

Technical Education — A Matter of National Security: Why Ukraine Cannot Import Specialists

At the 2025 HR Wisdom Summit held in Kyiv, Oleg Davydenko, the Director of the Corporate Communications Department at Metinvest Group, discussed how businesses and educational institutions should cooperate to graduate specialists in demand for the real sector of the economy and what is needed to achieve this.



The summit brought together more than 40 speakers, including representatives from government, large businesses, experts and educational institutions. Participants discussed HR strategies in wartime, opportunities for veteran adaptation after their service, tackling burnout, talent retention and the development of corporate training. The event was organised by the Ekonomika+ media outlet.

Davydenko participated in the “Interaction between educational institutions and real business” panel. The discussion featured representatives from Kormotech, Ajax Systems, Philip Morris Ukraine, ArcelorMittal Kryvyi Rih and the Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute.

Davydenko believes that businesses must be involved in the educational ecosystem at all levels, from school to university. At the same time, the goals of education and business must overlap, otherwise the disparity between their priorities — for example, the focus of education on quantity rather than quality — leads to a shortage of qualified personnel, forcing businesses to develop their own training systems.

He added: “We worked with schools and vocational colleges, trained teachers and eventually established our own university because there was a shortage of specialists with the required qualifications. If there is a demand from business, there should be a response from the education sectors. And this can only be scaled up through a shared space where education and business create a unified career path — a continuous cycle of learning, work and development that motivates people to stay and study in Ukraine.”

Davydenko said that technical higher education in Ukraine remains undervalued. Currently, there is low demand for technical specialties such as mathematics, physics, chemistry and engineering.



He is convinced: “Technical education is a matter of national security, because the stability and development of the economy depend on how much human potential will be preserved in Ukraine. We cannot afford to import knowledge and specialists — they must be here. It is these people who will rebuild what has been destroyed, build new enterprises and create the future of the country in the coming decades.”

At the same time, the decline in public interest in technical education is linked to the loss of popularity of industry, particularly metallurgy, even though steel, a product of this sector, surrounds us every day.

In his view, while the academic and scientific components of education are important, the key is close integration with practical experience with certification programmes, specific skills and internships. A university student must have a clear understanding of how to apply their knowledge in practice and where they will work in the future.

Metinvest invests in the creation of such programmes that meet the current market needs. In particular, the Group has invested over UAH513 million in the development of Metinvest Polytechnic university. The university offers 19 bachelor’s and 21 master’s degrees programmes, as well as postgraduate studies. It has already graduated nearly 300 students for its master’s degree programme — highly qualified specialists who apply their knowledge in practice.

Davydenko said: “I encourage educational institutions to seek partnerships — businesses will respond willingly. Establishing your own university is not the path for everyone, so businesses can cooperate with other universities and programmes. Partnership is the key to targeted, high-quality and fast results.”