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Metinvest Joins Architectural Transformation of Educational Institutions in Ukraine



Schools of the Future: Metinvest Joins Architectural Transformation of Educational Institutions in Ukraine

Metinvest Group has become a donor of a pilot project to create five architectural solutions for reconstructing typical Soviet-era educational institutions and to rebuild Ukrainian schools destroyed during the war.

The initiative is being implemented by the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Digital Transformation with the support of DTEK, Mariupol Reborn in cooperation with the Big City Lab urban bureau, and the Lithuanian architectural

initiative “Rebuild the Wonderful”.

The project team identified the five most common types of school buildings in Ukraine, which account for around 35% of all schools in the de-occupied regions of the country. The concepts for the new facilities are based on barrier-free access for teachers and students, safe shelters, social spaces, modern design and energy efficiency. The plan is to scale the five architectural solutions to transform schools across Ukraine.

The pilot concepts are being developed based on educational institutions in the Kharkiv and Kyiv regions, as well as in Zaporizhzhia and Kryvyi Rih, where many people work at Metinvest enterprises. For the Group, it is important to support the restoration of social infrastructure in these cities.

“The reconstruction of destroyed schools cannot be based on designs that are half a century old. The buildings must be modern, convenient, environmentally friendly and safe facilities that will attract every student. I hope that the development of municipal school infrastructure will be one of our significant contributions to improving the well-being of citizens.”

Tetiana Petruk, Metinvest’s Chief Sustainability Officer

The architectural transformation of educational institutions will reflect the values of the New Ukrainian School and is based on the principle of “build back better”.

“When we started working with the Ministry of Education and Science on the education transformation strategy, we realised that we needed to not only change the content and meanings of education, but also transform school spaces. Space affects human thinking. Our vision is that schools should look like small Google or Netflix offices, where breakthrough ideas and dreams are born. For me, this project is not only about re-imagining spaces and dispensing with the totalitarian past. For me, this project is the future of Ukraine, and we are actively preparing for it.”

Mykhailo Fedorov, minister of digital transformation

The architectural solutions for the new schools were developed by the Ukrainian Big City Lab team, together with the Rebuild the Wonderful initiative. It includes architectural bureaus Do Architects from Lithuania, Kavakava from Estonia and Archikon from Hungary, which have experience in transforming old Soviet-era schools in their countries.

“Educational spaces should reflect the approaches of a modern school, the culture and the values we intend to foster in it. If we declare that freedom is a value for us, then in schools we must give this freedom to children. Not only to choose subjects, although this is also important, but, for example, to sit on window sills specially equipped for this purpose. If we value development and self-realisation, we need to create modern makerspaces in schools where students can express themselves. Content and form are interconnected, so our task is to transform this consistently and comprehensively.”

Oksen Lisovyi, minister of education and science

The team of architects has developed principles that are universal for reconstruction projects based on opinion research of educators, experts and students. The architects presented the concepts created with the support of Mariupol Reborn and showed what the schools of the future will look like. A complete package of design and estimate documentation has already been developed for the first five pilot schools, and this can be adapted for any other typical school.