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# World TVET Database Costa Rica

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## Abbreviations

INA	Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje
MEP	Ministerio de Educación Pública
SINAFOR	Sistema Nacional de Capacitación y Formación Profesional
SINETEC	Sistema Nacional de Educación Técnica

## TVETipedia Glossary

Below are listed TVET terms mentioned in this report. Click on a term to read its definitions on the UNESCO-UNEVOC TVETipedia glossary.

Apprenticeship

Audit

Certification

Competence

Curriculum

Diploma

Entrepreneurial skills

Evaluation

Formal Education And Training

Informal Learning

Knowledge

Labour market

Lifelong Learning

National Qualifications Framework

Non-formal education

Qualification

Quality Assurance

Skills

Sustainable development

Teacher

Teacher In Vet

Trainer

TVET

# Costa Rica

## 1. TVET mission, strategy and legislation

### TVET strategy

According to the Institutional Strategic Plan 2011-2016 of the National Institute of Apprenticeship (*Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje*, INA) that acts as one of the main TVET bodies in Costa Rica, the objectives of national TVET development are:

- To achieve economic, technical and academic recognition of INA graduates by the business and the education sectors;
- To strengthen the processes of research and survey for the design and innovation of the training programmes;
- To strengthen sustainable development within institutional activities;
- To speed up the design process of innovative training programmes according to the market demands;
- To plan the investment for the infrastructure and technological equipment provision and improvement;
- To maximise partnerships with national and international bodies; and
- To update and strengthen the competencies of teaching and administrative human capital in strategic areas according to the different productive sectors' demands.

### TVET legislation

Costa Rica has established a set of regulations for TVET over the years to govern its operations. Among the most important are the mandates of the:

- Fundamental Law on Education 2160 (*Ley Fundamental de Educación N.2160*).
- The Law No. 3506 of 21 May 1965 which created the INA and was later amended by Law N. 6868 of 6 May 1983.

Another important legislative act is the Law on Financing and Development of Technical and Professional Education in Costa Rica, adopted in 1993.

### Sources:

Government of Costa Rica (2010). Plan Nacional de Desarrollo de Costa Rica 2011-2014 (Costa Rica National Development Plan 2011-2014). San José: Ministry of National Planning and Political Economy.

Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje INA (2011). Institutional Strategic Plan 2011-2016 "Dr. Alfonso Carro Zuñiga". San José: INA.

Web-page of INA. Accessed 28. 02.2012.

## 2. TVET formal, non-formal and informal systems

Nivel Educativo	Educación inicial					Educación General Básica								Educación Diversificada							
Edades	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		
					Pre-	I Ciclo			II Ciclo			III Ciclo			Cuarto ciclo						
Ciclos	Materno infantil				escolar				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
													10	11	12	Modalidad Comercial					
													Rama Técnica			Secretariado					
													7	8	9	Contabilidad					
													ITC: Agraria Industrial Comercial			Modalidad Industrial					
													Modalidad Agropecuaria								
													Agraria								
													Educación Familiar y Social								
													Modalidad Artesanal								
													AREA EXPLORATORIA								
	Guarderías SINAI CEN				Guarderías infantiles		Educación General					Básica Académica			Rama Académica						
	1	2	3	4	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Ciencias y Letras			
	EDUCACION ESPECIAL - especialidades											Artística			Rama Artística						
													7	8	9	10	11	Danza, Ballet, Folklore Instrumentos, Teatro			

Scheme extracted from UNESCO-IBE (2011). World Data on Education, VIth Edition 2010/2011: Costa Rica.

### Formal TVET system

Formal TVET in Costa Rica is embedded in the education system and controlled by Secondary Academic Colleges (academic study centres for advancement within the formal system) and Professional Technical Colleges, which offer the chance to get a diploma as a Medium Technician with the mention of the specialty followed. This is called third cycle and diversified education (*tercer ciclo y educación diversificada*) and is comprised of different specialties such as agricultural, industrial, commercial, secretarial, accounting, crafts, family and social education.

### Non-formal and informal TVET systems

Non-formal TVET is developed at a national level through the National INA in its regional centres in Brunca, Cartago, Central Oriental, Chorotega, Heredia, Huetar Atlántico, Huetar Norte, Pacífico Central and Central Occidental, which is divided into the following sectors: Agricultural, Food Industry, Crafts Processes, Graphic Industry, Fisheries, Textile and Industrial Clothing, Materials Technology, Car Mechanics, Electricity, Metal and Trade and Services.

The INA Certification Service recognises the knowledge and skills acquired by the students and to receive this recognition, the participant must perform tests and examinations related to the technical professional specialty to be certified.

No information has been found about informal technical education in Costa Rica.

### Sources:

Web-page of INA. Accessed 28.02.2012.

UNESCO-IBE (2011). World Data on Education VII ed.: Costa Rica. Geneva: UNESCO-IBE.

## 3. Governance and financing

### Governance

The Ministry of Public Education (*Ministerio de Educación Pública*, MEP), through the Directorate of Technical Education and Entrepreneurship Capacities (*Dirección de Educación Técnica y Capacidades Emprendedoras*), is in charge of the governance of the formal TVET system in Costa Rica. Its tasks are to "analyse, study, formulate, plan, advise, investigate, assess and report all aspects of technical education in Costa Rica third cycle and diversified education and to promote programmes and projects to strengthen its links with the labour market" (MEP web-page, accessed 28 February 2012).

The main functions of the Directorate are:

- To service the provision of technical education at the level of third cycle and diversified education in addition to all programmes of study related to technical education;
- To act as the technical secretariat of the National Technical Education System (*Sistema Nacional de Educación Técnica*, SINETEC);
- To establish mechanisms to coordinate horizontal and vertical integration among those institutions that train human resources and belong to SINETEC;
- To define and establish, in coordination with the Department of Curriculum Development, all aspects of the curriculum of technical education in third cycle and diversified education;
- To coordinate, with the Professional Development Institute "Uladielao Gámez Solano", all aspects related to the training of teachers in vocational technical education in third cycle and diversified education;
- To make recommendations and propose guidelines and policies to higher authorities in the technical education and training of employers;
- To contribute to the formulation of the National Technical Education System and to promote their implementation;
- To keep the educational provision of technical colleges and all MEP entities that provide technical education programmes; and
- To promote cooperation of national and international, public and private programmes and projects to support technical education and development of entrepreneurial skills, in coordination with the Directorate of International Affairs and Cooperation.

On the non-formal side, the main governing body is the INA as a "training entity, independent from the formal education system and endowed with autonomy and fast communicative mechanisms with the labour markets. The INA is managed by a cross-sectorial team consisting of groups directly involved, the labour sector, the employer sector and the Government" (INA Institutional Strategic Plan 2011-2016 "Dr. Alfonso Carro Zuñiga", 2011, p.53).

Within the INA, the Governing Management of the National Vocational Training System (*Gestión Rectora del Sistema Nacional de Capacitación y Formación Profesional*, SINAFOR) is the management that sets the guidelines and regulations for public and private entities to develop the National System of Vocational Training, to encourage their participation in the provision of training services and vocational training in line with demands for quality teaching.

## Financing

According to the Law on financing and development of technical and professional education in Costa Rica adopted in 1993, financing of technical and professional education is distributed to administrative boards of TVET institutions and amounts to 5% of the annual budget of the INA. The funds are taken from the accumulated budget surplus of INA or, when it is not available, from the INA's annual income.

The Ministry of Public Education, together with the Ministry of Finance, jointly decide before July of the current year at the latest on whether the 5% will be taken from the surplus or annual budget.

Available funds are spent on:

- The purchasing of didactic materials, equipment, tools and machinery;
- The maintenance and reparation of tools, equipment and machinery; and
- The financing and development of projects, educational initiatives on institutional and regional levels.

Under the same law, the Ministry of Public Education has established a Commission that consists of the Minister of Public Education (or his/her representative), the Director of the Finance Department of the Ministry of Public Education, the Director of Planning and Educational Development Division (or his/her representative), the Director of the Department of Technical and Professional Education, 3 representatives of the boards of TVET institutions and the Executive President of INA (or his/her representative).

The Commission is responsible for the distribution of funds among TVET institutions. The Ministry of Public Education conducts the audit of the rightful implementation of resources of each beneficiary. It also reviews the suitability of the programmes developed and implemented by the institutions.

According to the Law of 1965 on the creation of the INA, financing of the institute is conducted in the following way:



- All companies engaged in industrial, commercial, mining or service activities that have the capital of no less than fifty thousand Costa Rican Colons and employ at least 10 workers pay 1% of their total payroll to the budget of the INA.
- The Government contributes one million Colons annually to the budget of the INA.
- The Government contributes the annual sum of five hundred thousand Colons intended for the needs of Vocational Colleges under the Ministry of Public Education.
- Any other additional income may come from donations, subsidies, service charges, etc.

### Source:

Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje INA (2011). Institutional Strategic Plan 2011-2016 "Dr. Alfonso Carro Zuñiga". San José: INA.

Legislative Assembly of the Republic of Costa Rica (1983). Ley de Creación del Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje (INA) (Law for the creation of the National Institute of Apprenticeship). Accessed: 29.03.2012.

Legislative Assembly of the Republic of Costa Rica (1993). Ley para el financiamiento y desarrollo de la educación técnica profesional (Law on financing and development of technical and professional education). San José: Ministry of Public Education.

Web-page of MEP. Accessed: 29.02.2012.

## 4. TVET teachers and trainers

The National Technical University and its member institutions are in charge of the training of teachers for technical education.

In addition, the Centre for Research and Advancement of Technical Education (*Centro de Investigación y Perfeccionamiento para la Educación Técnica*) has the task of providing the training of human resources for the Technical Education System supported by educational research, new methodologies, pedagogical techniques and guided by labour-market demands.

Teacher training is also developed in Costa Rican public universities like the University of Costa Rica (UCR), the National University (*Universidad Nacional, UNA*), the State Distance Learning University (*Universidad Estatal a Distancia, UNED*) and the Technological Institute of Costa Rica (*Instituto Tecnológico de Costa Rica, ITCR*).

### Sources:

UNESCO-IBE (2011). World Data on Education VIIth Edition 2010/2011: Costa Rica. Geneva: UNESCO-IBE.

## 5. Qualifications and Qualifications Frameworks

### Quality assurance

National Institute of Apprenticeship (*Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje, INA*) provides a prior learning recognition and certification service. The Unit is responsible for validating previously acquired skills and knowledge (non-formal and informal) by organising examinations in the field in question and issuing relevant officially recognised certifications if the evaluation is successful.

### Sources:

Web-page of INA. Accessed 28.02.2012.

## 6. Current reforms, major projects and challenges

### Current reforms and major projects

A project aimed at creating a Technical Training and Assistance Centre is run by the National Institute of Apprenticeship (*Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje*, INA). The purpose of the centre is to foster research and development in the main sectors of the national economy. The technical and administrative department within the Centre acts as a communication point for Technology Research Centres. The Technical Training and Assistance Centre is supposed to improve collaboration between research institutions and industry, creating a platform for innovation and implementation of the results of the research in the training process and by that, improving skills and knowledge of workers.

Another project of the INA that forms a part of the Strategic Plan for 2011–2014, and for the year 2012 in particular, is the implementation of the National System of Education (*Sistema Nacional de Formación*, SINAFOR). The Coordination Unit for Vocational Education (*Unidad de articulación de la educación con la formación profesional*) is a part of SINAFOR in charge of programmes, planning and other issues related to the curricula development of the actors of the National TVET system. The main objective of the Unit is to assist the development of vocational education by fostering collaboration between private and public education providers so that people pursuing TVET programmes are given the opportunity to participate in lifelong learning.

More projects are incorporated in the Strategic Plan for 2011–2014. They are:

- Employment programme with the emphasis on vulnerable audiences such as disabled people, young people looking for their first employment, socially disadvantaged young people, housewives, etc;
- Programme of fostering collaboration between small and medium-sized companies (*Micro, Pequeñas y Medianas Empresas*, MIPYMES) and education and training in order to improve their competitiveness; and
- Programme aimed at developing entrepreneurial skills of youngsters and young adults.

### Challenges

One of the current challenges facing TVET in Costa Rica is establishing more efficient collaboration between education providers and the labour market in order to be able to adjust the supply of education programmes in accordance with demand and therefore contribute to the growth of national economy. It is assumed that the government should act as an intermediary between enterprises and education and training institutions.

### Sources:

Web-page of INA. Accessed 28.02.2012.

## 7. Links to UNEVOC centres and TVET institutions

### UNEVOC Centres

- [<http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/go.php?q=UNEVOC+Network+-+Centre&tid=477>  
Ministry of Public Education / Directorate of Technical Education and Skills  
Entrepreneurs]
- [<http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/go.php?q=UNEVOC+Network+-+Centre&tid=358>  
National Institute of Apprenticeship (INA Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje)]

## 8. References and further reading

### References

Government of Costa Rica (2010). Plan Nacional de Desarrollo de Costa Rica 2011-2014 (Costa Rica National Development Plan 2011-2014). San Jose: Ministry of National Planning and Political Economy.

Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje INA (2011). Institutional Strategic Plan 2011-2016 "Dr. Alfonso Carro Zuñiga". San Jose: INA.

Legislative Assembly of the Republic of Costa Rica (1983). Ley de Creación del Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje (INA) (Law for the creation of the National Institute of Apprenticeship). Accessed: 29.03.2012.

Legislative Assembly of the Republic of Costa Rica (1993). Ley para el financiamiento y desarrollo de la educación técnica profesional (Law on financing and development of technical and professional education). San Jose: Ministry of Public Education.

UNESCO-IBE (2011). World Data on Education VIIth Edition 2010/2011 Costa Rica. Geneva: UNESCO-IBE.

Web-page of National Institute of Apprenticeship (INA). Accessed: 30.03.2012.

Web-page of the Ministry of Public Education (MEP). Accessed 29 February 2012.