

HRDA's actions under the Cyprus operational programme THALIA 2021-27

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 CYPRUS

Timeline

2022 Design

2023 Design

2024 Design

2025 Implementation

ID number 44696

Background

The Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) implements activities for the training and development of human resources in Cyprus, providing the employed and the unemployed with the opportunity of acquiring new, or upgrading existing, knowledge and skills.

Objectives

The schemes aim to provide re- and upskilling opportunities for the unemployed and the employed and train young people aged 15-29 who are not in education, employment, or training (NEETs) by 2027. The target for the programming period 2021-27 is for 2 800 persons to benefit from the NEETs scheme and for 1 800 persons to benefit from the Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs) project.

Description

The Cyprus operational programme THALIA 2021-27 includes two relevant HRDA actions.

Individual learning accounts (ILAs) provide credits to eligible groups of employed and unemployed individuals to attend training programmes and acquire new and/or upgrade existing knowledge and skills. They aim to promote lifelong learning by providing flexible upskilling opportunities and preventing social exclusion. Through ILAs, individuals gain access to training programmes on a broad range of issues within the framework of the HRDA scheme, Standard multi-company training programmes. These programmes assist individuals to remain competitive in the labour market by improving their employment/career progression opportunities, and social skills.

Training programmes for NEETs help them to acquire basic knowledge and skills –literacy, numeracy, digital and technological skills, interpersonal skills, entrepreneurship – and enter the labour market. In addition, upgrading existing and acquiring new knowledge and skills might be instrumental in securing employment opportunities that arise in dynamic sectors of economic activity such as the green and blue economy, and to prepare for the digital transition.

In 2022, a consultation and a debate among relevant stakeholders took place to optimise implementation.

2023 Design

In 2023, a draft policy and procedure manual was prepared, for both actions. Regarding the ILAs, preparations and deliberations with external contractors for the implementation of the scheme through HRDA's digital platform (Ermis) took place.

2024 Design

The scheme's description and the policy and procedure manual for both actions were approved by the Board of Directors of the HRDA on 26 June 2024. In October 2024, a draft tender document was prepared for the organisation and implementation of training programmes for NEETs.

The HRDA, as the head of the national delegation in the field, participated in workshops for the 2024 Mutual Learning Programme for ILAs organised by the European Commission. The development of the digital platform for the implementation of the scheme was under way.

2025 Implementation

NEETs training

An open tender competition was published on 24 February 2025, for the organisation and implementation of training programmes for young persons aged 15 to 29 who is not in employment, education, or training (NEETs). The evaluation results have been approved by the competent body and the Board of Directors of the HRDA. In total, the contract provides for the implementation of 128 programmes for the training of 2 800 NEETs.

Piloting of the national ILA scheme

In March 2025, following approval of the policy and procedure manual and its publication on the HRDA website, the HRDA launched the ILA project on the *Ermis* platform and published an open call for individuals to apply for an ILA account. By the end of September 2025, 534 applications had been examined and 361 ILA accounts issued, corresponding to entitlements of EUR 866 400 for participation in training under the *Standard Multi-Company Training Programmes* scheme.

Eligible individuals (employed with up to upper secondary education level, and long-term unemployed for six months or more) apply for an individual learning account through the HRDA's online platform *Ermis*. Successful applicants receive an entitlement of EUR 2 400 for a three-year period, credited at the start into a digital wallet. Entitlements can be used only for training under the *Standard Multi-Company Training Programmes* scheme and must be spent via *Ermis* by selecting from the list of approved programmes. Fees are deducted from the wallet upon application and refunded if a programme is cancelled. There is no differentiation in entitlements between the two target groups. Programmes in the registry are assessed against HRDA quality criteria and are reviewed and approved twice a year.

Once an ILA account is approved, individuals may choose the programme that fits their needs from the *Standard Multi-Company Training Programmes* registry. Training is delivered by approved vocational training centres (VTCs) and reflects the thematic areas set out in the HRDA policy document, developed in consultation with social partners. The registry currently includes more than 3 000 programmes covering business management, skills for the green and blue economy, renewable energy sources, energy saving, occupational health and safety, business continuity, training of trainers, and digital skills.

In May 2025, the 2024 Mutual Learning Programme for ILAs was concluded with a final online event.

Bodies responsible

- Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA)

Target group

Learners

Young people (15-29 years old)
Young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs)
Adult learners
Unemployed and jobseekers
Persons in employment, including those at risk of unemployment
Low-skilled/qualified persons

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Coordinating VET and other policies

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Diversifying modes of learning: face-to-face, digital and/or blended learning; adaptable/flexible training formats

Acquiring key competences

Integrating green transition and sustainability in VET curricula and programmes

Integrating digital skills and competences in VET curricula and programmes

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Promotion strategies and campaigns for VET and lifelong learning

Financial and non-financial incentives to learners, providers and companies

Providing for individuals' re- and upskilling needs

Ensuring equal opportunities and inclusiveness in education and training

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

VET agile in adapting to labour market challenges

Osnabrück Declaration

Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET

Establishing a new lifelong learning culture - relevance of continuing VET and digitalisation

Subsystem

Further reading

[Programme website](#)

Directorate General Growth Ministry of Finance. (n.d.). Cohesion Policy Programme THALIA 2021-2027.

Related policy developments

2025 Implementation

Lifelong learning for the employed

The activities, implemented by the Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) to meet the above aim, include the following programmes:

 CYPRUS

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

CVET

2025 Implementation

Integration of the unemployed and inactive into employment

HRDA implements the following activities/schemes:

Scheme for the employment and training of tertiary education graduates

 CYPRUS

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

CVET

“ ... ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). HRDA's actions under the Cyprus operational programme THALIA 2021-27: Cyprus. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe (2025 update)* [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies->

