

Integration of the unemployed and inactive into employment

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 CYPRUS

Timeline

2022 Implementation

2023 Implementation

2024 Implementation

2025 Implementation

ID number 44654

Background

The aims of the HRDA include its contribution to the integration of the unemployed and inactive into employment, with focused training activities to support employability and the reduction of unemployment.

Objectives

The objectives of the Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) include:

- (a) the integration of the unemployed and inactive into employment, with focused training activities to support employability;
- (b) to support work-based learning of unemployed and inactive individuals by placing them in companies /organisations to acquire work experience in a real working environment.

Description

HRDA implements the following activities/schemes:

Scheme for the employment and training of tertiary education graduates

The scheme supports the enhancement of productivity and economic competitiveness of companies and organisations by providing incentives to them to employ and train young tertiary education graduates. At the same time, it helps to ensure the smooth integration of these graduates into suitable job positions. More precisely, the scheme provides incentives to companies to offer job positions, practical training and work experience of a six-month duration to graduates under the age of 30. The scheme was introduced in November 2014, with its implementation period scheduled to conclude by the end of 2023.

| Year | Actual Expenditure (EUR) | Number of tertiary education graduate participants |
|------|--------------------------|--|
| 2016 | 4 903 322 | 812 |

| 2017 | 5 520 589 | 928 |
|------|--------------------------|---|
| 2018 | 4 531 722 | 757 |
| 2019 | 4 652 222 | 777 |
| 2020 | 6 959 942 | 1 166 |
| 2021 | 4 539 827 | 767 |
| 2022 | 6 613 604 | 1 104 |
| Year | Actual Expenditure (EUR) | Number of long-term unemployed participants |
| 2017 | 367 945 | 99 |
| 2018 | 486 583 | 133 |
| 2019 | 335 392 | 92 |
| 2020 | 408 858 | 109 |
| 2021 | 348 441 | 94 |
| 2022 | 293 234 | 78 |
| Year | Actual Expenditure (EUR) | Number of trained participants |
| 2016 | 96 655 | 101 |
| 2017 | 120 427 | 264 |
| 2018 | 142 780 | 316 |
| 2019 | 167 003 | 348 |
| 2020 | | |
| 2021 | 14 952 | 28 |
| 2022 | 47 069 | 66 |

Since 2020, training programmes through this scheme, can be offered via e-learning (but VTCs and trainers need to adhere to specific rules and conditions). In November 2020, the HRDA, in collaboration with labour ministry, initiated the Special scheme for the vocational training of the unemployed in organisations of the public and broader public sector, local government authorities, non-governmental organisations and non-profit institutions to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The total budget for the scheme was EUR 7 million for 3 000 participants; it expired in December 2022.

| Year | Actual Expenditure (EUR) | Number of unemployed participants |
|------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2016 | 19 956 | 129 |
| 2017 | 44 859 | 255 |
| 2018 | 49 266 | 236 |
| 2019 | 142 780 | 316 |
| 2020 | 79 632 | 381 |
| 2021 | 138 000 | 601 |

| | | |
|------|---------|-----|
| 2022 | 140 640 | 671 |
|------|---------|-----|

The standard multi-company training programmes are also available for employed people. In the case of the unemployed, the scheme provides training in training programmes organised by vocational training centres (VTCs) within the framework of the HRDA scheme Standard multi-company training programmes. These programmes cover a broad range of subjects in relation to all the tasks and functions of a company and also cover all professions. The programmes are designed and organised by VTCs, based on the thematic priorities set by the HRDA, after consultation with social partners and other relevant stakeholders, such as training and consultants organisations, sectoral organisations, the Cyprus Hotel Institute, the Cyprus Computer Society, the Youth Board of Cyprus and the Research Promotion Foundation. The finalised priorities are then communicated to the VTCs. Long-term unemployed individuals are eligible for participation to the scheme as of January 2015. As of September 2018, all unemployed persons have the option to participate in these programmes. The scheme implementation period was scheduled to conclude by the end of 2023.

Standard multi-company training programmes: participation of the unemployed.

The scheme provides training opportunities for the unemployed to acquire, enrich and/or upgrade their skills and knowledge, in accordance with labour market needs, to broaden their prospects for re-entry and best possible reintegration in employment, as well as to meet their expectations for a new professional career. The training programmes are decided by the HRDA based on regular data from the Public Employment Service (PES), surveys and studies conducted by the HRDA etc, and after consultation with the social partners and professional bodies. The scheme was introduced in February 2015, with its implementation period concluded on October 2022.

Training programmes for the unemployed

The scheme provides incentives to companies/organisations to employ and train long-term unemployed individuals via a tailor-made training programme of a four-month duration. The scheme was introduced in July 2016, with its implementation period scheduled to conclude by the end of 2023. It provides opportunities to long-term unemployed individuals to be integrated or reintegrated in employment and, at the same time, to acquire the necessary skill set for a specific job position.

Scheme for the training of the long-term unemployed in companies/organisations

2022 Implementation

HRDA continued the implementation of all programmes. The implementation period of the training programmes for the unemployed was reviewed in December 2022 and it was extended until the end of 2030.

2023 Implementation

HRDA continued the implementation of all targeted training programmes, which helped train 1134 individuals under the scheme for the employment and training of tertiary education graduates (EUR 6 912 647). Moreover, 84 long-term unemployed were trained in companies and organisations (EUR 326 897), and 66 individuals followed training for the unemployed (EUR 67 406) under the dedicated schemes. Finally, 565 individuals participated in the scheme Standard multi-company training programmes: participation of the unemployed (EUR 123 099).

The Board of Directors of the HRDA approved an updated Policy and Procedure Guide for two schemes: the scheme for the employment and training of tertiary education graduates, and the scheme for the training of the long-term unemployed in companies and organisations. The new guides were set to take effect from January 2024, with the implementation period for the two above-mentioned schemes foreseen until the end of 2030.

2024 Implementation

For the year 2024, the updated Policy and Procedure Guides for the schemes were in place. Implementation of training programmes included:

- (a) scheme for the employment and training of tertiary education graduates: EUR 7 005 830 was allocated for 948 participations;
- (b) scheme for the training of the long-term unemployed in companies/organisations: EUR 344 562 was allocated for 73 participations;
- (c) training programmes for the unemployed: no training programmes were implemented in 2024;
- (d) standard multi-company training programmes: participation of the unemployed: EUR 272 118 was allocated for 983 participations.

2025 Implementation

Targeted HRDA training programmes implemented until 31 August 2025 included:

- (a) scheme for the employment and training of tertiary education graduates: EUR 4 873 671 was allocated for 609 participants.
- (b) scheme for the training of the long-term unemployed in companies/organisations: EUR 256 788 was allocated for 51 participants.
- (c) training programmes for the unemployed: No programmes were implemented in 2025.
- (d) standard multi-company training programmes – participation of the unemployed: EUR 353 577 was allocated for 571 participants. From 2025 onwards, individuals may participate in the scheme by using entitlements from the Individual Learning Account (ILA) scheme managed by HRDA. Five unemployed individuals have already taken part in training programmes using their ILA entitlements.

Bodies responsible

- Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA)

Target group

Learners

Young people (15-29 years old)
Adult learners
Unemployed and jobseekers
Low-skilled/qualified persons

Education professionals

Trainers

Entities providing VET

Companies

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

Developing and updating learning resources and materials

Acquiring key competences

Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

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

Providing for individuals' re- and upskilling needs

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

VET agile in adapting to labour market challenges

Flexibility and progression opportunities at the core of VET

Osnabrück Declaration

Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET

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

Subsystem

CVET

Further reading

[Integration of the unemployed and inactive into employment \(in Greek\)](#)

Related policy developments

2025 Implementation

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

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

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Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

CVET

2025 Implementation

Use of e-learning methods in training programmes

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic the physical presence of trainers in the classroom or training areas is no longer required, there is no obligation for the training programmes - provided to unemployed or employed individuals - to be carried out at a certified vocational training centre (VTC)

 CYPRUS

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

CVET

2024 Completed

Work-based learning in the public sector

The Special scheme for the vocational training of the unemployed in organisations of the public and broader public sector, local government authorities, non-governmental organisations and non-profit institutions, caters for the vocational training and work experience of unemployed individuals and

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Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

CVET

2025 Implementation

Digital skills training for employees and the unemployed

Since 2017, the Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) is including the acquisition of basic digital skills for employees over the age of 35 in the single- and multi-company training programmes that it subsidises.

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Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

CVET

“ ... ” **Cite as**

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<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/44654>