

Erasmus+ National Policy Reviews 2024

Panama



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Contributor

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This national policy review provides a detailed analysis of Panama's educational policies and their alignment with the Erasmus+ programme. It offers official, first-hand information into the country's engagement with Erasmus+ from 2021 to 2024, highlighting opportunities for improvement and identifying strategies to enhance integration and outcomes. Prepared and submitted by the Erasmus+ National Focal Point, this review contributes to ongoing efforts to strengthen international cooperation and to maximise the benefits of the Erasmus+ programme in Panama.

Reviews of policies, initiatives, projects, and/or stakeholders

Specialised Higher Technical Institute (ITSE)

In recent decades, Panama has made significant progress in matters such as economic development, growth of public infrastructure, and sustainable development issues. However, opportunities for improvement are constantly identified at all levels of education. Currently, there is a notable gap in the training of technicians who pertinently address the immediate needs of the labour market; high-volume sectors such as construction, hospitality, and the technology industry show a great need for trained human resources.

The ITSE emerges as a contribution to improving the educational system. It is an attractive educational offer in which students who have completed their middle or high school education have the opportunity for personal fulfilment with a professional technique based on quality, inclusive, and responsive to economic growth and development.

The ITSE pursues the integral development of the individual, in which "know-how" is enhanced and under the strategic pillars of "learn by doing, with reasoning, ethics and values" for the professional and personal success, in its contribution to the productive development of society. In this sense, the project incorporates short courses of one to two years, with flexible curricular designs that satisfy the demand of the productive environment.

This approach to quality and the appropriate professional skills will provide society with solid ethical values and an entrepreneurial mentality. These characteristics constitute a mark of excellence in technical and professional training.

<https://www.itse.ac.pa/>

Legislative reforms and/or policies that have been put in place in the past three years or that are still being discussed

National Council of Rectors of Official Universities

The main objective is to establish university public guidelines and policies and promote the development of academic, scientific, and technological research. To fulfil this purpose, the budgets of each of the official universities and the State will contribute a minimum of 10% of the annual operation, which must be allocated for investment in research, equipment, technology, laboratories, and infrastructure.

Initiatives and/or programmes that have been launched in the past three years

Since Panama is a small country that depends on exports of goods and services to grow, this is a strong motivation to strengthen capacity building and human resource training by most universities to ensure that development is sustained into the future.

The National Secretary of Science, Technology, and Innovation (SENACYT) has programmes and projects focused on promoting the country's scientific and technological development and finding ways to close the inequality gap to promote equitable development.

Some of these projects are:

Pioneras de la Ciencia

<https://pionerasdelaciencia.senacyt.gob.pa/pioneras/>

Diagnóstico Género y Ciência

<https://mujeresenciencia.senacyt.gob.pa/>

Projects which are examples of good practice that have been launched in the past three years

Gorgas Memorial Institute for Health Studies (ICGES)

In terms of health investigation, the Gorgas Memorial Institute for Health Studies (ICGES) carried out at least 400,000 PCR tests in one year since the start of the pandemic (2021). Due to COVID-19, the ICGES developed parallel investigations, for example, the study of the effect of the virus on placental stem cells, the immune response, the need or not for a second dose for people who suffered from COVID-19, seroprevalence studies, and in turn the importance of monitoring the genomic sequencing of the virus.

Despite the work that ICGES tirelessly carries out in Panama, the institution worked on a joint effort with several countries in the region, especially in COVID-19 sequencing. Gorgas is an interesting stakeholder to apply for CBVET

<https://www.gorgas.gob.pa/>

Key players and networks (stakeholders) at the national level (or at the regional level with a national component)

Ministry of Education (MEDUCA)

Created in 1941, MEDUCA is the governmental institution responsible for Panama's educational system. Its functions are to promote education, ensure access to basic education for the entire population, stimulate scientific and technological research and artistic creation, and protect the nation's cultural heritage.

<https://www.meduca.gob.pa>

The higher education system in Panama consists of various public organisations and services responsible for higher education, along with higher education institutions. The system is divided into two subsystems: the university subsystem and the professional technician subsystem.

National Council for University Evaluation and Accreditation of Panama (CONEAUPA)

This governing body, created by Law 30 July 2006 (repealed by Law 52 of 2015), regulates and accredits the quality of university offerings.

<https://coneupa.edu.pa/>