

‘Investing in skills’

EU funds to promote training of persons actively participating in the Labour Market to increase productivity and enhance adaptability

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Jobs, growth and investment are among the main priorities of the European Union (EU) as set out in the Europe 2020 Strategy – the EU’s 10-year growth and job strategy.

Five headline targets have been set for the EU to achieve by the end of 2020. These cover employment; research and development; climate/energy; education; social inclusion and poverty reduction.

To reach such targets, Europe has identified seven flagship initiatives. Within each initiative, both the EU and national authorities are being asked to coordinate their efforts so that action on the EU and the individual Member State level are mutually reinforcing. One of these initiatives consists of an agenda for new skills and jobs.

The New Skills for New Jobs initiative presents a set of concrete actions aimed at helping improve flexibility and security at work, job quality and working conditions, equip people with the right skills and enhance conditions for job creation.

The purpose of skills development is to help anticipate the skills needed in future, better match skills and labour market needs and, last but not least, to bridge the gap between education and work. In practice, the initiative translates into a number of practical measures including the availability of EU funds for projects addressing its objectives and priorities.

On a national level, EU funds for skills development are governed by Operational Programme II – ‘Investing in human capital to create more opportunities and promote the well-being of society’ where €8 million in European Social Funds have been made available to promote training activities.

Investing in Skills (IIS)

The initiative, managed by Jobsplus, is intended to promote the training of persons actively participating in Malta’s labour market with the aim of increasing productivity and enhancing adaptability. It seeks to increase and/or improve the knowledge and skills of employed persons through funds granted by this scheme.

Undertakings having an economic activity, irrespective of their legal form, may apply for funding support to provide training opportunities for their staff members. Undertakings may include self-employed persons, family businesses, partnerships, associations or other body of persons. Undertakings that are facing financial difficulties are not eligible for funds.

Additionally, the trainee/s must be formally employed by the beneficiary during the training period. For an application to be considered for evaluation, one must submit the complete documentation, including an online application.

Training that is legally enforced is not applicable for this scheme but rather training that is done on a voluntary basis. In the case of training accredited under the Malta Qualification Framework (MQF) or European Qualifications Framework (EQF), levels 1-4 will be accepted under this scheme. The beneficiary must also ensure that Malta benefits from the project.

The project needs to have an incentive effect, meaning that the grant must enhance the motivation for training. Therefore, it is essential for a beneficiary submits a written application for aid before work on the project or activity starts. Funds under this scheme will be allocated on a first-come first-served basis. The training activities must be held between April 19, 2017 and June 30, 2020. Applications must be received by the Investing in Skills Unit at Jobsplus at least three weeks (21 calendar days) prior to the date when training is expected to commence.

Eligible costs under this initiative may include external trainers' costs and examination fees, trainers and trainees' flight expenses directly related to the training project. Trainees' personnel costs will be reimbursed if the external training occurs during the normal working hours of the trainees.

The co-financing rate for eligible costs will vary from 70% to 50% depending on the size and capacity of the undertaking applying for the grant.

Those interested in this funding scheme may find more information on www.meusac.gov.mt or contact us on 2200 3300 or funding.meusac@gov.mt.