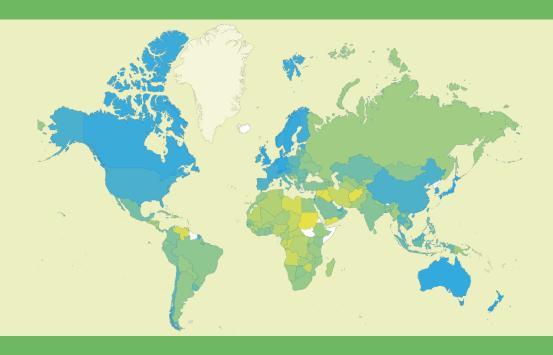


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## ELITE QUALITY REPORT 2023

Chile: Steady improvements, but rising threats to its long-term productivity and progress

Emiliano Heresi Toni, University of St.Gallen, Switzerland



## Cite as:

Toni, E.H. (2023). Chile: Steady improvements, but rising threats to its long-term productivity and progress. In T. Casas-Klett & G. Cozzi. (Eds.), Elite Quality Report 2023: Country Scores and Global Rankings. Zurich: Seismo. https://doi.org/10.33058/seismo.30882.2031

Published by Seismo Press AG, Zurich and Geneva in partnership with the Foundation for Value Creation.

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## Chile: Steady improvements, but rising threats to its long-term productivity and progress

There have been significant developments in the South American country since the last EQx report in 2022. The recent election of a left-wing president, the drafting of a new constitution (which was eventually rejected), an agenda that initially opposed free trade agreements, and a poor tax reform proposal (that was also rejected) have all presented major challenges for Chile's future ability to create value. Furthermore, skyrocketing inflation, driven by poor public policies and political pressures, as well as the escalation of violence, have further compounded these challenges. Despite these difficulties, we can now analyze this year's performance through the lens of the EQx2023, allowing us to identify the areas in which Chile has progressed, and also to effectively explore those in which it has deteriorated.

In 2023, Chile has climbed ten positions in the overall ranking to secure the #31 spot out of 151 countries included, a significant improvement from its 2022 ranking of # 41. This jump can be attributed to noteworthy advancements in the Economic Power (rising from rank # 48 to # 18) and Political Value (rising from rank # 42 to # 28) index areas. Among the pillar of Economic Power, Creative Destruction has experienced the most significant progress, soaring from rank # 50 to # 17. Of particular note the Billionaire's creative destruction (BCD, ii.6, rank # 15) Indicator rose sharply from rank # 58 in 2022, most likely due to the impact of the pandemic impact and the looming threat of a proposed wealth tax that was ultimately rejected by parliament. The Internal Revenue Service (SII) in Chile revealed that 125 high net-worth individuals initiated the process to change their tax domicile in 2022. Other relevant Indicators in an area where Chile fares particularly well include Family business revenue as percentage of GDP (FAM, ii.5, rank # 4), SMEs per 1,000 people (SME, ii.5, rank # 9), and Entrepreneurship (ENT, ii.6, rank # 16).

Continuing with the Political Value area, there is evidence of a virtuous trend over the years, with Chile rising from rank # 64 in 2021, to # 42 in 2022, and now to # 28 in 2023. This last improvement can be partially attributed to the 2022 'budget law', which reduced public expenditure by over 20% compared to 2021, resulting in a world leading result for *General government expenditure as* % of GDP (GEX, iii.7, rank # 1). The correction above puts the structural

balance fiscal rule onto the right track. For almost 11 years Chile has had a negative fiscal balance due to deviations from the structural balance rule. Although the correction previously mentioned is fundamental, it might also present challenges for the current government in order to provide public goods, putting additional pressure on increasing sovereign debt. Nonetheless, the Ministry of Finance has already announced a deficit of 2.4% of GDP for this year, putting future fiscal sustainability at risk. Other critical indicators that bolster this area include the Gender education gap (GEG, iii.8, rank # 3) and CO-VID-19 vaccination rate (VAX, iii.7, rank # 14). Despite Chile's top-performing Indicators, it also faces challenges in other notable areas. For instance, due to some of the world's most severe lock-down measures during the pandemic, Chile has experienced a significant number of COVID-19 lost school days (CLS, iii.7, rank # 134). This has had a direct impact not only on children's general wellbeing but also on future productivity, growth, inequality and wages. Additionally, a new problem that has emerged in Chile, common in the region but unfamiliar to this Latin American country, is the establishment of drug cartels and a surge in the related violence that they bring, making it a consistent key concern cited in opinion polls. The alarming rise of a narco elite is reflected in the Homicide rate (HOM, iii.8, rank # 110), which has significantly threatened the current president's popularity and legitimacy.

Chile faces several major concerns that threaten its long-term productivity and progress. One of the most significant issues is *Inflation* (DOI, iv.11, rank # 101). This problem is largely due to the country's pension system withdrawals, which alone contributed to an increase of over 5% of inflation during its peak, as reported by the Central Bank of Chile. Additionally, Chile's *Labor productivity growth* (LPG, iv.12, rank # 117) and *Unemployment rate* (UEM, iv.12, rank # 108) are also areas of concern. Chile is doing well overall in the EQx but to maintain its status as a leading country in the region and to become a candidate to escape the middle-income trap, it must take urgent action to reform areas where the EQx Indicators point to Value Extraction.

Emiliano Heresi Toni University of St.Gallen, Switzerland

