

TURBO PROJECT

The Universities' Reaction to Big Obstructions: Building resilient higher education to respond to and manage societal crises

RECOMMENDATIONS TO UKRAINIAN MINISTRIES



2026

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Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine
Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine

2026

Building on practical experience from the implementation of
micro-credential programmes for internally displaced persons
in seven Ukrainian regions

Jointly developed by





The Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine notes the practical significance of the recommendations prepared within the TURBO project for the further development of support mechanisms for internally displaced persons. The report highlights the importance of combining professional retraining, psychological and social adaptation, and employment support as interconnected elements of the integration of internally displaced persons into host communities. The presented findings and recommendations may be useful for further interagency dialogue on strengthening social support, engaging civil society organizations, and creating more sustainable conditions for the participation of internally displaced persons in Ukraine's social and economic life.

Tetiana Kiriienko

Deputy Minister of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine

The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine highly appreciates the TURBO project's contribution to strengthening the resilience and adaptability of the Ukrainian higher education system during an unprecedented period of challenges. The project has demonstrated the significant potential of universities to respond quickly to societal needs through flexible learning pathways, micro-credentials, and cooperation with local communities and employers. The practical experience and recommendations developed within the project may serve as an important foundation for the further development of lifelong learning policies, adult education, and the integration of vulnerable groups into the labor market in line with Ukraine's European integration priorities.

Vitalii Nosok

Head of the Expert Group on Technological Development, Directorate of Higher Education and Adult Education, Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine

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FOREWORD

This document presents joint recommendations to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and to the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine. The recommendations were prepared by the seven Ukrainian partner universities of the TURBO consortium, working with their seven partner non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and on the basis of their experience of designing and delivering micro-credential programmes for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in their respective regions between 2024 and 2026. The International Foundation for Social Adaptation (IFSA) and Nord University, as Ukrainian and overall coordinators of the project, consolidated and presented the partners' reflections in this document.

The TURBO project (No. 101129315) is funded by the European Union under the Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education programme. One of project's objectives is to improve the regulatory framework of the Ukrainian higher education system through the recognition of micro-credentials as part of lifelong learning. These recommendations contribute to that objective. It is intended to inform the wider policy debate on lifelong learning, professional retraining of adults, and the integration of IDPs into local labour markets. Behind this work stands educated work of academic staff, NGOs, local employers, and municipal officials in seven regions of Ukraine, carried out under conditions of war.

Where a specific recommendation in this document originated in the experience of a particular partner, that origin is acknowledged within the text of the recommendation itself. The consortium considered this attribution important, as they represent practical proposals tested in specific Ukrainian regions and refined through the joint work of the partnership.

The recommendations are addressed to two ministries because the integration of IDPs through education sits at the intersection of two policy areas: the regulatory framework for higher education and lifelong learning (Ministry of Education and Science) and adult retraining, employment support, and social adaptation (Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity). Several of the recommendations require coordinated action by both ministries to be effective; these are emphasized where they appear.

The consortium is grateful for the engagement of the partner NGOs, local authorities and businesses, and most importantly IDPs whose participation made this work possible. We hope these recommendations are useful in shaping a higher education and social protection system that is more resilient to crisis, more responsive to local labour markets, and better aligned with the European Union's lifelong learning agenda as Ukraine advances its accession process.

On behalf of the TURBO consortium:

Coordinators:

International Foundation for Social Adaptation (IFSA),
Kyiv, Ukrainian coordinator

Nord University Business School, Bodø, Norway,
Overall project coordinator

Ukrainian partner universities:

Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv
Lviv Polytechnic National University
West Ukrainian National University
Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University
Chernihiv Polytechnic National University
Vinnytsia National Technical University
South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University
named after K. D. Ushynsky



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Between 2024 and 2026, seven Ukrainian universities in Kyiv, Lviv, Ternopil, Chernivtsi, Chernihiv, Vinnytsia, and Odesa designed and delivered short-term micro-credential programmes in business and management for IDPs. Each university worked with a NGO that provided psychological adaptation and employment support, and with local businesses and authorities that connected participants to the regional labour market. Together with Nord University (Norway), Kozminski University (Poland), and IFSA, the consortium also built the capacity of Ukrainian academic staff to design, deliver, and assess such programmes in line with European practice.

Core finding

Ukrainian universities, working in partnership with NGOs and local stakeholders, can design and deliver short, practical, inclusive education programmes that respond rapidly to crisis-driven adult learning needs. The principal obstacle to scaling and sustaining this approach is not capacity; the project demonstrated that the capacity exists in seven regions and could be transferred to others. The principal obstacles are three interconnected gaps. First, the absence of a national regulatory framework for micro-credentials, which leaves universities working without a stable legal basis. Second, the absence of integration between the education and social-protection systems that adult learners need to navigate, with the result that a recognised qualification in one system is invisible in the other. Third, the absence of stable public financing for short-form adult education, with the existing voucher system structurally unsuited to micro-credential modules and no alternative funding line in university budgets to substitute for project-based donor funding. All three gaps can be addressed within existing legislative and budgetary instruments.

Priority recommendations

Seven recommendations identified by the consortium are:

1. Establish a regulatory definition of micro-credentials in national educational legislature aligned with the European Approach to Micro-credentials (Council Recommendation 2022/C 243/02), the National Qualifications Framework, and ECTS principles. (Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine)
2. Create a national digital register of micro-credentials with consideration of importance of technical interoperability with European platforms, to ensure transparency, recognition, and portability of qualifications. (Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine)
3. Permit the use of training vouchers for micro-credential modules by amending Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 207 and updating the List of professions and specialisations (Order of the Ministry of Economy No. 2844), including a «cascading voucher» mechanism that incentivises continuous learning. (Joint: Ministry of Economy of Ukraine, Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine, and Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine)

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4. Integrate verified micro-credentials into the Diia portal and the ePotential digital skills profile so that employers and employment services can recognise short-form qualifications acquired by displaced and other adult learners. (Joint: Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine, Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine, Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine)
 5. Formalise the role of NGOs as co-providers of psychological adaptation and employment support within publicly funded retraining programmes for internally displaced persons. (Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine)
 6. Recommend disseminating information among higher education institutions on good practices developed during the project implementation regarding the use of evening, part-time, and hybrid forms of education in the provision of educational services for adult education. (Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine)
 7. Establish family-supportive conditions for intensive adult retraining by enabling universities and partner NGOs to receive subventions for child-care spaces during in-person training. (Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine)

1. ABOUT THE TURBO PROJECT

1.1 Origin and purpose

"The Universities' Reaction to Big Obstructions: Building resilient higher education to respond to and manage societal crises" (TURBO) project was developed in response to two interconnected challenges arising from Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. First, the displacement of more than five million Ukrainians within their own country created acute and continuing needs for professional retraining, psychological adaptation, and labour-market reintegration in regions that had not previously received large displaced populations. Second, Ukrainian higher education institutions, themselves often displaced or operating under conditions of war, were called upon to heterogeneous adult learner groups for whom existing educational programmes were not adapted.

TURBO was conceived as a pilot intervention addressing both challenges simultaneously: building the capacity of Ukrainian universities to deliver short, flexible, practice-oriented programmes for adult learners, while at the same time providing IDPs with concrete retraining and social adaptation support in their regions of resettlement. The project sought to test whether a coordinated model, when universities providing professional content, NGOs providing psychological and employment support, and local businesses and authorities providing labour-market connections, could deliver outcomes that no single actor could achieve alone.

1.2 Consortium and authorship of this document

The TURBO consortium brought together ten partner institutions: Nord University (Norway, project coordinator), Kozminski University (Poland), the International Foundation for Social Adaptation (IFSA, coordinator on the Ukrainian side), and seven Ukrainian universities with two Norwegian and Polish chambers of commerce as associated partners. Further, each Ukrainian university paired with an NGO.

This document was prepared as project deliverable. The recommendations in Sections 4 and 5 were drafted by the seven Ukrainian partner universities, each writing from their direct experience in designing and delivering their micro-credential programme and in cooperating with their NGO. The Ukrainian partners' recommendations were then jointly reviewed and consolidated by IFSA and Nord University, with editorial work to harmonise terminology, place each recommendation within its current Ukrainian regulatory context, link each recommendation to the specific project evidence on which it rests, and align the framing with relevant European Union policy instruments. The substantive content belongs to the Ukrainian partners; the consolidation and editorial responsibility is shared.

1.3 The seven Ukrainian partner universities

The seven Ukrainian partner universities are central to developing recommendations. Each contributed not only the institutional capacity to design and deliver a micro-credential programme, but also the regional knowledge of local labour markets, of the displaced

population in the region, of partner NGOs and businesses without which the programmes could not have been adapted to the very different circumstances of seven Ukrainian regions. The short paragraphs below indicate what each university brought to the project and to the recommendations in this document.

Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (KNU)

KNU is one of Ukraine's oldest and largest classical universities, holding leading position among Ukrainian universities. Its Faculty of Economics, working with the partner NGO "Foundation for the Development of Entrepreneurship and Implementation of Business Ideas", designed and delivered the micro-credential programme "Business in the Digital Environment". The Kyiv programme drew on the Faculty's Diia.Business Entrepreneur Support Center, an initiative developed with the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine. KNU's contribution to this document is particularly visible in the recommendations on integration with the Diia portal and on national digital infrastructure.

Lviv Polytechnic National University (LPNU)

LPNU brought to the project their experience on implementing the retraining and social adaptation programmes for military veterans and their families, on the basis of which more than 800 servicemen and family members had been trained prior to TURBO. LPNU's Tech StartUp School and the Service for Accessibility to Learning Opportunities ("Without Limitations") of the International Center for Professional Partnership "INTEGRATION" provided the institutional infrastructure for the programme «Social Entrepreneurship in the Provision of Social Services.» LPNU worked with NGO «New Society of Ukraine,» with which it had partnered since 2017. LPNU's experience in inclusive education and in entrepreneurship support shaped the recommendations on social entrepreneurship and on inclusive learning environments.

West Ukrainian National University, Ternopil (WUNU)

WUNU is a classical university with active Erasmus+ project portfolios under Jean Monnet, KA2, and DAAD. Its programme "Entrepreneurship" was designed for a region with strong agricultural, IT, and logistics labour markets and a substantial influx of internally displaced persons from eastern Ukraine. WUNU worked with NGO "Educational and Social Innovations", its partner since 2016. WUNU's experience working with female entrepreneurs and IDPs informed the recommendations on targeted support for women in self-employment.

Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University (YFCNU)

YFCNU is one of the oldest classical universities in Ukraine. Its programme "Integrated Development: From Adaptation to Entrepreneurship", delivered jointly with NGO "Center of Economic Development and Social Adaptation", was designed for a regional economy in which 90% of businesses are self-employed individuals, which is an unusual structural context that shaped the integrated nature of the programme. YFCNU's experience contributed particularly to the recommendations on transitional support for displaced persons moving into self-employment.

Chernihiv Polytechnic National University (CPNU)

CPNU is the only multi-disciplinary educational and research centre in the Chernihiv region, working under conditions of particular difficulty given the region's exposure to active hostilities. Its programme "TURBO: An Educational Programme for the Development of Small and Medium-Sized Business" was developed by a team with deep prior experience in social entrepreneurship research and in soft-skills training and was delivered jointly with NGO "Chernihiv European". CPNU's contribution is particularly visible in the recommendations on flexible scheduling and on adaptive content delivery under conditions of martial law, both of which reflect the Chernihiv team's specific operational context.

Vinnitsia National Technical University (VNTU)

VNTU is a technical university serving Central Ukraine. Its programme "Social Entrepreneurship and Information Technologies in Business" was delivered jointly with NGO "Center for Social Adaptation and Development 'European Initiative'" and was supported by an established cooperation with Vinnitsia city and regional councils. VNTU's contribution shaped the recommendations on cooperation between universities, NGOs, and local authorities, and on combining technical and social-entrepreneurship content.

South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University, Odesa (SUNPU)

SUNPU is one of the oldest pedagogical institutions in Ukraine and the first such institution established in the south of the country. Its programme "Business and Technologies: A New Start", delivered jointly with the NGO "Association for the Development of Professional and Continuing Education", was designed for a region facing significant labour-market disruption and a substantial displaced population. SUNPU's specific expertise in psychology of risk, crisis psychology, and educational management informed the recommendations on integrating psychological support with retraining.

1.4 The TURBO model

Each university designed its programme (total 500 hours), reflecting the partners' previous experience that retraining alone does not produce employment for adult learners who have experienced displacement and trauma:

- Professional retraining delivered by the university in a blended format and ending with a university-issued certificate confirming completion of the micro-credential programme.
- Psychological and social adaptation, delivered by the partner NGO, focused on stress recovery, motivation, and resilience.
- Employment support through cooperation between the university, NGO, and local businesses included labour-market analysis for the region of resettlement, support with job search, and assistance for participants seeking to establish their own businesses.

This integrated structure is the principal innovation that the recommendations in this document seek to institutionalise within Ukrainian education and social policy.



2. EVIDENCE BASE: WHAT WAS TESTED AND WHAT WAS LEARNED

This section sets out the scale of need and the project results that underpin the recommendations in Sections 4 and 5. Each recommendation is also tagged with its specific evidence base in those sections.

2.1 The scale of need: why this matters beyond seven regions

The TURBO project trained 434 IDPs in seven regions. The scale of the underlying need is several orders of magnitude larger.

IDPs. As of January 2026, approximately 3.7 million people remain internally displaced within Ukraine, with 73% having been displaced for over two years¹. The displaced population is large, geographically dispersed, and predominantly of working age.

Veterans and their families. Ukraine currently has approximately 1.5 million veterans, with around 150 000 individuals with disabilities as a direct result of the invasion². Government and international projections estimate that, once full demobilisation occurs, the broader veteran community including families is expected to reach 5 to 6 million³.

The labour-market gap. The Ukrainian labour market combines high unemployment with substantial skills shortages. The Ministry of Economy projects that Ukraine will need to attract an additional 5 million workers for recovery and reconstruction⁴. The mismatch between employers' needs and candidates' skills or place of residence is identified as the principal labour-market constraint, with comprehensive retraining and inclusive employment of veterans, IDPs, women, and people with disabilities cited as the main route to closing it.

The populations the TURBO recommendations are designed to serve represent several million working-age Ukrainians whose labour-market reintegration is essential both to their own lives and to the country's recovery. Traditional bachelor's and master's programmes cannot meet this need: their duration, format, and admission requirements are often not suitable for adult learners with prior qualifications, family responsibilities, and limited time. Vocational training centres alone cannot meet it either: the volume is large, the regional coverage uneven, and the academic content required for many roles is demanding. The institutions with the geographical reach, the academic depth, and the regional embeddedness to deliver retraining at the required scale are Ukraine's higher education institutions, provided they are equipped to do so. Without restructuring higher education to deliver short, recognised, practice-oriented qualifications at scale, the integration of

1 UNHCR (2026) Ukraine Situation | UNHCR's 2026 plans and financial requirements. UNHCR Regional Bureau for Europe. <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/120716>

2 WB (2026) Fifth Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment Report RDNA5. The World Bank Group. Washington. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099022026094036395/pdf/P514499-22f93f3a-4278-42bc-b907-db9553d12069.pdf>

3 UNDP (2024) Survey on the Legal Needs of Veterans and Their Family Members. <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2025-02/ua-undp-veteran-needs-report-en.pdf>

4 IOM (2026) Ukraine Crisis Response Plan 2026. https://crisisresponse.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd1481/files/appeal/pdf/2026_Ukraine_Crisis_Response_Plan_2026.pdf

IDPs and also to veterans, and address of the regional labour markets' needs, will remain hard.

2.2 Quantitative results

The quantitative evidence is drawn from project monitoring data and participant surveys conducted at entry, exit, and 6+ months after completion.

Indicator	Target	Achieved
Internally displaced persons completing the full programme	minimum 350	434
Ukrainian academic and administrative staff trained at partner universities in Poland and Norway	minimum 56	59 in 2024
New micro-credential programmes designed, approved by Academic Councils, and delivered	7	7
Participants rating the practical value of the programme highly	—	> 90%
Participants reporting increased motivation to continue learning or start a business	—	> 80%

2.3 Qualitative findings

The project's qualitative evidence drawn from focus group interviews with IDPs, university staff and NGOs' representatives, self-evaluation reports produced by the seven partner universities, and the experience-sharing sessions held among partners. It supports nine main findings. These are reproduced below in the order in which they emerged from the partners' joint analysis.

Finding 1: A regulatory gap exists at national level.

Micro-credentials are not currently defined or recognised as an instrument for approval of educational results and professional qualifications in Ukrainian higher education legislation. The seven partner universities were able to design and approve their programmes only by relying on Academic Council authority and on the 2001 regulation on professional training without leaving the workplace. This is a workable but fragile basis for scaling the practice.

Finding 2: Heterogeneity of prior education is the principal pedagogical challenge.

Participants entered the programmes with widely varying prior qualifications obtained in different regions of Ukraine before displacement. The level of prior preparation in business and management subjects varied significantly. Programmes need to be designed to accommodate this heterogeneity, with diagnostic entry assessments and adaptive content where possible.

Finding 3: Short-form programmes are in high demand.

The 16 ECTS / 500-hour format proved highly attractive to adult learners precisely because of its short duration, practical orientation, and adaptability. Participants who would not have enrolled in a full retraining or master's programme did enrol in the micro-credential programme. This confirms the value of the format for the displaced adult population.

Finding 4: ECTS recognition and accumulation are essential next steps.

For micro-credentials to function as building blocks of lifelong learning rather than as stand-alone certificates, they must accumulate within a recognised credit system. This requires both regulatory definition and a mechanism for storing and verifying credits across institutions.

Finding 5: Adaptive content delivery is necessary under conditions of martial law.

Power outages, air raid alerts, and the practical constraints faced by displaced participants (housing instability, dependent children, distance from the host university) required programmes to combine in-person, hybrid, and asynchronous delivery. Regulatory and financial support for such formats is essential.

Finding 6: Coordination between universities and social-policy bodies is insufficient.

Universities and the Department for IDP Support and Integration within the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity work largely in parallel. Participants must navigate two systems with no shared reference points. Closer coordination at the level of data systems, financing, and recognition of qualifications would substantially improve outcomes.

Finding 7: Universities can act as intellectual centres for community resilience.

In each of the seven regions, the partner university became a focal point not only for retraining but also for connecting participants to local businesses, authorities, and civic networks. This wider role exceeds the traditional definition of a higher education institution and should be supported as a policy priority.

Finding 8: The Ukrainian higher education system is capable of rapid response.

The seven universities designed, approved, and delivered new programmes within the project timeline despite the conditions of war. This demonstrates institutional capacity for flexibility and innovation that should be encouraged rather than constrained by regulation.

Finding 9: The combined model (universities and NGOs) is more effective than either alone.

Universities provide academic content, recognised qualifications, and institutional stability. NGOs provide flexibility, specialised expertise in psychological work and employment, and direct relationships with local communities. Neither actor alone could deliver integrated outcomes observed in the project. This is the basis for several recommendations to the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity.

Finding 10: Stable public financing for short-form adult education does not yet exist.

The TURBO programmes were funded by the Erasmus+ grant. When this funding ends, no Ukrainian public financing instrument is structurally available to sustain the same model. The training voucher system covers full retraining programmes leading to recognised professional qualifications but not micro-credential modules. Universities do not have line-item budgets for adult continuing education at the scale required. The cost of the integrated three-component model (university teaching, NGO psychological support, employer

engagement) is not currently met by any single funding source available to Ukrainian institutions outside donor projects. International donor funding is the de facto financing mechanism, but it is as a rule project-based, time-limited, and unevenly distributed across regions. A sustainable approach requires both an extension of the voucher system and a longer-term strategy for embedding adult micro-credential delivery in regular university budgets and in social-protection financing.



3. EUROPEAN POLICY FRAMING

The recommendations in this document are aligned with the European Union's evolving policy framework for lifelong learning, micro-credentials, and the integration of displaced populations. As Ukraine advances its accession process, alignment with this framework is both a substantive aim of education reform and a formal expectation under Chapter 26 of the accession negotiations (Education and Culture). This short section sets out the principal European reference points relevant to the recommendations that follow, so that ministerial users can place the proposals in the wider context of European integration.

3.1 The European Approach to Micro-credentials

On 16 June 2022, the Council of the European Union adopted a Recommendation on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability (2022/C 243/02). The Recommendation establishes a common European definition of micro-credentials, a set of ten guiding principles for their design and operation (quality, transparency, relevance, valid assessment, learning pathways, recognition, portability, learner-centred, authentic, and information and guidance), and standard elements to be included in any micro-credential. It calls on Member States and partner countries to incorporate micro-credentials into their national qualifications frameworks, to ensure quality assurance arrangements, and to support portability across institutions, sectors, and borders.

The recommendations in Section 4 of this document, addressed to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, are designed to bring the Ukrainian regulatory framework into alignment with this European approach. Doing so would both modernise the Ukrainian system and create the technical conditions for mutual recognition of qualifications between Ukrainian and European institutions.

3.2 The European Qualifications Framework and ECTS

The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) provides the reference structure within which national qualifications, including micro-credentials, can be compared and recognised across European countries. Ukraine's National Qualifications Framework was developed with reference to the EQF, but micro-credentials are not yet integrated into either framework on the Ukrainian side. The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) provides the unit of measurement that makes accumulation and transfer possible. The TURBO programmes were designed using a 16 ECTS / 500-hour format precisely to facilitate future integration into both the National Qualifications Framework and the EQF.

3.3 The European Skills Agenda and lifelong learning

The European Skills Agenda (2020) and the European Year of Skills (2023) place adult retraining and upskilling at the centre of European employment and social policy. The Council Recommendation on Individual Learning Accounts (2022) and the parallel Recommendation on micro-credentials together create a policy environment in which short, recognised, portable, learner-financed qualifications are expected to play a growing

role. Several of the recommendations in Section 5 of this document, addressed to the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine, are inspired by these European instruments, in particular the proposals on extending the existing voucher system and on creating a unified digital skills profile for adult learners.

3.4 The Bologna Process

Ukraine has been a member of the Bologna Process since 2005 and has implemented many of its recommended reforms. The 2024 Bologna Process Implementation Report and the 2024 Tirana Communiqué identify micro-credentials, flexible learning pathways, and the recognition of prior learning as priorities for the next implementation cycle. Aligning the Ukrainian framework with these priorities is a logical continuation of the country's existing Bologna commitments.

3.5 EU accession Chapter 26 and the integration of displaced populations

Under Chapter 26 of the EU accession negotiations (Education and Culture), candidate countries are expected to demonstrate alignment with the EU's lifelong learning agenda and its instruments for the recognition of qualifications. Separately, the EU's framework for the integration of displaced persons, including the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and the EU's Temporary Protection Directive, places weight on access to education and labour-market integration as core integration measures. The TURBO model, and the recommendations that follow from it, sit at the intersection of these two policy strands.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE OF UKRAINE

This section presents twelve recommendations addressed to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine. They are grouped into four clusters reflecting the principal areas where regulatory action is required: (4.1) the regulatory and quality framework for micro-credentials; (4.2) digital infrastructure for transparency and recognition; (4.3) integration of micro-credentials into existing degree programmes; and (4.4) flexible adult learning formats.

Each recommendation is set out in a four-part structure: the current state of the relevant Ukrainian regulatory or institutional framework; the proposed change; implementation considerations; and the specific TURBO project evidence on which the recommendation rests. Each recommendation is also tagged for priority: short-term (no or low legislative effort, can be implemented within 6–12 months through ministerial order or methodological guidance), medium-term (regulatory change requiring inter-ministerial coordination, 12–24 months), or legislative (requires amendments to primary legislation, principally the Laws on Education and on Higher Education).

4.1 Regulatory and quality framework for micro-credentials

4.1.1. Establish a national regulatory definition of micro-credentials [LEGISLATIVE]

Current state

Ukrainian higher education legislation, principally the Laws of Ukraine “On Education” (2017) and “On Higher Education” (2014), recognises higher education degrees, post-graduate qualifications, and professional development. It does not currently recognise micro-credentials or micro-qualifications as a distinct instrument of recognition of defined learning outcomes, workload, and separate quality assurance requirements.

In the absence of such recognition, universities seeking to offer short-form credentialed programmes have relied on a combination of Academic Council authority, the 2001 “Regulation on professional training of workers without leaving workplace” (orders of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of Ukraine), and discretionary interpretation of the existing legal framework. The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine has issued strategic statements supportive of micro-credentials as part of lifelong learning, but the underlying regulatory definitions remain absent.

Proposed change

Develop and adopt a regulatory definition of micro-qualifications within the National Qualifications Framework, structured as follows:

- alignment with the European Approach to Micro-credentials (Council Recommendation 2022/C 243/02), in particular its ten guiding principles and standard descriptive elements;

- explicit reference to ECTS as the unit of measurement, with micro-credentials defined as carrying between 1 and 30 ECTS to permit a range from short upskilling courses to substantial retraining modules;
- definition of the relationship between micro-credentials and the levels of the National Qualifications Framework, so that each micro-credential is anchored to a defined level;
- minimum requirements for description of learning outcomes, workload, assessment criteria, issuing institution, and quality assurance procedures, enabling credentials to be compared and recognised across institutions.

Develop and issue methodological guidelines for the design, delivery, and assessment of micro-qualifications, suitable for use by all higher education institutions and by other authorised education providers. Prepare and submit to the Verkhovna Rada the corresponding amendments to the Laws of Ukraine "On Education" and "On Higher Education".

Implementation considerations

This recommendation is foundational: several other recommendations in this document, in particular those on quality assurance (4.1.2), the national digital register (4.2.1), and recognition within degree programmes (4.3.2), depend on a national regulatory definition being in place.

Implementation does not require entirely new legislation. Targeted amendments to two existing laws and a new methodological order would suffice. The drafting work could draw on the experience of EU Member States that have already incorporated the European Approach into national frameworks, including those whose education systems most closely resemble Ukraine's. Consultation with the National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance, with the National Qualifications Agency, with employer representative bodies, and with universities already piloting micro-credential approaches (including the seven TURBO partner universities) would substantially improve the quality of the resulting framework.

A phased timeline is realistic: methodological guidelines could be issued within 6 months of a decision to proceed, with the legislative amendments following within 12 to 18 months.

Evidence base from TURBO:

All seven TURBO partner universities designed and approved their micro-credential programmes through Academic Council authority and the 2001 regulation on professional training, in the absence of a national framework. This was workable for a pilot of 434 participants but is not a sustainable basis for system-wide scaling.

4.1.2. Develop a national quality assurance system for micro-credentials [MEDIUM-TERM]

Current state

Monitoring of quality assurance for higher education in Ukraine is the responsibility of the National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance (NAQA), which operates a programme accreditation system focused on degree programmes at bachelor's, master's, and PhD levels. The existing accreditation methodology is not designed for short-form, often modular, qualifications such as micro-credentials, and applying it without modification would impose disproportionate costs on the institutions delivering them.

At the same time, the absence of any quality assurance framework leaves micro-credentials vulnerable to reputational damage from low-quality providers and limits employer confidence in the credentials issued.

Proposed change

Establish a national quality assurance system for micro-qualifications, designed in consultation with NAQA and with employer representative bodies, comprising:

- a lighter-touch quality framework appropriate to the shorter duration and more practical orientation of micro-credentials, drawing on the European Approach principles of valid assessment, transparency, and relevance;
- standardised approaches to learning outcome description, workload calculation, and assessment, to enable comparability across institutions and disciplines;
- external monitoring mechanisms proportionate to the credential's size and stakes, with simplified procedures for credentials of low ECTS value;
- mechanisms for building and sustaining employer confidence, including employer involvement in quality framework design and in periodic review of high-volume credential areas.

The system should be capable of accommodating both university-issued micro-credentials and those issued by other authorised providers, with appropriate differentiation in procedural requirements.

Implementation considerations

This recommendation depends logically on recommendation 4.1.1 (national regulatory definition); the two should be developed in parallel rather than sequentially.

International experience suggests that quality assurance frameworks for micro-credentials work best when they are co-designed with the institutions and employers who will use them, rather than imposed from above. A working group including NAQA, the Ministry, employer representatives, and universities active in micro-credentials (including the TURBO partner universities) would be well placed to lead the design.

Funding for the additional NAQA capacity required can in principle be sourced from existing accreditation fee structures, supplemented during the design phase by EU technical assistance available under accession-related instruments.

Evidence base from TURBO:

Universities reported that the absence of a recognised quality framework limits employer recognition of micro-credential certificates, even where the underlying training is of high quality. Participant surveys and focus groups across all seven regions identified employer recognition as the principal determinant of perceived value of the qualification.

4.1.3. Introduce a national training programme for academic staff on micro-qualifications [SHORT-TERM]

Current state

Ukrainian academic staff have generally been trained in the traditions of degree-programme teaching, with limited exposure to the design, delivery, and assessment requirements specific to short-form, learner-centred, practice-oriented credentials. Where capacity exists, it is concentrated in a small number of institutions that have participated in international projects (including TURBO).

The Ministry's existing professional development arrangements for academic staff focus principally on pedagogical competence in degree programmes and do not systematically cover micro-credential design.

Proposed change

Develop and roll out a national training programme for academic staff in higher education institutions on the design, delivery, assessment, and recognition of micro-qualifications. The programme should comprise:

- a core curriculum covering learning outcome design, workload calculation in ECTS, assessment methods appropriate to short-form credentials, blended and hybrid delivery, and quality assurance;
- specialist modules on working with adult learners, on inclusive design, and on cooperation with non-academic partners (including NGOs and employers);
- a combination of in-person and online delivery modes, to ensure access for staff in regional universities and in institutions with limited travel budgets;
- a train-the-trainers component, so that the programme can be sustained and scaled by Ukrainian institutions themselves rather than relying indefinitely on international project funding.

Implementation considerations

The Ukrainian academic and administrative staff trained through TURBO in Norway and Poland represent an immediate resource for cascade training. Several of them are now well placed to act as trainers within a national programme, accelerating its rollout.

Training materials developed within TURBO (covering strategic and crisis management,

micro-credential design, hybrid delivery, and cooperation with non-academic stakeholders) are available and could be adapted for national use without significant additional development cost.

Delivery could be coordinated through existing structures such as the Institute of Higher Education of the National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine, in cooperation with universities active in micro-credentials. A two-year national rollout with annual cohorts of 200–300 staff would be feasible.

Evidence base from TURBO:

TURBO trained Ukrainian academic and administrative staff in Norway and Poland, producing detailed training materials and a network of staff with direct experience of European micro-credential practice. The consortium has offered these materials to the Ministry as input to a national training programme.

4.2 Digital infrastructure for transparency and recognition

4.2.1. Create a national digital register of micro-credentials [MEDIUM-TERM]

Current state

Ukraine maintains the Unified State Electronic Database on Education, which records formal degree qualifications issued by Ukrainian higher education institutions. There is no equivalent register for micro-credentials, training certificates, or other short-form qualifications, whether issued by universities, by employers, or by non-governmental training providers.

In the absence of such a register, holders of micro-credentials cannot reliably demonstrate their qualifications to employers, employers cannot verify the credentials presented to them, and policy-makers cannot measure the scale or distribution of micro-credential activity in the country.

Proposed change

Establish a national register or repository of micro-qualifications, structured to record for each credential:

- the issuing institution and date of issue;
- the title, learning outcomes, workload in ECTS, and assessment method;
- the level within the National Qualifications Framework to which the credential is anchored;
- the name and identifier of the holder, with appropriate data protection controls;
- verification and authenticity controls, enabling third parties to confirm a credential with the consent of the holder.

The register should be searchable both by institutions (for purposes of recognition within degree programmes) and by employers, with access governed by the consent of the credential holder. The technical design should anticipate integration with the digital skills profile within the ePotential reform (recommendation 5.2.1 of this document) and with the Diia portal.

Implementation considerations

This recommendation is one of the two recommendations in this document that require coordinated action by both ministries to be effective: the educational register (this recommendation) and the digital skills profile within ePotential (5.2.1) together describe a single integrated digital infrastructure. Implementing one without the other would substantially reduce the value of both.

The Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine, which manages the Diia portal and a number of related digital public services, would be a natural third partner in implementation. Existing cooperation between KNU's Diia.Business Entrepreneur Support Center and the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine provides one institutional channel through which this work could be initiated.

Phased implementation is realistic: a pilot register covering a limited set of issuing institutions (potentially the seven TURBO partner universities and other early adopters) could be operational within 12 months, with progressive extension to additional institutions and credential types over the following 12 to 24 months.

Evidence base from TURBO:

Across the seven TURBO regions, participants reported difficulty in communicating the content and value of their micro-credential to potential employers in the absence of a recognised national reference point. The Kyiv (KNU) team's prior experience with the Diia.Business Entrepreneur Support Center informed the proposal for technical integration with existing digital public services.

4.2.2. Build a unified national digital platform for micro-credentials, interoperable with European platforms [MEDIUM-TERM]

Current state

The European Union has developed substantial digital infrastructure for the recognition and portability of qualifications, including Europass, the European Digital Credentials for Learning infrastructure, and the European Qualifications Framework portal. These systems use common standards (notably the European Learning Model and verifiable digital credential standards) that are increasingly required for cross-border recognition.

Ukraine's existing digital education infrastructure was not designed with these European standards in mind. As Ukraine moves towards EU accession, the gap will become more visible and more costly to bridge with each year that passes.

Proposed change

Develop a unified national digital platform for the issuance, storage, and verification of micro-credentials, ensuring technical and substantive interoperability with European initiatives in the field of digital educational data and micro-credentials. Specifically:

- adopt the European Learning Model (or compatible standards) as the data structure for micro-credential records;
- implement verifiable digital credential standards, such that credentials issued through the Ukrainian platform can be verified through European tools without modification;
- ensure compatibility with Europass and with the European Digital Credentials for Learning infrastructure, so that holders of Ukrainian micro-credentials can present them to European employers and institutions on equal terms;
- align underlying terminology and classification with the European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO) classification, where applicable.

Implementation considerations

Building this interoperability into the platform from the outset is substantially less expensive than retrofitting it later. The cost differential is well documented in the experience of EU Member States that joined the European Digital Credentials infrastructure after their national systems were already in operation.

Substantial EU technical assistance is available to candidate countries for precisely this kind of digital infrastructure alignment work, including through the Digital Europe Programme and through bilateral assistance from Member States with relevant experience.

This recommendation is closely linked to recommendation 4.2.1 (national digital register) and to recommendation 5.2.1 (ePotential digital skills profile). The three should ideally be designed and implemented as components of a single integrated digital architecture rather than as separate projects.

Evidence base from TURBO:

TURBO programmes were designed in 16 ECTS / 500-hour blocks specifically to facilitate future integration with European systems. Without a national platform that speaks to European infrastructure, this design effort cannot be fully realised. Several TURBO partner universities, including KNU and WUNU, have direct experience of European mobility platforms through Erasmus+ and Jean Monnet programmes that informed this recommendation.

4.2.3. Ensure data protection and transparency in the digital storage of micro-credentials [SHORT-TERM]

Current state

Ukraine's data protection legislation, principally the Law «On Personal Data Protection» (2010) as amended, provides the general framework for handling personal data. Specific provisions for educational records exist within the regulations governing the Unified State Electronic Database on Education. There are not yet specific provisions for the handling of micro-credential data, including questions of consent for employer access, data portability between systems, and data retention.

Public confidence in any national micro-credentials system will depend on a credible data protection framework being established before significant volumes of credentials are recorded.

Proposed change

Develop, in parallel with the national digital register and platform (recommendations 4.2.1 and 4.2.2), specific data protection provisions covering:

- explicit consent requirements for the recording of micro-credentials in the national register;
- fine-grained consent for sharing of credentials with third parties (employers, other educational institutions, employment services), with the holder retaining control;
- data portability rights, enabling holders to export their credential records to other systems including European Digital Credentials for Learning;
- clear data retention rules, with credentials remaining valid for verification purposes throughout the holder's working life;
- alignment with the principles of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), in anticipation of EU accession requirements.

Implementation considerations

This recommendation is largely technical and can be implemented within existing data protection frameworks through targeted regulatory amendments. The main implementation work is ensuring that the technical design of the register and platform (4.2.1, 4.2.2) operationalises these principles correctly, rather than treating data protection as a separate compliance overlay.

Consultation with the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights (in the area of data protection) and with civil society organisations active on digital rights would strengthen the design. The forthcoming alignment of Ukrainian data protection law with the GDPR, required as part of EU accession, provides a natural opportunity to incorporate these provisions.

Evidence base from TURBO:

Project surveys across all seven TURBO regions found that participants were generally willing to have their qualifications recorded in a digital register, provided they retained control over employer access. This is consistent with the design principles of the European Digital Credentials for Learning infrastructure.

4.3 Integration of micro-credentials into existing programmes

4.3.1. Support universities in restructuring existing programmes to extract micro-credential modules [SHORT-TERM]

Current state

Most Ukrainian universities deliver bachelor's and master's degree programmes structured as integrated wholes, with limited modularity. Even where individual courses or modules within these programmes would be valuable as stand-alone credentials, current practice does not routinely extract them as such.

At the same time, the design and approval of entirely new micro-credential programmes (as the seven TURBO universities did) is resource-intensive and not realistic at scale. The faster route to expanding the supply of micro-credentials is to derive them from existing high-quality content.

Proposed change

Encourage and support higher education institutions in reviewing their existing degree programmes to identify modules (particularly practical modules) that could be transformed into stand-alone courses culminating in a micro-qualification. Specifically:

- issue methodological guidance on the criteria by which an existing module can be assessed for suitability as a stand-alone micro-credential;
- provide a streamlined approval pathway for derived micro-credentials, distinct from the full process required for entirely new programmes;
- support universities in adapting existing module content for adult learner audiences, where the original module was designed for traditional-age students;
- encourage universities to publish derived micro-credentials in the national register (recommendation 4.2.1) on the same basis as purpose-designed credentials.

Implementation considerations

This recommendation is among the lowest-cost in this document and could be implemented through ministerial methodological guidance within 6 months of a decision to proceed.

Several TURBO partner universities reported that elements of their micro-credential programme drew on existing master's-level modules adapted for adult learners. This pattern could be generalised across the system through targeted methodological support.

Evidence base from TURBO:

Several TURBO partner universities reported that elements of their micro-credential programme drew on existing degree-programme modules adapted for adult learners. This experience demonstrates the feasibility of the approach proposed.

4.3.2. Recognition of micro-credential modules within the elective component of degree programmes [MEDIUM-TERM]

Current state

Bachelor's and master's degree programmes at Ukrainian universities include an elective component, the size of which is regulated by the Ministry. Currently, students typically populate the elective component from a list of courses offered by their own university. The recognition of credits earned outside the institution, including micro-credentials, is not systematically supported.

This limits the value of micro-credentials as building blocks of lifelong learning: an adult learner who completes a micro-credential while in employment cannot easily count it towards a future degree, and a degree student cannot easily incorporate a relevant micro-credential into their elective component.

Proposed change

Provide a regulatory basis for the recognition of completed micro-credential modules within the elective component of bachelor's and master's degree programmes at Ukrainian universities. Specifically:

- amend the relevant ministerial orders on degree programme structure to permit micro-credentials registered in the national register (recommendation 4.2.1) to be recognised within the elective component;
- establish ECTS equivalence rules, under which a micro-credential's ECTS value within the register is automatically recognised by receiving institutions, subject to verification of authenticity;
- provide methodological guidance for receiving institutions on the academic-judgement aspects of recognition (e.g., the relevance of a particular micro-credential to a particular degree programme);
- set a presumption in favour of recognition for micro-credentials issued by Ukrainian universities, with refusal requiring documented academic justification.

Implementation considerations

This recommendation depends on recommendations 4.1.1 (regulatory definition) and 4.2.1 (national register) being in place. It is a relatively low-cost change once those are operational, requiring principally regulatory amendment and methodological guidance.

The recognition framework should also extend, in due course, to micro-credentials issued by foreign institutions and recorded in compatible registers (notably the European Digital Credentials for Learning infrastructure, supporting recommendation 4.2.2).

Universities should retain the academic judgement to determine which specific micro-credentials are appropriate for which specific degree programmes; the recommendation is to remove regulatory obstacles to recognition, not to impose recognition.

Evidence base from TURBO:

TURBO participants who had previously completed bachelor's or master's degrees expressed interest in the possibility of building on their micro-credential through further accumulated study. Several participants who completed programmes specifically asked whether their credits could count towards future master's-level study.

4.4 Flexible learning formats for adult and displaced learners

4.4.1. Introduce flexible and hybrid learning formats for adults and internally displaced persons [SHORT-TERM]

Current state

Ukrainian higher education institutions have substantially developed their capacity for distance and blended learning since 2020, initially in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequently in response to the conditions of war. However, this capacity is unevenly distributed across institutions and across regions, and a significant gap remains between the capacity of leading universities and that of smaller regional institutions.

The equipment and platform requirements for sustained high-quality hybrid delivery, capable of serving adult learners with diverse circumstances, exceed what most regional universities can fund from their own resources.

Proposed change

Introduce, support, and encourage flexible and hybrid learning formats for adults and internally displaced persons. Specifically:

- provide targeted financial support to universities for the acquisition of equipment for hybrid teaching (cameras, microphones, displays, networking, recording capability) sufficient to deliver synchronous hybrid sessions to adult learners;
- support the licensing of distance learning platforms (learning management systems, video conferencing, content delivery), particularly for institutions that cannot fund commercial licences from existing budgets;
- issue methodological guidance on quality standards for hybrid and asynchronous delivery to adult learners, distinct from the established methodology for traditional in-person teaching;
- establish a peer-support network among universities active in adult and IDP-focused programmes, building on the network developed within TURBO and other Erasmus+ projects.

Implementation considerations

Funding could be channelled through targeted competitive calls administered by the Ministry, prioritising institutions serving regions with high IDP populations and institutions with demonstrated capacity to deliver adult education programmes.

The TURBO partner universities each acquired hybrid teaching equipment through project funding (Work Package 3 procurement), and the equipment specifications and procurement experience are documented and could be shared with universities seeking similar capability.

EU technical assistance and structural funding available to candidate countries can in principle co-finance such investments, particularly where they advance digital transformation and inclusive education priorities.

Evidence base from TURBO:

All seven TURBO universities required additional digital equipment to deliver their programmes effectively. Project funds (under Work Package 3) covered the initial investment in each university; the equipment specifications, procurement experience, and operating arrangements are documented and available.

4.4.2. Approve evening and weekend scheduling formats for adult continuing education [SHORT-TERM]

Current state

Ukrainian higher education methodology has historically been built around daytime weekday scheduling appropriate to traditional-age full-time students. Although individual universities offer evening and weekend classes for part-time students and continuing education, there is regulatory ambiguity over the status of such scheduling within quality assurance reviews.

Universities offering predominantly evening and weekend programmes for adult learners have reported caution from quality reviewers, notwithstanding the demonstrated effectiveness of such formats for the target audience.

Proposed change

Recommend disseminating information among higher education institutions on the use of evening, part-time, and hybrid forms of education when providing educational services to adult internally displaced persons and other adult learners. Specifically:

- issue methodological guidance clarifying that evening and weekend scheduling is fully acceptable for continuing education programmes, including micro-credential programmes;
- ensure that quality assurance reviews evaluate such programmes against criteria appropriate to their target audience and delivery model, rather than against criteria designed for traditional-age full-time programmes;

- encourage universities to design programme schedules around the realistic availability of adult learners (typically evenings and weekends), with daytime sessions optional or recorded for asynchronous access.

Implementation considerations

This recommendation requires no legislative change and could be implemented through ministerial methodological guidance within 3 to 6 months of a decision to proceed. The cost is essentially nil.

The recommendation reflects existing good practice at several Ukrainian universities (including most of the TURBO partners) and would have the effect of removing residual regulatory ambiguity rather than introducing fundamentally new arrangements.

Evidence base from TURBO:

Universities reported that more than half of TURBO participants required evening or weekend scheduling to combine the programme with employment, childcare, or family responsibilities. The pattern was particularly pronounced among women participants and among participants caring for children or elderly family members.

4.4.3. Establish a digital experience-sharing platform for universities working with internally displaced learners [SHORT-TERM]

Current state

Ukrainian universities working with internally displaced persons currently share experience principally through bilateral contacts, through participation in international projects, and through ad hoc events. There is no systematic national mechanism for documenting and sharing what works in this area, with the result that lessons learned in one region are not reliably available to universities in other regions.

Several university networks (including the Ukrainian-Norwegian Education and Research Alliance (UNERA), of which several TURBO partners are members) maintain useful but partial documentation in this area.

Proposed change

Establish, at the level of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, a digital platform for the exchange of experience between universities implementing programmes for internally displaced persons. The platform should provide:

- a library of programme designs, curricula, methodological materials, and self-evaluation reports from successful initiatives;
- a directory of universities active in this area, with contact points for direct cooperation;
- regular online events for experience exchange, organised thematically (e.g., by discipline area, by type of partner organisation, by region);

- links to relevant European resources, including the European Approach to Micro-credentials documentation and the Erasmus+ project results database.

Implementation considerations

The TURBO consortium would be willing to contribute its training materials, programme designs, self-evaluation reports, and other documentation as initial content for such a platform. Materials are available in Ukrainian and English.

The platform could be hosted by the Ministry directly or by a designated implementing body (such as the Institute of Higher Education of the National Academy of Educational Sciences). Operating costs are low and could be covered within existing budgets or through EU technical assistance.

Evidence base from TURBO:

The seven TURBO partner universities benefited substantially from peer learning during the project, including through the experience-sharing sessions. A national platform would extend this benefit to universities outside the consortium.

4.4.4. Provide preferential admission terms for internally displaced persons from regions of active hostilities [MEDIUM-TERM]

Current state

Admission to state-funded places at Ukrainian universities operates principally on the basis of External Independent Evaluation (ZNO/NMT) results and on the basis of state-quota allocations to universities. Internally displaced applicants from regions of active hostilities or temporarily occupied territories face systematic disadvantages within this framework, including difficulty obtaining required documentation, disrupted prior education, and limited capacity to prepare for standardised tests.

Existing accommodations exist (including the right to take admission tests at any participating institution) but do not address the underlying disadvantages of the displaced applicant pool.

Proposed change

Provide, within the criteria for state-funded admission to higher education, preferential terms for the enrolment of internally displaced persons from regions affected by active hostilities. Specifically:

- establish a documented procedure for verification of internally displaced status and prior education in cases where original documents are unavailable, building on the existing work of the Department for IDP Support and Integration;
- introduce a state-quota mechanism reserving a defined share of state-funded places for verified IDP applicants from the most affected regions, similar in design to existing affirmative provisions for other groups;

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- permit universities to apply alternative admission criteria (including portfolio review, structured interview, and prior learning assessment) for IDP applicants in cases where standardised testing is not appropriate to the applicant's circumstances.

Implementation considerations

This recommendation extends beyond the micro-credentials agenda but reflects an observation made consistently across the seven TURBO regions: the pool of internally displaced persons who could benefit from higher education includes many who are excluded by the existing admission framework.

Several TURBO partner universities have already developed informal accommodations within their existing discretion. A national framework would standardise good practice and remove the institutional risk currently borne by individual universities.

Implementation requires coordination with the Ukrainian Centre for Educational Quality Assessment and with the Department for IDP Support and Integration of the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine.

Evidence base from TURBO:

TURBO partner universities reported that internally displaced persons from the most affected regions face systematic disadvantages in the existing admission process, including difficulties in obtaining required documentation.



5. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL POLICY, FAMILY AND UNITY OF UKRAINE

This section presents eight recommendations addressed to the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine. They are grouped into three clusters: (5.1) financial instruments to support adult retraining and entrepreneurship; (5.2) integration of education and social-protection data systems; and (5.3) the role of NGOs and family-supportive services.

Several of these recommendations require coordination with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, and this is indicated where relevant. Each recommendation follows the same four-part structure used in Section 4: current state, proposed change, implementation considerations, and TURBO evidence base. Priority tags are as defined in Section 4.

5.1 Financial instruments for adult retraining and entrepreneurship

5.1.1. Extend the training voucher system to cover micro-credential modules [MEDIUM-TERM]

Current state

The training voucher system is established by Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 207 of 20 March 2013 ("On the Approval of the Procedure for the Issuance of Vouchers to Support the Competitiveness of Certain Categories of Citizens on the Labour Market"). The Resolution rests on Article 30 of the Law of Ukraine «On Employment of Population» and provides vouchers to specified categories of citizens, including internally displaced persons, veterans, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups. The List of professions and specialisations for which vouchers can be issued is set by Order of the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine (most recently Order No. 2844 of 10 July 2025, which superseded Order No. 2040 of 11 April 2023). Implementation is carried out through the State Employment Service, which operates under the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine.

The voucher system is therefore an instrument owned jointly by the Cabinet of Ministers (which sets the underlying Procedure), the Ministry of Economy (which sets the List of eligible training and supervises the State Employment Service), and the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity (which is responsible for the social protection and integration of the principal target population, including IDPs).

The voucher system in its current form is structured around full retraining programmes leading to recognised professional qualifications. It does not accommodate shorter modular qualifications such as micro-credentials, which are typically of lower workload and cost than full retraining programmes but which TURBO experience has shown to be highly effective for adult learners.

Proposed change

Initiate, jointly with the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine and the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, the amendment of Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 207 and Order of the Ministry of Economy No. 2844 to permit the use of training vouchers for micro-credential modules. Specifically:

- amend Resolution No. 207 to permit the use of a voucher to pay for short-term micro-credential modules of 60 to 240 hours (2 to 12 ECTS), at amounts proportionate to the workload;
- request the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine, in coordination with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, to update the List of professions and specialisations (Order No. 2844) to include entrepreneurial and digital micro-programmes in formats consistent with the standards for micro-qualifications recommended in Section 4 of this document;
- introduce a «cascading voucher» mechanism: partial payment for the first module is treated as a contribution towards the next, providing a financial incentive for continuous learning. The cascade can extend through several modules, with the per-module subsidy declining as the holder accumulates credits, encouraging both initial uptake and sustained learning;
- ensure that voucher-funded micro-credentials are recorded in the national digital register (recommendation 4.2.1) and the digital skills profile (recommendation 5.2.1).

Implementation considerations

Implementation of this recommendation requires coordinated action by three ministries: the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine (as the holder of the regulatory instrument and the supervising authority of the State Employment Service of Ukraine); the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine (as the ministry responsible for the social protection and integration of internally displaced persons, the principal target population); and the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (as the ministry responsible for the educational institutions that would deliver the training and issue the micro-credentials). The TURBO consortium recommends that the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity initiate a tripartite working group to advance this recommendation.

The cascading voucher mechanism is one of the specific contributions of the TURBO partners to this recommendations document. The mechanism was developed by the Ukrainian partners during their joint analysis as a way of addressing two observed limitations of the existing voucher system: the under-use of vouchers by recipients who completed only one course, and the absence of incentives to continue learning beyond the first qualification.

Pilot testing in a small number of regions, drawing on the TURBO partner universities and their NGO partners, could demonstrate the operational viability of the cascading mechanism before national rollout.

Evidence base from TURBO:

TURBO programmes were 12 ECTS in size and were funded by the project. For the model to be sustained without project funding, public financing instruments must accommodate this format. The cascading voucher mechanism was developed by the Ukrainian partners as a specific solution. Resolution No. 207 and Order No. 2844 are cited from the Ukrainian partners' draft.

5.1.2. Establish a transitional support mechanism for displaced retrainees moving into self-employment [MEDIUM-TERM]

Current state

Internally displaced persons receiving social support payments administered by the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine face an abrupt reduction in support upon establishing entrepreneurial activity, with the result that the period of greatest financial vulnerability for a new business (the first 6 to 12 months of operation) coincides with the period of lowest social support. This creates perverse incentives against entrepreneurship and against the formal registration of new businesses.

Existing support instruments for entrepreneurship in Ukraine (administered principally by the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine and supplemented by international donor programmes) typically require formal business registration as an eligibility condition, but do not address the social-protection cliff edge that registration creates within the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine own area of responsibility.

Proposed change

Develop a mechanism of transitional support for internally displaced persons who, having completed retraining programmes, begin entrepreneurial activity. The mechanism should comprise:

- phased withdrawal of internally displaced person support payments over 6-12 months from the date of business registration, rather than abrupt cessation. change that lies within the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine own regulatory authority over IDP support;
- introduction of «social start-up grants» for internally displaced beginners in entrepreneurship, in modest amounts (calibrated to typical first-year operating costs of micro-businesses in the relevant sector and region), with the social-protection rationale (preventing destitution during business establishment) clearly distinguishing them from the entrepreneurship grants administered through the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine;
- simplified eligibility criteria for the start-up grants, recognising that new IDP entrepreneurs may not yet meet the documentation requirements of standard business support programmes;

- integration of the support mechanism with the universities and NGOs that delivered the original retraining, who are well placed to identify and support graduates moving into self-employment.

Implementation considerations

The phased withdrawal of IDP support payments could in principle be implemented within existing social-protection regulations through targeted amendments by the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine, without requiring new legislation or coordination with other ministries.

The social start-up grant component requires coordination with the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine (which administers the broader entrepreneurship support framework, including the grants programme launched in 2025) to ensure that the social-protection grants are complementary to, rather than duplicative of, existing economic-policy instruments. The TURBO consortium views the social start-up grant as a distinct instrument addressing a specific social-protection gap, not as an alternative to the Ministry of Economy's entrepreneurship support.

The social start-up grant concept was developed by the Ukrainian partners on the basis of consistent feedback from TURBO participants seeking to establish businesses. The TURBO partner universities are well placed to advise on operational design.

Evidence base from TURBO:

TURBO participants who began entrepreneurial activity after the programme reported that the loss of internally displaced person support payments coincided with the most fragile period of their new business. The pattern was observed consistently across all seven regions, with particular salience in the YFCNU (Chernivtsi) context where 90% of regional businesses are self-employed individuals.

5.1.3. Develop a sub-component of support for women entrepreneurs among internally displaced persons [SHORT-TERM]

Current state

Approximately 70% of internally displaced persons of working age in Ukraine are women, and TURBO participation reflected this distribution. Women internally displaced persons face a specific combination of obstacles to establishing and operating businesses in their new regions of residence: child-care responsibilities, lack of regional business networks (which were typically built up in the region of origin), limited access to start-up capital, and in some cases legal complications relating to business assets left behind in the region of origin.

Existing entrepreneurship support programmes in Ukraine are generally gender-neutral in design and do not specifically address these obstacles.

Proposed change

Develop a dedicated sub-component of support for women entrepreneurs among internally displaced persons, comprising:

- micro-grants targeted at first-stage business establishment costs, with simplified eligibility appropriate to the displaced applicant pool;
- structured mentoring programmes pairing IDP women entrepreneurs with established women entrepreneurs in their region of resettlement;
- legal advice services covering business establishment, asset recovery from the region of origin, and family law matters that frequently complicate women's business activity following displacement;
- child-care support during business establishment activities (linked to recommendation 5.3.3 on family-supportive conditions).

Implementation considerations

This recommendation is among the lowest-cost in this document and could be implemented through existing programmes with targeted adjustments to eligibility criteria and component design, rather than requiring an entirely new programme.

The experience working with women entrepreneurs and women IDPs particularly informed this recommendation. Several other partner universities have similar experience that could inform implementation design.

Coordination with the Government Commissioner for Gender Equality Policy and with international donors active in women's entrepreneurship in Ukraine would strengthen design and increase available funding.

Evidence base from TURBO:

Approximately 70% of TURBO participants were women, consistent with national-level data on the displaced population. Focus group interviews identified specific barriers, including childcare, lack of regional business networks, and limited access to start-up capital, that warrant targeted support. The experience with women entrepreneurs particularly shaped this recommendation.

5.2 Integration of education and social-protection data systems

5.2.1. Create a unified digital register of competencies of internally displaced persons within the ePotential reform [MEDIUM-TERM]

Current state

The ePotential reform, announced as part of the broader digitalisation of social services in Ukraine, aims to provide a unified digital interface between citizens and the social-

protection system. The reform's design and implementation is at an early stage, with substantial scope to shape the underlying data architecture.

The State Employment Service of Ukraine maintains its own information systems on registered job-seekers, qualifications, and labour-market matching. The Diia portal provides a unified interface for many digital public services. These systems do not currently exchange comprehensive data on the qualifications and competencies of internally displaced persons, with the result that an IDP's micro-credentials, training certificates, and verified competencies are not visible to potential employers through standard channels.

Proposed change

Within the framework of the ePotential reform, create a "Digital Skills Profile" module in which, alongside formal education documents, the holder's micro-credentials, training certificates, and verified competencies acquired in the past 12 months are recorded. Specifically:

- design the Digital Skills Profile as a module within ePotential, with the holder retaining control over which competencies are visible to which third parties;
- ensure data interoperability between the Digital Skills Profile, the platforms of the State Employment Service, and the Diia portal, enabling employers (with the consent of the candidate) to access a candidate's digital skills profile through any of these channels;
- implement jointly with the Ministry of Education and Science, with a defined format for micro-qualifications obtained at higher education institutions (cross-referencing recommendation 4.2.1 of this document);
- ensure technical interoperability with European Digital Credentials for Learning infrastructure, in alignment with recommendation 4.2.2.

Implementation considerations

This is one of the two recommendations in this document that require coordinated action by both ministries to be effective. The educational register at Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (recommendation 4.2.1) and the Digital Skills Profile at Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine (this recommendation) together describe a single integrated digital infrastructure, with MES as the source of recognised micro-credentials and Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine as the destination where they become visible to employers and employment services.

An inter-ministerial working group, including the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine as a third partner, would be the natural implementation mechanism. The TURBO consortium would be willing to provide technical input drawing on the project's experience with digital credential design.

Implementation should be phased: a pilot covering the seven TURBO regions and a limited set of credential types could be operational within 12 months, with progressive extension to additional regions, institutions, and credential types over the following 12 to 24 months.

Evidence base from TURBO:

TURBO participants reported that the absence of a unified digital reference point for their qualifications limited the employment value of the programme. A digital skills profile, tied to recognised national systems, would address this gap directly. This recommendation is the principal joint responsibility of the two ministries to which this document is addressed.

5.2.2. Develop ministry-level indicators of integration success for IDPs [SHORT-TERM]***Current state***

The Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine currently monitors IDPs principally through registration data and through the administration of social payments. These indicators measure the inputs of the social-protection system (registrations, payments, services delivered) but do not measure the outcomes that those inputs are intended to produce sustained employment, successful business creation, completion of retraining, integration into the host community, and improved well-being.

Without outcome indicators, it is difficult for the Ministry to assess which of its programmes are achieving their integration objectives and which are not, or to identify areas where inter-ministerial coordination (for example, with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine) is producing measurable benefits.

Proposed change

Develop, at the level of the Ministry, indicators of the success of integration of IDPs that go beyond registration of social payments. The indicator set should include:

- sustained employment indicators (employment status at 12 and 24 months after settlement in the host region);
- self-employment and business creation indicators (registration of new businesses by IDPs, survival rates at 12 and 24 months);
- completion of retraining and education indicators (including micro-credentials), with linkage to the digital register (recommendation 4.2.1) and skills profile (recommendation 5.2.1);
- self-reported well-being and integration into the local community, measured through periodic surveys of representative samples;
- indicators specific to particularly vulnerable sub-groups, including women IDPs, IDP families with children, and IDPs with disabilities.

Implementation considerations

The TURBO project applied a «social audit» methodology developed by Nord University to gather outcome data from project participants at entry, exit, and one year after completion. The methodology, the survey instruments, and the focus group protocols are documented and available, and could provide a starting point for ministry-level indicator development.

Implementation does not require new data collection infrastructure: existing instruments (including the State Statistics Service and the State Employment Service systems) can be adapted to capture additional indicators. Periodic survey data for self-reported indicators would require either Ministry-commissioned surveys or partnership with existing survey programmes.

Evidence base from TURBO:

Project monitoring data and the social audit methodology developed by Nord University and applied in TURBO offer a tested basis for indicators that capture integration outcomes rather than only inputs. The methodology and instruments are documented and could be made available to Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity.

5.3 NGOs and family-supportive services

5.3.1. Provide financial support to NGOs with proven competence in psychological work with displaced persons [MEDIUM-TERM]

Current state

Psychological support for internally displaced persons is delivered in Ukraine through a mix of state services, university-based services, international organisations (notably the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration and their implementing partners), and Ukrainian NGOs. The Ukrainian NGO sector has substantial accumulated competence in this area, much of it built through more than two decades of work with veterans and their families before being adapted to the IDP context after 2022.

Funding for NGO psychological support work is currently fragmented, project-based, and dependent on international donors. Ukrainian state funding mechanisms are limited and do not systematically support the participation of NGOs in publicly funded retraining programmes.

Proposed change

Provide financial support to NGOs with demonstrated competence in psychological work with internally displaced persons, to enable their participation in partnership-based retraining programmes. Specifically:

- establish a verified national register of partner NGOs available to universities and to local authorities for cooperation in adaptation programmes for internally displaced persons;
- develop competence verification criteria, drawing on the experience of NGOs that have delivered psychological work in established projects (including TURBO and the

prior Norway-Ukraine programmes);

- provide funding mechanisms (grants, sub-contracts, or service procurement) under which verified NGOs can be engaged by universities and local authorities for psychological support delivery;
- ensure that funding amounts are realistic given the cost of qualified psychological work in the Ukrainian context, including supervision and continuing professional development for NGO psychologists.

Implementation considerations

The seven TURBO partner NGOs have between them more than two decades of cumulative experience in psychological work with vulnerable populations in Ukraine, much of it built through the Norway-Ukraine projects with military veterans and their families before being adapted to the IDP context. They are well placed to inform the design of competence verification criteria and to participate in the initial register.

Funding could be sourced through reallocation within existing IDP support budgets, supplemented by international donors active in this area. EU technical assistance and Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund resources are in principle available for this kind of work.

Coordination with the Ministry of Health of Ukraine (responsible for the broader regulation of psychological services) and with professional psychological associations would strengthen the design.

Evidence base from TURBO:

The seven TURBO partner NGOs delivered psychological adaptation per cohort and were rated highly by participants. Their continued availability depends on sustained financing, which the project provided through subcontracting but which now requires a national instrument.

5.3.2. Establish a regulatory mechanism for state procurement or co-financing of non-governmental organisation services in adaptation programmes [MEDIUM-TERM]

Current state

Ukrainian public procurement and state co-financing instruments are not well adapted to the procurement of social services from NGOs. The standard public procurement framework (Prozorro) is designed primarily for goods and works contracts and applies awkwardly to services such as psychological support and employment assistance, where quality and continuity matter more than lowest price.

Existing arrangements for state co-financing of NGO services (for example, in social services for older people or people with disabilities) provide partial models but have not been extended to the IDP integration context.

Proposed change

Establish at regulatory level a mechanism for state procurement or co-financing of social services provided by NGOs within adaptation programmes for internally displaced persons. The mechanism should:

- permit multi-year agreements with verified NGOs (drawing on the register established under recommendation 5.3.1), with annual update based on programme demand;
- provide for direct contracting between universities and NGOs for delivery of integrated retraining and psychological support programmes, with state funding flowing through either or both partners;
- include quality standards and reporting requirements proportionate to the scale of the contract and to the vulnerability of the populations served;
- build in continuity provisions, recognising that effective psychological work with displaced populations requires sustained relationships and cannot be effectively procured through annual competitive cycles.

Implementation considerations

This recommendation operationalises TURBO qualitative finding 9 (the combined model of universities and NGOs is more effective than either alone). Sustaining the model in the absence of project funding requires both a regulatory and a financing framework. The Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine could in the first instance pilot the framework agreement model within its existing discretion under social services legislation, with extension to the wider IDP integration context once the model is demonstrated.

International experience with similar frameworks (for example, the procurement of homelessness services in several EU Member States) may provide useful design references.

Evidence base from TURBO:

TURBO qualitative finding 9: the combined model of universities and NGOs is more effective than either alone. Sustaining this model in the absence of project funding requires a regulatory and financing framework. The seven TURBO partner NGOs have between them substantial experience that would inform implementation design.

5.3.3. Provide family-supportive conditions for intensive adult retraining [SHORT-TERM]

Current state

Adult learners participating in intensive retraining programmes face child-care obligations that frequently limit their ability to attend in-person sessions. This is particularly acute for women IDPs (approximately 70% of the working-age IDP population), many of whom have primary child-care responsibility and have lost the informal child-care networks that were available to them in their region of origin.

Universities and partner NGOs have the physical infrastructure to provide supervised

child-care or learning hubs for participants' children during in-person sessions but lack the financing and regulatory basis to do so systematically.

Proposed change

Enable universities and partner NGOs to receive subventions for the organisation of children's spaces or supervised distance-learning hubs for children during in-person training of their parents. Specifically:

- establish a subvention mechanism through which universities and NGOs delivering recognised retraining programmes for IDPs can claim funding for child-care support, calculated on the basis of the number of participants with dependent children and the duration of in-person sessions;
- permit flexible models, including university-organised child-care spaces, NGO-organised hubs, and partnerships with existing child-care providers in the locality of the training;
- support a pilot «family micro-course» model, combining a training module for parents with developmental programmes for their children, delivered jointly by university and NGO;
- ensure that quality and safeguarding standards for child-care provision are appropriate to the short-term, complementary nature of the service.

Implementation considerations

The family micro-course concept is one of the specific contributions of the TURBO partners to this recommendations document, developed in response to consistent feedback from women participants. The concept does not require new institutional infrastructure: it combines existing capacities of university teaching, NGO child-engagement, and modest additional funding.

Implementation could be piloted in a small number of regions (for example, the seven TURBO regions) before national rollout. The cost per participant is low relative to the impact on participation rates and completion outcomes.

Coordination with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and with regional and local authorities (responsible for many existing child-care arrangements) would strengthen implementation.

Evidence base from TURBO:

TURBO participant feedback identified childcare as the single most frequently cited obstacle to full participation in the programme, particularly for women participants. The family micro-course concept was developed by the Ukrainian partners as a specific response. Universities and partner NGOs have the physical infrastructure but lack the financing and regulatory basis.



6. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

This section consolidates the recommendations of this document into a single overview, organised by ministry. The summary is intended for use as a reference and as a basis for dialogue between the consortium and the ministries. The full text of each recommendation, together with its supporting evidence and implementation considerations, is given in Sections 4 and 5.

Although this document is formally addressed to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and to the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine, several of the recommendations require coordinated action with other parts of the Ukrainian government. The recommendations on the training voucher system require the active engagement of the Ministry of Economy, which holds the regulatory instrument and supervises the State Employment Service.

The recommendations on the digital register and the ePotential digital skills profile require the engagement of the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine, which manages the Diia portal and the broader digital public-services architecture. Recommendations relating to veterans' retraining are also relevant to the Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine. The TURBO consortium therefore offers this document not only to its two principal addressees but also to these coordinating ministries, in the hope that it will support the inter-ministerial dialogue that the proposed reforms require.

Overview of the recommendations

Ministry of Education and Science	Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity
4.1.1 National regulatory definition of micro-credentials [LEGISLATIVE]	5.1.1 Extend training voucher system to micro-credential modules (Resolution 207, cascading mechanism) [MEDIUM-TERM]
4.1.2 National quality assurance system for micro-credentials [MEDIUM-TERM]	5.1.2 Transitional support mechanism for displaced retrainees moving to self-employment (social start-up grants) [MEDIUM-TERM]
4.1.3 National training programme for academic staff [SHORT-TERM]	5.1.3 Sub-component of support for women entrepreneurs among IDPs [SHORT-TERM]
4.2.1 National digital register of micro-credentials [MEDIUM-TERM]	5.2.1 Digital Skills Profile within ePotential, integrated with Diia [MEDIUM-TERM]
4.2.2 National digital platform interoperable with European systems [MEDIUM-TERM]	5.2.2 Ministry-level indicators of integration success for IDPs [SHORT-TERM]
4.2.3 Data protection in digital storage [SHORT-TERM]	5.3.1 Financial support to NGOs with proven competence in psychological work [MEDIUM-TERM]
4.3.1 Restructuring existing programmes to extract micro-credential modules [SHORT-TERM]	5.3.2 Regulatory mechanism for state procurement / co-financing of NGO services [MEDIUM-TERM]
4.3.2 Recognition of micro-credentials within elective components of degree programmes [MEDIUM-TERM]	5.3.3 Family-supportive conditions for intensive adult retraining (family micro-course) [SHORT-TERM]
4.4.1 Flexible and hybrid learning formats for adults and IDPs [SHORT-TERM]	
4.4.2 Evening and weekend scheduling for adult continuing education [SHORT-TERM]	
4.4.3 Digital experience-sharing platform for universities working with IDPs [SHORT-TERM]	
4.4.4 Preferential admission terms for IDPs from regions of active hostilities [MEDIUM-TERM]	

Distribution by priority

Of the recommendations, one requires legislative change (4.1.1, the national regulatory definition of micro-credentials, on which several other recommendations depend); ten are classified as medium-term (12–24 months, requiring regulatory change and inter-ministerial coordination); and nine are classified as short-term (6–12 months, implementable through ministerial order or methodological guidance).

This distribution reflects the consortium's view that substantial progress is possible within a 12-month horizon through actions that do not require primary legislation. The legislative recommendation is the foundational element on which the medium-term recommendations build; pursuing it in parallel with, rather than in sequence to, the short-term and medium-term work would substantially accelerate the overall reform programme.

Financing as the cross-cutting question

Several recommendations in this document concern financing, and they should be read together. Recommendation 5.1.1 extends the existing voucher system to cover micro-credential modules, the most direct financing fix and the one with the lowest legislative cost. Recommendation 5.1.2 addresses the social-protection cliff edge for displaced retrainees moving into self-employment. Recommendation 4.4.1 calls for targeted financial support to universities for the equipment and platforms required to deliver adult-oriented hybrid programmes. Recommendations 5.3.1, 5.3.2, and 5.3.3 concern the financing of NGO psychological and employment support and of family-supportive services. Taken together, these recommendations describe a financing architecture for adult micro-credential delivery: voucher-based individual support for the learner, equipment and operating support for the institution, dedicated financing for the partner NGO services, and transitional support for graduates entering self-employment. The TURBO consortium recommends that the two ministries, working with the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine, treat these recommendations as a connected financing package rather than as separate items, and that they consider piloting the package in the seven TURBO regions before national rollout.

Recommendations originating in the experience of specific TURBO partners

Several recommendations in this document originated in the specific experience of particular TURBO partner universities and NGOs. These origins are noted within each recommendation in Sections 4 and 5; they are summarised here for reference.

- Cascading voucher mechanism (5.1.1) developed by the Ukrainian partners during their joint analysis as a specific solution to observed limitations of the existing voucher system.
- Social start-up grants (5.1.2) developed in response to consistent participant feedback across all seven regions, with particular salience in the YFCNU (Chernivtsi) context.
- Family micro-course (5.3.3) developed by the Ukrainian partners in response to participant feedback from women, who comprised approximately 70% of participants.

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- Diia portal integration (4.2.1, 5.2.1) informed by KNU's prior cooperation with the Ministry of Digital Transformation through the Diia.Business Entrepreneur Support Center.
 - Targeted support for women entrepreneurs (5.1.3) informed particularly by the WUNU (Ternopil) team's experience working with women entrepreneurs and women IDPs.
 - Self-employment focus and transitional support (5.1.2) informed particularly by YFCNU's regional context, in which 90% of businesses are self-employed individuals.
 - Adaptive content delivery under martial law (4.4.1) informed particularly by the CPNU (Chernihiv) team's specific operational context.
 - Integrated psychological support (5.3.1, 5.3.2) informed by the SUNPU team's expertise in psychology of risk and crisis psychology, and by the cumulative experience of all seven partner NGOs.



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