

## Prospects and New Opportunities: Metinvest is Changing the Perception of Vocational Education

Metinvest Group is ready to resume vocational guidance programmes in vocational schools and secondary educational institutions that have been suspended due to the war as soon as it becomes possible. Svitlana Sudakova, Director of the Department for Personnel Recruitment, Adaptation and Development at Metinvest, announced this at the Serpneva educational conference held on 26 August in Kyiv.



The annual conference discussed education as a government strategy, studying in wartime, restoring access to education, reforming specialised secondary education, vocational schools, extracurricular activities, as well as the digitalisation of education in Ukraine.

The event was organised by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine with the support of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Ukraine, the Swiss-Ukrainian project Decentralisation for Improved Democratic Education (DECIDE), which is being implemented in Ukraine by a consortium of the DOCCU NGO and the Zurich University for Teacher Education with the support of Switzerland and the EGAP Programme, which is funded by Switzerland and is being implemented by the East Europe Foundation.

More than 70 speakers took part in the conference, including representatives from relevant ministries, educational institutions, businesses, local authorities, NGOs, as well as teachers and students.

The "Vocational Schools of the Future" panel was dedicated to discussing the interaction between the government, vocational schools and business, and exploring new formats for cooperation. Representatives from Metinvest, Interpipe and Kernel, three large companies that cooperate with vocational technical education institutions across Ukraine, took part in the discussion.



In her talk, Sudakova said: “Metinvest has long-standing relationships with vocational schools in every region where it operates. We have a lot of experience, but unfortunately, many career guidance projects in vocational schools, secondary education institutions and schools have been suspended. Now they are all waiting for their time. We will resume the projects as soon as possible. And we will continue to break down the stereotype that says if a child goes to a vocational school, there is something wrong with them, or they have no prospects. The child should learn more about mining and metals professions, understand how they work, how to master them, and, most importantly, what happens next. That is, to see their prospects and new opportunities.”

The director of the department said that Metinvest is building its relationships with vocational schools on the principles of openness and readiness for dialogue.

Sudakova said: “Relationships are a matter of two parties. Business, as well as vocational school, should be open and ready for a dialogue. If this is open communication, then we are definitely able to, firstly, discuss everything we can offer to each other. And secondly, to set a goal and move towards it. This is our common task.”

She added that Metinvest currently has 4,000 vacancies, many of which are available to young people.

Dmytro Zavgorodniy, Deputy Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine for issues of digital development, digital transformations and digitalisation, moderated the discussion and said that he had visited vocational schools with which Metinvest Group has been working. Zavgorodniy said during the presentation of the ministry’s projects: “We will try a different approach to establishing cooperation with business. This is our key stakeholder, partner and client. These are the organisations that we are not reaching. We hear a lot about it. And we will try to focus in the next year on increasing the number of partnership formats and resulting employment.”