UPskill - digital skills and jobs programme

POLICY DEVELOPMENT   PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE   PORTUGAL

Timeline

2020 Implementation   **2021 Implementation**   **2022 Implementation**
2023 Implementation   **2024 Implementation**

ID number 40206

Background

Portugal has placed high on the policy agenda actions addressing the digital skills deficit that the country was facing and challenges posed by the digital transformation. For instance, in April 2020, the action plan for the digital transition was approved in line with the National digital competences initiative (INCoDe.2030).

The UPskill - digital skills and jobs programme, was launched in 2020 under the umbrella of the action plan and INCoDe.2030.

Objectives

The main objective of the Upskill programme is to respond to companies' needs for digitally equipped human resources. It also offers unemployed secondary or higher education graduates the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills and competences to start a new career.

Description

The UPskill programme is the result of a partnership between the Portuguese Association for the Development of Communications (APDC), the Institute of Employment and Vocational Training (IEFP) and the Coordinating Council of Higher Polytechnic Institutes (CCISP).

The main objective of the programme's first call is to upskill 3 000 professionals (employed and unemployed) within a 3-year period. It provides intensive training (6 months) in specific ICT areas offered by polytechnic institutes (financed by IEFP), followed by 3 months of on-the-job training financed by the participating companies. The training method used is blended learning. The training allowance is equivalent to the national minimum wage. After successful completion, hired trainees will receive a minimum initial salary of EUR 1 200.

> **2020 Implementation**
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> The first phase of the programme started in June 2020. It mainly included a survey

identifying companies' needs for qualified human resources in the areas covered by the UPskill programme. Based on the identification of companies' needs in terms of technical profiles and geographic location, the polytechnic institutes involved (*Universidade Nova de Lisboa* -UNL and university institute of Lisbon - ISCTE) designed and organised the training courses in the chosen technological areas, for instance programming languages.

In September 2020, the 6-month full-time training in specific ICT areas started. In total, 26 training courses were provided by HE institutions; 424 trainees attended them.

2021 Implementation

Three-month on-the-job training (internship) was assured by APDC. A total of 18 companies were involved in the first phase of the programme (Accenture, Altran, Axians, CEiiA, CI&T, Deloitte, DXC Technology Portugal, Experis, Extrabite, GFI, Indra/Minsait, Joyn, Microsoft, Outsystems, Promopcmkt, Softinsa (IBM) and Zarph also known as OutFit) offering 500 vacancies. On-the-job training started in March 2021.

During 2021, the programme received 5 600 applications and was attended by 430 trainees.

The applications for the second phase opened in October 2021 and the first application cycle ran from 14 October to 26 November 2021; that involved validating candidates, interviewing and placing them on training courses. This phase created 22 training actions spread across 12 locations in the country in which 359 trainees were already integrated.

2022 Implementation

This measure is part of the NIP under the Package Green and digital transition.

The Upskill programme is in its second phase and has reached about 6 000 applications and was attended by 828 trainees. A total of 64 companies were involved in this edition, offering 802 vacancies, which created 50 training actions spread across 12 locations in the country.

The applications for the third phase opened in October 2022 and has already reached, at the end of December 2022, 2 928 applications.

2023 Implementation

The protocol between IEFP, APDC, and HIE was renewed in December. By 2023, 1 683 trainees had participated.

2024 Implementation

The 4th edition of UPskill, launched in 2024, includes training courses in the fields: JAVA-dotNet; Prog-Sistemas-Embebidos-C&C++; Development WEB / PL-SQL; ERP / SAGE X3; Servicenow; SAP-ABAP; Cloud - Microsoft / Azure; Java; dotNET; JavaScript-with-React; System Admin.

11 training courses started in 2024.

Bodies responsible

- Institute for Employment and Vocational Training (IEFP)
- Portuguese Association for the Development of Communications (APDC)
- Coordinating Council of Higher Polytechnic Institutes (CCISP)

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices
Adult learners
Older workers and employees (55 - 64 years old)
Unemployed and jobseekers

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Modernising VET standards, curricula, programmes and training courses

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

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

Ensuring equal opportunities and inclusiveness in education and training

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

> VET agile in adapting to labour market challenges

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

Osnabrück Declaration

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

Subsystem

CVET

Further reading

UPskill programme website

Resolution of the Council of Ministers No 30/2020, of 21 April 2020 (launching the Action plan for the digital transition)

Related policy developments

2024 **Implementation**

Action plan for the digital transition

The action plan for the digital transition has three main pillars. Each one comprises three sub-pillars:

PORTUGAL

Type of development
Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem
IVET CVET

2024 **Implementation**

National digital competences initiative (Portugal INCoDe.2030)

INCoDe.2030 is an integrated inter-ministerial strategy bringing together and encouraging collaboration between people with different experiences and knowledge as well as multiple public and private organisations.

This initiative has five major priorities:

PORTUGAL

Type of development
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plan

Subsystem
IVET CVET

> **Cite as**
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