

WORK-BASED LEARNING IN UKRAINE

Work-based learning in the Ukrainian VET system

In Ukraine, there are two modes of work-based learning (WBL): (i) traineeship/in-company pre-graduation internship/work placement carried out as part of school-based education; and (ii) dual education. However, the main current understanding of WBL is dual education.

In September 2018, the government approved the concept paper on training of experts based on dual education, which states that dual education shall combine vocational education in a vocational education and training (VET) institution with a work placement in companies, institutions and organisations for the acquisition of certain qualifications, as a rule, based on a training contract with the company.

Within dual education, in 2015 a pilot project was launched for three VET institutions. Considering the efficiency of the project, it has been expanded. Elements of dual education were introduced in 46 VET institutions in 2017, in 198 VET institutions in 2018, and in 345 VET institutions in 2019.

The introduction of elements of dual education in VET institutions has changed the ratio of learning time so that it is now split with 30% theoretical learning and 70% practical learning.

The role of social partners

There is a formal social partnership (based on agreements, regional and specialised councils) and non-formal partnership (within certain projects). As part of the decentralisation process, regional VET councils were established in all regions. In December 2019, the government approved a new statute for the councils, which defines the main tasks and responsibilities of their operations. The councils are advisory and consultative bodies in the regional state administrations. They are in charge of the preparation and oversight of regional VET policy.

The National Agency of Qualifications established by the Law on Education (2017) is a permanent collegial body co-founded by the government and the social partners. It has several tasks including coordination of stakeholders, supporting legislative developments, developing and maintaining the registry of qualifications, coordinating the development of occupational standards and supporting the development of educational standards.

Within the framework of the public-private partnership, nine memorandums of cooperation concerning the training of skilled workers have been signed by the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) and social partners.

The main challenges

The implementation of dual education since 2015 has been successful; however, various challenges remain.

- Employees involved as mentors in the training process require additional training in psychology and pedagogy to become in-company trainers.
- The issue of tax benefits and preferences for training employers remains unresolved.
- Small companies are unable to fully meet the requirements of curricula on their own, which creates a need for them to network.
- Classes of 25–30 learners are usually placed across several companies, which requires aligning of curriculum delivery and affects the training timeline.
- Equipment at VET institutions is worn out/outdated (even if the situation with the technical base is gradually improving).
- The main barriers for WBL are formalised and bureaucratic procedures.

KEY FIGURES

- **Number of VET institutions under the MoES: 824 in 2015; 809 in 2016; 767 in 2017; 763 in 2018; and 754 in 2019.**
- **In 2019, there were 253 900 learners (61.95% men and 38.05% women) enrolled in vocational schools under the MoES.**
- **Implementation of dual mode of education:**

	2016	2017	2018	2019
VET institutions	3	46	198	254
Occupations	3	54	114	160
Learners	97	3 000	7 000	10 000*
Employers	25	300	800	1 000

* Estimation

Providing learners with skills that match the labour market needs is a key issue that the VET system has to address. Dual education fosters a better connection with the world of work. However, the successful implementation of dual education is contingent upon cooperation between the VET provider and employer.

How does cooperation between learning venues work?

The cooperation between VET institutions and companies is somewhat weak. However, when it exists, the quality is good. Due to the ongoing reform, and to the work of the regional VET council, the autonomy of VET providers and the introduction of dual education, cooperation is improving.

Big companies could provide a large number of workplaces, multi-annual cooperation, equipment and support to the mentors. When the partners are small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), as is most often the case, especially micro companies, the initiative comes more from VET institutions, rather than companies. These enterprises do not have the resources (not only financial) to tackle the issue of training. When these SMEs do commit, it is usually just for one academic year.

In the regular internship framework, 50% of the wage paid to the learner goes to the VET institution.

The partnership between education and business concerns both curricula and delivery. Such cooperation is an opportunity for knowledge sharing, exchanges of experiences and distribution of resources.

In the framework of dual VET, all educational programmes are designed in cooperation with employers.

The MoES has developed a trilateral contract (VET institution, learner and employer). For example, the employer will be able to come to an agreement with the student about the job after training. There are also many examples of agreements between VET institutions and companies to determine the responsibilities of the parties.

There are some limited opportunities for professional development of teachers to improve their professional skills using work-based facilities (e.g. teachers visit the companies, traineeships and industries, and work with industry mentors in companies).

2020 objectives

In the Action Plan on the Concept of Training on the Dual Form of Education (April 2019) and the Concept for Modern Vocational Education until 2027 (June 2019), the government set several goals related to dual education, including adopting normative legal acts to ensure the development of the dual form of education; providing methodological support; preparing and approving methodological recommendations for the development of educational programmes; and organising the educational process in the dual form of education. Measures also include awareness raising for different population groups about the positives of dual training and providing in-company internships for VET teachers using global experience of dual training.

The latest developments

Recently, the government has adopted several formal acts dedicated or related to WBL/dual education:

- Order on Implementing the Dual Form of Education in Vocational Training of Skilled Workers (June 2017);
- Decree on Approval of the Concept of Training on the Dual Form of Education (September 2018);
- Implementation of the Concept of Training of Specialists using the Dual Form of Education;
- Order on the Action Plan on the Concept of Training on the Dual Form of Education (April 2019);
- Decree on the Concept for Modern Vocational Education until 2027 (June 2019).

The increase in the number of learners in dual education has been remarkable, from 3 000 in 2017 to 7 000 in 2018.

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IMPLEMENTING THE CONCEPT OF TRAINING OF SPECIALISTS USING THE DUAL FORM OF EDUCATION

The concept (Order 660, September 2018) was designed to have three phases, namely:

1. development of the legal framework (2018–19);
2. design of standard dual training models and delivery of pilot projects and the performance evaluation (2019–20);
3. creation of dual training clusters on the basis of competitive educational institutions and interested employers/enterprises, institutions, organisations, including those belonging to the sphere of government (2020–23).

