

Reader's guide

In order to accurately interpret the data included in Government at a Glance: Latin America and the Caribbean 2017, 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 on two pages. The first page contains text that explains the relevance of the topic and highlights some of the major differences observed across LAC countries. Furthermore, when data are comparable, the OECD averages are considered as an additional benchmark. It is followed by a “Methodology and definitions” section, which describes the data sources and provides important information necessary to interpret the data. Closing the first page is the “Further reading” section, which lists useful background literature providing context to the data displayed. The second page showcases the data. These 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 of the book.

Data sources and features

Most of the data used in the *Government at a Glance: Latin America and the Caribbean 2017* are collected from government officials by the OECD/IDB via specifically defined 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 answer the questions completely objectively. In general, the direction of the bias is known but not necessarily its extent. To try and minimise these biases the OECD/IDB cleaned and verified the collected data by following up with countries when there were potential inconsistencies or outliers. This has been done by benefitting from the OECD's knowledge through previous work in the region and mainly from the IDB's expertise and local presence in the countries under study. In addition, respondents have been 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. the Open Government Partnership dataset).

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 World Economic Outlook (IMF WEO)* and the *IMF Government Financial Statistics (IMF GFS)* databases. Data from the IMF WEO were extracted in late April 2016 corresponding to the April update. Data from the GFS database were extracted in May 16th 2016. For the OECD averages, the data are based on the *System of National Accounts (SNA)*, and were extracted from

the Government at a Glance online database representing the last available update: June 21st 2016. In most cases, data on public finances are presented for 2007, 2009, 2014 and if available 2015, showcasing the years immediately after and before the economic crisis as well as the latest information available. However, to increase the coverage all simple averages are calculated based on 2014.

The public employment data for LAC countries was extracted from the ILO dataset LABORSTA in July 15th 2016.

Despite the significant accomplishments of international organisations in harmonising data among the different statistical systems, several differences exist in different instances, that impact some of the indicators analysed. As a consequence, within the methodological sections, specific notes are included whenever specific methodological considerations need to be taken into account.

Country coverage

Government at a Glance: Latin America and Caribbean 2017 was intended to include data for 15 LAC countries. The 15 countries to which the surveys were initially sent are: Argentina, Brazil, Haiti, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. Based on data availability these are the countries for which data from external sources (e.g. ILO, IMF) was extracted. 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. In the case of the budget practices and procedures survey, this edition includes new indicators; however, the data corresponds to the collection that took place in 2013 and was cleaned for the first edition of *Government at a Glance: Latin America and the Caribbean*, launched in June 2014. In the case of the regulatory governance survey, eight countries were originally targeted and seven answered the survey. Despite several attempts the Dominican Republic didn't reply to the questionnaire.

Coverage of the different surveys sent to LAC countries

Survey	Number of countries that responded
Cost benefit analysis	12
Centres of government	15
Budget practices and procedures	17
Budgeting practices for health	13
Regulatory governance	7
Digital government	22
Open government and open data	13
Public procurement	22

Building on the successful experience that led to the publication of *Government at a Glance: Latin America and the Caribbean 2014*, the joint OECD/IDB LAC Senior Budget Officials network was used as a vehicle to collect data for the survey on budget practices for health. The survey was presented in the 2015 annual meeting of the network in Santiago, Chile (27-29 May) and preliminary results were presented in the 2016 annual meeting in Montevideo Uruguay (30 March – 1 April). In addition, the results from this survey were presented and discussed at the First OECD Health Systems Joint Network Meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean held in Bogota, Colombia in July 2016.

The IDB/OAS/CRDI Network of e-Government in Latin America and the Caribbean (RED GEALC) was the vehicle to collect and clean the data of the digital government survey. The survey was

presented at the annual meeting of the network in Mexico City (26-27 October, 2015) and data were cleaned in close cooperation with delegates to the network.

The Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) survey was presented in the framework of the annual meeting of the IDB/ECLAC network on Public Investment that took place from 21-23 April of 2015 in Santiago de Chile. The data was cleaned in close cooperation with delegates to the network.

The first meeting of the OECD LAC network on good regulatory practices that took place in Lima on 25-26 June 2015 was used to conduct a workshop presenting the regulatory governance survey. During the second meeting in Santiago, Chile on 26-27 April 2016, the results were presented and discussed. Shortly after, the data cleaning was finalised in close co-operation with the respondents to the survey.

In the course of the special meeting of the Inter-American Network on Government Procurement that took place in Washington D.C on 26 May 2015, a workshop on the public procurement survey was conducted. The data was cleaned in close cooperation with delegates to the network.

In the case of the centres of government and open government surveys, no designated policy networks exist in the region. As a result, the surveys were sent via the country delegates to the members of Open Government Partnership in the case of Open Government and through institutional contacts in the case of centres of government. In both cases the data were cleaned in close cooperation with the survey respondents.

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. For the graphical display of some figures, the following ISO codes are used.

LAC countries	ISO	LAC countries	ISO
Antigua and Barbuda	ATG	Guatemala	GTM
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
Dominica	DMA	Suriname	SUR
Dominican Republic	DOM	Trinidad and Tobago	TTO
Ecuador	ECU	Uruguay	URY
El Salvador	SLV	Venezuela	VEN
Grenada	GRD		

LAC and OECD averages and totals

Averages

In figures and text, the LAC and OECD averages refer to the unweighted, arithmetic mean of the LAC region and OECD member 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 2014 includes all current LAC countries with available information for that year. In the case of the OECD average, the averages have been updated considering the latest available data (unless specified otherwise).

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. In the OECD member countries, the totals are those published in the *OECD Government at a Glance 2015 edition* and/or in the *Government at a Glance* online data set.

Online supplements

Government at a Glance: Latin America and the Caribbean 2017 also offers access to StatLinks, a service that allows readers to download the corresponding Excel files of the data featured. StatLinks is 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, the following supplementary materials are available online at:
www.oecd.org/gov/government-at-a-glance-latin-america-and-the-caribbean-2016-9789264265554-en.htm

Country fact sheets that present key data by country compared with the LAC and OECD averages.

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 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 GDP 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 to those used by the IMF World Economic Outlook (WEO). The International Comparisons Program (ICP) is a global statistical initiative that produces internationally comparable purchasing power parity (PPP) estimates. The PPP exchange rate estimates, maintained and published by the World Bank, the OECD, and other international organisations, are used by WEO to calculate its own PPP weight time series.

Composite indicators

The publication includes seven descriptive composite indexes in narrowly defined areas. One in open government data, one in stakeholder engagement for regulatory policies and five in human resources management practices. These composite indexes are a practical way of summarising discrete, qualitative information. The stakeholder engagement and open government data

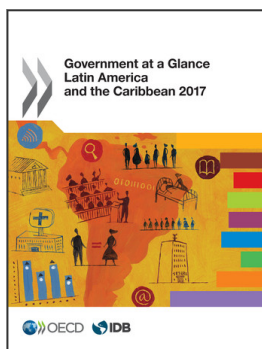
composites were created in accordance with the steps identified in the *Handbook on Constructing Composite Indicators* (Nardo, et al., 2008).

The human resource management (HRM) practices composites were developed through country diagnostics and *the critical point* methodology. According to this methodology, each factor describes a specific and desirable situation that refers to a certain key aspect of HRM. The benchmark is therefore a specific and substantial parameter that enables comparison with the situation empirically encountered in each country diagnostic.

Details about the variables and weights used to construct the stakeholder engagement composite are available in Annex B. The details about the composite indicator on Open Government Data are available in Annex C. The details about the composite indicators on human resources management Practices are in Annex A. The composite indicators are based on theory and/or best practices, the variables composing the indexes and their relative weights are based on expert judgements and, as a result, may change over time.

Signs and abbreviations

X	Missing values
n.a.	Not applicable (unless otherwise stated)
EUR	Euros
USD	US dollars
LAC	Latin American and Caribbean
p.p.	Percentage points



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