabilities.

In 2017, an Executive Decree (Decree No.40727-MP-MTSS) was issued establishing the Disability Certification Service, enabling persons with disabilities to obtain a disability certificate aligned with ICF standards. Holding this certificate facilitates easier access to various social services provided by the state and private enterprises, including health, labor, transportation, and education.

Within this framework, CONAPDIS provides financial assistance through subsidies to improve the situation of persons with disabilities living in poverty. Additionally, a social assistance program for persons with disabilities has been developed by pooling financial resources from multiple disability support agencies, with the Joint Social Assistance Institute serving as the implementing entity.

In addition to the above, the following initiatives are implemented regarding social security and social services for persons with disabilities:

- The National Housing Finance System stipulates that families of persons with disabilities are entitled to receive 1.5 times the housing allowance;
- When children with disabilities utilize specific care services (such as therapeutic centers and licensed childcare facilities), a 15% premium is added to the standard payment amount of the Childcare and Developmental Support Benefits (*Cuidado y Desarrollo Infantil*);
- Welfare pensions are provided to individuals aged 65 or older, or to persons under 65 with disabilities who are unable to work, regardless of their contributions to the social security system;
- Through technical advice from CONAPDIS and collaboration with the Joint Social

Assistance Institute, the criteria for assessing poverty and extreme poverty have been revised to incorporate disability-related factors; and

- In the 2018 Social Protection and Promotion Program, a social investment of 15,778,298,754 Costa Rican colones was made, benefitting 37,166 persons with disabilities.

The recommendations for social security and social services based on the Concluding Observations (2024) are as follows:

- Formulate, implement, and monitor a national plan to address the high poverty rate among persons with disabilities, incorporating funding mechanisms and implementation schedules; and
- Provide information on non-contributory pensions available to persons with disabilities aged 65 or older, or under 65 who are unable to work, including the payment amounts and the number of recipients disaggregated by gender.

6) Transportation and Urban Development (including accessible urban planning)

In line with Act No. 9171, Institutional Commissions on Accessibility and Disability have been established within all public institutions, serving as advisory bodies on disability issues within their respective organizations. Specifically, these committees advise, coordinate, promote, propose, monitor, and provide information to upper and middle management on methods and strategies complying with regulations regarding on the rights of persons with disabilities. The activities of these commissions have played a crucial role in mainstreaming a disability perspective into the policies, regulations, and operations of public institutions.

The recommendations for transportation and urban development based on the Concluding Observations (2024) are as follows:

- Secure the necessary financial resources in each region for the immediate repair of deteriorated sidewalks, purchase accessible passenger vehicles, and ensure accessibility in all public spaces;
- Implement accessibility plans that comply with accessibility standards for the physical environment and transportation, including measurable targets, implementation schedules, and sanctions;
- Establish Municipal Commissions on Accessibility and Disability where they have not yet been formed, and ensure the participation of persons with disabilities in all such committees; and
- Set concrete targets and deadlines to achieve full accessibility of public transportation,

including in remote and rural areas.

7) Information Accessibility

To ensure information accessibility, the government, as a goal of the National Telecommunications Development Plan (*Plan Nacional de Desarrollo de las Telecomunicaciones*) 2015-2021, requires central government agencies to apply accessibility and universal design principles in the development of web-based portals, websites, and services. To achieve this goal, an Executive Decree was issued, and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 standards of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) were adopted as the national standard.

In 2018, the Costa Rica Institute of Technology (*Instituto Tecnológico de Costa Rica*) conducted a web accessibility evaluation covering 150 public institutions. According to the evaluation, most institutions reported that they had implemented adjustments such as the following:

- Provision of training in LESCO and employment of interpreters;
- W3C-compliant accessible web pages;
- Policies for persons with disabilities;
- Use of NonVisual Desktop Access (NVDA);
- Utilization of JAWS and similar software; and
- Provision of documents in accessible formats (audio, Braille, Easy-to-Read, large print, sign language, captions, and video with audio description) in the field of education.

In addition to the above, the following initiatives are being implemented regarding information accessibility for persons with disabilities:

- The General Directorate of Civil Service adopted the Communication and Information Policy (PE-02-PO-02-2017), aimed at promoting equal treatment and non-discrimination in access to information; and
- The Institute of Technical Standards of Costa Rica (*Instituto de Normas Técnicas de Costa Rica*) developed six technical standards in the field of informational accessibility.

The recommendations for information accessibility based on the Concluding Observations (2024) are as follows:

- Take the necessary measures to apply principles of accessibility and universal design toward the effective implementation of the National Telecommunications Development Plan 2022-2027, particularly ensuring that persons with disabilities have access to information and communications; and

- Impose legal obligations on telecommunications and media operators to ensure that their services are accessible to persons with disabilities, and develop and enforce legally binding accessibility standards.

8) Disaster risk management

Costa Rica is a beneficiary country of the Project for the Participation and Protection of Persons with Disabilities in Emergencies and Disasters, which is sponsored by the United States Agency for International Development (hereinafter referred to as "USAID") and the Center for Coordination of the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America and the Dominican Republic (CEPREDENAC), and implemented by the United Nations Children's Fund (hereinafter referred to as "UNICEF") Costa Rica Country Office. Through the participation of persons with disabilities and OPDs, this project developed standards for the inclusion, participation, and care of persons with disabilities in risk and emergency situations, which were institutionalized by Executive Decree No.41095-MP-MTSS in 2017.

The National Risk Management Plan (*Plan Nacional de Gestión del Riesgo*) 2016-2020 also includes measures to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities. Emergency response manuals and standard operating procedures, such as guidelines on emergency shelter management, were developed and revised in line with the Act on Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. In the second phase of the Plan, which commenced in 2019, a simulation system was introduced to ensure that persons with disabilities can always receive disaster information. To apply these measures to the early warning system, progress is being made in developing accessible, multi-hazard warning systems and specific evacuation procedures that accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities.

While the principles of universal design and compliance with the Act on Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities are considered in reconstruction processes, it was noted that some of these measures may not be available as of July 2023. This is due to the fact that damage registration tools do not account for accessibility or inclusivity factors, and investment plans do not include specific guidelines on disability.

The recommendations for disaster risk management based on the Concluding Observations (2024) are as follows:

- Ensure, in close coordination with OPDs, that post-emergency recovery and reconstruction processes are based on risk assessments accessible to persons with disabilities and principles such as universal design and "Build Back Better" are applied.

3. International Treaties and International Cooperation

3-1. Status of Implementation Following the Ratification of the CRPD[45]

The Government of Costa Rica ratified the CRPD and its Optional Protocol on October 1, 2008. It submitted the State Party's Report to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on March 23, 2011 (submission deadline was November 1, 2010). The Committee presented a List of Issues on September 30, 2013, and the government submitted its Replies to LOI on March 25, 2014. Regarding parallel reports, two reports were submitted by two organizations[46] in 2013, and one report was submitted by one organization[47] in 2014[48]. On April 11, 2014, the Committee adopted its Concluding Observations.

During the combined second and third review cycles, the Committee presented a List of Issues prior to its March 9, 2018, reporting, and the government submitted its Combined Periodic Report to the Committee on April 3, 2020 (the submission deadline was November 1, 2018). Regarding parallel reports, three reports were submitted by two organizations[49] in 2017, and three reports were submitted by three organizations[50] in 2024. The Committee adopted its Concluding Observations on March 22, 2024.

The 2024 Concluding Observations commend the adoption of the following laws and policies aimed at promoting and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities.

- The enactment of Act No.9697, by which article 51 of the Constitution was amended to eliminate the use of the term *enfermo desvalido* ("infirm person who is destitute or helpless") to refer to persons with disabilities in 2019;
- The adoption of the National Disability Policy and the institutional strategic plan for 2019–2030;
- The adoption of Executive Decree No.48088, establishing the implementing regulations of the Act on the Establishment of the National Council of Persons with Disabilities and creating the Consultative Forum of Persons with Disabilities in 2018;
- The adoption of Decree No.40727-MP-MTSS, which created the Disability Certification Service in 2017;
- The adoption of the communication and information policy of the Directorate General of the Civil Service, which provides for equal treatment and non-discrimination in access to information for all institutional audiences in 2017;

[45] https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/Countries.aspx
[46] 1) Disability Council International, 2) Coalition of OPDs (a joint report by 31 organizations)
[47] Disabled Peoples Organizations Report (a joint report by 32 organizations)
[48] In addition, there is one report from OPDs (a joint report by 31 organizations), but the date of submission is unknown.
[49] 1) the Ombudsman's Office (*Defensoría de los Habitantes*), 2) Instituto Interamericano sobre Discapacidad y Desarrollo Inclusivo (IIDI; a joint report with Foro por los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad (FORO))
[50] 1) Alianza Latinoamericana de Mujeres con Discapacidad (ALAMUD; a joint report by seven organizations), 2) Coalition of OPDs in Costa Rica (a joint report by five organizations), 3) the Ombudsman's Office

- The adoption by the Ombudsman's Office of a policy on the accessibility of its services for persons with disabilities and older persons in 2017;
- The enactment of the Labor Law Reform Act (No.9343), incorporating additional grounds of discrimination into the Labor Code in 2016;
- The enactment of Act No.9303 on the Establishment of the National Council of Persons with Disabilities in 2015;
- The adoption of a comprehensive human resources policy on the management, employment and salaries of persons with disabilities providing services to the civil service in 2014; and
- The Ombudsman's Office adopted the "Breaking Barriers" policy agenda for women with disabilities in 2014.

On the other hand, recommendations have been made to harmonize the definition of disability in laws and policies, and disability certification procedures with the general principles of the CRPD; simplify and expedite disability certification; establish training systems for the professionals responsible; allocate sufficient resources to the Ombudsman's Office; and promote the participation of persons with disabilities in the CRPD implementation process by ensuring the independence of the Consultative Forum of Persons with Disabilities.

3-2. Status of Implementation of the Marrakesh Treaty

The Government of Costa Rica ratified the Marrakesh Treaty on October 9, 2017.

Following the ratification of the Treaty, the amendment (Act No. 9858) to the existing Act on Copyright and Related Rights (Act No. 6683) was enacted in 2020. This amendment introduced an exception that permits the reproduction, distribution, and public display of copyrighted works in accessible formats (such as Braille, large print, and audio) for non-profit purposes without the copyright holders' authorization.[51]

3-3. Initiatives on Disability Issues within SDG-related Policies

According to the third Voluntary National Review of the Government of Costa Rica[52], released in July 2024, of the 98 indicators that require a breakdown by disability, only 6 (6.41%) actually provide such a breakdown. According to Sustainable Development Goals (hereinafter referred to as "SDGs") indicator database of the United Nations Statistics Division,[53] Costa Rica reports data on the following indicators related to persons with

[51] https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/21983 (Accessed: 20 March 2026)
[52] https://www.ods.cr/es/recursos/publicaciones/iii-informe-voluntario-nacional-costa-rica-2024-objetivos-de-desarrollo (Accessed: 20 March 2026)
[53] https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/dataportal/countryprofiles/ (Accessed: 19 March 2026)

disabilities: "1.3.1 (d), "Proportion of population with severe disabilities receiving disability cash benefit," and "4.a.1 (d) Proportion of primary schools with access to adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities." The former declined from 79.6% in 2019 to 76.0% in 2022, while the latter improved from 60.5% in 2016 to 71.7% in 2020.

3-4. Ratification of and Initiatives regarding Other International Treaties related to Disabilities and Development

The status of Costa Rica's ratification of international treaties related to disability and development is as follows:

April 1986: Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (hereinafter referred to as "CEDAW")

August 1990: Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (hereinafter referred to as "CRC")

July 1991: Ratification of the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention (International Labour Organization Convention No. 159, 1983)

In its Concluding Observations adopted in March 2020,[54] the CRC Committee recommended that, in order to strengthen the protection of the rights of children with disabilities, measures should be taken to ensure that due weight is given to their view and promote their participation in decision-making within relevant laws and public policies; identify and establish reporting channels for cases of violence, abuse, and neglect; systematically record cases of violence and provide appropriate remedies; phase out institutionalization in psychiatric facilities; promote inclusion in the community; and improve the accessibility of healthcare services.

According to a direct request from the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations in 2022,[55] the Government of Costa Rica has implemented diverse measures, including the National Plan for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in the Labor Market, the National Disability Policy, employment support services, inclusive reforms of the educational system, the strengthening of mandatory employment quotas for persons with disabilities in public institutions, and policy consultations by the National Commission on the Employability and Work of Persons with Disabilities. However, noting that the number of persons with disabilities who secured employment after receiving

[54] Naciones Unidas (2020) *Observaciones finales sobre los informes periódicos quinto y sexto combinados de Costa Rica* (CRC/C/CRI/CO/5-6)
https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRC%2FC%2FCRI%2FCO%2F5-6&Lang=en (Accessed: 21 March 2026)

[55] https://normlex.ilo.org/dyn/nrmlx_en/f?p=1000:13100:0::NO:13100:P13100_COMMENT_ID,P13100_COUNTRY_ID:4312934,102599 (Accessed: 30 March 2026)

support services remains low, and that the extent of representative workers' organizations' involvement remains unclear, the Committee requested that the government provide more detailed information.

3-5. International Cooperation on Disability[56]

- The Japanese Government[57]

<Third Country Training Programme>

- Third-Country Training Programme on Improvement of National Support for the Empowerment and Independent Living of Persons with Disabilities (2023-2026)
- Regional Course on Community-based Inclusive Development (2012-2015)

<Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects>

- Project for Provision of a School Bus for Grecia Special Education School (2023)
- Project for Construction of the Training Center for Independent Living for Morpho Center (*Centro de Autonomía Morpho*) (2018)
- Project for Provision of Medical Equipment for the National Rehabilitation Center (*Centro Nacional de Rehabilitación*) (2015)
- Project for Expansion of the Care Center for Persons with Disabilities in Orotina Municipality (*Centro de Atención para Personas con Discapacidad de Orotina*) (2014)

<JICA Partnership Program>

- Project on Building a Social Support System for Disabilities (2017-2023)
- Project for the Promotion of Independent Living in Costa Rica (2012-2017)[58]

- Other development partners

<International organizations>

UN Costa Rica Country Team

- Disability Inclusion Initiative[59] (2022-2025)

UNICEF[60]

- Early Warning Strategy (*Estrategia de Alerta Temprana*)

[56] Achievements after 2016 are listed. Project names are listed exactly as they appear in the original text. However, this does not apply in cases where there is no English name or the English name is unknown.

[57] Based on Cabinet Office Japan (2016-2025) *Annual Report on Government Measures for Persons with Disabilities (White Paper on Persons with Disabilities*, Japan International Cooperation Agency (2025) *Aiming for a world where all people benefit: Initiatives for "Disability and Development*" [In Japanese] and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2016-2025) List of Exchange of Notes by Country and Fiscal Year, https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/region/latin/costarica/exchange.html (Accessed: 21 March 2026)

[58] Project Summary (https://www.jica.go.jp/Resource/activities/project_list/knowledge/ku57pq00002jvb9v-att/2015_215_cos.pdf) (Accessed: 21 March 2026)

[59] https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/03/1134222 (Accessed: 21 March 2026)

[60] https://www.unicef.org/lac/en/all-children-learn-costa-rica#:~:text=Overcoming%20gender%20biases%20in%20the,Aulas%20de%20Escucha (Accessed: 21 March 2026)

- *Aprendo Pura Vida*[61]
- Orienta2[62]
- Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey[63] (2018)

ILO and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

- UN Support to the National Plan for Labor Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Costa Rica[64] (2012-2019)

Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO)

- Rehabilitation 2030[65](2017-2030) (Nationwide, with a focus on the Brunca Region)

Inter-American Development Bank

- Support for Strengthening and Expanding the National Care System in Costa Rica[66] (2025)

<Bilateral aid agencies>

USAID

- Inclusive Disaster Risk Management [67] (2015–2016 and 2019–unknown) (Huetar Atlántica Region and Huetar Norte Region)

German Office for International Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training (GOVET)

- Promotion of Dual Vocational Education and Training in Costa Rica[68](*Fomento de la Formación Dual en Costa Rica*)(2016-2025)(San José, Cartago, Alajuela, etc.)

[61] Based on UDL, digital materials and resources that allow all students to learn at their own pace are provided. https://aprendo-pura-vida.learningpassport.org/ (Accessed: 30 March 2026)

[62] An online career guidance and support system designed for secondary school students. It focuses on providing accessible information to help students with disabilities find vocational training and higher education options that suit their individual needs.

[63] A large-scale survey that enables international comparisons of the circumstances of children and women (in areas such as health, education, and protection).

[64] https://globaldisabilityfund.org/programme/costarica/#:~:text=The%20Programme,Approach (Accessed: 21 March 2026)

[65] https://www.who.int/initiatives/action-on-the-social-determinants-of-health-for-advancing-equity/work-in-who-regions/amro-paho/costa-rica (Accessed: 21 March 2026)

[66] https://www.iadb.org/en/news/costa-rica-improves-its-care-system-idb-support#:~:text=June%2025%2C%202025,%2C%20its%20acronym%20in%20Spanish). (Accessed: 21 March 2026)

[67] https://theret.org/2023/10/pan/reduction-nothing-about-us-without-us-drr/ (Accessed: 21 March 2026)

[68]https://www.govet.international/en/201363.php#:~:text=Momentum%20and%20success:%20Dual%20System,Education%20and%20Research%20(BMBF). (Accessed: 21 March 2026)

4. Disability-related Organizations and Activities

4-1. Organizations of Persons with Disabilities

Name of Organization	Overview of Activities
Red Nacional de Organizaciones de Personas con Discapacidad (RENAPDIS) https://www.facebook.com/p/Renapdis-Costa-Rica-100086946271159/	Composed of persons with disabilities and their families, RENAPDIS works to improve accessibility in public transportation and facilities, makes policy recommendations based on the CRPD, and monitors compliance with domestic laws.
Movimiento de Personas con Discapacidad CR https://www.facebook.com/p/Movimiento-de-Personas-con-Discapacidad-CR-100090003675302/	In response to government budget cuts and service suspensions, Movimiento de Personas con Discapacidad CR protests through social media campaigns and lawsuits filed with the Constitutional Court, demanding protection for independent living for persons with disabilities. With a focus on monitoring legislation and promoting social participation, it leads political and social movements to protect the dignity of persons with disabilities.
Asociación Nacional de Sordos de Costa Rica (ANASCOR) https://anascor.org/quienes	Founded in 1974, ANASCOR engages in advocacy work to ensure legal equality and improve access to information, as well as promotes LESCO, provides LESCO education, and trains LESCO interpreters. It also works to strengthen domestic and international networks through collaboration with local organizations and various events.
Centro Morpho https://www.centromorpho.com/en/sobre	Found in 2011, Centro Morpho supports the independence of persons with disabilities through peer counseling and independent living programs. It also provides personal assistant services, promotes accessibility, and conducts leadership training in collaboration with JICA, striving to build a society where persons with disabilities can live independently within their communities.

4-2. Disability Support Organizations

Name of Organization	Overview of Activities
Fundación Andrea Jiménez https://www.facebook.com/institutoandreajimenez/?locale=es_LA	Founded in 1974, Fundación Andrea Jiménez operates a nonprofit special education institution serving children and adults aged 0 to 60 with intellectual disabilities or severe physical and mental disabilities. It provides education tailored to individual abilities, training in daily living skills, and speech and occupational therapy.
Do It Foundation https://doitcenterfoundation.com/blog/costa-rica-wheelchair-donations/	Found in 2005, Do It Foundation operates primarily in the province of Guanacaste, providing free wheelchairs (more than 30,000 units), educational support for children with disabilities, and health and living support services.
Fundación el Futuro es de Todos https://elfuturoesdetodos.wixsite.com/futuroparatodos	Found in 2011, Fundación el Futuro es de Todos provides programs designed to offer vocational training, academic support, and life skills development to adolescents with Down syndrome or intellectual disabilities. It also supports their independence and employment through initiatives such as farm projects.
Fundación Yo puedo, ¿y vos? https://yopuedoyvos.org/	Founded in 2012, Fundación Yo puedo, ¿y vos? promotes the inclusion of persons with Down syndrome or intellectual disabilities in employment and education. It has partnered with over 100 companies and created more than 5,000 jobs. It is the recipient of the “Zero Project Award 2025” (Employment & ICT Category).
Red Costarricense de Turismo Accesible https://costaricaturismoaccesible.com/	Founded in 2017, Red Costarricense de Turismo Accesible conducts accessibility surveys of domestic tourist sites and provides training for the industry, as well as installing portable ramps made from recycled plastic and amphibious wheelchairs along the coast.

5. Barriers and Needs Faced by Persons with Disabilities[69]

5-1. Barriers to and Needs regarding Healthcare Services

According to ALAMUD, 62.3% of persons with disabilities perceive their health as "average or poor." There is only one gynecological examination table and one mammography machine, each that are accessible to persons with disabilities nationwide, indicating a severe shortage of facilities necessary for the health management of persons with disabilities. Information on sexual and reproductive health is also insufficient, with approximately half of women holding misconceptions.[70]

Based on the findings of the Coalition of OPDs, early diagnosis and intervention programs for persons with disabilities are not in place, and delayed diagnosis limits opportunities to receive necessary support and treatment. Diagnosis and support for persons with ASD at public medical institutions are lacking, and responses are particularly inadequate in rural areas. The Mental Health Act is based on a medical model, which restricts the legal capacity of persons with disabilities and their full participation in the community.[71]

5-2. Barriers to and Needs regarding Education

According to the Ombudsman's Office, budget cuts in education have caused a shortage of support staff and delays in infrastructure development, leading to the scaling back or closure of special education programs. Due to inadequate teacher training, some students who received early intervention services at special education centers are unable to transition to mainstream classrooms and are instead sent back to integrated classrooms. Cases of physical and psychological abuse against students with disabilities have also been reported, with insufficient sanctions enforced. To resolve these challenges, there is an urgent need to increase the education budget, enhance teachers' professional expertise, expand special education, and strengthen abuse prevention measures.[72]

According to the Coalition of OPDs, students with disabilities are sometimes segregated into special education schools, and their right to inclusive education is not fully guaranteed. Additionally, because their academic performance is evaluated strictly within the framework of special education, this creates barriers to university admission and employment. In addition, adult education services for persons with hearing impairments have been closed, leaving them without necessary support. Standardized testing also lacks reasonable

[69] Based on the parallel reports.
[70] ALAMUD (2024) (INT/CRPD/CSS/CRI/57343/S)
[71] Coalition of OPDs (2024) (INT/CRPD/CSS/CRI/57344/S)
[72] Ombudsman's Office (2024) (INT/CRPD/CSS/CRI/57614/S)

accommodation for students with disabilities, failing to ensure equal educational opportunities.[73]

5-3. Barriers to and Needs regarding Employment

The Ombudsman's Office identifies attitudinal and accessibility barriers to employment for persons with disabilities. In 2022, only 882 persons with disabilities were employed by Costa Rican public agencies, and only seven agencies met the statutory 5% quota. To promote the employment of persons with disabilities, there is a need to ensure compliance with laws and regulations, expand employment opportunities, provide reasonable accommodations in the workplace, and enhance education and training.[74]

According to ALAMUD, employment opportunities for persons with disabilities are insufficient, and wages for women with disabilities, in particular, are 23% lower than the average. Because employment opportunities for persons with disabilities are limited, achieving economic independence is difficult, and this contributes to a cycle of violence and dependency. Full implementation of the 5% annual quota for the employment of persons with disabilities in the public sector is required.[75]

5-4. Barriers to and Needs regarding Transportation

The Ombudsman's Office points out ongoing challenges to improving public transportation accessibility. In 2023, a bill was enacted allowing for the extension of the service life of buses without adequately consulting the Ombudsman's Office. This amendment could lead to increased deterioration of buses, potentially compromising the safety and comfort of persons with disabilities when traveling.[76]

5-5. Barriers to and Needs regarding Information Access

The Coalition of OPDs emphasizes that information access for persons with disabilities is inadequate, and the disparity is particularly pronounced in rural areas and among low-income families. The public comment period for the bill is too short (8 days), making it difficult for persons with disabilities and their families to respond adequately. Because public transportation digital platforms are not accessible, persons with disabilities face difficulties when using these services.[77]

[73] Coalition of OPDs (2024)
[74] Ombudsman's Office (2024)
[75] ALAMUD (2024)
[76] Coalition of OPDs (2024)
[77] *Ibid.*

According to the Ombudsman's Office, in a 2023 case where a visually impaired lawyer complained about the lack of accessibility on a judicial website, it was found that information was not being provided in an appropriate format, and technical improvements are being sought.[78]

5-6. Barriers and Needs regarding Gender

According to the Coalition of OPDs, the protection of the rights of women and girls with disabilities is inadequate, and efforts are needed to guarantee their sexual and reproductive rights and a life free from violence. It is necessary to protect the right of women with disabilities to participate in decision-making and to promote their participation in political and social spheres.[79]

The Ombudsman's Office points out that while women with disabilities face discrimination and challenges in areas such as violence, education, economic empowerment, health, and access to justice, the collection of disaggregated data is insufficient, resulting in a lack of information needed to implement concrete measures.[80]

[78] Ombudsman's Office (2024)
[79] Coalition of OPDs (2024)
[80] Ombudsman's Office (2024)

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