



# Active Life Measure - Qualified Employment

## Medida Vida Activa - Emprego Qualificado

**Portugal**

### 1 DESCRIPTION

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**Timespan** 2013 - present

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**Stage** FULLY OPERATIONAL

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**Focus area**  MATCHING SKILLS FOR TODAY'S JOB MARKET

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### 2 FOUNDATIONS

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**Policy Area**  ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET POLICIES

This measure was established to help the unemployed improve or certify their skills and hence increase their employability.

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**Policy Goal** The instrument aims to reinforce the quality, the effectiveness and the responsiveness of active employment policies, namely regarding the professional qualification of unemployed people. This instrument creates a qualification measure that aims to adjust the personal employment plans and the individual potential and needs of each unemployed, in order to improve his/her employability, and favour his/her return to the labour market. Whenever considered adequate to the profile of the unemployed, the instrument may include a skills recognition, validation and certification process.

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**Mismatch** **EXPLICITLY DESIGNED TO ADDRESS SKILL MISMATCH**  
The instrument aims to integrate unemployed people into training schemes. It focuses on modular training and training at the workplace, as well as a skills recognition, validation and certification processes. This is done in order to help individuals acquire skills relevant to the labour market, and to mobilize individuals to pursue further qualification or retraining processes.

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## Aim of policy instrument



UPSKILL AND MATCH SKILLS OF UNEMPLOYED

## Legal basis

MINISTERIAL ORDER

## Administrative level

NATIONAL

## Main responsible body

Institute for Employment and Vocational Training (IEFP)

## Stakeholders



GOVERNMENT (CENTRAL & REGIONAL)



TRAINING PROVIDERS (PUBLIC/PRIVATE)

IEFP regulates and coordinates this measure and also provides the modular training in their training centres. Public and private training centres and certified training entities of social partners can also provide the modular training. There is also a partners network (public and private companies, NGOs, etc) for the providing of training in the workplace. The EU and Portuguese Government co-fund through European Social Fund.

## Funding

Data from December 2016 indicated that the total expenditure with this measures was €29,070,570. European funds (through the ESF) account for a maximum of 85% of funding with national state budget covering the remaining.

## Intended beneficiaries

The priority beneficiaries of the instrument are: unemployed registered for at least 6 months; unemployed who do not hold the 9th grade (i.e. EQF level 2) or who do not have a qualification adjusted to the labour market; unemployed people whose spouse/partner is also unemployed, or who are single parents; unemployed between the ages of 18-29 (youth guarantee beneficiaries). With this measure, the beneficiaries acquire the skills relevant to the labour market and by doing so, their employability increases.

## 3 PROCESSES

### Use of labour market intelligence



DESIGN TRAINING PROGRAMMES TO ACTIVATE UNEMPLOYED



Every two years IEPF defines a list of priorities based on LMSI tools. Current priorities were defined for 2016-2017 and will be revised for 2018. The priority sectors can be adapted regionally as a result of cooperation with local partners and consideration of regional and local strategies and action plans. The IEPF develops targeted training actions, in which the needs of both the unemployed and employers are taken into account. Along with the training in the workplace, this measure contributes to skills matching.

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## Financial schemes

The unemployed person aged more than 23 years (or 18 years for NEETS) receives an allowance of 35% of IAS ("Indexante de Apoios Sociais", a social support index), the value of which in 2017 was €421.32). Students are also entitled to transport (up to 15% of IAS), child care (to children and dependent adults of the students, up to 50% of IAS) and housing allowance (if the training centre is more than 50km from the place of residence of the student he/she can have an allowance of up to 30% of IAS).

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## Frequency of updates

The training priorities used to define the training offer are updated every 2 years. The next update will be for 2018-2019. The employment level of participants is monitored 6, 9 and 12 months after leaving programme.

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## Development

The measure had two adjustments. The first adjustment (December 2013) was made to integrate specific procedures aimed at youth (Vida Activa Jovem), with the purpose to reinforce the qualification of young unemployed adults (18-29 years) that were looking for their first job or a new job. This was made under a broader government intervention to tackle the rise of youth unemployment under European Union recommendations. The second adjustment (2017) introduced some operational changes, introducing more flexibility in the modular training specifically directed to candidates with low qualifications. The purpose is to develop specific and complementary responses (Vida Activa Qualifica+) to reinforce the levels of certified qualifications of this group and to improve their inclusion on the labour market.

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## Barriers

The measure is quite open about target groups and includes different kind of interventions. Nevertheless, during the implementation there were difficulties to reach two of its targets, the older unemployed people and the unemployed with lower qualifications. To better reach these targets groups, a complementary path (Vida Activa Qualifica+) was created, which includes a larger scope of training.

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## Success factors

There isn't an evaluation of the programme yet, but it increased the coverage of unemployed people by active labour market measures. The programme is centred in the identification of the needs of the target groups, providing different paths of training and/or recognition and certification of skills acquired according to the specific characteristics.

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## Monitoring

IEFP monitors the financial expenditure and number of students enrolled in the measure monthly. The same information on a national and regional basis is provided in its annual report, which is made public via the website.

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## Innovativeness

### SLIGHTLY INNOVATIVE

This is a case-management based intervention. The assessment of personal needs of the unemployed guides their referral to active measures and, specially, combines certification of acquired skills and prescription of training paths according to individual needs.

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## 4 SUSTAINABILITY

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### Evidence of effectiveness

In 2016, the measure covered a total of 145,551 individuals. The employment ratio after training is around 35%, as per information provided by IEFP. This is a massive intervention in registered unemployed people. As it is part of the core intervention of IEFP, it reaches a large number of beneficiaries. According to opinions of experts, most of the training provided is of lower duration than needed to promote significant progress in qualifications, and this reduces the impact in employment after participating in the programme.

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### Engagement of stakeholders

The programme was initiated by a Ministerial Order and its coordination is the responsibility of the national agency for employment, the Institute of Employment and Vocational Training (IEFP). The stakeholders engagement is well defined and the role of IEFP is clearly established as coordinator of the implementation. There is no specific mechanism of monitoring this measure, but it is followed-up by social partners as part of their engagement in the tripartite Administration Council of IEFP, where activities are planned and reports are approved.

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### Transferability

### EASILY TRANSFERABLE

The instrument can be used successfully in countries in which public employment services also run a training policy and can provide certification of acquired skills. The methodology is successful in a condition of strong coordination between referral, training services and certification procedures. In Portugal, this is possible, mostly by the role of IEFP, who simultaneously is the national employment agency and manager of a national network of training centres.

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## **Sustainability**

During the current programming period of European funds, the continuity is guaranteed, as it is co-financed by ESF. As it is currently a core measure in activation of unemployed, it is likely to remain in the political agenda.

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