



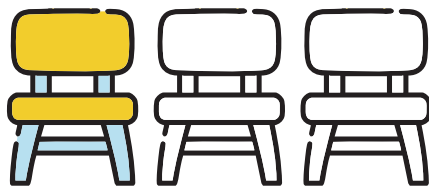
EASY BUSINESS

UKRAINE Sector Snapshot: Construction

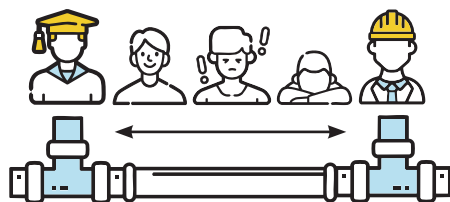
Introduction

After more than three years of a full-scale invasion in Ukraine, reconstruction presents an unprecedented opportunity yet also faces a critical challenge: a severe shortage of skilled construction workers. With the sector operating at just 60% of pre-war levels, the demand for skilled labor outpaces the available workforce, creating bottlenecks that could threaten recovery unless addressed now. This shortage reflects deeper systemic issues in training quality, workforce mobility, and worker pipelines. However, there are real opportunities for proactive private and public sector partnerships. Investing now in practical, and targeted training initiatives can bridge these gaps, boosting economic resilience and delivering measurable social impact. Timely intervention in workforce readiness isn't just urgent—it's strategically essential for Ukraine's economic future.

Labor shortages are acute: **about 2.4 job openings** per available candidate



Higher education and TVET exist, but **graduates often don't work** in their field of study.



MOST IN-DEMAND PROFESSIONS BY QUALIFICATION LEVEL

Professions	Skill level
Engineers	HIGHLY SKILLED
Builders	SKILLED
Concrete workers	SKILLED
Facade workers	SKILLED
Tilers	SKILLED
Installers	SKILLED
Welders	SKILLED
Electricians	SKILLED
Plumbers	SKILLED
Rebar workers	SKILLED
Foremen	SKILLED
Crane operators	SKILLED
Masons	SKILLED
Finishers	SKILLED
High-rise installer	SKILLED
Laborers	UNSKILLED/SEMISKILLED
Assistants	UNSKILLED/SEMISKILLED

Only **about 50%** of needed skilled workers **available.**



The Worker Gap

Ukraine's construction sector is recovering from the invasion but operates at just 60% of pre-war capacity, creating intense demand for skilled workers—about 2.4 job openings per available candidate. This shortage will only intensify. Meeting Ukraine's economic recovery goals requires more than doubling the construction workforce by 2032. The demand varies dramatically by region. Labor shortages are most acute in western areas like Lviv, where reconstruction is advancing rapidly, while war-affected eastern and southern regions currently see minimal construction activity.

Why it Matters: Ukraine's reconstruction depends on workforce availability. Current labor shortages create a cascading effect: delayed projects increase costs, discourage foreign investment, and slow economic recovery.

Recommendation: Establish mobile training units and temporary housing incentives to move skilled workers from low-demand to high-demand regions.



Pipeline Problems

Ukraine's training system isn't keeping up with labor market needs. Over 50 universities offer construction degrees, yet fewer than half of graduates work in their field, highlighting a disconnect between education and employment. Vocational schools exist nationwide but often lack strong employer partnerships and hands-on training opportunities. Official employment of TVET graduates varies between 13% to 36% depending on the profession. Public short-term courses offer cost-free options but are unevenly distributed. Some regions have 20+ programs while others have just one. Private training centers and online platforms are expanding to fill gaps, though cost, geography, and language barriers limit accessibility. Meanwhile, niche programs like Volvo's "Iron Women" and Swiss contact's "Career Path" are pioneering new pathways for women and youth, though these remain limited in scope.

Why it Matters: A fragmented training system wastes human capital when Ukraine can least afford it. When half of construction graduates leave the field, the country loses both its educational investment and potential workers.

Recommendation: Incentivize employer partnerships for vocational programs and deepen construction industry involvement in curricula to ensure training translates directly into employment opportunities.

Job placement rate for University grads



(44.6%)

University grads



Skills Gaps

Ukraine faces a skills crisis across all construction roles, from masons and crane operators to engineers and electricians, with only half of needed skilled workers currently available. This shortage impacts productivity for 70% of employers who report skills gaps as the most critical factor limiting their operations. Employers consistently report gaps in fundamental competencies like reading blueprints, proper tool handling, safety, and teamwork. These practical skills are often underdeveloped in current training programs.

Why it Matters: Fundamental skill deficits create uncertainty and risk that employers cannot afford. When employers can't reliably find workers with essential competencies, they face project delays, increased supervision costs, and unpredictable outcomes that discourage investment and slow recovery. This uncertainty impacts the entire construction sector, making it harder to plan projects, secure financing, and meet reconstruction timelines.

Recommendation: Experiment with standardized, industry-certified micro-credentials for essential skills like blueprint reading and safety protocols that workers can earn quickly and employers can trust immediately.

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*Bricklaying,
rebar work,
and concrete
installation
hardest to staff*

About IREX

IREX is a global development and education organization. With an in-country presence in Ukraine for over three decades, IREX has been driving transformative change by investing in human capital, catalyzing innovation, and empowering communities. With a dedicated team operating across all regions at both national and local levels, IREX continues to ensure sustainable development through the war with a deep commitment to building a brighter future for Ukraine and Ukrainians.

Learn more: www.irex.org.

About EasyBusiness

EasyBusiness is a non-profit Think-and-Do tank with the mission to drive Ukraine's recovery and economic growth by fostering private sector development, with a particular focus on advancing Ukraine's integration into the European Union. The organization combines research with actionable solutions to address barriers, empower local communities, and promote sustainable development. Guided by freedom, responsibility, initiative, trust, and respect, we work to create a thriving, competitive economy.

METHODOLOGY: This brief synthesizes data from quantitative labor market analysis, employer surveys, and expert interviews conducted by EasyBusiness. It focuses explicitly on labor demand, training pipeline issues, and skills gaps in Ukraine's manufacturing sector, presenting targeted recommendations to inform donor and private-sector interventions. Estimates for additional required employment in each sector are from the ILO.