



# Ministry of Science, Technology and Telecommunication

Costa Rica's innovation and incubation  
ecosystem

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Sep 24, 2020



# Some facts about Costa Rica



COSTA RICA  
GOBIERNO DEL BICENTENARIO  
2018 - 2022



MINISTERIO  
DE CIENCIA, TECNOLOGÍA  
Y TELECOMUNICACIONES

# Costa Rica: Macroeconomics



**51,100 km<sup>2</sup>**

total area. Almost as big as the state of West Virginia in the USA.

**5 million**

people live here.

**\$16,142**

GDP per capita PPP. One of the highest in the region.

**English**

is our second language but we also speak up to ten more.

**Colón (₡)**

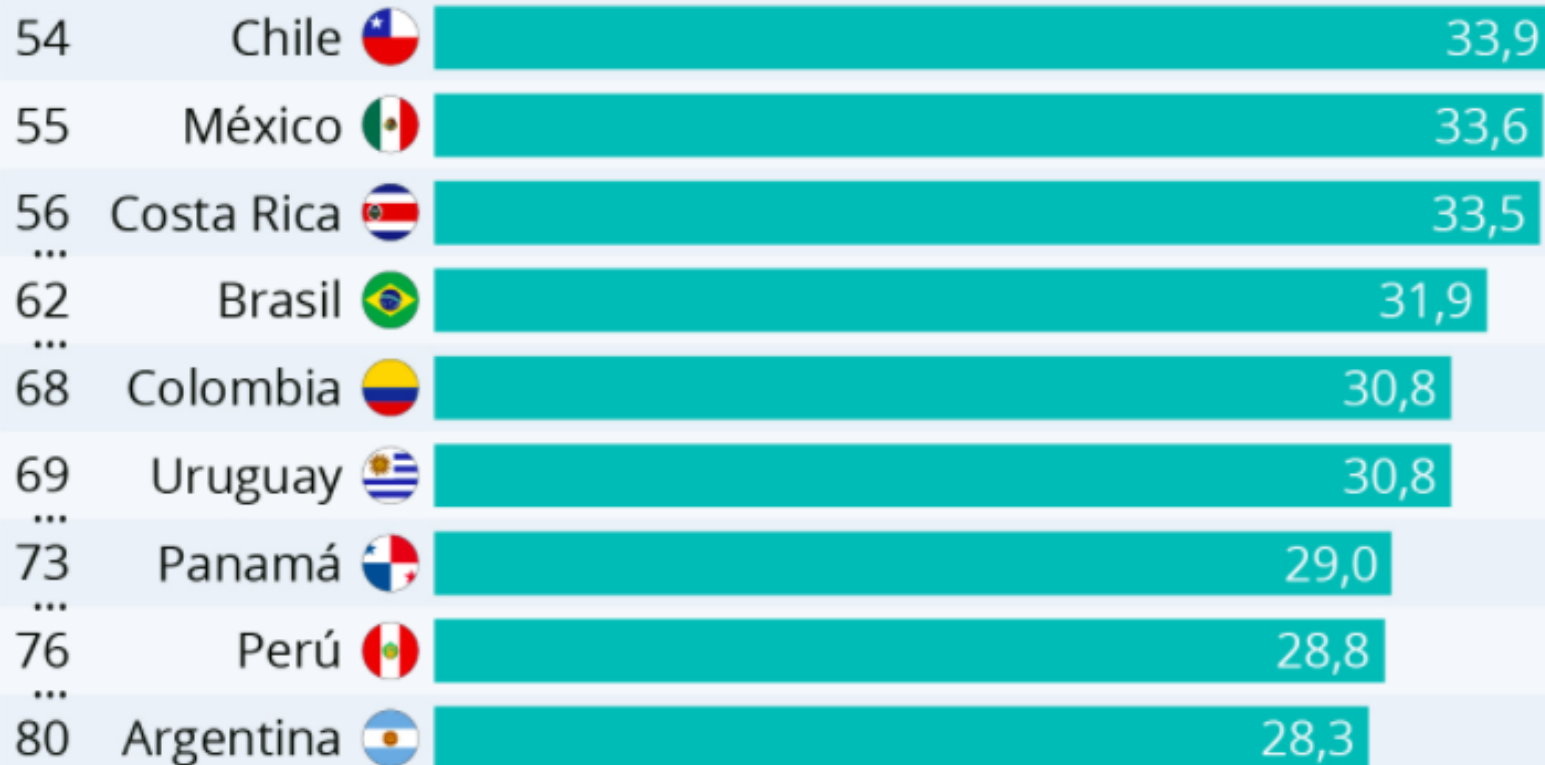
is the country's official currency. The dollar is commonly used as well.

**24 °C**

average temperature all year round. Lovely, don't you think?

Source: CINDE with data from INEC 2019;  
IMF-WEO 2018,BCCR

# Costa Rica: leading innovation

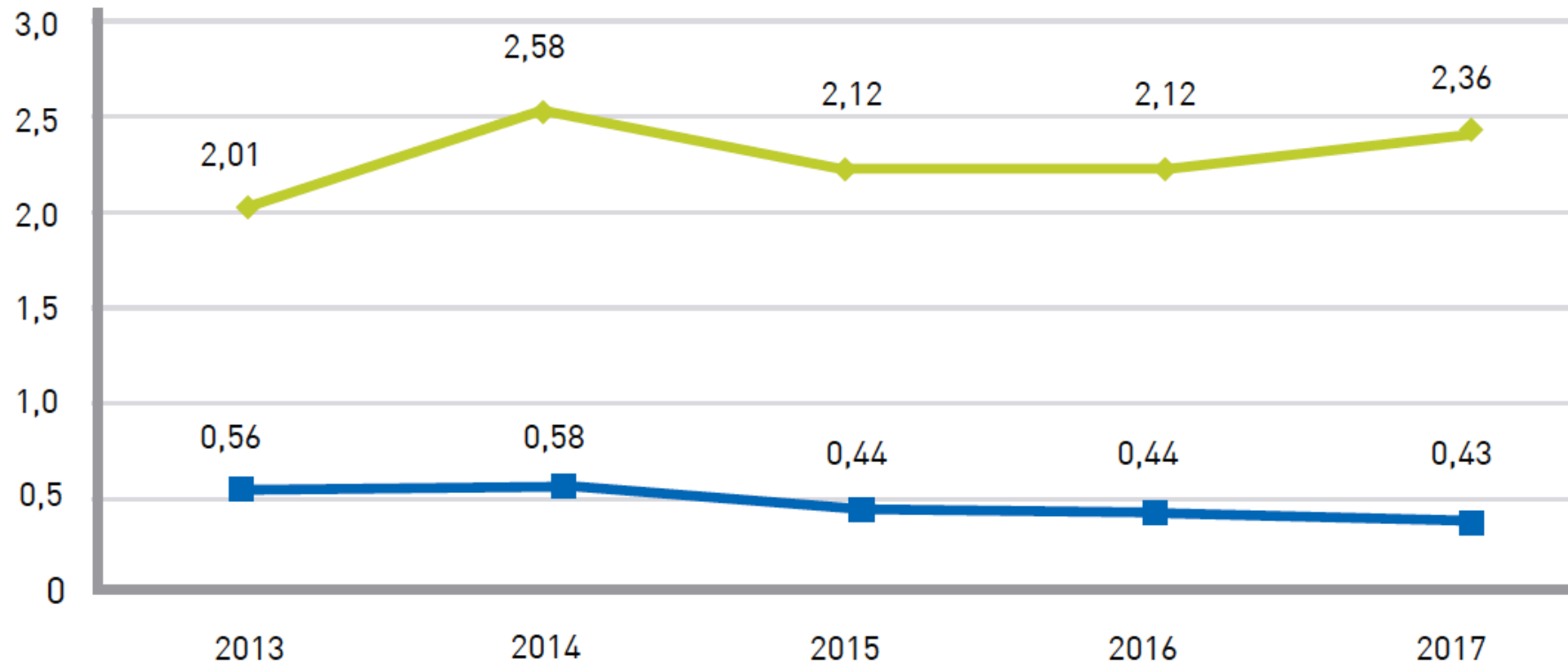


- 3rd in innovation country in LATAM (Global Innovation Index 2020)

Source: Global Innovation Index 2020, WIPO

# Costa Rica: R&D as % GDP Million \$ 2013-2017

Ratio as  
percentage of  
GDP



ACT

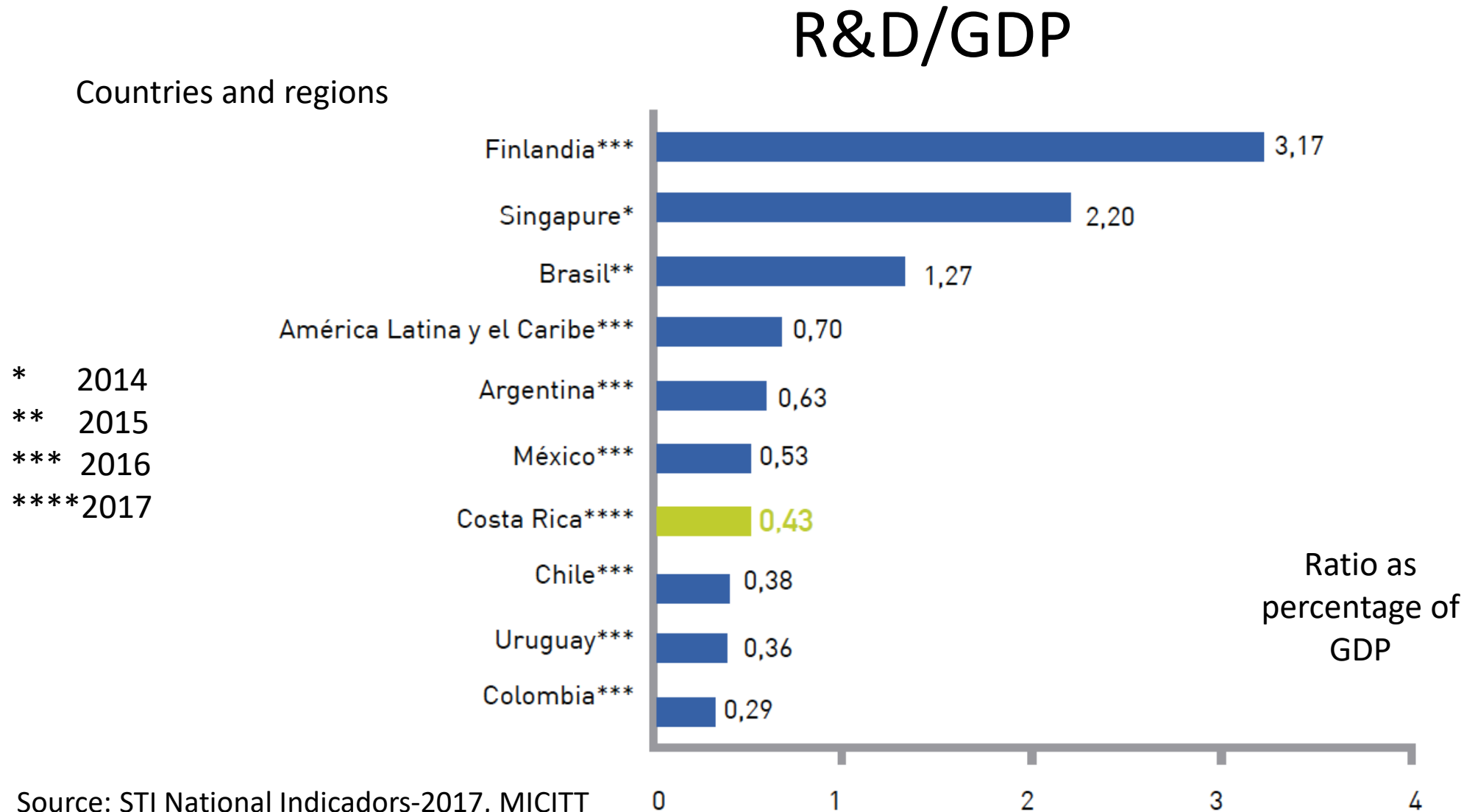


R&D

ACT: science, and technology activities

Source: STI National Indicators-2017, MICITT

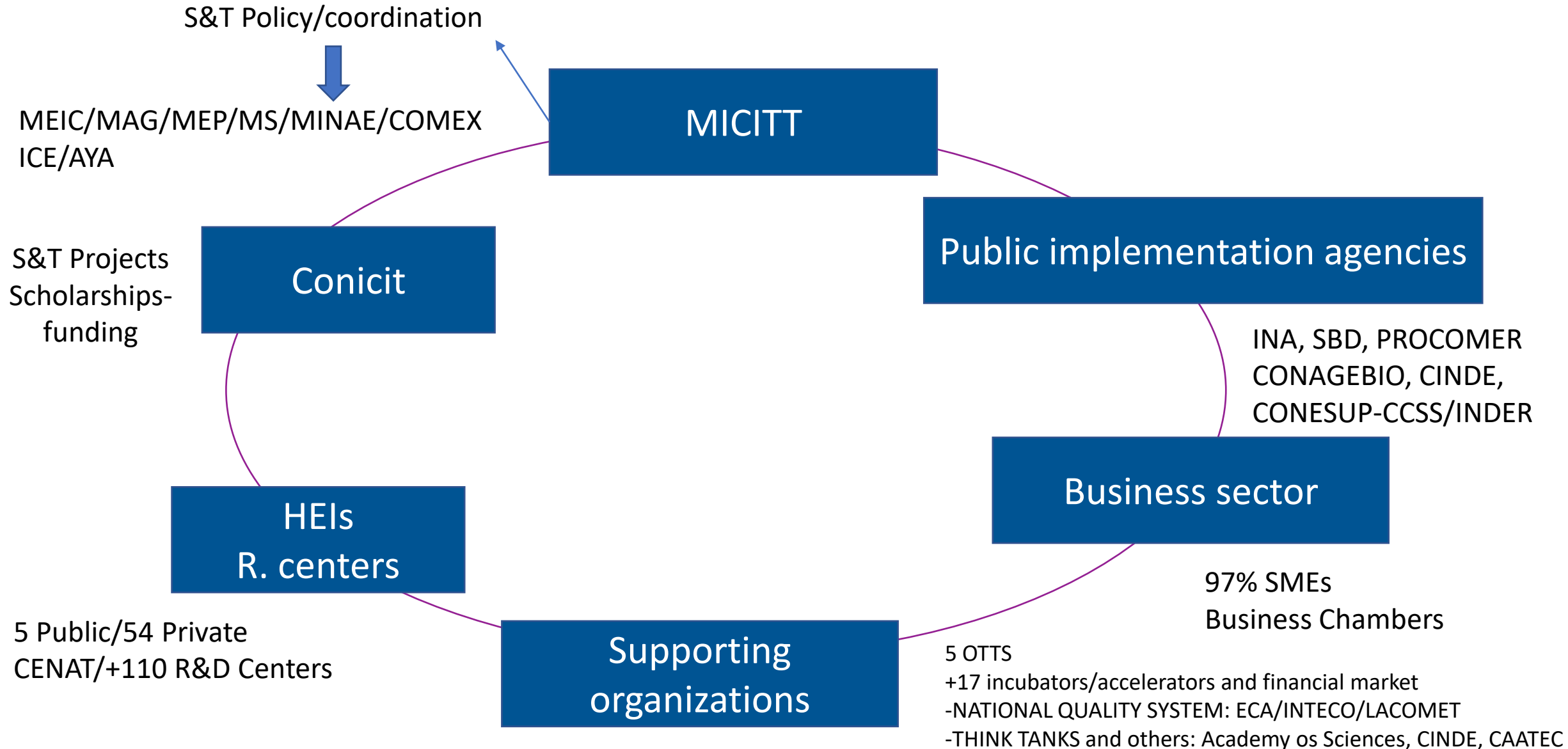
# Investment in R&D compared to other emerging economies





# Costa Rica's Innovation and incubation ecosystem

# Costa Rica: STI System



# Entrepreneurs and their firms are the central players in the innovation system



The industrial structure in  
Costa Rica is composed  
mainly of SMEs  
97% of firms are SMEs

Businesses has developed  
across a variety of  
technological sectors,  
including manufacturing, life  
sciences, food products, TICs

According to the Science,  
Technology and Innovation  
Indicators

(MICITT-2017), 89,3% of  
companies report science  
and technology activities

However, a low proportion  
engage in activities that are  
new to the

International market (most  
relates to asset purchases)

# Public Business Support Institutions



The Ministry of Economy, Industry and Trade is responsible for having a steering role in improving framework conditions and implementing policies that sustain the development and enhance the competitiveness of SMEs.



The Development Bank System (SBD) which regroups all public financial intermediaries, is a second-tier bank. Main public financial institution providing financial and non-financial services aimed at fostering SMEs entrepreneurship and competitiveness, and supporting innovation and research activities.



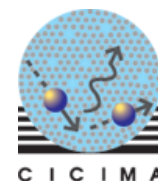
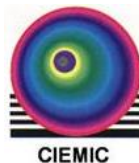
The Costa Rican Foreign Trade Promoter (PROCOMER) is the pillar of support for Costa Rican companies, especially for micro, small and medium-sized companies, throughout their internationalization process to conquer international markets.



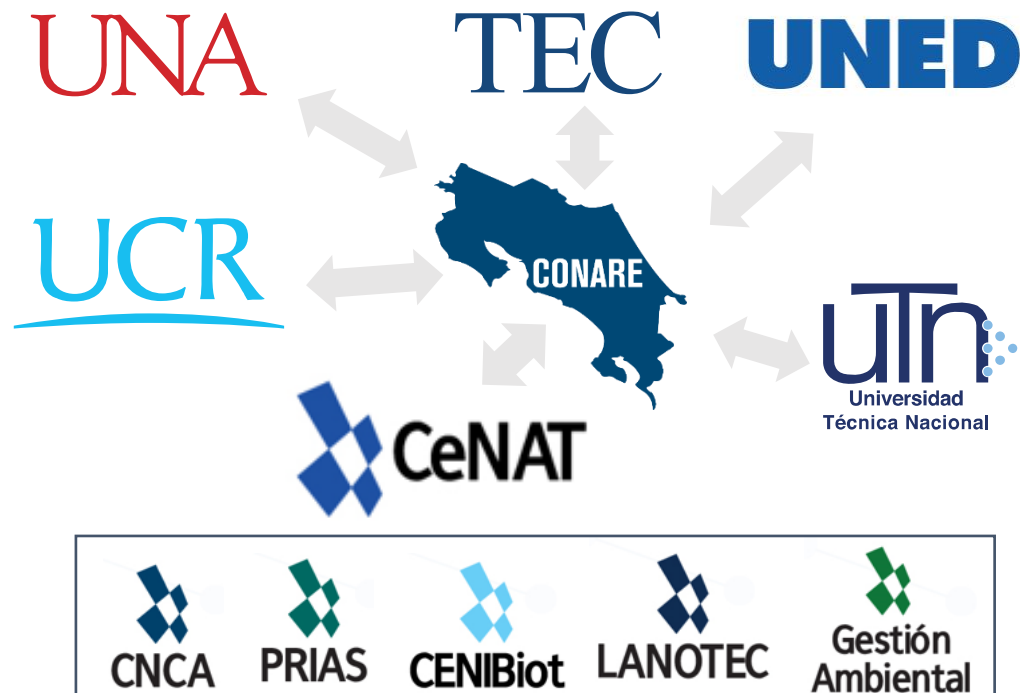
The National Training Agency (INA) provides technical assistance to SMEs in support of skills upgrading, entrepreneurship, innovation promotion and productivity development.

# BUSINESS SUPPORT AGENCIES (PUBLIC, PRIVATE-NGOs)

		Culture	Gestation	Start-up	Growth	Maturity
Policy	Business support			  		
		              	                       	                        	                  	               
			        	          	          	       
		   	     	  	    	  
		  	  	    	    	  



+ 4500 researchers  
+ 110 centres, institutes, laboratories,  
experimental farms and special units



# Network of Incubators & Accelerators



# Network of Incubators & Accelerators



## Pre-incubation

- COTAI-ZN
- INSUR
- INERCA
- INNOVAJOVEN
- Parque la Libertad



## Incubation

- AUGÉ
- UTN
- TEC EMPRENDE LAB
- CEI-UCI
- CARICACO
- CCCR
- ACTION PEOPLE
- Programa Semilla



## Acceleration

- PARQUE TEC
- CARAO VENTURE
- GS1

# Network of Incubators & Accelerators: PINN



- Focused on sustainability technologies, climate change, interculturality and inclusion
- Currently working with 10 companies
- 



- ParqueTec is a non-profit association founded in 2004 as an incubation center and promoter of technology companies in Costa Rica
- Currently working with 16 companies
- 2 open Soft-landing programs: Velocity Tx and Startup México
- Invertap fund: 7 startups/ US\$2.3 million



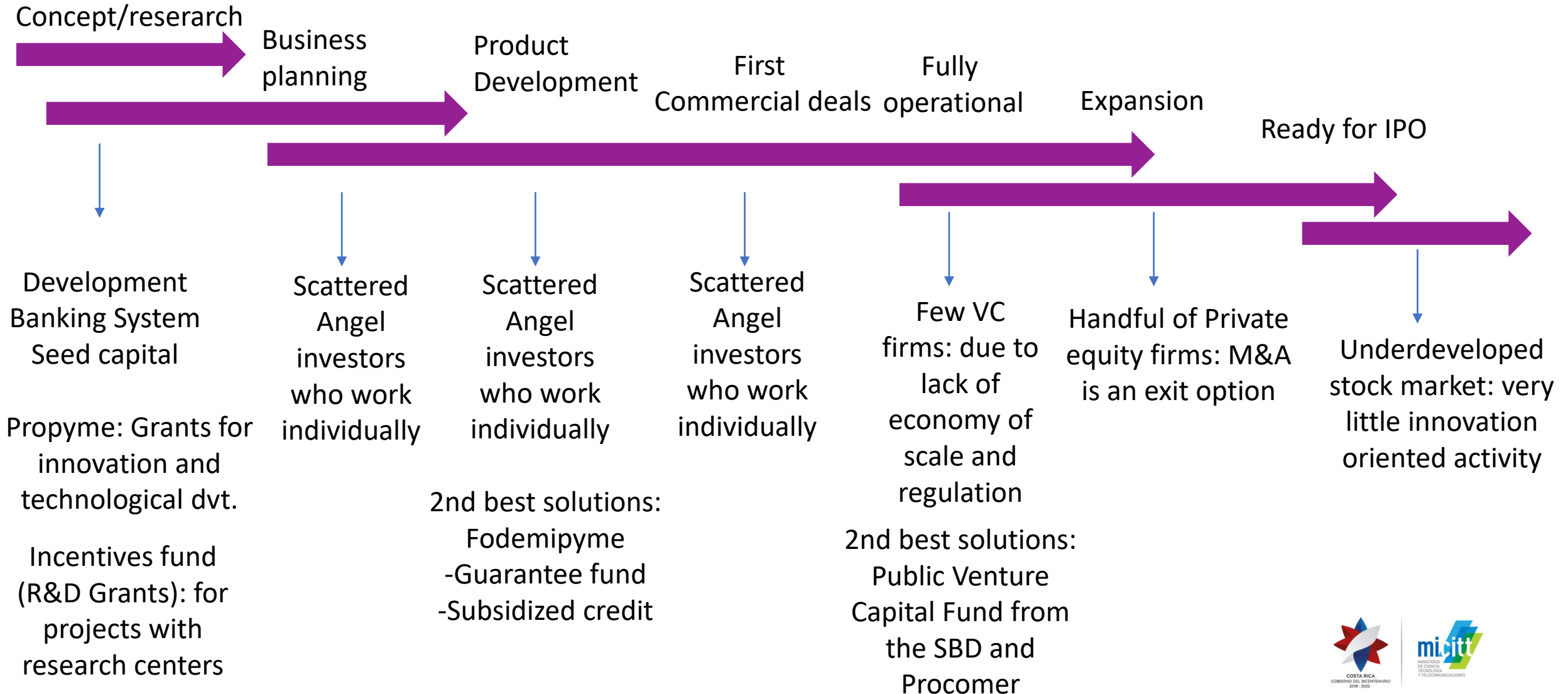
- Recognized by UBI as one of the 20 best business incubators linked to a university
- Specialized in the creation and acceleration of knowledge-intensive companies and entities. AUGE have 110 new projects in the pre-incubation stage 30 in the incubation stage and 15 in post-incubation stage
- AUGE offers seed capital through SBD fund
- Program to promote the development of spin off (PITTs)

- Focused on franchise development
- Associate with AL INVEST EU Program



- Incubator from the Technology Institute of Costa Rica
- Currently working with 16 companies
- Focused on science and technology
- Link with important multinational companies such as Roche (agreement)

# Important steps have been taken to increase public funding for early stages but equity finance is scarce



# Seed capital



- Currently the SBD offers seed capital through accredited financial operators.
- Incubators such as AUGÉ offer seed money: for prototyping (US\$10.000), startup (\$12.000) and scale-up ( \$40.000)
- Accelerators such as Carao Ventures provide accepted startups with pre-seed or seed capital usually through convertible preferred stock.



# Public venture capital fund



-First public venture capital fund, which can be accessed by small and medium-sized goods and services companies in the consolidation phase that require support for the development of export projects.

-The pilot program is providing \$ 500,000 by the SBD, while PROCOMER's support consists of reviewing and selecting companies in conjunction with other actors in the entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem





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