
Costa Rica

**Total area:**

51,100 km²

Population:

4.857 million (2016)

Literacy:

93%

Official languages:

Spanish

GDP (PPP) per capita:

\$12,382 (2012 est.)

Life expectancy:

79 years

Religions:

71% Catholic, 14% Protestant, 11% Atheist or Agnostic, 4% other religions

Prayer points

Complex campuses

Universities in Costa Rica are huge and highly complex places, posing major challenges to Christian ministry. Pray for ministries that will reach out on university campuses, and for churches to equip their young people for the realities on campus. For young professionals, prospects are bright and the resulting lifestyle materially abundant, though potentially spiritually empty. Pray for more Christian ministries to reach out to them. (Latin Link - July 2018)

Breaking Barriers of Discrimination

Despite good laws being in place to protect and provide for people with disabilities in Costa Rica, there remains a huge degree of discrimination and apathy from the majority of people towards those with disabilities, which leads to social isolation and limited quality of life. We give thanks that, for the first time, the government has funded its children's department to set up a project specifically focusing on helping children with disabilities, supported by Viva's partner network in San José. Social events in two of the very poorest and most violent areas of that city have begun to break through barriers of discrimination. Pray that the government would keep its promises to improve life for children with disabilities and that churches would be bold in welcoming their doors and sharing the love of Jesus with marginalised families. (Viva - November 2016)

Reaching women in San José

A Students International team reaching out to the women of three poor communities of San José have found that the key is to mix the spiritual and the practical. Most of the women don't have jobs and stay at home with children or grandchildren. Some are married, some not. They try to earn money by

selling their hand-made products or re-selling (clothes, perfumes, etc) in the community where they live or in the city centre. Over 40 women attend meetings each week with each tailored to the needs of the group - including elements of Bible study, craft session or short business guidance talks. Give thanks that lives are being changed, with women being encouraged both spiritually and professionally. (Latin Link - March 2015)

Sex trafficking

In May 2011 the US Department of State revealed that Costa Rica has become a major source and destination for sex trafficking. To make matters worse, over the year that the study was carried out not a single conviction was made against those involved. Although it is hard to know the true scale of the problem, the report shows child sex tourism to be a particularly serious issue, with thousands of children working in San Jose alone. Pray for Costa Rican families and parents, that they would prioritise the care and protection of their children and would be able to provide for them. Pray too for the Costa Rican government, that they would have the determination and wisdom to put renewed effort into creating systems that can prevent children being trafficked into and out of the country. Finally, pray for the work of organisations helping to feed children in San Jose and protect them from this very real threat. (Viva - September 2011)

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