



Momentum II

Momentum II (M2)



Ireland

1 DESCRIPTION

Timespan 2015-2017

Stage **NO LONGER OPERATIONAL**
The second part of the Momentum programme concluded in December 2016.

Focus area



MATCHING SKILLS FOR TODAY'S JOB MARKET



MATCHING SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE OF WORK

2 FOUNDATIONS

Policy Area



ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET POLICIES

Links eligible jobseekers to training that is tailored to local job vacancies and the needs of local employers.

Policy Goal

Improving employability of the long-term unemployed, as well as first time unemployed people following the economic crash, and skills shortages. Momentum consists of a number of projects aimed at improving the employability of individuals who are long-term unemployed. Participants receive training in growing sectors of the economy. It provides long-term unemployed people with access to a range of education and training projects, work placement/support and relevant industry and NFQ accreditation.

Mismatch

EXPLICITLY DESIGNED TO ADDRESS SKILL MISMATCH

Skills mismatch is directly tackled using a delivery-outcomes-based funding model. This was designed to provide a system of clear incentives to providers through financial premiums, which were granted based on the success of skills development. The providers were focused on the need to teach skills training relevant to the local economy, which was paired with a working placement and access to higher level qualifications (NVQ levels 4-6).

Aim of policy instrument



UPSKILL AND MATCH SKILLS OF UNEMPLOYED

Legal basis

MINISTERIAL ORDER

Administrative level

NATIONAL

Main responsible body

SOLAS, the agency responsible for Further Education and Training, which is the responsibility of the Department for Education and Skills.

Stakeholders



TRAINING PROVIDERS (PUBLIC/PRIVATE)

Momentum was administered by SOLAS on behalf of the Department of Education & Skills.

Funding

The total investment for M2 is €20,000,000.

Intended beneficiaries

The programme funds the provision of free education and training projects to allow 6,500 long-term unemployed (who are unemployed for 12 months or more) to gain skills and to access work opportunities in identified growing sectors. M2 was also adapted to better benefit young people and young people NEET. Rather than having a separate strand as in M1, M2 offered an extra four weeks of work placement for young people on the same programme as the adult jobseekers, to account for any gaps in existing work experience.

3 PROCESSES

Use of labour market intelligence



INFORM JOB-SEARCH DECISIONS OF UNEMPLOYED

Evidence was drawn from sectoral employment data to indicate areas where there was most growth.

Financial schemes

The training (offered by training providers, with employer input on the training-room content) offers outcome based payments to employers. Almost a third of the per-participant payment was attached to the achievement of an employment outcome; this was an increase of 10% on Momentum 1. Payment for each training provider/employer varies. However, it is estimated by the payment claim by the Training Provider, which included numbers of participants at each stage (such as post-induction participant numbers, week 11 participant numbers). Therefore, a third of the total payment offered depended on the number of participants successfully making it to the 'employment outcome stage', which was assessed 2 months after the programmes completion. This promotes success, and ties expenditure to successful outcomes in order to provide 'value for money' through investment. For Participants on Momentum projects, they will continue to receive: their weekly Social Welfare payment from the Department of Social Protection, this includes payment for any Qualified Adults and Child Dependents (subject to meeting all existing relevant qualification criteria) any payment of Rent Supplement or Mortgage Interest Supplement they were entitled to before starting on the Momentum initiative. However, participants will not receive any additional payment while participating on the Momentum project. The main incentive is for participants to gain skills that will increase their wages long term through employment and skills acquisition.

Frequency of updates

No longer operational. Based on the lessons learnt from M1, M2 was updated to have an increased work placement focus (which was ensured through a contractual requirement) to make sure that participants gained and had evidence of on-the-job skills.

Development

From M1 and the evaluations that followed, the following adjustments and improvements were made to M2: 1) Strengthened relationship with the Department of Social Protection: DSP positively engaged with SOLAS on the structure of, and recruitment to the projects. This level of commitment was important in overcoming recruitment challenges that were present in M1; 2) Additional Induction Module: An additional Induction element was added to all Momentum projects. It was expected to lead to greater motivation to complete the project and will improve the client's commitment to full engagement; 3) Increased Work Placement Focus: A contractual requirement was included in Momentum to ensure that all the participants are assigned a period of work placement; and 4) Increased Employment payment: Almost one-third of the per-participant payment was attached to the achievement of an employment outcome; this was an increase of 10% on Momentum 1.

Barriers

As with M1, M2 aimed to assist 6,500 long-term unemployed people to access relevant training that would lead them towards employment in growth sectors of the economy. As with M1, M2 also experienced high drop-out rates, with only 3,282 out of 6,134 finishing the programme course (a total 13,974 participants were initially referred to the programme). Specifically for the under 25 age group, the addition of the extra work placement block contributed to drop-out rates (as well as issues relating to personal reasons, health and attendance). Although the work placement is one of the instrument's strengths, it also caused challenges and concerns amongst participants (in terms of confidence level and pressure). However, these challenges remained consistent throughout each of the programme's phases, therefore making them difficult to overcome.

Success factors

The changes made and learned from the evaluation of M1 improved the success of M2.

Monitoring

As with M1, M2's success was measured by the number of participants who had signed off the Live Register at the end of the programme. The progress during the programme was measured by comparing the number of starters, against the number of finishers, then within the finishers the number who had entered full-time employment, part-time employment, or further education.

Innovativeness**VERY INNOVATIVE**

It deploys a "delivery-outcome" based system to fund training based on meeting key performance indicators. It was the first time such a system had been tried in Ireland and it proved successful.

4 SUSTAINABILITY

Evidence of effectiveness

The long-term period of observation post-M1 allowed M2 to have greater impact and run more smoothly. The model was transparent, with clear data available at all stages to show how effective the return to work process was. The data and evaluation of the instrument have shown that higher outcomes were achieved in M2 than in M1 across recruitment, training, placement and employment. This demonstrates that the most effective element of the instrument is in its continuous evaluation. A total of 34% of participants had obtained full-time employment in M2, and a further 11% had obtained part-time employment. These results are more than those achieved in the first programme, where 24% of participants had obtained full-time employment, and 6% had obtained part-time employment. The outcome for M2 is considered positive, because evidence shows that long-term unemployed (LTU) people have LTU exit rates to employment of around 10%. In addition, M2 took place in a better economic environment than M1, which meant that greater benefits were expected irrespective of the improvements made. That said, M2 tended to concentrate on a more traditional group of long-term unemployed people, whereas M1 concentrated on those who had been made unemployed as a consequence of the economic downturn.

Engagement of stakeholders

The instrument was designed on the assumption that the positive engagement between employers, training providers and stakeholders was crucial for success. This was addressed by the model's design (which was changed based on the evaluation and observation of M1), which allowed for a crucial structural link between labour market activation programmes and employers, where a reciprocal relationship sees the employer provide real work, based on a comprehensive period of state funded training, and placement provided by the public or private sector provider. The newer model also allowed the Employer to influence training-room content with insights on the sector skills gaps that need to be addressed.

Transferability**EASILY TRANSFERABLE**

The outcome-based approach to funding training providers is similar to the Work Programme in the UK and Job Services Australia. So there is potential for this type of approach to be transferred elsewhere.

Sustainability

The programme ran until the beginning of 2017, and there are currently no published plans for M3.
