

WORK-BASED LEARNING IN UKRAINE – AN ASSESSMENT PER EU QUALITY STANDARDS

Authors: Snizhana Leu-Severynenko (DMI Associates) with inputs and support from Cristina Mereuta (ETF) and Stefan Thomas (ETF).

ETF Project team: Iwona Ganko, Outi Kärkkäinen, Cristina Mereuta, Susanne Nielsen, Simonetta Riva, Stefan Thomas

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PREFACE

The report “Work-based learning in Ukraine – An assessment per EU quality standards” has been produced by the European Training Foundation (ETF). The research was carried out between September 2024 and March 2025 by Snizhana Leu-Severynenko.

The study project was coordinated by Stefan Thomas (ETF). The report was written by Snizhana Leu-Severynenko. Technical input and ongoing support were provided by Cristina Mereuta and Stefan Thomas (all ETF staff members).

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1. INTRODUCTION

Ukraine's labour market faces significant challenges due to war-related disruptions and demographic shifts. As of October 2024, 3.67 million people remain internally displaced. The unemployment rate has reached 24 % among those newly displaced, compared to 13 % for those displaced in 2023 (IOM, 2024). Labour shortages worsened to 36 % in 2024 (NBU) from 26.7 % in 2023 (SES). Unemployment rose to 16.8 % in February 2025 from 14.2 % in December 2024 (CES, 2025). Key factors include demographic losses, mobilisation, migration and skill mismatches, with 16-18 % of job applicants lacking the appropriate qualifications. To address this, the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) is modernising Vocational Education and Training (VET), strengthening industry ties and improving training quality (Eurydice, 2024).

Youth employment policy is a high priority in Ukraine. The European Union (EU) is supporting Ukraine's reforms aimed at consolidation of education relevance and employment services in context of reconstruction, recovery and preparation for EU accession. An important political priority for Ukraine as per 2024 commitments is the design, piloting and mainstream of a Youth Guarantee policy package mirroring the EU model put forward through the reinforced Youth Guarantee recommendation 2020. The Youth Guarantee aims to ensure that all young people under the age of 30 can avail of a good quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within a period of 4 months after becoming unemployed or leaving education.

Apprenticeships and traineeships are two important forms of work-based learning (WBL)¹. Apprenticeships – also known as dual programmes – are designed to develop occupational skills and lead to recognised qualifications. These combine school-based learning with WBL, with the latter typically accounting for a significant proportion of the programme duration which is usually longer (2-4 years). Traineeships are WBL periods that complement formal or non-formal education and training programmes. Traineeships can be a compulsory and integrated, or optional and supplementary component of a VET programme. They may last from a few days or weeks to several months but are generally shorter than apprenticeships. Both traineeships and apprenticeships may be offered as active labour market programmes (ALMP).

Because of their particular importance for youth employment, the EU has developed quality standards for both traineeships and apprenticeships. The European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships were developed in 2018 with the support of the European social partners and include 14 criteria for high-quality and effective apprenticeships (Council of the European Union, 2018). These criteria are divided into two categories: learning and working conditions, and framework conditions. The 2014 Quality Framework for Traineeships contains a set of quality criteria relating to traineeships delivered in various policy contexts, including as part of active labour market policy (Council of the European Union, 2014). The framework can also be used to guide the development and review of traineeships in other contexts, e.g. in initial or continuing VET.

This study provides a brief analysis of the main VET programmes in Ukraine against the criteria of the two EU frameworks. The three main chapters examine WBL arrangements in initial and continuing VET and WBL as part of ALMP. The most important strengths and challenges of each are summarised at the end of the chapters.

These two main chapters are preceded by a brief country overview and a short description of the framework for WBL in Ukraine. The appendix contains a glossary of the abbreviations and terms used in the report and the list of references.

We hope that the document will contribute to the national, European and international debate on the quality and effectiveness of WBL.

¹ For more information on work-based learning see: Work-based learning: an introduction to key concepts. Inter-Agency Working Group on Work-based Learning (Cedefop, European Commission, ETF, ILO, OECD, UNESCO, World Bank Group) <https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/work-based-learning-introduction-key-concepts>.

2. CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

In the context of Ukraine, the provision of practical training is delineated within the legal and regulatory framework governing VET, Labour Code, Laws of Ukraine “On Employment”, “About professional development of employees”, etc. Work-Based Learning (WBL) (*навчання на робочому місці, НРМ*) is recognised as an essential element of VET, wherein students gain skills through hands-on experience in real production environments. Ukrainian regulations distinguish WBL from purely theoretical learning by requiring active student participation in productive activities. WBL constitutes an integral component of the professional and practical training (PPT) (*професійно-практична підготовка/profesiyno-praktychna pidgotovka*); an obligatory element of every IVET programme. The focus of PPT is occupation-specific skills, and it takes place in various settings, including VET schools, workshops, workplaces and production facilities (VRU, 1998).

The scope of PPT encompasses Practical Training (*практичне навчання/praktytske navchannia*) and Industrial Training (*виробниче навчання/vyrobnyche navchannia*), along with Industrial Practice (*виробнича практика/vyrobnycha praktyka*).

- **Practical training** is defined as an organised form of learning that enables students to acquire professional knowledge, skills and competencies necessary for specific qualifications. It can be implemented in the form of training in VET school-based facilities, such as workshops, laboratories and training enterprises, and/or training within real work environments under the supervision of Masters of Industrial Training (MIT). While the emphasis remains on school-based training, some institutions facilitate on-site visits to enterprises where students observe work processes. However, it should be noted that students are not typically engaged in actual work tasks during these visits;
- In the context of **Industrial training** or VET, students are instructed in theoretical aspects, technologies, tools and rules within the framework of a company;
- In terms of **Industrial practice**, VET students apply theoretical knowledge in practice under the supervision of company mentors and MITs. This period of on-the-job training takes place during or after the academic year and typically lasts from two weeks to several months, depending on the profession and curriculum requirements.

Ukraine has been implementing the dual form of vocational education (*дуальна форма здобуття професійної освіти/dualna forma zdobuttia profesiynoi osvity*) as a method of VET. This system integrates theoretical instruction in educational institutions with WBL in enterprises. In 2017, Ukraine started introducing elements of dual education in the vocational training of skilled workers (MoES, 2017). Since then, the dual form of vocational education has been actively implemented through partnerships between VET schools and companies.

Internships in Ukraine are subject to regulation by several legal frameworks, including the Labour Code of Ukraine (VRU, 1971), the Laws on Professional development of employees (VRU 2012) and on Employment of the Population (VRU, 2013) etc. Student practical training is a mandatory component of VET (PPT) and university curricula, aimed at facilitating the acquisition of practical experience by students prior to their graduation. Within the context of VET, it constitutes an integral component of PPT.

The Ukrainian approach to practical education and WBL has evolved significantly, with growing emphasis on dual education and closer employer engagement. Significant challenges persist, including the expansion of dual education partnerships, the assurance of sustainable employer participation, and the adaptation of curricula to industry needs. The key challenge remains updating the Labour Code, which the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine (MEU) is currently working on.

3. METHODOLOGY

Data collection was conducted through in-depth, desk-based research, including national legislation, official resources of relevant Ministries and State Services, reports and studies of national and international organisations, open resources and databases, etc. The collected data was subjected to a process of double-checking through fieldwork. To this end, a total of five online and face-to-face interviews with representatives of state and private sectors were conducted between September and November 2024. The participants were selected based on their job positions and their role for the topic of this report. In addition, the information was collected from different in-person and online events of national and international agencies focused on human capital and workforce development, labour market challenges and trends, education-business partnerships, etc.

The mapping of WBL in Initial IVET (IVET) and Continuing VET (CVET) was guided by the criteria of the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeship (EFQEA) ([Annex 1](#)). The chapter on IVET applies the EFQEA criteria to “WBL at an employer”, i.e. the WBL component of the 3 to 3.5-year and 1 to 1.5-year IVET programmes. The IVET chapter also encompasses the subject of ferial practice, defined as a period of WBL undertaken at the conclusion of the school year. In accordance with the recommendation of the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES), the CVET component features the example of a company that is particularly active in piloting and leveraging training practices with a strong focus on WBL. This does not mean that this company is unique and inimitable. The use of this case study allowed us to demonstrate confirmation of the existing practice in Ukraine. The mapping of WBL in the section about Active Labour Market Programmes (ALMP) was guided by the criteria of the EU Quality Framework for Traineeships ([Annex 2](#)). However, in Ukraine, other terms are used for the WBL component of ALMPs. The primary emphasis has been placed on the analysis of the upskilling and reskilling initiatives for the unemployed population.

It should be noted that the present report provides information exclusively for programmes with a minimum WBL share of 40 %.

4. COUNTRY OVERVIEW

As of July 2024, the population of Ukraine has 35.8 million people, including 31.1 million people in the territories where public authorities exercise their powers in full (CMU, 2024). Key challenges include low birth rates, high mortality, emigration, and war-related deaths. Over 10 million people are over 65 years old, and the working-age group (15-64 years) is shrinking. Key declines have been observed among women aged 30-45 and children aged 10-15. (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Ukraine's population pyramid (2023)

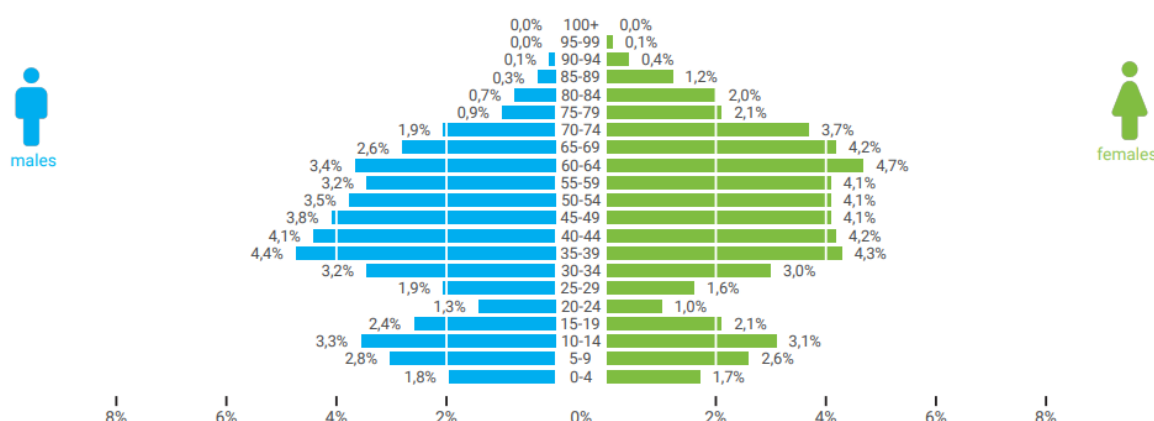


Figure source: UNICEF (2024) A Brighter Future: An Investment Case for Youth in Ukraine

Ukrainians have been displaced worldwide, with the majority seeking refuge in European countries. The National Bank of Ukraine (NBU) predicts 400 000 refugees may return if the security situation improves. Young, well-employed individuals, as well as those who do not own property in Ukraine, are unlikely to return. Retirees and those experiencing difficulties abroad are more likely to return.

Ukraine's recovery depends on its youth, but the war has deeply impacted their presence in the country. Of the 10 million-strong youth population (15-35 years old) present before the war, nearly half are displaced or are actively serving. Among those who remain, 17 % are IDPs, and 2 % are in military service, leaving just over half still residing at the address they were registered at before the war. More than 40 % have fled their homes, raising concerns about a brain drain and loss of talent that could hamper post-war recovery. (Figure 2; UNICEF, 2024). The percentage of young people aged 15-24 not engaged in employment, education or training (NEET) declined from 17.6 % in 2019 to 14.3 % in 2021 (ETF, 2023). Currently, the evaluation of NEET incidence is challenging in the absence of a Labour Force Survey which has been discontinued since 2022.

Figure 2. Status of Ukraine's youth

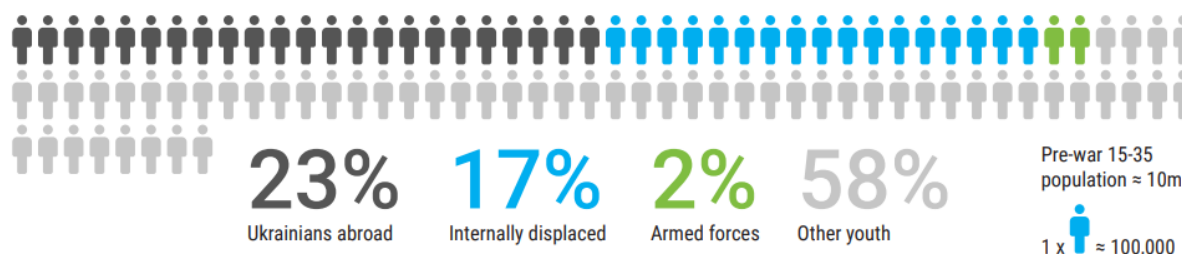


Figure source: UNICEF (2024) A Brighter Future: An Investment Case for Youth in Ukraine

The results of the Programme for International Student Assessment 2022 (PISA 2022) show that Ukrainian students scored below the average of countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in reading, math and science, highlighting issues with education quality and equity (Figure 3). Many small rural schools have high teacher-to-student ratios which are not conducive to better outcomes. Socioeconomic and regional disparities in education highlight the need for ongoing reforms (OECD, 2024).

Figure 3. Performance of students in three sectors in Ukraine, OECD average and reference countries

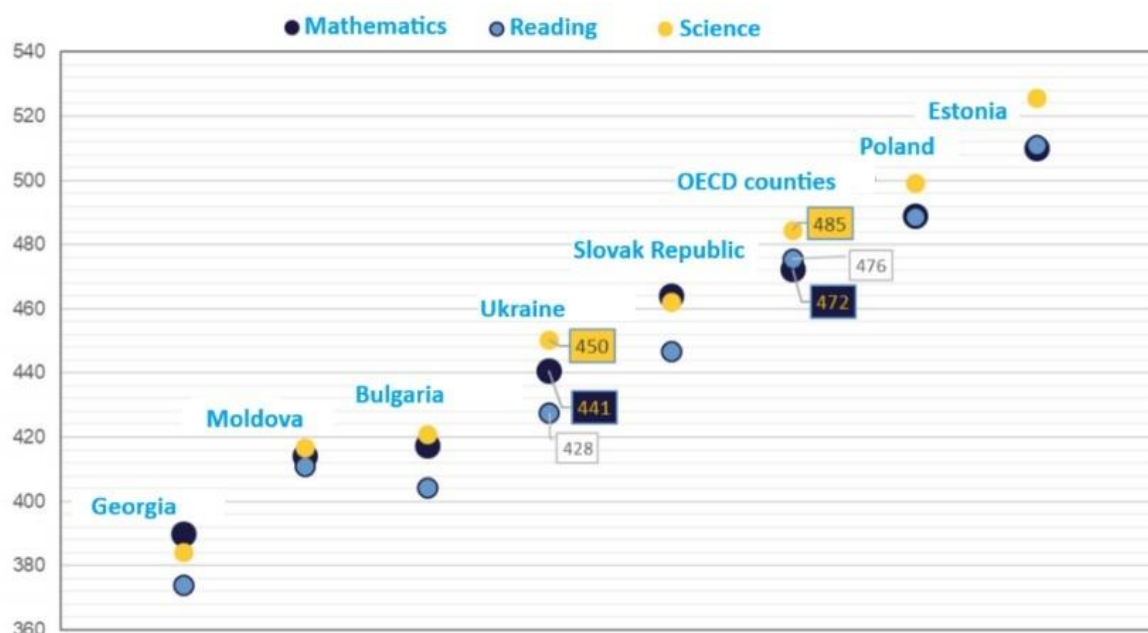


Figure source: OECD (2024), PISA 2022 Results (Volume III): Creative Minds, Creative Schools

Ukraine's labour market included 11.27 million economically active people in 2024, with a dependency ratio of two non-working individuals per worker. The State Employment Service (SES) estimates that 2.82 million people are still unemployed, almost half of whom belonging to vulnerable groups (ILO, 2024). As of December 2024, the unemployment rate was 14.2 %, which has improved from 22.3 % in 2022 (CES, 2025). Male participation in the workforce remains higher than its female equivalent, with high inactivity among older adults, those with lower education and rural residents. The share of unemployed youth under the age of 25 increased during the first half of 2024 (NISS, 2024). In November 2024, 29 % of jobseekers were under the age of 25 and 25 % were aged 25-34 (Work.UA, 2024; Figure 4).

Figure 4. Work.UA survey results: distribution of candidates by experience, age and gender

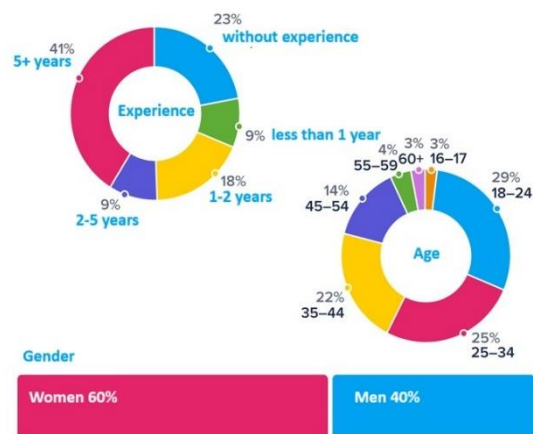


Figure source: Work.UA (2024)

5. THE FRAMEWORK FOR WORK-BASED LEARNING IN UKRAINE

Vocational education and training (VET) in Ukraine integrates work-based learning (WBL) at the professional and practical training (PPT) component of VET programmes. VET programmes are aligned with occupational standards and quality assured, correspond to levels 2-5 of the National Qualification Framework (NQF) and the same levels of the European Qualification Framework (EQF) (European Commission, 2023).

IVET at 2-5 NQF levels is open to those who have completed the 9th (14-15 years old) or 11th grade (16-18 years old), and those without prior VET qualification(s). IVET at the 2nd NQF level is also available for orphans and children from low-income families aged 12-13 from the 7th grade who receive free school meals. Most students enter VET after the 9th grade to study for a period of 3-3.5 years, combining general secondary education with obtaining between two and four VET qualifications. Students who start after the 11th grade need 1-1.5 years for the same VET programmes. Adults can pursue a VET qualification for the first time or upskill via partial qualifications. It can take from a few weeks to up to 3 years based on their current qualifications and desired level. VET graduates have Diplomas (3-5 NQF level), Certificates for skilled workers (2-5 NQF levels) or the Diploma of Occupational Pre-Higher Education (OPHE) or professional junior bachelor at the NQF level 5 (Leu-Severynchenko, 2022b; European Commission, 2023).

Continuing Vocational Education and Training (CVET) in Ukraine is essential for helping adults, the unemployed, and employees gain new skills or improve existing ones to meet job market needs. CVET offers short courses, modular programmes, and full/partial qualification upgrades via the network of state and private training providers. Since 2023, CVET programmes have focused more on learning outcomes to better match job market requirements. Upon completion, participants receive certificates or diplomas confirming their new or enhanced skills. The CVET system is supported by MoES, MoE, National Qualifications Agency (NQA), SES, regional authorities, and private sector partners. Efforts are ongoing to improve programme quality and increase access to training, especially in high-demand fields like construction, energy, IT and manufacturing.

According to the VET Directorate of MoES, in April 2025, Ukraine had 220 500 VET students², including young people with completed general secondary education (51 700), the unemployed population (993) and working population (6 694). VET schools had 5 000 students in training, including orphans and children deprived of parental care, and 1 900 people with disabilities (PwD). In the 2023-2024 academic year, 81 900 of VET graduates (76.6 %) found employment in their fields, particularly in sectors like industry (27 %), trade and service (21.4 %), agriculture (15.3 %), transport (15.1 %), construction (11.6 %), housing and communal services and non-productive consumer services (9.4 %) and communications (0.2 %). 17 900 of graduates (16.7 %) remained unemployed, 6 500 young people continue their studies (6.1 %), and 600 young people are called up for military service (0.6 %).

WBL is integrated into ALMPs, which have expanded significantly from 2022 to 2024 to address war challenges, economic instability and demographic shifts. Efforts focus on improving coordination between local authorities, businesses and SES in order to boost job creation, employment and training opportunities. Ukraine's ALMPs include business grants (e.g. eRobota, Own Business), training and retraining programmes (e.g., ReSkillUA, voucher programme), short-term courses, recognition of non-formal education and training, employment subsidies and compensation for hiring jobseekers, veterans, IDPs and PwDs. Training/retraining programmes feature updated curricula aligned with labour market needs, prioritising vulnerable groups' access to skills and jobs.

SES leads most ALMPs, offering upskilling services such as career counselling, skills assessments, apprenticeships, certifications, internships and OJT via 800+ partner companies and online platforms. Training programmes (3-12 months) focus on high-demand sectors (IT, construction, agriculture, healthcare, manufacturing, logistics, services, automotive repair) and increasingly adopt dual

² MoES presentation at the kick-off webinar of the project "VET-CONNECT" on April 7, 2025. The project is realized by OeAD-GmbH (Agentur für Bildung und Internationalisierung) – Austria's Agency for Education and Internationalisation.

education models and WBL. Current trends include growing demand for work-ready skills, project-based learning and internships. Efforts address regional labour needs and industry requirements, though disparities in resources and limited funding hinder WBL expansion and equal access. Still, the significant share of WBL is in the training for the unemployed population comparing to other ALMPs available (Army of Recovery, SES-voucher programme, grant initiatives, etc.).

5.1 Vocational education and training strategies

MoES is continuing to reform VET schools, improving career guidance and VET prestige. There has been a decrease in the number of VET schools; from 694 in 2022 to 598 in 2025 (see footnote 2). Dnipropetrovsk and Lviv regions have the highest number of VET schools and remain accompanied by Vinnytsia (replacing Kharkiv) the most popular regions for VET students. In 2024, the Government of Ukraine (GoU) allocated 500 mil UAH to create and modernise 100 Training and Practical Centres (TPCs), continuing previous investments. It is aimed at improving the technical infrastructure for VET student training, upskilling/reskilling for adults and employees, and building renovations and support for damaged or relocated VET schools. MoES keeps active VET promotion through social media campaigns, providing detailed information about various occupations to attract potential students of different ages and genders.

To enhance VET quality, dual education elements are being implemented under the Dual Form of Vocational Education (Dual VET) (MoES, 2024a), supported by the roadmap with specific goals within three stages (CMU, 2018). The first stage aimed to develop the regulatory framework, create and pilot standard Dual VET models in VET schools was successfully realised (2018-2019). The second stage (2019-2020) faced challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2021) and the full-scale invasion in 2022. Currently, MoES is focused on reviving the success and momentum of Dual VET implementation experienced in 2019-2021 aiming to foster a strong culture of education-business collaboration through the Dual VET model (Leu-Severynenko, 2022b; ETF, 2023).

VET Transformation is also the part of the latest MoES Strategic Plan 2027: the Education of Winners. It aims to provide access to quality VET, Occupational Pre-Higher Education (OPHE, NQF level 5) and a wide range of educational opportunities to have competitive workers for Ukraine's recovery. It includes adopting the new Law of Ukraine "On Vocational Education", modernising VET schools and colleges, restoring education in de-occupied territories, improving financial management and pedagogical staff motivation, upskilling VET teachers and masters, developing VET-business partnerships, adapting and modernising educational programmes, and promoting inclusive education. As a result, the MoES aims to increase the share of school graduates and adults in VET and OPHE, and the revenues from educational and production activities of VET schools and colleges (MoES, 2024b).

5.2 Policy dialogue and the role of actors at national level

The key stakeholders supporting VET development in Ukraine include government authorities, public bodies, research institutions, social partners, private sector partners and VET providers, with additional backing from international and EU institutions. MoES, Ministries of Social Policy (MSP), Economy (MoE), Finance (MinFin), Communities and Territories Development (MCTD) and Digital Transformation (MDT) oversee policy, regulation and coordination for VET sector growth. Public authorities like NQA, SES, and local authorities work to align VET with labour market needs at all levels. Research institutions study VET trends to meet current and future market needs.

Social dialogue is an institutionalised process through which representatives of employees, employers, government and local authorities collaborate to shape and implement social and economic policy and regulate labour relations through joint agreements. It operates at national, sectoral, territorial and local levels – either trilaterally or bilaterally – engaging relevant trade unions, employer associations and state actors. Key forms of dialogue include information exchange, consultations, conciliation and collective bargaining. Social partners have the right to participate in the formation and implementation of economic and social policy of the state, regulation of economic, social and labour

relations, promote creation of new jobs, improve the systems of training, retraining and advanced training of employees, promote dissemination of professional knowledge and experience, participate in the development and implementation of state policy in the field of education, employment, professional orientation, develop cooperation with foreign and international employers' organisations and their associations, etc.

Donor projects provide expert support on national and international VET trends, help modernise technical infrastructure, provide other types of assistance of institutional, sectoral, local and/or national levels. VET providers deliver VET, ensure recognition of prior learning (RPL), promote lifelong learning (LLL) and implement initiatives to enhance employability and professional development.

5.3 Legal provision of vocational education and training

Since 1991, Ukraine's education system has been undergoing slow reforms, with VET lagging behind. The 1998 VET Law, amended multiple times, remains outdated, prompting a new VET Law development since 2015. To keep VET updated, GoU launched the Concept "Modern Professional (Vocational) Education 2027" in 2019 (CMU, 2019b), the VET Development Strategy 2023 in 2020, the Concept of the State Targeted Social Programme for the Development of Vocational (Vocational and Technical) Education for 2022-2027 in 2021 (CMU, 2021b), etc.

On March 21, 2025, CMU approved the new draft 'Law On Vocational Education' for further adoption later this year.

The Law Ukraine "On Education" establishes the legal framework for all education levels, particularly highlighting WBL also in VET (GoU, 2017). The Concept for the Dual Training and its Action Plan outlines a system that integrates classroom instruction with work-place training to create skilled workers for the labour market and emphasises the importance of training contracts with companies for practical student experiences (CMU, 2019a). The "Modern Vocational Education" concept until 2027 aims to make VET more responsive to market demands, enhancing WBL opportunities (CMU, 2019b). The Regulation on Dual VET addresses the integration of classroom and practical learning, defining the roles of VET schools and employers (MoES, 2019). The Statute for Regional VET Councils defines the responsibilities of councils that ensure regional VET programmes align with local labour market needs (CMU, 2019d). The 2022 Validation of Non-Formal Vocational Learning supports LLL by formally recognising skills acquired outside traditional education via the network of colleges, universities and qualification centres (MoES, 2022; CMU, 2021a). CMU Resolution provides specifics for VET of veterans (CMU, 2023b). Several Laws provide for the social and legal protection of veterans (VRU, 1992; VRU, 1993). The Law of Ukraine "On Professional Development of Employees" provides the framework for informal professional training in Ukraine (VRU, 2012). CMU Resolution outlines the procedures for the confirmation of informal vocational training (CMU, 2013b). MSP Order provides for the approval of the list of subjects for confirmation of informal vocational training (MSP, 2016).

The legislative and regulatory framework governing WBL has evolved significantly from 2022 to 2024 (ETF, 2023). To address the challenges of war, Law No. 2312-IX amended the VET Law on June 19, 2022, to improve accessibility for students and adults, reduce unemployment and provide rapid retraining for job seekers (VRU, 2022). It enables the State to issue orders for the training, retraining and advanced training of skilled workers in order to meet current demands. Memorandums of Cooperation (MoU) of the MoES and various social partners promote joint training of skilled workers, fostering collaboration among VET schools, companies, and government bodies. Additionally, PPPs have been established to support the implementation of WBL programmes.

The administrative instructions and regulations governing ALMPs provide the framework for the provision of professional training to various groups, including the unemployed, veterans, and individuals seeking informal professional training. The Law of Ukraine "On Employment of the Population" (Article 1, Article 35) provides the basis for VET of unemployed individuals. CMU Resolutions outlines the procedures for vocational training, retraining, and advanced training of registered unemployed individuals (CMU, 2023a). MSP Order provides guidance on the selection of educational institutions and students' accommodation (if a company is in another town, region, etc.)

for vocational training (MSP, 2013). MoE Order provides for compensation of travel expenses for registered unemployed individuals (MoE, 2023b).

5.4 International donor support to work-based learning in Ukraine

Thanks to the collective efforts of donor projects, Ukraine's VET system is becoming more responsive to labour market needs, more innovative, and more inclusive. The EU initiative EU4Skills (funded by the EU, Germany, Finland, Poland and Estonia) supports VET schools modernisation, purchasing equipment, creating Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVE), training managers and teachers in seven regions. Skills4Recovery, another EU initiative (funded by the EU, Germany, Poland and Estonia), expands learning opportunities for young people and adults. Switzerland funds the EdUP Project, the DECIDE: Proftech project and the Economic Resilience Programme. The US-funded Economic Resilience Activity project and UNDP (funded by multiple donors) have implemented activities for upskilling individuals, communities and companies. These listed projects paid a lot of attention to expanding WBL share in the training programmes they offered to different target groups. The European Investment Bank (EIB) provided an EUR 8.5 million EU grant and EUR 58 million loan to renovate VET schools and create CoVEs.

As a result, there is the reformation of general upper secondary education (DECIDE Project), active PPP development (EdUP), upgrading of VET infrastructure and content (EU4Skills, DECIDE: Proftech, Skills4Recovery), transformation of VET schools into CoEs (EIB, KfW) and the growing offer of up(re)skilling courses for adults (Skills4Recovery, Programmes of USAID, UNDP, Helvetas, Scania, etc.). The German company Sequa GmbH implements accelerated skills training in high-demand sectors (construction, logistics, and manufacturing) under Skills4Recovery based on collaboration between VET schools and private training providers, incorporating significant WBL components to enhance practical training. The EdUP programme is working closely with the construction sector to train various construction workers, using curricula that were developed in partnership with partner companies. USAID supported initiatives for crafts schools development and a wide up/reskilling programme resulting in training of more than 4 000 individuals and companies' employees for construction, agriculture, manufacturing, engineering and service sectors. Since 2022, UNDP, with financial support from the EU, has organised specialised vocational training courses in Dnipropetrovsk, Khmelnytskyi and Lviv oblasts. These courses cover various specialties such as baking, painting, woodworking, plumbing, cashiering, lumberjacking, sewing, welding, hairdressing, postal operations, sushi making, pizza making, electrical work and paving. UNDP is actively supporting capacity building and upskilling initiative for SES and their employees.

The new initiative Skills Alliance, supported by international partners, is committed to retraining 180 000 people over the next three years, providing essential skills for Ukraine's recovery (MoE, 2024a). Its programmes will be aimed at IDPs, women and young people, ensuring that vulnerable populations have access to vital skills training.

6. WORK-BASED LEARNING IN INITIAL VET

6.1 Types of programmes with a WBL component

In Ukraine, professional and practical training (PPT) is an obligatory component of every IVET programme. PPT focuses on occupation-specific skills and takes place in various settings, including VET schools workshops, workplaces, and production facilities (VRU, 1998). Work-based learning (WBL) is therefore an integral part of PPT and has two different forms, namely:

- The classic form of PPT (hereinafter referred to as PPT for the sake of simplicity) is based on a two-party agreement between the VET school and the company. The proportion of WBL in the total curriculum time is around 20-69 %;
- The dual form of PPT (hereinafter referred to as Dual VET) is based on a trilateral agreement between the student, the VET school and the company. The proportion of WBL in the total curriculum time is around 70 %, in exceptional cases up to 80 %.

Dual VET was introduced in 2017, covering 54 professions and 300+ employers across 49 programmes (MoES, 2017). Table 1 illustrates the differences using the examples of VET programme for Cooks and Restorer of decorative and artistic paintings identified in terms of the first pilot for the period from 2017 to 2019. In 2025, 16 900 VET students of 90 professions from 176 VET schools studied Dual VET programmes partnering with 1 100 companies in key regions like Dnipropetrovsk, Zhytomyr, Lviv, Khmelnytskyi and Kyiv.

Table 1. Results of 2015-2019 Dual VET piloting

Table Heading	PPT (t.h.)	Dual VET (t.h.)	Difference (t.h.)
Restorer of decorative and artistic paintings of 3 cat., painter of 2,3 and 4 cat, Lviv Higher Professional Art School			
Total amount of training hours (t.h.)	2118	2118	
WBL	1234 (58.3%)	1449 (68.4%)	+215 (10.1%)
General Professional Training	173 (8.2%)	48 (2.3%)	-125 (5.9%)
Professional/Theoretical Training	683 (32.2%)	546 (25.8%)	-137 (6.4%)
Cook of 4 cat., Kyiv High VET School #33			
Total amount of training hours (t.h.)	2093	2093	
WBL	1262 (60.2%)	1546 (73.8%)	+284 (13.6%)
General Professional Training	162 (7.7%)	90 (4.3%)	-72 (3.4%)
Professional-Theoretical Training	669 (31.9%)	457 (21.8%)	-212 (10.2%)

Table source: Kyiv High Vocational School 33 (2019) and Lviv High Vocational Arts School (2019)

6.2 Written agreement (Criterion 1)

Prior to any type of practical training, a VET school and a company may draw up a Protocol of Intent (PI). They usually sign it before the beginning of the academic year. In PPT, the PI can be replaced or accompanied by the Two-Party Agreement which is signed between the VET school and the company, outlining their respective responsibilities. Specifically, the VET school is responsible for preparing students for WBL and ensuring their readiness for the workplace, while the company is

obliged to provide students with work that aligns with the training curriculum, offer paid positions, and ensure healthy and safe working conditions. The VET school conducts a check of the company's workplaces and living conditions (if applicable) to ensure compliance with required standards, documenting findings and suggesting improvements as needed.

In Dual VET, PI is accompanied by the Trilateral Agreement (TA) which is signed by the student, VET school, and company, establishing a framework for joint responsibility in implementing Dual VET programmes in line with Ukrainian VET Law (MoES, 2021). The agreement outlines the specific obligations of each party, defines duration and liability, and ensures a structured and collaborative approach to VET. The VET school is responsible for developing and coordinating training schedules and programmes with the company, providing coordinators to oversee training and assist company staff in managing students' WBL, ensuring students' theoretical knowledge and safety standards, and sending teachers for internships at the company to gain practical experience. The company is responsible for providing job placements and mentors, ensuring students learn practical skills, familiarising them with workplace rules, safety protocols and internal regulations, assessing student progress through exams and projects and suggesting updates to the curriculum and training schedules to meet industry standards. The student is responsible for participating in company training and following training tasks, adhering to safety and workplace rules and treating company property with care. Students also receive payments and benefits during training and may sign an employment contract with the company upon completing their programme, if offered a job.

The employment arrangements for PPT students differ from those in Dual VET. Specifically, PPT does not involve the signing of employment contracts. In contrast, students participating in Dual VET programmes can be formally employed by the company if an employment contract is signed. Large companies (e.g., MHP) may have internal contracts for student training.

6.3 Learning outcomes (Criterion 2)

In Ukraine's NQF, learning outcomes (LOs) define the skills, knowledge, autonomy, and responsibility expected of learners, closely tied to competences. LOs have been integrated into education reforms since the early 2000s, becoming mandatory for new qualifications after legislation in 2014 and 2017. Formal education provides educational qualifications, while professional qualifications are based on occupational standards aligned with labour market needs (European Commission, 2023). The Law on Education mandates that state educational standards align with NQF level descriptors, ensuring programmes and qualifications link to the NQF. Occupational standards help maintain relevance, guiding VET and higher education qualifications. They are mostly created by employers and reflect the full list of employers' demands to the qualification level of an employee they want to have after VET.

Since 2013, VET programmes in Ukraine have focused on competence-based learning, allowing for flexible curricula that can be customised. Up to 20 % of a programme can be tailored by partnering VET school and company to ensure its relevance to the company's needs. Programmes are regularly reviewed with partner companies to ensure quality and relevance. In addition, the ongoing EU-funded Erasmus+ project "Beyond Europe with Micro Credentials" (BEM) supports creation of 12 LO-based micro-credentials based only on consortium VET schools' partner companies' requests.

6.4 Pedagogical support (Criterion 3)

Both, a company and a VET school, support a student during PPT component of their IVET programme(s) or Dual VET if it is used as the WBL form in PPT.

Masters of Industrial Training (MIT) of VET schools are responsible for supervising students' practical training in schools' VET workshops, developing a work plan for each working day at the company, overseeing students' WBL to ensure meeting of planned LOs and resolving challenges with in-company trainers/mentors (MoES, 2006). At the company, the in-company engineering and technical employees and skilled workers support VET students, and ensure working conditions and safety meet regulatory requirements. The company may pay mentors a monthly allowance, funded from personnel (re)training and upskilling funds (CMU, 1999).

In Dual VET, MITs serve as coordinators, while appointed engineering and technical employees and skilled workers act as mentors. The in-company coordinator (if any), HR specialist, and mentor collaborate with the VET school coordinator to develop and approve educational programmes and curricula for Dual VET, align theoretical and practical components with occupational standards, coordinate school-based learning and WBL, and finalise practical training schedules.

Coordinators (MITs) are responsible for organisational, methodological and documentary support of Dual VET. Mentors are responsible for transferring experience and knowledge to students during WBL and facilitating students' adaptation to the workplace. The company has to provide mentors with professional development opportunities, suitable working conditions, allowances, surcharges, bonuses, rewards and other material and moral incentives (MoES, 2019).

6.5 Workplace component (Criterion 4)

In both PPT and Dual VET, VET schools offering WBL must provide companies with student lists and details about MITs and educational programmes at least two weeks before WBL starts and ensure students receive relevant theoretical and practical training on operating equipment, safety regulations and internal labour rules. Group sizes are limited to 30 students for theory groups at VET schools and minimum 12 students for PPT or Dual VET groups (with flexibility to adjust group sizes with partner companies if they pay for training) (MoES, 2006).

MITs are responsible for creating working curricula outlining skills and knowledge students must learn, based on partner companies' technologies and suggestions, preparing detailed lesson plans and daily work plans for WBL and tracking student performance and attendance in the PPT/Dual VET journal. Students maintain diaries, where they, along with MITs, mentors and coordinators (if needed), record their progress, skills development and assessment results. Its format is approved by the Head of the VET school in agreement with the partner company.

The primary distinction between PPT and Dual VET lies in the proportion of WBL time. In PPT, it accounts for 20-69 % of total curriculum time and in Dual VET constitutes 70 % or more of total curriculum time, as required by the company. For example, the share of WBL time for training a restorer of decorative and artistic paintings of Category 3 (degree)³ is 10.1 % more under Dual VET than under PPT. It means that a trainee has 215 training hours more to master their skillset (see Table 1).

VET schools use the most flexibility they can to adjust their training plans and curriculum to the needs of their partner companies. For example, VET schools can replace practical training at their workshops or the professional-theoretical training share of the training programme with WBL if a company has an urgent need in workforce or has the seasonal specifics of work. In some cases, VET schools provide WBL for students of first grades if the partner company ensures proper and safe work conditions.

Table 2 below shows adaptive scenarios (*) for planning the training of trainees by adding more WBL by increasing the share of industrial training and industrial practice instead of practical training in workshops of VET schools, where possible (see the section on [Conceptual clarification](#)). It also demonstrates student age limits: those under the age of 18 typically study for 3-3.5 years in SPTU groups⁴, while those 18+ study in TU⁵ groups for 1-1.5 years. Both target groups of students can participate in PPT or Dual VET. In all cases VET schools and companies take into account the list of prohibited works for the youth under 18 years old ([see section 6.8](#)).

Table 2. A preliminary schedule for educational process planning for IVET and CVET programmes of VET schools

Training course/time	Contract	Months of the year within the academic year	WBL
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³ A category or degree is a level of industrial qualification for skilled workers. It reflects increasing responsibilities and job functions. Promotions are based on job performance, adherence to standards, and diligence. It is assigned and upgraded by assessment commissions.

⁴ The Ukrainian term *середнє професійно-технічне училище* translates to 'Secondary VET school'.

⁵ The Ukrainian term *технічне училище* translates to 'Technical School'.

Y e a r	3-3.5	1- 1.5	PI	TA	09	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7-8	%
PPT																
1	SPTU				SBL PT	SBL PT	SBL PT	SBL PT	SBL PT	SBL PT	SBL PT/IP **	SBL PT/IP **	SBL PT/IP **	SBL PT	SH	20-40
2	SPTU				SBL PT	SBL PT	SBL PT/IP **	SBL PT/IP **	SBL PT/IP **	SBL PT/IP **	SBL IP	IP	IP QA	40-60		
3	SPTU	TU			SBL* PT	SBL* PT/IT	SBL* PT/IT	IT/IP	IT/IP	IP	IP QA	SBL IT	IT* IP	IP FQA		60-70
4	SPTU	TU			PT* IP	IT	IP	IP FQA	IT	IP	IP	IP FQA				60-70
Dual VET																
1	SPTU				SBL PT	SBL PT	SBL PT	SBL PT	SBL PT	SBL PT	SBL PT/IP **	SBL PT/IP **	SBL PT/IP **	SBL PT	SH	20-40
2	SPTU				SBL PT	SBL PT	SBL PT/ IP**	SBL PT/ IP**	SBL PT/ IP**	SBL PT/ IP**	SBL IP	IP	IP QA	40-60/ 70		
3	SPTU	TU			SBL* PT	SBL* PT/ IP	SBL* IT/IP	IP	IP	IP	IP QA	SBL IT	IP	IP FQA		70+
4	SPTU	TU			PT* IP	IT* IP	IP	IP FQA	IP	IP	IP	IP FQA				70+

Table source Made by the author based on publicly available information on VET schools websites

PI – Protocol of Intent (PI) or Two-Party Agreement between a VET school and a company

PT – practical training at VET school's workshop(s) or laboratory(ies)

IT – industrial training; learning theory as the part of WBL

IP – industrial practice; practical part of WBL

FQA – final attestation for a qualification category

QA – attestation for a qualification category

SBL – school-based learning

SH – summer holidays

SPTU – secondary technical school (середнє ПТУ); target group = students below 18 years of age

TA – Trilateral Agreement between a student, a VET school and a company

TU – technical school (технічне училище); target group = students above 18 years of age

* – for SPTU group(s) only

** – adaptations to war-related conditions

6.6 Pay and/or compensation (Criterion 5)

Students participating in PPT and Dual VET are paid for their work, with payment rates based on actual work carried out. The amount of financial compensation is negotiated between the VET school and the company and recorded in the agreement. The payment is split; 50 % goes to the student and 50 % to the VET school, which uses its share to support school activities, resources and staff incentives. There are two modes of payment for students' practical training possible:

- A company transfers the full sum for students' practical training to a VET school and the VET schools pays 50 % to students' individual bank accounts (scholarship cards), as well as all taxes and social payments;

- A company transfers 50 % of the full sum for students' practical training directly to students' individual bank account (scholarship cards) and 50 % to a VET school. In this case a company pays all taxes and social payments;

The main difference between PPT and Dual VET is the salary rate. Dual VET students are often paid at the minimum or average salary level for a full-time employee in their field. Up to 15 % of the funds kept by the VET school may also be used to reward MITs and teachers for their contributions to the training and theoretical instruction of students.

6.7 Social Protection (Criterion 6)

In VET in Ukraine, social protection includes ensuring access to education for vulnerable groups (e.g. orphans, single parents, young people from disadvantaged and low-income families and PwD) and students' awareness of labour rights within the curriculum to know their rights and responsibilities in the workplace and navigate the labour market with confidence.

Provision of health insurance, insurance for accidents at work and contributions to pension schemes is clearly regulated but companies do not always comply, e.g. sometimes smaller companies do not fulfil their obligations. Big companies ensure the paid sick leaves to students while smaller companies mostly do not. They can offer unpaid leave at the learners' own expense. All companies, regardless of their size, pay taxes and social contributions (e.g. to the pension fund) during the term of their collaboration with VET students.

6.8 Work, health and safety conditions (Criterion 7)

Occupational health and safety (OHS) training follows the requirements of the Law on Labour Safety, allocating at least 30 hours of curricula time for the theoretical part of the "Occupational Safety" based on job specifics (VRU, 1992b; SCOSS, 2005). Chapter XIII of the Labour Code frames the conditions of youth labour including health and safety requirements and restrictions on engaging young people under the age of 18 for carrying out heavy work and/or work in harmful or hazardous conditions, e.g. underground works (VRU, 1971). For types of work associated with increased danger, persons who have not undergone OHS training, instruction and knowledge testing are not permitted to work or participate in WBL.

In both PPT and Dual VET, MITs conduct introductory OHS briefings before new work tasks to review safety procedures and technology, ongoing and final briefings to verify compliance with work technology and safety regulations. These include briefings on proper use of equipment, fire safety regulations, company charter, internal labour regulations and workplace rules. In addition, OHS topics are integrated into vocational and theoretical training subjects accompanied by safety issues for practical training.

6.9 Regulatory framework (Criterion 8)

PPT and Dual VET in Ukraine are governed by both shared and distinct legal frameworks. While they both are based on common educational laws, PPT is guided by older regulations that focus on practical training in school workshops with less emphasis on WBL. Dual VET is shaped by newer reforms that highlight collaboration between VET schools and companies, with a stronger focus on integrating WBL into the education and training process.

Chief among these is the Law of Ukraine "On Education" (VRU, 2017), which sets the foundational legal framework for all types of education. Both PPT and Dual VET are influenced by the Concept "Modern Professional (VET) Education 2027" (CMU, 2019), a strategic document which outlines long-term objectives for VET modernisation and development, including enhancing practical training and aligning it with labour market needs. State VET Standards for Specific Professions apply to both PPT and Dual VET, ensuring that training programmes meet nationally established competencies for various professions.

WBL, in both PPT and Dual VET, follows the “Regulations on the organisation of the educational and production process in VET schools” (MoES, 2006). They outline the roles and responsibilities for planning and organising SBL and WBL, managing resources and ensuring smooth operations. Tracking and evaluating of student performance includes tests, final exams, and certifications and records in diplomas or certificates of the achieved LOs to ensure that standards are met. Final certification tests students’ qualifications, and clear procedures guide students’ progression to the next course.

The Regulation on Dual VET defines key terms like “Trilateral Agreement”, “Coordinator”, “Mentor”, “PPT”, and “Student Diary” (MoES, 2019). It follows the procedures outlined in the earlier regulation and clarifies the roles of all parties: the VET school provides theoretical education, the company handles WBL, and the student is responsible for attending and completing tasks (MoES, 2006). Dual VET students can sign employment contracts with partner companies, be added to the company staff, and receive salaries or other financial benefits (MoES, 2019).

In both PPT and Dual VET, the state qualification certification of students is carried out in accordance with the Regulation on the Procedure for Qualification Certification and Awarding Qualifications to Persons Receiving VET (MLSP, 1998).

6.10 Involvement of social partners (Criterion 9)

Social dialogue is a structured process that engages representatives of employees, employers, and government institutions at multiple levels to address labour and socio-economic issues. At the national level, the parties include all-Ukrainian trade union associations, employers’ associations, and CMU. The sectoral level involves trade unions and employers’ organisations representing specific branches of economic activity, alongside relevant central executive authorities. At the territorial level, social dialogue is conducted by local trade unions, employers’ organisations, and local executive authorities, with the potential inclusion of local self-government bodies within their legally defined competencies. The local level includes employees, represented either by primary trade unions or elected representatives, and employers or their authorised representatives. The main forms of social dialogue include information exchange, consultations, conciliation procedures and collective bargaining, with the aim of developing and concluding collective agreements and contracts.

Trade unions operate at various levels – primary, local, regional and national – and represent members in labour-related and socio-economic matters. They are independent from government, employers, political parties and other organisations. Trade unions cooperate with employers’ organisations based on the principles of social dialogue, without interfering in each other’s activities. Any disputes between them are resolved according to the law. They also play a role in shaping and implementing labour policies, including employment, wages, workplace safety and social protection.

Employers have the right to form and join employers’ organisations, freely participate in their activities, and withdraw as they choose, in line with each organisation’s charter. These organisations may also form or join associations of employers’ organisations on the same terms. Employers’ organisations and their associations contribute to job creation, workforce development and the promotion of professional knowledge. They also take part in shaping and implementing state policy on education, employment and career guidance.

In the field of VET and WBL, employers’ organisations and their associations have the right to take part in: developing the state standards of VET; developing and approving state standards for specific professions, occupational standards development; the thematic, incoming assessment of knowledge, skills and abilities of students, trainees, their qualification certification; organising and conducting research on current and future needs of the labour market for qualifications, etc. Therefore, a representative of a company has to take part in state qualification commission to assess students’ knowledge and skills at their final exams.

In 2024, the Federation of Employers of Ukraine (FEU) – the Joint Representative Body (JRB) of Employers at the national level – reviewed 27 draft VET education standards, actively collaborated

with MoES and the Parliament's Education Committee on the new VET Law, and contributed to developing legislation on individual learning paths and improving the education process.

6.11 Support for companies (Criterion 10)

According to the VET Law, companies shall provide appropriate workplaces or training sites for students' WBL. It is outlined in PPT agreements made with VET schools. Companies provide resources for training (e.g. funds, premises, equipment, tools, materials, technical information, etc.), all free of charge. They can offer MITs/teachers technical support and in-company upskilling (VRU, 1998). In both PPT and Dual VET, if students' WBL is outside the school's location, companies can cover their transportation and living expenses (e.g. accommodation, meals, etc.).

Funding for Dual VET can be provided at the expense of state and local budgets, individuals, legal entities, and other additional sources of funding not prohibited by law (MoES, 2019). If the company pays for training, the training groups can have as many students as the company needs. Otherwise, if training is covered from state or local budget, state and municipal VET schools should form the training groups of 15-30 students.

6.12 Flexible pathways and mobility (Criterion 11)

In Ukraine, flexible pathways for students in achieving their educational and career goals are ensured through a clear licensing and certification system. The students can customise their learning journeys via multiple entry and exit points to move between different levels of education and training based on their individual needs, e.g. changing career interests, skill demands, personal circumstances, etc. In this way, students can begin their education in a VET school, gain practical skills, and later continue to university or return for additional VET as needed.

Mobility within the system is facilitated through the alignment of Ukraine's NQF with the EQF, making it easier to transfer credits, pursue further education, or work abroad. The recognition of qualifications via the growing network of Qualification Centres⁶ enhances transition between different sectors or geographic locations, supporting LLL and labour market-driven skills development.

6.13 Career guidance and awareness raising (Criterion 12)

VET schools offer individualised support on career guidance through 379 Career Development Centres (CDCs), often supported by donor projects. In 2024, this network of CDCs provided career guidance services to 84 400 VET students and 163 800 secondary school students. Upskilling CDC staff and equipping CDCs remain of high priority but open for support.

Career guidance is integrated into VET programmes. MITs and company mentors provide insights into industry expectations and skill requirements. MITs use career guidance to motivate students to share information about their jobs to attract more potential students. VET schools promote career opportunities through public campaigns, outreach programmes, career fairs, skills competitions and partnerships with employers. Notably, the World Skills competition boosts the image of skilled VET students and showcases VET's and WBL's value to the wide audience.

Recently MoES and EU4Skills realised a series of social media campaigns, e.g. "#пояснюємопрофесії" ("we explain occupations") (2020), "Career Guidance" (2021), "Put your hand to..." (2022-2023), and "Your independence starts here" and "It's time to realise your dreams" (2024); created a webpage "Everything works thanks to us" so as to promote various trades (e.g., a locksmith, a tractor driver, a baker, a carpenter, a turner, a welder, a tailor and a system administrator etc.).

⁶ Qualification centre is an entity authorised by the National Qualifications Agency to assess and recognise learning outcomes obtained by individuals through formal, non-formal or informal education, award and/or confirm relevant professional qualifications, recognise relevant professional qualifications obtained in other countries on the basis of an accreditation certificate of such a qualification centre, and is included in the Register of Qualification Centres as part of the Register of Qualifications.

(2023); upskilled 230 VET representatives in social media communication (2022-2023). In 2024 USAID supported the project “College Check” showcasing facilities and educational opportunities of VET schools and colleges (YouTube Channel “Pedanos”) and creation of the career guidance and counselling concept. Meanwhile, there is a lack of awareness-raising efforts for Dual VET.

6.14 Transparency (Criterion 13)

VET schools create lists of companies offering workplaces or WBL sites for PPT and Dual VET based on proposals from businesses, employers’ organisations, and local authorities. VET students can choose their WBL sites but need the approval from the VET school management.

6.15 Quality assurance and tracking of apprentices (Criterion 14)

Quality assurance in VET schools relies on a regulatory framework involving MoES, NQA and industry representatives. The MoES sets guidelines and standards. The NQA develops a national qualifications system aligned with European guidelines. VET schools are responsible for self-evaluation (programmes, teaching methods, outcomes) and reporting to external bodies for review (OSA, MoES, etc).

To evaluate the effectiveness of their programmes’, VET schools track graduates via surveys, partner with employers, and collaborate with labour market research organisations to collect data on employment status, job satisfaction, and skills relevance. They also use digital tools and databases for real-time data collection and analysis, e.g. Labour Market Information System is now being piloted in several Ukrainian oblasts.

The recent tracer study of VET graduates’ career trajectories covers key indicators employment, the level of compliance of education with labour market requirements, quality of the educational process and graduate motivation (Skills4Recovery, 2024). Data was collected through an electronic questionnaire, with 18 979 respondents out of a total of 79 769 VET graduates in 2023. The study highlights the main aspects of employment and employability of graduates, as well as their own assessment of their education (further details in Box 1 below).

Box 1. Key results of tracer study Skills4Recovery: Career trajectories of graduates

- Employment. 68.3 % of graduates work (89 % in Ukraine, 11 % abroad). Men (74.5 %) have higher employment rates than women (62.7 %).
- Job-Education Match. 62.3 % work in their field; 87.6 % use their skills regularly.
- Job Search. 66.8 % found jobs within a month, 22.6 % in 1-3 months, while 10.6 % took longer.
- Unemployment Reasons. Further studies (35.3 %), family duties (28.6 %), job hunting (28.5 %). 4.3 % of men serve in the military.
- Skill Gaps. Lacking stress resistance (41.7 %), regulation knowledge (21.8 %), and client service skills (20.3 %).
- Education Quality. Teaching is rated well but dormitories (10 % ‘very poor’) and technical equipment (14 % ‘poor’) need improvement.
- Education Choice Factors. Key reasons: good profession (35.5 %), reputation (11.5 %), and free education (10.1 %).
- War Impact on Jobs. 42.7 % see no impact, 49 % report negative effects (closures – 26.8 %, fewer vacancies – 20.4 %).
- Positive Effects of War. 28 % see more employer interest, 27.4 % report more vacancies.
- Satisfaction. 83.3 % would choose the same institution, 76 % the same profession but 24 % would switch fields.
- Skill Use. 87.6 % of those in their field apply their skills; only 12.4 % do in other jobs.
- Job Change Reasons. Better offers (48.1 %) and low salaries (47 %).
- Training Review. Practical learning is strong, but dormitories and infrastructure need upgrades.

- Employment Barriers. Long job searches, lack of practical skills, and job-market mismatches.

Conclusion. Employment is fair but education programmes, infrastructure and graduate support need improvement.

Source: Skills4Recovery, 2024

As a result, it was recommended to improve curriculum, expand practical training, modernise infrastructure, enhance career counselling and provide career guidance support, launch incentives for employers and ensure institutional reputation. The report states that the recommended measures will improve VET quality, increase the level of employability of graduates and strengthen their competitiveness in the labour market even in the face of challenges caused by the war.

6.16 Conclusions

Strengths

- There is a clear framework for training agreements covering specific obligations of each party, duration and liability, structured and collaborative approach to VET for both types of work-based learning – PPT and Dual VET. (Criterion 1)
- VET curricula emphasise a competence-based approach, incorporating learning outcomes and flexibility to adjust programmes according to industry needs. VET programmes are closely aligned with occupational standards (if they are in place⁷), ensuring that students acquire relevant, in-demand skills. (Criterion 2)
- Strong collaboration between VET schools and companies ensures structured and well-supervised WBL, with clear roles for MITs, mentors, and coordinators. Companies actively invest in mentorship through allowances and professional development, enhancing student learning, workplace adaptation and alignment with occupational standards. (Criterion 3)
- Currently, many VET schools use the most flexibility they can to adjust the workplace component of their training plans and curriculum to the needs of their partner companies. (Criterion 4)
- The VET system ensures financial compensation for students in PPT and Dual VET, reinforcing the value of work-based learning. Transparent payment agreements benefit both students and VET schools, with schools reinvesting funds into resources and staff incentives, e.g. up to 15 % of those

⁷ Currently, the qualification system of Ukraine is under active development. In some cases, Soviet-era qualification metrics are still in place as the process for creating occupational standards is labour market-driven. It is therefore time consuming as not all employers/companies do not yet possess an understanding of the efficiency of occupational standards, and may not take part in the creation of same for this reason.

funds may be used to reward MITs and teachers for their contributions to the training and theoretical instruction of students. Dual VET students often receive competitive wages, enhancing motivation and workplace readiness. (Criterion 5)

- Ukraine's VET system integrates social protection by ensuring access for vulnerable groups, promoting labour rights awareness, and enforcing safe and supportive learning environments. Companies and VET schools share responsibility for student wellbeing. All employers have to adhere to safety, labour laws and social contributions. (Criterion 6)
- A structured approach to OHS in VET ensures compliance with legal standards, with at least 30 hours dedicated to safety training. Regular briefings before and during PPT and Dual VET reinforce safe work practices, integrating safety education into both theoretical and practical training. (Criterion 7)
- Despite the VET Law dating back to 1998, PPT and Dual VET are governed by a strong legal framework. Dual VET benefits from modern reforms that enhance company-VET school collaboration. Both PPT and Dual VET meet occupational and educational standards, ensuring consistent qualifications and certification. (Criterion 8)
- Social partners, employers, and trade unions work together to align VET with labour market needs. Companies (employers) shape training standards, provide WBL and take part in assessments, while trade unions protect student rights. FEU drives reforms, expanding employer participation and workforce readiness. (Criterion 9)
- Partner companies support VET by providing free training resources, equipment and upskilling for MITs and teachers (if needed). They cover student expenses for WBL that takes place away from home or where the vocational school is located and ensure fair pay. Dual VET benefits from diverse funding sources, allowing flexibility in training group sizes and financial support for mentors and students. (Criterion 10)
- Ukraine's education system offers flexible pathways for students to move between education levels and sectors. The alignment with the EQF and expanding Qualification Centres supports mobility, LLL and skill development, thereby helping students meet changing career needs. (Criterion 11)
- Career guidance in VET is under active development. Efforts to upskill CDC staff and boost VET visibility aimed to align student skills with industry demands. The recent social media campaigns and events like the World Skills competition raise VET awareness. (Criterion 12)
- VET schools work with businesses and local authorities to offer students WBL opportunities, letting them choose placements, including future employers, with school approval. (Criterion 13)
- Quality assurance involves collaboration between MoES, NQA and industry representatives. It includes self-evaluation, external reviews, and tracking graduate outcomes to ensure programmes meet labour market needs. Recent studies show that Dual VET programme graduates tend to have higher employment. The tracer studies are limited and are made possible with the support of donors. (Criterion 14)

Challenges / gaps

- PPT is not considered as work experience for a VET graduate, unlike in the case of graduates following Dual VET programmes. (Criterion 1)
- Time-consuming alignment of educational standards in VET with labour market-driven occupational standards. (Criterion 2)
- Practical training in VET schools' workshops is still prioritised over in-company WBL (Criterion 4).
- For some occupations, there are restrictions in WBL for students under 18 years that limit their practical training and the partnerships with companies, especially in the context of ongoing war-related workforce challenges e.g. mobilisation, displacement, damages, etc. (Criteria 4 and 7)
- The inconsistency in social protection across companies, especially between larger and smaller ones, with disparities in benefits like paid sick leave and health insurance. (Criterion 6)
- Potential gaps in the practical implementation of safety protocols, especially in small companies or diverse sectors. (Criterion 7)
- PPT is guided by older regulations that focus less on WBL compared to the newer, more comprehensive Dual VET regulations. This difference may hinder the effective integration of WBL into PPT programmes, potentially limiting their ability to fully align with industry needs and modern educational practices. (Criterion 8)
- The need in sector-level coordination between social partners, industry associations, and VET schools to ensure that curricula consistently meet the evolving needs of companies of a certain economic sector. (Criterion 9)
- The requirement for state-funded VET groups to have 15-30 students may not always align with industry needs, making it difficult for companies to engage in tailored WBL and/or WFD programmes. (Criterion 10)
- The need in strong coordination between VET schools, companies, and regulatory bodies to fully realise LLL and career mobility benefits. (Criterion 11)
- The lack of standardised and complex upskilling of CDC staff and equipping CDCs at VET schools. (Criterion 12)
- Lack of sufficient promotion of Dual VET programmes among (potential) students, parents, and the general public, which hinders their uptake and overall visibility. (Criterion 13)
- High dependence of regular tracer studies of VET graduates' career trajectories on the availability of external/donor funding. (Criterion 14)

7. WORK-BASED LEARNING IN CONTINUING VET

7.1 Types of programmes with a WBL component

There are several types of training programmes with a WBL component in CVET of Ukraine. There are VET Programmes for adults or formal CVET programmes, courses for partial qualifications, short-term skills programmes within donor projects, SES voucher programmes for the target group of 45 years of age and above, and professional training of employees by companies. Usually, CVET programmes are aimed at upskilling, reskilling or (re)training and often do not require a formal agreement with an employer.

VET for Adults. Since June 2022, adults can enrol in VET programmes without prior secondary education completion and enables retraining in new professions under specific conditions (e.g. health issues or labour market needs). Adults can pursue CVET programmes, which typically built on relevant IVET programmes, with training periods ranging from several weeks to 3 years, depending on the current qualification level and desired professional development of the potential learner.

Short-term programmes focusing on partial qualifications. VET schools, SES training centres, private companies and training providers offer non-formal programmes aimed at upskilling and reskilling, leading to partial qualifications. However, many of these programmes lack a robust WBL component, instead relying on practical skills development within workshops of training providers. There are also short-term skills programmes offered by international donors and local organisations ([see section 5.4](#)).

SES Voucher Programme for the age group 45+. SES provides vouchers for upskilling adults over 45, allowing them to retrain or obtain a new qualification at over 200 state-accredited institutions without requiring unemployment registration (CMU, 2013a). It also targets veterans, IDPs and others affected by the war.

WBL is a key approach to **professional training of employees**, often implemented by companies through their own training departments, partnerships with VET schools, or training centres. Companies can also use services of training and course centres (*навчально-курсний комбінат*) (MLSP, 1993). The DTEK⁸ Academy is a notable example, providing IVET, CVET, and professional development services through a network of 10 training centres (branches of DTEL Academy). They train around 75 unique professions, including 50 (67 %) VET qualifications that are not provided at VET schools. WBL in DTEK programmes ranges from 27 % to 71 % depending on the profession, complexity and safety conditions. Approximately 30 000 employees are trained or upskilled annually via this arrangement.

In all cases, the share of WBL depends on the type of training and capacity of a training provider to ensure the appropriate training partnering with relevant company/companies.

7.2 Written agreement (Criterion 1)

In a *formal CVET programme*, individuals may participate in a PPT or Dual VET model and have the same contractual conditions as IVET students ([see section 6.2](#)).

For *short-term skills programmes*, individuals typically sign a two-party agreement with the training provider but not with the company where WBL takes place, outlining rights, obligations and responsibilities of the Parties. It covers cost, delivery terms, and termination conditions, and may include LOs for the partial qualification. In cases where training is donor-funded, a separate agreement may exist between the training provider and the sponsoring organisation, detailing collaboration terms.

In *SES-voucher training programmes*, trainees do not sign a written traineeship agreement, as these programmes are educational rather than employment-based. The voucher itself serves as a

⁸ DTEK is the largest private energy company in Ukraine. It generates electricity at various types of power plants, extracts coal and natural gas, trades in energy resources, distributes electricity, and develops a network of charging stations. DTEK is also the largest private investor in Ukraine's energy sector.

contractual commitment, guaranteeing partial or full coverage of the cost of the training programme. Eligible applicants may use the voucher at various institutions⁹ for re-/upskilling or acquiring a new qualification purpose. The key condition is not having received a voucher previously or any state-funded retraining within the past three years. WBL depends on the training programme that a training provider offers to a voucher-holder.

Professional training of employees is often based on a written agreement between the employer and employee, especially when contracted with a training provider. Employers are responsible for organising training, maintaining records and supporting skills development, while training providers collaborate on curriculum development. The Law of Ukraine “On Professional Development of Employees” (PDE) requires periodic assessments and training of employees, as determined by working agreements and educational plans for their professional development and ensures that employees are compensated during training at a rate equivalent to the industry-standard hourly rate (VRU, 2012). Training can be conducted at different times, and may or may not be conducted separately from production.

7.3 Learning outcomes (Criterion 2)

Formal CVET and SES-voucher programmes (delivered by state providers) focus on LOs, defining the skills, knowledge, autonomy, and responsibility students/trainees should achieve. LOs align with competences and occupational standards and are reviewed with partner companies to ensure quality and relevance. Up to 20 % of a training programme can be tailored to specific needs of individual companies while achieving all planned outcomes ([see section 6.3](#)).

*Short-term skills programmes*¹⁰ also use LOs guided by occupational standards (if available) and the requirements of the sponsoring programme or partner company’s needs. For example, the EU4Skills and EdUP programmes developed training to meet labour market needs but focused on practical training in VET school workshops, rather than WBL (Swisscontact, 2023a; Eurydice, 2024; Morse, 2024).

Professional training of employees is developed based on occupational and state education standards and business needs. Curricula are created by training providers or employers, depending on the training form. DTEK Academy stands out for its tailored result-driven programmes, which are aligned with occupational standards which the company pioneered and later helped establish nationwide.

7.4 Pedagogical support (Criterion 3)

In 2017, the MSP introduced guidelines for mentoring. Companies can use and tailor them to their needs (MSP, 2017). It is recommended to involve qualified workers, foremen, industrial training instructors, heads of structural units or specialists who are not relieved of their main job duties (with their consent) in mentoring activities. The recommended criteria for selecting mentors include professional experience (at least 3 years, including 1 year in the company), knowledge of qualification standards, occupational health and safety rules and job responsibilities, proven safe working practices and understanding of the company’s operations, openness to new technologies and methods, organisational, teaching and leadership skills, high discipline, responsibility and communication skills, and having had no disciplinary sanctions within the preceding year. If necessary, training can be provided to enhance mentoring skills. That training can last 30-90 hours (1-3 ECTS credits) (CMU, 2019c; GoU, 2017¹¹). The programme focuses on enhancing LOs and competencies, covering VET pedagogy, psychology, occupational science, and didactics resulting in solid theoretical knowledge, practical skills and ICT competencies.

⁹ Training is provided by VET schools, colleges, universities, companies and other institutions and organisations licensed for such educational activities. SES has a limited list of 200 training providers that an individual can partner to use his/her voucher for training purposes.

¹⁰ For partial qualifications or developed by donor-funded projects.

¹¹ Article 59, Part 6

In *formal CVET programmes*, MITs support training depending on the training form – PPT or Dual VET ([see section 6.4](#)).

In *short-term skills programmes* (partial qualifications, SES-voucher programme or donor-funded projects), the training provider is responsible for providing a qualified trainer to achieve the LOs identified.

In the case of *professional training of employees*, in-company trainers/mentors must have at least three years of work experience and a relevant qualification in the occupational field to train employees (formal certification). Employers can engage external experts or their own staff to coordinate and provide professional training. DTEK company has a network of approximately 1 500 mentors and keeps empowering experienced employees to become mentors/in-company trainers. To ensure high-quality training, mentors undergo comprehensive training in knowledge transfer, psychology and pedagogy, working with internal experts. Mentors are certified through a rigorous 1-day assessment after the obligatory training. They get a bonus of 20 % of their monthly salary rate per trainee. Training and bonus rate are refreshed every 2 years based on trainees' feedback, completion rates and results. The Academy also hosts an annual competition to recognise top-performing mentors. In addition to developing workplace mentoring, DTEK Academy upgrades the qualifications of its lecturers and internal experts (employees of production enterprises involved in training at DTEK Academy branches). The compliance of their knowledge and skills with the company's requirements is periodically validated through regulated procedures. This stage is followed by development activities funded by DTEK. In 2024, 100 % of DTEK Academy's teachers and internal experts met stringent requirements, supported by additional training programmes funded by the company.

7.5 Workplace component (Criterion 4)

The workplace component of formal *CVET and SES voucher programmes* varies, depending on the partnership with a VET school and the type of practical training offered – PPT or Dual VET. Practical training is still emphasised, especially in healthcare and technical trades but mostly organised at the workshops of a training provider rather than at the company. A company also can order the training of a certain number of specialists to train them in real-time working conditions using equipment and resources of the company. Individuals can choose from accredited programmes lasting a few months to a year, with flexible options like part-time and online courses. While there is no condition of obligatory employment after completing the training course, trainees must meet institutional standards for attendance, assignments and performance.

Donor-funded short-term skills programmes prioritise WBL elements. These courses, often organised with companies, focus on rapid skills acquisition with intensive, industry-specific WBL components to maximise employability. The workplace component can be significant, depending on the partner company's readiness to provide facilities for training.

DTEK Academy's (branches of DTEK Academy) training programmes blend theoretical and practical components, with WBL ranging from 27 % to 71 % depending on job requirements. The Academy prioritises theoretical foundations and safety, with mentors closely supervising trainees who focus on learning tasks without production responsibilities. Trainees keep diaries, follow mentors' guidance, complete qualification work, and pass exams according to established protocols. DTEK Academy also innovates with immersive technologies to enhance WBL efficiency, effectiveness, safety, quality and achieving results in a shorter timeframe. The Academy actively uses VR technology before the trainee is allowed to undergo the relevant training at the site, especially for training workers that should work under dangerous working conditions e.g. electricians, repair specialists, etc.

7.6 Pay and/or compensation (Criterion 5)

In formal *CVET and SES-voucher programmes* with PPT or Dual VET models, students/trainees receive payment for completed work, with 50 % going to the student/trainee and 50 % retained by the VET school. It funds school operations and services, with up to 15 % allocated to trainers and teachers. In Dual VET programmes, student/trainee wages are typically higher than the minimum wage used in PPT.

Donor-funded short-term skills programmes cover training costs but do not provide trainees with direct financial support. Training providers are paid per-student/trainee, including resources and instructor fees. Companies may contribute by covering their own experts' time and support, but do not incur payroll expenses, making it a sustainable model for both trainees and employers.

Trainees that undergo professional training for employees are generally compensated according to labour standards. For example, at the DTEK Academy, trainees – future and current employees of DTEK Group – receive 80 % of their monthly salary rate during training, as well as potential housing compensation and other forms of support.

7.7 Social protection (Criterion 6)

CVET and SES programmes provide social protections including health insurance, accident insurance and pension schemes, as outlined by national labour laws. As for health insurance, employers contribute to the state social security system through a unified social tax of 22 % on salaries. It funds various benefits, including health coverage and accident insurance. While the State provides universal medical benefits to residents, some employers offer supplementary health insurance to cover additional medical services and expenses. Accident insurance covers short-term and long-term disability benefits resulting from occupational illnesses or personal accidents. In cases of short-term work-related disability, employees/trainees receive 100 % of their average daily salary during the disability period. The first five days are paid for by the employer, with subsequent days covered by the State fund.

The *Pension Fund of Ukraine* manages the State pension system, funded by employer contributions (the unified social tax of 22 % on salaries). It provides retirement benefits to employees, including those participating in CVET programmes. In accordance with the Law of Ukraine “On Compulsory State Pension Insurance” (No. 1058-IV dated 09.07.2003), the pension system has three levels: 1. Solidarity System – a mandatory state pension provision; 2. Mandatory Accumulation System – an obligatory savings system for employees; and 3. Voluntary Non-State Pension Savings System – optional private pension savings. They aim to ensure financial stability and an adequate retirement income for all workers.

MSP oversees social protections, ensuring that all workers, including those in training, receive appropriate benefits and support, e.g. access to healthcare, unemployment benefits and safe working conditions while training. DTEK Group while training its employees provides them additional social guarantees, e.g. medical insurance, benefits, trade union representation, relocation support and collective housing for trainees (if needed).

7.8 Work, health and safety conditions (Criterion 7)

OHS training in formal *CVET programmes* follows the Law on Labour Safety, with approximately 30 hours of theoretical instruction (VRU, 1992b). Training providers and companies conduct safety briefings before WBL, and safety topics are integrated into training curricula. MITs provide regular briefings on safety, modern techniques and task results, ensuring adherence to safety protocols. Training providers must create safe and supportive learning environments for WBL phases. Companies must ensure safe working conditions, fair compensation and adherence to labour laws, providing personal protective equipment, medical care, and preventive services, as well as support for MITs (if needed).

The PDE Law ensures employee training complies with labour laws, including workplace safety regulations. Employers provide mandatory safety training for high-risk jobs, specifying the required training hours, meeting legal safety standards, monitored through regular state inspections. The DTEK Academy goes beyond these requirements, offering training programmes including OHS, industrial safety and equipment operation, thereby increasing trainees' output both safely and efficiently, and reducing risks.

7.9 Regulatory framework (Criterion 8)

In *formal CVET programmes* adults seeking VET can enrol in VET programmes without completing secondary education, acquire a second profession after three years of insurance experience (as an unemployed or a retired) or receive state-funded education if unable to work in their previous profession (VRU, 2022). Programmes can provide partial qualifications through short-term courses, often lacking WBL component.

Partial qualifications in Ukraine are regulated by the Law “On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine on the Functioning of the National Qualifications System” (No. 4147), amending the Labour Code, the Law “On Remuneration of Labour,” and the Law “On Education.” It prioritises occupational standards over qualification profiles¹², and integrates partial qualifications into labour legislation.

SES voucher programmes are regulated by Law of Ukraine “On Employment of the Population”¹³, CMU Resolution (No. 207), MoE and MoES Orders (No. 2040 and No. 1151). This legislation approves the procedure for issuing vouchers, the list of professions and majors specialisation for which a voucher may be issued and outline training peculiarities for higher education applicants.

In *professional training of employees*, the PDE Law outlines procedures for professional training, certification and qualification confirmation. DTEK Academy adheres to these regulations and has developed its own comprehensive framework to ensure high quality and safety.

7.10 Involvement of social partners (Criterion 9)

Trade unions and their associations take part in shaping state and local employment policies and programmes. They consult with employers, government bodies and local authorities on employment issues. They also propose measures to protect union members affected by layoffs due to enterprise restructuring or closure, and they monitor how employment laws are followed.

Trade unions focus on labour safety, fair wages and protection during WBL. In 2021, they signed Education Sector Agreement (2021-2025) with MoES which improves wages, leave policies and social protections for education workers, including those in WBL. Recently, trade unions fought against a law reducing worker rights in SMEs, warning it undermined fair wages and job security (2022), pushed for fair wages and safe conditions in post-war rebuilding for WBL participants (2023), advocated for better legal status, fair pay and safety guarantees for deminers in WBL programmes (2024).

To address urgent needs in workforce development, employers' organisations and their associations have the right to: set up sectoral or intersectoral councils, educational and research institutions and independent assessment centres; participate in bodies responsible for qualifications regulation and professional skills certification; offer updates to the National Classifier of Professions and the list of higher education specialties; develop and suggest criteria for evaluating how well the training and retraining system works; help define research priorities and contribute to educational research projects and programmes; promote and expand modern, innovative WBL forms. For example, FEU, in cooperation with SES, led large-scale studies on employment by region. In 2023, data came from over 33 000 enterprises employing 2.1 million people. The 2024-2025 study expanded to 55 000

¹² A qualification profile is a regulatory document of a competent professional body agreed with the employer, which formulates the requirements for professional qualities, knowledge and skills of a specialist necessary to perform professional tasks in accordance with the needs of the labour market. It forms part of the legacy of the USSR, and is still in use for describing a profile of a job if an occupational standard is not yet in place.

¹³ Article 1, Article 30.

companies and 4.2 million workers. It also included a survey of 69 000 unemployed individuals aimed at better understanding perceptions of employment and training needs (FEU, 2024).

Social partners can participate in working groups for developing occupational standards to ensure *CVET programmes* meet industry needs and their curricula are aligned with labour market demands. Social partners have the right to initiate, create and then retain responsibility for the regular update of the occupational standard they created. For this purpose, they create the working group including representatives of interested stakeholders, e.g. companies, educational and/or research institutions, private training providers, sectoral and/or expert organisations, etc. Then, they apply to the NQA, follow all prescribed procedures and, after successful approval of the occupational standard, the companies use it to update working and professional development conditions for their employees. When the occupational standard is approved, MoES has to update the educational standard and training providers should update their curriculum with statements of the occupational standard to ensure proper quality of training.

Sectoral councils of business associations (e.g. the Federation of Metallurgists of Ukraine, Federation of Employers of the Fuel and Energy Complex, Federation of Railway Workers, etc.) actively develop occupational standards. The FMU Sectoral Council alone has created 100 approved standards – nearly 25 % of the national total – and was named “Most Active Developer of Professional Standards” by the NQA in 2023. It is worth noting that as of mid-2024, Ukraine had 130 Qualification Centres, with one-quarter established by businesses. These centres offer assessments for 447 professional qualifications and have issued over 4 100 certificates since launching in 2022 (FEU, 2024).

7.11 Support for companies (Criterion 10)

Formal CVET programmes can be funded by the state budget, trainees, or partner companies. Partial qualification costs are either covered by trainees or the skills programme they are participating in. The SES-voucher programme covers training costs up to 30,280 UAH, with any excess to be paid by the trainee (SES, 2024a). Donor-funded short-term skills programmes often cover all costs, aiding companies in saving their training budgets. Professional training of employees is primarily funded by employers. This is their right if they have a need and/or wish to do so. Employers may also receive non-financial support e.g. policy guidance and labour market information from government agencies, as well as training and resources (Swisscontact, 2023b).

7.12 Flexible pathways and mobility (Criterion 11)

Formal and most non-formal training are recognised in Ukraine, allowing for validation of professional experience through Qualification Centres resulted in qualification confirmation and certification. Those Certificates are recognised by legislation and in the labour market, ensuring to a person the right for decent work and salary. Formal CVET and SES-voucher programmes award State-standard Diplomas or Certificates, enabling employment or further studies. Donor-funded programmes and professional training of employees may offer various types of certificates, including internal and state-standard certificates, depending on the programme's aims and partners. DTEK Academy recognised that its internal certification process, while valuable, limited employee mobility. To address this, they established Qualification Centres to provide official recognition of employees' qualifications, making them transferable across the industry. This move enables the company to explore new opportunities, both within and outside the company.

7.13 Career guidance and awareness raising (Criterion 12)

Formal CVET programmes ensure individuals have the skills needed for success in the labour market. VET schools are now developing their career guidance services while establishing and developing CDCs. In 2024, 379 CDCs of VET schools provided career guidance service to 22 500 unemployed

(adults). SES offers career counselling via testing at their online platform – there is an opportunity to order a consultation with the career guidance specialist. Donor-funded short-term skills programmes actively offer career guidance and counselling services to help trainees select relevant training opportunities, enhancing their employment and professional growth prospects. Employers in Ukraine are encouraged to support their employees through professional training programmes to develop new skills and advance in their careers. The involvement of state bodies and trade unions ensures that employees receive relevant information regarding career development opportunities. DTEK Academy empowers employees to reach their full potential through clear career pathways and development guidance. The company supports growth in mono-industrial towns and fosters generational career progression, e.g. career maps help employees navigate their professional journey. The company also celebrates employee success stories and supports the next generation of leaders through youth initiatives, tracking their impact and sharing inspiring stories to attract younger people and inspire current employees to strive for professional excellence.

7.14 Transparency (Criterion 13)

Information on *formal CVET and partial qualification programmes* is available on training providers' websites and resources. The SES and donors also disseminate information on their programmes through their websites and advertising. Employers and employees are informed about training opportunities through agreements with providers and state programmes run by the selected training provider. The legislation of Ukraine outlines information-sharing mechanisms, ensuring transparency and accessibility, though it does not specify digital portals. Individuals can easily find information on training programmes through online searches, digital platforms, and websites. Those with limited digital access can have information from SES Centres, local providers or relevant NGOs. Traditional media such as newspapers and announcements also provide information on training opportunities. A large company always has resources to provide professional development opportunities for its employees ensuring proper informational support about planned and/or available ones. SMEs often face challenges in providing professional development opportunities for their employees. However, there are currently numerous offers available, mainly supported by donor projects that may be utilised.

7.15 Quality assurance and tracking of apprentices (Criterion 14)

Self-evaluation is a critical component of providers of *CVET programmes* in Ukraine. VET schools assess their own performance to ensure quality and relevance. The *SES-voucher programme* provides trainees with certificates recognised across various sectors (SES, 2024a). SES monitors the certification process to ensure proper recognition of qualifications. This programme has shown positive effects on educational attainment but less positive on employment outcomes¹⁴ (SES, 2024a).

Companies assess the effectiveness of professional training programmes through internal evaluations and certification processes. They are usually very attentive to tracking, monitoring and evaluating the efficiency of training process, ensuring proper quality and use of resources for training their employees.

Tracer studies in Ukraine for 2023-2024 are supported by various donors and projects but limited due to the ongoing conflict and its impact on data collection and analysis. The key results of the recent tracer study of VET graduates' career trajectories and recommendations are given in the IVET section of this report (see Box 1). As for the target group of 20+ years old, the report indicates that VET graduates achieve strong early labour market integration, with stable employment and salary growth from ages 20-23. However, as they age, fewer continue education, and a significant share remain inactive due to personal or social factors. While most find jobs quickly, the duration of the job search increases with age. Regional job retention is high. Skills relevance remains strong, but a portion of graduates do not fully utilise their qualifications. Key recommendations relevant for CVET target group

¹⁴ Most trainees do not provide any feedback on their employment status – 10 463 trainees out of 19 665 voucher handlers. Only 129 trainees got a job in the profession they studied, and 82 trainees found another job in a profession other than the one they studied, 1 031 trainees completed their training programs but stayed unemployed.

include the need of higher share of practical training strongly focused on WBL, better conditions for trainees' accommodation at student dormitories, more professional career guidance and stimulating employers to create stable jobs with competitive salaries.

7.16 Conclusions

Strengths

- CVET provides clear agreements for different training models, defining rights, responsibilities and funding. Dual VET engages trainees through trilateral agreements, while employer-led and voucher-based programmes improve access and skills development. (Criterion 1)
- CVET and SES-voucher programmes align training with industry needs through standardised LOs. Up to 20 % of curricula time can be customised for companies' needs. Initiatives like, for example, DTEK Academy (and many other companies in Ukraine) set benchmarks with industry-focused training. (Criterion 2)
- The existing training programmes for in-company trainers and mentors cover pedagogy, psychology, and occupational skills to meet industry standards. DTEK Academy leads by certifying and rewarding mentors to improve training quality. (Criterion 3)
- DTEK Academy actively implements VR technology to enhance WBL efficiency, safety and quality. (Criterion 4)
- CVET and SES-voucher programmes offer paid WBL for trainees, with higher wages in Dual VET programmes. Employer-led models generally compensate trainees according to labour standards while DTEK Academy enhances talent development – future and current employees of DTEK Group – through competitive compensation (80 % of their monthly salary rate). (Criterion 5)
- CVET programmes offer social protections like health insurance, accident coverage, and pensions. Employers contribute through taxes, while initiatives like DTEK Academy provide extra benefits to trainees (future and current employees) like medical insurance and relocation support. (Criterion 6)
- CVET programmes ensure strong occupational health and safety training, integrating legal requirements, workplace briefings and trainee protections. Employers and training providers maintain safe conditions, while initiatives like DTEK Academy enhance safety education with specialised programmes. (Criterion 7)
- CVET programmes provide flexible training options for adults to reskill, upskill or gain partial qualifications through state and employer-supported initiatives. Legal reforms enhance occupational standards, while SES-voucher programmes and DTEK Academy ensure high-quality, industry-aligned learning. (Criterion 8)
- Social partners support alignment of CVET programmes with industry demands by developing standards, shaping policies and advocating for fair wages and safety. (Criterion 9)
- CVET programmes are funded by the state, employers, and trainees, with SES-vouchers and donor support easing costs. (Criterion 10)
- CVET and SES-voucher programmes enhance job opportunities, while Qualification Centres boost skill recognition, adaptability and state-recognised certifications. (Criterion 11)
- Formal CVET programmes and SES-vouchers offer the opportunity to have career guidance and counselling for individuals to support career paths choice and employability enhancement. DTEK Academy provides clear career pathways. (Criterion 12)
- Information on CVET and partial qualification programmes is easily accessible through websites, SES, donor platforms, and traditional media. (Criterion 13)

Challenges / gaps

- Lack of training and support for in-company trainers, particularly in MSMEs, where resources and opportunities for skill updates may be limited, hinders effective mentoring and guidance for trainees in some companies. (Criterion 3)
- The WBL component in CVET programmes depends on the capacity and willingness of a training provider to engage its partner companies to practice training. (Criterion 4)
- Trainees, especially in smaller companies, may not always receive full social protections or insurance coverage due to varying employer resources. (Criterion 6)
- Lack of adequate financial or non-financial support, particularly for MSMEs, as the current funding model primarily relies on employers or trainees, with limited cost-sharing arrangements or specific incentives for smaller businesses to offer opportunities for upskilling/reskilling. (Criterion 10)
- Some programmes, like those offered by DTEK Academy, are limited to internal certifications that may not always be recognised or transferable to other contexts. (Criterion 11)
- Career guidance and mentoring services are limited for some programmes, e.g. the SES-voucher programme only offers career counselling upon request, which may limit proactive support and engagement for trainees. (Criterion 12)
- Lack of clear digital portal or unified system to easily access up(re)skilling opportunities across different sectors and regions. (Criterion 13)
- Tracer studies are limited due to the ongoing war and the availability of funding. The existing data collection efforts are not comprehensive enough to provide a full picture of employment outcomes or LOs alignment with industry needs. (Criterion 14)

8.1 WORK-BASED LEARNING IN ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET PROGRAMMES

8.1 Types of programmes with a WBL component

SES provides professional training to registered unemployed individuals, including IDPs, combatants and PwDs, funded by the Fund of Compulsory State Social Insurance of Ukraine for Unemployment. The training programme covers 95 professions and 335 educational programmes, lasting up to 10 months. The analysis of training programmes of SES training centres shows, for example, that the electrical and gas welder can be trained for 5.5 months or 843 training hours. This course has 70.5 % of practical training at the training provider's workshop (354 training hours) and WBL (240 training hours). SES can train housekeeping attendants for 13 weeks or 473 training hours with the share of 59 % for WBL. The 24-week (851 training hours) training course for waiters includes 68 % of a WBL component. Trainees receive a certificate guaranteeing payment of training costs (up to 10 times the subsistence minimum) and accommodation expenses (up to 5 times the subsistence minimum). If actual costs exceed these amounts, individuals or other sources can cover the difference. The key principle of this training (launched in 2023) is "the money follows the person" when the trainee can choose the training provider or the company. The trainee can have the full-fledged WBL through individual form of training, traineeship programme or dual education. It also allows for reducing time and costs for training and creates more opportunities for further employment. The employer also has a right to prior select the relevant trainee(s).

Professional training for veterans includes IVET and up/reskilling in various formats (full-time, distance, dual and combined). It is also available for former combatants and PwDs as a result of the war. Trainees studying outside their registered residence may avail of dormitory accommodation and reimbursement for travel expenses. Upon completion, they are issued a VET qualification or advanced training certificate.

8.2 Conclusion of a written traineeship agreement (Criteria 2 and 3)

As of March 24, 2023, *professional training for registered unemployed individuals* in Ukraine is regulated by the Procedure for Vocational Training, Retraining, and Advanced Training (Procedure) (CMU, 2023a). Training is formalised through a certificate from the employment centre, and a professional training agreement (Agreement) established between the individual and the educational institution or employer. A typical Agreement for professional training of registered unemployed individuals has a structured framework, including components on identification of parties, responsibilities, training programme specifications, post-training employment, financial arrangements, certification, evaluation and termination clauses. It is important for traineeship agreements to clearly specify working hours, compensation and insurance coverage to ensure compliance with labour laws, transparency and accountability and protect trainees' rights (CMU, 2023a). However, the exact requirements may vary depending on the specific traineeship programme and the employer's policies. The employer has the right to pre-select potential trainees via interviews or tests, as part of broader reforms.

8.3 Learning and training objectives (Criteria 4 and 5)

Training programmes for the unemployed individuals are designed based on labour market needs and company requirements. They are tailored to individual needs, considering personal capabilities, labour market demands and future employment opportunities, and, if an occupational standard is in place, the training programme is based on LOs, aligning with the specific job requirements outlined in the

occupational standard. If the occupational standard is not in place, then the statements of qualification characteristics¹⁵ are used to outline LOs that may be eligible for training.

SES, with support from UNDP and the German government, launched the “Strong Labour Market Institutions” project under the Skills4Recovery programme. This initiative aims for capacity building of SES including the use of modern approaches for creating innovative training courses for different target groups especially from vulnerable populations. As a result, SES services have to become more inclusive, accessible and open for collaborations and partnerships.

8.4 Working conditions applicable to trainees (Criteria 6, 7 and 8)

According to the Procedure, the professional training for the unemployed can take place at educational institutions or at the workplace through internships or individual training. As part of a WBL arrangement, the company provides proper working conditions ensuring that the environment supports skill acquisition. Unemployed individuals participating in WBL must adhere to the company’s internal regulations and working conditions. The unemployed population as trainees can take part in government-funded programmes for sectors critical to national recovery.

SES oversees regulatory aspects of professional training programmes (generally guided by the Labour Code) but they do not always explicitly detail working hours, compensation, and insurance coverage. The standard workweek is 40 hours, with rest periods of at least 42 hours¹⁶, though it may be reduced during martial law. Employers must provide OHS training, including hazard awareness.

8.5 Rights and obligations (Criterion 9)

Under Ukrainian employment legislation, the unemployed-trainees’ rights and obligations are protected (CMU 2023a). Unemployed-trainees must complete the full course of professional training, comply with the Agreement terms, and adhere to the training institution’s or company’s internal rules. They must participate fully in the training, demonstrate satisfactory progress, and seek employment in the acquired profession within 15 days of completion. Training providers must deliver the training according to the agreed curriculum, provide necessary resources, guidance and supervision. Companies/employers must ensure practical experience, evaluate trainee performance, provide feedback, employ trainees within 15 calendar days after completion, and participate in the qualification certification process. Specific policies regarding confidentiality and intellectual property (IP) are not explicitly standardised by SES but they are generally covered under broader labour laws and IP regulations in Ukraine. In cases where unemployed-trainees are involved in creating or handling sensitive information or IP during their training the company has to initiate addressing confidentiality and IP ownership in the traineeship agreements.

8.6 Reasonable duration (Criteria 10, 11 and 12)

According to the Procedure, the duration of professional training of the unemployed is determined by the specific training plans and programmes but generally should not exceed 6 months (for students in general) and can take 10 months for SES trainees (CMU 2023a). The upskilling programme or course on partial qualifications ranges from 30 to 480 hours (from 1 to 16 credits of the ECTS). The duration of internships for the unemployed is determined by the individual internship programme and ranges from 24 to 160 hours. It can also depend on the validation of knowledge and skills prior to the start of the programme; the better result of the entry test, the shorter the training course can be in fact. All types of training should align with the modular methodology. In some cases, internship durations are

¹⁵ A qualification characteristic is the predecessor of a modern occupational standard. It is also a regulatory document of a competent professional body, agreed with the personnel customer, which formulates the requirements for the professional qualities, knowledge and skills of a specialist necessary to perform the tasks of professional activity in accordance with the needs of the labour market. Currently, qualification characteristics are actively replaced by labour market-driven occupational standards (created by employers/companies).

¹⁶ Labour Code, art. 70

based on individual programmes and may vary but they are carefully regulated to ensure that they fit within the 6-month cap when applicable. Shorter, more intensive programmes are also available in Ukraine. They aim to address immediate labour shortages in fields such as nursing, construction and IT (MoE, 2024b). The Ukrainian Labour Code outlines general termination procedures for employment contracts, such as a 2-month notice in cases of redundancy or company liquidation. However, these rules may not apply directly to traineeships, which differ from employment contracts.

8.7 Proper recognition of traineeships (Criterion 13)

The Procedure states that upon completion of the professional training, unemployed-trainees receive a certificate of awarding (upgrading) a blue-collar qualification or a document on awarding a partial vocational qualification. SES certificates officially recognise professional qualifications, enhancing employability across sectors. They validate skills and competencies, boosting career opportunities and advancement. Employers view them as proof of expertise and commitment to professional growth. These certificates also support career mobility by aiding qualification recognition in different sectors.

The assessment process follows the guidelines of the occupational standard, if available, and is similar for both IVET and CVET. A commission, including representatives from the training provider and the company, oversees the evaluation, with trade unions sometimes participating. The trainee completes a final project or trial task and takes a theoretical test to demonstrate their skills and knowledge. The awardee certificate formally recognises the training and qualifications obtained which are defined as standardised sets of competencies or LOs and serves as proof of readiness for employment. These qualifications are recognised by authorised entities (Qualification Centres or educational institutions) and are certified by relevant documents that permit individuals to perform specific types of work or professional activities. In cases where advanced training is provided, participants receive a document detailing the partial professional qualification earned, ensuring that the training is properly recognised and documented. SES monitors the certification process to ensure proper recognition of qualifications.

8.9 Transparency requirements (Criteria 14 and 15)

The professional training process involves transparent coordination between the employment centre, educational institutions and companies/employers. The employment centre monitors all aspects of the training, from enrolment to the issuance of certificates, and ensures proper documentation of costs and outcomes. All agreements, including those for training and residence, are formally documented and copies submitted to the employment centre for verification. SES collaborates with major job platforms like robota.ua and work.ua to provide a comprehensive database of vacancies. The level of detail in job advertisements, including information on allowances, insurance and recruitment policies, depends on the individual employers posting the vacancies.

8.10 Cross-border traineeships (Criteria 16 and 17)

The SES professional training procedure does not specifically address cross-border traineeships. However, provisions are made for internships and professional training within Ukraine. It can be adapted depending on international partnerships. SES involvement ensures coordination for professional training programmes, potentially paving the way for future cross-border collaboration. While the primary focus of professional *training programmes for the unemployed* is on domestic reskilling, the Skills Alliance offers an opportunity for Ukrainians residing in Europe to benefit from the training as well. They can access these training programmes remotely or through international partnerships (MoE, 2024a).

8.11 Use of European Structural and Investment Funds¹⁷ (Criterion 18)

While the SES professional training procedure does not explicitly mention the use of external funds, it does refer to financing through the SES Fund. The fund covers the costs of training and associated expenses, suggesting that external funding mechanisms like EU funds could potentially be leveraged to support these programmes. Meanwhile, the Skills Alliance, backed by €700 million from international donors, is a prime example of leveraging European funds for upskilling Ukrainians in sectors that are essential for post-war recovery, e.g. IT, construction and healthcare (MoE, 2024a). ALMPs use various funding sources, including national budgets and international aid. As the EU candidate country, Ukraine will be required to build capacities and prepare strategies for future use of EU-specific funds for traineeships and other programmes, in particular as pre-accession funds as well as post-accession funds such as the European Social Fund (ESF) and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

8.12 Applying Quality Framework for Traineeships (Criteria 19, 20, 21 and 22)

According to the Procedure, the quality framework for traineeships is embedded in the requirement for a written Agreement, clear learning objectives, reasonable duration, proper recognition of qualifications and the active involvement of employers in the training and certification processes. The emphasis on monitoring and reporting by the employment centres further ensures that the quality of traineeships is maintained, aligning with European standards for VET (CMU, 2023a).

8.13 Conclusions

Strengths

- The structured framework of the professional training agreement ensures transparency, accountability, and alignment with Ukraine's workforce development goals, clearly defining responsibilities, financial arrangements, and certification. (Criterion 1)
- SES training programmes are tailored to individual needs and aligned with labour market demands, ensuring that trainees acquire relevant skills and practical experience that improve their employability. The "Strong Labour Market Institutions" project actively promotes best practices, modernises workforce training, and expands access, ensuring that training programmes remain relevant and aligned with labour market needs. (Criterion 2)
- The SES training procedure ensures that unemployed individuals undergoing WBL at a company's workplace follow internal regulations and working conditions, fostering a structured learning environment. Employers are responsible for providing proper working conditions during WBL, supporting skill acquisition, and following employment regulations guided by the Labour Code. (Criterion 3)
- Current Ukrainian employment law clearly defines trainees' rights and obligations, ensuring that both trainees and training providers follow structured agreements, which enhances accountability and compliance. (Criterion 4)
- The Procedure generally ensures that the duration of most professional training programmes aligns with the six-month cap, with the flexibility for shorter, intensive programmes designed to address specific labour shortages. To avoid ambiguity, the traineeship agreements should specify terms for extension, renewal, and termination, including notice periods. (Criterion 5)

¹⁷ In the context of this paper, the term 'European Structural and Investment Funds' refers to various European or other external funds available to Ukraine, mainly due to its status as an EU candidate country.

- The certification process is well-structured, with assessments aligned to occupational standards and overseen by a commission, ensuring standardised validation of acquired skills and competencies. Trainees receive officially recognised qualifications that enhance employability, career mobility and industry recognition. (Criterion 6)
- The training process is well-coordinated and documented, ensuring transparency in enrolment, costs and certification by means of oversight by the employment centre. SES provides a comprehensive database of vacancies resulted from collaboration with major job platforms of Ukraine. (Criterion 7)
- SES involvement in coordinating professional training programmes creates a foundation for potential cross-border collaboration, supporting future international traineeship opportunities. (Criterion 8)
- The SES Fund and the Skills Alliance demonstrate existing frameworks for financing WFD, suggesting a foundation for leveraging EU funds like the pre-accession funds and, in future, post-accession funds such as European Social Fund (ESF) and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The potential use of EU funds, along with significant backing from international donors like the Skills Alliance Initiative, highlights opportunities for leveraging external funding to support ALMPs. (Criterion 9)
- The procedure for traineeships includes key elements of the Quality Framework, such as written agreements, clear learning objectives, and the involvement of employers, aligning with EU standards for VET. (Criterion 10)

Challenges / gaps

- The lack of occupational standards to ensure that all training programmes are based on learning outcomes, aligning with the specific job requirements outlined in the occupational standard, thus highlighting the need for a structured system to ensure every trainee has a designated supervisor to guide, monitor, and assess their progress. (Criterion 2)
- The details regarding maximum working time, rest periods and insurance coverage are not always explicitly specified in traineeship agreements, leading to potential gaps in ensuring trainees' rights. (Criterion 3)
- The duration of traineeship and training can vary based on individual programmes, which might lead to inconsistencies in applying the six-month limit for traineeships. Traineeship agreements may lack clear specification of the circumstances and conditions for extending or renewing a traineeship and clarity on termination notice periods. (Criterion 5)
- Limited guidance on international recognition, which could impact career opportunities beyond national borders. (Criterion 6)
- Traineeship providers not always include key terms and conditions in vacancy notices which may limit transparency for potential trainees. (Criterion 7)
- The current framework focuses on domestic reskilling and lacks specific regulations or streamlined processes for cross-border traineeships. (Criterion 8)
- Need for capacity building aimed at more active and strengthened involvement of social partners, educational institutions and training providers to fully meet the objectives of the Quality Framework. (Criterion 10)

ANNEX 1: QUALITY CRITERIA FOR APPRENTICESHIPS, BASED ON THE EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK FOR QUALITY AND EFFECTIVE APPRENTICESHIPS

Criteria for learning and working conditions

Written agreement

1. Before the start of the apprenticeship a written agreement should be concluded to define the rights and obligations of the apprentice, the employer and, where appropriate, the vocational education and training institution, related to learning and working conditions.

Learning outcomes

2. The delivery of a set of comprehensive learning outcomes defined in accordance with national legislation should be agreed by the employers and vocational education and training institutions and, where appropriate, trade unions. This should ensure a balance between job-specific skills, knowledge and key competences for lifelong learning supporting both the personal development and lifelong career opportunities of the apprentices with a view to adapt to changing career patterns.

Pedagogical support

3. In-company trainers should be designated and tasked to cooperate closely with vocational education and training institutions and teachers so as to provide guidance to apprentices and in order to ensure mutual and regular feedback. Teachers, trainers and mentors, especially in micro-, small and medium-sized companies, should be supported to update their skills, knowledge and competences in order to train apprentices according to the latest teaching and training methods and labour market needs.

Workplace component

4. A substantial part of the apprenticeship, meaning at least half of it, should be carried out in the workplace with, where possible, the opportunity to undertake a part of the workplace experience abroad. Taking into account the diversity of national schemes, the aim is gradual progression towards that share of the apprenticeship constituting workplace learning.

Pay and/or compensation

5. Apprentices should be paid or otherwise compensated, in line with national or sectoral requirements or collective agreements where they exist, and taking into account arrangements on cost-sharing between employers and public authorities.

Social protection

6. Apprentices should be entitled to social protection, including necessary insurance in line with national legislation.

Work, health and safety conditions

7. The host workplace should comply with relevant rules and regulations on working conditions, in particular health and safety legislation.

Criteria for framework conditions

Regulatory framework

8. A clear and consistent regulatory framework should be in place based on a fair and equitable partnership approach, including a structured and transparent dialogue among all relevant stakeholders. This may include accreditation procedures for companies and workplaces that offer apprenticeships and/or other quality assurance measures.

Involvement of social partners

9. Social partners, including, where relevant, at sectoral level and/or intermediary bodies, should be involved in the design, governance and implementation of apprenticeship schemes, in line with national industrial relations systems and education and training practices.

Support for companies

10. Financial and/or non-financial support should be envisaged, particularly for micro-, small and medium-sized companies, enabling cost-effective apprenticeships for companies, taking into account, when appropriate, cost-sharing arrangements between employers and public authorities.

Flexible pathways and mobility

11. To facilitate access, entry requirements for apprenticeships should take into account relevant informal and non-formal learning and/or, if relevant, the accomplishment of preparatory programmes. Qualifications acquired through apprenticeships should be included in nationally recognised qualification frameworks referenced to the European Qualifications Framework (1). Apprenticeships should allow access to other learning opportunities, including at higher education and training levels, career pathways and/or, where relevant, the accumulation of units of learning outcomes. Transnational mobility of apprentices, either at the workplace or education and training institutions, should be progressively promoted as a component of apprenticeship qualifications.

Career guidance and awareness raising

12. Career guidance, mentoring and learner support should be provided before and during the apprenticeship to ensure successful outcomes, to prevent and reduce the number of early leavers, as well as support those learners to reengage into relevant education and training pathways. Apprenticeships should be promoted as an attractive learning pathway through widely targeted awareness-raising activities.

Transparency

13. The transparency of and access to apprenticeship offers within and between Member States should be ensured, including with the support of public and private employment services as well as other relevant bodies, and, where appropriate, by using EU tools such as EURES, as provided for in the EURES Regulation.

Quality assurance and tracking of apprentices

14. Quality assurance approaches should be in place taking into account the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET) (2), including a process allowing a valid and reliable assessment of the learning outcomes. The tracking of employment and career progression of the apprentices should be pursued, in accordance with national and European legislation on data protection.

ANNEX 2: QUALITY CRITERIA FOR TRAINEESHIPS, BASED ON THE EUROPEAN QUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR TRAINEESHIPS

1. Improve the quality of traineeships, in particular as regards learning and training content and working conditions, with the aim of easing the transition from education, unemployment or inactivity to work by putting in practice the following principles for a Quality Framework for Traineeships:

Conclusion of a written traineeship agreement

2. Require that traineeships are based on a written agreement concluded at the beginning of the traineeship between the trainee and the traineeship provider;
3. Require that traineeship agreements indicate the educational objectives, the working conditions, whether an allowance or compensation is provided to the trainee by the traineeship provider, and the rights and obligations of the parties under applicable EU and national law, as well as the duration of the traineeship, as referred to in recommendations 4-12;

Learning and training objectives

4. Promote best practices as regards learning and training objectives in order to help trainees acquire practical experience and relevant skills; the tasks assigned to the trainee should enable these objectives to be attained;
5. Encourage traineeship providers to designate a supervisor for trainees guiding the trainee through the assigned tasks, monitoring and assessing their progress;

Working conditions applicable to trainees

6. Ensure that the rights and working conditions of trainees under applicable EU and national law, including limits to maximum weekly working time, minimum daily and weekly rest periods and, where applicable, minimum holiday entitlements, are respected;
7. Encourage traineeship providers to clarify whether they provide coverage in terms of health and accident insurance as well as sick leave;
8. Require that the traineeship agreement clarifies whether an allowance or compensation is applicable, and if applicable, its amount;

Rights and obligations

9. Encourage the concerned parties to ensure that the traineeship agreement lays down the rights and obligations of the trainee and the traineeship provider, including, where relevant, the traineeship provider's policies on confidentiality and the ownership of intellectual property rights;

Reasonable duration

10. Ensure a reasonable duration of traineeships that, in principle, does not exceed six months, except in cases where a longer duration is justified, taking into account national practices;
11. Clarify the circumstances and conditions under which a traineeship may be extended or renewed after the initial traineeship agreement expired;
12. Encourage the practice of specifying in the traineeship agreement that either the trainee or the traineeship provider may terminate it by written communication, providing advance notice of an appropriate duration in view of the length of the traineeship and relevant national practice;

Proper recognition of traineeships

13. Promote the recognition and validation of the knowledge, skills and competences acquired during traineeships and encourage traineeship providers to endorse them, on the basis of an assessment, through a certificate;

Transparency requirements

14. Encourage traineeship providers to include in their vacancy notices and advertisements information on the terms and conditions of the traineeship, in particular on whether an allowance and/or compensation and health and accident insurance are applicable; encourage traineeship providers to give information on recruitment policies, including the share of trainees recruited in recent years;
15. Encourage employment services and other providers of career guidance, if providing information on traineeships, to apply transparency requirements;

Cross-border traineeships

16. Facilitate the cross-border mobility of trainees in the European Union inter alia, by clarifying the national legal framework for traineeships and establishing clear rules on hosting trainees from, and the sending of trainees to, other Member States and by reducing administrative formalities;
17. Examine the possibility to make use of the extended EURES network and to exchange information on paid traineeships through the EURES portal;

Use of European Structural and Investment Funds

18. Make use of the European Structural and Investment Funds, namely the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund, in the programming period 2014-2020, and the Youth Employment Initiative, where applicable, for increasing the number and quality of traineeships, including through effective partnerships with all relevant stakeholders;

Applying the Quality Framework for Traineeships

19. Take appropriate measures to apply the Quality Framework for Traineeships as soon as possible;
20. Provide information to the Commission by the end of 2015 on the measures taken in accordance with this Recommendation;
21. Promote the active involvement of social partners in applying the Quality Framework for Traineeships;
22. Promote the active involvement of employment services, educational institutions and training providers in applying the Quality Framework for Traineeships

ACRONYMS

ALMP	Active Labour Market Programme
CDC	Career Development Centre
CEU	Confederation of Employers of Ukraine
CMU	Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine
CVET	continuous vocational education and training
EU	European Union
FEU	Federation of Employers of Ukraine
GoU	Government of Ukraine
IDP	internally displaced person
ILO	International Labour Organization
IVET	initial vocational education and training
LLL	lifelong learning
LO	learning outcome
MIT	Masters in Industrial Training
MoE	Ministry of Economy
MoES	Ministry of Education and Science
MSP	Ministry of Social Policy
NBU	National Bank of Ukraine
NISS	National Institute for Strategic Studies
NQA	National Qualification Agency
NQA	National Qualification Agency

NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OHS	occupational health and safety
OPHE	occupational pre-higher education
PDE Law	Law of Ukraine “On Professional Development of Employees”
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PPP	public-private partnership
PPT	professional and practical training
PwD	persons with disabilities
SES	State Employment Service
SME	small and medium enterprises
SSSU	State Statistics Service of Ukraine
TA	trilateral agreement
TPC	Training and Practical Centre
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VET	vocational education and training
VRU	Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (Supreme Council of Ukraine)
WBL	work-based learning

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