

Identification of employment and training needs for 2023

The Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) provides, on a systematic basis, long-term and short-term forecasts of employment needs in Cyprus. In this context, the HRDA conducted the study "Identification of employment and training needs for 2023", which provides estimates for the employment and training needs for 2023.

The identification of employment and training needs on an annual basis, is particularly important, as it complements and enhances the periodic provision of employment forecasts for the economy of Cyprus for a ten-year period. Through this annual study, the occupation and skill needs of the economy of Cyprus are identified, in order to assist the HRDA to plan and implement appropriate activities to meet the needs and alleviate the labour market problems, which have been intensified as a result of the conditions caused by the coronavirus pandemic and the geopolitical and economic developments from the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine.

A. Methodology

The annual identification of the employment and training needs is conducted in cooperation with the social partners and other competent stakeholders. Their estimates are provided through the completion of a specially designed questionnaire on the occupation and skill needs of the economy of Cyprus for 2023. Additionally, through the completion of a questionnaire by the enterprises that cooperate with the HRDA, information on the occupation and skill needs they expect to have in 2023 is collected.

Furthermore, data has been extracted from the European tool "Skills Online Vacancy Analysis Tool for Europe" (Skills-OVATE)¹ of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), which provides information on the occupation and skill needs based on online job advertisements posted on websites in the European Union (EU).

For the completion of the study for 2023, a focus group meeting was also held for the first time on the occupation and skill needs of the labour market. During the meeting, the participants discussed the current situation of the labour market and the observed occupation and skill needs as well as the mechanisms and actions being implemented and/or planned to identify and meet the needs.

The estimates on the occupation and skill needs provided by the stakeholders and the enterprises as well as the data from the Skills-OVATE tool, have been evaluated taking into account the long-term forecasts for employment needs provided in the recent study of the HRDA "Forecasts of labour demand and supply in the Cyprus economy 2022-2032"², in conjunction with the

¹ The Skills-OVATE tool provides real time information on the EU labour market based on online job advertisements.
<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/skills-online-vacancies>

² <https://bit.ly/3Gk2ZhC>

conclusions of the focus group discussion. Additional factors that were considered were the data of employment, registered unemployment, new job openings and job vacancies for 2022, in view of the situation of the labour market and the economy. Furthermore, the intense seasonality of certain occupations, such as those in the tourism sector, was considered.

B. Recommendations for the implementation of training programmes

The results of the study indicate that there are quantitative and qualitative needs in occupations and skills in the labour market, which can be addressed through the promotion and implementation of appropriate training programmes, for the following eight occupations and seven skills:

Occupations

- Receptionists – Proposal for the implementation of 2 training programmes
- Waiters – Proposal for the implementation of 6 training programmes
- Bartenders – Proposal for the implementation of 2 training programmes
- Hotel housekeepers – Proposal for the implementation of 4 training programmes
- Personal care providers in nursing homes, care centres and residences – Proposal for the implementation of 2 training programmes
- Bakers – Proposal for the implementation of 4 training programmes
- Butchers and meat cutters – Proposal for the implementation of 3 training programmes
- Welders – Proposal for the implementation of 2 training programmes

Skills

- Specialisation of cooks in Japanese and Chinese cuisine – Proposal for the implementation of 4 training programmes
- Installation and maintenance of photovoltaic systems – Proposal for the implementation of 2 training programmes
- Repair and maintenance of hybrid or electric vehicles – Proposal for the implementation of 2 training programmes
- Installation and maintenance of air conditioning and cooling systems – Proposal for the implementation of 2 training programmes
- Waste and refuse management – Proposal for the implementation of 2 training programmes
- Basic digital skills – Proposal for the implementation of 40 training programmes
- Specialised digital skills – Proposal for the implementation of 20 training programmes

C. Actions for the implementation of the training programmes

The green and digital transition of the economy, which is also supported by the schemes included in the “Recovery and Resilience Plan for Cyprus 2021-2026” (RRP)³ and the Cohesion Policy Programme «THALIA» 2021-2027⁴, the increasing utilisation of new technologies, the automation, the new forms of work and the significant labour force shortages observed in the labour market, create opportunities for filling the new work positions through the implementation of initial training programmes. These also highlight the need for the human resources of Cyprus to acquire new and/or upgrade their existing skills and knowledge through the implementation of continuing training programmes. Towards this end, the HRDA implements various training actions, which are addressed at both the employed and the unemployed.

The training programmes addressed to the unemployed, are implemented mainly through the HRDA’s scheme “Training Programmes for the Unemployed”⁵. The scheme aims at the provision of training opportunities for the unemployed in order to acquire, enrich and/or upgrade their skills and knowledge, in accordance with the needs observed in the labour market, which in turn will improve their prospects for reintegration in employment, as well as to meet their expectations for a new professional career path.

Complementary action for the training of the unemployed in the identified occupations and skills, is their participation in relevant training programmes within the framework of the HRDA’s Scheme “Standard Multi-Company Training Programmes”⁶. The Scheme aims to meet the needs of the economy for highly trained personnel through the activation and proper utilisation of Vocational Training Centres (VTCs). The Public Employment Service is allowed to issue two referrals per calendar year to each unemployed person to participate in these training programmes.

The occupation and skill needs identified in the context of the study can also be met through the participation of employees of enterprises/organisations in other HRDA’s Schemes. The HRDA implements a wide spectrum of activities for the vocational training and development of human resources, providing them with the opportunity to acquire new and/or upgrade existing knowledge and skills through their participation in both single-company and multi-company training programmes.

In addition to the utilisation of the HRDA’s existing Schemes and in order to meet the identified occupation and skill needs, the unemployed and the employed may participate in the new schemes included in the RRP and the Cohesion Policy Programme «THALIA» 2021-2027.

The four new schemes included in the RRP are the following:

- Training programmes for the acquisition of digital skills (for the employed and the unemployed)
- Training programmes for the acquisition of knowledge and skills related to the green economy (for the employed and the unemployed)

³ <https://bit.ly/3TPIY93>

⁴ <https://bit.ly/3yA1mZp>

⁵ <https://bit.ly/3N2qSy5>

⁶ <https://bit.ly/45J5aGW>

- Training programmes for the acquisition of knowledge and skills related to the blue economy (for the employed and the unemployed)
- Training programmes for the acquisition of entrepreneurial knowledge and skills (for the unemployed)

The new HRDA's schemes included in the Cohesion Policy Programme «THALIA» 2021-2027, concern Training programmes for young people aged 15-29 not in education, employment, or training (NEETs) to acquire basic knowledge and skills and the pilot implementation of Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs).

Following the completion of the training programmes, the individuals, where applicable, can be assessed and certified for the knowledge, skills and abilities they acquired, through the System of Vocational Qualifications (SVQ)⁷. The certification of vocational qualifications of individuals facilitates the entry/re-entry into employment by the unemployed and the inactive as well as the professional advancement of the employed and contributes to the increase of productivity and competitiveness of enterprises that employ them.

It is noted that the results of the study will also be utilised in the preparation of the documents that contain the themes for the training programmes that can be approved and subsidised by the HRDA⁸. These are essential guiding documents for the VTCs and enterprises in designing and organising appropriate training programmes and are prepared in the general context of the HRDA's strategic objectives and targets, following prior relevant consultation with the social partners and other stakeholders, including business and professional bodies.

⁷ <https://bit.ly/3IP55r8>

⁸ <https://bit.ly/3qnE5sA>