



International
Labour
Organization



UKRAINIAN
WOMEN'S
FUND

► LEP4WORK

Local Employment Partnerships for Decent Work
and Effective Labour Market Governance

Results 2025-2026



► ABOUT THE PROJECT

LEP4WORK supports the establishment of Local Employment Partnerships (LEPs) across three key communities in the Kyiv oblast: Bila Tserkva, Brovary, and Irpin.

The LEP model was rolled out as a centrepiece of the **ILO Director-General's crisis response in Ukraine**. In a region hit hard by hostilities, the immediate priority was clear: restore access to jobs and livelihoods at pace.

By leveraging data-driven planning, in collaboration with UNHCR, including hromadas (community) profiling and gender analysis, the project identified precise local needs. This approach bridged the gap between vocational training and business skills, while modernising employment services to meet today's realities.

Implementation at the community level enabled the rapid development of a highly effective model where business support, youth career guidance, and industry demand operate as a single, integrated system. This framework is now fully primed for scaling.



"Launched as a rapid response under the ILO Director-General's crisis mandate, this initiative demanded both speed and precision. Building a coordinated system in the Kyiv oblast in such a short timeframe, where data and the synergy between employers and education function as a unified mechanism, is a landmark achievement. We have proven that even in wartime, a locally-driven response ensures relevance and provides a blueprint for scaling labour market recovery nationwide," said **Aida Lindmeier, Director of the ILO Country Office for Ukraine**.

► STRATEGIC FOCUS

The project is centered on building **robust local cooperation models** to drive employment, bolster economic resilience, and unlock new job opportunities with a focus on women. By pooling local resources and expertise, the initiative enables an agile response to immediate community needs while **establishing sustainable, long-term solutions for decent work** and the economic integration of people in vulnerable situations.

Project Target Groups:

- Internally displaced persons
- Families of service personnel
- Veterans
- Persons with disabilities
- Caregivers of family members with disabilities
- Single parents
- Parents with many children
- Representatives of national minorities
- People in need of social support



“Local Employment Partnerships are a cornerstone of Ukraine’s recovery. By uniting local authorities, employers, workers, and civil society, they identify the community’s true needs to design and deliver practical, inclusive results. The ILO’s experience shows that when local actors collaborate, they unlock innovative solutions – from supporting internally displaced persons to revitalising local businesses and future-proofing skills for the new economy. These partnerships are the bedrock of a sustainable, people-centred recovery,” said **Tetyana Minenko, National Project Manager at the ILO Country Office for Ukraine.**

► PROJECT RESULTS



Over its one-year duration, the project delivered practical solutions to revitalise the local labour market, addressing urgent wartime community needs while fostering entrepreneurship and expanding access to decent work.

Key outcomes include:

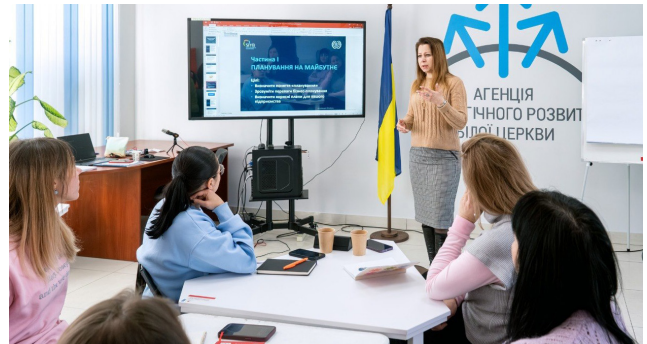
- **Established a Local Employment Partnership** in the Kyiv oblast
- **Engaged over 1,500 beneficiaries**, 70% of whom are women
- **Reached 1,000 persons**, including youth in soft skills training and career fairs
- **Upskilled almost 200 individuals** through the Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) programme
- **Graduated 154 participants** from short-term vocational courses (cooks, baristas, and machine operators), with **47 already securing employment in their new fields**
- **Trained 142 TVET students** on SYIB programme
- **Empowered 28 entrepreneurs** to launch or scale their businesses through a combination of grant support and professional mentoring
- **Trained 23 Regional State Employment Service representatives** as specialized career counsellors for hard-to-employ populations



*"The project has been an invaluable experience, demonstrating the resilience of the Local Employment Partnerships model even in wartime. The defining takeaway is the power of collaboration; in times of crisis, partnership becomes the most effective response to labor market challenges," said **Olesia Bondar, Director of the Ukrainian Women's Fund.***

Technical & Institutional Strengthening:

- **Modernisation of Vocational Training:** Educational institutions were equipped with state-of-the-art tools for training baristas and cooks.
- **Training of TVET staff in entrepreneurship:** building capacity to deliver practical business skills and support self-employment pathways.
- **Professionalisation of Employment Services:** Representatives from Regional employment centers successfully completed a specialised career counselling certification programme.
- **Inclusive Business Development:** Local enterprises underwent intensive training on inclusive hiring practices, gender equality, and social inclusion (GESI).
- **Advocacy & Promotion:** A professional video campaign was launched to enhance the prestige and visibility of vocational education.



► BUSINESS-EDUCATION SYNERGY

The **LEP4WORK** project has proven to be a vital tool for bridging the gap between education and employment, specifically supporting young people in their transition to the professional world.

A standout success was the series of **targeted job fairs**, where students engaged directly with the private sector. These events moved beyond simple networking; students successfully secured **internships on the spot**, with a notable surge of interest in the retail sector. Large retail chains responded by offering **flexible, individualised scheduling**, making it possible for students to balance work and study. These initiatives have significantly strengthened the lines of communication between stakeholders, creating a more responsive and integrated local labour market.

In addition, career guidance sessions were held with students to highlight the potential of vocational education and training in sectors such as hospitality, agri-industry, and logistics. Professionals provided hands-on demonstrations, giving students a chance to engage in practical tasks. Under a chef's guidance, students mastered dough-making and baking, while others gained direct experience working with metal in welding workshops.

Vocational education offers young people a direct and viable career pathway. These engagements allowed students to envision real professional growth, while communities cultivated a new generation of skilled talent ready to drive the country's recovery and development.



SUCCESS STORIES / RESKILLING



Oleksandra is an internally displaced person from Zaporizhzhia who, due to the war, relocated with her family to Brovary. Without formal vocational education, she decided to reset her career and enrolled in short-term training courses for cooks. She became one of 48 participants in the programme, which provides a state-recognised certificate and a real opportunity to secure employment. During her internship at a local Georgian restaurant, she demonstrated strong professional skills and received a job offer.

Oleksandra's success is one example of how Local Employment Partnerships work in practice. As a result of this training alone, eight participants have already secured employment, while the short-term course format has proven effective for the rapid integration of internally displaced persons into the community.

"I have always loved cooking, but never had formal training. During the course, I discovered something new every day and gained confidence that I could become a professional. I completed my internship at a local Georgian restaurant – I immediately felt it was a strong team where people support each other and share experiences. Now I have been offered a permanent position there. Every day in the kitchen is interesting, time flies, and I feel that I am exactly where I belong."

SUCCESS STORIES / RESKILLING



For **Taras**, five years in Bila Tserkva's coffee industry—specializing in everything from machine repair to precision calibration—served as the foundation for a new career chapter. Participation in the project allowed him to translate his technical expertise into pedagogical skills. He is now preparing to join the faculty of a vocational school, where he will pass on his practical mastery to the next generation of professionals.

His journey demonstrates that Local Employment Partnerships do more than just create jobs; they cultivate a new wave of skilled practitioners capable of strengthening vocational education from within.



"I am driven by a strong desire to share what I know. I can see how my experience benefits others and helps them grow professionally."

A philologist by training, **Iryna** balanced a career in tailoring with teaching Argentine tango. Despite her background in the humanities, she had long been drawn to woodworking. When the opportunity arose to enrol in a furniture-making course, she traded her dance studio for a production workshop to master a new applied trade.

Through the woodworking machine operator program, she moved seamlessly from theory to hands-on industry practice. The experience proved that stereotypes surrounding "male-dominated" fields are unfounded, showing that the furniture industry is both accessible and promising for women.



"I happened upon the free training course for machine operators and decided to dive in, as I've always been interested in working with wood. Throughout the program, I went beyond the curriculum, constantly engaging with the instructor. After my internship, I realised that this profession is entirely within reach for women."

SUCCESS STORIES / RESKILLING



A veteran from Bila Tserkva, **Yaroslav** stepped away from his advertising and printing business in 2022 to defend the country. Upon demobilisation, he returned home with a firm resolve to rebuild his enterprise. He joined the LEP4WORK project, where he mastered crisis management and successfully applied for a grant. This support allowed him to repair essential equipment and relaunch production. Today, his business is not only back on track but gaining momentum. Yaroslav is now eyeing further expansion and actively mentors other veterans, helping them transition to civilian life through entrepreneurship.

"The most important thing is to believe in yourself and stay active. Even after the toughest experiences, it is possible to return, rebuild, and move forward."

SUCCESS STORIES / RESKILLING

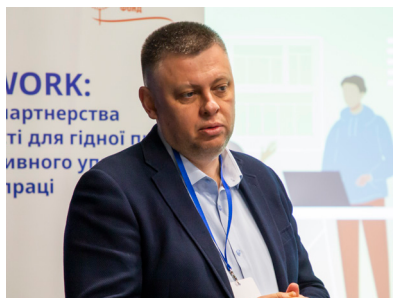
Maiia has progressed from working on a production line to owning her own auto atelier in Irpin. After moving from the Zhytomyr oblast, she channelled her manufacturing expertise into a specialised business: car interior upholstery and furniture restoration.

Participation in the training program marked a turning point, providing Maiia with a grant for professional equipment. This investment allowed her to automate time-sensitive tasks, boost production capacity, and take on more complex orders that were previously technically out of reach.



"I had long dreamed of professional equipment, but couldn't manage it alone. I encourage other entrepreneurs not to give up and to keep seeking out opportunities—my experience proves they exist, even in wartime."

Today, Local Employment Partnerships established under the methodology of the International Labour Organization are successfully operating in Ukraine.



"Local Employment Partnerships are already revitalising the regional labour market. These are practical solutions: reskilling, employment support, and grant assistance for businesses. This approach enables people to work and grow within their communities, bringing together the efforts of authorities and businesses to achieve shared results," said **Denys Darmostuk, Director of the Kyiv Regional Employment Centre.**

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