Academic staff is a key resource in higher education institutions (HEIs) and therefore has a major role in the achievement of the objectives of these institutions. Satisfied and well-motivated academic staff can build a national and international reputation for themselves and their institutions. Moreover, the performance of academic staff impacts student learning. In this context, the study of academic staff job satisfaction and motivation to perform their professional activities becomes crucial, especially as higher education is traversed by multiple changes. The purpose of this paper is to present and analyze the findings of a nationwide study on satisfaction and motivation of academics. All academics working in Portuguese HEIs were invited to complete a survey online. The data obtained from 4529 academics were extensively analyzed and findings are presented here along with their implications for HEIs in Portugal.