

## Metinvest ranks among Ukraine's top 15 "unbreakable" employers: Tetiana Petruk talks about overcoming staff shortages, salary revisions and working with veterans

Metinvest Group has been included in the dsnews.ua rating of 15 "unbreakable" employers in Ukraine.



As stated in the

["Top 15 Unbreakable Employers"](#)

article, the rating includes companies from various industries that meet the following priorities:

- Guarantee security, including in the face of military risks.
- Preserve jobs and decent working conditions as much as possible; increase salaries considering inflation.
- Help colleagues in the defence forces.
- Ensure the reintegration of veterans at the workplace and help their families.
- Care for the psychological health of employees.
- Develop professional skills and provide opportunities for career growth.
- Provide a social package and support in difficult life circumstances.

According to the latest Opendatabot rating, the publication also considered the number of jobs provided by a company. However, it primarily focused on the conditions created for employees by an employer, regardless of its size.

The publication noted that Metinvest was included in the rating for its maximum efforts to retain teams in conditions of unprecedented challenges, including the loss of a significant part of its assets and operations in front line regions.

As the largest employer in the industry, Metinvest Group, an international mining and metals company, has developed a number of tools to retain and attract employees. During the war, the number of employees almost halved. The situation is complicated by the fact that 15% of the Group's employees have been mobilised into the military and its enterprises are located near the front line.



To protect employees, the Group has prepared bomb shelters, provided body armour to protect those who are unable to leave the production site during air raid alerts, and organised tactical medical training.

Despite the war, the Group has maintained one of the leading employee motivation systems in the industry. Last year, Metinvest introduced an additional bonus for teamwork, allowing production employees to increase their income by 15%.

The Group takes care of displaced employees, military personnel and their families, as well as veterans. The Group pays for the medical treatment of those seriously injured and assists with prosthetics if necessary. Psychological rehabilitation programmes cover various categories of people. Meanwhile, Metinvest remains one of the largest donors to the Ukrainian defence forces and helps Ukrainians to survive the war.

In an

[interview with dsnews.ua](https://www.dsnews.ua)

, Tetiana Petruk, Metinvest Group's Chief Sustainability Officer, spoke about employee retraining, internal career advancement routes and the inclusive ecosystem for veterans.

**— In 2022, after the loss of Mariupol, Metinvest could not avoid redundancies. Have you managed to retain staff in 2023?**

— Really, 2022 was the worst year in Metinvest's history. We began to increase the workload of our enterprises after the resumption of seaborne exports in 2023. That is why we did not implement layoffs last year. Conversely, since then, we have been focusing all our efforts on retaining production teams and improving process efficiency. However, due to staff turnover and mobilisation, staff numbers decreased by 4,800 people.

**— How widespread are the retraining programmes for employees who want to stay in the Group?**

— We offer retraining for virtually all blue-collar professions. We conduct training for 85% of specialities directly at the production site. In 2023 alone, Metinvest retrained and improved the qualifications of 13,000 employees.

**— Has Metinvest been able to preserve salary levels by indexing them to inflation?**

— We regularly monitor trends in the compensation market and inflation rates. As a socially responsible Group, we have been increasing employee incomes despite all the wartime challenges. In 2023, the Group introduced an additional team bonus for employees at its Ukrainian production sites, resulting in a 15% increase in employee income. Salaries have been increased in line with inflation at our international and service enterprises. From 1 May 2024, we will increase salaries for employees of our production and repair enterprises in Ukraine. The average salary of production staff will therefore increase by almost 30% compared with the pre-war period.

**— Is Metinvest currently experiencing a staff shortage?**

— Yes, we are already experiencing a staff shortage. The Group currently has about 4,000 open positions. Among the reasons for the shortage are labour migration and mobilisation, as well as people moving to safer regions and abroad. To overcome the shortage, we retrain our employees so that they can acquire an additional vocation, enabling them to work outside their main profession.

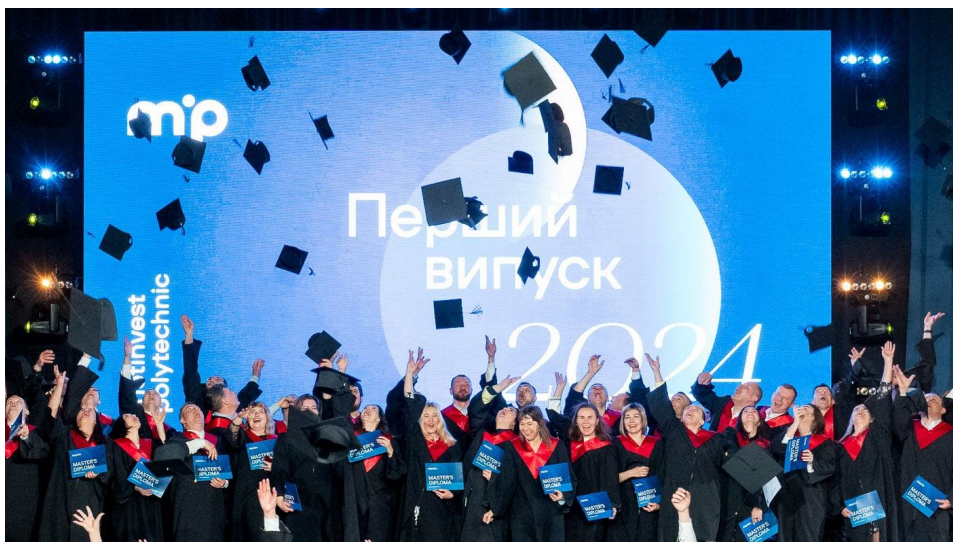


— **Can women partly compensate for the staff shortage by learning traditionally male professions?**

— We have started to hire significantly more women wherever possible. These are professions where women have worked before, and where the necessary infrastructure already exists. For example, these are repair specialities: electricians, electrical mechanics and conveyor operators. In this way, we are attempting to free up men for those professions that women are unwilling to do. Obviously, we cannot avoid the further increase of women working in traditionally male professions. This is our future.

— **You opened Metinvest Polytechnic to address the staff shortage. How many students has the university taught and how many does it plan to teach this year? Will the university be built in a particular city?**

— This year, Metinvest Polytechnic graduated the first 143 master's students in modern engineering and technical specialities. Currently, there is a third intake of students to the university, as well as the first intake to the postgraduate programme. We have ambitious plans because the demand is there. In total, 690 students are studying at the university. I believe that Metinvest Polytechnic will become the backbone for overcoming the staff shortage in our industry and a driver of Ukraine's reconstruction. I hope that we will be able to build the university campus, as planned, in Mariupol after the liberation of the city.



— **What is your strategy for building a talent pool amid the staff shortage?**

— This year, we have focused on building a talent pool for key positions at our Ukrainian enterprises and completed a talent review at our international operations.

We have also summarised the results of the annual assessment, based on which we plan the selection of the talent pool, training and development programmes for employees.

We support internal promotion and intercompany transfers, enabling employees to fulfil their potential. This is why it is important for us not only to prepare our employees for today's tasks, but also to ensure their readiness for future challenges and opportunities internally.

— **How does the Group approach staff training and development? What psychological support programmes do you have in place?**

— We are constantly engaged in employee training. Our psychological support programmes cater for different categories of employees. For example, this year the Group has introduced psychological support for employees mobilised into the defence forces and veterans.

In addition, since the beginning of the war, Metinvest has set up a helpline for employees to receive psychological counselling. The Group also offers the Metinvest Together! psychological support service for its employees and their families.

The Group has implemented two major programmes for the psychological rehabilitation of women and children, including families of soldiers. In total, since the beginning of the full-scale war, nearly 1,200 women and children have undergone psychological rehabilitation.

In 2023, we also became a partner in the opening of a hub in Zaporizhzhia for the psychological rehabilitation of civilians and soldiers affected by the war.

— **Apart from psychological support, how do you support your employees affected by the war?**

— At the beginning of the full-scale war, Metinvest launched several humanitarian initiatives that continue to this day. In particular, we have already allocated UAH217.5 million to help the injured, families of employees who have died and their relatives.

We also assisted with the relocation of employees from the temporarily occupied territories and their resettlement in new homes. The Group offered jobs and compensated housing costs to more than 1,000 families of such employees. In total, these expenses amounted to almost UAH62 million. The Group provided free accommodation for hundreds more families at its facilities.

— **How are you preparing for the reintegration of employees returning from the defence forces?**

— Overall, 8,000 of our employees have been mobilised into the Ukrainian defence forces, and more than 500 veterans have already returned to work at the Group. That is why we are creating an inclusive ecosystem for the reintegration of veterans into normal life and work. All business processes are being consistently adapted to ease their return.

Our work strategy is based on the principles of responsibility, consistency and internal justice. The main areas of our work include psychological rehabilitation and additional medical examinations, as well as return, retention and adaptation programmes. In particular, these include retraining and preferential conditions for admission to Metinvest Polytechnic. In addition, we are working to set up an association and community space for veterans.

We also train our team on how to welcome veterans, and our managers on how to anticipate conflicts in the team. We are learning from the US experience of working with veterans of war and developing our own practices.

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