

The war is testing Ukrainian businesses for resilience. And the best companies understand that in order to survive, they need to keep their teams together.



Ensuring safety is the first priority. The best companies view their employees not as a "labour factor" from a first-year textbook, but as their most valuable resource, human capital. They care about the team environment and about individual employees in different life situations. In times of war, such employers help their people with relocation within Ukraine and abroad, ensure safe working conditions at production sites, offices or shops, set up shelters and provide financial support to employees if necessary.

Helping their employees in the Armed Forces of Ukraine and the Territorial Defense Forces and contributing to the country's combat capability is a mandatory function of the best wartime employers. Companies support the army financially, materially and organisationally, and encourage the spirit of corporate volunteering.

And, of course, the best employers pay salaries on time and provide their employees with a social package, including health insurance.

The dsnews.ua publication has ranked the best employers in Ukraine during the war. The ranking includes companies with large staffs that offer decent working conditions, interesting and socially important work, build strong and trusting relationships within the team, and help employees, take care of their physical and psychological

health, invest in staff training and development programmes. Given the demands of the times, companies are prioritised by the following indicators: job and salary retention/increase, and employee assistance programmes (including those for the military, IDPs and their families).

As part of the project, the publication publishes stories of resilience of the country's best employers, representing different industries but united by the goal of keeping their economic front without losing their "main capital" - skilled and friendly employees.

Steel pillar of Ukraine. How Metinvest cares about its employees and helps 500,000 Ukrainians

During the year of the war, Mining and Metallurgical Metinvest Group managed to maintain its status as one of the largest employers in Ukraine. The company focused on supporting its employees and ensuring their safety.

The full-scale war has become a serious challenge for Metinvest, particularly as an employer. About 37,000 employees worked at the Group's enterprises in the regions under occupation (Mariupol) or in the areas where hostilities are taking place (Avdiivka). Therefore, after the Russian invasion, the company's main task was to evacuate employees to safer regions or abroad. In total, more than 20,000 employees and their families were evacuated from Mariupol and Avdiivka.

At the same time, the company developed a program of material, social and emotional support for employees who were forced to leave their cities. The Group has prepared for them more than 6,000 simultaneously available temporary accommodation places. The company provided the internally displaced persons with food and basic essentials.

In addition, Rehabilitation and Reintegration Centres were established in Zaporizhzhia and Kamianske, where displaced employees could receive consulting, medical and psychological assistance, as well as find housing and work at the company's enterprises. In particular, employees were offered a retraining service with the payment of scholarships while learning a new specialization and compensation for the cost of housing. After the start of the full-scale war, Metinvest employed more than 6,800 people.

In order to retain the workforce of enterprises forced to suspend their activities, the company involved employees in repair and maintenance work and landscaping while maintaining basic earnings.

Saving lives — Humanitarian aid

Since the beginning of the full-scale war, Metinvest has created the humanitarian initiative Saving Lives, under which EUR 40 million were provided to help civilians, including its employees, and attracted EUR 2.7 million from donors outside Ukraine. Due to the initiative, about 500,000 people received more than 4,000 tons of basic essentials, and the hospitals of Zaporizhzhia, Kryvyi Rih, Avdiivka, and Kamianske were provided with medicines and equipment for almost EUR 250,000. During the year of work, 400 volunteers, as well as 10 foundations and public organizations, joined the humanitarian initiative of Metinvest. More than 200 companies from all over the world became donors to the project.

The Group's employees continue to work, sometimes even in life-threatening conditions, ensuring the efficiency of enterprises and supporting the economy of Ukraine. They also participate in volunteer activities in their cities: they help accommodate refugees, collect and distribute humanitarian aid, work with displaced children, organize and restore cities. About 8,000 employees of Metinvest, who defend the country in the Armed Forces, are provided by the Group with bulletproof vests, helmets and winter uniforms.

A unique partnership with Protez Hub

At the same time, the Group is always ready to help in a crisis situation. In particular, as part of the Saving Lives project, Metinvest with Protez Hub launched a program for prosthetics for Group employees and their family members. Since December 2022, the program has been expanded to include servicemen and civilians in frontline regions. Sixty eight people with limb amputations are undergoing prosthetics and treatment at various stages, and 13 of them have already received prostheses worth up to EUR 30,000.

The Saving Lives humanitarian initiative of Metinvest Group and Protez Hub have launched the first online educational platform in Ukraine Knowledge Base: Protez Hub" for professionals in the field of prosthetics and injured, including Metinvest employees, their families and friends. This platform will allow us to go through all the stages of prosthetics and rehabilitation step by step, to understand the needs of people with amputations and to improve the quality of medical services. The training of medical personnel will include five courses: rehabilitation, for specialists in prosthetics and patient care. Metinvest allocated over UAH 2.5 million to create the resource.

Psychological recovery and education

The company also provides psychological support for employees and their family members. For this reason, the "Metinvest Together!" service was created. Since March 3, 2022, the specialists have conducted more than 3,000

individual and group consultations.

A separate program of the Group is dedicated to the psychological recovery of women and children affected by the war. Together with the Masha Foundation, Metinvest implements the Unbreakable Mom program: more than 70 women and more than 150 children have already undergone rehabilitation. The total investment in the project amounts to EUR 88,000.

It is worth noting that the war challenges did not stop the program of professional training of young people in Mining and metallurgical sector — in autumn 2022, 442 students began studying engineering specialties at the Metinvest Polytechnic university. This opportunity is provided free of charge for Metinvest employees and their children.

Metinvest emphasizes that during the war, it was possible to save the company and workforce, to pay salary on time and, in general, to provide support for its teams in times of need. And this is a great reason to be proud.

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