

FAQs Human Talent Platform - Panama

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS PLATFORM?

The platform is aimed at providing a user-friendly mapping of the availability of human resources that have completed training or a certification programme in technical and vocational education and training areas.

The new tool is not only visually appealing, interactive, and easy to use, but also provides georeferenced information on each school of the National Vocational Training Institute as well as the vocational centres attached to the Ministry of Education comprising variables such as field of training, speciality, sex, graduation year and institute. This platform can be consulted by institutions for planning and decision-making purposes and by external users (potential investors in the territories, other public institutions, enterprises all over the country, etc.).

IS THE PLATFORM A DATABASE?

The platform is not a database of names or professional profiles. As stated, it provides an overview of the human talent and resources in technical and vocational areas of expertise at the national level. However, it is linked to the job search engine of the Ministry of Labour and Workforce Development (MITRADEL) and it will eventually be linked to the databases of graduates by the National Vocational Institute.

WHAT ARE THE VARIABLES THAT THIS PLATFORM INTEGRATES?

In addition to listing the vocational institutions across the country related to the National Vocational Institute and the Ministry of Education and showing the number of graduates by sex, the platform disaggregates information according to the variables listed below:

Training area: Main training field, such as Agriculture

Field of specialization: Branch of the main training field where the participant acquires deeper or specialized knowledge, e.g. plantain cultivation, farm workers, subsistence farming, or fish farming.

Level of studies: Type of acquired certification by the vocational institution

Vocational Offer: This variable indicates the range of vocational programmes offered by the selected institution.

Graduates per training field: Provides a disaggregated picture of the graduates per each training area.

The vocational offer was classified, to the extent of possible, according to the International Standard Classification of Occupations in use by the Panama National Institute of Statistics.

During 2019 the platform will add other institutions offering vocational training, including graduates from an online vocational training programme following the Khan Academy methodology with certification by the National Vocational Institute.

HOW IS THE PLATFORM USEFUL TO THE PUBLIC IN GENERAL?

The platform is highly useful firstly, because each of its components is interactive and reports can be generated from the settings selected by the user.

The usefulness of the platform resides in the eye of the user:

For institutions, for example, as the platform provides a quick overview of what is happening at the national level in terms of vocational training, it provides valuable inputs to public employment orientation and intermediation services on the availability of skilled human resources in a certain area. In addition, it strengthens the role of MITRADEL as a coordinator between the offer of the vocational institutions and demand by the private sector to reduce skill gaps, for example with internship programmes for a first work experience. This element has a favourable effect also in the recent decentralization efforts the country is undertaking for local economic development.

With regard to the productive sector, it provides a general overview of the availability of skilled human resources across the country and per field of specialization. It also serves as a tool for dialogue with vocational institutions and MITRADEL to ensure that skills needed in different regions of the country are developed. The access to the information that the platform provides, can bolster, to name an example, the establishment of public-private partnerships to promote apprenticeships.

From the perspective of students and workers, the information that the platform provides can help the interested person make decisions regarding further training on certain fields or find a livelihood near home. For worker groups, it provides an informative tool to also ensure the professional development of workers throughout their lives.

If properly managed, the platform can become a valuable and indispensable tool to ensure tailored employment policies at the municipalities, capitalizing the regional assets of each of the country's provinces.

FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF FUTURE OF WORK, WILL MORE PLATFORMS LIKE THIS ONE BE NEEDED?

IS THE PLATFORM EASILY REPLICABLE?

Yes. It utilizes a Tableau Platform, which allows flexibility to display data, as well as high interactivity. In terms of feeding data into the system, it requires the information to be fed through an Excel, which, once fed with the necessary data, is relatively easy to keep updated and add new institutions to the platform. The Panamanian platform is analogue to that of Costa Rica, lodged in <https://hipatia.cr/dashboard/talento-tecnico>, showing in this manner its high replicability characteristics.

It is important, however, to ensure appropriation by the concerned stakeholders at the tripartite level, in order to ensure also its sustainability and relevance.

WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE OF WORK AND THIS PLATFORM?

The platform already is a first forage into the world of work 4.0 and its possibilities. Its benefits can be understood from three perspectives:

- 1) It condenses thousands of variables coming from numerous sources of information to be digested at a glance, branching out to provide needed information to the entity seeking it and attending to a variety of needs, whether more focused employment policies, more pertinent apprenticeship and internship programmes or training adapted to life-long learning purposes.
- 2) While the public administration walks the path to digitalized services, packages of information provided in this type of formats create a basis for information sharing between institutions, also strengthening reliability among investors and general public.

- 3) Information that is presented in an easy to use format also helps promote social dialogue between sectors, institutions, and social actors in the world of work. Having reliable information accessible at all times, helps bridge inconsistencies and find common solutions.