



Highlighted experience

Organisation of labour supply and demand, ensuring professional training to positively influence the employment market and create quality jobs



COSTA RICA

Area:
SOCIAL POLICIES

Line of action:
**ACTIVE EMPLOYMENT
POLICIES**



COSTA RICA'S NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SYSTEM

Costa Rica has a highly dynamic labour market that needs people with suitable training and qualifications to cover labour supply and demand and thus contribute to the improvement of the country's employability indexes, ensuring the harmonisation of professional skills with the real labour needs for each sector.

The National Employment System of Costa Rica brings together a set of institutions, companies and people in order to identify the needs of the labour market and match professional profiles and vacant positions, linking training services and appropriate professional training in order to improve job quality and job security, thus improving the country's productivity.

Such an employment system is one of the requirements stipulated by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in order to join this organisation of which Costa Rica is a part. Its establishment is the result of a coordinated process involving the government's executive branch, the private sector and trade unions, all of whom have representatives on the National Employment Council, the system's highest authority.

Andrés Valenciano¹, the Costa Rican Minister of Foreign Trade and former president of the National Learning Institute, a key organisation



"A strong National Employment System makes it possible to identify the needs of people seeking work in Costa Rica's productive sectors, thus improving training programmes and employability in the country."
(Andrés Valenciano, former president of the National Institute of Learning).

¹ Andrés Valenciano was president of Costa Rica's National Institute of Learning until 24 November 2020.

in the strengthening of the SNE, takes the view that “a robust employment system becomes even more essential in times of crisis, such as the situation resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic, in order to develop and refresh the professional skills that allow people to stay relevant in the labour market.”

EUROSOCIAL'S SUPPORT

The EUROsociAL+ programme has helped to strengthen the Costa Rica SNE management model by supporting the establishment of its regulations and the creation of its conceptual framework and range of programmes. At an operational level, the programme has set up the National Employment Agency, which was established by Executive Decree and whose management and administration is the responsibility of the National Learning Institute.

EUROsociAL+'s role affects the assignment of functions of the National Employment Agency, which include the coordination of the Employment Unit Network which brings together all public, private and public-private employment bodies at a regional level and with municipal support for the management of the public's needs, either in person, by phone or online.

According to Andrés Romero, president of the National Learning Institute, EUROsociAL+'s support in establishing a results-based work model has been extremely valuable – “The approach used has made it possible to establish the National Employment System in Costa Rica by comparing it to other models at an international level and identifying good practices applicable within a context of the country's labour market and professional training.

The most valuable aspect of EUROsociAL+'s support has been to implement a work model that focuses on results in the improvement of the National Employment System and the development of the National Employment Agency as an operational tool.” (Andrés Romero, president of the National Institute of Learning).

VIRTUALISATION AND MODERNISATION

One of the most important aspects of EUROsociAL+ support for Costa Rica's National Employment System has been the design and implementation of the National Employment Agency's IT platform (www.ane.cr), a free information and employment arbitration service which guides the supply and demand of labour with a focus on recruitment and vocational training services.

This platform seeks to be a one-stop shop for people and companies, improving employability



in the country, reducing labour gaps and activating the monitoring and follow-up mechanisms that have a bearing on job quality. Andrés Romero feels that this contribution has been essential, as “it allows the integration of services and institutions and reduces the fragmented range of programmes on offer that the country has suffered from.”

The strengthening of the National Employment System and Agency as operational tools can be seen in the general modernisation plan for the National Learning Institute, a process characterised by dialogue and inter-sector and multi-level coordination (with the participation of the municipalities as territorial entities), in order to update the regulatory framework of the institution and strengthen the action of the National Learning Institute as a key organisation in the harmonisation of vocational training and job creation and thus in Costa Rica's development.

The modernisation of the National Learning Institutes and the National Employment System has also ensured dialogue and coordination at a regional level with other Central American countries, advancing aspects that contribute to greater regional integration, including the certification and standardisation of professional skills to improve the working conditions of migrant populations.

INSTITUTIONS INVOLVED IN THE STRENGTHENING OF COSTA RICA'S NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SYSTEM:

- ▶ The National Institute of Learning, which headed up the action.
- ▶ The Presidency of the Republic of Costa Rica, responsible for monitoring and coordination.
- ▶ The Ministry of Planning and Economic Policy, responsible for the alignment and validation of organisational and regulatory adjustment.
- ▶ The Ministry of Foreign Trade, aligned with labour-market needs through direct foreign investment.
- ▶ The Ministry of Employment and Social Security, the governing institution in labour matters.
- ▶ The Joint Social Aid Institute, responsible for the coordination of the project's approaches to vulnerable populations.
- ▶ The Ministry of Public Education, which aligned the comprehensive management model with the qualification framework.

Key points of the management of the EUROsociAL+ programme in the strengthening of Costa Rica's National Employment System:

1. The design and implementation of the functional structure of the National Employment Agency, including regulatory aspects, inter-institutional relations with organisations providing services, processes and tools.
2. The preparation of standards for the operation of the Employment Unit Network within the framework of the National Employment System through the attribution of services, professional profiles, basic conditions of infrastructure and technology etc. and human resources training on the basis of professional profiles.