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**Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC**

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inclusive economic development
competence center for engagement
with the private sector

Improving plumbing education in Ukraine

Private sector collaboration



The mismatch between the vocational education system and the labour market in Ukraine causes low productivity and high youth unemployment. The partnership between the Swiss company Geberit and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) aims to improve the quality and relevance of vocational education and training (VET) for plumbers in order to increase young people's employability and income.

Gap between qualification and labour market needs

Ukraine has high youth unemployment, with almost one in five young people having no job. A major problem is the mismatch between the VET system and the demand from the labour market, which causes low productivity. Vocational schools focus on theory rather than on practical training and do not provide their graduates with the skills and competencies demanded by employers. As a result, the private sector is facing a shortage of skilled labour in several areas. One of the companies indirectly affected by this problem is Geberit, a Swiss company in the field of sanitary technology that has been active in Ukraine for several years. As a producer of sanitary equipment, Geberit depends on skilled plumbers who are able to install state-of-the-art equipment.

Improving plumbing education in Ukraine in collaboration with the private sector

Against this background, Geberit and the SDC agreed to co-finance a collaboration aimed at improving the quality and practice-orientation of VET for plumbers, which would benefit the entire sanitary installation sector. Improved skills and knowledge tailored to the needs of the industry will increase young people's employability and income. The project strengthens VET schools by introducing international industry standards, training the teachers and updating the training curriculum. Furthermore, it promotes close collaboration between VET schools and businesses.

The SDC's main role in this cooperation is to facilitate dialogue with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine in order to ensure that the innovations developed by the project are in line with the national strategy and development plans and that they are introduced in the revised curriculum and teaching materials. Moreover, the SDC promotes dialogue with other industry actors in order to ensure their participation in the project

and to obtain an endorsement of the new educational model by the industry as a whole. Geberit contributes equipment such as sanitary hardware and product samples, organises educational factory tours for students and provides personnel. The Ministry of Education and Science supports the project at the regulatory and policymaking level. Geberit, the SDC and the Ministry of Education and Science are all on the project steering committee.

1'332 qualified plumbing graduates

Since the start of the collaboration in 2014, a new plumber training curriculum, professional standards and materials have been developed and introduced in 25 vocational schools. In addition, new infrastructure for practical training has been installed. 1'332 qualified plumbers have been trained and graduated from the VET schools supported by the project. Thanks to the vocational education received, on average 81% of graduates have found employment.

The project also inspired the Ukrainian government to strengthen VET in the country. In the past, higher education was prioritised. Now the government has increased the budget for VET and for the first time appointed a deputy minister specifically in charge of VET. The ultimate goal of the project is to replicate this new type of training and have it certified by the Ministry of Education and Science across the whole country.

Impact

**Overall goal**

Improving the quality and relevance of VET for plumbers in order to increase young people's employability and income.

**Value added**

By mobilising the expertise and knowledge of both the private and public sector and exploiting their respective strengths, the quality and practice-orientation of VET for plumbers is improved, enabling young people to gain skills tailored to the needs of the market and thus increasing their employability and income prospects.

**Objectives achieved so far**

- ▶ New plumber training curriculum, professional standards and materials have been developed and introduced in 25 VET schools.
- ▶ New infrastructure for practical training has been installed in 25 VET schools.
- ▶ 1'332 students graduated from schools supported by the project.
- ▶ 81% of graduates found an employment on average.

**Further expected results**

- ▶ Effective certification system of schools' graduates introduced in 25 VET schools.
 - ▶ Industry board created with an outreach to other businesses active in the sanitary sector in order to contribute to new employment opportunities of graduates.
 - ▶ 3'000 young people and adults received basic education combined with vocational skills development.
 - ▶ Six training and resource centres established within the VET schools provide training for adults and become commercially self-sustainable.
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«It is less costly to get a skilled graduate than to retrain an old-fashioned plumber.»

Oleksiy Rakov

General Manager of Geberit Ukraine



«From the Government side we have created additional 19 training centers using a Swiss model and making sure that 25 VET schools located all over Ukraine are equipped now.»

Pavlo Khobzey

Vice Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine

Project at a glance

Private sector partner

Geberit Ukraine

Public partners

Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine

Implementing partner

Gurt (2014–2019); Swisscontact (2020–2023)

Format of the partnership

Single-partner collaboration

Target groups / beneficiaries

Students, teachers and managers of VET schools, private small and medium-sized enterprises (producers, installers, service providers) and relevant public entities active in the plumbing, heating and piping sectors

Implementation period

2014–2023

Budget

CHF 1.725 million

Theme

Vocational skills development

Country

Ukraine

