

Panama

National Higher Education Equity Policy

Governance

The Ministry of National Education MEDUCA is the responsible for Higher Education Policy. It has the following instances as consultative and support entities.

- National Education Coordinating Commission
- The Council of Rectors of Universities of Panama is a non-profit organization that brings together the 5 public universities and the 15 private universities of Panama. It has the responsibility to promote quality and relevance, equity and modernization of higher education institutions.
- The National Council for University Evaluation and Accreditation of Panama CONEAUPA

Higher Education Policy Documents

- Law 52 of 2015
- Government Strategic Plan 2015-2019 "One country only" PDP2019
- Strategic Plan of the Ministry of National Education 2014-2019 MEDUCA2019
- National Commitment to Education 2017

Equity Policy Documents

What broad and specific equity objectives do the policy documents identify?

- Eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access for vulnerable people, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in situations of vulnerability, at all levels of education and vocational training
- Increase the inclusion and access of vulnerable population groups to vocational training and job training services.
- Ensure inclusive, equitable and quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

- Promote opportunities for high school students with disabilities to access and success in higher education.
- Increase and improve higher education for young people and women. i) Scholarships for indigenous students ii) Access to higher education for indigenous girls
- Higher Education with equity and gender equality, without discrimination, respecting inter cultural, inter generation, nationality, social class, age, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity and ideas.

The following equity target groups are identified in the policy documents

The

- Low-income students
- Students by gender
- Students in remote areas.
- Indigenous students
- Students with disabilities

Does the country have concrete targets for the participation of specific equity groups?

- No specific targets

Is there a standalone policy document dedicated to equity promotion in higher education?

- There is no specific document

Panama has a number of specific anti-discrimination provisions embedded in the following pieces of legislation:

- National Strategic Plan of the National Disability Secretariat - SENADIS 2015-2019 Published March 2015 SENADIS2019
- Plan for the Integral Development of Indigenous Peoples of the Republic of Panama (PLAN DIPORP)
- Public Policy for Equal Opportunities for Women PPIOM 2012

- Law No. 16 of April 10, 2002 "That regulates the right of admission in public establishments and dictates measures to avoid discrimination"

The Government of Panama uses a series of financial and non-monetary instruments to promote equity.

Financial Policy Instruments

- Scholarships and Grants financed by government and private organization.
- Student Loan Program administrated by the IFARHU (Institute for the Formation and Use of Human Resources)
- Private universities must grant every year at least one full scholarship for undergraduate study for students with high academic performance and limited economic resources.

Non-Monetary Policy Instruments

- Preparation of upper secondary students in basic sciences, technological, humanistic and entrepreneurial training with options to be recognized by the higher education institutions
- Tutoring and retention programs.
- Academic and career guidance and counseling
- Remote higher education institutions in areas with indigenous population.

Financial Resources

What financial resources does the country have to promote equity strategies and policies?

- Not available

Quality Assurance

The quality assurance criteria take the following elements of equity into account.

- Equality of opportunities, non-discrimination and recognition of differences.

- Flexible Admission process
- Special programs to support vulnerable populations
- Students, teachers, administrative staff with disabilities
- Student support services
- Scholarships and subsidies for students

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Not available

Dedicated Equity Promotion Agency

Panama does not have an agency dedicated to equity promotion in higher education.

Key Equity Indicators

Net Enrollment Rate by Gender, Income Quintile and Area

YEAR	Total	Gender		Quintiles of Income					Area	
		Female	Male	1	2	3	4	5	Rural	Urban
2011	20,3	26,1	14,4	5,1	13,0	18,5	23,2	47,7	10,0	25,0
2012	21,3	25,7	16,9	5,5	13,1	19,0	25,0	46,9	8,7	27,5
2013	22,4	27,1	17,8	5,7	12,4	21,0	23,8	52,4	7,8	29,0
2014	23,1	27,5	18,5	5,8	14,8	17,4	26,7	56,3	9,7	29,4
2015	24,1	28,6	19,6	5,9	14,3	19,8	28,2	56,5	10,0	30,2
2016	23,3	27,1	19,8	4,9	14,0	21,3	28,8	56,9	9,4	30,2

Source: SEDLAC (CEDLAS and The World Bank) May2018

Sources

Agenda2030 El Compromiso Nacional por la Educación 2017

https://www.grupoconsultorefe.com/assets/files/recursos/files/0113_387

Informe CINDA, 2016

<https://www.ifarhu.gob.pa/becas/becas-nacionales/>

http://www.utp.ac.pa/documentos/2012/pdf/DocNo2ProcesodeAutoevaluacionInstitucionalUniversitariadePanama_0.

<https://observatorioplanificacion.cepal.org/es/planes/plan-estrategico-de-gobierno-2015-2019-un-solo-pais-de-panama>