

## *Foreword*

For several decades, Costa Rica has presented a strong track record of political and economic stability. Building on these achievements, the country will need to strengthen its public governance system to address emerging socio-economic challenges, as well as changes within the political system and in the public administration.

In a context of ongoing efforts to improve public governance, the government of Costa Rica has called on the OECD to carry out a Public Governance Review to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of its public administration, and to identify options for increasing the performance of the state in order to ensure more effective and efficient service delivery for all citizens. This Review puts forward ways to improve whole-of-government co-ordination in order to achieve integrated strategic policy outcomes, enrich public policy monitoring and evaluation through the National Evaluation System, and improve annual and multi-annual budgeting and planning. In addition, the Review provides recommendations to strengthen strategic human resources management for its Civil Service Regime, to support integrity policies in public procurement and to improve multi-level governance. As such, the Review seeks to contribute to the country's reform agenda, which aims to sustain important achievements in terms of socio-economic development, and to provide enhanced and sustainable prosperity for its entire population.

Costa Rica is at a turning point: to sustain past achievements, the country's governance system needs to find ways to successfully cope with a changing economy and society. Reforms should include, amongst others, a move from a compliance approach towards a result-oriented focus in different areas such as budget and human resources management; the development of a stronger, shared identity and organisational culture across the public sector; a centre of government that provides clear leadership and vision; and the exploration of new ways of multi-stakeholder engagement in policy-making processes.

The diagnostic and strategic directions presented in this Review were discussed with the Costa Rican authorities over the course of 2014 and have provided input in the public governance area to Costa Rica's National Development Plan for 2015-18.

This Review is part of a series of publications entitled OECD Public Governance Reviews. It was conducted under the auspices of the OECD Public Governance Committee on the basis of its long-standing expertise in public governance reforms and engagement in open government in Members and non-members. The Review seeks to support Costa Rica in its efforts to foster a more effective, efficient, open and inclusive government.

Public Governance Reviews contribute to the work on public administration and management reform of the OECD Public Governance Committee with the support of the Governance Reviews and Partnerships Division of the OECD Public Governance and Territorial Development Directorate. The directorate's mission is to help government at

all levels design and implement strategic, evidence-based and innovative policies to strengthen public governance, respond effectively to diverse and disruptive economic, social and environmental challenges and deliver on government's commitments to citizens. The goal is to support countries in building better government systems and implementing policies at both national and regional level that lead to sustainable economic and social development.

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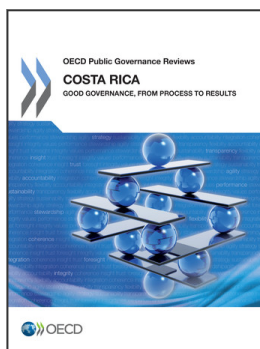
The project was managed by Eva Beuselinck, Policy Analyst in the Governance Reviews and Partnerships Division, who also wrote Chapters 2 and 3. Wilhelmine Brown and Silvia Losada supported the data and information collection process for these chapters. David Goessmann drafted Chapter 1. Chapter 4 was written by Camila Vammalle and Chapter 5 was drafted by Daniel Gerson. Chapter 6 was written by Emma Cantera. Chapter 7 was prepared by Raffaele Trapasso. Administrative and production assistance were provided by Virginie Mendy and Katarzyna Weil. Jennifer Allain and Ciara Muller prepared the manuscript for publication.

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- Orlando García, Director of Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Policies, Colombian National Planning Department, Colombia
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