

Advanced specialisation programmes

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 PORTUGAL

Timeline

2022 Implementation

2023 Implementation

2024 Implementation

2025 Implementation

ID number 43541

Background

Current productivity challenges in organisations bring the need to promote new standards of effectiveness in professional performance. Consequently, they demand more and greater competences.

Objectives

- (a) Contributing to strengthening the participation of employers' organisations in networks of production, exchange and application of knowledge, as well as reinforcing the technological intensity and/or knowledge of the activity of employers' organisations.
- (b) Improving the employability of citizens.
- (c) Improving the competitive capacity of the national economy.

Description

These programmes are designed to meet the needs of professionals in a specific area, responding to market needs and creating value for professionals and institutions, serving as a national reference in the area.

Programmes are developed within the scope of cooperation between higher education institutions and public and private employers, with a view to providing students with competences in transversal subjects valued by the labour market and facilitating their professional integration in more diversified settings. Advanced specialisation programmes (*Cursos de Formação Avançada*) are aimed at those with a second cycle degree of polytechnic or university higher education, or equivalent, in any scientific area.

The courses are also eligible for obtaining credits to have equivalences in other post-graduate courses, such as PhD Programmes. The credit units awarded - 12, 24 or 36 ECTS - vary according to the length of the course, and correspond to short, medium or long duration.

2022 Implementation

This measure is part of the NIP under the umbrella of package Innovation and resilience.

Every year, public and private universities offer a wide range of advanced training programmes in many scientific areas, addressing second cycle degrees from polytechnic or university higher education, or equivalent.

2023 Implementation

A new application process for financing scholarships in advanced training courses in the North, Centre and Alentejo regions has been opened by notice 'PESSOAS-2023-1'.

2024 Implementation

The programme was operational and ran as regular practice.

The call took the form of an invitation addressed specifically to the Foundation for Science and Technology. Its objective was to fund doctoral scholarships in academic and non-academic settings from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2024.

2025 Implementation

According to monitoring data from June 2025, around 4 200 scholarships were funded, of which more than 970 were in non-academic settings.

In 2025, a call for applications similar to the 2023 one was launched, and monitoring data was not yet available.

Bodies responsible

- Higher education institutions

Target group

Other

Citizens with 2nd cycle degree, or equivalent

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Optimising VET funding

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Acquiring key competences

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Providing for individuals' re- and upskilling needs

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

VET as a driver for innovation and growth preparing for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand

VET as an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training and skills

Osnabrück Declaration

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

Subsystem

CVET

Further reading

[Decree-law \(Decreto-lei\) No 27/2021 of 16 April 2021](#)

[Notice \(Aviso\) No 'PESSOAS-2023-1'](#)

“ … ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). Advanced specialisation programmes: Portugal. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2025 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/43541>