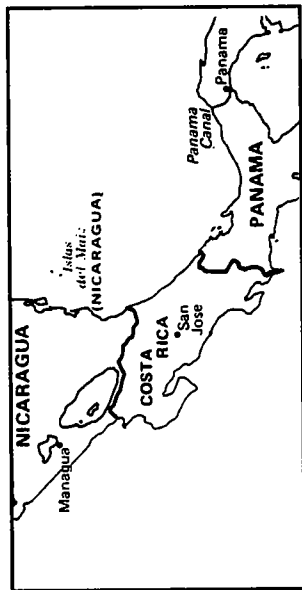


Costa Rica

The oldest democracy in Latin America, Costa Rica has a highly literate (estimated at about 92 percent) population of three million. It is a homogenous nation of mostly European descent, and Spanish is the language of instruction. The country has no army, is prosperous, and values education, which is compulsory from grades 1 through 9 and free at both primary and secondary level. At tertiary level, scholarships are provided for needy students. All levels of education are supervised by the Higher Council of Education. Secondary education is offered in two cycles: a basic, three-year program of general educa-

tion at the lower level, and an upper secondary cycle offering either two years of academic courses (*Ciclo*



III) or three-years of professional programs (*Ciclo IV*) in commercial, agricultural, or industrial specializations. Only about 50 percent of the age group attends secondary school. Higher education is offered at four public universities, the oldest and most prestigious of which is the *Universidad de Costa Rica* dating to 1940. It is also offered at *parauniversidades*, *colegios*, *escuelas*, *institutos* and *centros*. Unlike most other Latin American countries, teachers are educated at tertiary level only.

Credential Name	Entrance Requirement	Length of Program	Type of Program	Gives Access to
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Level: *Ciclo Diversificado* (Upper Secondary Education) Following 6 years of primary and three years of lower secondary education.

Diploma de Conclusión de Estudios de Educación Diversificado/D.C.E.E.D.

Certificado de Conclusión de Estudios Primarios

2-3 years

academic/artistic/technical

further study

Level: *Educación Superior* (Higher Education)

Parauniversidades (nonuniversities)

Diplomado/Técnico Superior

D.C.E.E.D. + entrance exam.

2-3 years

technical/professional

employment/further study

University

Bachiller Universitario

Licenciatura/Título profesional

D.C.E.E.D. + entrance exam.

4-5 years

academic

further study

Licenciatura/Título profesional

1-8 years

professional

further study

Profesor de (level)

Ingeniero

Derecho

Doctorado en Medicina

Maestría

Doctorado Académico

Same as above

Same as above

Same as above

Same as above

Bachiller Universitario or *Licenciatura*

Bachiller Universitario, Licenciatura

or *Maestría*

3 years

5 years

6 years

7-8 years

2 years + thesis

3.5 years + thesis

teacher training

professional

professional

professional

academic

academic

further study

further study

further study

further study

further study