

## Metinvest Is Among the Top Ten Most Resilient Employers in Ukraine. Tetiana Petruk on Employee Motivation, Training and the Talent Pool

According to the publication *Dilova Stolytsia*, Metinvest Group ranks among the top ten most resilient employers in Ukraine.



One of the main criteria for selecting companies from various sectors of the economy for the rating includes employee training and professional development. In the fourth year of the war, the Ukrainian labour market is caught between two challenges: high unemployment and shortages of staff. This situation has arisen because, under current conditions, many companies lack qualified employees, while the skills of applicants often do not match the requirements of employers.

The publication also highlighted how employers' HR teams work with their military colleagues. Companies with successful experience in digitalisation and implementation of AI tools had the best chance of being included in the rating.

Other criteria include safe working conditions and decent pay, concern for the mental health of employees, broad opportunities for career growth, the provision of benefits packages and a well-developed support system for colleagues facing difficult life circumstances.

According to *Dilova Stolytsia*, despite the enormous losses caused by the Russian aggression, Metinvest Group remains one of the largest and most responsible employers in Ukraine. It regularly indexes employee salaries above the inflation rate and adheres to a fair system of remuneration.

Metinvest responds to labour market challenges linked to staff shortages by retraining employees, attracting new staff and employing veterans. The Group has established its own university, Metinvest Polytechnic, which trains qualified specialists to European standards. In total, the Group has invested UAH513 million in the creation of facilities and in the development of the university. In 2024, the institution graduated its first 143 master's students, most of whom are Group employees planning to advance in their careers.



In an

[interview](#)

with the publication prior to the rating, Tetiana Petruk, Chief Sustainability Officer at Metinvest Group, talked about the motivation system, employee training and retraining and the development of a talent pool amid a shortage of specialists.

**— The front line is drawing ever closer, and important Group enterprises are shutting down. Are you able to maintain salary levels indexed to inflation under the current circumstances?**

— Indeed, Metinvest Group has lost over 50% of its business since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, including its two largest steel plants — Ilyich Steel and Azovstal in Mariupol, as well as Avdiivka Coke. In addition, due to the approach of the front line to Pokrovsk, the Group has suspended operations at Pokrovske Coal, Ukraine's last major producer of coking coal.

Despite these losses, we are guided by the principle of building a fair system of remuneration based on work performance and regular increases in employee incomes. Each year, we index salaries above the projected inflation rate. In May 2024, the Group increased salaries for employees of its manufacturing and repair facilities in Ukraine by an average of 15%. For certain professions in short supply — up to 30%. As a result, the average wage for production staff has risen by nearly 30% compared to the pre-war period. In September 2024, we increased the salaries of administrative and managerial staff, as well as of employees of service assets, by 15%. Currently, the average salary within the Group is nearly UAH28,000, and for the main technological positions — approximately UAH35,000.

**— Could you please describe the employee motivation system? I know that, in addition to salaries, you offer bonuses and incentive payments. What is the difference between them and what they are given for?**

— The Group is introducing a differentiated approach to motivation depending on the category of employee. The Group's industrial enterprises in Ukraine have two types of bonuses. The first is a production bonus, which fosters collective responsibility for work performance – meeting the operational plan and maintaining product quality. It promotes team cohesion in achieving production targets under martial law and amid staff shortages. The second is a team bonus for efficiency aimed at achieving operational results. This means that all the Group's manufacturing and repair personnel are focused on producing and shipping quality products with optimal monthly costs.

Meanwhile, a KPI-based motivation system has been implemented at the Group's trading assets, as well as in logistics, IT, service and foreign enterprises, with indicators tailored to the specifics of each business area. The management company and senior management of the enterprises receive bonuses based on the achievement of annual goals — both team and functional ones.

**— Despite the difficult situation, you continue to operate in frontline regions. However, for obvious reasons, you currently have over 4,000 vacancies there. How do you manage to maintain operations in such a situation? Do you offer additional incentives for your remaining employees?**

— Before the full-scale war, the Group employed nearly 111,000 people. Following the loss of assets, more than 50,000 employees remain, with around 10,000 having served in Ukraine's armed forces. Currently, more than 8,000 employees are serving in the army and 1,000 have returned from the war and gone to work for the Group.

Metinvest's industrial enterprises have approximately 4,000 vacancies.

To maintain its operations in this situation, the Group is working in several areas. First, we are retraining employees. They acquire additional professional qualifications at the Group's expense, enabling them to perform various tasks and compensate for the staff shortage.

In addition, we are recruiting new personnel — looking for employees by offering vacancies for both men and women, with or without work experience.

We also work with war veterans, offering training and employment to former military personnel, helping them to adapt to civilian life and reintegrate into work processes.

**— A proactive way to address the staff shortage is to train people. You now have an entire university. How many new technical specialists do you train and recruit through this institution during the year?**

— Yes, in 2020, we established Metinvest Polytechnic, Ukraine's first private mining and metals university. One of the reasons for this was the need for qualified personnel. Having our own university enables us to train specialists to European levels and who will meet the current needs of both the Group and the mining and metals sector as a whole. The Group has already invested UAH513 million in the university's facilities and its development.

The university offers 16 bachelor's degree and 18 master's degree programmes, as well as five postgraduate programmes and provides advanced training and workshops. In 2024, the university graduated its first 143 master's students — most of whom are Metinvest employees planning to advance in their careers.

Metinvest Polytechnic combines distance learning with dual education and offline laboratory workshops. Internships take place at Metinvest's production facilities in Zaporizhzhia, Kryvyi Rih and Kamianske, as well as at our European facilities. The skills students acquire during their studies will enable them to fully master their profession and work at any facility in the world.

**— What is the Group's strategy for developing its talent pool?**

— In the approach to personnel management, the strategy of developing a talent pool and training plays an important role. We have focused on building a talent pool for key positions across our Ukrainian enterprises and have completed a talent development project at our foreign assets for the implementation of current and future projects.

We have also summarised the results of the annual assessment, which will serve as the basis for future selection for the talent pool, as well as for training and development programmes for our employees.

We support internal promotions and transfers between enterprises, enabling employees to realise their potential. That is why it is important for us not only to prepare our employees for current tasks, but also to ensure that they are ready for future challenges and opportunities within the Group.

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