On the 11th and 12th of July 2015, the Portuguese National Association of Masters Athletics (ANAV), member of European Masters Athletics (EMA), staged the Masters Athletics International Meeting in the city of Vila Real de Santo António (Algarve, Portugal), at which a total of 61 athletes (24 women and 37 men) competed.

Apart from the large number of foreign athletes present, accounting for around 40% of the total, the high percentage of female athletes is also particularly worth noting. So too were the performances and corresponding WMA points obtained by the athletes: 6 performances worth over 9,000 points and 42 worth over 8,000 points. This is a clear indication of the quality of the results obtained and the competitiveness of the event itself.

The aims of promoting and developing masters athletics in Portugal were definitely achieved since there was considerable involvement on the part of the local population. More than 100 people attended the convivial dinner and spent a pleasant evening socialising with each other while savouring the local cuisine and watching an excellent fado performance.

Those who competed in the meeting as part of their preparation for other competitions also achieved their goal, since they had the opportunity to compete against a number of very high-performing athletes.

The prize-giving ceremony for the Saturday afternoon’s cross-country race was held in the city centre in the presence of hundreds of people, helping to advertise not only this event but also the forthcoming European Masters Non-stadia Championship, scheduled to take place in the same city in May 2016.

This was a highly successful initiative which we will certainly be repeating, although the scheduling will be changed to ensure the date is better suited to the Portuguese athletics calendar, allowing even more local and foreign athletes to take part.