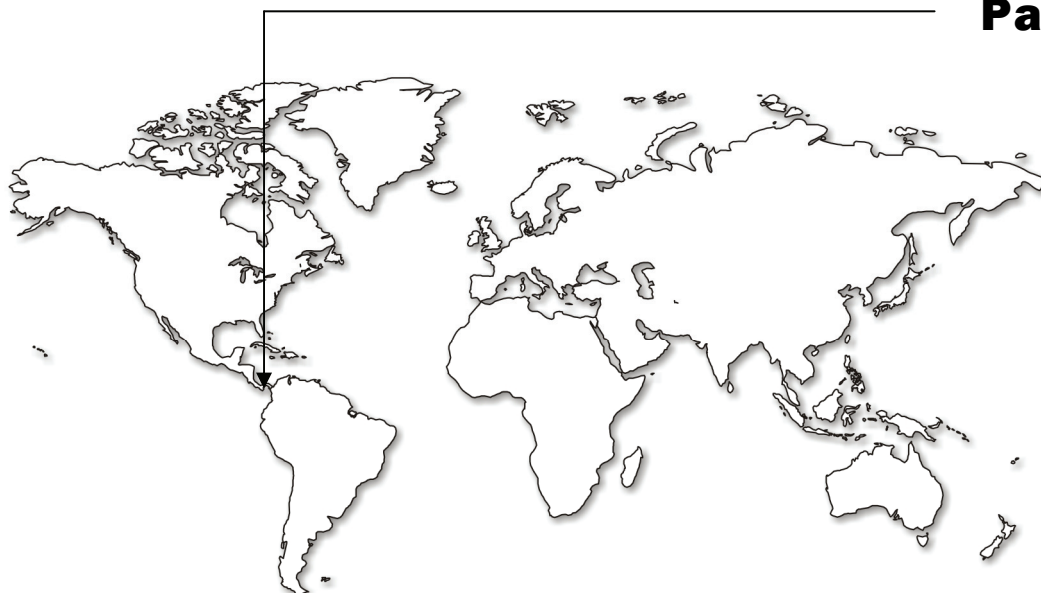


Panama



Responding institutions:

Asociacion Panameña de Bibliotecarios and Biblioteca Nacional Ernesto J. Castillero R.

Panama made two submissions that largely supplement each other. This is its second contribution to the World Report. There are 108 public libraries, 10 university research libraries (with a total of 118 branches), 607 school libraries and 60 government research libraries.

Internet access for public libraries is 41-60%, for school libraries less than 20%, for university libraries 61-100% and for government libraries 61-80%. Internet access is not free of charge but the costs are kept as low as possible for users. There has been some support from the state. The University of Panama, for example, received support to increase the speed of access and to buy more computers.

Very little of the content on the Internet is local and practically nothing is available in local languages. The literacy rate in Panama is given as 92%. Librarians support some degree of filtering to protect children, but there is no such software on library computer terminals.

No new anti-terror laws were passed in the past two years. The respondents feel that such laws would affect user privacy, and that keeping user records would impact on the individual's intellectual freedom. There have been no incidents of the violation of intellectual freedom.

Government libraries and special libraries participate in HIV/Aids awareness programmes, and some libraries have made this information available to people who cannot read. The high literacy rate in Panama is the reason why there are no special library literacy programmes or special information programmes for women.

The library association adopted a code of ethics in 1996, but the respondents believe that more can be done to promote the ethical tenets among librarians. The code is not available on the Internet yet, as there are no resources to maintain a website. For the same reason, the Internet Manifesto has been acknowledged but not yet adopted. This should happen within the next two years. The Glasgow Declaration has not been adopted, but Panama's Constitution covers some of the same ground on intellectual freedom and access to information. The Declaration should be adopted within the next two years.

User privacy and anti-terror legislation

There have been no new anti-terror laws that were passed in the past two years. The respondents are convinced though that such laws affect user privacy, and that keeping user records will impact on the individual's intellectual freedom.

Reported incidents/violations of intellectual freedom in the past two years

No incidents of the violation of intellectual freedom have been reported, in the respondents' view, but fear

has been expressed that a criminal code endorsed by the President will severely restrict freedom of expression and information.

Sources:

<http://www.news.vu/en/news/inter/060526-Progress-Reported-on-Freedom-of-Expression-in-the-Americas.html>

<http://www.ifex.org/es/content/view/full/82026>

HIV/Aids awareness

Government libraries and special libraries participate in HIV/Aids awareness programmes. Some libraries have made this information available to people who cannot read.

Women and freedom of access to information

Panama's high literacy rate is the reason why there are no special library literacy programmes or special information programmes for women.

IFLA Internet Manifesto

The Internet Manifesto has been acknowledged by the library association but not yet adopted. This should happen within the next two years.

IFLA Glasgow Declaration on Libraries, Information Services and Intellectual Freedom

The Glasgow Declaration has not been adopted but Panama's Constitution covers the issues of intellectual freedom and access to information. The Declaration will probably be adopted within the next two years.

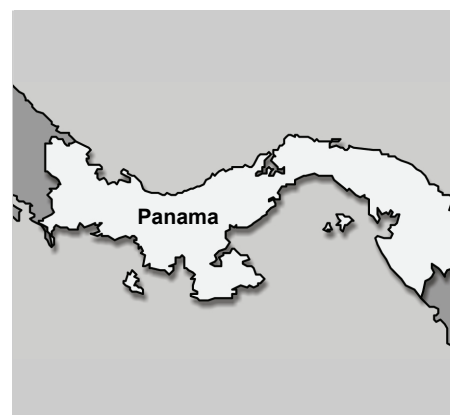
Ethics

The library association adopted a code of ethics in 1996. More can be done, however, to promote the code's ethical tenets among librarians. The code is not available on the Internet yet, as there are no resources to maintain a website.

Main indicators

Country name:	Panama
Population:	3 242 173 (July 2007 est.)
Main language:	Spanish (official), English 14% (note that many Panamanians are bilingual)
Literacy:	91.9%
Literacy reported by respondents:	92%

Population figures, language and literacy are from the
CIA World Factbook, 2007 edition
(<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>).



Libraries and Internet access

Panama contributed to the World Report series in 2003. The following section compares data and answers from 2007 with the 2003 IFLA/FAIFE World Report and adds context from the respondents' estimates, where possible.

Library services

Estimated number of public libraries*:	108
Estimated number of school libraries:	607
Estimated number of university libraries:	10 (with 118 branches)
Estimated number of government-funded research libraries:	60
Source of these numbers:	Census done by Biblioteca Nacional Ernesto J. Castillero R.

Internet access

Population online**:	300 000 Internet users as of Sept. 2005 (9.8%) (2003: 1.56%)
Percentage of public libraries offering Internet access to users:	41-60% (2003: Less than 20%)
Percentage of school libraries offering Internet access to users:	Less than 20%
Percentage of university libraries offering Internet access to users:	61-100%
Percentage of government-funded research libraries offering Internet access to users:	61-80%
In your estimate, how much local content*** is available on the Internet:	Very little
To what degree is content on the Internet available in local languages:	Nothing, or practically nothing
Is the library association in favour of filtering information on library Internet terminals:	Yes – in some cases, for the protection of children (2003: No answer)
Is the use of filtering software widespread in your country's libraries:	No (2003: No answer)
Is it free of charge for library users to access the Internet on library computers:	No, there is a minimum cost for the use of the Internet (2003: No, no extra funding has been made available to libraries to improve Internet access)
Has the state or other library authorities made any extra funding available for Internet access in the library system of your country in the last two years:	Yes, in some cases – the University of Panama has received support to increase the speed of Internet access and to buy more computers

* Public library service points, including branch libraries.

** Online population numbers are from Internet World Stats (www.internetworldstats.com).

*** Local content is defined as content that originates in the country.