

REPORT 4

Comparative Analysis of Educational Practices for Retraining and Social Integration of Migrants in Ukraine, Norway and Poland

2026

REPORT 4

Comparative Analysis of Educational Practices for Retraining and Social Integration of Migrants in Ukraine, Norway and Poland

2026

Veronika Vakulenko and Bohdan Dorosh



Project: 101129315-TURBO-Erasmus-EDU-2023-CBHE



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was produced by the TURBO project consortium, drawing on the work of partners in Ukraine, Norway and Poland. In the comparative overview, Section 2.1 (Ukraine) was written by Bohdan Dorosh; Section 2.2 (Norway) by Veronika Vakulenko; and Section 2.3 (Poland) by Grygorii Kravchenko, Joanna Bril and Inna Tselinko.

The institutional case studies in Section 4 were prepared by the Ukrainian partner teams in each region: Lviv Polytechnic National University – Tetiana Shapovalova and Konstantin Levchenko; West Ukrainian National University, Ternopil – Uliana Koruts and Roman Kulyk; Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University – Oleksandr Saienko, Roman Greshko and Oleksandr Kyfyak; Chernihiv Polytechnic National University – Kateryna Maksom and Anna Verbytska; Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv – Olena Liubkina, Tetiana Onysenko, Oksana Kovalenko, Mariya Knir, Alina Magomedova, Nataliia Pleshakova, Eugenia Nosova and Vitalina Delas; Vinnytsia National Technical University – Yuriy Buriennikov, Iryna Yepifanova, Oleksandr Petrov, Liliia Ruda and Liliia Blagodyr; and South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky, Odesa – Nataliia Chernenko and Volodymyr Chernykh.

Anatoli Bourmistov read the full manuscript and provided comments on the report as a whole, and Roman Vakulchuk carried out the quality assurance.

INDEX

Executive Summary	11
1. Introduction	13
2. Overview of international educational practices for retraining and social integration of migrants	16
2.1 Ukraine	17
2.2 Norway.....	22
2.3 Poland	26
3. Comparative analysis of international practices	33
3.1 The model of social integration	34
3.2 Micro-credential: regulatory maturity and the recognition	34
3.3 Collaboration: public capacity and the role of NGOs.....	35
3.4 Shared challenges and opportunities	35
3.5 Sustainability and scalability	36
4. Insights from Ukrainian experience	37
Summary of IDPs' perceptions	37
4.1 Lviv Polytechnic National University (Lviv)	39
4.2 West Ukrainian National University (Ternopil).....	46
4.3 Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University (Chernivtsi).....	51
4.4 Chernihiv Polytechnic National University (Chernihiv)	57
4.5 Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (Kyiv)	67
4.6 Vinnytsia National Technical University (Vinnytsia).....	72
4.7 South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky (Odesa)	79
5. Lessons learnt.....	86
5.1 Lessons for Ukrainian universities and NGOs.....	86
5.2 Lessons for international collaboration.....	87
5.3 Policy-level recommendations.....	87

5.4 How Ukrainian practice aligns with and differs from Poland and Norway	88
5.5 Transferable elements for refugee and adult education across Europe.....	88
References.....	89
Annexes	97

List of figures

Figure 4.1.1. Structure of educational components and trainings in Lviv	42
Figure 4.1.2. Aggregated programme model, LPNU (both 2025 semesters)	45
Figure 4.2.1. Structure of educational components and trainings in Ternopil ...	48
Figure 4.2.2. Aggregated programme model, WUNU (both 2025 semesters)	50
Figure 4.3.1. Structure of educational components and trainings in Chernivtsi .	53
Figure 4.3.2. Aggregated programme model, YFCNU (both 2025 semesters)....	56
Figure 4.4.1. Structure of educational components and trainings in Chernihiv ..	60
Figure 4.4.2 Aggregated programme model, CPNU (both 2025 semesters)	66
Figure 4.5.1. Structure of educational components and trainings in Kyiv.....	69
Figure 4.5.2. Aggregated programme model, KNU (both 2025 semesters).....	71
Figure 4.6.1. Structure of educational components and trainings in Vinnytsia...	75
Figure 4.6.2 Aggregated programme model, VNTU (both 2025 semesters)	79
Figure 4.7.1. Structure of educational components and trainings in Odesa	82
Figure 4.7.2. Aggregated programme model, SUNPU (both 2025 semesters)	85

List of abbreviations

AI	Artificial intelligence	GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
AMIF	Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund	H-BRS	Hochschule bonn-rhein-sieg
BGK	Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego	HEI(s)	Higher education institution(s)
BWI	Building and Wood Workers' International	HK-dir	Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills
CBHE	Capacity Building in Higher Education	IDP(s)	Internally displaced person(s)
CEDSA	Centre for Economic Development and Social Adaptation	IFSA	International Foundation for Social Adaptation
COIL	Collaborative online international learning	IMDi	Directorate of Integration and Diversity
CPNU	Chernihiv Polytechnic National University	IOM	International Organization for Migration
CV	Curriculum Citae	IT	Information technology
DAAD	German academic exchange service (deutscher akademischer austauschdienst)	JetIQ	VNTU electronic learning environment (e-learning platform)
EC	European Commission	KNU	Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System	LPNU	Lviv Polytechnic National University
EMN	European migration network	MInT-Ukraine	Micro-Credentials as an Internationalisation Tool for Ukrainian Universities
EQF	European qualifications framework	MOOC	Massive open online course
ESF+	European social fund plus	NAWA	Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange
ETF	European Training Foundation	NGO(s)	Non-governmental organisation(s)
EU	European Union	NOK	Norwegian krone
EUF	European university foundation	NOKUT	Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education
GDP	Gross domestic product		

NQA	National qualifications agency (Ukraine)	SUNPU	South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky
NQF	National qualifications framework	TURBO	The Universities' Reaction to Big Obstructions
NVL	Nordic Network for Adult Learning	UAH	Ukrainian hryvnia
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	UDI	Norwegian Directorate of Immigration
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	UI/UX	User interface / user experience
OJ	Official Journal of the European Union	UNDP	United nations development programme
OPI PIB	National information processing institute (ośrodek przetwarzania informacji – państwowy instytut badawczy)	UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UN Refugee Agency)
PESEL	Polish universal electronic population-register (personal identification) number	UNICEF	United nations children's fund
PLN	Polish złoty	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
PQF	Polish qualifications framework	USD	United States dollar
PR	Public relations	UVD	Recognition procedure for applicants without verifiable documentation
PROFBUD	Construction and Building Materials Workers' Union	VNTU	Vinnitsia National Technical University
RDNA	Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment	VTC(s)	Vocational Training Centre(s)
SEO	Search engine optimisation	WIDERA	Widening Participation and Strengthening the European Research Area
SES	State employment service	WUNU	West Ukrainian National University
SME(s)	Small and medium-sized enterprise(s)	YFCNU	Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University
SMM	Social media marketing		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report developed under “The Universities’ Reaction to Big Obstructions: Building Resilient Higher Education to Respond and Manage Societal Crises” (TURBO) project, (Erasmus+ CBHE Grant No. 101129315, 2024-2026) presents a comparative analysis of educational practices for the retraining and social integration of displaced people in three national settings – Ukraine, Norway and Poland. The report sets that comparison against the experience of seven Ukrainian universities that piloted a micro-credential model for internally displaced persons (IDPs) during the spring and autumn semesters of 2025.

The event linking all three national contexts is the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, yet each had a different experience in handling the resulting displacement crisis, which makes the comparison valuable. Norway integrates displaced Ukrainians through a comprehensive, publicly funded municipal system in which the state carries primary responsibility; Poland (as the European Union’s initial large-scale displacement host) has pursued a pragmatic, decentralised and strongly labour market oriented model; and Ukraine acts simultaneously as the country of origin and as host to millions of IDPs, sustaining its education system under attack while preparing for post-war reconstruction.

A central finding is a trade-off in integration models. Norway’s highly institutionalised system produces slower short-term employment, roughly one in three Ukrainians are in work after two years, but is deliberately oriented towards durable, “sustainable” integration through language acquisition and formal qualification recognition. Poland’s near-unconditional and rapid labour-market access produced comparatively high employment (rising to 69% within a year) but at the cost of widespread skills mismatch and underemployment, with around half of working refugees in simple occupations despite high levels of tertiary education. Ukraine, operating under emergency and reconstruction needs, is revisiting its approach through short-term, individualised, flexible offers, often supported by externally funded projects in addition to a formal and rather limited state assistance framework.

Across all three contexts, micro-credentials are an emerging but not yet fully regulated instrument. Their value for displaced learners depends less on the certificate itself than on embedding short, labour market relevant learning within wider integration opportunities that combine language, qualification recognition, psychosocial support and employer engagement. The Ukrainian pilots demonstrate that such a model is achievable and can bring good results. Short, intensive, certificate-bearing programmes of around 500 academic hours (approximately 16-17 ECTS credits), co-delivered by a university and at least one civil-society partner (a non-governmental organization (NGO)), bring good results when professional and entrepreneurial retraining is combined with psychological and legal support. The explicit labour-market alignment helped a predominantly female, highly educated displaced population to improve their employability and/or become self-employed.

One of the major questions is sustainability. Most provision in Ukraine, as well as much of the targeted support in Poland, depends on time-limited donor and project funding. Securing durable national funding, formal recognition of micro-credentials within national

qualification frameworks (including ECTS accumulation and qualification-centre status for universities), and institutionalised partnerships between universities, NGOs, employers and public authorities will determine whether these promising pilots can be scaled.

The report closes with lessons and findings that can be transferred internationally. Notably NGO-academic synergy, flexible micro-credential programme design, and integrated social-psychological support, that are relevant not only to Ukraine's reconstruction but to refugee and adult education across Europe.

1. INTRODUCTION

Context: war-induced displacement and the role of education

The full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 triggered the fastest-growing forced displacement crisis in Europe since the Second World War. Within days the European Union activated, for the first time in its history, the Temporary Protection Directive, granting displaced Ukrainians fleeing the war rights for residence, work and education (Council of the European Union, 2022b) across countries of the European Economic Area (EEA). The scale has since settled at an extraordinary level as by the end of 2025 around 5.3 million refugees from Ukraine were recorded across Europe with the largest communities in Poland and Germany, while approximately 3.7 million people remained internally displaced inside Ukraine (UNHCR, 2025b; IOM, 2026). Thus, from being perceived as a short-term emergency, displacement became a protracted condition that will shape Ukrainian and European societies for years to come.

What distinguishes this crisis is the profile of those displaced. The population is mostly composed of women, children and elderly people, and the adult part of this population being highly educated. The large majority of working-age refugee women hold vocational or academic qualifications and possess a substantial work experience (OECD, 2023). Such concentration of human capital in western democracies transforms education and retraining from being a humanitarian support into a strategic instrument for national economies. It is, in effect, what determines whether displacement becomes a long-term cost or a contribution to host and home economies alike. Yet that potential remains far from realised. By mid-2025 only around 57% of working-age Ukrainian refugees in Europe were employed, some 22 percentage points below host-country nationals, and more than a third of those holding tertiary qualifications were working in low-skilled jobs (UNHCR, 2026). Closing this gap between what displaced people can do and what they are actually employed to do is precisely where targeted retraining, qualification recognition and social adaptation become decisive for individual livelihoods, for Ukraine's eventual reconstruction, and for the receiving societies that stand to gain or lose from how this human capital is mobilised.

Continuity: building on the previous TURBO reports

This report is the fourth in a connected series and builds on the project's deliverables.

Reports 1 and 2 mapped regional stakeholders, established and reviewed the educational model that the Ukrainian partner universities would pilot. This is a short, modular, certificate-bearing programme combining professional retraining with psychological and social adaptation support.

Report 3 turned to the perceptions and experiences of IDPs graduating from the programmes delivered by Ukrainian partners.

Report 4 extends this trajectory in two complementary directions: (1) outward, by situating the Ukrainian experience within a comparative analysis of educational practices

in Norway and Poland; and (2) inward, by documenting how the piloted model was actually implemented across seven Ukrainian regions during 2025. It draws the educational model and the institutions' delivery experience together into a comparative account.

The Report 4, therefore, pursues two aims. The first is to explore and compare retraining and social-adaptation practices for displaced people in Ukraine, Norway and Poland, in order to identify the existing practices, find evidence on how successful they are, and what are the limitations with further comparison of these approaches. The second is to share the experience of Ukrainian higher education institutions in retraining and social adaptation of IDPs, making their practical knowledge, faced challenges and adaptations to inform national and international policymakers, educators and wider stakeholder groups.

Evidence base and method

The analysis rests on several complementary types of data.

The Ukrainian experience is documented through institutional self-reflection reports (see template in Annex 1) submitted by seven Ukrainian partner universities for both 2025 semesters. These are complemented by focus group interviews (see Annex 2) conducted at the end of spring and autumn semesters to capture intentions, adaptations and reflections.

The cross-country comparison draws on statistical data from national and international sources including Eurostat, UNHCR, IOM, OECD and Cedefop, alongside the relevant legislation and policy strategies in each country and sources on displacement and integration.

The methodical approach of this report is a structured comparative analysis. Each national context and each Ukrainian pilot is examined across a consistent set of dimensions (e.g., how displaced people are retrained and socially adapted, the status of micro-credential programmes in higher education, the role of university-NGO and stakeholder collaboration, and the challenges and opportunities for implementation) so that practices can be compared and transferable lessons drawn out.

Why this matters for Europe

The findings provided by this report seek to reach well beyond Ukraine. The displacement crisis has made refugee and adult education a pressing concern across the European Union, where member states are searching for flexible, scalable ways to bring large numbers of newly arrived adults into labour markets and communities.

The Ukrainian case offers a unique opportunity to observe educational innovation under extreme conditions, while the comparison with Norway's state-led integration model and Poland's labour-market-led model exposes the strengths, limits, and trade-offs of different national approaches. The report's focus on micro-credentials, as short, stackable, employment-relevant qualifications, connects this experience to a shared European agenda, which corresponds to the Council of the European Union's Recommendation of 16 June 2022 on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability that calls for portable, quality-assured short learning that displaced adults need in order

to re-enter skilled work (Council of the European Union, 2022a). Seen in that light, the Ukrainian pilots are not only a national reconstruction effort but a live test of European lifelong-learning policy under pressure, and these findings can contribute to making higher education across Europe more resilient.

The TURBO project pilots were designed with the European Commission's own quality criteria for micro-credentials in mind. The European approach defines a micro-credential as the record of the learning outcomes that a learner has acquired following a small volume of learning, assessed against transparent and clearly defined standards, owned by the learner, shareable and portable, and able to stand alone or be combined into larger credentials (European Commission, 2021). It sets out ten guiding principles for the design and issuance of high-quality micro-credentials: quality, transparency, relevance, valid assessment, flexible learning pathways (including stackability and the validation of non-formal and informal learning), recognition, portability, a learner-centred design, authenticity, and information and guidance. The European approach also defines a common set of standard elements that every micro-credential should record, such as the learner's identity, the awarding body, the learning outcomes, the notional workload in ECTS credits, the level, the type of assessment and the form of quality assurance.

In building short, certificate-bearing, ECTS programmes around assessed learning outcomes, labour-market relevance, psychosocial support and the needs of adult learners, the TURBO partners deliberately sought to follow these principles, even though Ukraine does not yet have a national framework that formally recognises micro-credentials.

2. OVERVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES FOR RETRAINING AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS¹

This section provides a comparative overview of educational practices for the retraining and social integration of displaced people in three national settings (Ukraine, Norway and Poland), establishing the basis for the comparison that follows.

Ukraine is the country in war dealing with multiple challenges including outmigration, security threats and resource exhaustion. Norway represents a small, highly institutionalised host country, in which the state carries primary responsibility for integration. Poland, which borders Ukraine, has been a primary destination of millions of people fleeing the war. Its reception has been pragmatic, decentralised and strongly oriented towards the labour market. Comparing these three settings makes it possible to read each national approach against meaningfully different institutional and economic conditions.

The status of retraining and integration differs accordingly. In Ukraine, this problem is addressed by both emergency responses and plans for reconstruction. In particular, state employment services, fragmented donor-funded programmes for IDPs, and localised initiatives by local stakeholders operate across the country with universities and NGOs filling the gaps. In Norway, displaced Ukrainians are integrated through a comprehensive, publicly funded municipal Introduction Programme supported by a mature system for recognising foreign qualifications; employment outcomes are slower in the short-term but are pursued through a multi-phase integration model. In Poland, rapid and near-unconditional labour-market access produced comparatively high employment, but at the cost of widespread skills mismatch and underemployment, and integration infrastructure and micro-credentials are still developing.

To enable systematic comparison, each country is examined across the same four dimensions: how refugees and (in Ukraine's case) IDPs are retrained and socially adapted; the current status of micro-credential programmes in higher education; the role of university-NGO and wider stakeholder collaboration in delivering such programmes; and the principal challenges and opportunities for implementation.

Read together, the three cases point to a shared conclusion that recurs throughout this section, that is, micro-credentials are still an emerging instrument in all three countries, and their value for displaced learners depends less on the certificate itself than on embedding

¹ This report distinguishes four related terms. Displaced people (or displaced population) is the umbrella term for those forced from their homes by armed conflict and embraces two legally distinct groups. (1) Refugees – displaced Ukrainians who have crossed an international border and are protected abroad (here we focus on Norway and Poland, largely under the EU Temporary Protection Directive). (2) Internally displaced persons (IDPs), who have fled but remain inside Ukraine. Terms migration and migrant are broader terms, with no single definition in international law. Where the distinction matters, the report refers specifically to refugees, IDPs or displaced people rather than to migrants.

Definitions follow IOM and UNHCR usage, the 1951 Refugee Convention and the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.

short, labour-market-relevant learning within wider integration opportunities that combine language, qualification recognition, psychosocial support and employer engagement.

2.1 Ukraine

Ukraine occupies a distinctive position in any comparative analysis of educational practices for the retraining and social integration of displaced people because it carries three roles at once. It is the country from which displaced people originate, the host of millions of IDPs, and a state sustaining its higher education system under direct military attack while planning post-war reconstruction. This combination reframes what retraining and social adaptation are for. They are thus both welfare service and a strategic instrument for preserving human capital that would otherwise erode through prolonged inactivity, and for assembling the skilled workforce that reconstruction will require. The defining feature of the Ukrainian response is therefore “improvisation under constraint”. Educational capacity is being built faster than it can be regulated, and largely through donor-financed and NGO-delivered projects that run ahead of a settled national framework.

Retraining and social adaptation of IDPs

Scale and profile of displacement

As of February 2026, the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity recorded 4.61 million registered IDPs (below the 2022 peak but still vast) with the largest concentrations in Kharkiv (508,100), Donetsk (504,500), Dnipropetrovsk (471,900), and the city of Kyiv (432,900) (Ministry of Social Policy, as reported by Slovoidilo, 2026). Two features of this population shape every educational response. First, displacement has become structural. With 83% of displaced households having been displaced for more than a year, the operative policy question is no longer emergency shelter but durable economic reintegration (UNHCR, 2025d). Second, the geography of displacement is misaligned with the geography of future labour demand, as IDPs are concentrated in the comparatively safe west and centre, whereas reconstruction-driven demand will be highest in the east and south, to which return remains unsafe (OECD, 2024). This spatial mismatch means retraining cannot assume that learners will work where they currently live, and it pushes provision towards portable and often remote delivery. The profile of those displaced reinforces the stakes. The population is overwhelmingly women, and it is unusually highly educated, so the risk is not unemployment alone but the deskilling of an educated workforce.

Legislative and policy framework

Ukraine has approved access more quickly than it has provided the necessary instruments. The Law on Ensuring the Rights and Freedoms of IDPs (2014, as amended) established registration and access to social services, while the Laws on Education (2017) and Higher Education (2014) guarantee educational access irrespective of place of registration. The State Policy Strategy on Internal Displacement (until 2025) made labour market access, self-employment and professional psychological assistance explicit objectives (Council of Europe Office in Ukraine, 2023), and the Strategy for the Development of Higher Education for 2022–2032 commits the system to lifelong learning, labour-market alignment and flexible delivery, which is the conceptual ground on which IDP retraining stands (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2022b). The decisive gap is at the level of adult education: the draft

Law on Adult Education, adopted in first reading in January 2023, remained unapproved as of 2026 (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2023). Until it passes, short non-degree retraining operates without a statutory home, which is the single most important reason the sector improvises.

State mechanisms for retraining

The State Employment Service (SES) of Ukraine is a responsible agency for IDP retraining. As of 2024, 93 000 IDPs received employment assistance from the SES, of which 47 000 found employment, and 6 000 benefited from training vouchers in 2023 (UNHCR, 2024). The SES operates Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) in eight regional hubs: Odesa, Poltava, Dnipro, Rivne, Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kharkiv, and Sumy, offering 98 working professions and over 400 advanced training courses, provided free of charge for veterans, persons with war-related disabilities, and registered unemployed individuals (Ministry of Economy of Ukraine, 2024). Employers hiring IDPs can claim compensation for labour costs equivalent to the minimum monthly salary for three to six months (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2022a). They may also receive reimbursement for retraining and upskilling costs (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2015).

Additionally, international partners have committed substantial resources for war-affected people in Ukraine. At the 2024 Ukraine Recovery Conference, a €700 million package (ETF, 2025) was pledged to upskill workers, reintegrate women, and retrain war-affected populations, alongside the EU's €50 billion Ukraine Facility (European Training Foundation, 2025). The multi-donor Skills4Recovery programme, implemented by GIZ with Denmark, Germany, Poland, and Estonia as donors, retrained over 2 500 people by mid-2025 with a target of 5 800 by 2026, focusing on construction, logistics, agriculture, and services (GIZ / Skills4Recovery, 2025). Within this framework, the NGO 'Ukrainian Professional Development' partnered with 28 vocational institutions across six regions to deliver free short-term training for 1 375 participants during February-November 2024 (Rubryka, 2024). UNDP Ukraine, supported by Japan's funding, modernised two specialised training centres in the Kyiv region and Vinnytsia for energy sector retraining, targeting IDPs and veterans, with five more renovations planned in 2026 (UNDP, 2025). The ReSkill UA initiative provides access to courses from Google, IBM, and Meta via Coursera, while the USAID Competitive Economy Program has allocated \$1.8 million for labour market integration of IDPs, women, veterans, and persons with disabilities (Ministry of Economy, 2024).

Social adaptation and psychological support

Retraining is embedded within a broader category of social adaptation services. The Ministry of Social Policy has consolidated previously fragmented schemes into a unified IDP-support model spanning medical care, temporary and supported accommodation, the eOselia affordable-mortgage programme and employment assistance such as Prykhystok (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2025). In this context psychological support is crucial, since the prevalence of mental-health difficulty among IDPs is markedly higher than in the non-displaced population, so resilience and trauma-informed components function as a precondition for learning rather than a supplement to it (OCHA, 2025). This is why the retraining models that work in Ukraine tend to interleave professional content with structured psychosocial support from the first session rather than appending it at the end.

Current status of micro-credential programmes in Ukrainian higher education

Conceptual and regulatory context

Micro-credentials are defined by the Council of the European Union as ‘the record of the learning outcomes that a learner has acquired following a small volume of learning’ (Council of the European Union, 2022a). In Ukraine, this is a relatively new concept, and its adoption is driven by the EU Association Agreement (2014), which committed Ukraine to cooperation in lifelong learning, and more immediately by the EU accession process inaugurated in 2022.

As of 2026, Ukrainian educational legislation does not yet formally define or recognise micro-credentials as a distinct credential type within the national qualifications framework. In 2024, however, several steps were taken. The National Qualifications Agency (NQA) published ‘Recommendations on the Implementation of Micro-Credentials in Ukraine’ (Semigina et al., 2024), outlining general principles and approaches. The Strategy for the Development of Higher Education for 2022–2032 (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2022b) provides the overarching policy foundation, explicitly envisioning lifelong learning and flexible educational delivery. If the Law on Adult Education (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2023) receives final parliamentary approval, it will provide a statutory basis for short-cycle qualifications and non-formal learning recognition (Eurydice Ukraine, 2024).

Institutional practice

Practice is consequently running ahead of regulation and is concentrated in the universities that international projects reach. The TURBO project is the most directly relevant, but it sits within a small ecosystem: MInT-Ukraine, run by Leibniz University Hannover with DAAD support, builds the capacity of Ukrainian staff to design and deliver micro-credentials (National Erasmus+ Office Ukraine, 2025); CRED4TEACH develops MOOC-based micro-credentials for teachers (CRED4TEACH project, 2023); and the State Centre for International Education promotes the agenda within Ukraine’s internationalisation strategy. The significance of this activity lies less in the number of learners reached than in the institutional capacity being assembled; several universities able to design quality-assured short credentials to European standards before a national framework exists to recognise them. That sequencing, capacity before regulation, is the defining characteristic of the Ukrainian micro-credential landscape.

University-NGO and stakeholder collaboration

A defining characteristic of delivering micro-credentials is multi-stakeholder collaboration. In the context of Ukraine, three distinct collaboration models have emerged.

University-NGO partnerships

The TURBO project is the clearest case of multi-stakeholder collaboration. Coordination across all seven partner universities is managed by the International Foundation for Social Adaptation (IFSA), the Ukrainian NGO partner in the TURBO consortium, which tracks programme delivery and participant outcomes: across both semesters of 2025, IFSA recorded 876 applications, 463 enrolled participants, and 434 programme completions (IFSA, 2025).

A complementary example of such partnerships is the NGO 'Ukrainian Professional Development', which acted as a coordinating intermediary under the GIZ Skills4Recovery framework: it managed a network of 28 vocational institutions across six regions, with training delivered through certified state schools and funded by international donors (Rubryka, 2024). Here, the NGO ensured quality and participant access, while state institutions provided the physical and accreditation infrastructure. The European Training Foundation's UA Re-Emerge(ncy) programme illustrates a different configuration: a direct partnership between an EU agency, Ukraine's Ministry of Education and Science, and employers in the Dnipropetrovsk region, delivering eight micro-credential courses in energy efficiency, construction, and green energy. One in four participants were IDPs, and three in four found employment after certification (ETF, 2024). Social partners have also emerged as delivery actors: the Construction and Building Materials Workers' Union (PROFBUD) signed a cooperation memorandum with the Centre of Integrated Support for Conflict Participants to provide skills training for veterans and war-affected individuals, including IDPs (BWI, 2025)

State-International organisation partnerships

UNDP Ukraine's collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science to modernise VTC facilities and design IDP-targeted curricula (UNDP, 2025) exemplifies a state-international organisation partnership model. The SES maintains formal cooperation agreements with employer organisations, enabling wage subsidy mechanisms and specialist training commissions aligned to actual labour market vacancies (UNHCR, 2024). The EmployUkraine platform operates as a public-private matching service connecting IDP job seekers with Ukrainian and international employers, including through Employer of Record arrangements for remote work.

Digital networks

The ReSkill UA programme represents a partnership between the Ministry of Economy, international technology companies (Google, IBM, Meta), and the Coursera platform, providing scalable digital upskilling for displaced populations (Ministry of Economy, 2024). Digital delivery is both an asset (enabling access across displacement locations) and a constraint, given the connectivity challenges discussed below.

Challenges and opportunities for implementing micro-credential programmes for retraining and social adaptation of IDPs

Key challenges

Challenges identified in Ukrainian context include structural, operational, and social issues.

- Absence of a formal legal framework. Ukrainian educational legislation does not yet define micro-credentials, creating uncertainty around portability, employer recognition, and accumulation into formal qualifications.
- Security, infrastructure, and continuity. Continuous aerial attacks cause widespread power outages and damage educational infrastructure, forcing institutions into hybrid or fully online delivery (UNHCR, 2025d). Several TURBO partner universities have sustained direct physical damage: Chernihiv Polytechnic National University suffered destruction of its educational infrastructure during the siege of Chernihiv,

with total damage estimated at €5 million (H-BRS, 2024), while a November 2024 airstrike damaged several buildings of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (EUF, 2024).

- Targeting and access barriers for IDPs. IDPs face compounding barriers that include unstable housing, growing psychological pressure affecting their mental health, employment precarity, and care responsibilities, particularly acute for women with children, who comprise the biggest share of displaced households. Additionally, reaching those in collective shelters (79 000 as of January 2025) or in frontline areas presents serious logistical challenges (OCHA, 2025).
- Employer recognition and labour market alignment. Without a national register or quality assurance mechanism, employers have limited means of assessing micro-credential credibility. Structural mismatches compound the problem. IDP populations are concentrated in western and central regions, while reconstruction-driven demand is highest in eastern and southern regions to which return remains unsafe (OECD, 2024).
- Sustainability and funding dependency. The majority of operational programmes are funded through time-limited Erasmus+, GIZ, USAID, and UNDP project cycles. There is no durable national funding mechanism for the provision of IDP-targeted micro-credentials. Programme continuation after donor exit depends on whether universities have capacity to maintain delivery from their budgets, creating a significant uncertainty under wartime fiscal pressure (ETF, 2025).
- Digitalisation of education and connectivity. Online delivery, while essential for flexibility and safety, excludes IDPs without reliable internet access, devices, or digital literacy. Educational continuity for displaced children and adults has been significantly disrupted (OCHA, 2025), and the digital divide disproportionately affects older IDPs, those in rural host communities, and those in collective shelter settings.

Key opportunities

- Momentum towards regulatory reform. The publication of the NQA framework (Semigina et al., 2024), and the pending Law on Adult Education (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2023) together constitute the most advanced pre-legislative environment for micro-credential formalisation in Ukraine. EU accession negotiations provide an external political driver, since harmonisation with the European approach to micro-credentials (Council of the European Union, 2022a) is an expected element of educational alignment.
- Established multi-stakeholder infrastructure. The TURBO project consortium of seven universities has demonstrated that micro-credential design, delivery, and certification for IDPs is achievable within existing institutional frameworks (Nord University TURBO project page, 2025). This network provides a scalable model for national extension upon regulatory formalisation.
- Labour market demand and reconstruction imperatives. Ukraine's reconstruction is projected to require USD 588 billion over the next decade (World Bank et al., 2026). Demand for skilled labour means that short-cycle, competency-based retraining

are necessary to meet the demand in skilled labour, which is continuously growing.

- European integration and qualification recognition. Ukraine's EU accession path creates an incentive to align the NQF with the EQF, simultaneously making Ukrainian micro-credentials legible to European employers and enabling credential portability for the millions of Ukrainians who may return from abroad. The MInT-Ukraine (National Erasmus+ Office Ukraine, 2025) programme and other Erasmus+ CBHE projects are building institutional capacity to design micro-credentials to European standards.
- International donor coordination. The Skills Alliance of €700 million (ETF, 2025), Skills4Recovery (GIZ / Skills4Recovery, 2025), UNDP vocational centre modernisation (UNDP Ukraine, 2025), and the EU Facility constitute an unprecedented financial commitment to the development of skills of the Ukrainian workforce. Coordinated with the emerging national micro-credential framework and active partnerships working in this area, this donor landscape could sustain scaled provision while national funding mechanisms are developed.

2.2 Norway

Norway integrates displaced Ukrainians through a comprehensive, publicly funded municipal system in which the state, rather than the market or civil society, carries primary responsibility.

Since February 2022, more than 85,000 Ukrainians have been granted temporary collective protection in Norway, proportionally one of the highest intakes in Europe and the largest among the Nordic countries (UDI, 2026). Collective protection (in Norwegian – "kollektiv beskyttelse") is grants a residence permit for one year at a time and is renewable, and currently beneficiaries have the right to reside for up to five years (UDI, 2026). It confers the right to work, access to health and social services, financial support, and the right, though not the obligation, to participate in the municipal Introduction Programme (IMDi, 2025). Because settlement in a municipality can occur quicker than under the ordinary asylum procedure, Ukrainian beneficiaries may seek employment almost immediately on arrival (NOKUT, 2025).

The legal foundation for integration is the Integration Act (Integreringsloven), in force since 2021, which defines municipalities' duties and beneficiaries' rights with respect to language training, social studies, and labour-market qualification. From 2024 onward, however, Norway has progressively tightened its Ukrainian-protection regime. Certain regions of Ukraine have been designated safe for return (in January 2025), benefit levels have been reduced, and from May 2026, men aged 18-60 can be denied receiving collective protection (UDI, 2025; Nordic Council of Ministers, 2025). These measures introduce a tension between an integration system designed for durable inclusion and a protection status that is mostly framed as temporary.

Retraining and social adaptation of refugees and migrants

The municipal Introduction Programme and the Integration Act

The Introduction Programme (introduksjonsprogrammet) is the central instrument of Norwegian integration policy. It is a full-time, individually tailored programme that combines Norwegian language instruction, social studies and measures preparing participants for employment or further education. For most Ukrainian beneficiaries it is comparatively short (around six months) reflecting their generally high prior education and the expectation of rapid labour-market entry (IMDi, 2025). Approximately 70% of Ukrainian refugees have taken part (Government of Norway, 2025). Amendments to the Integration Act adopted by the Storting on 20 June 2025 sharpen the programme's focus on employment and formal education, extend the eligible age group from 55 to 60, and lengthen the programme for participants pursuing upper-secondary qualifications (Government of Norway, 2025).

Recognition of qualifications

A distinctive strength of the Norwegian system is its developed infrastructure for recognising foreign qualifications, administered by NOKUT and the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills (HK-dir). For applicants who cannot document their education, the UVD procedure (recognition for applicants without verifiable documentation) provides an expert-panel assessment designed specifically for refugees and persons in refugee-like situations (HK-dir, n.d.). For Ukrainians, automatic recognition has been extended to a range of higher vocational and academic programmes (NOKUT, 2025). To narrow the persistent gap between formal qualifications and their use in the labour market, HK-dir launched the project "A Clear Path Forward" (2025-2029), which develops digital solutions to help Ukrainian refugees enter employment and make better use of their competencies (Cedefop, 2025).

Employment outcomes and the integration approach

Despite this infrastructure, the labour market integration of Ukrainians in Norway has been not that quick. By the end of 2025, around 27,000 Ukrainian refugees were in work, but among those residents for around two years only about one in three was employed, and a substantial share remained registered as jobseekers or as having reduced work capacity (Government of Norway, 2025). Lack of Norwegian and English language proficiency is identified as a principal barrier both to employment and to the use of existing qualifications (Cedefop, 2022b). This pattern reflects that Norway prioritises durable, "sustainable" integration through language and formal qualification over the rapid placement into entry-level work.

Social adaptation

Social adaptation is embedded in the same municipal architecture. All Norwegian municipalities have participated in settling Ukrainians, with the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi) coordinating settlement, funding and integration services (IMDi, 2025; Nordic Council of Ministers, 2025). Beneficiaries receive financial support during the Introduction Programme and full access to the public health and welfare system, so that retraining is delivered within, rather than alongside, a comprehensive social-protection framework.

Current status of micro-credential programmes in Norwegian higher education

Conceptual and regulatory context

Norway approaches micro-credentials primarily through the lens of lifelong learning and labour-market relevance, under the stewardship of HK-dir as the national skills authority. Norwegian policy aligns with the Council of the European Union's 2022 Recommendation on a European approach to micro-credentials (OJ C 243) and is shaped by the Long-term Plan for Research and Higher Education 2023-2032 and the 2025 competence-reform process (HK-dir, 2024; Government of Norway, 2025). As elsewhere in the Nordic region, however, micro-credentials are not yet established as a distinct, separately regulated qualification category; they remain an emerging instrument rather than an embedded part of the formal system (NVL, 2025).

Institutional practice

In the context of displacement, Norwegian higher education's most direct engagement with micro-credentials is through capacity-building and the export of expertise rather than domestic provision for refugees. The TURBO project, led by Nord University, develops the micro-credential model that the Ukrainian partner universities use to retrain and socially integrate IDPs, applying flexible, practice-oriented and EU-aligned approaches (Nord University, 2025). Norwegian institutions have also widened access for displaced Ukrainians directly, for example through additional study places and flexible admission arrangements (Study in Norway, 2025). Domestically, however, micro-credentials are not yet a primary vehicle for refugee retraining, which remains anchored in the Introduction Programme and the formal qualification system becomes a notable gap, given that short, stackable modules are precisely the instrument that could connect recognised qualifications to specific labour-market needs.

University-NGO and stakeholder collaboration

University-led support

Norwegian universities have responded to the war through both international cooperation and domestic inclusion. Nord University coordinates the TURBO consortium and has received dedicated funding to build Ukraine-related expertise in Northern Norway (Nord University, 2024). The UKRAINETT networks connect Norwegian and Ukrainian institutions around higher education in times of crisis, while several universities have created study places and admission pathways for Ukrainian refugees and host at-risk scholars (OsloMet, 2025; Study in Norway, 2025).

NGO and civil-society support

Civil society plays a complementary role, precisely because primary responsibility for integration rests with municipalities. Caritas Norway operates resource centres for immigrants in Oslo, Bergen, Stavanger, Drammen and Trondheim, offering guidance on labour-market rights, accommodation and legal and health matters (Caritas Norway, n.d.), and the Norwegian Red Cross and other organisations provide volunteer-based language and social-inclusion activities that supplement public services (Nordic Council of Ministers, 2025).

A multi-stakeholder model

The Norwegian model can therefore be described as centralised multi-stakeholder cooperation. Municipalities and IMDi coordinate delivery; universities, NOKUT and HK-dir supply qualification recognition and educational pathways; employers and the social partners engage through tripartite competence-development structures; and NGOs add outreach and social support at the margins. This contrasts with the more NGO-dependent ecosystems of Ukraine and Poland, and it illustrates how strong public capacity reshapes the role of non-state actors.

Challenges and opportunities for implementing micro-credential programmes for refugee and migrant retraining and social adaptation

Key challenges

- The gap between investment and short-term employment outcomes. Despite a comprehensive and well-funded system, employment among Ukrainians remains comparatively low in the first years, raising questions about cost-effectiveness and the pace of labour-market entry.
- Language. Limited Norwegian, and sometimes English, proficiency restricts both employment and the use of recognised qualifications.
- The temporariness of collective protection. Successive restrictions since 2024, including the designation of “safe” regions and the exclusion of men aged 18–60 from May 2026, create uncertainty that can weaken incentives for long-term investment in retraining by both beneficiaries and institutions.
- The early stage of micro-credentials development. They remain an emerging instrument in Norwegian higher education and are not yet systematically linked to refugee retraining or to the Introduction Programme.

Key opportunities

- Universal municipal coverage and stable public funding provide an integration infrastructure that few countries can match.
- A mature qualification-recognition system (NOKUT, the UVD procedure and recognition of Ukrainian qualifications) addresses one of the main barriers to professional integration.
- The emphasis on sustainable integration, if maintained, may yield stronger long-term outcomes than rapid but mismatched employment, offering a valuable counterpoint to the Polish experience and a model relevant to Ukraine’s own reconstruction-era retraining.

2.3 Poland

Poland represents one of the most significant European cases for analysing educational practices for retraining and social integration of migrants and refugees. Since the beginning of invasion, Poland has combined emergency reception, rapid access to the labour market, decentralised local assistance, school inclusion, civil-society mobilisation and gradually developing integration infrastructure. Poland's approach has been more pragmatic, decentralised and labour-market oriented. Many of the displaced people hosted in Poland are Ukrainian citizens whose educational and professional trajectories remain connected to future reconstruction and reintegration processes in Ukraine (Duszczuk et al., 2023; UNHCR, 2025a)

At the end of 2024, Poland hosted 991,630 Ukrainians under temporary protection, which represented 23.3% of all refugees in the European Union and 27.1 beneficiaries per 1,000 inhabitants. Poland was then the second-largest EU host country after Germany (Eurostat, 2025). At the end of 2025, Poland still hosted 969,240 beneficiaries, or 22.3% of the EU total, with 26.6 beneficiaries per 1,000 inhabitants (Eurostat, 2026a). By 31 March 2026, Poland hosted 961,405 beneficiaries, corresponding to 22.2% of the EU total and 26.3 per 1,000 inhabitants (Eurostat, 2026b). These figures show that Poland's refugee response has moved beyond a short-term emergency situation and has become a medium-term integration challenge involving education, employment, language learning, social services and local community adaptation.

The legal foundation of Poland's response is the Act of 12 March 2022 on assistance to citizens of Ukraine in connection with the armed conflict on the territory of that state. This legislation created a special protection regime for eligible Ukrainian citizens. It covered legal stay, access to the PESEL registration system, public benefits and services, healthcare, education, higher education, employment, business activity and selected forms of social assistance. The law also enabled Ukrainian citizens to register as unemployed persons or jobseekers and provided access to selected support measures (Office for Foreigners, 2022; Act of 12 March 2022, 2022). This legal framework was decisive because it avoided a narrow asylum-based reception model and made immediate socio-economic participation possible.

Poland's broader migration policy framework has also changed. On 15 October 2024, the Council of Ministers adopted the document *Regain Control. Ensure Security. A Comprehensive and Responsible Migration Strategy for Poland for 2025–2030*, submitted by the Minister of the Interior and Administration (Council of Ministers, 2024). The strategy identifies several areas of state intervention, including access to territory, access to national and international protection, labour-market access, educational migration, integration, citizenship and repatriation, and relations with the Polish diaspora. From the perspective of migrant education, two elements are particularly relevant. First, the strategy sets out rules for foreigners' access to Polish higher and post-secondary education. Second, it presents integration as a policy area requiring the use of migrants' potential while maintaining social cohesion (Council of Ministers, 2024).

Retraining and social adaptation of refugees and migrants

Labour-market access and the employment-oriented model

Poland's model of refugee integration has been strongly employment oriented. The Special Act enabled Ukrainian citizens with legal stay to work without the standard administrative barriers that often delay labour-market participation in asylum systems. It also allowed access to business activity and registration in public employment services (Office for Foreigners, 2022; Act of 12 March 2022). This rapid opening of the labour market was one of the most important factors explaining the relatively high employment of Ukrainian refugees in Poland compared with many other European countries.

Ukrainian refugees had a net impact of 2.7% on Poland's GDP in 2024, while their employment rate increased from 61% to 69% within one year (UNHCR & Deloitte, 2025). This is a particularly important because it challenges the perception of refugees only as recipients of assistance. In Poland, displaced Ukrainians quickly became workers, taxpayers, entrepreneurs, consumers and service users, contributing to national output while also filling labour shortages. UNHCR data also recorded 986,953 refugees from Ukraine in Poland as of April 2026, based on government and UNHCR sources, which confirms that the scale of integration remained high in 2026.

Skills mismatch and the limits of employment

However, labour-market access alone does not guarantee full professional integration. Duszczek et al. (2023) show that the situation of Ukrainian war refugees in Poland should be analysed not only through legal access to employment, but also through broader socio-economic challenges, including labour market participation, education and institutional integration. A 2025 economic report by Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego (BGK) showed that at the end of 2024, around 794,000 Ukrainian citizens paid social security contributions in Poland, meaning that Ukrainians accounted for approximately 5% of workers in the Polish economy. The same report indicates that around 693,000 Ukrainians were working in Poland in 2024, while around 1.48 million Ukrainians held valid documents authorising stay at the end of that year. It also notes that about 50% of refugees and pre-war Ukrainian migrants had a university degree, which makes underemployment and qualification mismatch a central policy issue (BGK, 2025).

The same BGK data reveal an important difference between employment and appropriate employment. In 2024, a large share of working Ukrainian refugees still performed simple work. 51% of refugees were employed in simple occupations, compared with 37% of pre-war Ukrainian migrants and only 4% of working Poles (BGK, 2025). This suggests that many refugees entered the labour market below their qualification level. In line with the broader integration challenges discussed by Duszczek et al. (2023), the causes may include Polish language barriers, limited recognition of qualifications, sectoral licensing requirements, limited knowledge of Polish labour law and workplace culture, childcare responsibilities and the psychological effects of war and displacement.

A broad understanding of retraining

Retraining in Poland should be understood broadly. It includes vocational reskilling, but also Polish language learning, professional terminology, digital skills, career counselling,

recognition of prior learning, entrepreneurship support, psychological stabilisation and legal orientation. This is especially important for teachers, healthcare workers, engineers, social workers and other professionals whose qualifications may not be immediately transferable. In these cases, retraining does not mean replacing previous qualifications. It means translating existing competences into a new linguistic, legal and institutional context (Duszczuk et al., 2023; UNHCR & Deloitte, 2025). This is where micro-credentials may become relevant, provided that they are linked to labour-market needs and recognised by employers (Cedefop, 2022a; National Information Processing Institute, 2024).

Institutional support and Foreigner Integration Centres

Social adaptation is supported through schools, local governments, employment offices, NGOs, universities and international organisations. One of the most important recent institutional developments is the creation of Foreigner Integration Centres. The European Commission reported in October 2024 that 49 such centres were being opened across Poland with support from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. These centres are intended to offer integrated support, including Polish language courses, legal counselling, job-search assistance, adaptation courses and social integration services (European Commission, 2024). The Polish European Migration Network (EMN) report for 2024 also notes that, by the end of 2024, seven Foreigner Integration Centres had already been established using ESF+ funding and that 6,338 third-country nationals had been supported under the specific ESF+ objective (European Migration Network Poland, 2024).

Current status of micro-credential programmes in Polish higher education

Conceptual and regulatory context

Micro-credentials in Polish higher education are developing, but they are still not fully institutionalised. The concept is linked to lifelong learning, digital badges, open badges, short courses and professional certification, yet it is not yet fully embedded in Polish legal acts or uniformly applied across universities. The 2024 report by the National Information Processing Institute (OPI PIB) on micro-credentials in Polish higher education indicates that awareness among university staff remains uneven and that institutions still face uncertainty regarding legal frameworks, quality assurance, organisational models and recognition by employers (National Information Processing Institute, 2024).

Poland nevertheless has institutional foundations that could support the development of micro-credentials. The Integrated Qualifications System, introduced by the Act of 22 December 2015, organises the Polish qualifications system and enables flexible responses to changing labour-market demand. The Polish Qualifications Framework describes eight levels of qualifications, referenced to the European Qualifications Framework, and defines qualifications in terms of knowledge, skills and social competences (Eurydice, 2026). This framework is important because micro-credentials for migrants need to be transparent, comparable and trusted by employers and educational institutions.

The Integrated Skills Strategy 2030 also provides a favourable policy environment. It covers general education, vocational education, higher education, non-formal education and informal learning. It emphasises skills anticipation, adaptation to labour-market needs, lifelong learning, career counselling, employer cooperation and recognition of skills (Cedefop, 2021). This is highly relevant for refugees and migrants because many of their

skills were acquired in another country or outside Polish formal education, and therefore require validation, translation into Polish qualification language and connection to labour-market needs.

Cedefop's Poland case study describes micro-credentials as a relatively new but increasingly important instrument for labour-market education and training. It identifies the development of open badges, digital badges, professional certificates and short learning forms as part of a broader European trend towards flexible, employment-relevant learning. The report also notes that Poland's Integrated Skills Strategy 2030 creates a supportive environment for micro-credential development because it promotes the integration of formal, non-formal and informal learning (Stasiowski, 2023).

Institutional practice

An important development is the Odznaka+ digital badge application, developed by the Educational Research Institute. In July 2025, Opole University of Technology became the first higher education institution in Poland to issue a micro-credential through Odznaka+. The Educational Research Institute has since worked with higher education institutions to develop recommendations for standardising micro-credentials in Poland (Institute for Educational Research, 2025). This signals that micro-credentials are moving from policy discussion towards institutional practice.

For migrants and refugees, micro-credentials could become especially valuable if they are designed as short, stackable and labour-market-oriented learning units. Potential areas include professional Polish language, digital administration, entrepreneurship, care work, education support, logistics, construction, green skills, public-service navigation, intercultural mediation and sector-specific bridging courses. For example, a Ukrainian teacher may need a short course in Polish educational law and classroom terminology; a healthcare worker may require professional Polish and documentation standards; an engineer may need a module on Polish technical regulations and workplace safety. Micro-credentials could make such learning visible and portable. For migrants, additional conditions are essential: bilingual information, recognition of prior learning, flexible schedules, childcare-sensitive formats, online or hybrid delivery, psychological safety and links to legal and career counselling.

University-NGO and stakeholder collaboration

University-led academic support

Polish higher education institutions have played an important role in supporting Ukrainian students, doctoral candidates, researchers and academic staff. The NAWA "Solidarity with Ukraine" programme was established in 2022 to enable Ukrainian students and doctoral candidates who fled the war to continue education or doctoral work in Poland. It allowed Polish institutions to provide scholarships, language courses, preparatory education and other forms of academic support. NAWA reported that 98 institutions received funding, that more than PLN 23.3 million was allocated, and that the programme was expected to support 1,947 people (NAWA, 2022a). NAWA's programme is important because it demonstrates how higher education can respond to displacement not only through humanitarian aid but through structured educational continuity.

A second NAWA initiative supported Polish universities participating in European University alliances in their cooperation with Ukrainian HEIs. Polish institutions received almost PLN 16 million to foster academic cooperation with Ukrainian universities through exchanges, fellowships, summer and winter schools, seminars, workshops, training, teaching-material development and joint research (NAWA, 2022b). The University of Warsaw's 4EU+ for Ukraine project included flexible educational pathways, language, intercultural and IT courses, online and hybrid short programmes, and workshops for students, doctoral candidates, researchers and academic staff (University of Warsaw, 2023).

Another relevant example is Kozminski University (Akademia Leona Koźmińskiego) in Warsaw. In the first phase of the war, the university organised a fundraiser and a support point for refugees from Ukraine in cooperation with the Ukrainian House in Warsaw of the "Our Choice" Foundation. This initiative provided humanitarian and legal assistance and mobilised more than 1,300 volunteers, supporting hundreds of Ukrainian families in the first days of displacement (Akademia Leona Koźmińskiego, 2022a). Kozminski University also launched an intensive Polish language course with elements of business knowledge for people coming to Poland from Ukraine and other countries. The programme included basic and intermediate Polish groups, covered selected elements of management, finance and law, and was delivered by Kozminski University teachers. Participants received a course completion diploma, and the course could be continued online if participants left Poland (Akademia Leona Koźmińskiego, 2022b). Although this initiative was not formally described as a micro-credential, it illustrates the type of short, targeted and certifiable educational pathway that may support refugees' linguistic adaptation, preparation for study and labour-market integration.

NGO-led integration support

NGOs have been important, especially for migrants and refugees who are outside formal higher education. The Ocalenie Foundation's Help Centre for Foreigners in Warsaw provides legal assistance, psychological support, Polish language courses, career counselling, interpretation, help with dealing with offices, school enrolment, healthcare navigation, crisis support and activities for children and youth (Ocalenie Foundation, 2026). This kind of support is essential because many refugees need stabilisation before they can successfully participate in formal education or retraining.

Towards a multi-stakeholder ecosystem

The emerging model of cooperation in Poland can be described as a multi-stakeholder ecosystem. Universities provide curriculum design, academic expertise, certification and access to research-based teaching. NGOs provide outreach, trust-building, individual case support, cultural mediation and psychological assistance. Employers identify labour-market needs and provide information about practical skills gaps. Local governments and Foreigner Integration Centres can coordinate access and ensure that services are not duplicated. International organisations such as UNHCR, UNICEF and IOM provide data, coordination, technical expertise and funding support (European Commission, 2024; UNHCR, 2025a; UNICEF, 2025).

This cooperation model has direct relevance for micro-credentials. A university may design a short, certified module, but an NGO may be better placed to recruit learners, identify barriers and provide social support. Employers may help ensure that course content

corresponds to actual job requirements. Local integration centres may connect learners to language courses, legal assistance and employment services. In this sense, micro-credentials for migrants should be embedded in integration pathways rather than offered as stand-alone academic products.

Challenges and opportunities for implementing micro-credential programmes for refugee and migrant retraining and social adaptation

Key challenges

The first challenge is the fragmentation of support. Poland's integration system includes national legislation, local governments, schools, universities, employment offices, NGOs, international organisations and newly developing Foreigner Integration Centres. This diversity creates flexibility, but it also makes the system difficult to navigate. Migrants may need legal advice in one institution, Polish language classes in another, psychological support elsewhere and job counselling through a different channel. The development of Foreigner Integration Centres is therefore promising, because these centres are intended to connect language learning, legal counselling, employment support and adaptation services in one place (European Commission, 2024; European Migration Network Poland, 2024). However, their effectiveness will depend on stable funding, regional coverage, professional staff and cooperation with NGOs, municipalities and educational providers (European Commission, 2024; Ocalenie Foundation, 2026).

The second challenge is skills mismatch. Poland has achieved rapid labour-market inclusion of Ukrainian refugees, but employment has not always meant appropriate professional integration. Many Ukrainians work below their level of education or outside their previous professional field. This is especially important because a large share of Ukrainian refugees and pre-war migrants have tertiary education, while access to regulated or semi-regulated occupations in Poland depends on Polish language proficiency, formal recognition of qualifications and knowledge of sector-specific procedures (BGK, 2025; Duszczyk et al., 2023). This mismatch is costly for individuals, because it may lead to downward professional mobility and loss of professional identity. It is also inefficient for Poland, because available human capital is not fully used. In the longer term, it may also weaken Ukraine's reconstruction capacity if highly qualified professionals remain for years in low-skilled employment (BGK, 2025; UNHCR & Deloitte, 2025).

Micro-credentials could help reduce this mismatch if they are designed as bridging instruments. Their role should not be limited to certifying short courses. They should help translate existing skills into the Polish institutional and labour-market context. This may include professional Polish, sector-specific terminology, Polish labour law, workplace communication, digital administration, preparation for qualification recognition and modules linked to regulated professions (Stasiowski, 2023; National Information Processing Institute, 2024). Such programmes would be especially useful for teachers, healthcare workers, engineers, social workers and other professionals whose qualifications cannot be transferred automatically. In this sense, micro-credentials could support both immediate integration in Poland and the preservation of professional capacity relevant to Ukraine's future recovery (BGK, 2025; NAWA, 2022b; University of Warsaw, 2023).

The third challenge is language. Polish language proficiency remains a key condition for social adaptation, school participation, access to higher education and professional

mobility. The experience of Ukrainian pupils shows that language support must be organised systematically and not only as an emergency measure. Additional Polish language lessons, compulsory school attendance and school-based integration support are therefore important not only for children, but also for the stability of whole refugee families (Skorupa-Wulczyńska, 2025; UNHCR Poland, 2024; UNICEF, 2025). For adults, however, general language courses are not sufficient. Retraining programmes should include occupationally specific Polish, for example Polish for healthcare, education, administration, construction, customer service, entrepreneurship and public-service navigation. Micro-credentials could make such language learning more targeted, assessable and recognisable by employers (Stasiowski, 2023; National Information Processing Institute, 2024).

The fourth challenge concerns the still-developing status of micro-credentials in Polish higher education. Poland has a qualifications framework, an Integrated Qualifications System and a policy environment that supports lifelong learning, but micro-credentials are not yet fully standardised across higher education institutions (Act of 22 December 2015, 2015; Cedefop, 2021; Eurydice, 2026). The 2024 OPI report shows that Polish universities still face uncertainty regarding legal frameworks, quality assurance, organisational models and employer recognition (National Information Processing Institute, 2024). Without clear standards, micro-credentials may remain locally useful but weak as national integration instruments. The Odznaka+ application and the first university implementation of micro-credentials in 2025 are therefore important steps, but they need to be connected more explicitly to migrant learning needs and labour-market pathways (Institute for Educational Research, 2025; Microcredentials Poland, 2025; Stasiowski, 2023).

Key opportunities

At the same time, Poland offers strong opportunities for innovation. It hosts a large population of Ukrainian learners and has extensive labour-market participation among refugees. It also has active NGOs, developing integration centres, experienced universities and direct educational links with Ukrainian higher education institutions (Eurostat, 2025, 2026a, 2026b; NAWA, 2022a, 2022b). These conditions create a favourable environment for flexible, modular and labour-market-oriented education. If Polish universities cooperate with NGOs, employers, local governments and integration centres, micro-credentials could become a practical tool for migrant integration. They could support access to employment, professional mobility, recognition of prior learning and further education (European Commission, 2024; Ocalenie Foundation, 2026; National Information Processing Institute, 2024).

In comparative perspective, Poland shows that micro-credentials for migrants should not be treated as stand-alone educational products. They are most useful when embedded in a wider integration pathway that includes legal security, language learning, psychosocial support, career counselling, employer engagement and recognition of prior learning. This makes the Polish experience relevant both for Ukraine, where universities and NGOs are developing flexible retraining models for internally displaced persons, and for Norway, where integration is more strongly embedded in public municipal systems (Duszczyk et al., 2023; Stasiowski, 2023; UNHCR & Deloitte, 2025).

3. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF INTERNATIONAL PRACTICES

This section sets the three national contexts side by side and reads them along five comparative dimensions: the policy logic of integration, the use of micro-credentials, models of higher-education-NGO collaboration, challenges and opportunities, sustainability and scalability.

Given the fact that each national case responds to different institutional and economic conditions, the aim is to clarify how those conditions shape what retraining and integration can achieve, and to draw out the lessons that travel across contexts. Table 1 summarises the comparison.

Table 1. Comparative summary of educational practices for retraining and social integration of displaced people in Ukraine, Norway and Poland

Dimension	Ukraine	Norway	Poland
Integration models	Emergency response and reconstruction. Wartime legislation delivered through state employment services and a dense donor/NGO web; oriented to preserving human capital for recovery.	Centralised. comprehensive, publicly funded municipal system (Integration Act; Introduction Programme) in which the state carries primary responsibility.	Labour-market-led. Near-unconditional access to work and services (Act of 12 March 2022); formal integration infrastructure develops afterwards.
Integration outcome (the trade-off)	High flexibility and external resources, but no settled regulatory framework and acute fiscal and security pressure.	Slower early employment (about one in three after two years) but durable, qualification-matched inclusion.	High employment but widespread underemployment (51% of working refugees in simple occupations).
Micro-credentials	No legal definition yet; fast Erasmus+ practice (notably TURBO) and NQA 2024 recommendations build capacity ahead of regulation.	Approached through lifelong learning under HK-dir and aligned with the EU 2022 Recommendation; engagement mainly through emerging grass-root expertise.	Strong qualifications scaffolding (Integrated Qualifications System, PQF/EQF, Skills Strategy 2030) but weak standardisation.
HEI-NGO collaboration	Most NGO- and donor-dependent: university-NGO, state-IO and digital-platform models substitute for state capacity (IFSA/TURBO).	State-anchored: municipalities and IMDi coordinate; universities, NOKUT and HK-dir recognise and route; NGOs complement at the margins.	Emerging multi-stakeholder ecosystem: universities (NAWA, 4EU+, Kozminski) and NGOs (Ocalenie), increasingly coordinated via Foreigner Integration Centres.
Key challenge	No recognition framework for micro-credentials; security, infrastructure and the digital divide; donor dependency.	Low early employment; host-language proficiency; the temporariness of collective protection.	Skills mismatch and underemployment; fragmented, hard-to-navigate support; weak micro-credential standardisation.
Sustainability & scalability	Funded through time-limited donor cycles; no durable national mechanism; depends on absorbing delivery into core budgets.	Most sustainable (stable public funding, universal coverage), but temporary-protection framing adds uncertainty.	Targeted services and integration centres depend heavily on EU funds (AMIF, ESF+); long-term coverage uncertain.

3.1 The model of social integration

The case countries embody three distinct integration models.

Norway has a centralised model. Integration runs through a comprehensive, publicly funded municipal system, regulated by the Integration Act and the Introduction Programme, in which the state and not the market or civil society carries primary responsibility. Poland is a labour-market-led model. The Act of 12 March 2022 granted near-unconditional access to work, business and public services, avoiding an asylum-based reception and enabling immediate socio-economic participation, with formal integration infrastructure developing only afterwards. Ukraine is an emergency-reconstruction model. Responses rest on a cascade of wartime legislation delivered through state employment services and a dense web of donor- and NGO-led provision, oriented as much towards preserving human capital for reconstruction as towards immediate integration.

These models resolve into a single, instructive trade-off between the speed of labour-market entry and the quality of integration. Norway's heavy up-front investment buys durable, qualification-matched inclusion at the cost of slow early employment; Poland's rapid access buys high employment at the cost of widespread underemployment. as the defining inefficiency is mismatch, not joblessness; and Ukraine's improvisation mobilises remarkable flexibility and external resources but operates without a settled framework and under acute fiscal and security pressure. Read together, the cases suggest that speed of entry and quality of integration tend to pull in opposite directions, and that the decisive design question is how to combine rapid access with structured pathways back into skilled, qualification-matched work. This is the gap each system tries to fill in its own way.

3.2 Micro-credential: regulatory maturity and the recognition

In all three countries micro-credentials are an emerging instrument rather than an embedded, separately regulated qualification, but the three sit at different points on the same path.

Poland has the strongest scaffolding (an Integrated Qualifications System, an EQF-referenced Polish Qualifications Framework and the Integrated Skills Strategy 2030) yet weak standardisation, with the first university micro-credential issued only in 2025. Ukraine has no legal definition at all, but a fast-moving ecosystem of Erasmus+ practice (for example, the TURBO project), the National Qualifications Agency's 2024 recommendations and a pending Law on Adult Education are assembling capacity ahead of regulation. Norway approaches micro-credentials through the lens of lifelong learning under HK-dir and in alignment with the EU's 2022 Recommendation, but its most direct engagement for displacement is the bottom-up emergence of expertise as universities themselves start to experiment with introduction of such programmes under EVU (etter- og videreutdanning) umbrella.

The common lesson is that the certificate is not the major result, while the recognition matters the most. In every case the value of a micro-credential for a displaced learner turns on whether the learning is recognised, by employers, by qualification frameworks, and as a step towards formal qualifications, and on whether it connects to language acquisition, recognition of prior learning, psychosocial support and employment. Where

micro-credentials are designed as short, stackable bridging instruments (occupational language, sector-specific terminology, regulatory and workplace knowledge, preparation for qualification recognition) they translate existing competence into the labour market. Thus, the actual recognition is therefore the hinge on which all three systems turn. Norway's comparative advantage is precisely a mature recognition infrastructure, while Poland and Ukraine are on the way for building one.

3.3 Collaboration: public capacity and the role of NGOs

Each country relies on multi-stakeholder collaboration, but the balance among actors varies in direct proportion to the strength of public capacity. In Norway the model is managed by the state. Municipalities and IMDi coordinate delivery, universities, NOKUT and HK-dir supply recognition and pathways, employers and social partners engage through tripartite structures, and NGOs add outreach at the margins. In Poland it is an emerging ecosystem. Universities (through NAWA's Solidarity with Ukraine, the University of Warsaw's 4EU+ and Kozminski's language-and-business courses) provide academic continuity, while NGOs such as Ocalenie provide outreach and stabilisation, increasingly coordinated through Foreigner Integration Centres. In Ukraine collaboration is the most NGO- and donor-dependent of the three, with university-NGO partnerships (e.g., TURBO), state and international-organisations partnerships and digital-platform collaborations together substituting for capacity the wartime state cannot provide.

The pattern shows that the stronger the public integration infrastructure, the more NGOs shift from being primary providers to being complementary specialists in outreach and psychosocial support. What does not vary is the underlying division of labour is that NGOs reach displaced learners, build trust and deliver the social and psychological components, while universities supply curriculum, certification and academic credibility. The important ingredient of resilience of such arrangements is to establish collaborations based on partners' strengths deliberately, and it is this collaboration, rather than any single actor activity, that the Ukrainian pilots in Section 4 operationalise.

3.4 Shared challenges and opportunities

The three systems share a recognisable set of challenges. The first is the still-developing status of micro-credentials. In none is it a fully standardised, nationally recognised category, which limits portability and employer trust. The second is recognition and language. Limited host-language proficiency and slow or partial recognition of foreign qualifications are the principal barriers to skilled employment in Norway and Poland, while Ukraine's absence of a micro-credential recognition framework creates an analogous uncertainty. The third is skills mismatch and underemployment, which is particularly explicit and measurable in Poland, but latent wherever rapid placement is prioritised over qualification-matched work. The fourth is the fragmentation and navigability of multi-actor support; the fifth, most acute in Ukraine, is security, infrastructure and the digital divide.

Several shared opportunities can also be named. All three settings host large, highly educated displaced populations whose human capital needs to be recognized an asset rather than a state burden. All three are converging, at different speeds, on the European approach to micro-credentials and lifelong learning, which creates both a common

direction and the basis for credential portability, each producing unique practices. Norway's institutional governance of recognition infrastructure and digital tools, Poland's rapid labour-market inclusion and developing integration centres, and Ukraine's multi-stakeholders' delivery model. The central opportunity is to combine them: to embed flexible, recognised micro-credentials within the integration pathways that already exist, so that short learning units accelerate movement into qualification-matched employment rather than adding one more unrecognised certificate.

3.5 Sustainability and scalability

Sustainability is the binding constraint across all three systems, though it takes a different form in each. In Ukraine, most micro-credential and retraining provision depends on time-limited Erasmus+, GIZ, USAID and UNDP cycles, with no durable national funding mechanism, so continuation after donor exit rests on whether universities can absorb delivery into core budgets under wartime fiscal pressure. In Poland, targeted integration services and the Foreigner Integration Centres depend heavily on EU funds (AMIF, ESF+), leaving their coverage and staffing uncertain. Norway's provision is the most secure, as derives from the public funding and universal municipal coverage, yet even there the increasingly temporary framing of collective protection introduces an uncertainty that can erode incentives for long-term investment by beneficiaries and institutions alike.

Scalability, finally, depends on three conditions that recur throughout the analysis. (1) Formal recognition of micro-credentials within national qualification frameworks, so that learning accumulates and transfers. (2) Durable funding that does not hinge on individual project cycles. (3) Institutionalised multi-stakeholder partnerships that survive staff turnover and political change.

The Ukrainian pilots show that the model can be replicated across very different regional contexts; whether it can be scaled nationally and adapted for refugee and adult education elsewhere in Europe will be decided largely by progress on these three conditions.

4. INSIGHTS FROM UKRAINIAN EXPERIENCE

Summary of IDPs' perceptions

This section presents an overview of the implementation of the IDP retraining and social adaptation programmes during the spring and autumn 2025 semesters. Each sub-section is based on the institutional self-assessments submitted by the partner universities and focus groups conducted with them and partner NGOs. The two semesters have been merged into a single coherent narrative per region.

Overview of the piloted model

Across all participating Ukrainian universities, the TURBO project piloted a common model for the retraining and social integration of IDPs. Although each university adapted the model to its regional context, disciplinary strengths and partner network, the institutional self-assessments converge on a similar structural approach. The model is built around short, intensive, certificate-bearing micro-credential programmes lasting 500 academic hours per semester that combine professional and entrepreneurial retraining with psychological and social support, and that are co-delivered by a university and a civil-society partner. Four components recur as the defining features of the model:

1. Micro-credentials. Each programme is structured as a stackable, certificate-based micro-credential rather than a full degree, with a defined volume of academic hours and ECTS credits, a modular curriculum, and assessment leading to a certificate issued by the university. This format allowed IDPs to acquire and document new competencies quickly and created a basis for the formal recognition and accumulation of learning outcomes within national and university qualification frameworks.
2. NGO cooperation. Delivery is shared between the university, which provides the academic part of the programme, and one (or in some cases several) partner NGOs experienced in working with displaced populations. The NGOs typically lead recruitment and selection processes, delivered psychological and soft-skills components, mobilised mentors and business contacts, and supported outreach to the displaced community, bringing the programmes closer to participants' real needs.
3. Psychological and legal support. Alongside professional content, the model embeds support for participants' psychological resilience and legal awareness. The trainings were provided in each region covering emotional self-regulation, burnout and trauma prevention, group cohesion, and guidance on social entitlements, IDP status and the legal foundations of entrepreneurship, all in recognition of the displacement-related barriers that participants faced and were willing to acquire.
4. Labour-market alignment. The programmes were developed in line with local labour-market needs. The main aim was to move participants into employment, self-employment or entrepreneurship. This was pursued in close collaboration with local businesses, employers, employment services and start-up ecosystems, and

through practical outputs such as supporting participants in developing business plans, so that retraining responds to regional labour-market demand.

5. IT equipment and digital infrastructure. Every partner equipped its delivery with the audio-visual, computing and connectivity equipment procured through the TURBO project. Thus, across all sites this equipment underpinned the recording of lectures, asynchronous catch-up and uninterrupted online delivery. Where partners diverged was in how far they used and extended the digital infrastructure.

Read together, the model piloted in the project is best seen as a single, comparable design rather than seven unrelated courses. Each university set out the educational modules and trainings co-delivered by the partner university and NGO. Over the regions, three main patterns stand out:

- Every programme converged on the same volume (500 academic hours, equivalent to roughly 16-17 ECTS) delivered over a single semester, even though the number of modules ranged from three in Lviv to nine mandatory modules plus five electives in Odesa.
- A business and entrepreneurship core is universal, yet each partner extended it in a distinctive direction as, for example, social-services provision in Lviv or digital economy in Kyiv.
- Psychological, legal and labour market trainings were integrated as part of the curriculum in every region. However, the approach and volume varied, making each regional programme distinctive and adapted to participants' needs and to local community circumstances.

Objectives and expectations before implementation

Before launching their programmes, all partner universities began from a shared aim, i.e., to support the social and professional reintegration of IDPs by equipping a predominantly working age, highly educated but displaced population, of whom most are women, with practical entrepreneurial, business and digital competencies, while strengthening psychological resilience and a sense of belonging to local communities.

A premise that recurs across the partner interviews is that this population should be treated as adult learners whose own life and professional experience is itself a resource. Partners expected to work in an andragogical (i.e., teaching approach oriented towards adults), co-learning mode, mapping each cohort's needs and the local stakeholders' disposition before delivery and adapting content in real time rather than adhering rigidly to a pre-developed syllabus. To this end, every Ukrainian partner university built selection around a registration form capturing motivation and prior education, followed in most regions by an interview to enrol participants genuinely committed to an intensive micro-credential programme.

Partners expected to reach motivated learners holding IDP status from the war-affected eastern and southern regions, and to produce concrete outputs such as developed business plans, new or restarted economic activity, and improved employability among graduates. In practice, their starting assumptions about recruitment were quickly tested, and several found that demand had to be actively built rather than assumed. For example, Vinnytsia drew only four sign-ups from its initial media campaign and had to recruit through

the city and a partner NGO; Odesa's registrations crept from five to eight before suddenly reaching nearly fifty; Chernihiv concluded it could not assemble a sufficiently motivated group from its own region and recruited through NGO channels across other regions; and Lviv deliberately opened recruitment nationwide through its NGO partner, receiving more than a hundred applications in ten days and selecting on the strength of motivation letters. Flexibility of format was anticipated as a precondition for reaching participants who combine study with work, caregiving and unstable housing, but approaches for the programmes delivery diverged by region. Where the security situation and a settled local cohort allowed, partners expected and preferred in-person or hybrid delivery (e.g., Chernivtsi, and Odesa conducting mostly all teaching in-person), valuing the group engagement that face-to-face contact creates; where participants were dispersed across the country, fully online delivery was accepted as a necessary trade-off.

The psychological and social dimension figured prominently in partners' pre-implementation thinking, although their expectations were not uniform. Several partners, drawing on prior Ukraine-Norway project experience, expected displaced adults to need psychological stabilisation before they could absorb professional content, and planned to front-load resilience work or to use an opening session as a diagnostic "litmus test" of the group's motivation and readiness; others chose to embed psychological support within the teaching team rather than as a separate block. While some partners anticipated a more acute trauma burden than they ultimately encountered, some reported that the demand for psychological assistance was modest and participants were coping with stress rather effectively. On the legal side, partners initially expected demand for document restoration but increasingly foresaw questions about property, inheritance and contracts left behind in occupied or front-line territories.

The micro-credential format itself was a deliberate expectation shaped by the project's capacity-building exchanges with the European partners, including Kozminski University and Nord University, which several teams cited as the reference for building a flexible, modular, certificate-bearing offer in the absence of a settled national framework.

Finally, partners agreed that the model should be replicable and scalable, and planned from the outset for sustainability through durable cooperation between universities, NGOs, employers and local authorities, alumni networks, and pathways towards ECTS recognition and continuing-education provision — experience that can inform Ukrainian and international practitioners working in this area.

4.1 Lviv Polytechnic National University (Lviv)

Distinctive contribution. Lviv built its programme on a strong institutionalised social partnership between Lviv Polytechnic and the NGO "New Society of Ukraine" specialising on the work with war veterans (especially those with complicated injuries) and their family members. It is the only partner to have built its offer specifically around the social-services sector. "Social Entrepreneurship in the Field of Social Services Provision" trained displaced adults to become providers of social services, not only to launch generic businesses. It was reinforced by a dense veteran- and disability-inclusion network.

Institutional overview

Lviv Polytechnic National University delivered the retraining and social adaptation programme in partnership with the NGO "New Society of Ukraine," a collaboration that has continued since 2018 within the framework of the Ukraine-Norway project. The programme, "Social Entrepreneurship in the Field of Social Services Provision," was implemented across two semesters in 2025. The spring cohort ran from 17 March to 6 June 2025 and graduated 27 participants, while the autumn cohort ran from 1 September to 10 November 2025 and graduated 31 participants. Across both semesters, the programme comprised 500 academic hours (16.6 ECTS credits).

University	Lviv Polytechnic National University (LPNU)
Region / city	Lviv
Partner NGO	NGO "New Society of Ukraine"
Programme	Social Entrepreneurship in the Field of Social Services Provision
Spring 2025 cohort	17 March – 6 June 2025; 27 graduates
Autumn 2025 cohort	1 September – 10 November 2025; 31 graduates
Volume	500 academic hours / 16.6 ECTS credits Three sequential modules

Context of IDPs in the region (as of 2026)

According to the head of the Lviv Regional Military Administration (Apostrophe, 2026), as of March 2026, there were 201,000 officially registered IDPs in Lviv region, which is probably about two-thirds of the actual number of people. The real number, according to mobile operators, is in the range of 300,000–350,000. Among the officially registered IDPs, 60% are women, 40% men, and 60,000 are children under 18. About 10,000 of them are people with disabilities (Apostrophe, 2026). These data indicate a significant demographic and social burden on the region. The high proportion of children and persons with disabilities among the displaced population reinforces the need for accessible, inclusive, and comprehensive social services oriented towards long-term integration and improved quality of life.

The city of Lviv operates a Municipal Centre for the Support of IDPs, which provides assistance on a "single-window" principle. IDPs can obtain consultations and support relating to housing, documentation, military registration, social support, medical care, education, leisure, guardianship, and employment. This integrated approach aims to help by reducing administrative barriers and increasing the effectiveness of social integration.

Since 2022, 74 projects aimed at creating long-term housing for IDPs have been implemented in the Lviv region, resulting in more than 9,800 accommodation places, with a further 86 facilities under repair and refurbishment in cooperation with communities and international partners (Varto News, 2025). Over three years, more than UAH 1.32 billion was mobilised for housing initiatives, of which UAH 575 million came from the regional budget and the remainder from communities, charitable organisations and international partners (Dilo.net.ua, 2025). Some projects include temporary housing on Zamarstynivska Street in Lviv for displaced persons requiring special medical care (currently home to 21 residents, with a total capacity of nearly 70), and 69 accommodation places established at the Medenytsia Agrarian-Technological Vocational College in 2025.

Programme design and implementation

Target group

The spring 2025 cohort consisted of IDPs aged 29 to 55 from various regions of Ukraine, most of them between 40 and 50 years old, which is an age profile reflecting awareness of, and motivation to pursue, new opportunities for self-realisation and income generation. The group comprised 6 men and 21 women, the predominance of women being typical of IDP groups. All participants held higher education in fields including law (4), pedagogy (7), psychology (3), economics (8) and the technical sciences (5), with varied professional and entrepreneurial backgrounds and social statuses ranging from low-income and unemployed to experienced business, civic and public-sector actors.

For the autumn 2025 cohort, recruitment began with a broad vocational-orientation campaign through which 134 applications were processed via Google Forms. Following analysis of motivation, educational background, professional experience and geographic location, 41 candidates progressed to motivation letters and interviews, 32 were enrolled, and 31 completed the programme and received graduation documents. Women made up the large majority (28 participants, 90%) and men 10% (3 participants). The group was professionally mature: the largest cohort was aged 41–50 (18 participants), followed by 31–40 (7), over 50 (4) and under 30 (2). Participants came from ten regions of Ukraine, with the largest representation from Luhansk (9), followed by Donetsk including the city of Donetsk (4), Zaporizhzhia (4), Kharkiv and region (4), Kherson (3) and Odesa and region (2), alongside single participants from Dnipropetrovsk, Kyiv, Sumy, Chernihiv and Cherkasy regions. Their educational backgrounds spanned the humanities and social sciences (pedagogy 8, psychology 3, law 2, philology 1, social work 1), economics and administration (economics 6, logistics 2, public administration 1), and the technical and natural sciences (technical 5, medical 2).

Delivery and structure

The programme was delivered in a hybrid format with a strong emphasis on online learning using project equipment. In the spring semester, most classes were held synchronously on Zoom, complemented by video lectures and materials on the Moodle platform that allowed participants to work at their own pace, which was particularly valuable for displaced participants living across different regions. A portion of sessions, mainly kick-off and summary meetings and trainings (team building and group cohesion, achievement motivation, goal setting, individual career planning, burnout and secondary-trauma prevention, and emotional self-regulation), were held in person and broadcast for those unable to attend. Video material was recorded in specially equipped classrooms at LPNU, in particular in the "Socioprostir" educational-information hub, with high-quality recording and broadcasting enabled by media training and equipment provided through the TURBO project.

In the autumn semester the hybrid format continued and most of classes was delivered remotely on Zoom five evenings per week (18:00-21:00), ensuring convenience and accessibility, while in-person activities were hosted at the LPNU Centre for Veteran Development and the "Socioprostir" hub. The university's Moodle-based virtual learning environment provided round-the-clock access to video lectures, presentations and methodological materials, supporting continuity and effectiveness.

The programme was structured into three consecutive modules combining theory with practice:

Module 1: Social services as a set of measures aimed at specific population groups (180 hours / 6 ECTS, three courses of 60 hours each): basics of social work, digitalisation of social services, legal regulation of social services and social entrepreneurship, inclusiveness, the gender approach, and working with different vulnerable groups; approximate theory-to-practice ratio 30/70.

Module 2: Social enterprise as an agent of positive change in the community (180 hours / 6 ECTS, three courses of 60 hours each): social entrepreneurship and social innovation, community needs research, business-model building, social-project development, institutional cooperation, ethics and supervision; approximate theory-to-practice ratio 30/70.

Module 3: Soft skills of a social entrepreneur (140 hours / 5.7 ECTS): team building and group cohesion, conflict prevention and mediation, achievement motivation, goal setting, burnout and secondary-trauma prevention, emotional self-regulation, marketing and PR in social entrepreneurship, and crisis communications; delivered entirely through practical formats.

Psychological-rehabilitation and soft-skills trainings ran in parallel with the core disciplines and were delivered by the partner NGO "New Society of Ukraine." In the autumn semester the balance was shifted towards practice (approximately 70% practical and 30% theoretical), incorporating simulation sessions, analysis of real cases, legal-support webinars and the development of individual career-growth plans.

Educational component			
Module 1. Social services as a set of measures	Module 2. Social enterprise as an agent of community change	Module 3. Soft skills of a social entrepreneur	
Basics of social work; digitalisation of social services; legal regulation; social entrepreneurship; inclusiveness & gender approach; working with vulnerable groups	Social entrepreneurship & innovation; community-needs research; business-model building; social-project development; institutional cooperation; ethics & supervision	Team building & cohesion; conflict prevention & mediation; achievement motivation; goal setting; burnout & secondary-trauma prevention; emotional self-regulation; marketing & PR; crisis communications	

Trainings			
Team cohesion and conflict management	Achievement motivation: the path to effective goal setting and implementation	Maintaining emotional well-being: prevention of burnout and secondary trauma	Marketing, PR, and crisis communications in social entrepreneurship

Figure 4.1.1. Structure of educational components and trainings in Lviv

Quality assurance of the programme relied on constant supervision by the teaching team and regular coordination meetings, together with analysis of participant engagement in the online environment. In the autumn semester these methods were complemented by a shared WhatsApp group chat for rapid interaction and mentoring and individual informal interviews on satisfaction and emerging difficulties, surveys of the teaching staff, and assessment of learning outcomes through testing, review of individual and group assignments, and the defence of business plans. Feedback informed the strengthening of the practice-oriented, gamified component and the introduction of "resource meetings."

Resource meetings are a tool of psychological support and development that combine practical techniques, creativity, and shared communication. They help participants restore energy, better understand themselves, and develop resilience skills in challenging life circumstances.

Partners involved

Implementation drew on a multi-level network of civil-society, academic, business, and public-sector partners, each performing a specific function that together formed a comprehensive support system for displaced persons and veterans with IDP status.

- NGO "New Society of Ukraine" acted as a lead NGO partner; coordinated vocational-orientation selection, delivered soft-skills and psychological-rehabilitation trainings, and provided mentoring support.
- Luhansk Association of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities contributed to disseminating information among IDPs from different regions, broadening the reach of the target audience.
- Veteran associations helped recruit participants with veteran status through social media, strengthening the programme's inclusiveness.
- LPNU Centre for Veteran Development supported participant selection and provided the base for hybrid delivery of courses.
- "Socioprostir" educational-information hub (created under TURBO) served as the technical base for interactive classes, webinars, and multimedia content; the university psychological service provided individual support.
- Local businesses and social enterprises. The social enterprise "Online Pampushechna. Lviv" and the "Rukomysly" workshop hosted excursions and demonstrated successful social-business models (the spring semester also drew on the experience of partner social enterprises such as "Tarilka").
- State and regional bodies. The Lviv Regional Branch of the Social Protection Fund for Persons with Disabilities, the State Rehabilitation Institution "Halychyna," the Lviv centre serving combatants, and the Lviv Regional Employment Centre provided advice on CV preparation and individual legal consultations by lawyers.

Institutional reflection

The programme proved effective because it addressed the specific needs of IDPs through a flexible schedule and an individualised approach. Interactive sessions and practical exercises raised motivation, the psychological component helped participants build self-regulation and stress-resilience skills, and a trusting atmosphere developed through closer cooperation between teachers and participants. In the autumn semester, participants particularly valued the study of digital technologies (CRM systems, mobile applications, and online registers) as practical tools for improving service accessibility, showed strong interest in understanding their rights and the mechanisms for protecting them, and came to perceive social entrepreneurship not merely as a business but as a personal mission. Burnout-prevention and self-regulation themes created a safe space in which participants could speak about loss and fatigue while learning to care for themselves, and conflict-

management and mediation training helped people who had experienced the breakdown of their communities to rebuild relationships based on trust. The “Socioprostir” hub, course video “business cards,” and the multimedia archive of recorded lectures were all noted as technical and methodological successes.

The principal challenges concerned the varying levels of training, experience, and entrepreneurial knowledge among participants, the difficulty of overcoming psychological barriers and traumatic experiences, the limited time available for adaptation and skills development, and uneven participation in discussions and group work. The autumn cohort additionally highlighted the high risk of burnout under prolonged stress, the need to simplify some parts of complex educational topics through multimedia and subtitles, and some challenges of combining education and remote work.

The institution adapted by regularly collecting participant feedback to adjust content and teaching methods, intensifying individual consultations, and making the format more interactive and needs-focused. In the autumn semester, short motivational videos “business cards” were introduced for each discipline; particular attention was paid to clarity and visual structuring of content, blended learning was organised using the project’s media equipment, and a complete archive of recorded sessions enabled self-paced study. The teaching staff confirmed the importance of an integrated approach combining training with psychological support, the need for flexibility and rapid response to participants’ changing situations, and the value of a supportive learning environment and continuous feedback. The psychological stability and emotional state of participants emerged as decisive factors in their engagement and learning outcomes.

Planned improvements for the next cycle

Drawing on the experience of both semesters, the Lviv team proposed a set of improvements across content, delivery, individualisation, psychological support, and organisation:

- Content and structure. Adapt the curriculum to the specific experience of displacement through a dedicated thematic block (legal aspects, access to social services in host communities, overcoming digital barriers); add preparation for the “family assistant” role; strengthen crisis management in the social sphere; synchronise the teaching of community-needs research tools with the stages of social-enterprise planning; and allocate more time to business planning.
- Practical and interactive component. Maintain the increased share of practice successfully introduced for the second group; create a “mini-incubator of ideas” where participants present their initiatives and receive expert feedback from mentors; and expand internships and study visits to operating social enterprises.
- Individualisation and mentoring. Introduce personalised learning trajectories based on each participant’s prior education, professional experience, and needs; and involve graduates of earlier cohorts as mentors for new participants.
- Psychological and social support. Systematically introduce “resource meetings” with elements of art therapy and body-oriented practices, and add dedicated blocks on psychological safety in teams, mutual support under stress, and the basics of crisis counselling.

- Organisational and technical. Increase flexibility through webinars and self-scheduled modules, make greater use of visual materials (infographics and short subtitled videos), strengthen external communication through regular IDP-community forums, and reinforce monitoring and impact evaluation using standardised performance indicators.

Sustainability and continuation plans

The continuation of the programme in Lviv has strategic potential for the university system, local communities and displaced persons alike, having demonstrated that the combination of educational, social and psychological components creates a comprehensive support model that can be scaled and institutionalised. The next stage could be integration into the formal education system, expansion of learning formats, and the introduction of micro-credentials in line with international and national trends.

Thus, stable funding is the key condition for continuation (as this will also appear for other partners). Potential sources include European Union grant programmes such as Erasmus+, Ukrainian state programmes supporting IDPs and veterans, the engagement of local authorities able to integrate the programme into regional socio-economic development strategies, and business partners able to fund individual modules and provide internships and mentorship.

Specific directions for running the programme could include organising electives for university students that combine formal and non-formal education with recognition of results and that are also open to IDPs; participating in the creation of micro-credential programmes that allow displaced persons, veterans and students to obtain verified, stackable learning outcomes; and obtaining qualification-centre status, which would enable the university to award qualifications on the basis of accumulated micro-credentials and to build individual educational trajectories.

Visual model of the programme

Across both semesters, the programme followed a consistent sequence of stages, with responsibilities shared between the partner NGO and the university (see Figure 4.1).

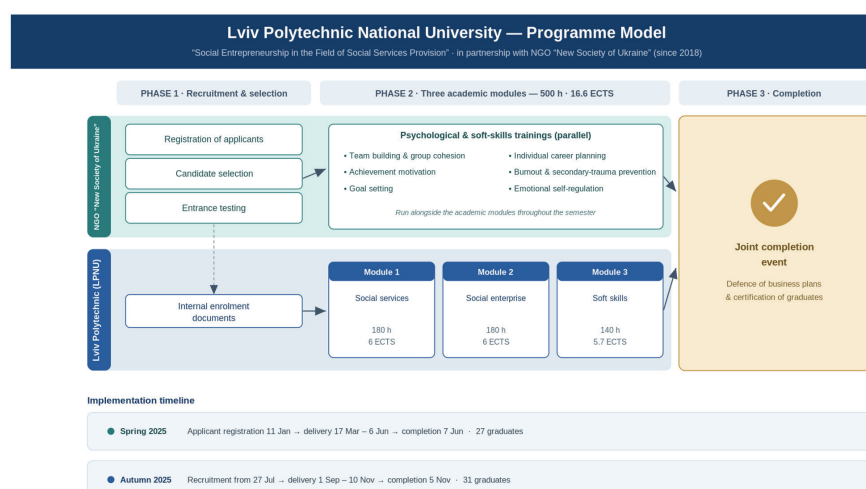


Figure 4.1.2. Aggregated programme model, LPNU (both 2025 semesters)

The NGO “New Society of Ukraine” led the registration of applicants, candidate selection, and entrance testing, and the psychological and soft-skills trainings (team building and group cohesion at the start of training, followed by achievement motivation, goal setting, individual career planning, burnout and secondary-trauma prevention, and emotional self-regulation). Lviv Polytechnic National University prepared the internal enrolment documents and delivered the three academic modules, with the cycle concluding in a joint completion event.

4.2 West Ukrainian National University (Ternopil)

Distinctive contribution. Ternopil built an integrated programme, in which entrepreneurship education included individualised psychological and legal support and close cooperation with state services (rather than running as complementary activities). It was the only partner to combine one-to-one psychological counselling with animal-assisted therapy, and to pair this with dedicated legal consultations, a child-inclusive learning environment, and engagement with the Regional Employment Centre and the Pension Fund of Ukraine.

Institutional overview

West Ukrainian National University (WUNU) delivered the programme “Retraining and Social Integration of Internally Displaced Persons in the Field of Entrepreneurship” in partnership with the Educational and Social Innovations NGO. The programme was implemented across two semesters in 2025. The spring cohort ran from 20 January to 20 May 2025 and graduated 30 participants, while the autumn cohort ran from 22 August to 14 November 2025 and graduated 44 participants. In both semesters, the programme comprised 500 academic hours, of which 360 were delivered by the university and 140 by the partner NGO.

University	West Ukrainian National University (WUNU)
Region / city	Ternopil
Partner NGO	“Educational and Social Innovations”
Programme	Retraining and Social Integration of Internally Displaced Persons in the Field of Entrepreneurship
Spring 2025 cohort	20 January – 20 May 2025; 30 graduates
Autumn 2025 cohort	22 August – 14 November 2025; 44 graduates
Volume	500 academic hours (360 university + 140 NGO) 12 disciplines (8 university + 4 NGO)

Context of IDPs in the region (as of 2026)

According to the official data of the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, as of June 2026, 63,354 IDPs are registered in the region, including 15,851 children under the age of 18 (SE «Information and Computing Centre», n.d.). More than 60% of the adult IDP population are women, many of whom are raising children on their own while simultaneously coping with everyday challenges and searching for new sources of income. Children and adolescents account for approximately 25% of all displaced persons in the region, creating a sustained

demand for educational services and long-term social integration programmes within local communities. At the same time, nearly one-fifth (18%) of all displaced persons are older adults who face the challenge of “double isolation”, which means separation from their homes and difficulties adapting to the increasingly digital and dynamic environment of Western Ukraine.

Such a heterogeneous demographic structure requires the TURBO project at West Ukrainian National University to adopt a multimodal approach, where professional reskilling opportunities for the working-age population are complemented by psychosocial support services.

A distinctive feature of Ternopil region is that a significant proportion of IDPs are settled outside the regional centre, in smaller territorial communities where unemployment and the mismatch between existing skills and local labour market demands are particularly acute. In this context, the TURBO project serves not merely as a traditional educational initiative, but as a critically important instrument for restoring human dignity through meaningful employment.

Programme design and implementation

Target group

The spring 2025 cohort consisted of IDPs who had relocated to Ternopil and the surrounding region, predominantly women aged 25–50 holding higher-education degrees in non-business fields; priority was given to those without permanent employment or housing, and many were caring for children or elderly relatives. Despite psychological stress and socio-economic instability, the group showed high motivation, and 30 participants graduated.

The autumn 2025 cohort comprised 44 participants selected competitively from 50 applications through interviews and testing. The group was overwhelmingly female (42 women, 2 men) and professionally mature: 21 were aged 31–40, 17 aged 41–50, 4 aged 19–30 and 2 over 50. All held confirmed IDP status and a documented higher-education degree, with backgrounds in economics (16), pedagogy (9), the technical sciences (8), law (4), and smaller numbers in medicine, technologies, psychology and journalism. Participants came from the most war-affected regions: Donetsk (12), Kherson (9), Luhansk (5), Sumy (5), Zaporizhzhia (4), Kharkiv (4), Mykolaiv (3), Dnipropetrovsk (1) and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (1).

Delivery and structure

The programme was delivered in a blended format (online from Monday to Friday and in person on Saturdays) supported by Zoom and a Moodle environment hosting the full set of teaching materials and recorded lessons, so that participants could revisit content at their own pace. The 500-hour curriculum was organised into 12 disciplines grouped under four thematic modules (personal development and employment readiness; legal and organisational aspects of entrepreneurship; business planning, financial literacy and accounting; and digital skills and applied practice). Drawing on the spring cohort's experience, the autumn cycle consolidated the business-planning content into a single 90-hour module, folded benefits- and grant-advice into a broader “Integration of and Support for IDPs” module, and taught business English to the whole group.

Educational component			
Module 1: Legal and organisational aspects of entrepreneurship	Module 2: Business planning, financial literacy and accounting	Module 3: Personal development and employment readiness	Module 4: Digital skills and applied practice
2. Organisation & Legal Regulation of Entrepreneurship in Ukraine	3. Management 4. Basics of Business Accounting & Analysis 5. Tax Calculations & Reporting 8. Fundamentals of Business Planning; Business Plan Writing & Presentation	1. Psychology of Business and Management 6. Communications in English	7. IT in Business

Trainings			
Working with consequences of traumatic events & psychosocial climate in IDP families	Job search & employment	Financial literacy	Integration of and support for IDPs
First psychological support in wartime	Stress/burnout & secondary-trauma prevention	Personal resources	Canine- and equine-assisted therapy
Stress-resilience	Inner-drive-to-start-business workshop	Individual counselling	

Figure 4.2.1. Structure of educational components and trainings in Ternopil

Quality assurance combined baseline diagnostic testing (covering around 90% of participants), a two-stage questionnaire administered before and after the training, anonymous module surveys, and a final online questionnaire, with a psychologist monitoring the well-being of all participants; around 80% joined remedial sessions, and about 35% used one-to-one counselling. Reflective practices and individual consultations allowed the team to adapt delivery continuously.

Partners involved

The Educational and Social Innovations NGO was the lead partner and delivered the programme's social-support layer. Its psychologists provided 75 hours of individual counselling to participants (an average of five sessions each) alongside a series of group trainings. Other trainings also included legal advisory, coordinated employment facilitation, and a three-month post-training mentoring programme.

Delivery was further enriched by external experts and stakeholders from the Ternopil Regional Employment Centre; senior officials of the Main Directorate of the Pension Fund in the Ternopil Region; representatives of local business and of the Ternopil Region IDP Council. Their involvement ensured the content alignment with state services and the regional labour market.

Institutional reflection

The team attributed the programme's effectiveness to a structured yet flexible blended format and to the strong partnership with the NGO, which embedded trauma-informed teaching and psychosocial support into the curriculum from the first session. The practical,

business-plan orientation was a particular strength. In the autumn, 28 participants presented finalised business plans and a further 16 presented ideas still in development, with three projects on "Paper Recycling", "Opening a Veterinary Clinic" and "Designer Clothing", receiving the highest scores and cash prizes to help them launch their ideas. The cash prizes were provided by the Educational and Social Innovations NGO in cooperation with local business representatives as seed support for the implementation of the most promising business initiatives developed within the programme.

The psychological support produced results, with anxiety levels falling by about 42%, self-esteem rising for 71% of participants, and 82% expressing readiness to seek work or start a business; legal information was rated useful by 87%, and a child-inclusive environment made the programme accessible to families, with several graduates going on to enrol in WUNU master's programmes.

The main challenges reflected the realities of displacement and the wartime context. Uneven access to devices, blackouts, and unstable internet connection, and the emotional burden carried by many participants, compounded by unpredictable caregiving and work responsibilities and ongoing housing instability. A uniform format did not always let every learner reach their potential; community-building and peer mutual-support functioned only partly; fewer in-person events were held than planned; some business-sector partnerships did not materialise; and 25-30% of participants felt they needed more individual counselling. The university adapted by combining modules into more coherent blocks, securing a permanent Zoom subscription and modern equipment, front-loading psychological support, adding equine-assisted therapy alongside canine therapy, creating a dedicated space for children, and strengthening career guidance through the Employment Centre and the Pension Fund. The key lesson was that a comprehensive approach combining education, psychology, law, and career guidance meets the real needs of IDPs far better than all components delivered separately.

Planned improvements for the next cycle

Future cycles can benefit from offering more personalised learning pathways. Additional tasks for highly motivated learners and a slower pace for those who need it. Also, psychological support in response can be expanded for the 25–30% who requested more individual sessions, while continuing canine- and equine-assisted therapy. The team plans to build a stronger alumni community with up to three one-to-one consultations per participant in the three months after the course and optional group meetings, to expand partnerships with the business sector for mentoring and internships, to develop a legal guide for IDPs, and to consider commercial courses outside the project to strengthen sustainability, all while continuing to involve families and provide a safe environment for children, including those with special needs.

Sustainability and continuation plans

Continuation is envisaged through institutional integration in the WUNU Centre for Continuing Education, with the programme formally incorporated into the university's catalogue and recruitment continuing outside the grant cycles.

Funding can be diversified through a paid, commercial version of the programme whose proceeds cross-subsidise free places for IDPs; through institutional partnerships with public

authorities (long-term agreements with the Employment Centre, government retraining vouchers and reimbursement of retraining costs, and coordinated post-programme support); and through international funding for IDP reintegration.

The university also intends to build an alumni network for networking, mutual support, and the presentation of business projects to investors, and to extend the model to other regions by sharing its methodology and partnership approach through the TURBO network of partner universities.

Visual model of the programme

Figure 4.2.2 renders the WUNU programme as a single left-to-right timeline of six stages, with the partner NGO “Educational and Social Innovations” running a parallel social-support track beneath the academic process. The cycle opens with announcement and recruitment, an information campaign across the university website, partner channels and the regional IDP council, communication with civil-society organisations, formation of the target IDP group and a preliminary survey of expectations. It followed by selection of the participants, identification of their needs and agreement of the study format.

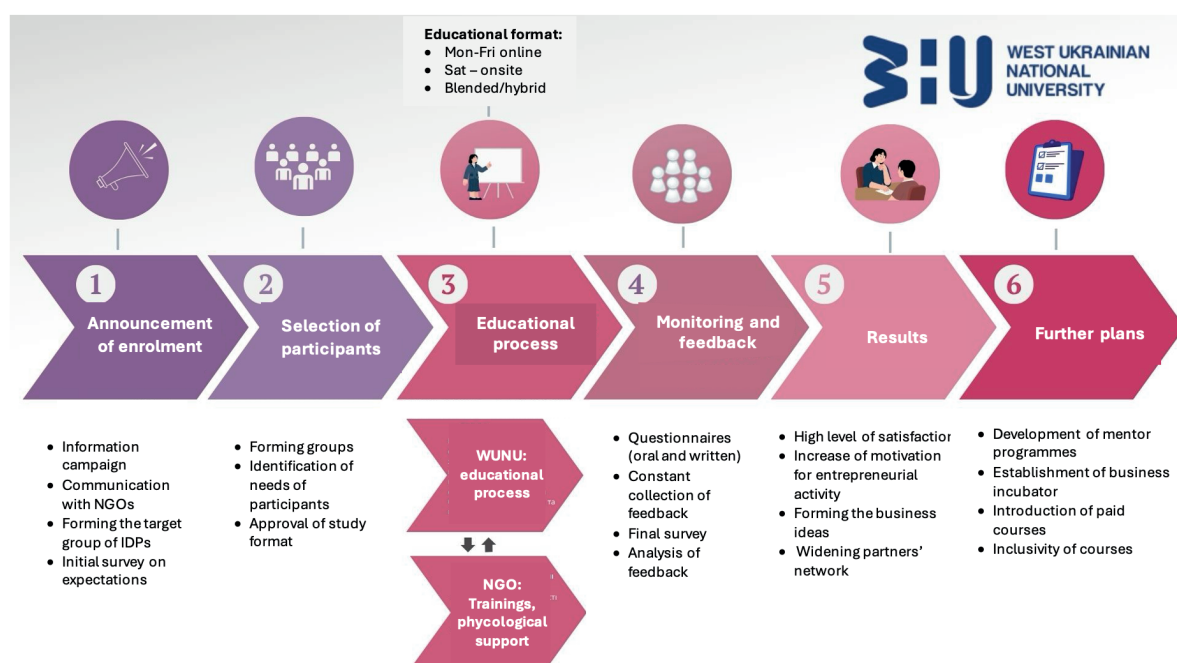


Figure 4.2.2. Aggregated programme model, WUNU (both 2025 semesters)

The educational process is delivered in a blended format (online Monday to Friday, in-person on Saturdays) and structured around five educational modules, while the NGO delivers resilience training, animal-assisted therapy and psychological support in parallel.

The fourth stage couples monitoring with feedback through a several instruments. The steps for further development point to introduction of mentoring programmes, establishing a business incubator, paid courses to support sustainability, a stronger inclusion component and deeper cooperation with stakeholders.

4.3 Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University (Chernivtsi)

Distinctive contribution. Chernivtsi ran the consortium's only predominantly in-person model (made possible by the region's relative security) and embedded it deeply in local government: the Chernivtsi City Council's Department of Socio-Economic Development and Strategic Planning helped recruit participants, and delivery was aligned with the Regional Council's Comprehensive Programme for IDP Support and Integration for 2026.

Institutional overview

Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University delivered the micro-credential programme "Integrated Development: From Adaptation to Entrepreneurship" in partnership with the NGO "Centre for Economic Development and Social Adaptation." The programme was implemented across two semesters in 2025. The spring cohort ran from 3 March to 19 June 2025 and graduated 29 participants, while the autumn cohort ran from 8 September to 15 November 2025 and graduated 31 participants with no dropouts. In both semesters, the programme comprised 500 academic hours (16.5 ECTS credits) delivered over 14 weeks through five sequential modules.

University	Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University (YFCNU)
Region / city	Chernivtsi
Partner NGO	NGO "Centre for Economic Development and Social Adaptation"
Programme	Integrated Development: From Adaptation to Entrepreneurship
Spring 2025 cohort	3 March – 19 June 2025; 29 graduates
Autumn 2025 cohort	8 September – 15 November 2025; 31 graduates (no dropouts)
Volume	500 academic hours / 16.5 ECTS credits Five sequential modules

Context of internally displaced persons in the region (as of 2026)

According to the official information from the Chernivtsi Regional Military Administration the region has officially registered over 74,000 IDPs (Bukovyna (Chernivtsi) Regional Military Administration, 2025). Despite relative security and stability, housing remains the most critical challenge for the majority of displaced families, particularly given the limited availability of temporary accommodation and high rental costs.

According to the governmental official information (Diia, 2026), from 1 January 2026 the social-support system changed. Monthly payments amount to UAH 2,000 for adults and UAH 3,000 for children and persons with disabilities, and the income threshold for receiving assistance was revised, requiring re-verification through the Pension Fund of Ukraine.

The housing issue has become particularly acute. In 2026, the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights documented inadequate living conditions in certain temporary accommodation facilities (Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, 2026a, 2026b; ACC Information Agency, 2026), while the Chernivtsi Regional Military Administration, together with the International Finance Corporation, is implementing

housing reconstruction and construction projects; in parallel, a national reform of the rental market is under way. In this context, employment and economic self-sufficiency are of particular importance, since social benefits are temporary and do not provide long-term financial stability. Regional and local programmes increasingly focus on stimulating employment through cooperation with employers, vocational training, grant mechanisms for starting a business, and small-business development. At the higher level, the Chernivtsi Regional Military Administration approved the Comprehensive Programme for IDP Support and Integration for 2026, covering healthcare, youth policy and employment, and specialised seminars for local deputies on communicating with IDPs and incorporating their needs into local policies are being held. Overall, the region demonstrates a gradual transition to a long-term integration model centred on employment, entrepreneurship and economic capacity, even as the instability of social benefits and housing difficulties remain significant vulnerability factors.

Programme design and implementation

Target group

At the start of the spring 2025 programme the target group consisted of 30 participants, predominantly female (86.7%), with men comprising 13.3%. The majority were aged 45–54 (40.0%), followed by 35–44 (33.3%) and 55+ (13.3%); participants aged 18–24 represented 10.0% and those aged 25–34, 3.3%. Most participants were unemployed and actively seeking employment (46.7%), with others including entrepreneurs and business representatives (20.0%), private-sector employees (16.7%), public-sector (6.7%) and civic-sector workers (6.7%), and one practising pharmacist (3.3%). Geographically, the largest share came from Donetsk region (33.3%), followed by Kharkiv (23.3%) and Dnipropetrovsk (16.7%), with smaller proportions from Kherson and Zaporizhzhia (6.7% each) and Mykolaiv, Kyiv, Luhansk and Sumy (3.3% each). The programme was completed by 29 participants.

The autumn 2025 cohort comprised 31 participants. The vast majority were women (90%), with men accounting for 10%. By age, the largest share was 41–50 (38.7%), followed by 31–40 (25.8%), 19–30 (22.5%) and over 50 (13%). In terms of employment, 35.5% were unemployed and actively seeking work, 22.5% represented the entrepreneurial and business sector, and 42% were employees of the public and civil-society sectors. Participants again came primarily from regions affected by armed conflict and socio-economic instability, with the largest groups from Donetsk (32%) and from Zaporizhzhia and Luhansk (16% each), and a combined 35% from Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kherson, Sumy, Kyiv, Mykolaiv and Chernihiv. All 31 participants successfully completed the programme.

Delivery and structure

Given the stable security situation in the region, training was conducted primarily in person in university classrooms. This format was unanimously supported by participants, trainers and lecturers for its effectiveness in fostering communication and engagement. A hybrid option using newly acquired equipment under TURBO project and the Google Meet platform was provided on request for those unable to attend in person. Classes were held three to four times per week, with a minimum of four academic hours per day starting at 17:30, a schedule agreed with participants so that those in employment could attend after work. Each participant received a university corporate account and access to the

Moodle educational platform, where course content was hosted. Academic delivery was ensured by a team of 14 lecturers supported by university administrative staff (a group coordinator, accounting staff, representatives of the international relations office, and a communications officer).

The micro-credential programme consisted of five sequential modules delivered over 14 weeks, totalling 500 academic hours (16.5 ECTS credits). Each module combines lectures, practical seminars and individual assignments, with an approximate balance of 30% lectures, 28% practical sessions and 42% independent work. Participants are assessed through written assignments (25%), testing (25%) and the preparation and presentation of a personal business plan (50%). The blended format, supported by Moodle and digital tools, enabled both in-person and remote participation and incorporated modern teaching methods such as problem-based learning, business-case analysis and project presentations; the digital learning system ensured continuity by providing access to materials and recorded content for self-paced study and supporting the development of digital literacy alongside the core programme outcomes.

Educational component				
Module 1. Economic & Legal Foundations of Entrepreneurship	Module 2. Fundamentals of Administration & Business	Module 3. Modern Management Technologies	Module 4. Entrepreneur's Toolbox	Module 5. Soft Skills for Personal Development
Business behaviour and design thinking; generation of a business idea and business planning; legal foundations of doing business	Sources of business financing; taxation models; accounting and reporting for decision-making	Basics of management; human resource management, motivation and control; international business	Marketing and SMM; IT and AI in business processes; economic psychology of business entities	External and internal business communication; personal branding; career and professional development

Trainings		
Psychological	Legal	Employment
Introductory psychological diagnostics and motivation	Rights and guarantees of IDPs in Ukraine (social protection, benefits and payments, court practice)	Modern labour market and job-search techniques
Group cohesion in learning		CV writing and interview preparation
Time management and personal effectiveness		Grant opportunities for IDPs
Effective public speaking		Business start-up and business planning
Personal growth and mobilization of inner resources		Success stories of entrepreneurs (incl. IDPs)
Individual psychological counselling		SME lending opportunities
		Personal brand and SMM
		Business strategy and viability
	Individual legal consultations	Individual consulting on CVs and business plans

Figure 4.3.1. Structure of educational components and trainings in Chernivtsi

Quality assurance combined several complementary tools. Participants completed online feedback forms via Google Forms after each micro-credential course, assessing overall satisfaction, the quality of lectures, seminars and practical sessions, the level of communication with instructors, any subjects or approaches found unsatisfactory, and suggestions for improvement, with space for open comments. Verbal feedback was collected during informal check-ins and reflection sessions with the group coordinator, allowing real-time adjustments, while the academic team held internal coordination meetings to review feedback and monitor progress, and Moodle analytics provided further insight into learner activity and assignment completion.

Partners involved

Stakeholder collaboration was a key element of the programme's effective delivery and began before the start of training, continuing through the preparatory, educational and final stages.

- NGO "Centre for Economic Development and Social Adaptation" supported group formation during the preparatory phase (developing the registration form, disseminating calls for participants, processing applications, conducting brief interviews and finalising selection); during implementation it facilitated integration activities and psychological training sessions, organised practical workshops with business representatives, provided business consulting, and supported employment through seminars with HR professionals and employment-centre representatives; at the final stage it co-organised the business-plan presentation event.
- Department of Socio-Economic Development and Strategic Planning of the Chernivtsi City Council provided informational support and contributed to outreach efforts among IDPs.
- Chernivtsi Entrepreneurship / Business Development Centre hosted the final business-plan presentations, enabling real-world feedback, networking with local stakeholders, and integration with local economic-development efforts.

Institutional reflection

The programme demonstrated several elements of successful implementation. The in-person format fostered strong group cohesion, active engagement and dynamic communication, while evening sessions allowed working participants to attend without compromising their employment. The teaching team consisted of lecturers with both academic and practical expertise, which was highly valued by participants for its responsiveness and openness to feedback, and the use of digital tools ensured continuity of learning even for those facing temporary barriers to attendance. Cooperation with the partner NGO supported both organisational and content-related components, including psychological support, integration events and business-plan development, and collaboration with the Entrepreneurship Development Centre enriched the programme with practical insights, a venue for final presentations and networking opportunities.

Still, several challenges were encountered. Participants came from diverse professional backgrounds with varying levels of educational background and practical experience, requiring instructors to adapt their teaching and ensure content accessibility. Limited digital literacy among some participants was addressed through short onboarding

sessions, individual consultations and ongoing technical support. Sustaining motivation across the 14-week programme was difficult, particularly for participants with doubts about entrepreneurship, and was addressed through motivational meetings, success stories and personalised consultations. Importantly, several factors were observed as strongly influencing participants' educational progress. First was the challenging social situation, as difficult housing conditions, dependence on state benefits, and financial uncertainty heightened by changes to the social-support system. The second was the psycho-emotional effects of prolonged stress and forced displacement, varying levels of prior preparation. And finally, the challenge of balancing study with work and family responsibilities was indicated.

The institution was adapting constantly on the basis of feedback collected through anonymous surveys and reflection sessions. It reinforced the use of practical case studies and real-life examples, provided clearer instructions and expectations at the start of each module, and improved Moodle organisation. In the autumn semester it adapted deadlines and the volume of independent work for participants in difficult circumstances, differentiated assignments according to varying levels of preparation, organised additional briefings and technical support to build digital literacy, and together with the partner NGO conducted integration activities and motivational meetings providing socio-psychological support. This experience yielded clear lessons as: in-person learning remains highly valuable for vulnerable groups such as IDPs, yet a hybrid option is essential; early and active involvement of an experienced NGO partner significantly enriches the programme; flexibility in scheduling, methods and communication is critical; and structured quality-assurance mechanisms are vital instruments for delivering learner-centred education.

Planned improvements for the next cycle

Based on the experience of both cycles, the following improvements are planned to enhance effectiveness, inclusivity and practical orientation:

- Introduce a separate preparatory day (or onboarding phase) to assess participants' digital literacy and train them in online tools such as Moodle and Google Meet, levelling starting opportunities and reducing technical barriers from the first sessions.
- Provide preparatory materials and a recommended reading list for participants with limited business experience, and grant full access to the university's electronic library, with functionality equivalent to that available to students, so participants can use current publications, textbooks and research throughout the programme.
- Integrate additional short-format interactive sessions, peer-mentoring elements and success stories into the early stages to maintain motivation and prevent fatigue.
- Enhance the feedback system by introducing mid-course surveys and reflection sessions after each module, enabling timely adjustments rather than only end-of-programme analysis.
- Offer an alternative final assignment for participants oriented towards the civic or non-profit sector, for instance, a social-business concept, a corporate-social-responsibility project, or a grant application instead of a classic business plan, with the course "Modern Management Technologies" expanded to include grant writing and grant management.

Sustainability and continuation plans

The programme has high potential for continuation, institutionalisation and scaling at university and regional level, with further development envisaging a combination of internal university support, external funding, and a gradual transition to a mixed financial-sustainability model. Five directions are foreseen:

- Integration into the university's educational process. This means to include individual programme modules in the elective part of students' educational trajectories, ensuring official recognition of learning outcomes and allowing partial funding from university resources.
- Development of micro-credential programmes to expand use of short courses that adapt rapidly to market needs and may function as standalone certificated products.
- Introduction of a paid educational service. This can be done via offering the programme to business beginners and small-business representatives, with preferential or grant-funded places for socially vulnerable categories supported by donors.
- Social responsibility of the project offering an alternative social or public-sphere final assignment and expanding participation of IDPs, military personnel, veterans' family members and youth from low-income families.
- Funding and support conditions could be performed through institutional support from the university, grant funding from international and national donors, a mixed financing model (paid participation plus grant places), and partnership support from local authorities and the business community.

Visual model of the programme

The aggregated programme model is rendered as a swim-lane process diagram in which the partner NGO "Centre for Economic Development and Social Adaptation" (CEDSA) and Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University (CHNU) operate in parallel lanes. The cycle opens with a shared preparatory phase: dissemination of information about the project, followed by recruitment, comprising the testing of candidates, interviews and the formation of the group. Delivery then advances along three parallel strands before converging on graduation (see Figure 4.3).

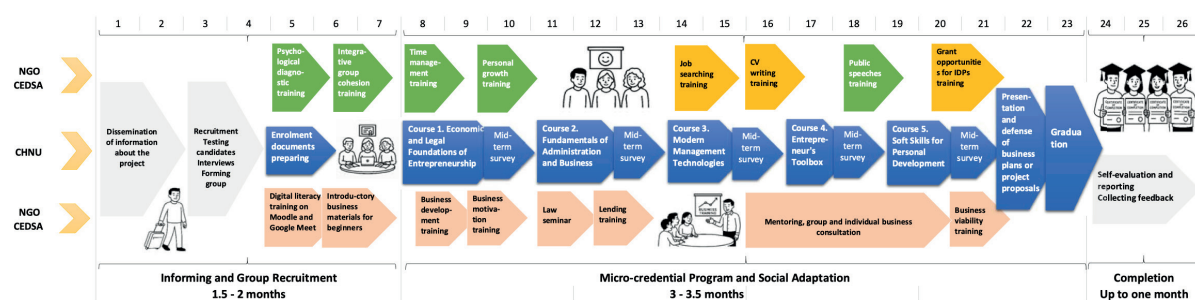


Figure 4.3.2. Aggregated programme model, YFCNU (both 2025 semesters)

The central university lane carries the academic core. It begins with the preparation of enrolment documents and proceeds through five sequential courses — Course 1: Economic and Legal Foundations of Entrepreneurship; Course 2: Fundamentals of Administration and Business; Course 3: Modern Management Technologies; Course 4: Entrepreneur's Toolbox; and Course 5: Soft Skills for Personal Development — each punctuated by a mid-term survey, before culminating in the presentation and defence of business plans or project proposals and, finally, graduation.

The upper lane delivers the psychological and personal-development support that frames the learning: psychological diagnostic and integrative group-cohesion training at the outset, followed by time-management and personal-growth training, and later a job-readiness block of job-searching, CV-writing, and public-speaking training together with training on grant opportunities for IDPs.

The lower lane provides hands-on business support: digital-literacy onboarding on Moodle and Google Meet and introductory business materials for beginners, then business-development and business-motivation training, a law seminar and lending training, a sustained strand of mentoring and group and individual business consultation, and, towards the end, business-viability training.

The cycle closes with a shared completion phase of self-evaluation, reporting, and the collection of feedback. In the spring 2025 cycle, these phases ran across roughly 26 weeks: Informing and Group Recruitment (15 January – 28 February), the Micro-credential Programme and Social Adaptation (3 March – 20 June, sub-divided into 3–28 March, 31 March – 25 April, 28 April – 23 May and 26 May – 20 June), and Completion (23 June – 10 July).

4.4 Chernihiv Polytechnic National University (Chernihiv)

Distinctive contribution. Chernihiv, located close to the frontline, delivered its programme under continuous multiple pressures (blackouts, missile strikes, and need for sheltering) and faced a dual problem of its own team and participants' burnout. To address this, they introduced "rest" and "information-detox" days. Chernihiv worked to integrate the pilot's results into a state-funded research project (a Service-Learning model for the resilience and post-war recovery of Ukraine's border communities, state registration No0126U001542), converting an applied course into a research agenda with planned Horizon Europe WIDERA and COIL extensions.

Institutional overview

Chernihiv Polytechnic National University delivered the certificate (micro-credential) retraining and social-adaptation programme "TURBO: an educational programme for the development of small and medium-sized businesses" in partnership with the NGO "Chernihiv European," a long-standing partner of the university. The programme was implemented across two semesters in 2025. The spring cohort ran from 3 March to 30 May

2025 and graduated 30 participants, while the autumn cohort ran from 15 August to 11 November 2025 and graduated 25 participants (of 28 enrolled, selected competitively from 41 applications). In both semesters, the programme was built around four parallel modules with a strong practical orientation (approximately 67% practical work and 33% lectures).

University	Chernihiv Polytechnic National University (CPNU)
Region / city	Chernihiv
Partner NGO	NGO "Chernihiv European"
Programme	TURBO: an educational programme for the development of small and medium-sized businesses
Spring 2025 cohort	3 March – 30 May 2025; 30 graduates
Autumn 2025 cohort	15 August – 11 November 2025; 25 graduates
Volume	500 academic hours / 16.5 ECTS credits Four parallel modules

Context of internally displaced persons in the region (as of 2026)

According to the Information and Computing Centre of the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine (as of January 2026), the Chernihiv region had 69,310 registered IDPs, of whom 60.2% were women (SE «Information and Computing Centre», n.d.). By comparison, the figure stood at 68,455 in 2024, indicating that internal displacement has remained persistently high with no significant downward trend. Children account for 13,682 of the displaced population (21.41%), and 1,577 IDPs were registered as unemployed, which underscores the importance of economic integration and self-sufficiency for this group.

The age structure shows that working-age adults form the core of the IDP population (SE «Information and Computing Centre», n.d.); this group generates the principal demand for employment, professional adaptation, retraining and entrepreneurial support, making access to the labour market the system-forming issue for socio-economic integration. At the same time, the substantial share of children confirms the family character of displacement, creating additional needs for stable access to education, social integration, psychological support and childcare infrastructure. A notable proportion of people aged 60+ places increased pressure on the social-protection and healthcare systems and reinforces the need for targeted social services and long-term support.

The social status profile of the region's IDPs reflects a significant number of people requiring additional support, including 1,649 persons with disabilities, 1,577 unemployed people, 689 recipients of social assistance, and large numbers of children of various social categories (15,425 children under 18) across 53,202 registered families (SE «Information and Computing Centre», n.d.). The largest concentration of IDPs is in the city of Chernihiv, predominantly families displaced from the region's border districts; around 40% arrived from other regions of Ukraine, most from the Donetsk, Luhansk, Kharkiv, Sumy and Kherson regions.

The key needs of IDPs remain the same: long-term housing (with temporary, community-offered solutions currently prevail); access to employment and opportunities for professional realisation; and social integration into host communities. IDP councils operate in the region's territorial communities, and consultative-advisory bodies (such as community development councils and engagement working groups) are in some cases being formed with the support of international donors, with IDP representatives included;

however, their level of activity remains moderate, pointing to participation barriers and a need for targeted engagement tools. Analysis of local development strategies and the lists of current challenges defined by territorial communities confirms high relevance of IDPs' economic and social integration, i.e., employment, access to housing, inclusion in social and educational systems, and participation in community life.

Programme design and implementation

Target group

The spring 2025 cohort comprised 30 participants (24 women and 6 men) aged 32-52, an age profile reflecting the programme's focus on lifelong learning rather than initial education. Participants held degrees in fields such as law, education, management, social work, accounting and auditing, and other humanities and social-science disciplines. The group was geographically diverse: officially registered as IDPs, 15 came from the Chernihiv region, 6 from Luhansk, 5 from Donetsk, 3 from Zaporizhzhia and 1 from Odesa, with most currently residing in communities across the Chernihiv region.

The autumn 2025 cohort was formed competitively from 41 applications: 28 participants were enrolled and 25 successfully completed the programme and received graduation documents. The vast majority were women (22), with 3 men, mirroring the regional IDP structure (60.2% women). Most participants were of working age 31-40 (12 people) and 41-50 (6 people), alongside 6 aged 19-30 and 1 over 50. The group was interdisciplinary with the largest shares held engineering and technical degrees (9) and qualifications in the social sphere, psychology and pedagogy (8), with others trained in management, economics, law, history and veterinary science. The geography of participants widened markedly: only 1 person was from the Chernihiv region, while the rest were IDPs from the Kharkiv (10), Zaporizhzhia (4), Luhansk (3), Donetsk (2) and Kherson (2) regions and from the Mykolaiv, Sumy and Kyiv regions.

Delivery and structure

In the spring semester, the programme was delivered in a blended format, allowing participants to attend in person and online, with all learning materials (video lectures, practical assignments, and additional literature) made available through the Moodle platform so that participants could study at their own pace. Experience from this first cycle showed that such flexibility requires close follow-up on scheduling and deadlines, prompting plans to strengthen moderation through mandatory synchronous sessions, checkpoint assessments within each module, and individual tutor consultations.

In the autumn semester, the programme moved to a fully online format, which ensured flexibility and enabled participation from across Ukraine. Despite constant external challenges (security risks, shelling and blackouts) the university maintained academic activities. Classes were held on MS Teams as planned in schedule, which disciplined participants and sustained the rhythm of study. Continuity was made possible by the university's autonomous recording studio, equipped with professional cameras, microphones, lighting and computing equipment, which operated without interruption even during power outages. To ensure equal access, all classes were recorded and posted in Moodle, allowing participants who could not attend synchronously for technical or safety reasons to catch up or revisit material at a convenient (including accelerated) pace.

In both semesters, the programme was built around four interconnected modules delivered in parallel, with a strong applied focus (approximately 67% practical work and 33% lectures):

Module 1: Fundamentals of Business Project Design. The core module, culminating in a fully developed business plan.

Module 2: Business Psychology fostering an entrepreneurial mindset, resilience and emotional self-regulation; in the autumn semester, the sequence was revised so that resilience and emotional-stabilisation trainings preceded the psychology of entrepreneurship.

Module 3: Website Creation and Promotion: UI/UX, No-code, SEO. This focused on practical digital tools for promoting one's product or service; in the autumn semester, this module offered individual trajectories, with a technical track (Figma, No-code, SEO) and a creative-communication track (Canva, SMM, content).

Module 4: Business English for developing business-English skills as a tool for scaling business ideas, organised by proficiency level in the autumn semester to prepare participants to pitch their ideas in English and engage in international cooperation.

The programme was oriented towards gaining specific skills, centred on hands-on tasks, work with participants' own case studies, and the presentation of final outcomes; particular attention was paid to developing each participant's individual business idea, tailoring the learning process to real needs and motivating the practical application of knowledge.

Educational component			
Module 1. Fundamentals of Business Project Design	Module 2. Business Psychology	Module 3. Modern Tools of Web Design and Online Communication	Module 4. Business English
Designing and launching a business: SME valuation, business project management, social entrepreneurship, and promotion on global marketplaces. It is complemented by practice-oriented workshop series on starting a business and on job search and employment, delivered in cooperation with the NGO "Chernihiv European".	Psychological readiness for entrepreneurial activity. It combines a series of social and psychological adaptation trainings delivered in cooperation with the NGO ("Personal Resilience in Crisis Conditions," "Goal-Setting and Time Management") with components on the psychological foundations of entrepreneurship and leadership, and on mediation as a tool for resolving business conflicts.	Digital skills for creating and promoting an online business presence. It starts with the fundamentals of design, web, and digital marketing, after which participants follow one of selected tracks based on a skills assessment and learning preferences: a Technical Track (Figma, no-code/low-code development, SEO) or a Creative & Communication Track (Canva, presentations, SMM, user-generated content).	Develops English-language competences for professional settings: comprehension of authentic business-related messages, obtaining information from English-language sources, and oral and written communication in typical business situations, with attention to sociocultural features and verbal and non-verbal communication norms.

Trainings		
Psychological	Legal	Employment
Training "Personal Resilience in Crisis Conditions"	Webinar "Legal Navigator for IDPs: Rights, Opportunities, Protection"	Employment support seminar "Career in Action: How to Find Your Dream Job"
Training "Goal setting and Time Management"	Webinar "Legal Start for Small Business: How to Launch a Venture Without Unnecessary Risks"	Seminar "Personal Brand: CV, Cover Letter, and Video Resume"
Training "Mediation as a Tool for Resolving Business Conflicts"		Training on interviewing with a potential employer "Interview Without Fear: Secrets of a Successful Job Interview"

Figure 4.4.1. Structure of educational components and trainings in Chernihiv

Quality assurance was designed as a continuous “feedback-action” loop. To avoid duplicating the surveys already conducted by IFSA and Nord University, the use of external questionnaires was minimised, and short feedback forms were embedded directly into the Moodle course modules; in the autumn semester, this was complemented by input and final psychological testing to assess the effectiveness of social-adaptation measures. The programme coordinator held short check-in conversations with participants before or after classes, an active messenger group chat (WhatsApp) provided round-the-clock support and a sense of community, and the teaching team and NGO partners held regular reflection meetings to review observations and feedback. The access to all learning materials (recorded MS Teams sessions, presentations and video instructions) was retained in Moodle for one year, enabling participants to work asynchronously, revisit difficult topics and compensate for absences caused by blackouts, family circumstances or mobility.

Partners involved

Implementation was based on a model of cross-sectoral interaction in which the university served as the academic core while the engaged stakeholders provided applied expertise, social support and institutional backing.

- NGO “Chernihiv European” is the key partner, coordinating mentoring sessions, psychological support and the engagement of public-sector experts; the well-coordinated joint project team ensured high-quality module delivery and continuous participant support.
- Right to Protection Charitable Foundation. With them, a memorandum of cooperation was signed to strengthen the programme’s resilience; although its services were not required by these particular cohorts, the organisation provided housing support and access to specialised assistance for IDPs and is well positioned to step in if the key partner reaches capacity or if participants face complex accommodation or social issues.
- NGO “Eco Misto Chernihiv”. Although not directly involved in delivering content, it offered targeted volunteer support to participants’ families (for example, a participant’s teenage child joined as a volunteer and gained access to a bicycle and a creative coworking space), reducing parental stress and supporting a family-centred approach to reintegration.
- Local businesses and the expert community included practitioners, delivered workshops and individual consultations, including the owner of the craft and gift-production company “Wooden Page,” the owner of the beauty salon “Marinel,” the commercial director for key clients at PJSC “AB InBev Efes Ukraine” (strategic marketing, scaling and customer-experience management), and a startup entrepreneur and investor (Akademika, Uber, Voltika, LinkUkraine, AdvanceMe) who shared experience of attracting investment, digitalising business processes and entering international markets. In the spring semester, open Q&A sessions with entrepreneurs from the furniture, beauty, artisanal-production and wellness sectors gave participants a “live” understanding of the local market and opportunities for networking and future cooperation.
- Employers’ Council of Chernihiv Polytechnic National University. Beyond advisory

support, its business members established a prize fund to provide financial encouragement for the best business projects following the final pitching competition.

- Local authorities and state services. The deputy head of the employment-programmes department and the head of the employment unit held meetings on the labour market, available vacancies for IDPs and active job-search tools; the chief specialist of the social-protection department explained IDPs' legal status, social guarantees and procedures for receiving state payments; and the Regional Development Agency was engaged as an institutional partner to discuss regional recovery strategies and the integration of small business into the region's economic ecosystem.

In the spring semester, cooperation with government stakeholders was primarily expert and advocacy-oriented: the university developed a set of policy recommendations supporting the integration of micro-learning into the national education and social-support systems, emphasising the introduction of micro-credentials for rapid response to social and labour-market challenges, the development of short certificate-based programmes (10–30 ECTS) for professionals in psycho-social support, mechanisms for the formal recognition of micro-credentials within higher education and professional-advancement frameworks, and stronger cross-sectoral cooperation between education, social services, healthcare and veteran-support systems.

Institutional reflection

A key factor behind the programme's effectiveness was the combination of theoretical and practical components, with the Fundamentals of Business Project Design module serving as the core, enhanced by practical tools from Business Psychology, digital technologies and Business English so that each participant could see the real value of the knowledge gained. Equally important was the interdisciplinary team of lecturers and practitioners, which brought together experienced university staff and civil society representatives to create a holistic space of support, trust and collaboration. The blended and flexible format, which combined online and offline participation, video lectures, practical tasks and interactive sessions via Moodle, proved well-suited to IDPs and those balancing study with childcare, employment or volunteering, while the inclusive, supportive atmosphere, individual approaches, curator support and informal communication strengthened group cohesion and created a safe space for personal and professional growth. In the autumn semester, the high level of lecturer preparation and comprehensive methodological support (interactive presentations, workbooks with step-by-step algorithms, additional materials and video instructions), the engagement of practising entrepreneurs matched to participants' business ideas, and the social-adaptation and psychological trainings (goal-setting, time management, teamwork and resilience) all reinforced both the applied and the stabilising functions of the programme. The development of complete business plans with financial calculations, income and expenditure forecasts, and market and risk analysis, supported by a prize fund established through the Employers' Council and a competitive business-idea pitch, raised engagement and oriented participants towards measurable results.

During the implementation process, several significant challenges were also encountered. In the spring semester, maintaining participants' discipline and adherence to deadlines within

a flexible, empathetic environment required constant adjustment, and both participants and instructors experienced general emotional and physical exhaustion amid constant safety threats, missile attacks, sleepless nights, infrastructure destruction and personal losses, with a real risk of professional burnout for the team. Heterogeneity in participants' technical skills and motivation, most evident in the digital skills and English modules, required a more individualised approach that complicated planning and increased instructors' workload. The autumn semester added further challenges such as: blackouts and security restrictions that affected the regularity of synchronous participation and technical stability; the geographic dispersion of participants ruled out offline events and required region-specific employment support; the simultaneity of several parallel, interdisciplinary modules sometimes created an overload; participants' levels of prior preparation and digital competence varied widely; and the online format made it harder to build strong horizontal personal ties, while the intensity of 24/7 support contributed to team fatigue and burnout.

The institution adapted continuously based on feedback from participants, instructors and partners. In the spring semester, it changed the sequence of the Fundamentals of Business Project Design and Business Psychology modules to lead participants gradually towards more complex topics, allowed self-paced completion of stages in the IT course with instructor support, and introduced "rest days" on two Saturdays, underpinned by continuous curatorial support through daily group-chat contact and short Zoom check-ins. In the autumn semester, the full recording of all classes in Moodle became a mandatory, built-in element guaranteeing academic continuity and equal access regardless of technical or safety conditions; specialised step-by-step video instructions were created for the IT block to let participants master complex technical elements independently and compensate for differences in preparation; the psychology module was re-sequenced to begin with resilience and stabilisation trainings; labour-market monitoring was conducted at national level to make employment advice more relevant to a geographically dispersed group; individual consultations were introduced to improve business plans; and individual trajectories within the IT block, together with mandatory "rest days" and "information-detox days," reduced overload.

The main lessons were that the team must be protected through burnout prevention and regular internal "reset" meetings; flexible educational trajectories are essential given participants' diverse starting points; "decompression days" must be part of the overall strategy; and support must be not only academic but also emotional and human. Overall, the experience confirmed the value of a model that combines economic integration (through entrepreneurship and employment) with systemic social-psychological support, producing a sustainable rather than a short-term effect, and demonstrated the team's capacity for reflexive, feedback-driven programme management.

Planned improvements for the next cycle

Drawing on the experience of both cycles and the feedback collected, the team identified a set of targeted improvements across content, target audience, employment support and organisation:

- Content and structure. Further individualise educational trajectories, extending them beyond the IT block to the business-planning module, with a variable component shaped by the participant's business direction, prior experience and professional

interests (for active entrepreneurs, an emphasis on scaling, new markets and process optimisation; for beginners, on building a viable business model); and, in line with the programme's micro-credential positioning, narrow the overall specialisation around a compact, structured core complemented by variable modules and clearly defined business competencies and digital tools.

- Target audience. Increase inclusivity by allowing participation of people without higher education, particularly young people who need practice-oriented tools to start or develop economic activity, in keeping with the principles of lifelong learning and adaptation of content and methods to varying levels of preparation.
- Employment support. Integrate a psychological component into employment facilitation, including interview-preparation trainings with simulations, modelled employer dialogues and subsequent analysis with psychologists, so that mentoring is provided not only by employment consultants but also by psychologists teaching self-regulation, emotional management and confident self-presentation; conduct labour-market monitoring at national rather than only regional level given participants' mobility; and expand meetings with potential employers to include on-site enterprise visits, Q&A sessions and discussion of vacancies, with a new strategy suited to a wide participant geography.
- Organisation and community sustainability. Introduce a mandatory three-day offline event (a training or mini-congress) to strengthen informal interaction, trust and the alumni network and overcome the limitations of the online environment; and protect mental health and prevent burnout through the systematic use of "rest days" for participants and a system of "retreats" and additional administrative support for the project team during peak periods.

Sustainability and continuation plans

The continuation of the programme is envisioned through a combination of institutional integration, diversified funding and strategic partnerships, building on the proven relevance and effectiveness of the model for adult learners in wartime conditions.

- Institutional support. The certificate (micro-credential) programme has been integrated into the university's normative framework and approved by the Academic Council in accordance with the Regulation on Certificate Programmes at Chernihiv Polytechnic National University, creating a basic institutional precondition for its operation beyond grant support. The programme has an approved curriculum and competence description, issues a university certificate that can be reflected in the diploma supplement, and operates as a paid educational service on a contractual basis; key modules (Business Psychology, Fundamentals of Business Project Design, and the IT and English tracks) are being integrated into the permanent offerings of the university's continuing-education provision.
- Mixed funding model. Sustainability will rely on internal university resources (staff time and infrastructure), co-funding from international donors and partner NGOs, and future applications to Erasmus+ Capacity Building, Horizon Europe (clusters 2 and 5) or DAAD programmes targeting adult learning, war-affected populations and social innovation, together with potential contributions from local authorities and community-based organisations.

- A prize-fund mechanism and business engagement. Through the university's Employers' Council, local entrepreneurs have created a prize fund to finance participants' business projects on a competitive basis, and local business resources are being engaged to finance individual modules, provide scholarships or grants, support business-project competitions and partially cover organisational costs.
- Integration into research. Members of the project team have been included in the state-funded research project "Service Learning Model for the resilience and post-war recovery of Ukraine's border communities" (state registration No0126U001542), transforming the results of TURBO from an applied educational format into a systematic scientific-methodological dimension and providing an analytical basis for piloting IDP-support initiatives within a broader community-development context.
- Grant monitoring and new applications. The team systematically monitors national and international grant competitions (including those of the International Organization for Migration and the United Nations Development Programme) and prepares applications in partnership with the NGO "Chernihiv European," with several draft proposals already based on the TURBO experience and a planned expansion of target audiences to include youth, women, and veterans.
- New Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe directions. A strategic session considered a new Erasmus+ application expanding the programme to student youth and integrating the micro-credential into individual educational trajectories through COIL modules, summer schools and virtual or blended mobility, alongside a possible transformation of the certificate programme into a modular system offering mini-certificates for individual modules or a full certificate; a longer-term shift towards a research-and-innovation model is envisaged through a Horizon Europe WIDERA application examining the efficiency of micro-qualifications, the impact of microfinance instruments, and the role of universities in regional recovery ecosystems.
- Scaling as an online product. Leveraging the equipment and video materials produced under the project, the programme could be structured as a full online course or series, with pedagogical redesign for online learning and potential collaboration with national and international platforms (Prometheus, Udemy, Skillshare); a combined approach could keep part of the modules open as a socially oriented product for IDPs and other vulnerable groups while offering extended or specialised blocks on a commercial basis.

Visual model of the programme

The model visualising the programme focuses on personalisation and structurally integrates the economic and social-psychological components (see Figure 4.4). Its key principle is that participants choose an individual educational trajectory at the registration stage, taking account of prior entrepreneurial experience, level of digital skills, and professional interests; at registration, they select not only a direction within the business and IT blocks but also priority themes for the social-psychological adaptation trainings, agreed jointly by the university and the NGO on the basis of a preliminary survey.

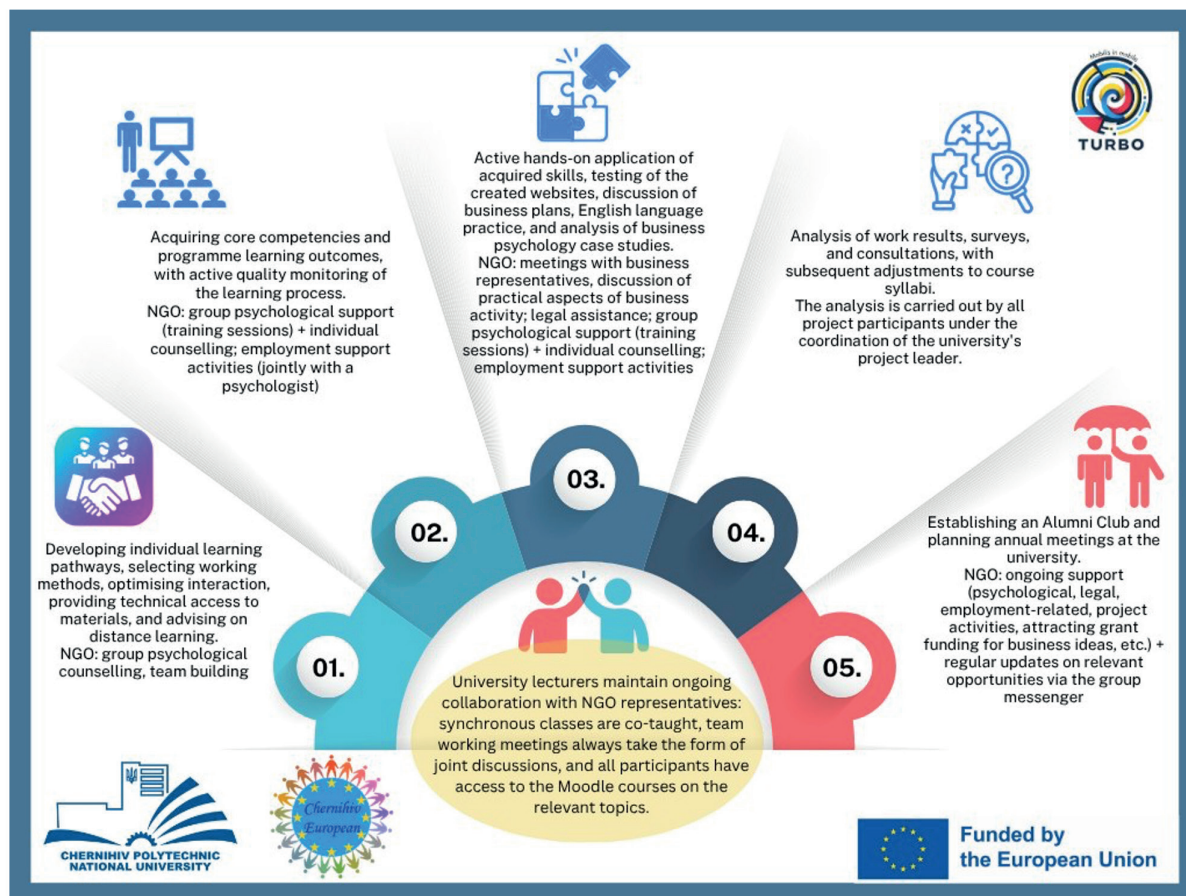


Figure 4.4.2 Aggregated programme model, CPNU (both 2025 semesters)

Social-psychological integration is embedded into the logic of the modules rather than running in parallel, with more frequent training events to sustain motivation and completion, and the programme opens with an adaptation psychological training to attune participants to learning and build group interaction. The content comprises Module 1, Fundamentals of Business Project Design (culminating in a business plan, with differentiated tracks for beginners and active entrepreneurs, a social-entrepreneurship component, a promotion component selected by market scale, integrated pitch preparation and employment workshops combining employment consultants and psychologists, and a final business-plan competition); Module 2, Business English (organised by proficiency level, with a business-idea pitch in English); Module 3, Modern web-design and online-communication tools (with individual tracks by business need); and Module 4, Business Psychology (complemented by social-psychological adaptation trainings and a concluding reflective training).

4.5 Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (Kyiv)

Distinctive contribution. Kyiv case is the consortium's capital city with a strong focus on digital-economy educational specialisation. Its participants came mostly from the eastern front-line regions (39% from Luhansk and 29% from Donetsk regions) and its continuation rests on a diversified three-channel model: a formal elective for third-year undergraduates, a paid track through the Institute of Postgraduate Education, and a non-formal route via the Diiia.Business KNU platform.

Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (KNU) is one of the seven Ukrainian higher-education partners implementing the TURBO retraining model. Delivery is led by the Faculty of Economics, which designed and ran a stackable micro-credential programme, "Business in the Digital Environment," across two 2025 cohorts in partnership with a Kyiv-based entrepreneurship NGO. The programme reskills internally displaced persons (IDPs) for the capital's increasingly digital labour market and for self-employment, combining business and digital competencies with hands-on project work.

Institutional overview

Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, through its Faculty of Economics, delivered the micro-credential programme "Business in the Digital Environment" in partnership with the Foundation for Entrepreneurship Development and Business Ideas Implementation. The programme was implemented across two semesters in 2025. The spring cohort ran from 27 February to 5 June 2025 and graduated 42 participants, while the autumn cohort ran from 3 September to 3 November 2025 and graduated 28 participants. In both semesters the programme was delivered in a blended format with approximately 60% practical work and 40% theory.

University	Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (KNU)
Region / city	Kyiv
Partner NGO	Foundation for Entrepreneurship Development and Business Ideas Implementation
Programme	Business in the Digital Environment
Spring 2025 cohort	27 February – 5 June 2025; 42 graduates
Autumn 2025 cohort	3 September – 3 November 2025; 28 graduates
Volume	500 academic hours / 16.5 ECTS credits Six sequential modules

Context of internally displaced persons in the region (as of 2026)

As of January 2026, Kyiv remains one of the principal hubs for internally displaced persons in Ukraine (Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, 2025; International Organization for Migration, 2025, 2026; Ministry for Communities and Territories Development of Ukraine, 2025; UNHCR, 2025c). As the capital and the country's largest economic and educational centre, it plays a dual role offering temporary refuge while also providing a platform for the longer-term socio-economic integration of IDPs. According to local authorities and humanitarian organisations, a large share of the IDPs in Kyiv are of working age and hold higher or professional pre-higher education, including specialists in economics,

management, education, engineering, IT and the social sector (Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, 2025). Many, however, have lost stable sources of income or are employed below their qualification level, because their competencies do not match the evolving demands of the capital's labour market.

The Kyiv labour market in 2025–2026 is marked by high competition and a growing premium on digital skills, managerial flexibility, entrepreneurial thinking and the capacity to adapt quickly (Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, 2025; International Organization for Migration, 2025, 2026; Ministry for Communities and Territories Development of Ukraine, 2025; UNHCR, 2025c). For IDPs this creates both opportunities and additional barriers due to outdated digital competencies, limited professional networks and the psychological exhaustion of displacement. Social integration is further complicated by the high cost of living, scarce affordable housing, and the need to combine retraining with caregiving. At the same time, Kyiv's dense concentration of universities, research institutions, civil-society organisations and businesses generates strong demand for professionals able to contribute to the digital economy, public administration, social entrepreneurship and recovery efforts. In this setting, IDPs are increasingly viewed not only as beneficiaries of assistance but as carriers of human and intellectual capital, and university-NGO-employer retraining programmes serve as a key mechanism for bridging the gap between their existing skills and the needs of the city's economy.

Programme design and implementation

Target group

The spring 2025 cohort produced 42 graduates, of whom 35 (83.3%) were women and 7 (16.7%) men, aged roughly 20–50; about 85% already held a bachelor's degree or higher across diverse fields engineering, economics, food technologies, medicine, psychology and others, while the remainder had incomplete higher or college-level education. The autumn 2025 cohort comprised 28 graduates and showed a noticeably wider age range, from 18 to over 55, with rising interest among both younger (18–25) and older (55+) participants; the great majority again held higher-education diplomas. The autumn cohort was also strongly weighted towards the most war-affected regions: 39% of participants originated from Luhansk region, 29% from Donetsk and 17% from Zaporizhzhia, with Dnipropetrovsk, Mykolaiv and Kherson each contributing 5%, which evidenced strong interest among IDPs from the east and south. Although coordinated from Kyiv, the programme's hybrid format allowed it to reach IDPs hosted across many regions of Ukraine.

Delivery and structure

The programme was delivered in a blended format, with participants free to attend on-site or online according to their circumstances. This flexibility proved decisive for IDPs dispersed across the country. Face-to-face classes were combined with live online participation, supported by digital platforms for real-time interaction and shared materials, while dedicated group chat on social media sustained peer interaction, mutual support and a sense of community beyond scheduled sessions. The curriculum is a micro-credential distributed evenly across six modules: Organisational and Management Foundations of Digital Business; Business Plan and Business Model; Financial Accounting and Taxation; Financial Management in Business; Digital Finance; and Leadership in Business.

Educational component					
Module 1. Organisational & Management Foundations of Digital Business	Module 2. Business Plan & Business Model	Module 3. Financial Accounting & Taxation	Module 4. Financial Management in Business	Module 5. Digital Finance	Module 6. Leadership in Business
Fundamentals of digital business management, organisational structures, business processes, digital transformation.	Business idea development, business modelling, value proposition, business planning, entrepreneurship.	Accounting principles, financial reporting, taxation system, legal requirements for businesses.	Budgeting, financial planning, cash flow management, investment decisions, financial sustainability.	FinTech solutions, digital payments, online banking, financial technologies, cybersecurity basics.	Leadership skills, team management, communication, decision-making, personal and professional development.

Trainings		
Psychological	Legal	Employment
Psychological Training Sessions (Group activities aimed at strengthening emotional resilience, stress management, and social adaptation)	Legal Training Sessions (Information on legal rights, employment regulations, entrepreneurship registration, and support mechanisms for IDPs.)	Business Training Sessions
		SMM Training Sessions
		AI Training Sessions
		Training Delivered by a First-Cohort Graduate
Mediation Webinar (Introduction to conflict resolution and effective communication techniques)		Meetings with the Kyiv Employment Service
		Meeting with the Employment Service: “Made in Ukraine” Business Consulting Programme

Figure 4.5.1. Structure of educational components and trainings in Kyiv

Learning was strongly practice-oriented with around 60% practical (case studies, applied tasks, teamwork and project work) against 40% theory. Assessment was continuous and competency-based, relying on online tests, practical tasks and a team project-based final rather than summative examinations alone. Pre-recorded lectures, produced with equipment funded through the TURBO project, freed synchronous sessions for discussion and project work and let participants revisit content at their own pace.

Partners involved

The core of delivery was the academic staff of the Faculty of Economics, drawn from several departments so that the programme could call on a broad spectrum of economic and management expertise. A practical perspective was added by guest lecturers from the Diia. Business KNU Centre, who contributed real-world business cases, applied digital tools and insight into managing risk in a digital environment, and by entrepreneurs, employers and Faculty alumni who shared first-hand experience of entrepreneurship, hiring requirements, access to finance and professional development.

The partner NGO, the Foundation for Entrepreneurship Development and Business Ideas Implementation complemented the programme by organising additional activities for participants according to its own schedule and thematic plan and reinforcing the programme's social and adaptive dimension.

Institutional reflection

The team attributes much of the programme's success to a careful, needs-based identification of what IDPs actually require in the Kyiv labour market, and to a logically sequenced, stackable modular structure that supports cumulative learning. The design drew on the experience shared by the Norwegian and Polish partners, while an interdisciplinary teaching team, drawn from several economics departments and reinforced by guest practitioners from the Diia.Business KNU Centre, balanced theory with practice. As at every partner site, the team used the audio-visual equipment provided through the project to pre-record lectures; here this was put to particular effect, freeing synchronous sessions for discussion and project work, letting participants revisit material at their own pace, and keeping lectures concise and focused.

The principal challenge in both cohorts was the heterogeneity of the participant group (in prior education, professional background, digital literacy, learning pace and expectations) which made a single uniform pathway difficult to pitch well for everyone and risked calibrating the programme to a higher-competency subgroup rather than to all. A second, more specific difficulty was coordination with the partner NGO, as the schedules were developed in parallel, some topics for practical trainings overlapped.

The team overcame the first by keeping delivery deliberately mixed, including lectures, workshops, case studies, project-based and individual work with close small-group support, and by monitoring progress continuously through Google Classroom, Google Forms and informal feedback, revising the general-competencies block and inviting additional guest speakers where participants' needs demanded. The overlap with the NGO was resolved by adjusting emphasis and sequencing to remove redundancy without losing learning outcomes. The experience hardened into lessons for future work which is to better align university and non-academic plans by an NGO in advance and introduce a diagnostic pre-assessment of applicants' baseline competencies so that foundational and advanced learners can be differentiated from the outset.

Planned improvements for the next cycle

Future cycles will place greater emphasis on the soft skills most relevant to employability, entrepreneurship and social integration (communication, teamwork, leadership, adaptability, problem-solving and resilience) to complement technical and business content.

The practical component on business development will be expanded, with particular attention to grant-application skills, identifying funding opportunities, structuring project ideas, drafting proposals, budgeting, and pitching to donors or investors, all especially valuable for IDPs seeking to launch or restore entrepreneurial activity.

The team also intends to refine modular content and learning pathways on the basis of participant feedback and diagnostic assessment, enabling clearer differentiation between foundational and advanced needs, alongside strengthened career support, mentorship from business partners and alumni, and deeper cross-university collaboration to harmonise best practice and quality standards.

Sustainability and continuation plans

Sustainability can be implemented as a part of institutional integration, when the course is included in the list of elective disciplines for third-year undergraduate students at the Faculty of Economics, guaranteeing continued academic delivery and institutional support.

Beyond degree education, the programme has strong potential as a lifelong-learning initiative, as a paid professional-development and upskilling version may be offered through the university's Institute of Postgraduate Education, and a non-formal version through the Diia.Business KNU platform, broadening outreach to entrepreneurs, start-ups and socially vulnerable groups.

Continued support from EU (such as future Erasmus+ CBHE calls) or other funding agencies as well as co-financing from and co-design with employers are expected to underpin financial sustainability.

Taken together, integration into formal curricula, paid continuing-education formats and non-formal delivery create a diversified and resilient model for the programme's long-term continuation and scaling.

Visual model of the programme

Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (Faculty of Economics) co-delivered a micro-credential programme with the Diia.Business KNU Centre, entrepreneurs and employers, and a partner NGO providing complementary activities (Figure 4.5).

Participants enter through recruitment, registration and selection (interviews and testing), with a planned diagnostic pre-assessment of baseline competencies conducted by a partner NGO. They then complete six sequential, two-ECTS modules: EC1 Organisational & Management Foundations of Digital Business, EC2 Business Plan & Business Model, EC3 Financial Accounting & Taxation, EC4 Financial Management in Business, EC5 Digital Finance, and EC6 Leadership in Business.

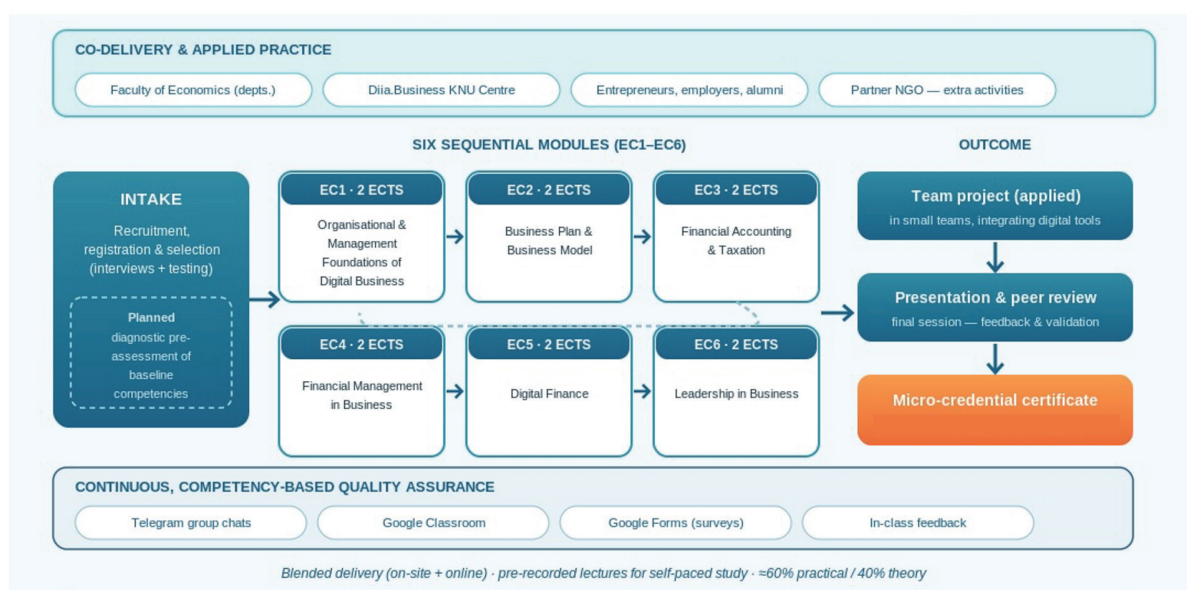


Figure 4.5.2. Aggregated programme model, KNU (both 2025 semesters)

The programme culminates in an applied team project and a final presentation with peer review, leading to an ECTS-recognised micro-credential certificate. Delivery is blended (on-site and online) with pre-recorded lectures for self-paced study, roughly 60% practical and 40% theory, and continuous competency-based quality assurance through Telegram group chats, Google Classroom, Google Forms surveys, and in-class feedback.

4.6 Vinnytsia National Technical University (Vinnytsia)

Distinctive contribution. Vinnytsia has shown a new side of educational resilience – infrastructural. Rather than only adapting content, the partners rebuilt the physical and energy basis for uninterrupted learning. This included generators for power supplies, solar panels, Starlink terminals, Wi-Fi equipped shelters, and a mobile learning hub able to run for up to eight hours off-grid, alongside inclusive facilities such as ramps, an adjustable-desk classroom and a supervised children’s corner. It also worked with the highest level of gender asymmetry in the consortium.

Institutional overview

Vinnytsia National Technical University (VNTU) delivered the micro-credential programme “Social Entrepreneurship and Information Technologies in Business” implemented across two semesters in 2025 in partnership with the Centre for Social Adaptation and Development “European Initiative” and a wider network of partner NGOs. The spring cohort ran from 20 March to 25 June 2025 (with the final class on 25 June and graduation on 26 June) and graduated 25 participants, while the autumn cohort ran from 25 August to 15 November 2025 and also graduated 25 participants. In both semesters, the programme comprised 500 academic hours organised into five modules, with approximately 60% of time devoted to practical work and 40% to lectures.

University	Vinnytsia National Technical University (VNTU)
Region / city	Vinnytsia
Partner NGO	Centre for Social Adaptation and Development “European Initiative” (lead); “I am Mariupol”; IDP Centre; “Bakhmut District Unites”; with Vinnytsia City Council and the Regional Military Administration
Programme	Social Entrepreneurship and Information Technologies in Business
Spring 2025 cohort	20 March – 25 June 2025; 25 graduates
Autumn 2025 cohort	25 August – 15 November 2025; 25 graduates
Volume	500 academic hours / 16.5 ECTS credits Five sequenced modules

Context of internally displaced persons in the region (as of 2026)

Vinnytsia region is one of Ukraine’s key host regions for IDPs. According to the Vinnytsia Regional Military Administration, Department of Social and Youth Policy, (2026), as of the end of December 2025, 143,193 IDPs were registered there, placing the region twelfth nationwide; official figures remained stable throughout 2025 (142,833 in May), an increase of less than 0.25% over the year, although weekly net inflows from areas of active hostilities still amount to 100–200 persons. The demographic profile shows marked

gender asymmetry: women account for around 62%, children for approximately 25%, and persons of pensionable age for about 18%, generating persistent demand for childcare and social services, employment programmes for working-age adults, and support for vulnerable groups (Vinnytsia Regional Military Administration, 2025). As of June 10, 2026, according to the Ministry of Social Policy (SE «Information and Computing Centre», n.d.), the number of registered IDPs in the oblast was 143,289.

According to a regional survey conducted in 2025 (Vinnytsia Regional Military Administration, Department of Social and Youth Policy, 2025), only 44% of IDPs consider themselves fully integrated into host communities, 42% report partial integration, and 14% remain socially isolated. Housing conditions are predominantly unstable. 76% rent accommodation, 20% live in temporary housing, and only 4% own property. This means it significantly constrains participation in the labour market, particularly in skilled employment and entrepreneurship, where stable housing, local social networks, and knowledge of the regional economic context are decisive. A local survey of 150 adult IDPs in the Khmilnyk community identified a shortage of financial resources as the most common problem, forcing respondents to restrict spending on food, clothing and medicines (Legal Development Network, 2025).

Labour-market projections by the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine for 2025–2030 indicate that labour demand (+10%) will outpace supply (+7%), with the most acute shortages in agriculture and industry, implying, for an agro-industrial region such as Vinnytsia, a long-term structural personnel deficit precisely in sectors where IDPs could be employed following training (Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture of Ukraine, 2025). In 2025, some 20,500 vacancies were submitted to the Vinnytsia Regional Employment Centre (2026), of which only around 16,000 were filled, with the highest demand in trade, agriculture, education, manufacturing and healthcare. This context underscores the relevance of practice-oriented, flexibly delivered retraining that integrates digital and entrepreneurial competencies with realistic employment opportunities.

Programme design and implementation

Target group

The spring 2025 cohort was demographically diverse, ranging from the youngest participant, aged 20, to the oldest, aged 51. Women formed the majority, with three men in the group; all participants held at least a bachelor's degree, and several held two or more degrees, indicating a high educational baseline. Participants came from war-affected regions (Donetsk (11), Luhansk (5), Kharkiv (5) and Kherson (4)) and from varied disciplinary backgrounds, such as: technical (13), economic/business (5), pedagogical (3), medical (2) and legal (2). The group also included three military personnel (one of persons who were women) and two people with disabilities, reflecting the programme's inclusive approach.

The autumn 2025 cohort comprised 25 participants (22 women and 3 men) with a broad age range: 2 aged 19–30, 8 aged 31–40, 13 aged 41–50, and 2 over 50. Participants came primarily from eastern and southern Ukraine: Donetsk (12), Kharkiv (9), Kherson (2), Luhansk (1) and Sumy (1). Their educational backgrounds were again multidisciplinary (technical (9), pedagogical (5), economic (5), legal (2), philological (2), medical (1) and social/humanities (1)).

Delivery and structure

In both semesters, the programme was delivered in a hybrid format, combining distance-learning classes (lectures, seminars, and consultations via Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meet) with in-person classroom sessions for discussion, teamwork, and practical assignments. Delivery was organised on VNTU's electronic information environment, the JetIQ platform (jetiq.vntu.edu.ua), a microservice-based system in which each participant has a personal account providing structured access to lecture notes, multimedia resources and practical assignments in both synchronous and asynchronous modes, together with self-monitoring tools, gamification elements and a communication module enabling interaction with instructors and peers. This environment supported personalised guidance, progress tracking and an inclusive learning experience for participants from diverse regions and backgrounds, including those with special needs.

The course totalled 500 academic hours across five modules, each comprising 60 offline and 40 online hours, with approximately 60% of time devoted to practical work and 40% to lectures. The thematic structure was logically sequenced, interdisciplinary and practice-oriented:

Module 1: Business creation and legal foundations providing introduction to entrepreneurship, formation of business behaviour, the essence and directions of social entrepreneurship, and the business idea and business plan.

Module 2: Business administration / management focusing on financing of entrepreneurial activity, taxation, and accounting and reporting.

Module 3: Management technologies and project activities that outlined the fundamentals of management, human-resource management, and project management.

Module 4: Digital office of the entrepreneur giving basic knowledge in marketing and SMM, IT and AI, and internet technologies in business.

Module 5: Development of the entrepreneur's personal competencies focused on external and internal business communication, personal branding, career and professional development, and the psychology of personal growth.

Following an analysis of the spring semester, the content was confirmed to be aligned with the programme's objectives and current labour market needs, so the structure and sequence of modules were kept unchanged in the autumn. At the same time, in cooperation with the lead NGO, the practical component was strengthened by increasing the number of study visits to local enterprises and introducing optional intensive English-language classes for entrepreneurs.

Educational component				
Module 1. Business creation & legal foundations	Module 2. Business administration / management	Module 3. Management technologies & project activities	Module 4. Digital office of the entrepreneur	Module 5. Entrepreneur's personal competencies
Establishing a business from idea generation to business planning, considering legal and social aspects/ entrepreneurship, business model, business plan, social entrepreneurship, business ethics	Financial management, taxation, and accounting support for business operations/ finance, taxation, accounting, reporting, financial analysis	Managing organisations, people, and projects to achieve business objectives/ management, HR, leadership, teamwork, project management	Applying digital technologies for marketing, communication, and business development/SMM, digital marketing, AI, web technologies, online communication	Building communication, leadership, and career-development competencies for entrepreneurs/ communication, personal branding, career development, time management, and personal growth

Trainings		
Psychological	Legal	Employment
Developing Motivational Intelligence	Starting Your Own Business Training Course	Information Technologies in Entrepreneurship
Building Effective Communication from Partners to Consumers		Team Building and Creating High-Performing Teams
SMART Goal Setting		

Figure 4.6.1. Structure of educational components and trainings in Vinnytsia

Quality assurance relied on a continuous, digitally supported feedback system. Input and output questionnaires administered through JetIQ assessed participants' prior knowledge, expectations, and learning needs at the outset, and their competencies gained, satisfaction, and the practical value of the training at the end, using a mix of structured and open-ended questions with automated collection, storage, and analytics. Two further short surveys addressed the calibration of the training load and participation in extracurricular activities (company tours, expert meetings, and supplementary workshops, with three company visits, four expert sessions, and two additional workshops delivered in the spring semester in response to expressed interests). In the autumn semester, a dedicated WhatsApp group provided continuous communication and support.

Partners involved

Although initially planned to work with a single partner NGO, during the spring 2025, the Centre for Social Adaptation and Development "European Initiative" expanded its partnership framework to enhance effectiveness and broaden outreach to IDPs. The resulting multi-stakeholder network combined civil-society, business and public-sector partners.

- Partner NGOs is the Centre for Social Adaptation and Development "European Initiative" (lead), together with "Bakhmut District Unites," "I am Mariupol" and IDP organisations, contributed specialised experience in working with displaced persons, enabling more accurate identification of participants' needs, more targeted activities, more efficient use of resources and stronger participant engagement.

- Local businesses and institutions included Promavtomatika-Vinnytsia (industrial automation and management), the Grinkul Plant (operational management, quality control and supply chains), the Rebernia Vinnytsia restaurant (small-business management, customer service and marketing in hospitality), the Tourism Office of the Vinnytsia City Council (local tourism development and public-private partnership), and the Vinnytsia Innovation and Technology Park "Crystal" (innovation, start-ups and technology commercialisation). Cooperation took the form of excursions and meetings with company leaders, allowing participants to observe real workflows, conduct interviews, and explore the role of each business in building their own ventures. In the autumn semester, participants also visited the Vinnytsia IT Cluster and social enterprises run by entrepreneurs who had themselves experienced displacement.
- Local authorities, including the Vinnytsia City Council and the Regional Military Administration, working with the Tourism Office, organised training sessions, introductory tours of the Vinnytsia community and courses for future guides and tourism entrepreneurs, and engaged participants in preparing thematic exhibitions and fairs.

Institutional reflection

The blended learning format was consistently identified as the programme's most effective feature, giving displaced participants the flexibility to combine study with work, job-searching and family responsibilities, to continue learning remotely during air-raid alarms, and to revisit materials asynchronously. The combination of interactive workshops, group discussions, and hands-on exercises in offline sessions fostered collaboration, peer learning, and immediate feedback, while multimedia resources, quizzes, and surveys within JetIQ enhanced engagement and self-assessment.

Psychological trainings and one-to-one consultations with project teachers were strongly motivating for participants, and the decision to hold classes in the evening and, in the autumn, on weekends was particularly valued, since about 60% of participants were employed. Excursions and meetings with entrepreneurs, including those who had rebuilt businesses after displacement, acted as a "live textbook," raised participants' spirits and improved the social climate of the group; the autumn semester also saw the emergence of a genuine support community, the introduction of demanded English-language courses (rated highly by 85% of participants) and AI skills for automating business processes, and access to psychological services supported by trauma-informed training for instructors.

The principal challenges stemmed from the wartime context. Training took place amid air-raid alarms, systematic power outages caused by attacks on energy infrastructure, and a high level of tension and at times low motivation; participants varied widely in professional competence, education and business experience; and male participation was low, which limited diversity of perspectives. The autumn semester further highlighted the traumatic experiences of participants recently evacuated from occupied or frontline territories (withdrawal, difficulty concentrating, anxiety reactions and psychosomatic absences) and the financial difficulties of many IDPs, some of whom could not afford transport to the university or reliable internet access.

The institution adapted continuously based on feedback gathered at weekly meetings with the project team and participants, as well as after each module. Decisions on format and scheduling were taken jointly in response to the security situation, and practical recommendations from business partners were used to make learning more applied. In the autumn semester VNTU modernised its inclusive infrastructure (additional ramps, a specialised classroom with adjustable desks and sound amplification, and a supervised children's corner), expanded its network of employer partners through new memoranda giving graduates priority consideration, and strengthened technological resilience by purchasing generators and uninterruptible power supplies, installing solar panels, obtaining Starlink terminals, equipping shelters with Wi-Fi, and creating a mobile learning hub able to operate for up to eight hours without external power. A key lesson from the spring cycle was the need to differentiate teaching by participants' level of preparation, which informed the autumn design, including entry diagnostics to segment participants and a mandatory psychological "zero module."

Planned improvements for the next cycle

Drawing on both semesters and on analysis of the regional labour market, the team identified improvements organised around flexibility, multiple pathways and sector-specific competencies:

- Differentiated and practice-oriented delivery. Conduct practical sessions at partner enterprises in the sectors of highest labour demand and differentiate the learning path by participants' level of preparation (a Basic Level group with an introductory "Introduction to the profession" course, and an Advanced Level group focused on applied topics, real cases and individual consultations).
- Strengthened English-language and AI components. Expand basic English-language competence adapted to social entrepreneurship and digital communication, developed jointly with experienced NGOs, and introduce a dedicated module on the use of artificial-intelligence tools (generative systems, chatbots and digital assistants) in everyday business work, taught by trained university staff.
- Digital products for wider reach. Develop a distance course based on the micro-credential programme for hybrid delivery on university and local-government platforms and create an electronic guide for IDPs (with an optional interactive course) presenting regional sectoral employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.
- Employer-aligned design and elective offerings. Involve partner enterprises in preparing learning outcomes aligned with labour-market competency requirements and develop elective courses for IDP students addressing key regional employment sectors, alongside a professional-development programme for IDP lecturers.
- Refined recruitment and mandatory psychological onboarding. Conduct entry diagnostics segmenting participants by entrepreneurial experience, digital skills, employment readiness, English proficiency and resource profile (including childcare needs and housing), and establish a mandatory psychological "zero module" addressing trauma, motivation, career orientation and entrepreneurial mindset, drawing on success stories of IDP entrepreneurs.

Sustainability and continuation plans

VNTU plans to continue the initiative through centred on institutional integration, expanded partnerships and the active search for new funding, pursuing three objectives: (1) ensuring sustainable retraining opportunities for IDPs; (2) strengthening the university's role as a regional centre for social and economic integration; and (3) developing an ecosystem that combines education, entrepreneurship and labour-market integration.

- Institutionalisation within the university. Incorporate selected modules into the university's micro-credential and continuing-education provision, use the existing JetIQ and hybrid-learning infrastructure to minimise additional costs, engage faculty within their regular workload, and embed the programme in university centres for entrepreneurship development, international cooperation and lifelong learning, so that it can function without dedicated project funding.
 - Low-cost hybrid model. Maintain a flexible hybrid format with increased use of distance modules and weekend classes, further develop the online micro-credential course on university platforms, and create self-learning materials and recorded lectures to reduce teaching costs while preserving accessibility.
 - Stronger local partnerships. Expand cooperation with NGOs working with IDPs, local and regional authorities, regional enterprises and business associations, and innovation and start-up ecosystems, drawing partners into expert lectures, mentoring, study visits, internships and outreach.
 - Entrepreneurial and employment support. Develop further a mentoring network of entrepreneurs and alumni, organise business-idea pitching events with investors and local businesses, support participants applying for national small-business and start-up grants, and create an online guide to employment and entrepreneurship resources in the Vinnytsia region.
 - New funding and broader target groups. Pursue funding through EU initiatives, international donors supporting IDPs and post-war recovery, national employment and retraining programmes, and private-sector partners, while expanding participation to veterans and demobilised personnel, family members of servicemen and servicewomen, young people from de-occupied territories, and unemployed residents seeking retraining.

Visual model of the programme

The model is organised as a four-step process shared between the partner NGO and the university (see Figure 4.6).

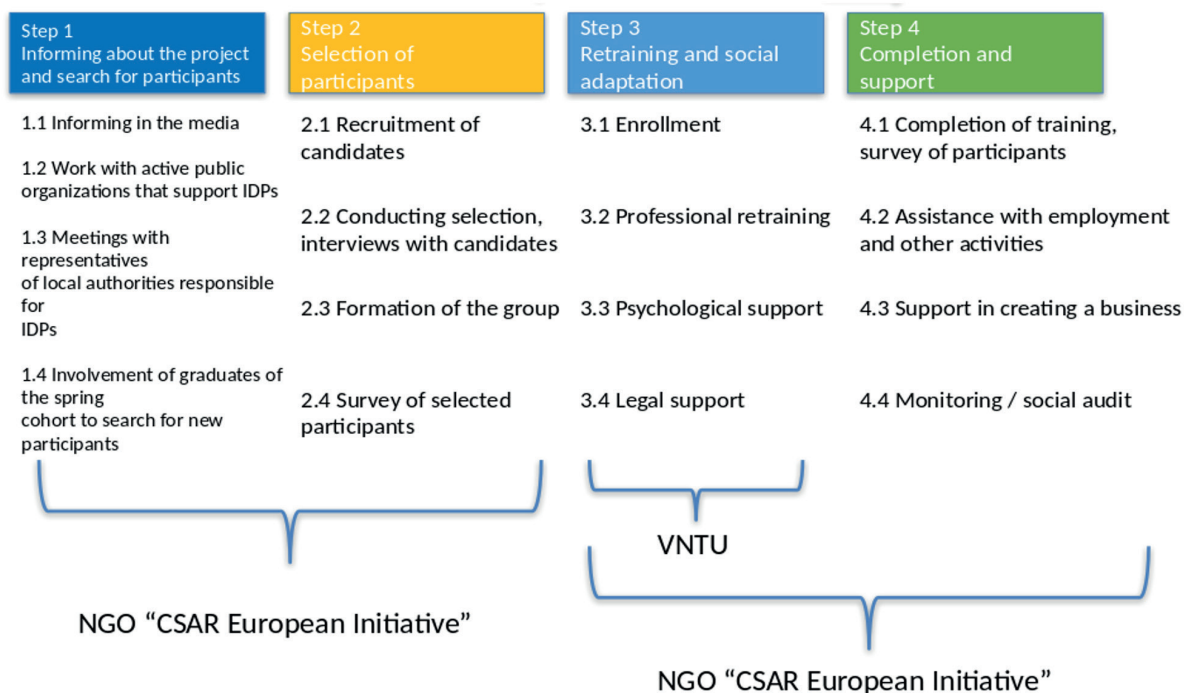


Figure 4.6.2 Aggregated programme model, VNTU (both 2025 semesters)

In the first step the partners inform and search for potential participants; in the second they conduct selection; the third and central step delivers retraining and social adaptation through enrolment, professional retraining, and parallel psychological and legal support; and the fourth step covers completion and continued support. The model situates the NGO "European Initiative" (Centre for Social Adaptation and Development) and Vinnytsia National Technical University in parallel lanes, with the autumn timeline running through the recruitment phase, the main retraining and adaptation phase and a completion-and-support phase.

4.7 South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky (Odesa)

Distinctive contribution. Odesa grounded its programme design in a formal empirical survey of displaced people (n=422), which found 57% holding higher education and 53% ready to retrain, yet psycho-emotional stress as the dominant barrier. It delivered the most online-intensive model (thirteen webinars to a single offline training) and the most modular curriculum, with nine mandatory and five elective units.

Institutional overview

South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky (SUNPU) delivered the programme "Business and Technologies: A New Start" for the retraining and social adaptation across two semesters in 2025 with different civil-society partners. The

spring cohort ran from 1 March to 14 June 2025 in partnership with the NGO AVLED and graduated 34 participants, while the autumn cohort ran from 14 June to 11 October 2025 in partnership with the Public Association "Association for the Development of Professional and Continuing Education" (Kharkiv) and graduated 33 participants. Both cycles were delivered in a blended format.

University	South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky (SUNPU)
Region / city	Odesa
Partner NGO (spring)	NGO AVLED
Partner NGO (autumn)	"Association for the Development of Professional and Continuing Education"
Programme	Business and Technologies: A New Start
Spring 2025 cohort	1 March – 14 June 2025; 34 graduates
Autumn 2025 cohort	14 June – 11 October 2025; 33 graduates
Format	500 academic hours / 16.5 ECTS credits Sequenced nine mandatory and five elective modules

Context of internally displaced persons in the region (as of 2026)

Odesa has been among leading regions for the reception and long-term integration of IDPs. As of January-February 2026 the region had over 223,000 registered IDPs, sustaining steady demand for social support, employment services and practice-oriented adult education (Slovo i Dilo, 2026).

Empirical research conducted in Odesa region (a sample of n=422, aged 18-67) shows that the IDP profile is predominantly of working age, making investment in retraining and competence development particularly worthwhile. The most represented age groups were 21-40 (43.1%) and 41-60 (40.8%), and the educational potential of the sample was high, with 57.1% of respondents holding higher education. At the same time, integration barriers remain complex. Among major difficulties the psycho-emotional dimension dominates stress and anxiety (28.9%) followed by housing problems (23.3%) and employment problems (13.7%). "Personal" barriers were mentioned as emotional-psychological difficulties (25.4%), a sense of social isolation (21.1%) and reduced motivation and faith in the future (17.5%). Despite this, readiness for change was significant. 53.1% of respondents declared their readiness to acquire a new profession (Ostra, 2025).

Programme design and implementation

Target group

The spring 2025 target group consisted mainly of young and middle-aged adults, most commonly in the 20-45 age range, and was strongly female (88% women, 12% men). The level of higher education was high. 92% had completed higher education (bachelor's and/or master's degrees) and 8% had incomplete higher education, often interrupted by displacement. All participants were IDPs, many combining study with family responsibilities or employment, and their principal motivations were improving employability, rebuilding psychological resilience and reintegrating into local social and economic life. The recruitment for autumn 2025 maintained a high level of interest with 44 applications. A selection mechanism (interviews and testing) was applied before the start of training, which resulted in 33 motivated participants successfully finished the programme and received certificates.

Delivery and structure

The spring 2025 programme was delivered in a blended format combining online modules and video lessons to enable flexible individual educational workloads with in-person sessions, field visits and group workshops. It made extensive use of interactive masterclasses and project work, including role-playing activities simulating real-life and business situations and the development of practical IT products such as start-up websites, digital business presentations and visual-branding components. The curriculum was modular and sequenced, moving from psychological stabilisation towards practical business and technological skills, and included modules on resilience building, self-organisation, emotional self-regulation, entrepreneurship, digital technologies, artificial intelligence and 3D modelling. Practical activities were emphasised, accounting on average for approximately 70% of learning time against around 30% for theoretical content.

During autumn, the program was delivered in a blended format comprising 13 webinars and one offline training. The autumn curriculum included 9 mandatory and 5 elective modules (with participants choosing two electives). Following analysis of the spring results, several changes were introduced. For example, the module "Communication and Social Interaction Skills" was reduced from 60 to 30 hours; a module "Human Resources and Motivational Management" (30 hours) was made as a separated one; and a new module "AI Tools in the Professional Activities of a Modern Entrepreneur" (30 hours) was added. These updates oriented towards greater applicability and alignment with digital transformation. Group work was also strengthened, with participants able to work in teams on business plans within the "Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship" component.

Educational component (mandatory)				
Module 1. Modern digitalisation tools	Module 2. Personal potential development technologies	Module 3. Personal resilience in extreme and crisis situations	Module 4. Conflict coaching and mediation	Module 5. Communication and social interaction skills
Digital tools; presentations; audio/video content; online surveys; Web 2.0; cloud services; workflow automation.	Self-organisation; time management; emotional self-regulation; personal efficiency; professional growth.	Crisis and extreme situations; resilience; stress management; resource state; self-help; psychological recovery; adaptation potential.	Conflict coaching; mediation; mediator communication; active listening; empathy; neutrality; conflict resolution practice.	Social communication; communication models; emotional intelligence; psychological barriers; intercultural communication; successful social interaction.
Module 6. Start-up Organisation	Module 7. Basics of Entrepreneurship	Module 8. Personnel and motivational management	Module 9. AI tools in the professional activities of a modern entrepreneur	
Start-up creation and management; business models; Canvas model; start-up marketing; SMM; risk management	Entrepreneurial activity; legal registration; financial planning; risk management; business idea; business plan; strategic management.	Soft skills; team building; leadership; team roles; motivation; responsibility; self-presentation.	AI in business; knowledge-based systems; logical inference; neural networks; generative AI; prompt engineering; business analytics.	

Educational component (elective)				
Module 1. Soft Skills of a Social Entrepreneur	Module 2. 3D interior modelling	Module 3. Modern digital technologies and artificial intelligence	Module 4. Self-organisation and emotional self-regulation	Module 5. Private and public law
Soft skills; teamwork; team roles; leadership; self-presentation; responsibility; effective cooperation.	3D modelling; interior design; architectural drawings; 3D objects; materials and textures; lighting and camera settings.	AI in business; knowledge-based systems; logical inference; neural networks; generative AI; prompt engineering; business analytics.	Self-organisation; time management; personal efficiency; emotional self-regulation; professional productivity; stress control.	Private and public law; legal rights and obligations; civil relations; public administration; entrepreneurship regulation; legal responsibility.

Trainings		
Psychological	Legal	Employment
Social adaptation of IDPs: approaches and overcoming challenges	Social security of internally displaced persons	Key skills for a successful career and entrepreneurship
Emotional intelligence of an entrepreneur in action	Legal framework for IDP status and social protection	Digital skills for life and business
Crisis situations, trauma and mental health management		Effective CV as a step towards successful employment
Social adaptation in life transformations: a guide for IDPs in Ukraine	Ways of conducting commercial activity in the IT sector: private entrepreneur, taxation and forms of employment	Family business: features and prospects for IDPs
		Grant opportunities for IDPs to develop business and social initiatives

Figure 4.7.1. Structure of educational components and trainings in Odesa

Quality assurance combined quantitative monitoring of participation and completion with qualitative feedback. In the spring cycle the university used a continuous monitoring system based on regular participant surveys and questionnaires at key stages (notably at the end of each module and at the conclusion of training), ongoing feedback through direct communication with module coordinators, and analysis of engagement levels (involvement in online and offline activities, assignment completion and participation in group work); collected feedback led to local improvements during delivery, such as incorporating additional real-life examples, clarifying digital terminology and adjusting deadlines for participants with limited internet access. For the autumn cycle the university reported consistently high satisfaction and technical-support ratings and the absence of critical technical failures, with the qualitative component yielding recommendations for greater interactivity and broader thematic coverage.

Partners involved

The programme was delivered in partnership between the university and specialised civil-society organisations. In the spring semester, local businesses and start-up community members contributed actively through sharing real business challenges for case analysis, mentoring participants during group project work, and giving feedback on digital products such as websites and presentations, including a case on launching a local e-commerce platform and panel discussions on entrepreneurship and digital marketing.

Local authorities and community initiatives were engaged indirectly through dissemination

of programme information, support in identifying potential participants and promotion of the final programme results. In addition, the interaction with labour-market institutions (regional and city employment centres) was maintained. The further cooperation was done with employers and business communities through guest lectures, start-up mentoring and internships.

Institutional reflection

Several elements worked well across both cycles. The reproducibility and stability of the model between the spring and autumn cycles was confirmed through sustained demand, effective selection, high completion rate and consistently positive evaluations from the participants. The practice-oriented character of the content (particularly work on business plans) raised engagement, and the blended format provided the flexibility that IDPs with work, caregiving or relocation responsibilities require. The programme also delivered a combined effect of developing professional competencies while supporting social and psychological adaptation, which has proven critical given the dominance of psycho-emotional barriers that IDP experience. A responsive teaching team, accessible and relevant content, and peer learning in diverse teams further reinforced both skills development and social cohesion.

The main challenges reflected the complex barriers to integration of IDPs. Psycho-emotional strain, housing instability, employment problems and time conflicts between work and study. In the spring semester the university also noted periodic power outages disrupting both offline sessions and online access, complex logistics for participants living on the outskirts or in temporary shelters, varying levels of digital literacy requiring additional one-to-one support, and limited access to personal devices. Systemic constraints on scaling also persist as the need for stable digital infrastructure, the alignment of short learning outcomes with recognition mechanisms, and the cross-sectoral coordination of education, labour and social-protection policies.

The team relied on the participants' feedback through both content and organisational changes. In the spring cycle it integrated additional real-life cases, expanded explanations of technical terminology in more accessible language, and individually adapted assignment deadlines for participants affected by power cuts and unstable internet, while making some modules mobile-friendly and available asynchronously to address limited device access. For the autumn cycle it revised the curriculum and confirmed the appropriateness of the blended format for an adult audience combining study with other responsibilities. The main lessons drawn were that flexibility, and multiple delivery modes are essential for vulnerable groups, that continuous communication keeps the programme relevant, that technical resilience must be planned for, and that community-building strengthens social ties and emotional resilience alongside technical skills.

Planned improvements for the next cycle

Building on both semester, the university identified the following improvements:

- Introduce mini-workshops for the practical study of adaptation, employment and self-employment, and systematically strengthen interactivity through short surveys, group exercises and facilitated discussions.

-
- Broaden the thematic coverage to include topics such as the adaptation of children and adaptation after job loss.
 - Continue updating digital materials, cases and video lectures to improve the reproducibility of the programme.
 - Establish a dedicated Alumni Club for IDP participants, an expanded mentorship component, and group-coaching sessions at key transition points, to sustain community, motivation and psychological support beyond the core training.

Sustainability and continuation plans

The university plans to move towards an institutionalised model based on regular enrolment, the integration of individual modules into other educational products, mechanisms for the recognition and transfer of ECTS credits, and the creation of a permanent coordination centre for IDP support.

- Scaling and content. Expand the online components, grow the portfolio of elective modules (including AI, social entrepreneurship and digital marketing), accumulate materials in a repository, and prepare academically validated methodological products.
- Partnerships. Deepen cooperation with the civic sector and employment centres and engage employers and business communities in mentoring, guest lectures and internships, as a condition of sustainability.
- Financial model. Pursue a mixed model (grants, partner programmes and partial co-payment for selected modules), complemented by short, certified courses and cost optimisation through scaling of online delivery.
- Long-term impact. Create an alumni community, support initiatives through mentoring and consulting, and conduct annual monitoring of graduates' career trajectories.

Visual model of the programme

The aggregated model visualising the course of the programme is depicted in Figure 4.7. The model reflects the programme's overall logic as a progression from psychological stabilisation and adaptation, through the development of digital, managerial and entrepreneurial competencies, to applied outputs such as business plans and digital products, delivered in a blended format and co-delivered by the university and its partner NGO.

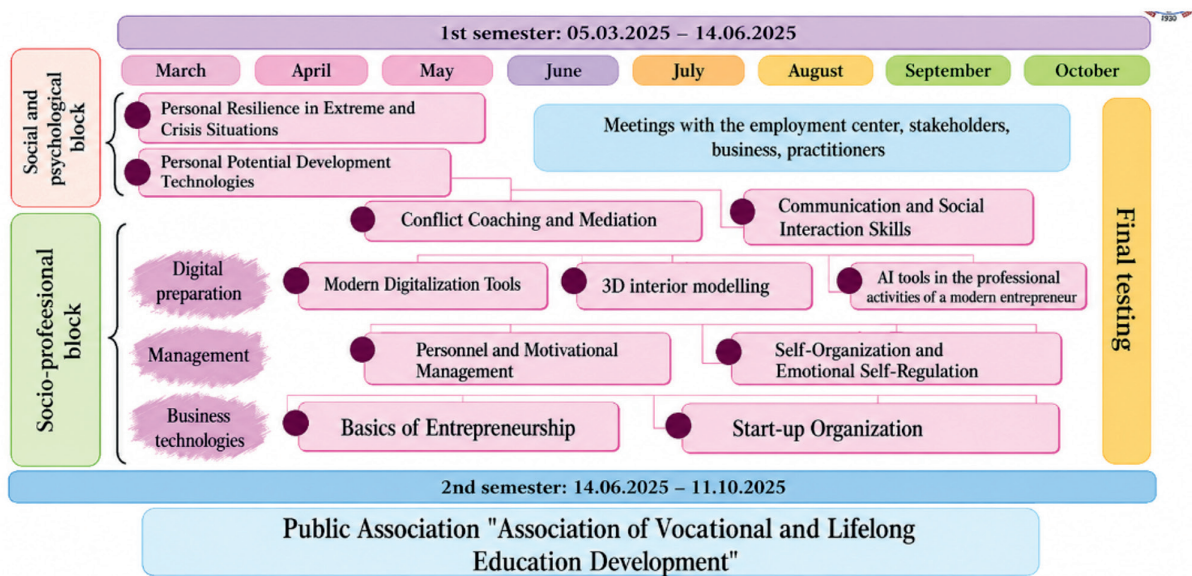


Figure 4.7.2. Aggregated programme model, SUNPU (both 2025 semesters)

5. LESSONS LEARNT

This final section distils what the report's two strands: the three-country comparison (Section 3) and the seven Ukrainian pilots (Section 4), which together teach about retraining and social adaptation of displaced people through micro-credentials. The lessons are grouped by the actors able to act on them. The Ukrainian universities and NGOs that delivered the pilots, the international partnerships that supported them, and the national and European policymakers who set the rules. The section closes with the transferable results, which can be valuable for dissemination of knowledge on refugee and adult education for Europe.

5.1 Lessons for Ukrainian universities and NGOs

The pilots offer a set of lessons that hold across different regional contexts, from frontline Chernihiv to comparatively secure Chernivtsi.

The partnership is necessary, and the division of labour must be deliberate. The seven universities converged on a common design (a 500-hour or 16-17 ECTS, certificate-bearing micro-credential co-delivered by a university and at least one civil-society partner) and totally produced 434 graduates across the two 2025 semesters. The lesson is that effectiveness of the programme depends on an allocation of roles, which creates synergetic effect. NGOs lead recruitment, trust-building, group-bonding and psychosocial support, while universities provide professional teaching, academic content and certification.

Psychosocial and legal support is a precondition for learning. Wherever partners front-loaded stabilisation, professional learning improved: Chernihiv re-sequenced its programme to begin with resilience and emotional-stabilisation training; Vinnytsia made a psychological "zero module" mandatory; and Ternopil combined individual counselling and animal-assisted therapy with legal advice. Designing trauma-informed support into the programme, rather than appending it, is what helped a vulnerable group of displaced learners to engage.

Design for adult learners and for flexibility. The majority of participants were working age, highly educated women combining study with caregiving, employment and unstable housing. Andragogical, co-learning approaches; hybrid or fully online delivery with recorded materials; and evening or weekend scheduling were decisive for retention. Demand also had to be built, as several partners recruited nationwide through NGO channels and selected on motivation, and the autumn cohorts generally improved on the spring once recruitment and diagnostics were strengthened.

Protect the team. Partners operating under blackouts and air-raid alerts learned that burnout prevention is a delivery condition. Chernihiv built "rest days" and "information-detox days" into the schedule and rotated support. Sustaining 24/7 mentoring without safeguards exhausts the human resources of both university and NGO.

Build employability and recognition in from the outset. Business plan presentations, networking, employer and alumni engagement helped to connect courses to employment or self-employment. Institutionalising the programme through approving it

through academic councils, embedding modules in continuing education catalogues, and issuing recognised certificates will ensure the sustained demand for such programmes.

5.2 Lessons for international collaboration

Transfer knowledge and build capacities. The transfer of methodological and micro-credential expertise from the Norwegian and Polish partners to Ukrainian institutions established a solid knowledge base for delivering the programmes. Establishment of digital classes (thanks to the equipment purchased through the project) allowed production and delivery of high-quality educational materials. International collaboration delivers the most lasting value when it builds durable institutional capability, including the ability to design quality-assured short-term educational programmes that meet European standards, rather than financing a single round of delivery.

Importance of coordination infrastructure. A Ukrainian coordinating NGO the International Foundation for Social Adaptation supported smooth delivery of the project across all seven universities gave the consortium the comparability and accountability. Shared templates, common reporting and cross-university reflection turned seven local pilots into one comparable body of evidence.

5.3 Policy-level recommendations

The comparison and the pilots point to a small number of high-leverage policy actions, at national and European level.

Close the recognition gap (Ukraine). The single most consequential step is to give micro-credentials statutory standing so that short credentials carry portability, employer recognition and accumulation into formal qualifications rather than resting on institutional discretion.

Create a durable national funding mechanism (Ukraine). Provision financed through time-limited donor cycles cannot be the permanent basis for IDP retraining. A national funding line, together with qualification-centre status for universities, is needed for programmes to survive donor exit under wartime and post-war fiscal pressure.

Align the national qualifications framework with the European Qualifications Framework (Ukraine). Alignment makes Ukrainian micro-credentials legible to European employers and enables credential portability for Ukrainians turning learning into a reconstruction asset.

Embed micro-credentials in existing integration pathways (host countries). The cross-country lesson is that stand-alone certificates have weak value. The policy task is to connect short, recognised learning to language acquisition, recognition of prior learning, psychosocial support and employment services.

Treat recognition of foreign qualifications (host countries). Underemployment is the dominant inefficiency where labour-market access is fast. Mature recognition infrastructure is the instrument that most directly converts an educated displaced population into qualification-matched employment.

5.4 How Ukrainian practice aligns with and differs from Poland and Norway

Set against the comparison in Section 3, the Ukrainian pilots demonstrate, in practice, a model that neither Norway nor Poland has yet institutionalised for displaced learners. A short, certificate-bearing programme that integrates professional and entrepreneurial retraining with structured psychosocial and legal support and explicit labour-market alignment, delivered jointly by universities and NGOs.

The strengths and weaknesses are mirror images of the other two cases. Where Norway is strongest (a mature system for recognising foreign qualifications), Ukraine is weakest, lacking a recognition framework for micro-credentials. Where Poland struggles most (widespread underemployment despite rapid labour-market access), Ukraine's emphasis on entrepreneurship and qualification-matched retraining offers a partial corrective.

The distinctive Ukrainian contribution is an agile, resilient university-NGO delivery model sustained under extreme constraint; its central vulnerabilities (the absence of durable funding and of formal recognition) are precisely the conditions that Norway's public stability and Poland's qualifications architecture already supply. The practical implication is reciprocal learning, so Ukraine can borrow recognition and funding mechanisms, while its integrated, psychosocially grounded delivery model is itself transferable to host countries seeking to reduce underemployment.

5.5 Transferable elements for refugee and adult education across Europe

NGO-university synergy. The deliberate pairing of civil society reach, trust and psychosocial capacity with university curriculum and certification is a transferable design principle for any system educating displaced or otherwise vulnerable adults, and one that becomes more, not less, important where public integration capacity is thin.

Flexible micro-credentials. Short, stackable, labour-market-oriented credentials (provided they are recognised and aligned with local labour market needs) are a scalable instrument for adult and refugee education generally, beyond the displacement context that prompted them.

Integrated social-psychological support. Building trauma-informed, wraparound support into learning rather than alongside it is a transferable principle for vulnerable adult learners across contexts, and one of the clearest contributions of the Ukrainian pilots to wider practice.

These elements align with the EU's approach to micro-credentials and to lifelong learning, which makes the Ukrainian experience more than a national reconstruction effort. It has served as a real test of European policy under pressure and a source of grounded practice for member states facing their own adult-education and integration challenges. Whether the model can be scaled (nationally in Ukraine and by adaptation elsewhere) will be decided by the three conditions identified in Section 3, that is: formal recognition of micro-credentials within qualification frameworks, durable funding that does not depend on individual project cycles, and institutionalised multi-stakeholder partnerships that survive staff turnover and political change.

REFERENCES

- ACC Information Agency. (2026, April 16). Over 73,000 displaced persons: Chernivtsi discussed the effectiveness of IDP assistance [Понад 73 тисячі переселенців: у Чернівцях обговорили ефективність допомоги ВПО]. <https://acc.cv.ua/news/chernivtsi/ponad-73-tisyachi-pereselenciv-u-chernivcyah-obgovorili-efektivnist-dopomogi-vpo-119730>
- Act of 12 March 2022 on assistance to citizens of Ukraine in connection with the armed conflict on the territory of that state, Journal of Laws 2022, item 583. (2022). <https://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/DocDetails.xsp?id=WDU20220000583>
- Act of 22 December 2015 on the Integrated Qualifications System, Journal of Laws 2016, item 64. (2015). <https://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/DocDetails.xsp?id=wdu20160000064>
- Akademia Leona Koźmińskiego. (2022a). Fundraiser and a support point for refugees from war-torn Ukraine. Kozminski University. <https://www.kozminski.edu.pl/en/news/fundraiser-and-support-point-refugees-war-torn-ukraine>
- Akademia Leona Koźmińskiego. (2022b). We are launching the recruitment for the intensive course of Polish language with elements of business knowledge. Kozminski University. <https://www.kozminski.edu.pl/en/news/we-are-launching-recruitment-intensive-course-polish-language-elements-business-knowledge>
- Apostrophe. (2026, March 23). Kozytskyi: Lviv region has up to 350,000 IDPs, but there remains a constant labour shortage [Козицький: на Львівщині до 350 тисяч ВПО, але все одно є постійний дефіцит робочої сили]. <https://apostrophe.ua/politics/regional-policy/kozitskij-na-lvivshchini-do-350-tis-vpo-ale-vse-odno-je-postijnij-defitsit-robochoji-sili.html>
- Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego. (2025). The impact of Ukrainian migrant inflow on the Polish economy. https://www.bgk.pl/files/public/user_upload/The_Impact_of_Ukrainian_Migrant_Inflow_on_the_Polish_Economy.pdf
- Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI). (2025, May 16). PROFBUD launches new initiative for skills and reintegration. <https://www.bwint.org/BwiNews/NewsDetails?newsId=492>
- Bukovyna (Chernivtsi) Regional Military Administration. (2025). More than 74,000 internally displaced persons currently live in Bukovyna. <https://bukoda.gov.ua/news/na-bukovyni-nyini-meshkaie-bilshe-74-tysiach-vnutrishno-peremishchenykh-osib>
- Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. (2015). On approval of the Procedure for implementing employment promotion measures and the return of funds allocated to finance such measures in case of violation of employment guarantees for internally displaced persons (Resolution No. 696). <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/696-2015-%D0%BF>
- Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. (2022a). On approval of the Procedure for providing employers with compensation of labour costs for employing internally displaced persons as a result of hostilities during martial law in Ukraine (Resolution No. 331). <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/331-2022-%D0%BF>
- Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. (2022b). On Approval of the Strategy for the Development of Higher Education in Ukraine for 2022–2032 (Decree No. 286-r, 23 February 2022). <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/286-2022-r>

-
- Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. (2023). On the Model Regulation on IDP Councils (Resolution No. 812, 2 August 2023). <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/812-2023-%D0%BF>
- Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. (2025). Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity shifts away from fragmented programs, instead building a unified model for supporting IDPs. <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/en/news/minsotspolityky-vidkhodyt-vid-frahmentovanykh-prohram-natomist-buduie-iedynu-model-suprovodu-vpo>
- Caritas Norway. (n.d.). Caritas Norway. <https://www.caritas.eu/caritas-norway/>
- Cedefop. (2021). Poland: Integrated Skills Strategy 2030. <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/poland-integrated-skills-strategy-2030>
- Cedefop. (2022a). Microcredentials for labour market education and training: First look at mapping microcredentials in European labour-market-related education, training and learning: Take-up, characteristics and functions (Cedefop research paper No. 87). Publications Office of the European Union. <https://doi.org/10.2801/351271>
- Cedefop. (2022b). Norway: reception of Ukrainian refugees in the education system and labour market. <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/norway-reception-ukrainian-refugees-education-system-and-labour-market>
- Cedefop. (2025). Norway: digital solutions for Ukrainian refugees. <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/norway-digital-solutions-ukrainian-refugees>
- Chernihiv Polytechnic National University (CHSTU). (2025). TURBO annual conference 'Higher Education, Capacity Building, and Societal Crises: International Perspectives'. <https://stu.cn.ua/en/news-en/2025-turbo-annual-conference-higher-education-capacity-building-and-societal-crises-international-perspectives/>
- Chernivtsi Regional Military Administration. (2025). On approval of the Comprehensive Programme for Support and Integration of Internally Displaced Persons and Other War-Affected Persons for 2026 (Decree No. 1515-r). <https://bukoda.gov.ua/pereselencyam>
- Council of Europe Office in Ukraine. (2023). The Government of Ukraine approved the Strategy of State Policy on Internal Displacement until 2025. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/kyiv/-/the-government-of-ukraine-approved-the-state-policy-strategy-on-internal-displacement-until-2025>
- Council of Ministers. (2024). Uchwała w sprawie przyjęcia dokumentu „Odzyskać kontrolę. Zapewnić bezpieczeństwo. Kompleksowa i odpowiedzialna strategia migracyjna Polski na lata 2025–2030”. Kancelaria Prezesa Rady Ministrów. <https://www.gov.pl/web/premier/uchwala-w-sprawie-przyjecia-dokumentu-odzyskac-kontrolę-zapewnic-bezpieczenstwo-kompleksowa-i-odpowiedzialna-strategia-migracyjna-polski-na-lata-2025-2030>
- Council of the European Union. (2022a). Council Recommendation of 16 June 2022 on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability (2022/C 243/02). Official Journal of the European Union. [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32022H0627\(02\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32022H0627(02))
- Council of the European Union. (2022b). Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/382 of 4 March 2022 establishing the existence of a mass influx of displaced persons from Ukraine within the meaning of Article 5 of Directive 2001/55/EC. Official Journal of the European Union. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32022D0382>

-
- CRED4TEACH project. (2023). MOOC-based micro-credentials for the professional development of teachers (Erasmus+ CBHE Project No. 101082858). National Erasmus+ Office in Ukraine. <https://erasmusplus.org.ua/en/projects/mooc-based-micro-credentials-for-teacher-professional-development/>
- Diia. (2026). Payments for IDPs in 2026: Everything you need to know about the main changes [Виплати ВПО у 2026 році: усе, що варто знати про головні зміни]. Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine. <https://diia.gov.ua/news/vyplaty-vpo-u-2026-rotsi-use-shcho-varto-znaty-pro-holovni-zminy>
- Dilo.net.ua. (2025, March). Yurii Holod: Over three years, Lviv region arranged almost 10,000 residential places for IDPs. https://dilo.net.ua/lviv/yurij-holod-za-try-roky-na-lvivshhyni-oblashtuvaly-majzhe-10-tysyach-mists-prozhyvannya-dlya-vpo_11771/
- Duszczek, M., Górny, A., Kaczmarczyk, P., & Kubisiak, A. (2023). War refugees from Ukraine in Poland – one year after the Russian aggression: Socioeconomic consequences and challenges. *Regional Science Policy & Practice*, 15(1), 181–200. <https://doi.org/10.1111/rsp3.12642>
- European Commission. (2021). A European approach to micro-credentials: Output of the Higher Education Consultation Group. Publications Office of the European Union. <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/cb7e025d-61e5-11eb-aeb5-01aa75ed71a1>
- European Commission. (2024). Poland: New integration centres established nationwide. Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs. https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/poland-new-integration-centres-established-nationwide-2024-10-07_en
- European Migration Network Poland. (2024). Raporty roczne dotyczące migracji i azylu. Government of Poland. <https://www.gov.pl/web/europejska-siec-migracyjna/roczne-raporty-polityczne>
- European Training Foundation (ETF). (2024, March 1). 30 years, 30+ stories: The ETF's support to recovery and reconstruction in Ukraine. <https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/news-and-events/news/30-years-30-stories-etfs-support-recovery-and-reconstruction-ukraine>
- European Training Foundation (ETF). (2025). Three years of war: Ukraine's resilience, Europe's support, and the future of skills and employment. <https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/news-and-events/news/three-years-war-ukraines-resilience-europes-support-and-future-skills-and>
- European Union & Ukraine. (2014). Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and Ukraine, of the other part (OJ L 161, 29 May 2014, pp. 3–2137). Official Journal of the European Union. [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:22014A0529\(01\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:22014A0529(01))
- European University Foundation (EUF). (2024, November 11). Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv calls for international support. <https://uni-foundation.eu/2024/11/11/taras-shevchenko-national-university-of-kyiv-calls-for-international-support/>
- Eurostat. (2025). 4.3 million under temporary protection in December 2024. European Commission. <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/w/ddn-20250210-1>
- Eurostat. (2026a). Temporary protection for 4.35 million in December 2025. European Commission. <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/w/ddn-20260210-1>
- Eurostat. (2026b). 4.33 million under temporary protection in March 2026. European Commission. <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/w/ddn-20260508-1>

-
- Eurydice Ukraine. (2024). Lifelong learning strategy. <https://eurydice.iea.gov.ua/en/the-national-education-system-of-ukraine/2-organisation-and-governance/2-2-lifelong-learning-strategy/>
- Eurydice. (2026). National qualifications framework: Poland. European Commission. <https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/eurypedia/poland/national-qualifications-framework>
- GIZ / Skills4Recovery. (2025). Skills4Recovery expands donor support for Ukraine's recovery and European future. Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine. <https://mon.gov.ua/en/news/skills4recovery-expands-donor-support-for-ukraines-recovery-and-european-future>
- Government of Norway, Ministry of Education and Research. (2025). Migration and integration 2024–2025: Report for Norway to the OECD.
- HK-dir (Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills). (n.d.). Recognition procedure for applicants without verifiable documentation (UVD). <https://hkdir.no>
- HK-dir. (2024). Læring i nord 2024 – Micro-credentials: The future of skills recognition? <https://hkdir.no/en/events/laering-i-nord-2024-micro-credentials-the-future-of-skills-recognition>
- Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg (H-BRS). (2024). H-BRS unterstützt Partneruniversität in der Ukraine [H-BRS supports partner university in Ukraine]. <https://www.h-brs.de/de/kum/ukraine>
- IFSA. (2025). TURBO Project overview. <https://ifsa.com.ua/en/turbo-project/>
- IMDi (Directorate of Integration and Diversity). (2025). Integration of refugees from Ukraine. <https://arkiv.imdi.no/en/facts-about-immigrants-and-integration/integration-of-refugees-from-ukraine/>
- Institute for Educational Research. (2025). Microcredentials are an opportunity for higher education institutions in Poland. <https://www.ibe.edu.pl/en/news/3512-microcredentials-are-an-opportunity-for-higher-education-institutions-in-poland>
- International Organization for Migration. (2025). Ukraine internal displacement report: General population survey round 20 (April 2025). Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM). <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/ukraine-internal-displacement-report-general-population-survey-round-20-april-2025>
- International Organization for Migration. (2026). Ukraine internal displacement report — General Population Survey, Round 22. Displacement Tracking Matrix. <https://dtm.iom.int/ukraine>
- KNU Faculty of Economics. (2026). Second Phase of the TURBO Project Completed at the Faculty of Economics. <https://econom.knu.ua/en/2026/02/02/secondphaseoftheturbo/>
- Law of Ukraine 'On Education'. (2017). Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2145-19>
- Law of Ukraine 'On Ensuring the Rights and Freedoms of Internally Displaced Persons'. (2014, as amended). Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1706-18>
- Law of Ukraine 'On Higher Education'. (2014). Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1556-18>
- Legal Development Network. (2025). Internally displaced people in the Khmilnyk community receive assistance to adapt to their new lives, taking their major challenges into account. <https://ldn.org.ua/en/success-story/internally-displaced-people-in-the-khmlnyk-community-receive-assistance-to-adapt-to-their-new-lives-taking-their-major-challenges-into-account/>

-
- Lviv Polytechnic National University (LPNU). (2025). TURBO project: Certificate ceremony for social entrepreneurship programme graduates. <https://lpnu.ua/en/news/university-held-ceremony-award-certificates-graduates-social-entrepreneurship-program-part>
- Microcredentials Poland. (2025). First Polish university issues microcredentials via Odznaka+ app. <https://microcredentials.pl/en/first-polish-university-issues-microcredentials-via-odznaka-app/>
- Ministry for Communities and Territories Development of Ukraine. (2025). Policy on internally displaced persons and key results for 2025. <https://dp-reintegration.gov.ua/en/policy-on-internally-displaced-persons-and-tot-key-results-for-2025-and-plans-for-the-next-year>
- Ministry of Economy of Ukraine. (2024). Educational opportunities from the Ministry of Economy: list of available programs. <https://me.gov.ua/News/Detail/dbfde3a0-b765-4791-8808-76392daedf67?lang=en-GB&title=EducationalOpportunitiesFromTheMinistryOfEconomy-ListOfAvailablePrograms>
- Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture of Ukraine. (2025). Analysis of the state and problems of the labour market: Current and projected number of people by category (regions, occupations, employment status, etc.) [Аналіз стану та проблем ринку праці]. <https://me.gov.ua/Documents/Detail?lang=uk-UA&id=d7994559-e2cb-4b49-b2fa-86ba08bfe1e3&title=AnalizStanuTaProblemRinkuPratsi-NaiavnaTaPrognozovanaKilkistLiudeiZaKategoriiami-regioni-Profesii-StatusZainiatostiToscho-kviten2025->
- Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine. (2025). Support for internally displaced persons. <https://www.msp.gov.ua/en/otrymuvacham-soc-pidtrymky/vnutrishno-peremishchenym-osobam>
- National Erasmus+ Office Ukraine. (2025). MInT-Ukraine: Micro-Credentials as an Internationalisation Tool for Ukrainian Universities. <https://erasmusplus.org.ua/en/news/blended-learning-training-programme-micro-credentials-as-an-internationalisation-tool-for-ukrainian-universities-mint-ukraine-until-11-09-2025-online-offline/>
- National Information Processing Institute – National Research Institute. (2024). Microcredentials at Polish universities – are we ready for this? <https://microcredentials.pl/en/microcredentials-at-polish-universities-are-we-ready-for-this/>
- NAWA. (2022a). In a spirit of solidarity. Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange. <https://nawa.gov.pl/en/nawa/news/in-a-spirit-of-solidarity>
- NAWA. (2022b). “Solidarity with Ukraine” – Polish universities associated in alliances of European Universities to help Ukrainian HEIs. Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange. <https://nawa.gov.pl/en/nawa/news/solidarity-with-ukraine-polish-universities-associated-in-alliances-of-european-universities-to-help-ukrainian-heis>
- NOKUT. (2025). Recognition of education and qualifications from Ukraine. <https://www.nokut.no/en/news/recognition-of-education-and-qualifications-from-ukraine/>
- Nord University. (2024). Receives NOK 3 million to build Ukraine expertise in Northern Norway. <https://www.nord.no/en/news/receives-nok-3-million-to-build-ukraine-expertise-in-northern-norway>
- Nord University. (2025). TURBO – The Universities’ Reaction to Big Obstructions. <https://site.nord.no/turbo/>

-
- Nordic Council of Ministers. (2025). Policy frameworks for migrant integration in the Nordic countries 2025 – Norway. <https://pub.norden.org/nord2025-038/norway.html>
- NVL (Nordic Network for Adult Learning). (2025). Microcredentials in a Nordic perspective. <https://nll.org/publications/2025/microcredentials/1-introduction.html>
- Ocalenie Foundation. (2026). Help Centre for Foreigners. <https://centrum.ocalenie.org.pl/en/warsaw/help-center-for-foreigners>
- OCHA. (2025). Ukraine: Summary of the Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan, January 2025. <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/ukraine/ukraine-summary-humanitarian-needs-and-response-plan-and-regional-refugee-response-plan-january-2025-enuk>
- OECD. (2023). What we know about the skills and early labour market outcomes of refugees from Ukraine. OECD Publishing. <https://www.oecd.org/migration/what-we-know-about-the-skills-and-early-labour-market-outcomes-of-refugees-from-ukraine.htm>
- OECD. (2024). Strengthening the Human Capital of Forcibly Displaced Persons in and from Ukraine. https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2024/06/strengthening-the-human-capital-of-forcibly-displaced-persons-in-and-from-ukraine_710d8b05/9afedf7c-en.pdf
- OECD. (2025). Teacher Initial Education and Ongoing Professional Learning in Ukraine. https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/teacher-professional-learning_0cceeddf-en/full-report/teacher-initial-education-and-ongoing-professional-learning-in-ukraine-strengths-challenges-and-reflections-for-further-development_1c400453.html
- Office for Foreigners. (2022). Amendment to the law on assistance to Ukrainian citizens in connection with the armed conflict on the territory of the country. Government of Poland. <https://www.gov.pl/web/udsc-en/the-law-on-assistance-to-ukrainian-citizens-in-connection-with-the-armed-conflict-on-the-territory-of-the-country-has-entered-into-force>
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2025). International Migration Outlook 2025. OECD Publishing. https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2025/11/international-migration-outlook-2025_355ae9fd.html
- OsloMet. (2025). UKRAINETT – Projects. <https://uni.oslomet.no/ukrainett/projects/>
- Ostra, V. A. (2025). Dynamika potreb vnutrishno peremishchenykh osib v Ukraini: vyklyky ta mozhlyvosti dlia hromad [Dynamics of the needs of internally displaced persons in Ukraine: Challenges and opportunities for communities]. *Visnyk Odeskoho natsionalnoho universytetu. Heohrafichni ta heolohichni nauky*, 30(2[47]), 215–228.
- Rubryka. (2024). Solutions from Ukraine: over 1,000 Ukrainians undergo retraining for blue-collar jobs. <https://rubryka.com/en/2024/12/02/perekvalifikatsiya-na-profesiyi/>
- SE «Information and Computing Centre» of the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine. (n.d.). IDPs Dashboard. <https://www.ioc.gov.ua/analytics/dashboard-vpo>
- Semigina, T., Rashkevych, Yu., Reznik, H., & Stepankova, N. (2024). Recommendations on the implementation of micro-credentials in Ukraine. National Qualifications Agency of Ukraine. https://cred4teach.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Ukraine_EN_National_Framework_Micro-Credentials.pdf

-
- Skorupa-Wulczyńska, A. (2025). The language rights of Ukrainian minors enjoying temporary protection in Poland in the field of education. *Central and Eastern European Migration Review*, 14(1), 121-137. <https://doi.org/10.54667/ceemr.2025.02>
- Slovo i Dilo. (2026). Distribution of internally displaced persons across Ukrainian oblasts [data reported from the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine]. <https://www.slovoidilo.ua/2026/03/25/infografika/suspilstvo/yakyx-oblastyax-prozhyvaye-najbilshe-najmenshe-vnutrishnix-pereselencziv>
- Stabilisation Support Services Charitable Foundation. (2025). About IDP Councils. <https://sss-ua.org/en/idp-councils/>
- Stasiowski, J. (2023). Case study Poland: Microcredentials for labour market education and training. First look at mapping microcredentials in European labour-market-related education, training and learning: take-up, characteristics and functions. Thessaloniki: Cedefop. https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/poland_microcredentials_mapping.pdf
- Study in Norway. (2025). Refugees. <https://studyinnorway.no/node/65>
- UDI (Norwegian Directorate of Immigration). (2025). Ukrainians have their temporary collective protection extended. <https://www.udi.no/en/latest/ukrainians-have-their-temporary-collective-protection-extended/>
- UDI. (2026). Temporary collective protection for Ukrainians. <https://www.udi.no/en/latest/collective-protection-for-ukrainians/>
- Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights. (2026a). Monitoring of the temporary residence site for IDPs in Chernivtsi oblast. https://ombudsman.gov.ua/news_details/monitoring-miscya-timchasovogo-prozhivannya-vpo-u-cherniveckij-oblasti
- Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights. (2026b). Compliance with IDP rights at a temporary residence site checked in the Vyzhnytsia district. https://ombudsman.gov.ua/news_details/na-vizhnichchini-perevirili-dotrimannya-prav-vpo-u-misci-timchasovogo-prozhivannya
- Ukrainian State Centre for International Education. (n.d.). About us. State Enterprise of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine. <https://studyinukraine.gov.ua/about-us/>
- UNDP Ukraine. (2025). UNDP and Japan modernise training centres for energy sector specialists in Kyiv and Vinnytsia oblasts. <https://www.undp.org/ukraine/press-releases/undp-and-japan-modernise-training-centres-energy-sector-specialists-kyiv-and-vinnytsia-oblasts>
- UNHCR & Deloitte. (2025). Poland: Analysis of the impact of refugees from Ukraine on the economy of Poland (2nd ed.). <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/116621>
- UNHCR Poland. (2024). Education in Poland. <https://help.unhcr.org/poland/information-for-new-arrivals-from-ukraine/education-in-poland/>
- UNHCR. (2024). Resources for employers in Ukraine. <https://www.unhcr.org/europe/resources-employers-ukraine>
- UNHCR. (2025a). Poland: Regional Refugee Response Plan for the Ukraine Situation, 2025–2026. <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/113657>
- UNHCR. (2025b). Ukraine emergency. <https://www.unhcr.org/us/emergencies/ukraine-emergency>

-
- UNHCR. (2025c). Internally displaced persons in Ukraine. <https://www.unhcr.org/ua/en/internally-displaced-persons-idp>
- UNHCR. (2025d). Ukraine: Summary of the Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan and the Regional Refugee Response Plan (January 2025). <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/ukraine/ukraine-summary-humanitarian-needs-and-response-plan-and-regional-refugee-response-plan-january-2025-enuk>
- UNHCR. (2026). Labor market integration of Ukrainian refugees in Europe: Employment gaps, skill mismatches and economic gains. UNHCR Regional Bureau for Europe. <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/120820>
- UNICEF. (2025). Educational integration of refugee children in Polish schools: Where do we stand after the introduction of compulsory schooling? <https://www.unicef.org/eca/press-releases/educational-integration-refugee-children>
- University of Warsaw. (2023). Solidarity with Ukraine – 4EU+ for Ukraine. <https://en.uw.edu.pl/4eu-for-ukraine/>
- Varto News. (2025). Lviv region created almost 10,000 places for IDPs over three years of war. <https://vartonews.com.ua/2025/03/20/lvivshchyna-stvoryla-mayzhe-10-tysyach-mists-dlya-vpo-za-try-roky-viyn33423/>
- Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. (2023). On Adopting the Draft Law of Ukraine on Adult Education as a Basis (Resolution No. 2874-IX, 12 January 2023). <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2874-IX>
- Vinnytsia Regional Employment Centre. (2026). In which sectors did Vinnytsia region seek workers most in 2025? [У яких галузях на Вінниччині найбільше шукали працівників у 2025 році?]. <https://vin.dcz.gov.ua/node/12222>
- Vinnytsia Regional Military Administration, Department of Social and Youth Policy. (2025). Results of a survey on the state of IDP integration in Vinnytsia oblast [Результати опитування щодо стану інтеграції ВПО у Вінницькій області]. <https://www.vin.gov.ua/dep-smp/68084-rezultaty-opytuvannia-shchodo-stanu-intehratsii-vpo-u-vinnytskii-oblasti>
- Vinnytsia Regional Military Administration, Department of Social and Youth Policy. (2026). Summarizing the results of 2025, I understand that a lot has been done, even more is planned! [Підбиваючи підсумки 2025 року, розумію, що пророблено дуже багато, ще більше заплановано!]. <https://www.vin.gov.ua/dep-smp/74772-pidbyvaiuchy-pidsumky-2025-roku-rozumiiu-shcho-prorobleno-duzhe-bahato-shche-bilshe-zaplanovano>
- Vinnytsia Regional Military Administration. (2025). Vinnytsia region joined the discussion on ways to improve state policy on internally displaced persons [Вінниччина долучилася до обговорення шляхів удосконалення державної політики щодо внутрішньо переміщених осіб]. <https://www.vin.gov.ua/news/ostanni-novyny/70244-vinnychchyna-doluchylasia-do-obhovorennia-shliakhiv-udoskonallennia-derzhavnoi-polityky-shchodo-vnutrishno-peremishchenykh-osib>
- World Bank, Government of Ukraine, European Commission & United Nations. (2026). Ukraine: Fifth Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA5), February 2022 – December 2025. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2026/02/23/updated-ukraine-recovery-and-reconstruction-needs-assessment-released>

ANNEXES

Institutional self-assessment template

(to be used for Report 4 Comparative Analysis of Educational Practices
for IDPs Retraining and Social Integration)

Implementation of the IDPs retraining & social adaptation programme Self-assessment Spring 2025

1. Institutional overview

- Name of university:
- Region / city:
- Name of partner NGO:
- Name of programme:
- Semester start-end dates:
- Number of participants graduating:

2. Educational programme

- Target group description:
Demographics: Age, Gender, previous education, other relevant information
- Programme design and delivery:
Describe how the program delivery was technically organised (online/blended/in-person etc)
Describe the flow of the program // structure (sequenced or parallel modules, number of hours, practical vs. Theoretical ratio etc)
Describe stakeholder collaboration for program co-delivery (NGOs, Local businesses, local authorities, others)
- Quality assurance:
What tools/methods were used to collect feedback from participants and assure quality?

3. Institutional reflection and adaptation

- What worked well?
- What were the main challenges?
- How did the institution adapt based on feedback?
- Lessons learned

4. Forward-looking statements

- Planned improvements for the next cycle

Institutional self-assessment template

(to be used for Report 4 Comparative Analysis of Educational Practices
for IDPs Retraining and Social Integration)

Implementation of the IDPs retraining & social adaptation programme Self-assessment Fall 2025

1. Institutional overview

- Name of university:
- Region / city:
- Name of partner NGO:
- Name of programme:
- Semester start-end dates:
- Number of participants graduating:

Context of IDPs in the region (per Jan 2026)

2. Educational programme

- **Target group description:**
Demographics: Age, Gender, previous education, other relevant information
- **Programme design and delivery:**
Describe how the program delivery was technically organised (online/blended/in-person etc)

Describe the flow of the program // structure (sequenced or parallel modules, number of hours, practical vs. Theoretical ratio etc)

Describe stakeholder collaboration for program co-delivery (NGOs, Local businesses, local authorities, others)
- **Quality assurance:**
What tools/methods were used to collect feedback from participants and assure quality?

3. Institutional reflection and adaptation

- What worked well?
- What were the main challenges?
- How did the institution adapt based on feedback?
- Lessons learned

4. Forward-looking statements

- Planned improvements for the next cycle

5. Sustainability plans

- How this programme will continue? Under what funding/support conditions?

Focus group interviews

Spring 2025

Universities

Topic	Questions
Introduction	Please describe your role in the program.
Micro-credential program	- How did your institution apply the knowledge gained during the capacity-building phase to develop the micro-credentials? - What has been the institutional response or changes as a result of this work?
Stakeholder engagement and program co-delivery	- How did you collaborate with NGOs and employers to ensure the training met labour market needs? - What worked well or could be improved?
Digital component	What digital tools/platforms were used in delivery and how effective were they? Any challenges?
Lessons & recommendations	- What key lessons did your institution learn? - What could be improved or scaled?

NGOs

Topic	Questions
Introduction	Please describe your role in the program.
Program design & delivery	- How did you tailor psychological and employment training for IDPs? - Which components were most impactful?
Psychological assistance	- Can you share examples of impact from individual/group support? - Any challenges with trauma or deep psychological issues?
Employment training	- What training methods were most effective? - Did you observe changes in confidence or initiative?
Collaboration	- How was collaboration with universities/partners handled? - Any challenges or successes in integration?
Improvement & sustainability	- What would make the training more effective? - What should be permanently included in future programs?

Focus group interviews

Fall 2025

Universities (Same Representatives as Spring 2025)

Purpose: Explore institutional learning, changes in program design, and integration since last semester.

Topic	Updated Questions
Introduction	Please remind of your role in the program. How has your role evolved since last semester?
Micro-credential program – Evolution	Since last semester, how has your institution refined or expanded the micro-credential program? What new content or delivery methods have been introduced?
Institutional change and learning	What lessons from the previous implementation were applied this semester? What worked better, and what challenges persisted?
Stakeholder engagement and co-delivery – Change over time	Have collaborations with NGOs and employers changed or deepened? What new partnerships or improvements emerged?
Digital component – Development	Were there updates or improvements to digital tools/platforms used in delivery? How did these changes affect engagement or learning outcomes?
Sustainability and future direction	How is your institution planning to sustain or institutionalize the program? What do you think your team has learned most from this two-semester experience?
Closing reflection	If you could give one piece of advice to another university starting a similar program, what would it be?

NGOs (Same Representatives as Spring 2025)

Purpose: Assess evolution of training design, long-term collaboration, and lessons learned.

Topic	Questions
Introduction	Please reintroduce your organisation's role in the program. What has changed in your involvement since last semester?
Program design & delivery – Evolution	How have your training modules (psychological/employment) been adapted based on feedback or previous outcomes?
Psychological assistance – Long-term impact	Have you observed more lasting or deeper psychological effects from continued participation? What adjustments have improved impact or participant engagement?
Employment training – Growth and learning	What new techniques or partnerships have enhanced employability outcomes? How have participants' needs evolved?
Collaboration & integration – Dynamics	How has collaboration with the university and other partners developed since the previous cycle? Any new integration models or lessons learned?
Improvement & sustainability	Based on two semesters of experience, what are your key takeaways for sustaining or scaling this initiative?
Closing reflection	What has your organisation learned about supporting IDPs that could benefit future national or regional programs?

